

CREATING A NEW PLATFORM FOR GLOBAL GROWTH



REPORT ON THE OUTCOME
OF THE FIRST OPEN DIALOGUE

MOSCOW | 2025

NATIONAL CENTRE
RUSSIA



OPEN
DIALOGUE



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OPENING REMARKS

The world is changing rapidly. The countries of the Global Majority — the BRICS+ states and their partners first and foremost — are becoming the driving force of global economic growth. They are the ones forging new development models and practical solutions based on the real needs of the larger part of the world's community. This is not a transient process, but a long-term trend that is set to transform the entire architecture of the global economy.

On the other hand, it is clear that many existing international frameworks, mechanisms and institutions designed to deal with the issues of

the previous hundred years are increasingly struggling to meet the challenges of the 21st century. If the countries of the Global Majority want to step up the pace of their development, rather than be happy with the way things are currently moving, then they need to build their own framework, which would be open, equitable, people-centred, technologically advanced, and sustainable. A platform that would serve the good of all countries, rather than a close clique of beneficiaries.

Aware of this imperative, Russia has initiated the Open Dialogue, “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth.” We greatly appreciate the enthusiastic and far-reaching response to this initiative, with a total of 696 essays submitted from 102 countries in 16 languages, offering a broad spectrum of views — from students to recognised experts. This is proof of the relevance and urgency of putting forward a new development model. And it is not a purely theoretical exercise as it is backed with specific ideas, projects, and aspirations.

This presentation summarises the key outcomes of this unique initiative. Far from being a final roadmap, it should be regarded as only the first step on a long journey we are taking together. But even now, we can definitely say that we have the necessary intellectual foundation, energy, and commitment, as well as a shared understanding of what we want to accomplish. All of this inspires confidence that a new platform for global growth will not only be established, but provide a strong basis for an equitable, balanced and truly inclusive development.

Maxim Oreshkin

Deputy Chief of Staff,

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This monograph, produced by the Center of Expertise TRIM, explores potential frameworks for a new platform of global economic growth tailored to the needs of the Global Majority. The report examines four key drivers of sustainable and inclusive development in the 21st century: investments in human capital, environmental sustainability, technological advancement, and enhanced connectivity. Drawing on nearly 700 expert contributions from over 100 countries—submitted as part of the Open Dialogue “*The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth*”—the study synthesises in-demand global initiatives and projects. Combining analytical rigour with empirical evidence, the monograph presents actionable solutions proposed by dialogue participants.

This publication will be of interest to policymakers, international organisations, academics, and researchers, as well as readers seeking innovative approaches to global development and cooperation.

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INTRODUCTION



Introduction

At the start of the century, the BRICS countries accounted for roughly 20% of global GDP. Today they lead in manufacturing, resource extraction and demand creation. Their sustained high growth rates, along with comparable economies, positions them to lead the global economy in the near future.

In this report, we refer to this expansive group as “the Global Majority”¹ – a term that best captures the shift in today’s economic landscape. These are the nations that developed outside the Washington Consensus², beyond the G7 and Western Europe. They include economic powerhouses like China, Russia, Brazil and the Gulf states, as well as rapidly growing regions of South and Southeast Asia and Africa, where youthful population and breakneck urbanisation continue to drive high growth rates.

As the next era of the global economy takes shape, the global expert community must confront a critical question: What will shape the next wave of growth? With globalisation in flux, demographics shifting and transformative technologies on the rise, human capital has become the ultimate asset. The priorities for the decades ahead are clear: investing in people, advancing life-changing innovation, strengthening international ties and creating a sustainable future.

This trend toward a human-centered economy demands a new platform for global growth – one that is truly open, inclusive and responsive to the needs of the majority. Which projects deliver real value? Where do investments make the deepest social impact? What ideas deserve support today?

To explore these questions, Russia launched the international Open Dialogue “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth”. From January 29 to March 15, 2025, the National Centre RUSSIA hosted an open essay competition. Submissions were welcome from all backgrounds – no restrictions on age, nationality, profession or language. Only the quality of ideas counted.

¹ Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s Written Interview with Brazilian newspaper O Globo, 28 April 2025. Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. Available at: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/2011929/.

² Williamson, J. (1990). What Washington Means by Policy Reform. In Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened, Institute for International Economics. Available at: <https://www.piie.com/commentary/speeches-papers/what-washington-means-policy-reform>.

Four key areas were proposed:

- **INVESTMENTS IN HUMAN CAPITAL** – Elevating human development as a core priority
- **INVESTMENTS IN ENVIRONMENT** – Creating safer, more comfortable living conditions
- **INVESTMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY** – Solutions with real impact for the Global Majority
- **INVESTMENTS IN CONNECTIVITY** – Strengthening collaboration across people, regions and nations

Over a period of six weeks, 696 essays were submitted from 102 countries in 16 languages. During the six-week submission window, 696 essays were received from 102 countries in 16 languages. Participants spanned students, academics, educators, business leaders, independent journalists and economists from international organisations. Proposals addressed critical themes: education reform, migration issues, urban development, climate change, AI applications, renewable energy, circular economy and social entrepreneurship.

The competition followed a three-stage selection process. First, all submissions underwent technical screening to remove any promotional content or plagiarism. Next, a panel of experts carefully assessed each submission based on four criteria: originality, factual accuracy, social significance and feasibility. The most promising candidates then participated in video interviews before the final selection. Ultimately, 96 top contenders presented their ideas in person during the Open Dialogue’s live sessions in Moscow (April 28–30, 2025), engaging directly with panel experts and fellow participants.

The submissions shared key strengths: bold vision, innovation, economic feasibility and practical relevance. Together, they represent a meaningful step toward reimagining global economic development, proving that the Global Majority is already shaping tomorrow’s growth framework.

This report synthesises this extensive intellectual effort, identifying solutions for the new economic challenges by connecting diverse perspectives. The report presents an analytical narrative supported by factual data, highlighting the most promising ideas from the essays alongside real-world project examples. While this represents just the beginning, it establishes a foundation for further discussions, joint initiatives and concrete actions to shape a new platform for global growth.

Overview of Participation in the Open Dialogue

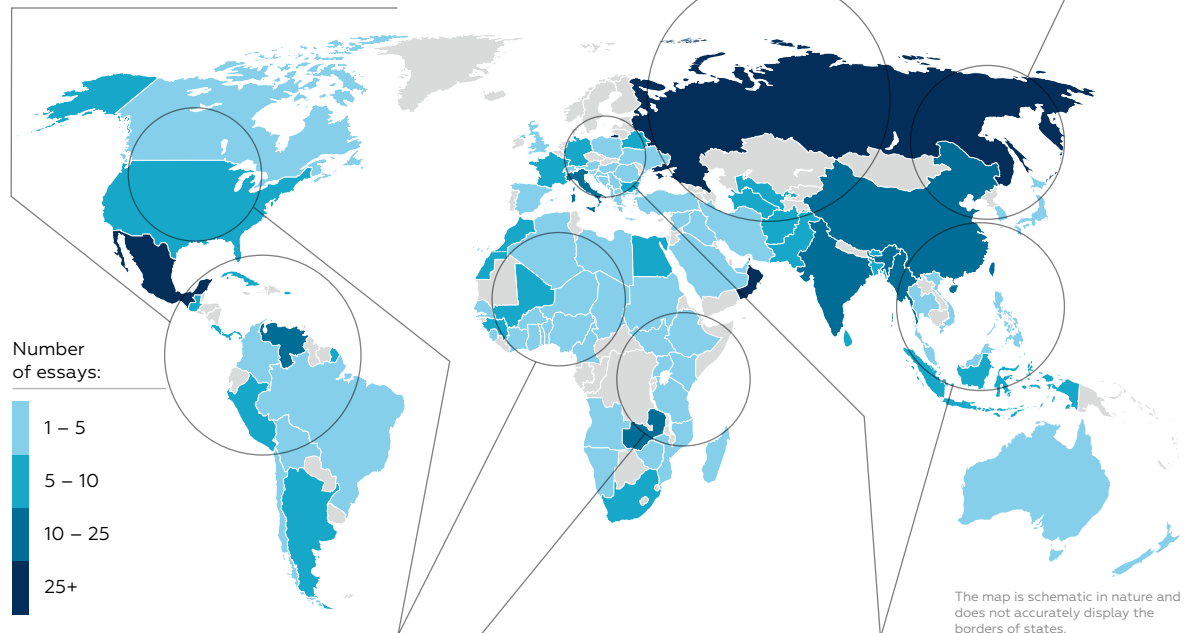
Picture 1

Distribution of participants in the Open Dialogue by country

The participants from **South and Central America** paid almost the same amount of attention to all four aspects of development that were put up for discussion: investing in human capital, investing in environment, investing in technology and investing in connectivity. One perspective to consider is that they grasp the interconnections between these topics.

Authors from **Europe and Asia** focused mostly on investing in human capital. This may indicate that education and health care are seen as key drivers of growth in these regions.

Asia, and especially **Eastern Asia**, is at the forefront of technological innovations, which is hardly surprising given that this region is home to global innovation hubs.



While not a widely discussed topic, the environment unexpectedly inspired much interest from **Central Africa and North America**. In the former case, this might be seen as a response to desertification, and in the latter – a reflection of the powerful climate agenda.

Participants from **Africa** tended to focus on connectivity, likely a result of the swift development of transport corridors and logistics on this continent.

Meanwhile, in **Southern Europe and Southeast Asia**, the environment topic remained on the sidelines, perhaps due to more pressing economic concerns.

“Investing in human capital” was the runaway leader among all the four topics. Evidently, human capital is perceived as a key resource for development.

“Investing in technology” and “Investing in connectivity” (infrastructure, communications) came second with almost equal results. And the topic “Investing in environment” (ecology, climate) was not so lucky, proving to be the least popular, although it did receive more attention in some regions.

Chart 1

Distribution of essays submitted by language

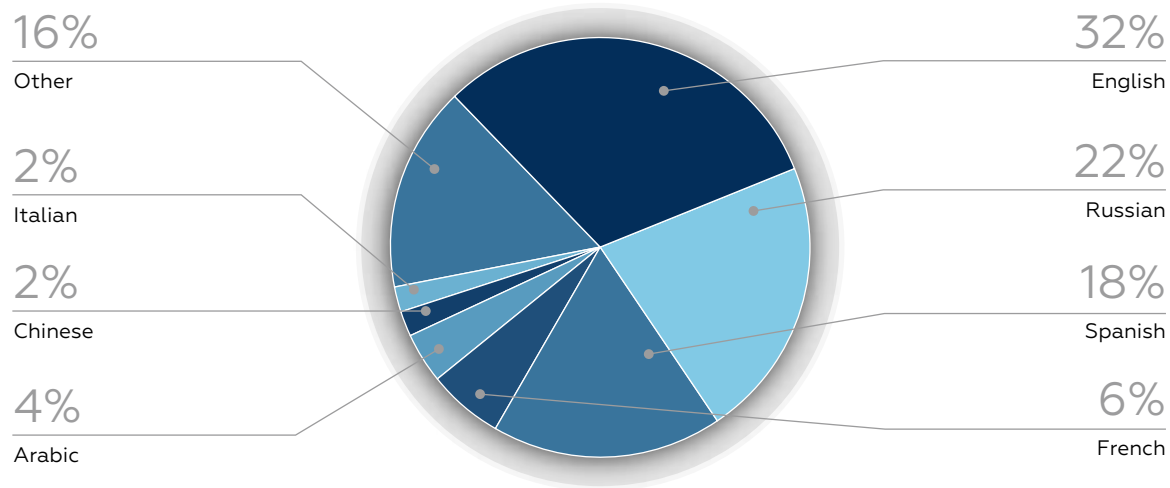
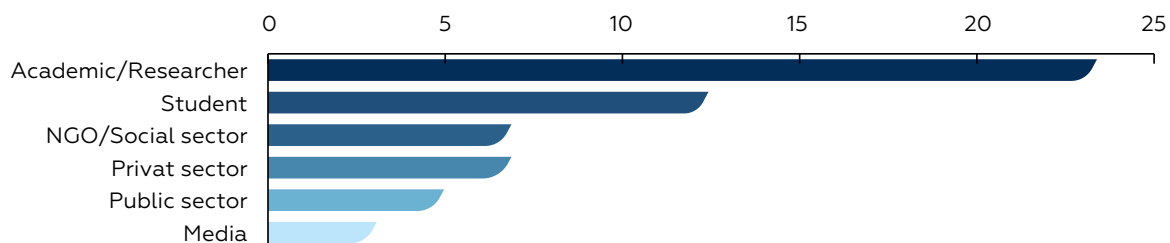


Chart 2

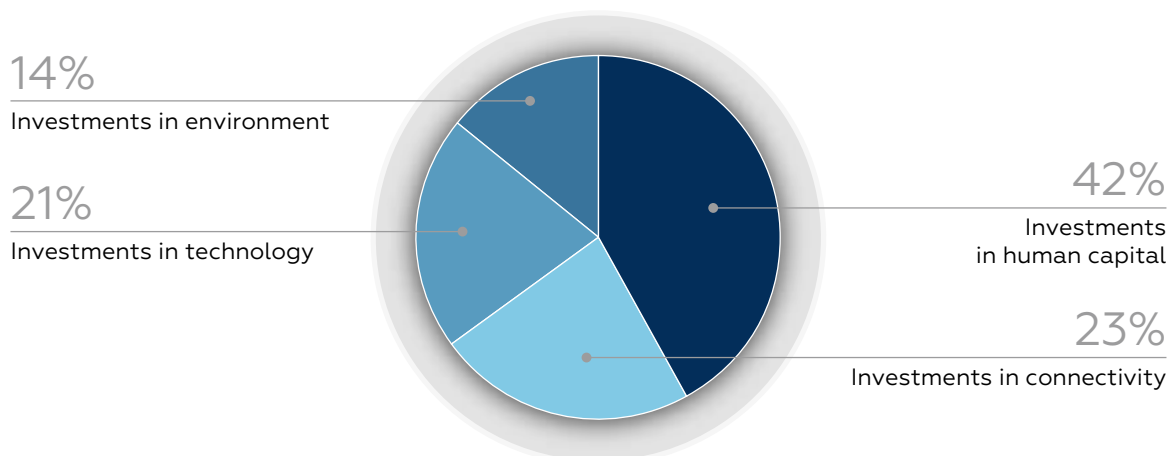
Distribution of essay authors by affiliation, as a percentage of essays received

12% of essay authors held an academic degree.

Note: the total is less than 100 because some authors did not indicate their affiliation.

Chart 3

Distribution of submitted essays by topic



CHAPTER 1

→ PLATFORMS FOR GLOBAL GROWTH



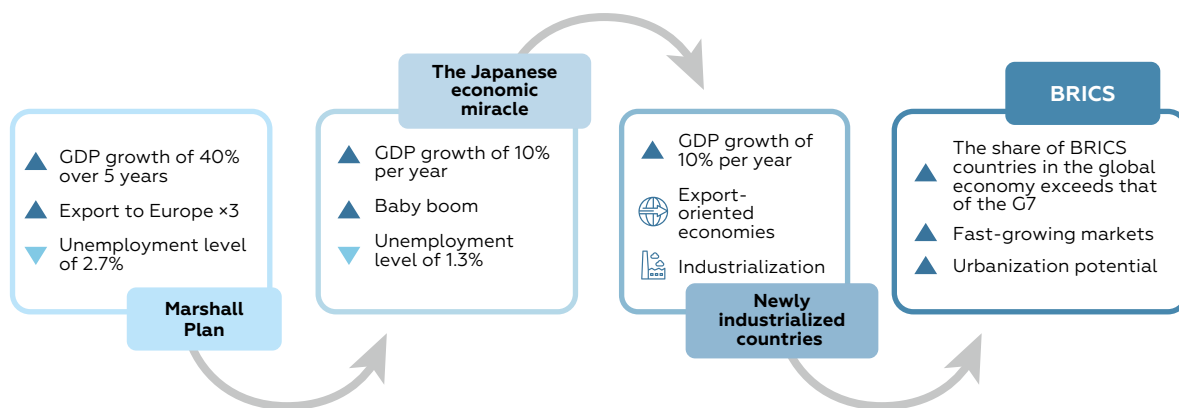
Chapter 1. Platforms for global growth

After World War II, the global economy saw a few big waves of development, each bringing new leaders and changing the balance of power. The first wave came with the post-war recovery, when the devastated economies of Europe and Japan, backed by the United States, not only returned to pre-war levels but also paved the way for future prosperity.

Next came the era of new industrial countries led by Japan, which made a technological breakthrough and proved that economic clout can shift to those who are better at innovating and building production chains. Following Japan, the Four Asian Tigers – South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore – followed a similar path, turning from backward agrarian economies into hi-tech states through smart industrial policies, investment in education and a focus on exports. In the 21st century, the momentum has shifted towards the BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Today, these countries are the main drivers of global economic growth, making it clear that global development no longer relies exclusively on Western countries.

Picture 2

Economic cycles in the 20th–21st centuries



Source: compiled by the authors of the report.

Each of these waves was shaped around key pillars: tech advances, trade frameworks, financial systems and investment models. The countries that gave the world these tools for growth ended up being the main ones to benefit from them. So, much of the economic progress of the second half of the 20th century and early 21st century stems from the framework created by the United States. The American financial system, the dollar as the global reserve currency, and open markets have all perked up the U.S. economy and helped it get loads out of globalisation.

According to Q4 2024 data, international investment in the U.S. economy exceeded USD26 trillion³. This amounts to a huge volume of goods and services consumed by American society effectively “on credit,” paid for by trust in the country’s financial system.



Juan Antonio de Castro⁴
Spain

« The international economic organisations that emerged after the Bretton Woods Conference 80 years ago have pursued inconsistent development policies. In many cases, their advice failed to factor in the big changes that came with the shift to a knowledge-based economy and therefore did not accurately capture the concept of sustainable development with regard to the needs of developing countries. These failings highlighted the limits of a mechanistic approach, whereby a single universal theory is supposedly capable of solving all problems in all countries. Today, more than ever, we need new theoretical and practical models that can explain economic growth, national production and development in their interrelationship. This is a key challenge for the BRICS countries and the entire Global South. »

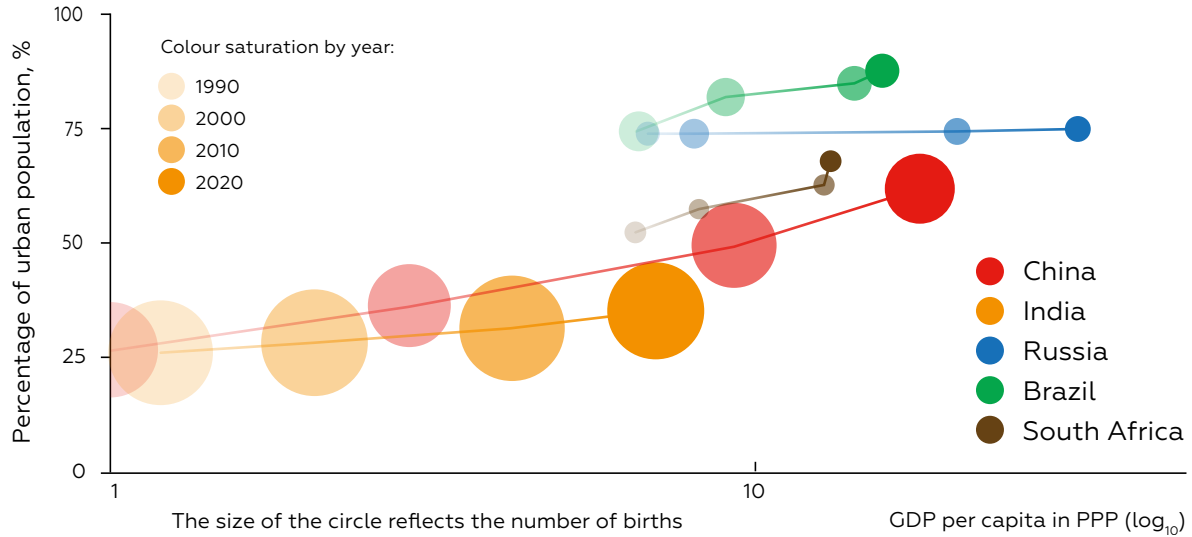
However, the world is changing rapidly. It is already clear that in the coming decades, growth will be driven by the countries of the Global Majority – those that until recently were on the periphery of the global economy. The charts showing urbanisation and GDP per capita in PPP terms clearly show how the leading BRICS economies have made a sharp leap from the lower left quadrant (low income, low urbanisation) upwards and to the right, towards the level of developed countries. Those who remain in the “lower corner” have significant potential that has yet to be realised. The size of the “bubble” in the chart (representing the birth rate) indirectly reflects the demographic potential of countries.

³ U.S. Department of Commerce (2025). U.S. International Investment Position, 4th Quarter 2024. Available at: <https://www.bea.gov/news/2025/us-international-investment-position-4th-quarter-and-year-2024>.

⁴ de Castro, J. (2025). BRICS-Global South Development and the Globalist threat. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue (Note: Hereinafter, we quote essays by participants in the Open Dialogue: New Platform for Global Growth, event held at the National Centre RUSSIA on April 28–30, 2025.)

Chart 4

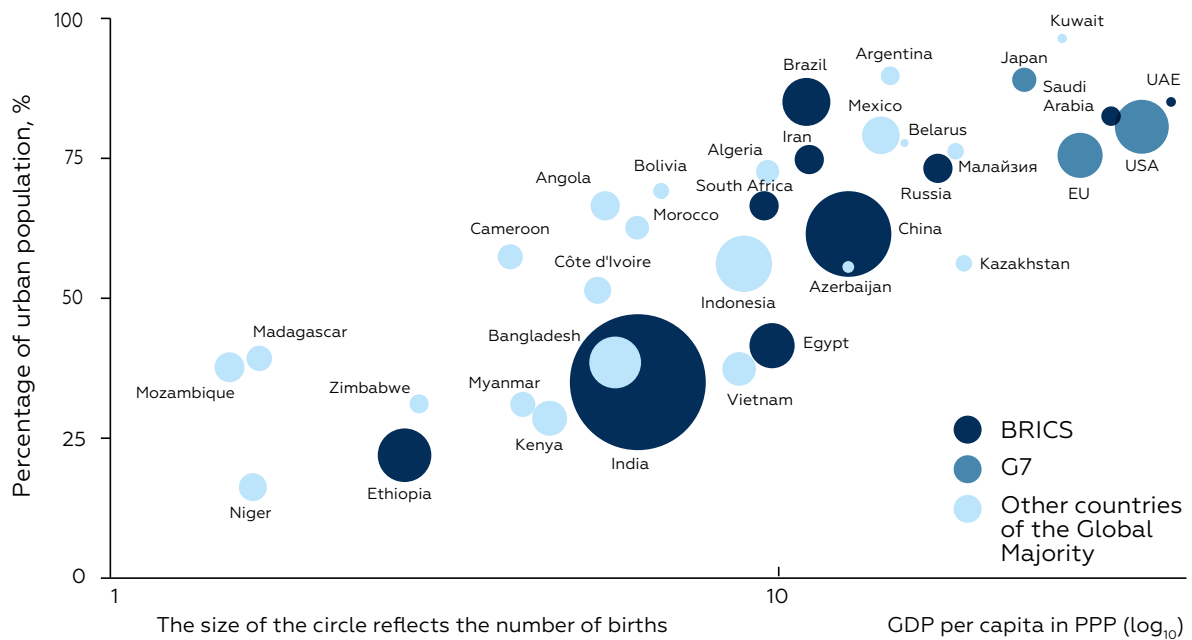
Economic performance of BRICS countries, 1990 to 2020



Source: World Bank.

Chart 5

Comparison of economic indicators for selected economies, 2023



Source: World Bank.

**Calistrat Atudorei⁵****Romania**

« The appeal of the BRICS model lies in the ability of participating countries to build mutually beneficial and fair relationships that enable rapid economic growth. It is important to emphasise that the BRICS+ format promotes development models based on respect for national sovereignty. In contrast, the neoliberal policies pursued by Western countries are geared towards supranational governance coordinated by international institutions. »

But what specific initiatives and projects can shape a new platform for the next wave of economic growth? How can leading countries hold on to their positions, and how can countries that lag behind catch up with global pace?

This will be explored in the following chapters.

⁵ Atudorei, C. (2025). The Multipolar Dynamics of the New Global Economy. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

CHAPTER 2



INVESTMENTS IN HUMAN CAPITAL: THE FOUNDATION OF THE NEW ECONOMY



Chapter 2. Investments in Human Capital: the Foundation of the New Economy

Introduction

Economic development should not merely be viewed as quantitative growth in indicators such as GDP, productivity and capital investment. The economy exists not for its own sake, but as a means to improve quality of life and broaden the opportunities and potential available to society and individuals alike. With demographic changes, technological advancements, and the shifting centre of global economic growth towards countries in the Global Majority, it becomes clear that human capital is now a pivotal element in achieving sustainable development. Investing in human capital (education and health care) and creating an environment that is conducive to self-fulfilment is not an expense but a strategically sound investment. Human capital can account for as much as 70% of long-term economic growth in high-income countries⁶. Public policy and corporate strategies must be based on the fundamental principle that sustainable economic progress is impossible without systematic and long-term investment in people. This is not only a matter of social justice, but also a pragmatic imperative that underpins the competitive strength and stability of national economies amid global turbulence.

Demographic Dividend of the Global Majority Countries

The growing role of the Global Majority countries, especially the BRICS+ states (full members and partner countries) in the global economy is largely driven by demographic trends. **The population of the Global Majority countries is set to grow in the coming decades, while that of developed economies will stagnate or decline.** The average annual population growth in Europe is projected to drop by 0.26% by 2045–2050, compared to an increase of roughly 1.74% in Africa⁷. This world's youngest continent with a median age of around 19 is expected to account for 25% of the global workforce by 2050⁸. The rapid growth of the working-age population – the so-called “demographic dividend” – gives a chance for accelerated economic growth, provided that investments are made in human capital.

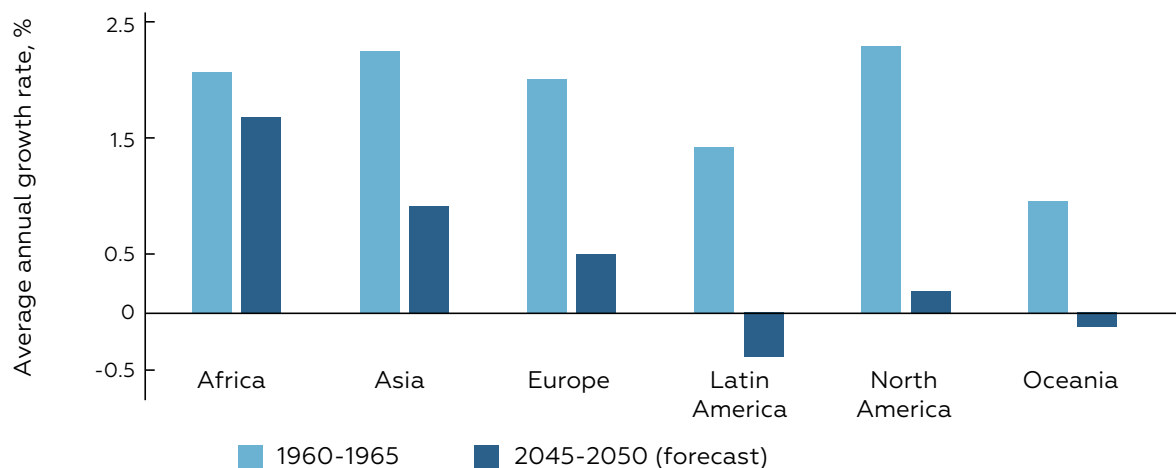
⁶ World Bank. (2019). Fulfilling the Potential of Human Capital. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2019/03/18/fulfilling-the-potential-of-human-capital>

⁷ International Monetary Fund. (2020). Global Population Trends Picture: Infographic. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2020/03/infographic-global-population-trends-picture>

⁸ UNECA. (2024). As Africa's Population Crosses 1.5 billion, the Demographic Window is Opening: Getting it Right This Time. Available at: [https://www.uneca.org/stories/%28blog%29-as-africa's-population-crosses-1.5-billion%2C-the-demographic-window-is-opening-getting#:~:text=And%20Stronger%20Effort-,.\(Blog\)%20As%20Africa's%20Population%20Crosses%201.5%20Billion%2C%20The%20Demographic,More%20Time%20And%20Stronger%20Effort&text=On%20the%20World%20Population%20Day,Prospects%20\(WPP\)%20and%20forecast.](https://www.uneca.org/stories/%28blog%29-as-africa's-population-crosses-1.5-billion%2C-the-demographic-window-is-opening-getting#:~:text=And%20Stronger%20Effort-,.(Blog)%20As%20Africa's%20Population%20Crosses%201.5%20Billion%2C%20The%20Demographic,More%20Time%20And%20Stronger%20Effort&text=On%20the%20World%20Population%20Day,Prospects%20(WPP)%20and%20forecast.)

Chart 6

Population growth by region until 2050



Source: IMF⁹.

At the same time, there is a risk that 56% of children born today may not realise even half of their economic potential due to inadequate access to quality education and health care, as well as digital inequality¹⁰.

In recent decades, many countries of the Global Majority have made progress in raising living standards.

The Human Development Index (HDI, ranging from 0 to 1) has grown steadily in almost all developing economies. Still, there is still much to be done to really tap into the potential of their people. An HDI of over 0.8 is considered very high. Right now, India's HDI is just 0.685, China's – 0.797, Brazil's – 0.786, and South Africa's – 0.741¹¹.

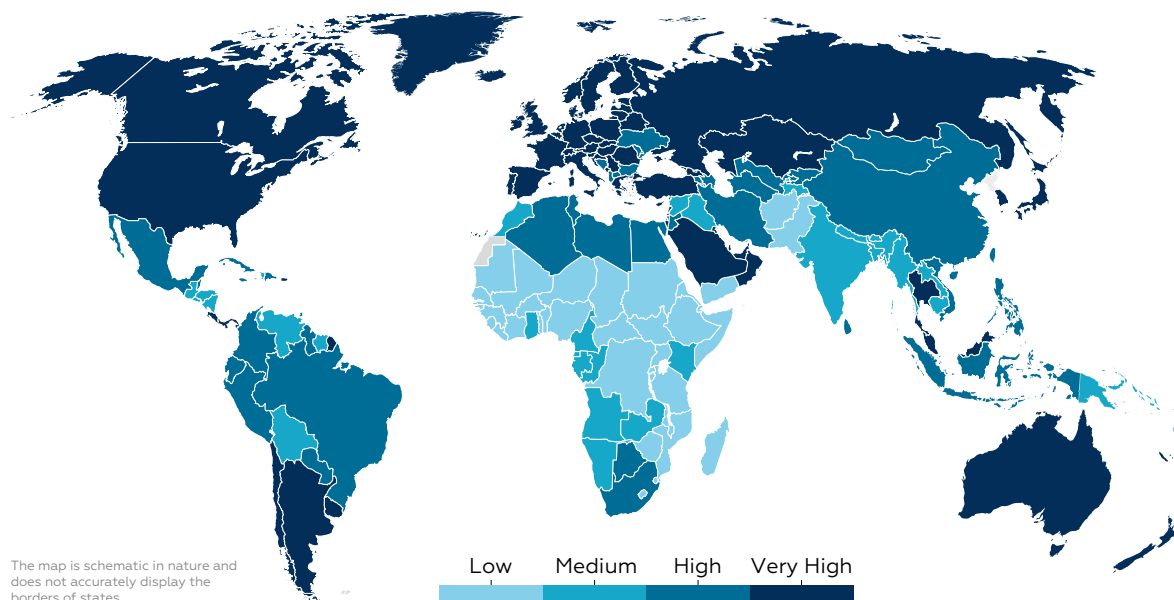
⁹ International Monetary Fund. (2020). Global Population Trends Picture: Infographic. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/en/%20Publications/fandd/issues/2020/03/infographic-global-population-trends-picture>.

¹⁰ World Bank. (2019). Human Capital Project: Frequently Asked Questions. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital/brief/the-human-capital-project-frequently-asked-questions>.

¹¹ UNDP. (2025). Human Development Report. Available at: <https://report.hdr.undp.org/a-matter-of-choices>.

Chart 7

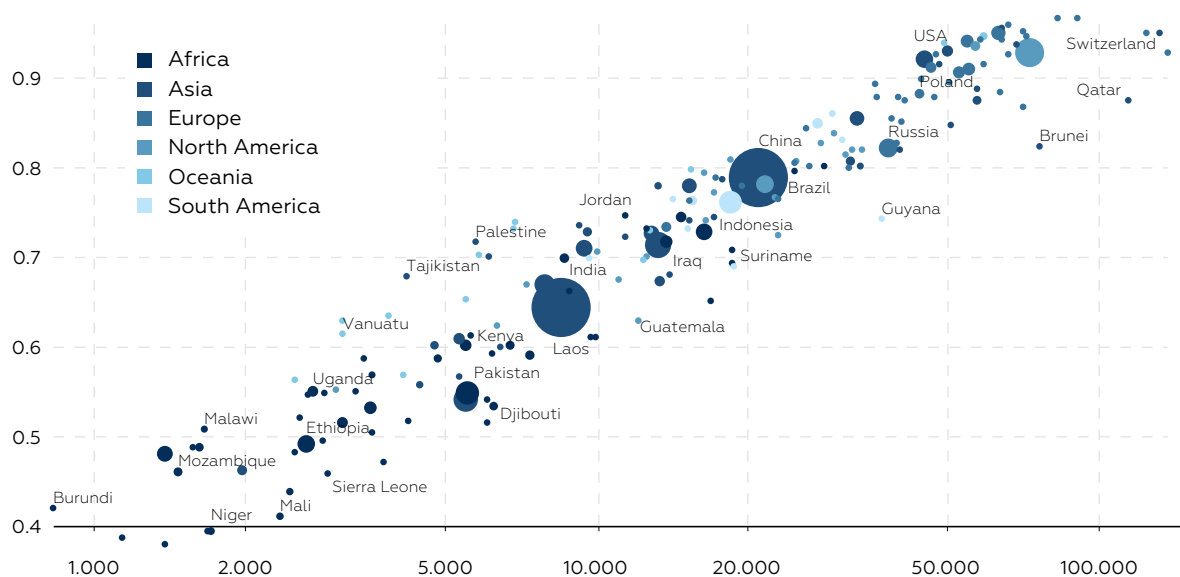
Human Development Index in countries worldwide, 2023

Source: UNDP¹².

The HDI is calculated based on indicators in three key areas: life expectancy and quality of life; access to good education; and decent standard of living. The index correlates positively with the level of economic development.

Chart 8

Correlation between Human Development Index and GDP per capita, 2022

Source: UNDP¹³.¹² Ibid¹³ Our World in Data. (2022). Human Development Index vs. GDP per Capita. Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/human-development-index-vs-gdp-per-capita>.

The countries of the Global Majority face two key challenges: maintaining demographic momentum and managing it in the most economically effective way possible.

Countries around the world (including the BRICS+ countries) have come up against the fact that traditional measures – tax breaks, payments, maternity leave – are not enough to get the birth rate back up to replacement level. It is clear that we need to find new, non-standard ways to tackle the demographic problem.



Brandon Burke¹⁴

United States

« To solve population ageing issues, increase fertility rates and maintain the demographic potential, we need to make parenting profitable. To this end, a particular device is suggested: a small generational tax enabling intergenerational resource redistribution. Each child's income from the age of 22 to 65 will be subject to a small tax (3–15%) which will be disbursed to each parent, primarily the mother in the range of the age of 50 to 65. The rate of small generational tax could be regulated by the state, much like how a central bank controls inflation. This would transform children into economic assets and make parenting an economically profitable profession with delayed benefits. »

Education is a key component of investing in human capital. The countries of the Global Majority are generally stepping up their education spending¹⁵. However, 2018–2021 saw an overall slowdown in public spending on education worldwide, with Latin America and the Caribbean witnessing per capita spending fall as much as USD90 in absolute terms¹⁶. In per capita terms, the countries of the Global Majority still lag behind developed economies. In low-income countries, residents are forced to pay from their own pockets to make up for the state's meager funding of education.

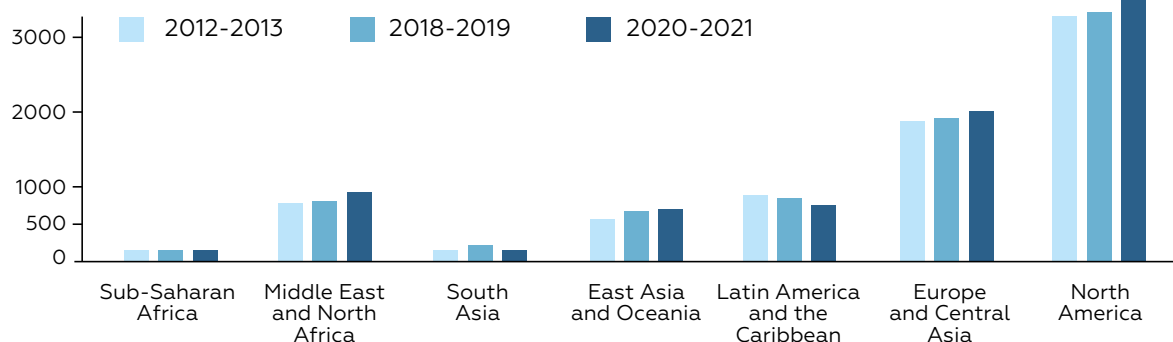
¹⁴ Burke, B. (2025). Small Generation Tax. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁵ UNESCO (2023). Education in times of crisis: responses to global challenges. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387042>.

¹⁶ World Bank data, calculations by the authors of the report.

Chart 9

Trends in per capita expenditure on education



Note: Data in constant prices, U.S. dollars for 2021.

Source: World Bank data, calculations by the authors of the report.

At the same time, the countries of the Global Majority are really into big educational projects that help build up human capital, keep them ahead in cutting-edge industries and make the most of their science and tech potential. There are 45 university campuses in Russia. A striking example is the Quantum Park project of the Bauman Moscow State Technical University, a multifunctional scientific and educational complex that was opened in September 2024 and includes clusters of photon, quantum and fluid technologies¹⁷.

In China's Hebei province, a new district called Xiong'an is being built as a high-tech and environmentally friendly city. Scientific centres are already up and running there, including research institutes affiliated with China Electronics Technology Group and China Mobile, along with the Tsinghua University Intelligent Laboratory and the Xiong'an Innovation Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences¹⁸.

One obvious way to make education more accessible is by using information and communication technologies (ICT). For example, Africa's start-up Eneza Education has set up a distance learning platform that sends SMS messages to ordinary mobile phones without internet access. This platform has attracted over 10 million students in Kenya, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and other countries, with 70% of the students living in rural areas¹⁹.

¹⁷ Interfax (2024). Government to Allocate 1.5 billion Rubles to Equip Quantum Park at Bauman Moscow State Technical University. Available at: <https://www.interfax.ru/business/994274/>.

¹⁸ Website of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2024). Xiong'an New Area: China's "City of the Future." Available at: https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202403/31/content_WS66096809c6d0868f4e8e5a2f.html.

¹⁹ Pioneers Post (2021). The Largest Classroom in Africa: How Text Messages Mean Millions of Children Can Learn <https://www.pioneerspost.com/news-views/20210104/the-largest-classroom-africa-how-text-messages-mean-millions-of-children-can>.

For regions with internet access, **digital education platforms** – ranging from private or national online portals to global MOOCs – offer a chance for developing economies to deliver knowledge to millions of their citizens.

Some of the most successful projects include India's SWAYAM platform²⁰ (part of the Skill India initiative, with over 2,000 courses in English and regional languages), China's XuetangX²¹ (over 3,000 online courses, mainly in the natural sciences, with 80 million users) and Russia's Stepik²² (over 2,000 courses, used as a platform for university MOOCs and school programmes).

Modern technologies make education not only more accessible but also more flexible, personalised and high-quality, ultimately helping train more competitive specialists.



Maszlee Malik²³

Malaysia



AI will enable to adapt curriculum in real-time, VR and AR technologies will allow to delve into complex topics, while platforms would include students from different countries. It is also important to align education with evolving demands. Countries worldwide are prioritizing TVET education, ensuring students acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical expertise, which is demonstrated by the case of Malaysia and Germany. STEM is expanding into STREAM, incorporating artistic and humanistic elements for a workforce that increasingly values both technical expertise and the ability to think beyond conventional boundaries. »

However, **the focus of the educational process should remain on the individual.** Technology should not replace teachers – artificial intelligence (AI) should assist them. AI can automate routine tasks such as test checking, progress monitoring, and providing recommendations on the curriculum, giving teachers more time for creative interaction and individual work with students.

²⁰ SWAYAM Website (2025). <https://swayam.gov.in/>.

²¹ XuetangX Website (2025). <https://www.xuetangx.com/>.

²² Stepik Website (2025). <https://stepik.org/>.

²³ Malik, M. (2025). The Transformation of Education: How Technology Will Change the Educational Process by 2045. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.



Mathew Maavak²⁴
Malaysia

« It is important to preserve the role of human in education when integrating digitalization solutions: face-to-face contact and mentoring cannot be substituted by AI algorithms. AI platforms should be based on an ethical approach and guarantee that personal information will not be revealed and exclude any bias of algorithms. »

On the other hand, it is crucial to guarantee that **learners use AI in a reasonable and ethically responsible manner**. A well-formulated query (prompt) can yield a summary of a book or scientific report in a matter of minutes, yet deep understanding and personal reflection will be lost in the process. This leads to “passive” learning – the student performs, the teacher transmits, and AI completes the task. In future educational programmes, AI should be used as a supporting tool, while the task itself should require creative input from students.



Maksim Luppov²⁵
Russia

« To prevent the complete “deactivation” of human involvement in the education process, it is proposed to redesign training programmes. We need to develop complex tasks that cannot be solved with a simple prompt. This will give rise to the “Renaissance” model of education – one focusing on creativity, critical thinking and fundamental knowledge rather than content overload. This approach motivates students and unleashes their creative potential. »

²⁴ Maavak, M. (2025). AI And the Quantum Leap in Education: Are We Ready? Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

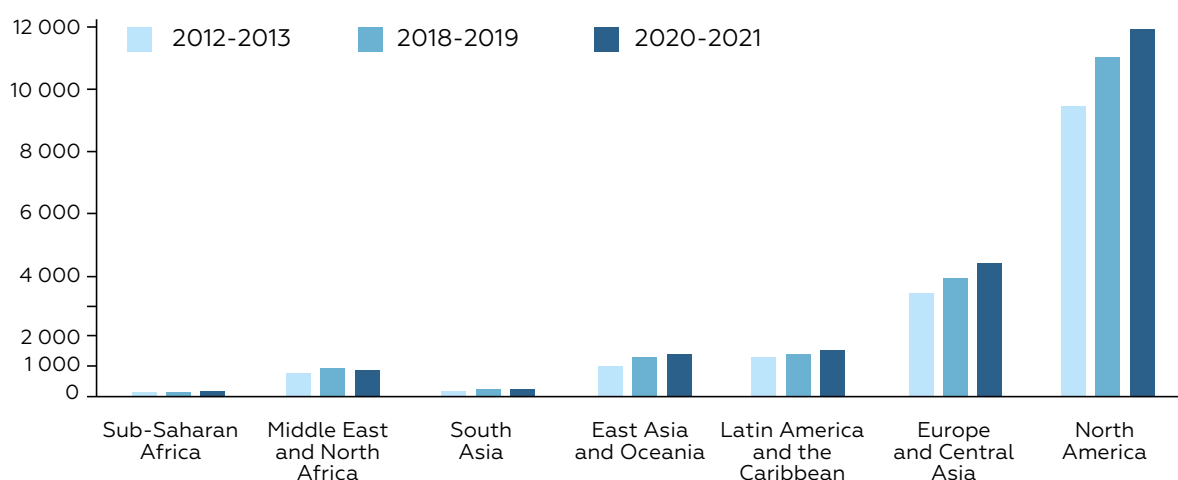
²⁵ Luppov, M. (2025). Modern Education: (De)Actorisation of Artificial Intelligence Systems in The Educational Process. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

Health care

The countries of the Global Majority continue to spend more on health care, but in absolute terms, this isn't enough. For example, in 2022, per capita expenditure in Europe and Central Asia was USD2,852, compared with a mere USD71 in South Asia, even though the share in GDP was three times lower (3.3% against 10.4%).

Chart 10

Trends in per capita health care expenditure



Note: Data in constant prices in US dollars for 2021.

Source: World Bank.

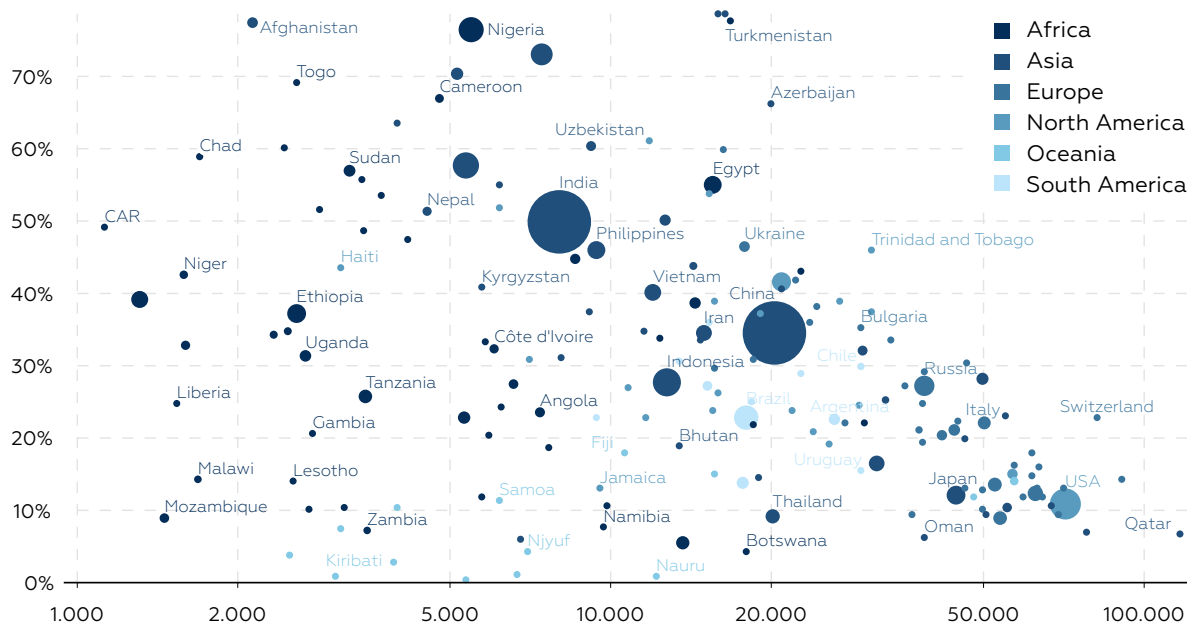
The countries of the Global Majority need to secure access to basic health services to an additional 4.5 billion people²⁶.

The current level of public health insurance is clearly insufficient, and the private insurance market in many countries is underdeveloped. As a result, citizens have to pay a large share of health costs out of their own pockets. This is quite a prevalent issue in several BRICS+ nations, such as India and Nigeria, where over 60% of health costs are borne directly by individuals at the point of treatment.

²⁶ World Health Organisation, World Bank (2023). Tracking Universal Health Coverage: 2023 Global Monitoring Report. Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/1ced1b12-896e-49f1-ab6f-f1a95325f39b>.

Chart 11

Correlation between the share of out-of-pocket medical expenses and the level of GDP per capita



Source: WHO.

In a number of areas, the countries of the Global Majority are taking the lead globally. India, in particular, is making big strides, ranking third in the world for drug production and accounting for roughly 20% of global generic drug exports. By 2030, India is set to take over more than 13% of the world's pharmaceutical market, with the industry growing at an average rate of 10% per year²⁷. Iran's medical industry is on the rise, too, with a number of medical equipment makers increasing fivefold to some 2,000 companies, and production volumes quadrupling²⁸.

In 2025, a large nuclear medicine centre was opened in Tehran, equipped with advanced equipment that provides high-resolution images with reduced radiation exposure for patients²⁹.

²⁷ IBEF (2025). Indian Pharmaceutical Industry. Available at: <https://www.ibef.org/industry/pharmaceutical-india>.

²⁸ Tehran Times (2024). Iran is top medical device manufacturer in West Asia: official. Available at: <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/498361/Iran-is-top-medical-device-manufacturer-in-West-Asia-official>.

²⁹ Jam Hospital website (2025). Nuclear Medicine Center. Available at: <https://jamhospital.ir/en/pages/display/139>.

In an effort to cut health costs and make up for the shortage of doctors and clinics, countries of the Global Majority are also eagerly embracing telemedicine and digital health. In India and the rest of South Asia, apps for remote health monitoring, appointment scheduling, and medicine delivery are gaining popularity, with rural areas really benefiting.

Telemedicine saves patients time and money, while also expanding the reach of preventive measures (e.g., online consultations on maternal health, vaccinations, etc.). An example how telemedicine can be used effectively is the Nand Ghar project run by Vedanta in India.

In 2021, a telemedicine model was launched as part of this project, connecting doctors (including paediatricians and gynaecologists) with rural residents via mobile medical vans and online consultations. This initiative has brought health care to over 6,300 villages across India, including the states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand³⁰. Another example is the use of AI tools for analysing and describing X-ray images in Moscow as part of the compulsory health insurance system. This will relieve the workload of narrow specialists, who in 99% of cases spend their time describing images that show no signs of pathology, leaving them more time to analyse deviations from the norm³¹.

Methods of disseminating medical knowledge are also crucial in today's world. While medical knowledge doubled every seven years in the 1980s, today it doubles every two to three months. Doctors struggle to adapt to new requirements, which leads to an increase in errors and patient complaints, while also undermining clinical effectiveness. An example of a solution that improves the efficiency of medical knowledge transfer is Russia's online digital platform MedBaseGeotar, with over 180,000 sources and integrated with medical information systems³².

³⁰ Nand Ghars by Vedanta (2024). Nand Ghars. Available at: <https://www.vedantalimited.com/nand-ghar-movement/>.

³¹ Vademecum (2024). Moscow Has Introduced a Compulsory Medical Insurance Tariff for the Analysis of X-Ray Images by a Neural Network Without the Participation of a Doctor. Available at: <https://www.vademec.ru/news/2024/04/24/v-moskve-vnedrili-tarif-oms-dlya-analiza-rentgenovskikh-snimkov-neyrosetyu-bez-uchastiya-vracha>.

³² MedBaseGeotar website (2025). Available at: https://medbase.ru/baza/?utm_source=infopartners&utm_medium=zdravdeti&utm_campaign=logo.



Guzel Ulumbekova³³

Russia

« Today, when the quality, accessibility and quantity of content on digital educational medical platforms are growing fast, the idea of a “health care training system” is becoming increasingly relevant. To keep this idea moving forward, we need to:

- Make professional libraries, including digital ones, a standard requirement for clinics.
- Raise funding standards for educational resources at the legislative level.
- Expand the list of knowledge sources at the legislative level that doctors can rely on in their professional activities, including educational platforms.

Develop nationwide strategies for disseminating medical knowledge, including at different levels of government (regional, national, etc.). »

Health care also covers disease prevention and healthy lifestyle: getting everyone into sports and active leisure, ditching bad habits, eating better and learning about health. Not only do these measures boost – leading to fewer sick days and higher energy levels among workers – but they also alleviate future burden on the health care system while directly improving people’s quality of life.

The countries of the Global Majority are **rolling out healthy lifestyle strategies at the national level**. China has adopted the Healthy China programme geared to raise the average life expectancy from 76 years in 2015 to 79 years in 2030. The programme is based on the findings of Chinese studies suggesting that observing five healthy lifestyle guidelines (not smoking, not abusing alcohol, being physically active, eating properly and maintaining a normal body weight) increases life expectancy by 8.8 years in men and 8.1 years in women³⁴.

³³ Ulumbekova, G. (2025). Improving the Professional Skills of Medical Workers As Medical Knowledge Doubles Every Year And Health Care Goes Digital. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

³⁴ Qiufen Sun, Dongmei Yu, Junning Fan, Canqing Yu, Yu Guo, Pei Pei, Ling Yang, Yiping Chen, Huaidong Du, Xiaoming Yang, Sam Sansome, Yongming Wang, Wenhua Zhao, Junshi Chen, Zhengming Chen, Liyun Zhao, Jun Lv, and Liming Li, on behalf of the China Kadoorie Biobank Collaborative Group. (2022). Healthy lifestyle and life expectancy at age 30 years in the Chinese population: an observational study. Available at: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(22\)00110-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(22)00110-4/fulltext).



Sofia Kaznacheeva³⁵

Russia

« The spread of bad habits, especially among young people, remains a serious issue, exacerbating demographic and socio-medical challenges.

The BRICS countries serve as a prime example of how governments, societies and businesses are increasingly embracing healthy living.

Most effective measures include excise taxes on tobacco products, alcohol and sweet drinks (along with limiting their advertising), banning smoking in public places and creating infrastructure for healthy lifestyles (accessible stadiums, parks, bike paths, gyms, places where people can get advice on healthy eating and physical activity). »

Labour Market of the Future: the Impact of Automation and AI

The rapid pace of artificial intelligence (AI) and industrial automation is bringing new challenges for human capital. Almost 40% of jobs in the countries of the Global Majority will undergo transformation due to AI³⁶.

With this in mind, countries have been getting a **head start on training** people by adding skills like data literacy, basic programming, adaptability, creativity, and entrepreneurship to education programmes. For example, in Nigeria, Egypt and Vietnam, machine learning hubs are being created with the support of international IT companies. This is particularly relevant in the context of youth unemployment, with an estimated 13% of young people (aged 15–24) worldwide remaining jobless³⁷. In South Africa, youth unemployment reached 49% in 2023³⁸.

³⁵ Kaznacheeva, S. (2025). The Economy of Healthy Lifestyles. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

³⁶ IMF (2025). AI Will Transform the Global Economy. Let’s Make Sure It Benefits Humanity. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2024/01/14/ai-will-transform-the-global-economy-lets-make-sure-it-benefits-humanity>.

³⁷ ILO (2024). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/publications/major-publications/global-employment-trends-youth-2024>.

³⁸ The Global Economy (2023). Youth Unemployment – Country Rankings. Available at: https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/youth_unemployment/#:-:text=Djibouti%20%202076,2023.



Nyambe Nalishebo³⁹

Zambia

« Africa's youth population faces numerous challenges that hinder their ability to reach their full potential. Initiatives which provide young people with entrepreneurship skills and business cooperatives formation will allow them to succeed. One such program is the Skilling Up Unskilled Population (SUP) initiative. The program has been highly successful, with over 1,000 young people graduating from the program and starting their own businesses. The development of practical competences helps to bridge the skills gap in various industries, transforming unemployment in a source of sustainable economic growth and development. »

Concerning employed young individuals, it is essential to devise management strategies that will allow them to fully realise their professional potential.



Nikita Tachilkin⁴⁰

Belarus

« Digitalisation and automation of production both reduce the need for physical labour and increase demand for young skilled professionals. However, the current employment system and corporate culture are poorly adapted to the values and motivations of young people. When choosing a profession, the members of Generation Z and Generation Alpha tend to focus not only on earnings but also on comfort, ecology, safety, opportunities for personal growth and the technological sophistication of the workplace.

Industry 4.0 smart enterprises, in addition to the digital transformation of work processes, will reap maximum benefits from creating an attractive environment for young people, with modern workshops, mentoring, gamification elements and a contemporary corporate culture adapted to the mindset of today's generations of workers.. »

Another focus is on training adult workers in new skills and **helping them upgrade or change their qualifications**. Government retraining programmes, often in partnership with businesses, help workers move into new areas as old jobs disappear. In 59% of sub-Saharan African countries, one in five adults attends advanced training courses (the highest rate among all regions of the world).

One of the most comprehensive national programmes for skills development is India's National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), with over 1,000 centres across the country and 40 million people having undergone professional retraining⁴¹.

³⁹ Nalishebo, N. (2025). Investing in Human Capital: Investing in People. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue, Bhutan, the concept of Gross National Happiness.

⁴⁰ Tachilkin, N. (2025). Investing in human capital: investing in people. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue, Bhutan, the concept of Gross National Happiness.

⁴¹ NSDC (2025). Available at: <https://nsdcindia.org/partners>.

It is also important to introduce modern approaches to migration management. In 2020, migration between the countries of the Global Majority accounted for 40% of global migration flows (1st place)⁴². Managed migration can be organised in the countries of the Global Majority in an equitable manner, ensuring it does not result in brain drain. The countries of the Global Majority faced with a declining working-age population (Russia and China) can conclude agreements with countries that have unutilised human resources. This can be done based on the principle of circular migration where people get training and internships in their home country and then work abroad for a set amount of time.



Soumya Bhowmick⁴³

India

« Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) among BRICS+ nations in priority areas, including IT, construction, healthcare and engineering, can enhance cross-border skills portability, ensuring efficient labour migration and market workforce integration. MRAs imply that credentials of professionals from one country can be recognized by another BRICS+ country. This will include skill mobility and facilitate employment. BRICS+ can develop an holistic approach harmonizing different levels of skills and education. Credential verification recognized in different jurisdictions can be ensured by transparent blockchain-based certification platforms. BRICS+ can invest in digital workforce recruitment and management platforms to promote further labor market integration and ensure a more equitable common workforce ecosystem. »

⁴² Schewel, K., & DeBray, A. (2023). Understanding Global Trends in South-South Migration. Available at: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-39814-8_8.

⁴³ Bhowmick, S. (2025). Overcoming the Labor Divide: Investing In Human Capital as the New Global Currency. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.



Conclusion

Economic growth only has real value when it leads to better lives for people, providing health, access to education, opportunities for self-fulfilment and confidence in the future. The economy should serve people, not the other way around. This is the cornerstone of sustainable and equitable development.

Investing in human capital is not a secondary task, but a strategic priority. It is an investment in the future that pays off not only in terms of growth figures, but also in terms of the quality of social institutions and more mature society that can adapt to changes. This approach takes time, yet it is precisely this that lays a solid foundation for lasting progress.

Should the countries of the Global Majority succeed in prioritising people within their economic models, they will not only be able to bridge the gap but also pave the way for a new logic of development – one in which digitalisation, industry and foreign trade are seen as tools rather than ends in themselves.

Human capital is not just a resource, it is the bedrock of the future. By investing in people, the countries of the Global Majority can secure their rightful position within the global economy – not as nations striving to catch up, but as architects of an alternative, more balanced model of global growth.

CHAPTER 3

→ INVESTMENTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT:
THE KEY TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Chapter 3. Investments in the Environment: the Key to a Sustainable Future

Introduction

For many countries of the Global Majority, achieving balanced spatial development and creating a comfortable living environment are pressing issues and critical components of human wellbeing. In this regard, a comfortable environment is not a set of isolated smart technologies or park areas, but a complex ecosystem where infrastructure, climate stability, inclusiveness and rational consumption combine to provide conditions for living, not just surviving. This is achieved through the synergy of key elements of spatial development. The first such element is people-centred cities with a focus on citizens' needs, second comes green infrastructure that transforms the environment into an economic asset. Other factors include accessible transport that connects people and territories, adaptation technologies mitigating the effects of climate change, and a circular economy that turns waste into resources. Finally, an inclusive approach is needed to ensure equal opportunities, coupled with business responsibility and conscious consumption to change the supply and demand paradigm.

None of these elements stands alone. Disaster management is unthinkable if not backed by a climate-resilient infrastructure, and an inclusive environment is hard to imagine without accessible transport.

However, to strike a balance between growth and sustainability, we need to rethink traditional approaches. The state, business and society must act as a single mechanism where urbanisation becomes a driver of prosperity rather than a source of crisis. Where profit is measured not only by financial indicators, but also by quality of life, and where technology serves not to exploit nature but to restore it.

This chapter analyses how systemic investments in the environment are shaping a new platform for global growth. From people-centred planning to sustainable tourism, each section looks at the stages of transformation leading to a future where cities and regions will become spaces of opportunity ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Urbanization and a Human-Centred Approach

Urbanisation acts as a catalyst for economic growth, making it easier to bring together resources, workforce and innovation. In countries undergoing rapid urbanisation, cities are becoming magnets for investment, spurring the development of industry, services and digital technologies. **While cities are home to 54% of the world's population, they generate as much as 80% of global GDP⁴⁴.** A striking example is the city of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which accounts for 13% of the country's population but produces over 85% of national GDP⁴⁵.

The countries of the Global Majority differ by level of urbanisation and, accordingly, by the level of economic benefits they have achieved. For example, in Brazil, with an urbanisation rate of over 87%⁴⁶, megacities such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have been driving national economy for decades, generating a large chunk of GDP and attracting foreign investment. And other countries such as Ethiopia, where the urban population barely exceeds 20%, are just beginning this journey. This is where urbanisation opens up opportunities for upgrading infrastructure, creating jobs and reducing poverty.

However, urbanisation also carries risks, both environmental and socio-economic, including exacerbating inequality. If not backed by sound investment in social and environmental infrastructure, rapid urban growth inevitably leads to overcrowding, air pollution, and polarisation. Air pollution is a particularly pressing issue in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, where 42 out of the world's 50 most polluted cities are located⁴⁷.

A people-centred approach to urbanisation, which puts citizens' needs at the forefront, demonstrates how cities can transform from battlefields for resources into areas focused on the quality of life of every resident.

This is what Mumbai is trying to do with its Smart Cities Mission programme by bringing smart tech into key areas like transport, health care, the environment, citizen engagement, government and architecture. The key here is digitalisation, which helps make city services more efficient, optimise resource use and cut costs.

⁴⁴ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (2016). World Cities Report 2016: Urbanisation and Development – Emerging Futures. Nairobi: UN-Habitat. Available at: <https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/WCR-2016-WEB.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Population Stat. Democratic Republic of the Congo: Kinshasa. Available at: <https://populationstat.com/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/kinshasa>.

⁴⁶ World Bank (2025). World Development Indicators. Available at: <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>.

⁴⁷ IQAir. COVID-19 Reduces Air Pollution in Most Countries. Available at: <https://www.iqair.com/ru/newsroom/covid-19-reduces-air-pollution-in-most-countries>.

Yet India is still in the early stages of rapid urbanisation. With its urban population expected to grow by more than 400 million by 2050⁴⁸, the country will need to build around 30 new megacities the size of Moscow to provide these people with decent housing.

China is also eagerly embracing smart city principles, with over 500 cities already rolling out projects to make themselves smarter. Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen are leading the way in this respect⁴⁹.

In Russia, the national project “Infrastructure for Life” aims to improve the quality of life in 2,160 key settlements by 30% before 2030 and by 60% before 2036⁵⁰.

Moscow is a leader in digitalisation, implementing over 300 digital projects every year across all sectors, including education, health care, housing and utilities, construction, urban economy and culture. These services save Muscovites some 100 million hours per year⁵¹.

The capitalisation of smart cities is expected to grow from USD648.4 billion in 2020 to USD6.1 trillion by 2030⁵². This increase reflects the mounting demand for technologies that can solve key challenges associated with urbanisation, from optimizing transport to reducing environmental impact. However, these initiatives cannot really work without due regard for social aspects such as housing affordability.

Urbanisation often makes it harder for different areas to develop at the same pace, pushing people out of rural areas, which can lead to a great many economic issues.

Low-rise construction, which not only relieves pressure on megacities, but also creates a family-friendly environment, could be the solution. This approach does not run counter to urbanisation, but rather redistributes its flow: the development of suburbs with accessible infrastructure allows cities to “breathe,” combining economic efficiency with quality of life.

⁴⁸ United Nations. (2018). 68% of the World Population Projected to Live in Urban Areas by 2050. Available at: <https://www.un.org/ru/desa/68-world-population-projected-live-urban-areas-2050-says-un>.

⁴⁹ Zarubejom.ru. (2025). China's Smart Cities. Available at: <https://zarubejom.ru/articles/umnye-goroda-podnebesnoj>.

⁵⁰ Government of the Russian Federation. (2025). On the Implementation of the National Project “Infrastructure for Life.” Available at: <http://government.ru/news/54893/>.

⁵¹ Vedomosti.ru. (2025), The Capital of Digitalisation. Available at: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/gorod/smartcity/articles/stolitsa-tsifrovizatsii>.

⁵² Allied Market Research. (2021). Smart Cities Market: Global Opportunity Analysis and Industry Forecast, 2021–2030. Available at: <https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/smart-cities-market>.


Igor Pilipenko⁵³
Russia

« Low-rise individual housing construction (IHC) is key to raising living standards in BRICS+ countries. Today, the proportion of small apartments in high-rise buildings is rising, which has a negative impact on the demographic situation, quality of life and housing affordability. The solution is to develop IHC and build medium-rise houses in suburban areas that offer more space for less money and are better suited for families.

Proposed measures include scaling up IHC through streamlining procedures for land allocation and ensuring connection to infrastructure. It is also necessary to create infrastructure (transport and social) in suburbs to make them comfortable places to live permanently and roll out preferential mortgage programmes. »

Investments in people-centred projects also drive economic growth by improving health, safety and social cohesion. These factors attract additional resources for innovation, setting the stage for a sustainable urban economy.

Green infrastructure

With urbanisation proceeding apace, green infrastructure has become a critical tool for survival. **By 2050, as much as 68% of the world's population will be living in cities, placing greater strain on ecosystems, resources and human health⁵⁴.** Green solutions – from parks and vertical gardens to drainage systems and urban forests – tackle systemic issues. Indeed, they bring down temperatures in urban heat islands by 2–5 °C, absorb up to 30% of CO₂, cut health costs due to improved air quality and make places more flood-resistant.


Serdar Rahymov⁵⁵
Turkmenistan

« Using eco-friendly tech in the smart city of Arkadag (Turkmenistan), which covers 950 hectares and can house 70,000 people, has cut energy use by 25% and CO₂ emissions by 10%. »

⁵³ Pilipenko, I. (2025). The Potential of the Housing Sector and Low-Rise Housing Construction for Improving the Standard of Living in the Russian Federation and BRICS+ Countries. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue (Note: Hereinafter, we quote essays by participants in the Open Dialogue: New Platform for Global Growth event held at the National Centre RUSSIA on April 28–30, 2025.)

⁵⁴ United Nations. (2018). 68% of the world population projected to live in urban areas by 2050. Available at: <https://www.un.org/ru/desa/68-world-population-projected-live-urban-areas-2050-says-un>.

⁵⁵ Rahymov, S. (2025). Green Infrastructure and Smart Urbanism: Integrating Environmentally Adaptive Technologies in the Spatial Development of the Region's First Smart City of Arkadag. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Integrating nature into the urban landscape is when ecology and economy go hand in hand reinforcing each other. Green infrastructure, including bio-corridors, smart irrigation systems and adaptive landscapes, helps cities deal with extreme weather and sets the stage for innovative business models, like ecotourism and bio-resource production.



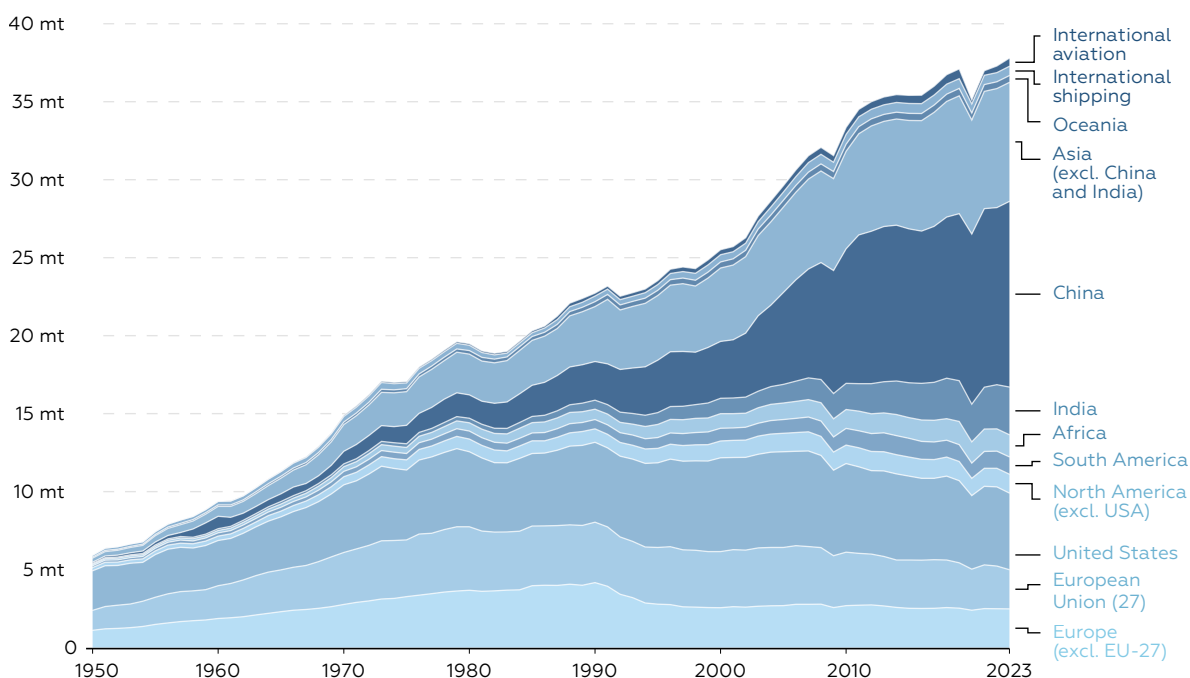
Alexander Vanyushkin⁵⁶

Russia

« The eco-cities economy clustering is a key mechanism for ensuring their scalable development. The creation of a self-sufficient economic system within eco-cities by forming clusters of related industries (e.g. agriculture, tourism, creative industries, medicine and healthy lifestyles), which complement each other and create local value chains, solves the issue of weak economies and low employment common to many eco-projects. Right from the start of the eco-city master plan, it is important to map out the industry structure and set up clusters. Other things to look at are waste recycling, renewable energy and some other eco-friendly solutions. Green financing tools should be used to cover the high infrastructure costs. The population should be limited (to 50,000–250,000 people) to maintain a balance between urbanisation and nature. »

Chart 12

CO₂ emissions



Source: Our World in Data⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ Vanyushkin, A. (2025). Eco-cities Economy Clustering as a Prerequisite for Scaling Their Development. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

⁵⁷ Our World in Data. (2025). Global Carbon Budget CO₂ and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Processed. Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions>.

Transport systems

Today, a well-developed transport infrastructure is increasingly vital for ensuring fairness and driving economic growth. Easy access to transport is a big deal in fighting inequality. It connects outlying regions to job-providing areas, reduces carbon footprint by shifting to eco-friendly transport and creates jobs..



Khushi Khushboo⁵⁸

Pakistan

« Well-designed public transport systems can reduce CO₂ emissions in cities by 50%⁵⁹. »

Transport connectivity among the Global Majority countries is currently way lower than that of the G7 countries, so it is important to invest heavily in transport infrastructure if we want to build a new platform for global growth.

As for the logistics efficiency of the Global Majority countries, only China and South Africa (sharing 19th place) made it into the top 20 of the World Bank ranking⁶⁰, with South Africa in 21st place, India in 38th, Brazil in 51st, and Russia in 88th. However, it is increasingly believed that the transport of the future will not depend on traditional physical transport links thanks to the rapidly advancing unmanned transport.

In addition to unmanned technologies, which will be discussed below in Chapter 4, **the countries of the Global Majority are increasingly leading the way in terms of sustainable and inclusive electric transport.** And we are not just talking about China, the world's leader in this respect⁶¹. The city of Dakar in Senegal has recently established a high-speed electric bus network, which serves 320,000 passengers and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 1.2 million tons over 30 years⁶².

Moscow is also keeping pace, having upgraded its public transport system extensively in recent years. The Russian capital has already replaced a third of its bus fleet with electric buses. It now has more than 2,300 electric buses, the largest fleet in Europe, which has already reduced CO₂ emissions by 190,000 tonnes and improved air quality for 12 million residents⁶³.

⁵⁸ Khushboo, K. (2025). Investments in Environment: Building a Sustainable and Comfortable Future. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

⁵⁹ Frontiers in Built Environment: The Role of Public Transport in Reducing CO₂ Emissions. Available at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/built-environment/articles/10.3389/fbuil.2017.00005/full>.

⁶⁰ World Bank. (2025). World Development Indicators. Available at: <https://lpi.worldbank.org/international/global>.

⁶¹ Bloomberg News. (2023). How China Beat Everyone to Be World Leader in Electric Vehicles. Available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-07-17/how-china-beat-everyone-to-be-world-leader-in-electric-vehicles>.

⁶² World Bank. (2024). Sustainable Transport Projects in Dakar. Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstreams/b28daa86-e61c-4890-9950-a13600388a6d/download>.

⁶³ Official website of the Mayor of Moscow. (2025). Modernisation of Public Transport. Available at: <https://www.mos.ru/mayor/themes/12578050/>.

Digitalisation – from smart route planning to contactless payment – not only lowers operating costs, but also makes cities more sustainable by mitigating the effects of climate change and growing urbanisation.

Climate adaptation

Of the 132 million people expected to slip into poverty due to climate change by 2030, most live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia⁶⁴. Making them less vulnerable is not just about adapting – it is also about getting precise, data-driven preventive solutions. The countries of the Global Majority are already working on such solutions.



Ramin Kazymov⁶⁵
Kazakhstan

« A look at climate data shows that temperatures in Kazakhstan have gone up by 0.4–0.5 °C over the last 30 years, which is more than the global average. Forecasts say that by the end of the 21st century, temperatures in the country could rise by 3–4 °C, leading to major changes in ecosystems and adding to existing water issues. »

But adaptation is only part of the equation. When it comes to sudden disasters, preventive technologies come to the fore. In India, where floods threaten millions of people every year, the rollout of an AI-powered forecasting system that covers over 350 million people is already showing impressive results.

In 2021, over 100 million alerts sent via smartphones and messengers helped reduce damage by 30–50%, saving up to USD4 billion in a single season⁶⁶. Each unit of data invested in the system has a multiplier effect, reducing the cost of emergency measures and stimulating the creation of insurance products at the local level.

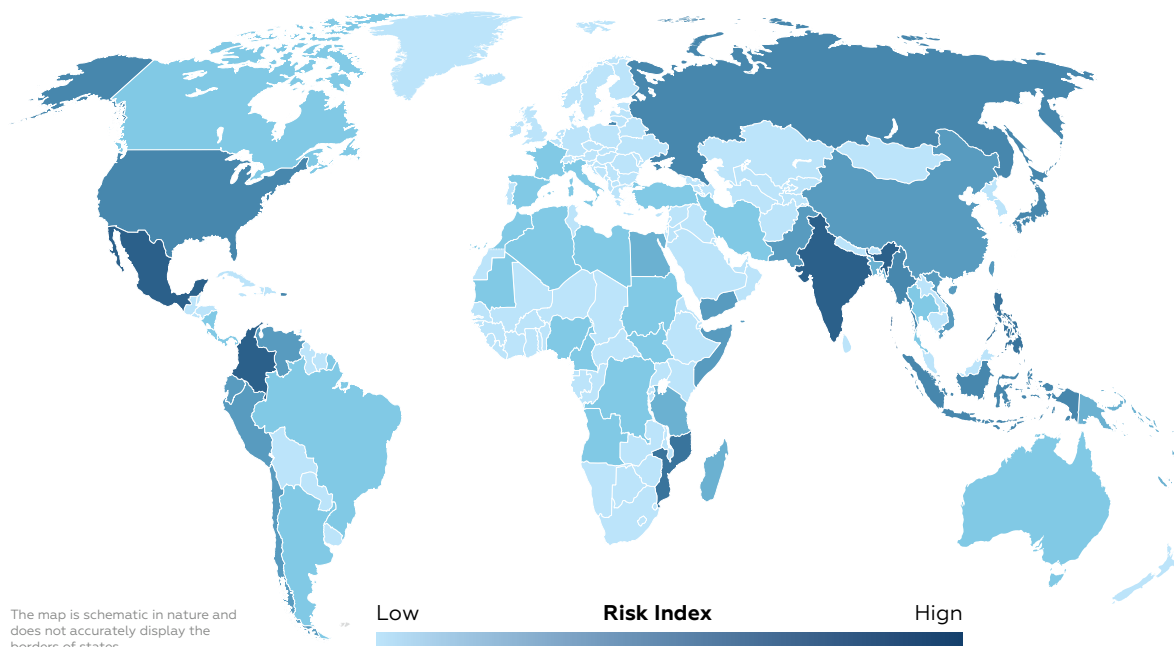
⁶⁴ World Bank. Health and Climate Change. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/health/brief/health-and-climate-change>.

⁶⁵ Kazymov, R. (2025). Adapting to Climate Change in Kazakhstan. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

⁶⁶ ArXiv. (2025). Flood Prediction Using AI. Available at: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2111.02780>.

Chart 13

Natural disaster risk index



Source: World Population Review⁶⁷.

In the Mexican state of Quintana Roo, mangrove forests prevent more than USD60 million worth of flood damage each year, protecting buildings, roads and tourist infrastructure⁶⁸. However, these figures only partly reflect the value of ecosystems: mangrove restoration also makes coastal communities way more socially stable by easing their reliance on pricey engineering solutions and bringing in new income from ecotourism. However, climate resilience is unattainable without restoring natural ecosystems. Another Mexican state, Veracruz, has launched a 20-year project to restore 2,100 hectares of mangrove forests, with 6.2 million trees set to be planted. The project is expected to absorb 1 million tonnes of CO₂ over 20 years⁶⁹.

It is estimated that investing USD1.8 trillion in climate change adaptation between 2020 and 2030 could yield benefits worth USD7.1 trillion, highlighting the critical role of preventive and green solutions in making the countries' economies more resilient.

⁶⁷ World Population Review. (2024). Natural Disasters by Country 2024. Available at: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/natural-disasters-by-country>.

⁶⁸ Menéndez Fernández, P., Losada, I., Torres-Ortega, S., Narayan, S., & Beck, M. (2020). The Global Flood Protection Benefits of Mangroves. Scientific Reports. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339831395>.

⁶⁹ Livelihoods Fund Impactful Investment in Mexico. (2025). Available at: <https://livelihoods.eu/new-impactful-investment-in-mexico-balancing-the-livelihoods-of-farmers-with-the-restoration-and-protection-of-mangroves/>.



François Ndenge⁷⁰

France

« While global climate initiatives focus on reducing emissions, Africa faces a unique challenge – a combination of energy shortages, rapidly growing population and historically low contributions to global emissions. The Climate Energy Sovereign Solutions initiative rethinks the continent’s climate policy with a focus on sovereignty and fairness. Special attention is paid to energy diversification (a mix of natural gas (600 trillion cubic feet of reserves)), hydropower (Grand Inga hydroelectric plant, 40 GW) and solar and wind energy. Another important thing is infrastructure reforms. In particular, this involves expanding national grids (currently 50% access to electricity), creating regional energy pools (WAPP, EAPP) and rolling out smart grids. It is also necessary to ensure climate justice (demanding compensation from developed countries for historical emissions and protection from “carbon colonialism”). »

It is also worth looking at some alternative views that question the accepted climate models. One theory says that human CO₂ emissions are not the main driver of global temperature changes.



Jason Steele⁷¹

Canada

« Solar activity, not anthropogenic CO₂ emissions, is the main driver of global temperature change. The extensive application of Kirchhoff’s law in climate models leads to an overestimation of the influence of CO₂ on the radiation balance. Instead, we need to focus on studying solar variability, geomagnetic activity and their impact on climate. »

Synthesis of Circular Economy and Conscious Consumption

With natural resources running low and landfills growing, the world needs to rethink its basic economic models. **The circular economy, which rejects the linear logic of “produce–consume–dispose,” and conscious consumption, which transforms demand, have become two sides of the same coin** – a strategy for survival. Every year, humanity generates 2.2 billion tons of waste, 55% of which can be recycled or reused⁷², thereby cutting down raw material costs, reducing carbon footprints and creating jobs.

⁷⁰ Ndenge, F. (2025). What Climate-Energy Policy Couple for Africa’s Sovereignty and Development Strategy Proposal for 21st Century’s Africa. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

⁷¹ Steele, J. (2025). Reassessing Climate Science: The Dominance of Solar Forcing Over Anthropogenic CO₂ Models. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

⁷² United Nations Environment Programme. (2024). Global Waste Management Outlook. Available at: <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/global-waste-management-outlook>.

Based on the UN's experience, circular models could generate USD4.5 trillion in profits by 2030⁷³, but this will not happen without a shift in consumer behaviour.

Important initiatives have already been implemented in China. Food waste aggregators have been installed in courtyards around Beijing. They collect food waste and, within 24 hours, process it into environmentally friendly compost, which is then used to fertilise trees and shrubs in courtyards. China accepts waste for recycling from other countries around the world. Used cardboard boxes are imported from the United States – 60% of paper products in China are made from recycled materials⁷⁴.



Ekaterina Afanasyeva⁷⁵

Italy

« A food bank has existed in Russia since 2012. Is this widely known? Do elderly people in need know about it? There is also another issue, a commercial one: for companies, it is cheaper to dispose of food than to donate it to a food bank or distribute it. Yet the first step has been taken: the Russian government has been instructed to exempt food and commodity donations from VAT until 1 June 2025. »

Conscious consumption has become a lever that is turning markets upside down. Companies that integrate environmental and social standards are achieving 20% higher annual revenue growth than their rivals⁷⁶. This highlights that ignoring such standards can mean missed opportunities for growth, while green brands tend to grow faster than the industry average.

Consumers are voting with their wallets for closed-loop products: from recycled packaging to services such as Too Good To Go, which has saved 250 million tons of food from landfill, cut methane emissions by 18% and returned EUR1.2 billion to businesses⁷⁷. This is not just a choice of products – it is a demand for the entire production-to-disposal cycle.

The synergy of these two approaches is shaping a new reality. **The circular economy transforms waste into raw materials for industry, while conscious demand speeds up this transition, making it economically viable.**

⁷³ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). (2024). Riding the circular wave: Entrepreneurs tackle the waste crisis, redefine economies. Available at: <https://unctad.org/news/riding-circular-wave-entrepreneurs-tackle-waste-crisis-redefine-economies>.

⁷⁴ Lindeal. (2025) How Countries Around the World are Getting Rid of Waste: Top 10 Best Examples. Available at: <https://lindeal.com/rating/kak-strany-mira-izbavlyayutsya-ot-musora-top-10-luchshikh-primerov>.

⁷⁵ Afanasyeva, E. (2025). Investments in communication. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

⁷⁶ McKinsey & Company. (2023). The Triple Play: Growth, Profit, and Sustainability. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-triple-play-growth-profit-and-sustainability>.

⁷⁷ Too Good To Go. (2025). Impact Report. Available at: <https://www.toogoodtogo.com/impact-report>.

Every investment in recycling brings triple benefits: lower product costs, preservation of ecosystems and stronger social justice. For example, repairing and reusing electronics helps reduce the extraction of rare metals while also creating local jobs.



Victor Osorio Salamanca⁷⁸

Mexico

« In Mexico, excessive exploitation of aquifers for agriculture and industry has led to the salinisation of water sources, the subsidence of cities and social conflicts due to unequal access to water. Reusing treated wastewater, collecting rainwater, and restoring ecosystems is the way to stop underground reservoirs from getting worse and create new economic opportunities, like in the electronics recycling sector. »

This symbiosis proves that economic growth does not have to come at the expense of the planet. Quality of life is no longer measured by the quantity of things we own, but by their durability and value for the future. When businesses adopt circular models and consumers support them through responsible purchasing, a system emerges where profit, ecology and society are no longer at odds with each other.

Inclusive Environment

In a world where 15% of the population are people with disabilities and one in four individuals will be over the age of 60 by 2050, fostering an inclusive environment transcends mere social responsibility to become a vital strategic economic imperative⁷⁹. At the macroeconomic level, **between 5% and 7% of GDP is lost due to the economic exclusion of people with disabilities⁸⁰**. Removing barriers for people with reduced mobility can saturate the labour market and reduce health costs. Inclusivity is not just about installing wheelchair ramps and tactile tiles – it is also about digital platforms, adaptive transport, and equal access to education.



Elizabeth Romanova⁸¹

Russia

« The inclusion of people with disabilities can bring significant economic benefits. These individuals can become active participants in the economy, driving business growth and increasing revenues. »

⁷⁸ Osorio Salamanca, V. (2025). Challenges of Aquifer Overexploitation: a Call for Equity and Sustainable Development. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

⁷⁹ World Bank. Bridging the Disability Divide. (2016) Available at: <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/123481461249337484-0050022016/original/WDR16BPBridgingtheDisabilityDividethroughDigitalTechnologyRAJA.pdf>.

⁸⁰ Centre for Financial Inclusion (2025). A Case for Financial Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. Available at: <https://www.centerforfinancialinclusion.org>.

⁸¹ Romanova, E. (2025). A Barrier-free and Inclusive Environment – Luxury or Necessity. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Investments in affordable and environmentally friendly mobility, including **adapting infrastructure for people with reduced mobility** and deploying smart transport management systems, reduce social inequality by ensuring unconditional access to education, health care and jobs. For example, almost all ground public transport in Moscow is low-floor, which makes it accessible for people with reduced mobility⁸². And the mos.ru portal, which now offers more than 450 electronic services, has become a digital platform that allows people to carry out essential tasks without leaving their homes⁸³. In Singapore, over 95% of pedestrian walkways, taxi stands and bus stops are accessible to wheelchair users and other people with limited mobility. The same goes for all lifts, escalators and toilets.

By creating an inclusive environment, economies invest in human capital development. Removing barriers opens up new markets, expands the workforce, stimulates innovation and fosters social cohesion.

Corporate Social Responsibility: Profit with a Purpose

In 2022, global ESG assets topped USD30 trillion and are expected to reach USD40 trillion by 2030⁸⁴.

In a world where consumers are willing to pay more for products from responsible companies, corporate social responsibility is becoming a key driver of competitiveness. Integrating ESG principles (ESG stands for environmental, social and governance) enables companies to reduce risks, attract green investors and ramp up customer loyalty. A key factor in putting these principles into practice is responsible supply chains. They are a tool that turns declarations about “sustainability” into real actions to prevent cases such as the use of child labour in cobalt mining⁸⁵.



Oleg Paroev⁸⁶
Russia

« It is important to invest in sustainable development in the regions where businesses operate. This involves creating a safe living environment for current and future generations, supporting health care and education, promoting various aspects of social and cultural life, addressing environmental issues, etc. »

⁸² New Districts. (2015). Maxim Liskutov: Almost All Ground Transportation in Moscow is Low-floor. Available at: <https://nov-okruga.ru/pochti-ves-nazemnyiy-transport-v-moskve-nizkopolnyiy>.

⁸³ CNews (2025), City Residents Used Electronic Services More Than 23,000 Times. Available at: https://www.cnews.ru/news/line/2025-05-07_boleee_23_tysraz_gorozhane.

⁸⁴ Bloomberg Intelligence. (2024). Global ESG Assets Predicted to Hit \$40 Trillion by 2030. Available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/company/press/global-esg-assets-predicted-to-hit-40-trillion-by-2030-despite-challenging-environment-forecasts-bloomberg-intelligence/>.

⁸⁵ The Guardian. (2016) Children as Young as Seven Mining Cobalt for Use in Smartphones, Says Amnesty. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/jan/19/children-as-young-as-seven-mining-cobalt-for-use-in-smartphones-says-amnesty>.

⁸⁶ Paroev, O. (2025). From Corporate Social Responsibility to Social Initiative. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

Corporate social responsibility is transforming traditional philanthropy into a strategy for long-term growth, where economic goals are achieved through the resolution of social and environmental issues. Companies striving for more than just profit not only change the world, but also move ahead of their competitors. Seven out of ten respondents said they would stop buying brands that put profit before people (71%)⁸⁷.



Natalia Ponomareva⁸⁸

Belarus

« More than 50% of company executives believe that business sustainability, environmental management and social responsibility are “very” or “extremely” important, along with other key priorities. »

Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism accounts for up to 10% of global GDP and 7% of global exports. By 2030, its share in the global industry could grow to 25–30%, meaning that one in every four travellers opt for holiday destinations that ensure their visit is eco-friendly⁸⁹.

The countries of the Global Majority are demonstrating that environmental responsibility is not at odds with the growth of the tourism industry. For example, China’s experience shows the **potential of tech solutions for sustainable tourism**.



Pan Peng⁹⁰

China

« The city of Qingdao faced a problem: an annual invasion of green algae (Enteromorpha). It came up with a smart solution, developing a closed cycle of “monitoring–collection–processing–tourism.” Using satellite systems and drones, the city improved the accuracy of algae spread forecasts to 92%. Their processing into bioplastics and fertilisers has shaped an industry with an annual turnover of USD210 million. This approach to urban environmental management through sustainable tourism development has been proposed as a model for other countries. It is all about getting eco-friendly ideas (like cleaning water and recycling waste) to team up with the tourism industry, which means using tech (digital and biotech), making institutional changes (like interregional cooperation and eco-compensation) and integration of industries (ecotourism, low-carbon transport). »

⁸⁷ Shchukina, D. A. (2024), Social Responsibility of Business in Modern Russia. Master’s Journal, 1, 18.

⁸⁸ Ponomerova, N. (2025). Toward Positive Impact. Corporate Social Responsibility as a Norm. ‘Investing into the environment’ thematic vector. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

⁸⁹ Global Wellness Summit. Tourism Towards 2030. (2011). Available at: https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/wp-content/uploads/Industry-Research/Global/2011_UNWTO_Tourism_Towards_2030.pdf.

⁹⁰ P. Pan (2025), ‘The innovative path of sustainable tourism as a driver of urban environmental management’, Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

Conclusion

To wrap things up, it is worth pointing out that investing in spatial development and the living environment is laying the foundation for a new growth platform that brings together economic efficiency, social justice and environmental sustainability. It is not just about creating safe and comfortable living conditions but rather about shaping an environment that helps people unlock their potential. A comfortable, inclusive and adaptive environment is not a side effect of growth, but its very basis.

Such investments are economically justified: green technologies and adaptation to climate challenges provide a high multiplier effect, generating up to four dollars for every dollar invested. In social terms, building inclusive infrastructure helps reduce inequality and strengthen cohesion, enabling all segments of the population to participate in the economy and society. From the perspective of innovative development, the countries of the Global Majority are already demonstrating how tech solutions, multiplied by cooperation, are paving the path to new standards of sustainable growth.

A systematic approach is essential for ensuring everything functions smoothly, with businesses, the government, and civil society collaborating seamlessly. Finding the right balance between profit, social responsibility and sustainability is not only possible – it is already in progress. At the next stage, the main task is to set up solid, long-term ways to fund and run these kinds of projects. This is the only way for cities and regions to become more than just growth spots, but real places where people can thrive.

CHAPTER 4

→ INVESTMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY:
ALIGNING GROWTH TRAJECTORIES



Chapter 4. Investments in Technology: Aligning Growth Trajectories


















Introduction

Advanced technologies hold enormous potential – not as an end in themselves, but as a means to help the countries of the Global Majority overcome systemic barriers and build an inclusive, sustainable development model focused on people and their wellbeing.

As emphasised in Chapter 2, people – or, more specifically, the realisation of their potential, health, education, rights and opportunities – must remain the ultimate goal of any development strategy. In this context, technology is not a luxury or a catch-up factor; rather, it is a key lever driving the development of a new platform for global growth, speeding up the achievement of goals that previously seemed unattainable or required decades of effort.

Table 1

Taxonomy of advanced technologies

Industry 4.0 Technologies	Green Technologies	Other Advanced Technologies
 Artificial intelligence	 Solar photovoltaics	 Nanotechnology
 Internet of Things	 Concentrated solar power	 Genome editing
 Big data	 Biofuel	
 Blockchain	 Biogas and biomass	
 5G	 Wind power	
 3D printing	 Green hydrogen	
 Robotics	 Electric vehicles	
 Drones		

Source: UNCTAD⁹¹.

⁹¹ UNCTAD. (2025). Technology and Innovation Report 2025. Available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2025_en.pdf.

Many advanced technologies are already well on their way to mainstream adoption and boast impressive commercial potential that will only grow over time. The market for advanced technologies was worth USD2.5 trillion in 2023, and, according to UNCTAD estimates, will grow sixfold over the next decade to USD16.4 trillion by 2033. Artificial intelligence technologies will make up almost a third of the market by 2033, or USD4.8 trillion⁹².

Technology as a Multiplier of Transformation

A distinctive feature of advanced technologies is their cross-cutting nature. They can affect many sectors at the same time, solving common challenges – from low productivity to climate vulnerability – in a systematic, rather than an isolated, manner.

In the **economy**, digitalisation, automation, and new production approaches such as additive manufacturing, robotisation, and the use of artificial intelligence help boost work efficiency, modernise industry and logistics, and make up for the lack of skilled workers, especially as the population ages. By automating routine tasks, we can shift human resources to more intellectual, managerial, and creative activities, and eventually reduce the economy's dependence on mass labour as such.

In the **social sphere**, technology is emerging as a tool for reducing inequality, opening up access to basic services – financial, medical, educational – for broad segments of the population, including in remote and rural areas. Mobile banking, telemedicine, distance learning and platform-based employment technologies can transform the social architecture of countries where access to basic rights was previously limited.

Finally, in the field of **sustainable development**, tech solutions are instrumental in overcoming extreme climatic conditions and resource shortages. Smart homes and cities, energy-efficient systems, sustainable consumption and resource reuse models all create fundamentally new living conditions, especially in densely populated megacities and climate-vulnerable regions.

⁹² Ibid.

Promising Areas for Investment

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

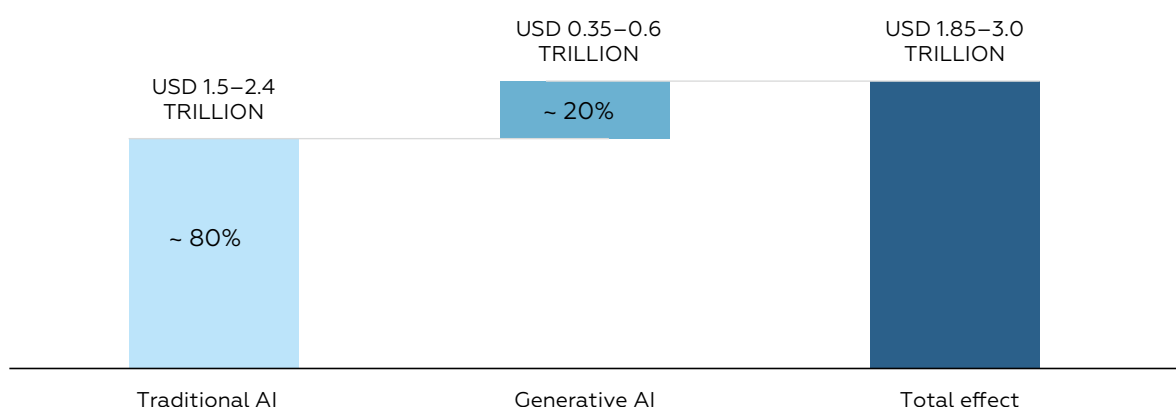
The development of Large Language Models (LLMs) and generative AI (GenAI) has sparked a new wave of investor interest in AI technologies. Thanks to more affordable training and inference for LLMs and the emergence of open-source LLMs⁹³, the development and implementation of AI-based services is no longer the exclusive domain of developed countries, as these services are now available to the countries of the Global Majority too.

Data shows that AI tools are being adopted at a much faster pace than previous technologies. ChatGPT, a big player in this space, accounts for over 80% of all traffic on popular AI-based services and already has a presence in 209 economies (more than 96% of all countries). Yet, more than 50% of total traffic comes from countries with average income levels, with India, Brazil, the Philippines and Indonesia among the top five in terms of ChatGPT traffic as of the end of March 2024.⁹⁴

Getting AI into more parts of the economy of the Global Majority countries will bring real benefits. For example, the financial impact of AI adoption in BRICS+ countries by 2030 is expected to hit USD1.85–3.0 trillion, including USD350–600 billion from generative AI (about 20% of the total impact of AI).⁹⁵

Chart 14

Expected financial impact of AI implementation on the BRICS+⁹⁶ economies by 2030, USD trillion



Source: Yakov & Partners.⁹⁷

⁹³ Inference is the operation of a pre-trained LLM on an end device.

⁹⁴ Liu, Y., & Wang, H. (2024). Who on Earth Is Using Generative AI? World Bank. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099720008192430535/pdf/IDU15f321eb5148701472d1a88813ab677be07b0.pdf>.

⁹⁵ Yakov and Partners. (2025). Generative AI in the BRICS+ Countries: Trends and Outlook. Available at: <https://yakovpartners.com/publications/gen-ai-brics/>.

⁹⁶ In this paper, BRICS+ refers to the five BRICS countries (Russia, India, China, Brazil, and South Africa) plus the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

⁹⁷ Yakov and Partners, Op. cit.

Almost 70% of the potential benefits of introducing GenAI in these countries go to six key industries: banking, retail, engineering, energy, electronics and IT.⁹⁸ The adoption of GenAI in the countries of the Global Majority will thus bring benefits not only to new industries, but also to traditional ones.



Francisco Vielma⁹⁹

Venezuela

« The looming energy transition and sanctions are forcing oil-producing countries such as Venezuela to revamp their production processes. In this context, AI is an optimal tech solution to address these issues and ensure more rational management of oil and gas resources.

AI can cut production costs significantly (up to USD5 per barrel, per estimates) and boost productivity by 25%. Plus, by improving resource extraction methods, AI can help increase oil reserves by 8–20%. »

However, the further development of AI requires a robust infrastructure to handle the growing demand for the computing power needed to train and run LLMs, as well as electricity to power data centres.

Particular attention is being paid to the development of cloud infrastructure, which offers computing power and storage with flexible access at a relatively low cost, making AI more accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). A number of Global Majority countries have already laid the groundwork for this. For example, four of the top ten countries for cloud infrastructure are in this group (China, India, Brazil, Singapore).¹⁰⁰

Equally important is the training and retention of qualified personnel who have the skills needed to develop and implement AI tech.

The countries of the Global Majority already have great human resource potential.

According to UNCTAD figures based on GitHub data, the three countries in the Global Majority with the largest talent pools for programming skills are India (around 13 million developers), Brazil (around 4 million) and Indonesia (around 3 million). The largest increase in AI developers in 2023 was seen in Nigeria (45%).¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Vielma, F. (2025). The Potential and Challenges of AI in Venezuela's Oil and Gas Industry in the Context of the Energy Transition. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁰⁰ UNCTAD. (2025). Technology and Innovation Report 2025. Available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2025_en.pdf.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

In addition, the development of AI and other digital technologies increases information security risks, including cyberattacks on IT infrastructure and the spread of disinformation. Many countries of the Global Majority, especially the BRICS countries, recognise this challenge, factoring it into their development strategies. All of the original BRICS countries have adopted or drafted their own strategies in this area, with the most detailed documents being those of China and Russia.¹⁰²



Arina Golikova¹⁰³

Russia

« In an era of big data, BRICS countries face various challenges that require comprehensive solutions and innovative approaches. By pooling efforts, sharing experience, and creating joint initiatives, a sustainable and secure cybersecurity infrastructure – one that will ensure stable development in the long run without the risk of losing data – is achievable. Promising practices in BRICS countries include programmes to raise public awareness, educational programmes to train people in cybersecurity, and cooperation within BRICS to develop common standards and protocols for cybersecurity and data protection. »

Low-Carbon Technologies

Investments in low-carbon technologies open up new economic opportunities for the countries of the Global Majority. The transition to low-emission energy sources such as solar, wind, nuclear and hydropower can help these countries diversify their energy mix. This also stimulates the creation of new jobs in the green economy, from equipment manufacturing to infrastructure maintenance (see also Chapter 3).

Solar power, including small-scale solar power technologies such as rooftop and facade solar power plants (SPPs), have already matured enough to be deployed anywhere in the world. In recent years, the countries of the Middle East have taken the lead in harnessing solar energy. For example, one of Saudi Arabia's flagship projects is the construction of NEOM¹⁰⁴, a fully sustainable city that will be powered exclusively by solar and wind energy.

Other countries of the Global Majority are also following suit. However, they still need to overcome a number of social, financial, psychological and regulatory barriers before the technology can be rolled out on a large scale.

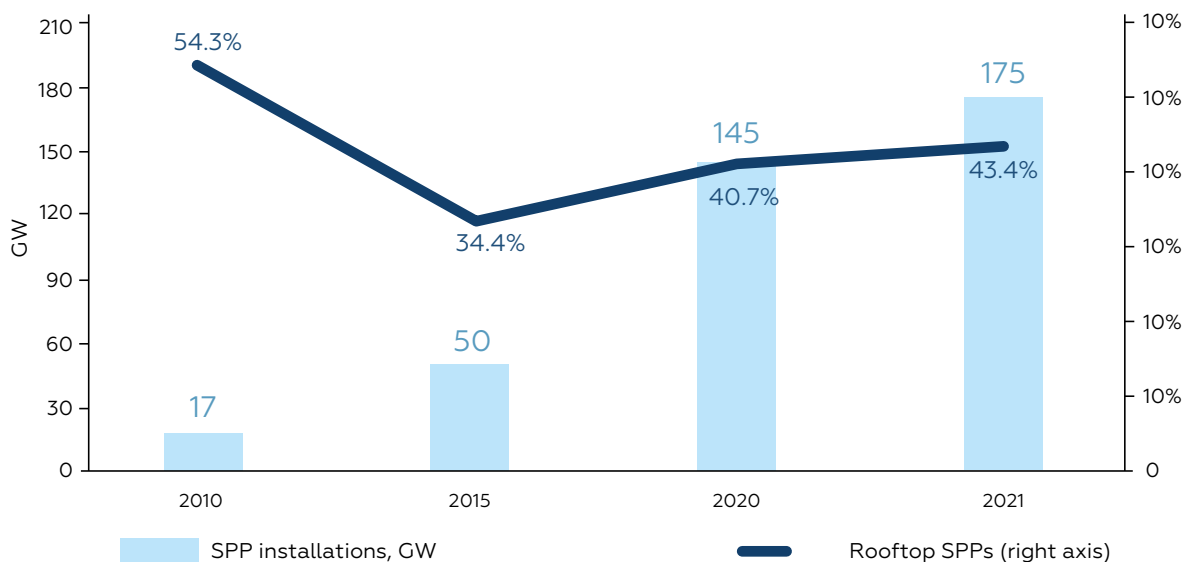
¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Golikova, A. (2025). Cybersecurity in the Age of Big Data (Based on the Example of the BRICS Countries). Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁰⁴ NEOM website. (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.neom.com>.

Chart 15

Trends in solar power plant (SPP) installation and the share of rooftop SPPs, 2000–2021



Source: IEA.¹⁰⁵



Vladimir Chuprov¹⁰⁶

Russia

« The use of rooftop and facade solar power plants can be an effective addition to traditional solutions related to the backup and management of generating capacities during heat waves. Not only will the massive rollout of small-scale solar energy systems make power supply more reliable in the summer, but it will also help create a comfortable environment in urban areas as the climate changes. »

Another promising area for decarbonisation is **hydrogen energy**. Hydrogen has high energy density, making it ideal for use in transport, industry and energy. It can be produced from various resources, including water, natural gas and biomass. The BRICS countries account for approximately 40% of global emissions, which makes their role in shaping the hydrogen market extremely important.

¹⁰⁵ IEA. (2022). Technology and Innovation Pathways for Zero-Carbon-Ready Buildings by 2030. Available at: <https://www.iea.org/reports/approximately-100-million-households-rely-on-rooftop-solar-pv-by-2030>.

¹⁰⁶ Chuprov, V. (2025). Introducing Rooftop Photovoltaic Technology as a Precondition for Creating a Comfortable Environment under Climate Change Conditions. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.



Konstantin Korneev¹⁰⁷

Russia

« The BRICS countries can become drivers of the global hydrogen transition, especially if they build up strategic cooperation. Joint initiatives will speed up the creation of a sustainable hydrogen infrastructure, strengthen technological sovereignty, and help shape global standards in the field of hydrogen energy. Cooperation among the BRICS countries will promote the exchange of information, knowledge and resources. This will help overcome some of the challenges associated with the implementation of hydrogen technologies, such as creating the necessary infrastructure for the production, storage, and transportation of hydrogen, regulation and standardisation. »

Digital Platforms

Business models based on platform solutions are emerging in all areas of life. Their widespread use frees people from inter-institutional relationships in the economy, making it much easier to get goods and services and improving the customer experience. Prominent examples include platforms for video communication, e-commerce, logistics, financial services, social networks, entertainment and more.

Although Western companies (such as Amazon and Google) are present in many countries of the Global Majority, **new platforms are also emerging that reflect local cultural, economic, and technological characteristics**. Moreover, local platforms effectively compete with Western ones, sometimes even displacing them. For example, Uber lost to local start-ups in a number of regions: Go-Jek and Grab in Southeast Asia, the Dubai-based Careem in the Middle East, Didi in China, and Yandex.Taxi in Russia.

Table 2

Examples of local digital platforms in countries of the Global Majority

Video communication	E-commerce	Logistics and delivery	Taxi
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yandex.Telemost Russia • Tencent Meeting China • Meet4U Brazil • Mitron India 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildberries Russia • Flipkart India • Jumia South Africa, Egypt • Takealot South Africa • Mercado Livre Brazil • Taobao China • Tokopedia Indonesia • Digikala Iran • Noon UAE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iFood Brazil • Yandex.Lavka Russia • Gojek Indonesia • Grab Malaysia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yandex.Taxi Russia • InDrive Russia • Didi China • Gojek Indonesia • Grab Malaysia • Careem UAE • Snapp Iran • TAP30 Iran

¹⁰⁷ Korneev, K. (2025). The Development of Hydrogen Energy: Current Achievements and Opportunities for Cooperation within BRICS. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Fintech	Social media	Digital entertainment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M-Pesa South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia • Alipay China • WeChat Pay China • Paytm India • GoPay Indonesia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VK Russia • Sina Weibo China 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tencent Video China • Douyin/TikTok China • Koo India • Aparat Iran

Source: compiled by the authors.

More narrowly focused platforms designed to address specific problems are also popping up. One such example is the Colombian platform EatCloud¹⁰⁸, which connects the food ecosystem (the food industry, supermarkets, restaurants, hotels, and agricultural producers) with the social sector (food banks and charitable foundations) and aims to redistribute surplus food to those most in need.



Ratmi Sari Machado Rodriguez¹⁰⁹
Venezuela

« Using cutting-edge technology, the EatCloud platform connects donors and recipients based on their location, product characteristics, collection points and the needs of specific groups (like breastfeeding mothers, children, the elderly, and so on). Cloud-based software identifies the best match between donors and recipients based on the data provided and the parameters entered. This enables the rapid collection of food products with an expiring shelf life and ensures that they are used while they are still of optimal quality. For this model to keep going, consumer companies, retail chains, local communities, and the social sector need to work together using a three-step approach: transforming every product into data; transforming every data set into an opportunity, and transforming every opportunity into an incentive for improvement. »

Platform solutions can also make companies in traditional industries more competitive. This can be done by creating ecosystems that include hi-tech industries.

¹⁰⁸ EatCloud Website. (n.d.): <https://www.eatcloud.com>.

¹⁰⁹ Rodriguez, R. (2025). Digital Transformation as a Strategy for Social Innovation. The Case of the Colombian Platform EatCloud. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.



Sviatlana Hrytsevich¹¹⁰

Belarus

« Today, traditional industries in developing countries mostly include medium- and low-tech manufacturing, which makes up the biggest portion of the economy in most developing countries.

However, despite the crisis, a key trend in the global economy is the growing importance of hi-tech industries, as well as the fact that developing countries continue to strengthen their positions. Traditional industries can be successfully integrated into the platform economy alongside hi-tech players by choosing a new way for companies to work together, based on a comprehensive ecosystem approach. In particular, it is necessary to build ecosystems in business, which will not only help traditional industries adapt to the changing environment, but also create new opportunities for their development and improvement in modern conditions. »

Platform solutions can be used to both fix problems at the country level and make cross-border interactions easier. One specific area of application is the optimisation of trade processes, including export-import, logistics and insurance operations, with the help of a digital blockchain platform.



Naila Mehrabova¹¹¹

Azerbaijan

« Against the backdrop of globalisation and advances in digital technologies, economic growth is largely shaped by how well countries can tap into international markets. But the potential of Global Majority countries is limited by their outdated financial and communications infrastructure. While possessing 60% of the world's resources, they control only 15% of financial flows. Developing a digital platform that integrates key players in international trade (manufacturers, logistics services, banks, government agencies, etc.) into a single digital space will promote sustainable economic growth and enhance the competitiveness of companies in the Global Majority countries.

Building such a platform based on distributed ledger technology (blockchain) will keep the economy growing and make companies in the Global Majority more competitive. »

¹¹⁰ Hrytsevich, S. (2025). Transformation of Inter-Organisational Interactions in the Platform-Based Economy. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹¹¹ Mehrabova, N. (2025). Digital Blockchain Platform for Export, Logistics and Insurance as a Tool for Growth and Integration. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Robotics and Unmanned Technologies

Advances in robotics and unmanned technologies in the countries of the Global Majority are paving the way for automation in industry, logistics, agriculture and other sectors. What is more, adding AI to robots and drones is taking automation to a whole new level.

Industrial robots with AI are already relatively common in manufacturing. AI helps them learn, make decisions, and accomplish tasks in changing situations. China is the leader in industrial robotisation – not only among emerging markets, but also globally. In 2023, it accounted for more than half of all new robots installed worldwide (51%, or 276,288 robots).¹¹² AI also helps improve efficiency in agriculture. In particular, AI enables drones to operate autonomously and adapt to changing scenarios, making them more efficient and versatile.

Some of the expected effects include higher crop yields (by 25% on average), lower water use (by 80%), more accurate fertiliser application (by 85%), less environmental pollution from wastewater (by 80%) and better soil health.¹¹³ Such AI-based solutions are particularly relevant for developing countries in Africa, where agriculture makes up a big part of the economy.



Michael Bernard Mwidete¹¹⁴
Tanzania

« In a world in the future where food production is going to require a major uplift to support an increasing population, agricultural drone technology is a necessity and a possibility. The capability offered by drones is aiding farmers in making intelligent decisions with the delivery of real-time actionable data, leading to higher yields and effective use of resources. »

Biotechnology

Biotech innovations are opening up new ways to improve the quality of life for people in the countries of the Global Majority by offering effective solutions in areas such as health care, agriculture and environmental protection.

Advances in genetic engineering, bioinformatics and synthetic biology are breaking new ground in addressing global challenges such as food security, treating previously incurable diseases, and creating cleaner production processes.

¹¹² International Federation of Robotics. (2024). World Robotics 2024. Available at: <https://ifr.org/ifr-press-releases/news/record-of-4-million-robots-working-in-factories-worldwide>.

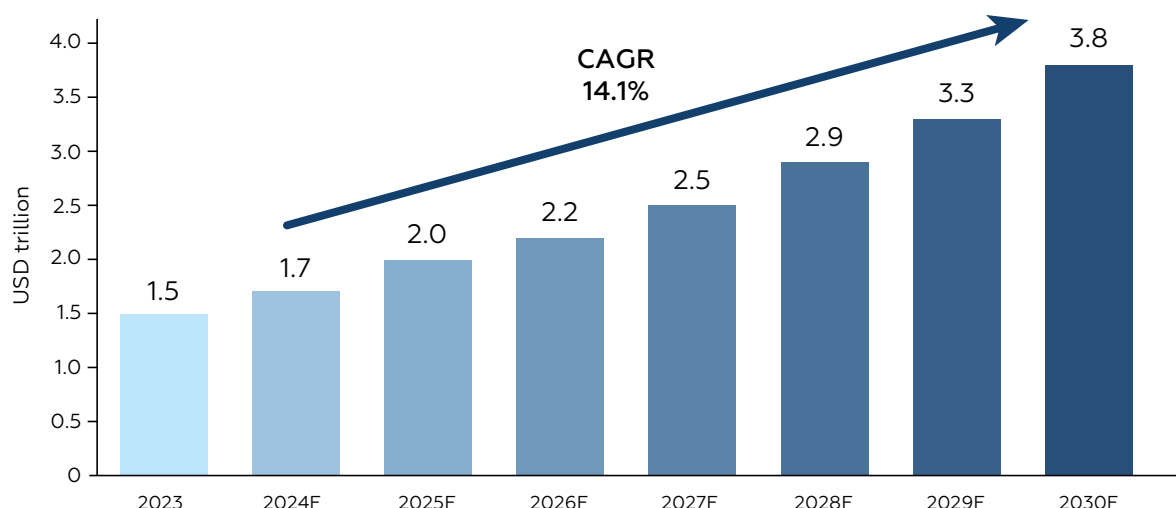
¹¹³ Hossain, M. A., Ferdousmou, J., Khatoon, R., Saha, S., Hassan, M., Akter, J., & Debnath, A. (2025). Smart Farming Revolution: AI-Powered Solutions for Sustainable Growth and Profit. *Journal of Management World*, 2, 10–17. Available at: <https://www.managementworld.online/index.php/mw/article/download/862/480/1277>.

¹¹⁴ Mwidete, M. (2025). The Use of Drones for Precision Farming and Sustainable Growth. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

The global biotechnology market is expected to reach USD3.8 trillion by 2030, with a compound annual growth rate of 14.1% between 2024 and 2030.¹¹⁵

Chart 16

Projected biotech market size, 2023–2030



Source: Grand View Research.¹¹⁶

The countries of the Global Majority are already leading the way in bringing biotech to farming. More than half (56%) of the world's biotech crop area (soybeans, corn, cotton, rapeseed, etc.) was planted by 24 developing countries in 2019, outpacing developed countries.

At the same time, three developing economies (Brazil, Argentina, and India) entered the top five countries, accounting for 90% of all cultivated areas.¹¹⁷ The countries of the Global Majority are likely to keep leading the way in growing biotech crops, which will give them extra commercial benefits and ensure food security.

Further growth is expected to come mostly from Asian countries. In particular, India, Pakistan, China, Myanmar (cotton), the Philippines (corn), Vietnam (corn), Bangladesh (eggplant), and Indonesia (sugar cane) are seen as promising actors in terms of increasing acreage.¹¹⁸ This is not all.

¹¹⁵ Grand View Research. (2023). Global Biotechnology Market Size and Outlook, 2023–2030. Available at: <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/horizon/outlook/biotechnology-market-size/global>.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Tome, K. G. N. (2021). Developing Countries Beat Industrial Countries in Biotech Crop Adoption. ISAAA Blog. Available at: <https://www.isaaa.org/blog/entry/default.asp?BlogDate=5/26/2021>.

¹¹⁸ Dionglay, C., & Romero-Aldemita, R. (2021). Biotech Crops Continue to Benefit Smallholder Farmers in Developing Countries; More Products in the Pipeline for the Philippines. ISAAA Blog. Available at: <https://www.isaaa.org/blog/entry/default.asp?BlogDate=11/24/2021>.

Some Asian countries (such as the Philippines and Bangladesh) are already trying out genetically modified rice that is rich in vitamin A (called “golden rice”), even though growing it for commercial use runs into long regulatory checks and pushback from human rights activists.¹¹⁹

One way to further the development of biotechnologies in the Global Majority countries is for the countries with the highest potential in this area to team up and get more actors involved. Russia and India are a good example of this kind of teamwork.



Debjit Chakraborty¹²⁰

India

« With Russia’s robust research infrastructure and India’s low-cost pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity, the two nations are well-suited to become world leaders in biotech innovation. Perhaps the most prominent case of Indo-Russian biotech cooperation has been vaccine development. During the COVID-19 pandemic, India was the largest producer of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine, with production agreements between the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and leading Indian pharmaceutical firms like Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories, Hetero Biopharma, and Serum Institute of India. Russia’s biotechnology research capabilities and India’s large-scale production capacities offer tremendous opportunities for co-investment in genetic engineering, bioinformatics, and precision medicine. »

International cooperation

Only a few Global Majority countries have enough resources to develop advanced technologies on their own, so international cooperation is still a key tool for getting there.

Promising areas for cooperation include:

- joint R&D: pooling scientific, technological, and financial resources for prototyping, developing, and testing new technologies to speed up their introduction and spread the risks among all project participants;
- interaction between technological universities: educational programmes, academic exchanges, joint conferences and joint research;
- open innovation: creating open data marts, expanding access to open-source libraries, repositories and models for a wide range of developers and researchers, etc.;
- shared use of infrastructure: providing computing power for training AI models as a service, etc.;

¹¹⁹ Alliance for Science. (2024). Bangladesh Still Stuck in the Past as Locally Grown Golden Rice Hits Markets in the Philippines. Available at: <https://allianceforscience.org/blog/2024/02/bangladesh-still-stuck-in-the-past-as-locally-grown-golden-rice-hits-markets-in-the-philippines/>.

¹²⁰ Chakraborty, D. (2025). Investments in Indian and Russian Technologies: a Strategic Shift in Global Alliances. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

- creating industry-specific technology alliances: pooling the resources and expertise of business, science and government to develop and roll out technologies, set industry standards and regulations, etc.;
- establishing preferential regimes to support tech development: creating special economic zones, technology and industrial parks;
- attracting private capital to fund tech development: growing the venture capital market, ensuring returns on investments in big infrastructure projects, setting up public-private partnerships, and more.

AI tech growth is a prime example of where international cooperation is critical.

As leaders in AI development, the United States and China are investing billions of dollars in infrastructure and attracting the best talent to improve models. The development of AI technologies in other countries, especially the developing countries of the Global South, requires the pooling of their scientific and technological capabilities to unlock their collective and individual potential.



Evgenii Osadchuk
Russia



Advances in AI can be a big help in solving important problems that most countries face. But to really get the most out of modern technologies, we need a big project that covers key areas of AI research and development and brings together resources from these countries.

Key stages of this project:

- pooling sufficient resources;
- agreeing on areas of research and their targeted financing;
- distributing individual stages of work among the most effective teams in different countries;
- coordinating international cooperation to keep things on track, optimising research teams, and checking interim results;
- creating an international online platform to present project results and involve all interested research groups, commercial companies, and state-owned organisations that are not officially included in the project.

This project will help the Global Majority countries make the most of AI technologies to tackle their social and economic challenges and boost their competitiveness in global markets.

One promising initiative to promote technological cooperation among the Global Majority countries within the BRICS framework is the alliance's New Technology Platform. »

One promising initiative to promote technological cooperation among the Global Majority countries within the BRICS framework is the alliance's **New Technology Platform**.

BRICS New Technology Platform

The idea to create a New Technology Platform first raised in 2024 during Russia's presidency of BRICS. The initiative is still being actively pursued in 2025.

Goals of the initiative:

- to ensure technological cooperation between the BRICS countries;
- to create a mechanism for sharing information and best practices between technology companies and organisations in the BRICS countries.

Promising work formats:

- joint scientific and research work;
 - educational exchanges and cooperation between higher education institutions;
 - joint development of technologies;
 - joint projects and industrial cooperation.
-

Conclusion

Investments in technology in the countries of the Global Majority is a powerful driver of economic growth and social development in the face of global challenges. Support for tech projects not only helps reduce digital inequality, but also creates sustainable development models that tackle issues like climate change, food security and access to basic services.

As suggested by these promising ideas in digital technologies, platform solutions, low-emission energy, hydrogen technologies, and biotech, the Global Majority countries could become major players in global tech innovation. International cooperation, government support and the attraction of private investment are key factors here.

In the long run, technological development in these countries could not only improve the quality of life for millions of people, but also help build a more fair and sustainable global economy.

CHAPTER 5

→ INVESTING IN CONNECTIVITY:
NEW LEVEL OF COOPERATION



Chapter 5. Investing in Connectivity: A New Level of Cooperation

Introduction

In the 21st century, a nation's economic development is becoming less about the amount of resource available and more about how effectively this resource is used. This is where connectivity comes in, be it through logistics, trade, digital products, finance, or culture. For the countries of the Global Majority, connectivity is not only a tool for accelerated growth, but is also a path to full engagement in global economic governance. Instead of fitting into existing systems that do not always meet their needs, countries in Eurasia, Africa and Latin America are progressively building their own systems of interaction. This is not a confrontation – it is parallel growth based on new pathways, platforms and institutions that reflect the real needs and priorities of the majority of the world's population.

Trade Connectivity

Regional Trade Growth

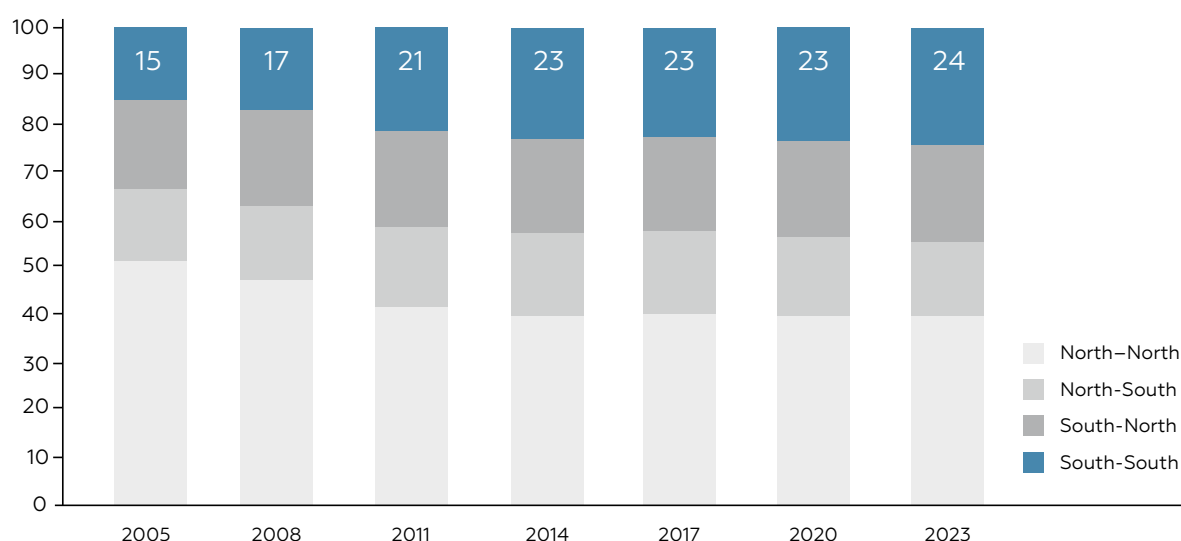
Trade connectivity is becoming one of the main drivers of economic growth in the countries of the Global Majority. Regional markets are expanding, logistics corridors are multiplying, and intergovernmental trade agreements are gaining importance. These processes are shaping a more flexible yet more resilient architecture of global trade, with South–South linkages at its core.

Trade within the regions of the Global Majority has shown steady positive growth over the last decade. In Asia, for example, intra-regional trade accounted for 58% of the region's total trade in 2023¹²¹, up from a mere 38% in 1995. Africa and Latin America, however, are not progressing as rapidly and still have considerable potential for expanding intra-regional trade.

¹²¹ UNCTAD. (2025). Merchandise Trade Matrix – UNCTADstat Data Centre. Available at: <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/datacentre/dataviewer/US.TradeMatrix>.

Chart 17

International Export Structure by Region, %

Source: UNCTAD database.¹²²

Not only does intra-regional trade strengthen economic autonomy, but it also promotes the **development of new production networks**. For example, according to the African Development Bank, intra-regional trade in agri-food products could grow by 574% by 2030 under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement compared to 2020 levels, provided that barriers are reduced to a minimum.¹²³ Cross-border agro-industrial clusters are already emerging in West Africa: for example, the “cocoa bean – processing – chocolate export” value chain links Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria.¹²⁴

Fragmentation and Selective Connectivity

As the global geo-economic situation grows more complicated, world trade is becoming more and more fragmented. Between 2022 and mid-April 2025 alone, over 18,000 new trade restrictions were introduced worldwide.¹²⁵ However, this does not mean universal deglobalisation, but rather **increasing selectivity** in trade based on strategic partnerships and regional ties.

¹²² UNCTAD. (2025). Merchandise Trade Matrix – UNCTADstat Data Centre. Available at: <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/datacentre/dataviewer/US.TradeMatrix>.

¹²³ Munyati, C., & Signé, L. (2023). How Africa’s New Free Trade Area Will Turbocharge the Continent’s Agriculture Industry. World Economic Forum. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/03/how-africa-s-free-trade-area-will-turbocharge-the-continent-s-agriculture-industry/>.

¹²⁴ World Agroforestry (2025). Strategy for Sustainable Cocoa Value Chain in West and Central Africa. Available at: https://www.worldagroforestry.org/sites/agroforestry/files/WCA%20Roadmaps_Cocoa_041.pdf.

¹²⁵ Global Trade Alert. (2025). Data Center – Monitoring Policy Changes That Affect Global Commerce. Available at: <https://globaltradealert.org/data-center>.

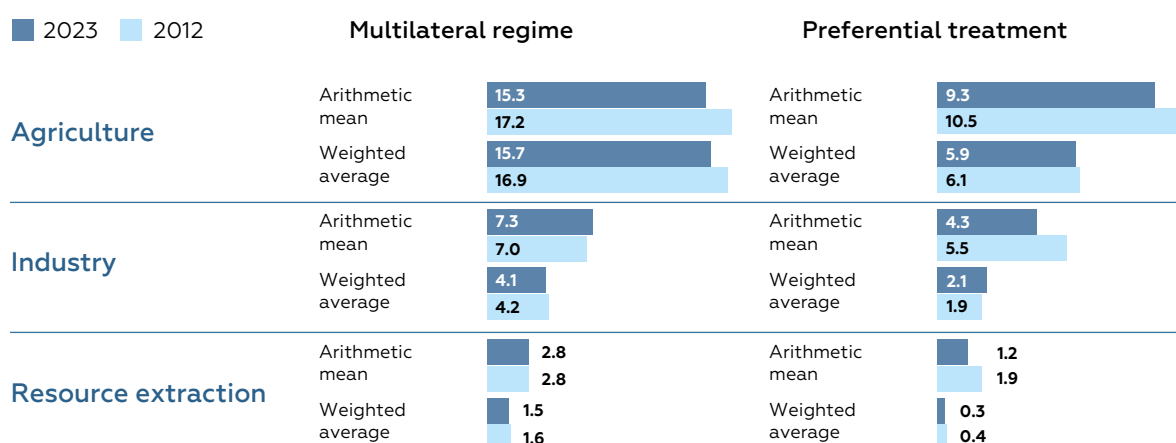

Ekaterina Gospodarik¹²⁶
Belarus

« Regional associations are instrumental in unifying and aligning the positions of governments on global issues, while also boosting mutual investment and trade. »

An increasing number of countries of the Global Majority are building trade relations based on the principle of “trust zones,” as part of regional blocs or under bilateral agreements. For example, the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in Asia brought customs tariffs between its members down significantly: over 20 years, almost 90% of goods will be totally free to trade.¹²⁷ Similar trends are observed within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which aims to eliminate 97% of tariff barriers between participating countries by 2035.¹²⁸

Chart 18

Comparison of Tariffs Within and Outside the Trade Union, Individual Industries


 Source: UNCTAD.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Gospodarik, E. (2025). The Russia–Belarus Union State: adapting to megatrends of the future digital multi-global world. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

¹²⁷ World Economic Forum. (2025). RCEP: How Will This Trade Agreement Shape Multilateralism? Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/03/rcep-how-will-this-trade-agreement-shape-multilateralism/>.

¹²⁸ Institute for Security Studies. (2025). Africa’s Free Trade Area: The AfCFTA Agreement. Available at <https://futures.issafrica.org/thematic/08-afcfta/#:~:text=Each%20phase%20is%20captured%20in,goods%20in%20a%20staged%20manner.>

¹²⁹ UNCTAD. (2025). Merchandise Trade Matrix – UNCTADstat Data Centre. Available at: <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/datacentre/dataviewer/US.TradeMatrix.>

Value Chains

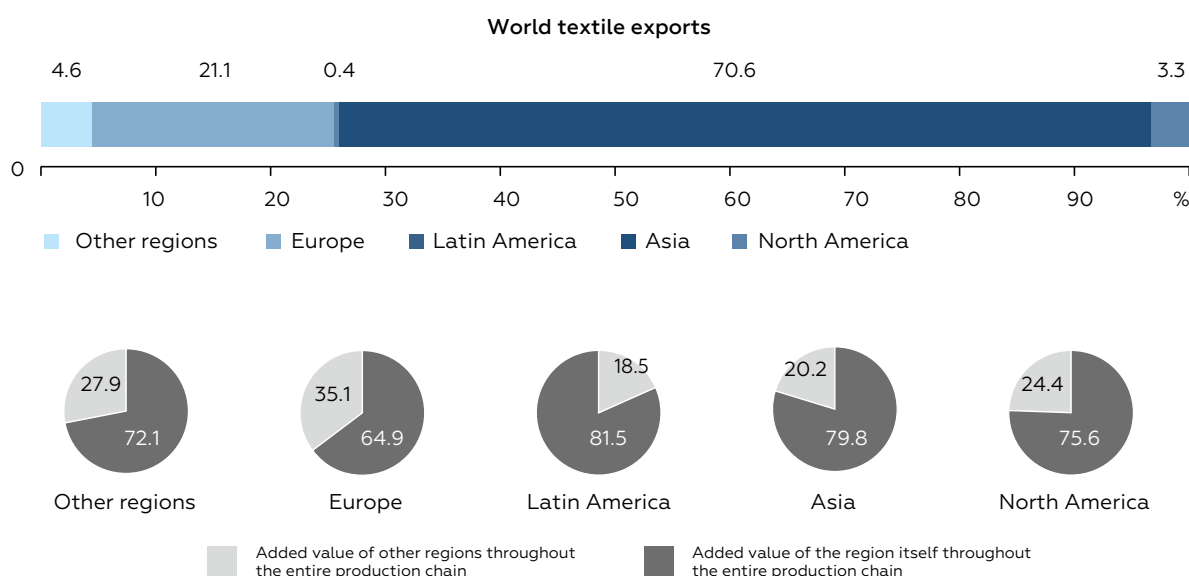
Today, economic interdependence between countries goes beyond just growing trade. It is also about how they work together to produce things. **More than 70% of world trade is linked to global value chains (GVCs),¹³⁰** where the production of a single product is spread across several countries.

For example, the production of a smartphone may begin with the extraction of rare metals in the Congo, continue on assembly lines in Vietnam, and end with packaging in Mexico. Such cooperation requires a logistics infrastructure, customs compatibility, harmonised standards and trust between partners.

This distribution of production is best seen in such spheres as electronics, textiles, automotive manufacturing and agriculture.¹³¹ The countries of the Global Majority, especially those in Asia, are leading the way in terms of integration into the GVCs. A good example here is the textile industry, where the countries of the Global Majority produce more than 70% of all final products, and supply up to 70% of the added value in the final products of other regions.

Chart 19

Share of Regions in Global Value Chains, Textile Industry, 2022, %



Source: WHO.¹³²

¹³⁰ OECD. (2025). Global Value and Supply Chains. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/policy-issues/global-value-and-supply-chains.html#:~:text=About%2070%25%20of%20international%20trade,cross%20borders%20%E2%80%93%20often%20numerous%20times.>

¹³¹ WTO. (2024). New Sectoral Profiles Offer Insights into Trade Linkages within Manufacturing Industries. Available at: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news24_e/miwi_25nov24_e.htm.

¹³² World Trade Organisation. (2024). Global Value Chains. Sectoral Profiles. Textiles and Clothing Industry. Available at: https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/miwi_e/gvc_sectoral_profiles_textiles_clothing24_e.pdf.

Participation in value chains increases the export growth rate of developing countries by 1.5–2 times compared to conventional trade in raw materials.¹³³ This makes value chains a key development strategy for the countries of the Global Majority. One way to build a higher-level value chain infrastructure is to create industrial clusters.



Murat Dudarev¹³⁴

Russia

« An international industrial cluster is not a territorial but an extraterritorial economic phenomenon, its main feature being cooperative links between enterprises in different countries regardless of their location. In other words, different parts of a common product can be manufactured in different countries and on different continents. »

Digitalisation of Trade and Transformation of Customs Procedures

Technology is becoming a key driver of trade facilitation. **E-platforms, digital documents, real-time freight tracking systems and customs automation** are reducing costs and border crossing times. The Global Majority are leading the way with many of these solutions.

In Kenya, for example, KenTrade has brought together more than 30 government agencies into a single one-stop shop system for import and export clearance, reducing customs clearance times from ten to three days.¹³⁵ In India, the government-run e-Marketplace (GeM)¹³⁶ has already generated USD50 billion in transactions, demonstrating how digitalisation can help fight corruption and cut transaction costs. In Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Single Window platform¹³⁷ enables the exchange of electronic certificates of origin and tax documents between countries, making things more transparent and reducing corruption risks.

In Latin America, the CADENA blockchain initiative is actively developing,¹³⁸ which is aimed at enabling information sharing among the customs administrations of Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico.

¹³³ World Bank. (2025). Measuring Exposure to Risk in Global Supply Chains. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/476361632831927312/pdf/Measuring-Exposure-to-Risk-in-Global-Value-Chains.pdf>.

¹³⁴ International Industrial Clusters: From Competitiveness Between Countries to Common Goals.

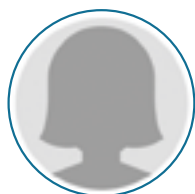
¹³⁵ Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade). (2025). Available at: <https://kentrade.go.ke/>.

¹³⁶ Government of India. (2025). Government E-Marketplace: Procurement Reimagined. Available at: <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/government-e-marketplace-procurement-made-smart#tab=tab-1>.

¹³⁷ ASEAN. (2025). ASEAN Single Window. Available at: <https://asean.org/our-communities/economic-community/asean-single-window/>.

¹³⁸ World Customs Organisation. (2025). CADENA, a blockchain enabled solution for the implementation of Mutual Recognition Arrangements/Agreements. <https://mag.wcoomd.org/magazine/wco-news-87/cadena-a-blockchain-enabled-solution-for-the-implementation-of-mutual-recognition-arrangements-agreements/>.

Digitalisation not only streamlines trade, but it also sets the stage for further integration – not just in terms of goods, but also at the institutional level.



Viktoria Rudit¹³⁹

Belarus

« To make the BRICS+ cooperation stronger, there is a plan to set up a free trade zone for services. This approach will enable participating countries to remove discriminatory measures, harmonise legal and regulatory frameworks, and create favourable conditions for the development of key industries. For example, the common market for services within BRICS+ could serve as a platform for joint projects in IT, education, and health care, strengthening the countries' positions in the global market and ensuring sustainable economic growth. »

Logistics Connectivity

Logistics is becoming a key factor in the economic integration of the countries of the Global Majority. Without an efficient, sustainable and modern logistics system, it is impossible to deepen intraregional trade and integrate into global value chains.

Large logistics hubs are already the prerogative of this group of countries. Of the 100 largest ports in the world, 68 are located in the countries of the Global Majority, which underscores their leading role in world trade.¹⁴⁰

However, the events of the last decade have shown how vulnerable global logistics is to geopolitical and climate shocks. The stranding of the Ever Given in the Suez Canal, sanctions, piracy – all this is forcing countries and companies to look for more flexible and sustainable logistics solutions.

¹³⁹ Rudit, V. (2025). Reducing Barriers to International Trade in Services – the Opportunity of the Century? Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

¹⁴⁰ Lloyd's List. (2024). One Hundred Ports 2024. Available at: <https://www.lloydslist.com/one-hundred-container-ports-2024>.



Younes Bennane¹⁴¹

Morocco

« The vulnerability of traditional routes (the Suez and Panama canals) highlights the need for alternatives. The Suez Canal, which handles 12% of global maritime cargo (8% of global GDP), has faced numerous crises, such as the grounding of the Ever Given container ship in 2021. The Panama Canal, in turn, suffers from droughts that limit its capacity. The combination of the Northern Sea Route and the Port of Dakhla has the potential to change global trade flows but success depends on the resolution of infrastructural and geopolitical issues. Backed by the Belt and Road Initiative and cooperation between countries, this corridor could become a new hub for global trade by 2050. »

In response, some countries of the Global Majority are developing **alternative routes** and stepping up investment in their own ports, railways and warehouses. For example, Tanzania is actively developing the port of Dar es Salaam as an alternative to the busy port of Mombasa.¹⁴² And India is pushing the PM Gati Shakti initiative to fast-track transport infrastructure coordination at the federal and regional levels.¹⁴³

Individual infrastructure initiatives are already bearing fruit. China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative has already given a boost infrastructure development in 149 countries.¹⁴⁴ The cumulative level of investment in infrastructure attracted by Belt and Road projects is estimated at USD1.2 trillion.¹⁴⁵



Suman Sonkar¹⁴⁶

India

« The INSTC (International North–South Transport Corridor) and BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) serve as strategic transport linkages aimed at enhancing economic and trade connectivity between the Global South and Global East. Russia and China spearhead these initiatives, while Brazil, India, and South Africa actively contribute to a more balanced global order through improved logistics, greater market access, and strengthened trade ties. »

¹⁴¹ Bennane, Y., & Haouata, S. (2025). The Northern Sea Route and The New Transcontinental Corridor: A Strategic Vision to Link China, Russia and Africa Via the Dakhla Atlantic Port. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁴² Food Business Africa. (2025). Tanzania to Position Dar Tea Auction as a Cost-Sensitive Alternative to Mombasa. Available at: <https://www.foodbusinessafrica.com/tanzania-to-position-recently-launched-dar-tea-auction-as-a-cost-sensitive-alternative-to-mombasa/>.

¹⁴³ Government of India. (2025). PM Gati Shakti – National Master Plan for Multi-Modal Connectivity. Available at: <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/pm-gati-shakti-national-master-plan-multi-modal-connectivity>.

¹⁴⁴ Green Finance & Development Centre. (2025). Countries of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Available at: <https://greenfdc.org/countries-of-the-belt-and-road-initiative-bri/>.

¹⁴⁵ <https://greenfdc.org/china-belt-and-road-initiative-bri-investment-report-2024/>.

¹⁴⁶ Sonkar, S. (2025). Strengthening BRICS by Connecting the Global South and Global East through INSTC and BRI. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

**Faisal Javaid¹⁴⁷****Pakistan**

« The development of new logistics routes has gained strategic importance, particularly in the Global South and East, where nations are actively working to overcome geographical and infrastructural constraints. One of the most significant initiatives in this regard is the International Transport Corridor spanning Belarus-Russia-Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan. This corridor represents a transformative step in enhancing trade, infrastructure, and economic interdependence among these regions. »

**Subeom Choi¹⁴⁸****South Korea**

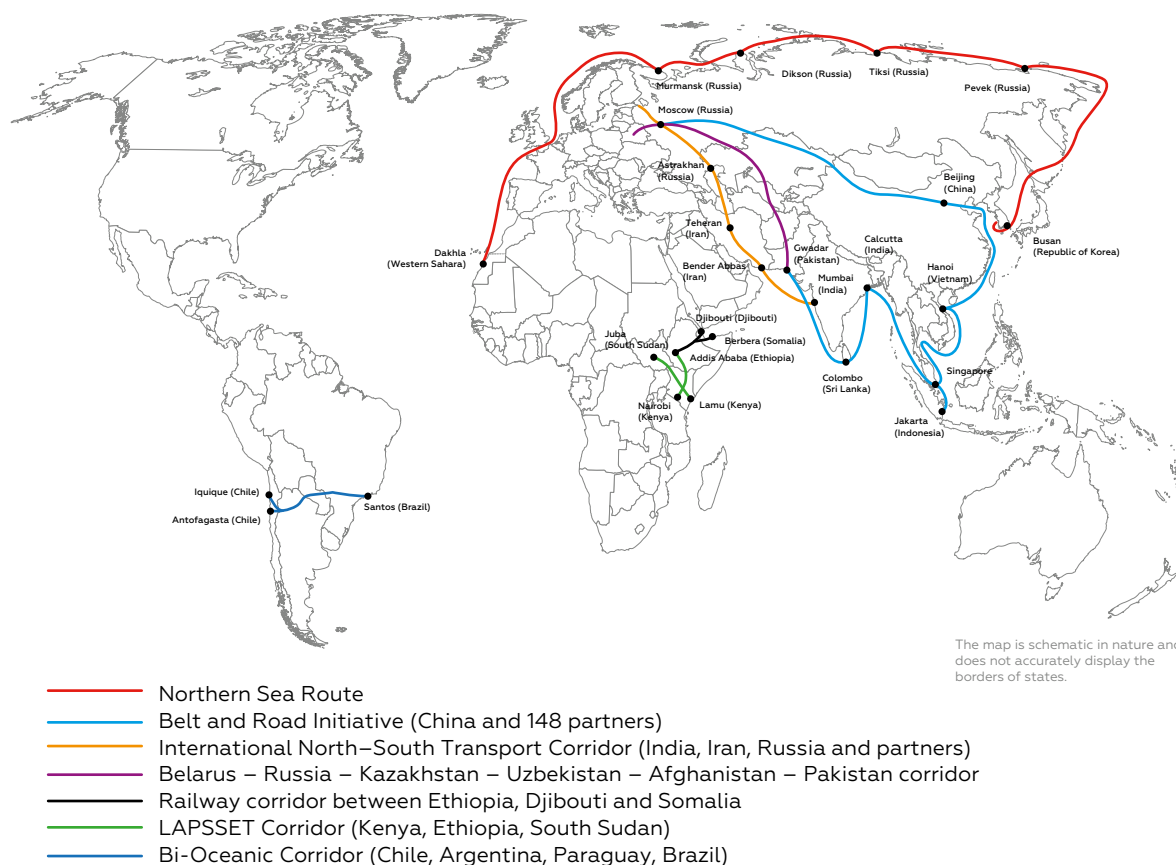
« The Northern Sea Route (NSR) is emerging as a critical new maritime pathway capable of overcoming the limitations of traditional routes and realizing both economic efficiency and strategic value. In particular, the NSR is increasingly recognized as a strategically and economically significant maritime transport corridor connecting Asia and Europe. With sufficient technological advancements, infrastructure improvements, and robust international cooperation in environmental protection, the NSR has the potential to dramatically enhance global trade efficiency and competitiveness, ushering in transformative changes to the international shipping and logistics industries. Looking ahead, comprehensive policy support, technological innovation, and expanded international cooperation will play decisive roles in establishing the NSR as a central axis of future global maritime commerce. »

¹⁴⁷ Javaid, F. (2025). New Logistics Routes in the Global South and East: Strengthening North-South Regional Connectivity. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁴⁸ Choi, S. (2025). Opportunities and Challenges of Northern Sea Route (NSR): The Hub of a New Maritime Transport Corridor. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Picture 3

Key Infrastructure Projects Discussed during the Open Dialogue



Source: authors of the report.

The railway corridor between Ethiopia and Djibouti has reduced freight delivery times by sixfold (from three days to 12 hours)¹⁴⁹ and stimulated industrial production growth in border regions. In Latin America, the Bi-Oceanic Corridor project¹⁵⁰ (Brazil–Paraguay–Argentina–Chile) aims to connect the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, providing an alternative to expensive maritime logistics.

¹⁴⁹ Brookings. (2025). Africa in the News: Ethiopia–Djibouti Railway Complete, AU Summit Held, and the Gambia Crisis Ends. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/africa-in-the-news-ethiopia-djibouti-railway-complete-au-summit-held-and-the-gambia-crisis-ends/>.

¹⁵⁰ International Road Transport Union. (2025). Bioceanic Corridor: South American Political Leaders Back the Need for TIR. Available at: <https://www.iru.org/news-resources/newsroom/bioceanic-corridor-south-american-political-leaders-back-need-tir>.



Leta Sera Bedada¹⁵¹

Ethiopia

« The commercial geography of East Africa is changing as a result of infrastructure projects. By cutting cargo transit times by 40%, the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), which connects Kenya's Mombasa port to Uganda and Rwanda, has increased intra-EAC trade volumes.¹⁵² In the meantime, Kenya is positioned as a gateway for landlocked states by the LAPSET Corridor, which connects Lamu Port to Ethiopia and South Sudan. It has the potential to redirect 30% of Ethiopia's port trade from Djibouti to Lamu.¹⁵³

The potential for non-EAC governments to improve regional connectivity is demonstrated by the restoration of the Mogadishu Port and the Berbera Corridor in Somalia, which connects Somaliland to Ethiopia. To reduce delays, many projects necessitate harmonizing trans-border regulations. For example, trucks traveling from Ethiopia to Kenya still have to pass through ten or more checkpoints, which raises logistical costs by 15% to 20%.¹⁵⁴ »

The Global Majority is facing the challenge of creating a new generation of logistics – digital, sustainable, flexible and integrated. This rakes both institutional reforms and capital inflows, but it also creates unique opportunities for economic growth, reducing dependence on narrow routes and strengthening interconnectivity between countries.

Digital Connectivity

Digital connectivity is becoming one of the key indicators of sovereignty and competitiveness for countries in the Global Majority. Unlike in the industrial era, when physical infrastructure was the chief driver of integration, **today digital platforms, communication channels, and unified interaction protocols are shaping a new dimension of global exchange** – one that is faster, more scalable and less costly.

The countries of the Global Majority have already developed a number of solutions that ensure digital connectivity between countries and regions.

¹⁵¹ Bedada, L. S. (2025). The Future of Trade in East Africa: Integration, Innovation and Regional Collaboration. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁵² Xinhua. (2025). Kenya's SGR Passenger Train Revenue Up 41 pct in 2024. Available at: <https://english.news.cn/20250327/aa7b774baf4243e6824b4f05bf3bb1b4/c.html>.

¹⁵³ LAPSET Corridor Development Authority. (2025). Building Transformative & Game Changer Infrastructure for a Seamless Connected Africa. Available at: <https://lapsset.go.ke>.

¹⁵⁴ World Bank. (2023). Ethiopia–EAC Trade Dynamics. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org>.

Table 3

Examples of Solutions that Improve Digital Connectivity

Payment systems	Software and digital platforms	Trade and logistics	Infrastructure and communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flutterwave Flutterwave 30 African countries — Platform for cross-border payments in Africa • Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) (42 AfCFTA countries) — Instant settlement system in local currencies • M-PESA Africa 7 countries: Kenya, Tanzania, DRC, etc.) — Cross-border mobile payments • Unified Payments Interface (UPI) + NPCI International India, Singapore, UAE, etc. — Integration with payment systems in Asia and the Middle East 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoho 10+ countries in Asia and Africa — Cloud solutions for business • MOSIP (Modular Open Source Identity Platform) 10+ countries: Philippines, Morocco, Ethiopia, etc. — Open digital identity system • eGov (DIAL, инициатива ООН) 20+ countries of the Global Majority — Platform for digital public services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TradeLens 70+ countries, including Kenya, South Africa, Indonesia — Blockchain platform for supply chains • ePhyto (ФАО) 50+ countries, including Ghana, Uganda, Vietnam — Digital certificates for agricultural exports • Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) 3 countries: Chile, Singapore, New Zealand — Harmonisation of digital standards • ASEAN Single Window 10 стран АСЕАН — Ускорение таможенных процедур • CADENA 4 countries: Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico — Digitalisation of cross-border trade • Alibaba eWTP China, Malaysia, Thailand, Rwanda — Electronic trading hubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2Africa (submarine cable) 33 countries in Africa and the Middle East — The largest internet cable • Digital Silk Road China, 70+ countries — Development of 5G, cloud and satellite technologies • Kacific Satellite 25 countries in Asia and Oceania — Broadband Internet for remote regions

Source: compiled by the authors of the report.

Digital connectivity initiatives have a decisive impact on the success of intra-regional trade development.¹⁵⁵

However, greater digital connectivity carries the risk of creating fragmented ecosystems that are incompatible with each other. Conflicts between different technology standards, encryption protocols, approaches to personal data processing, and digital taxation structures are already evident. Not only could thus slow down integration, but it could also threaten the sovereignty of countries, especially if they fall dependent on external technology providers.

To avoid digital feudalism, the countries of the Global Majority agree on **compatible standards, mutual recognition of regulations, and the technological neutrality of platforms** through numerous mechanisms:

- **The Smart Africa Alliance** includes 36 countries and aims to harmonise standards to ensure the interoperability of digital identities, cloud solutions and broadband access.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

- **The ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement** aims to create a single digital space in the region, including compatible approaches to cybersecurity, e-commerce, and data.
- **The Latin American regulatory environment for digital trade.** As part of the CAF (Development Bank of Latin America) initiative, work is underway to harmonise digital taxation rules, data protection, and the regulation of digital platforms. By 2024, the agreed principles will already be in place in Argentina, Colombia, and Peru.
- **Initiatives to create shared data hubs and digital clouds.** In West Africa, ECOWAS is supporting a regional cloud centre project that will ensure data security and localisation while allowing countries to share infrastructure.

Harmonising digital regulation is one of the most practical ways to enhance digital connectivity. This does not necessarily require strict standardisation, but it does imply **recognition of equivalence, common interfaces and open APIs**. Such approaches enable companies to scale digital solutions without rewriting them for each country, and enable governments to launch cross-border services more quickly.

A good example is the experience of East Africa: an initiative for the mutual recognition of electronic signatures and encryption standards has been launched in the East African Community (EAC)¹⁵⁶, which speeds up document circulation and electronic procurement.

The transfer of technology from one region to another can also make it easier to harmonise technological standards.



Austin Mwange¹⁵⁷

Zambia

« In the field of digital technology, the Russian companies are very active, providing IT services, which is an important contribution to the development of African digital infrastructure. This includes data centres and fiber-optic networks, which are critical to supporting Africa's fast-growing technology market. »

Digital connectivity is the cornerstone for a new level of economic cooperation based on compatibility, trust and mutual technological openness. The countries of the Global Majority that invest in such digital bridges are gaining real sovereignty in the 21st century – not only as consumers of foreign technologies, but also as creators of joint digital solutions. Scaling up such initiatives and is a strategic task for the coming years.

¹⁵⁶ East African Community (EAC). (2025). Regional Digital Trade. Available at: <https://www.eac.int/eardip-online-mrkt/regional-digital-trade>.

¹⁵⁷ Mwange, A. (2025). Enhancing Global Trade and Digital Connectivity for Inclusive Economic Development. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Financial Interconnectivity

Financial connectivity is becoming extremely important for the sustainable development of the countries of the Global Majority, especially with the growing geopolitical and economic risks. **Technological advances and the launch of new financial initiatives** have paved the way for alternatives to Western payment systems, providing new channels for international trade, investment and economic autonomy.

Today, China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) already has 1,497 participants,¹⁵⁸ which reflects the ambition to expand the yuan's use in international settlements. Russia's System for Transfer of Financial Messages (SPFS) includes 557 organisations from 24 countries,¹⁵⁹ demonstrating growing interest in alternative payment solutions amid sanctions pressure.

ASEAN countries have integrated their QR payment systems, enabling citizens to make cross-border payments through national apps without using dollars or euros.¹⁶⁰ This keeps transaction costs down and makes the region more financially independent.

Switching to settlements in national currencies continues to gain popularity. The awareness of the risks associated with the dominance of the U.S. dollar – which accounts for approximately 60% of global currency reserves and 40% of cross-border payments¹⁶¹ – is prompting countries to rethink their currency strategies.

There are some good lessons from history here: the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the taper tantrum in 2013, when one statement from the head of the U. S. Federal Reserve caused panic and capital flight from emerging markets, demonstrate how exposed other countries are to the U.S. dollar. Some alternative practices are already in place. More than 90% of trade between Russia and China is conducted in yuan and roubles,¹⁶² which minimises currency risks. In Latin America, Brazil and Argentina are discussing plans for a single currency, the “sur,” which could strengthen regional ties and accelerate integration. Similar processes are underway across Africa and Asia: the BRICS countries working on solutions to streamline mutual settlements in national currencies.

In addition to settlements in other currencies, more innovative options for monetary settlements are also available, like currencies tied to natural ecosystems.

¹⁵⁸ China International Payment Service Corporation (CIPS). (2025). Official Website. Available at: <https://www.cips.com.cn/en/index/index.html>.

¹⁵⁹ RBC. (2024). Russia plans to launch QR codes for cross-border payments within the ASEAN system. Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/finances/24/06/2024/667934579a79470dd2abf53d>.

¹⁶⁰ U.S.–ASEAN Business Council. (2023). The ASEAN QR Code Payment to Launch in 2023. Available at: <https://www.usasean.org/article/asean-qr-code-payment-launch-2023#:~:text=The%20ASEAN%20QR%20code%20system,from%20this%20%20regional%20payment%20connectivity>.

¹⁶¹ International Monetary Fund. (2025). IMF database.

¹⁶² Interfax (2024). Share of rouble and yuan in mutual settlements between Russia and China exceeds 95%. Available at: <https://www.interfax.ru/business/977403>.

**Joseph Potvin¹⁶³****Canada**

« The Earth Reserve Assurance (ERA) is a sustainable money system backed by the restoration of nature. It operates in parallel with conventional currencies without the need for global reforms. New money can only be created after environmental projects have been approved that increase ecosystem productivity by 200+ years. The value is determined by a market auction and pegged to the ERiC index, which guarantees stability. »

Central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) are emerging as a new tool for enhancing financial autonomy. Pilot projects involving digital versions of the yuan, rupee, and naira have already shown some big advantages, such as instant transfers, lower fees, and better access to financial services, especially in remote areas and places where banks are not as common. By the end of 2024, transactions using the digital yuan topped USD1 trillion.¹⁶⁴ CBDCs have the potential to greatly strengthen international settlements without the involvement of Western currencies and infrastructure.

**Hongyue Wang¹⁶⁵****China**

« The use of digital currencies in cross-border trade reduces commission fees to 0.3–0.5% and ensures real-time payments. This speeds up companies' capital turnover and expands the scale of their business. After one Chinese textile company switched to digital currency payments, its trade with Brazil went up by 50% in a year, which helped streamline the production chains up and down and created more economic benefits and job opportunities. »

Investment platforms also play an important role. For example, the Shanghai Free Trade Zone has become the benchmark when it comes to attracting international capital through the creation of a modern financial infrastructure.

By 2024, the Shanghai Free Trade Zone had attracted USD37.4 billion in foreign investments.¹⁶⁶ Similarly, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), established by China in 2016, has financed more than 252 infrastructure projects worth over USD50.47 billion,¹⁶⁷ fostering connectivity and capital market development in the region.

¹⁶³ Potvin, J. (2025). Earth Reserve Assurance (ERA): a framework for sound money. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁶⁴ Nikkei Asia. (2024). China Explores Cross-Border Uses for Digital Yuan in New Trial. Available at: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Markets/Currencies/China-explores-cross-border-uses-for-digital-yuan-in-new-trial>.

¹⁶⁵ Wang, H. (2025). Digital Currency – an Innovative Tool to Strengthen Financial Interconnectedness of BRICS Countries. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

¹⁶⁶ Statista. (2025). Total Value of Fixed Asset Investment in China Pilot Free-Trade Zone in Shanghai from 2015 to 2023. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/994133/china-value-of-fixed-asset-investment-in-shanghai-free-trade-zone/>.

¹⁶⁷ Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. (2024). Annual Report 2023. Available at: <https://www.aiib.org/en/news-events/annual-report/2023/index.html>.

The New Development Bank (NDB) has already backed over 90 projects worth USD30 billion,¹⁶⁸ ranging from solar power plants in South Africa to water infrastructure in Brazil. Not only do these investments not modernise economies, but they also boost long-term sustainability.

The New Development Bank's New Investment Platform

The New Development Bank has significant potential to strengthen the international financial infrastructure by expanding financing opportunities in reserve and national currencies.

When setting up a new investment platform, there are two important things to get right: first, to figure out a good way to spot and pick investment projects; and second, to build a reliable funding system based on modern technological solutions.

A Multi-Stage Financing System

The platform is proposed to be developed in two stages. In the first stage, a tokenised platform using distributed ledger technology (DLT) will be put in place. It will enable the management of various tokenised accounts, separated by currency, ensuring transparency and security of transactions.

The second stage will be the launch of the Digital Investment Asset (DIA), an innovative financial instrument based on blockchain technology. This is fully digital smart money capable of transforming the approach to project financing. Their implementation will give a big boost to capital inflows, while also keeping the investment process stable and efficient.

Advantages of DIA in Financing

DIA is a stable and secure financial instrument, fully guaranteed by central banks. Its design eliminates inflationary risks thanks to controlled issuance and use, ensuring zero inflation. DIA also provides cross-border liquidity, with central banks acting as market makers to maintain exchange rate stability. An important advantage is the transparency of operations: smart contracts automate resource allocation and ensure compliance with financing terms, minimising risks and the human factor.

¹⁶⁸ New Development Bank. (2024). Investor Fact Sheet Q1 2024. Available at: https://www.ndb.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Investor-Fact-Sheet-Q1_2024.pdf.

Advantages of DIA in Investing

The use of DIA contributes to economic sustainability, as the platform does not depend on an external financial infrastructure. It can be easily adapted to the specific needs of participating countries, allowing for seamless project transactions within the BRICS alliance. The system's scalability allows it to flexibly adapt to changing investment demands, while stable capital support makes DIA a long-term source of liquidity for the New Development Bank. On top of that, the direct focus on investments means there is no need for middlemen, which makes funding more accurate and efficient.

The rollout of this platform will help the New Development Bank take the lead in digital investment solutions, bringing steady economic growth and financial stability to the countries involved.

In this way, financial connectivity becomes a strategic resource for the Global Majority. The emergence of alternative payment systems, the transition to settlements in national currencies, the rollout of digital solutions, and the development of regional financial institutions are all shaping a new landscape in which sovereignty and sustainability are becoming real practices rather than mere slogans.

Media and Information Connectivity

“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world,” wrote Ludwig Wittgenstein.¹⁶⁹ This idea, which may seem philosophical, is in fact highly practical. People perceive and describe reality within the limits of their language and culture. Therefore, foreigners will perceive what they see in another country through their cultural filters. This is particularly keenly felt in the global media environment. Most of the largest media and digital platforms are rooted in the West, and they do not simply broadcast information, but rather shape the image of the world based on their own categories, concepts and interests.

Western media often fails to accurately convey what is happening in the countries of the Global Majority – not intentionally but rather because they think and describe things in a different way. They speak a different language and therefore perceive reality differently. As Edward Said noted in his *Orientalism*,¹⁷⁰ the West has been shaping the images of the East for centuries, not trying to understand it but trying to subjugate and simplify it. Indeed, this logic persists in our digital age, only now it takes the form of algorithms, editorial policies and moderation filters.

¹⁶⁹ Wittgenstein, L. (1922). *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

¹⁷⁰ Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*.



Solomon Gardie¹⁷¹

Ethiopia

« The global media landscape is going through a crisis of trust: according to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023, only 39% of respondents in 46 countries trust the news, compared to 44% in 2018. In the U.S. and the UK, the figures have dropped to 32% and 36%, respectively. This is due to accusations of bias, sensationalism and disregard for the realities of the Global South. At the same time, the economic weight of the BRICS+ countries (32% of global GDP in PPP terms in 2023, according to IMF) requires alternative media platforms. For example, in Ethiopia (with a population of 120 million and economic growth at 7% per year), Western media often focus on stereotypes, while Russia's RT and Sputnik, which opened an Amharic-language newsroom in 2025, offer local narratives. A study of content produced by African journalists (including participants in the RT Academy course) showed that 87% of their material had a positive or neutral tone, as opposed to just 12% of positive news stories about Africa in Western media. »

Media communications are not just channels of communication and information; they are tools for creating meanings and managing public consciousness. The right to one's own voice in the media space is becoming a key element of sovereignty. It is not just about being able to tell your side of the story, it is also about forming your own system of axes: what you consider to be justice, progress, development, a threat or success.

An alternative to the unipolar narrative is possible – and it is already emerging. Regional media platforms based on local languages, values and cultural codes offer a way to regain control over content and meaning. For example, Qatar's Al Jazeera has been taking an independent stance for more than two decades, offering audiences in the Middle East and North Africa an alternative to the Western agenda.

In Africa, the Africanews platform reports news from an African perspective, providing content in English, French, and Portuguese.

In Latin America, Telesur, launched with the support of the governments of Venezuela, Bolivia, and Cuba, brings together the voices of South American countries into a single information network, limiting the influence of large English-language media companies. The Russian news agency Russia Today reports in English and is available in more than 100 countries.

¹⁷¹ Gardie, S. (2025). Reimagining Global Communication: Investing in Alternative Voices for a Multipolar World. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

If we look at Asia, India's Koo offers an alternative to Twitter/X with support for local languages and algorithms tailored to Indian realities. In China, Douyin and WeChat are developing a domestic digital media ecosystem that promotes educational and cultural content aligned with the national agenda. In Indonesia, too, local video platforms such as RuangGuru are making headway, combining an educational mission with a media format.

Just as important is **horizontal information connectivity** – the ability of countries in the Global Majority to hear each other without any middlemen. Joint media projects between India, Brazil, and South Africa, sharing news stories, cultural content and documentaries are creating an alternative South–South information route. This is particularly important in a situation where Western algorithms create an information bubble that limits the diversity of opinions. Expanding exchanges between independent platforms helps mitigate this effect by promoting an open and polycentric information environment.



Boukari Moutawakilou¹⁷²

Benin

« The media, both traditional and electronic, act as catalysts facilitating the spread of ideas, innovation and investment around the world. Meanwhile, the world is full of problems such as misinformation, content fragmentation and cultural barriers. »

Moreover, the development of the creative economy in the countries of the Global Majority – through cinema, television series, music, podcasts, and video games – is also becoming a soft power tool. South Korea's K-pop industry, Turkish soap operas, Nigeria's Nollywood, and now Indian web series on platforms such as MX Player and ALT Balaji, are all examples of how countries are creating their own cultural "exports," shaping the new face of the global media landscape. National social networks are developing in parallel, from ShareChat and Moj in India to Likee and Kwai in Southeast Asia and Africa. China's TikTok (called Douyin in China), WeChat and Xiaohongshu have already gone global, spreading entertainment and cultural content built on a different approach to interacting with audiences. These platforms create ecosystems where local users are not just consumers, but true carriers and producers of meaning.

Today, media is the infrastructure of meaning. Whoever controls the media sets the rules of the conversation. For the Global Majority, developing their own media ecosystems, strengthening regional connectivity, and promoting alternative narratives is not just a matter of communication, it is a path to cultural and political autonomy in a multipolar world.

¹⁷² Moutawakilou, B. (2025). The Influence of Mass Media and Communication on Global Growth: Building Bridges Between Nations. Essay for "The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth" Open Dialogue.

Language and Cultural Connectivity

The use of “bridge languages” – Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and Russian – is expanding. There are approximately 500 Confucius Institutes around the world – centres for the study of Chinese language and culture for foreigners.¹⁷³ In Africa, the number of Spanish language centres has grown by 40% over the last three years,¹⁷⁴ which is a sign of growing economic and cultural ties with Spanish-speaking countries.

New technologies, such as AI-powered automatic translation, are being actively used on platforms such as Baidu, Yandex, and Deepl. These technologies allow users to instantly **get past language barriers** and speed up communication between countries around the world. For example, Yandex translates over 100 million texts a day into 101 languages.¹⁷⁵



Xi Wang¹⁷⁶
China

« BRICS countries account for 32% of global GDP (PPP), but language barriers add 15–20% to business transaction costs. AI translation tech (with 95% accuracy) and projects like the BRICS Business Metaverse cut negotiation time by 25%. »

Digital platforms also foster cultural exchanges. Traditional approaches to cultural exchange are becoming less effective. Cultural communication among young people is thriving thanks to modern platforms. Even remote regions now have high levels of internet access (for example, over 95% in some remote areas of Colombia),¹⁷⁷ enabling young people to share their ideas with the world and access creative content from around the globe.



Juan Manuel Rincon¹⁷⁸
Colombia

« The social effect of such initiatives is no less important. In regions where tensions remain high (e.g., following the 2021 protests), inclusive media can serve as a tool for reducing conflict. Digital museums, educational platforms, and local start-ups will help bring different groups of people together through shared cultural projects. »

¹⁷³ China International. (2025). Announcement. Available at: <https://ci.cn/en/xwzx/gg/10929b45-6376-4776-8d00-45f77b73c487>.

¹⁷⁴ Cervantes Institute. (2023). Anuario 23. Available at: https://cvc.cervantes.es/lengua/anuario/anuario_23/?_gl=1*e2fznu*cent_ga*MTY5NzA0ODg2Ni4xNzM4NTAwMjky*cent_ga_57JPCLFY9Z*MTc0NTE1NjUwMy4xLjAuMTc0NTE1NjUwMy42MC4wLjA.

¹⁷⁵ Yandex. (2025). Yandex Translate Blog. Available at: <https://yandex.ru/blog/translate>.

¹⁷⁶ Wang, X. (2025). Language Homogenisation and Intercultural Cooperation: Building Dialogue in the Framework of a New Platform for Global Growth in BRICS Countries. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

¹⁷⁷ Rincon, J. M. (2025). Investment Strategies for Building the Russian–Colombian Intercultural Dialogue in the Current Multipolar World. Essay for “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth” Open Dialogue.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

Therefore, cultural connectivity not only deepens ties between countries, but also enhances their economic and political autonomy, enabling them to shape their own cultural narratives that more accurately reflect local realities and values.

Conclusion

The economic and institutional connectivity of the countries of the Global Majority is no longer a project for the future, but a reality of the present. New transport corridors, payment systems, digital ecosystems and cultural alliances are shaping a parallel globalisation that is inclusive, multipolar and based on mutual respect.

Sovereignty here does not mean isolation, but rather the ability to choose development paths based on one's own interests and potential. Today, the countries of the Global Majority are no longer "nations playing catch-up," but the creators of new models of cooperation, sustainability and technological breakthroughs.

By fostering connectivity, countries strengthen not only their economies, but also their role in global processes. This means they are building a world in which the majority finally has a voice and participates in decision-making on an equal footing.

Conclusion

The new platform for global growth involves the creation of an open, fair, sustainable and people-centred model of development. The countries of the Global Majority are becoming the driving force behind these changes, shaping alternative approaches to economic integration, technological development, and social sustainability.

Investments in human capital, environment, technology, and connectivity are the four pillars of the new growth architecture. Priorities include affordable and quality education, health care, environmentally safe infrastructure, digital inclusion, and the development of independent financial and logistics networks. These elements form the basis for sovereign development and reduce dependence on inherited models that are ill-suited to the challenges of the 21st century.

The Open Dialogue “The Future of the World: A New Platform for Global Growth,” held in Moscow in the spring of 2025, showed that the countries of the Global Majority already have concrete solutions and initiatives to fill the new platform with real content. This work must be continued and expanded. Moreover, the format of open dialogue itself has proven its effectiveness: it is open and allows for genuine dialogue – factors that allow different voices to be heard and diverse views to be taken into account. All this paves the way for the new platform for growth to be transformed into a tool that works for the benefit of all.

In the face of growing climate, demographic, and technological challenges, what is particularly important now is joint action, the exchange of experience, and flexible decision-making. The new global agenda calls for the recognition of diverse development paths and respect for the strategic priorities of the countries of the Global Majority.

The creation of a new platform for global growth is not a mere declaration, but a practical task to be accomplished through the concerted efforts of governments, businesses, and international organisations. The time has come for systemic transformations centred on people, technology and cooperation.

Glossary

Abbreviations

- **AfCFTA:** African Continental Free Trade Area
- **AIIB:** Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank – a financial institution established by China in 2016 that has financed more than 252 infrastructure projects.
- **BRI:** Belt and Road Initiative – a large-scale initiative launched by China that has contributed to infrastructure development in 149 countries.
- **CBDC:** central bank digital currency – pilot projects have already demonstrated their advantages such as instant transfers and lower fees.
- **CIPS:** Cross-Border Interbank Payment System – a Chinese cross-border interbank payment system with 1,497 participants.
- **DEPA:** Digital Economy Partnership Agreement – an agreement signed by Chile, Singapore and New Zealand, aimed at harmonising digital standards.
- **DIA:** Digital Investment Asset – an innovative financial instrument based on blockchain technology, proposed for the New Development Bank.
- **DIAL:** Digital Impact Alliance – an UN initiative related to the eGov platform for digital public services.
- **DLT:** Distributed Ledger Technology – a technology, used, for example, in tokenised platforms.
- **EAC:** East African Community.
- **ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West African States – a community supporting projects such as a regional cloud centre.
- **ePhyto:** a system of electronic phytosanitary certificates used in more than 50 countries for agricultural exports.
- **ERA:** Earth Reserve Assurance – a sustainable money system backed by the restoration of nature.
- **ERiC:** Earth Reserve Index Currency – an index to which the value of money is linked in the ERA system.
- **ESG:** environmental, social, and governance – a set of principles allowing companies to reduce risks and attract investors.
- **eWTP:** electronic World Trade Platform – Alibaba electronic trading hubs in China, Malaysia, Thailand, Rwanda.
- **GeM:** Government e-Marketplace – an Indian government electronic procurement system.
- **GNH:** Gross National Happiness – a development concept introduced by Bhutan, which includes nine metrics, including health (physical and mental).
- **INSTC:** International North–South Transport Corridor.
- **LLM:** large language models – models, the development of which has sparked a new wave of interest in AI technologies.

- **LAPSSET:** Lamu Port – South Sudan – Ethiopia – Transport Corridor – a transport corridor connecting the port of Lamu with Ethiopia and South Sudan.
- **MOOC:** massive open online courses, providing developing countries with the opportunity to bring knowledge to millions of people.
- **MOSIP:** Modular Open Source Identity Platform – an open digital identification system used in more than ten countries.
- **MRAs:** Mutual Recognition Arrangements – agreements on mutual recognition of qualifications.
- **NDB:** New Development Bank, also the BRICS Development Bank, which has supported more than 90 projects.
- **NPCI:** National Payments Corporation of India, linked to UPI.
- **PAPSS:** Pan-African Payment and Settlement System for instant settlements in local currencies in 42 AfCFTA countries.
- **SGR:** Standard Gauge Railway, for example, in Kenya.
- **SGT:** Small Generation Tax – the proposed national system of intergenerational redistribution.
- **STEM:** Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
- **STREAM:** STEM with an emphasis on creativity and liberal arts
- **SUP:** Skilling Up Unskilled Population – a programme that helps young people start their own businesses.
- **TIR:** Transports Internationaux Routiers – a system of international road transport that simplifies customs procedures.
- **TVET:** Technical and Vocational Education and Training – practical training preparing students for real-world work.
- **UPI:** Unified Payments Interface – India's unified payment interface integrated with payment systems in Asia and the Middle East.
- **BRICS:** a group of countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) that play a significant role in the global economy.
- **GDP:** Gross Domestic Product – a macroeconomic indicator reflecting the market value of all final goods and services produced in a year in all sectors of the economy within a country.
- **CEP:** Comprehensive Economic Partnership – a trade agreement in Asia aimed at reducing customs tariffs.
- **PPP:** Public-Private Partnership, a form of cooperation between the state and the private sector.
- **Healthy lifestyle:** includes mass sports activities, giving up bad habits, improving nutrition and health education.
- **AI:** Artificial Intelligence – technology capable of adapting lessons, automating tasks, and being used in industry and agriculture.

- **ICT:** information and communication technologies used to increase access to education and other services.
- **HDI:** Human Development Index – an integrated indicator calculated based on indicators in three key areas: life expectancy and quality of life, access to good education; and decent standard of living.
- **IMF:** International Monetary Fund – an international financial organisation.
- **SME:** small and medium-sized enterprise – a category of enterprises by size.
- **ITC:** international transport corridor – a major transport artery such as the International North–South Transport Corridor.
- **R&D:** research and development – activities aimed at acquiring new knowledge and its practical application in the process of creating a new product or technology.
- **PPP:** Purchasing Power Parity – an indicator used to compare GDP and other economic indicators between countries.
- **NSR:** Northern Sea Route – a maritime transport corridor connecting Asia and Europe.
- **SPFS:** Financial Messaging System of the Bank of Russia – an alternative to Western payment systems, with 557 organisations from 24 countries.
- **SPP:** solar power plant – a plant for converting solar energy into electricity.
- **VC:** value chain – a global production network where the production of a single product is distributed across multiple countries.
- **UNCTAD:** United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Complex Terms

- **Additive manufacturing:** technologies for layer-by-layer build-up and synthesis of objects (also known as 3D printing).
- **Active longevity:** a vision that includes continuing education, flexible pension schemes, and employment opportunities for older people.
- **Anthropogenic emissions:** emissions of pollutants into the atmosphere associated with human activity.
- **Bio-corridors:** areas of natural or semi-natural habitat that connect disparate habitats and allow species migration.
- **Large Language Models (LLM):** a type of artificial intelligence model that uses large amounts of textual data to understand and generate human language.
- **Washington Consensus:** a set of standard macroeconomic recommendations for countries experiencing financial and economic crisis, developed by the Washington-based international financial institutions.
- **Hydrogen energy:** a branch of the energy industry that uses hydrogen as an energy carrier.
- **Generative AI (GenAI):** a type of artificial intelligence capable of creating new original content (text, images, music, etc.) based on the data it receives.
- **Global South:** a term used to refer to developing and least developed countries, often located in the Southern Hemisphere.
- **Deglobalisation:** a process of decreasing interdependence and integration between countries in the world economy.
- **Decarbonisation:** a process of reducing emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases.
- **Demographic dividend:** economic growth resulting from a change in the age structure of the population, where the proportion of the working-age population increases relative to the non-working-age population.
- **Generics:** unpatented medicinal products that are reproductions of original medicinal products with expired patent protection for the active substance.
- **Trust zones (in trade):** trade relations built within regional blocs or bilateral agreements on the basis of trust.
- **Green infrastructure:** a network of natural and semi-natural areas that provide ecosystem services, support biodiversity, and improve people's quality of life.
- **Industry 4.0:** a concept of an industrial organisation based on the mass adoption of information technology, automation and cyber-physical systems.
- **Inclusive environment:** an environment that provides equal opportunity and access for all people, including people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- **Inference (in AI):** a process of using a trained artificial intelligence model to make judgments or predictions on new data.
- **Information and communication technologies (ICT):** technologies that collect, process, store, and transmit information.

- **Information bubble:** a situation in which a user on the internet receives only information that matches their beliefs and interests, thus limiting access to a variety of viewpoints.
- **Interoperability:** the ability of different systems, devices or applications to exchange data and interact with each other without restriction.
- **Cyber security:** a set of measures and technologies aimed at protecting information systems, networks, and data from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, alteration or destruction.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** a concept according to which organisations consider the interests of society by taking responsibility for the impact of their activities on customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, local communities, and other stakeholders in the public sphere.
- **Creative economy:** a sector of the economy based on the use of intellectual property and creative resources to create goods and services.
- **Learning Health System:** a concept in which the health system continually learns and improves based on the data and experience it collects.
- **Open-source software:** software whose source code is available for review, study, modification, and distribution.
- **Orientalism:** a concept described by Edward Said that refers to a specific Western view of the East, often stereotypical and simplistic, which was shaped in the context of colonial domination.
- **Conscious consumption:** an approach to consumption in which individuals consider the impact of their purchases on the environment, society, and their own well-being.
- **Open innovation:** a paradigm that involves using external ideas and resources as much as internal ones to accelerate innovation processes.
- **Competence passport:** an electronic document showing validated skills and qualifications recognised in different countries.
- **Platform solutions/economy:** business models based on the creation of digital platforms that facilitate interaction between different user groups (e.g. suppliers and consumers).
- **Prompt (in AI):** a request or instruction given by a user to an artificial intelligence system (e.g., a large language model) to get an answer or perform a task.
- **Renaissance education:** a model of education that focuses on the development of creativity, critical thinking and fundamental knowledge, rather than content overload.
- **Silver economy:** a sector of the economy focused on meeting the needs and potential of older people.
- **One-stop-shop system (for customs clearance):** a mechanism that allows participants in foreign economic activities to submit standardised information and documents to a single point of entry to meet all regulatory requirements related to the import, export, and transit of goods.
- **Smart contracts:** computer protocols that automatically fulfil the terms of an agreement when predetermined conditions are met, often used in blockchain technology.
- **Social entrepreneurship:** entrepreneurial activity aimed at solving social problems and achieving positive social change.

- **Countries of the Global Majority:** a broad group of countries that have developed outside the so-called Washington Consensus – the world outside the G7 and Western Europe.
- **Customs compatibility:** the ability of customs systems and procedures of different countries to interact and exchange information to facilitate international trade.
- **Telemedicine:** providing medical services and counselling using telecommunication technologies, especially in remote areas.
- **Technological sovereignty:** the ability of a state to independently develop, produce, and control critical technologies, as well as make decisions about their use.
- **Distributed ledger technology (blockchain):** a system for storing and transferring data in which information is recorded in a chain of blocks distributed across multiple computers, ensuring transparency, security and immutability of data.
- **Tokenised platform:** a platform that uses digital tokens (representing assets, rights, or values) to conduct transactions, often based on distributed ledger technology.
- **Trade restrictions:** measures imposed by states to regulate international trade, such as tariffs, quotas, and other barriers.
- **Carbon colonialism:** a situation in which developed countries, which have historically contributed most to global emissions, impose a climate agenda on developing countries that limits their economic development, or use their territories to offset their own emissions.
- **Sustainable tourism:** a form of tourism that takes long-term economic, social, and environmental impacts into account, meeting the needs of tourists and host communities, while preserving opportunities for future generations.
- **Fintech:** an industry that brings together companies using technology to improve and automate the delivery of financial services.
- **Food sharing / Food bank:** a system for collecting and redistributing surplus food (from producers, retailers, restaurants) to people in need.
- **People-centred economy:** an approach in which economic development is focused on improving the quality of life, expanding opportunities and the potential of society and each individual.
- **Human capital:** the total knowledge, skills, abilities and health of people that can be used to produce goods and services and contribute to economic growth.
- **Circular migration:** a pattern of migration in which people move to another country for a certain period of time to work or study, and then return to their home country, bringing back new experiences and skills.
- **Digital feudalism:** a situation in which a few large technology companies or states control digital infrastructure and data, creating dependency for other countries and users.
- **Circular economy:** an economic model based on resource renewal, waste recycling, and minimising environmental impact, as opposed to the linear “produce-consume-dispose” model.
- **Bridge languages:** languages used for international and intercultural communication between representatives of different language groups.



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