Think Tank Report

2/2020 Insights into the agendas of international think tanks

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG

GENDER EQUALITY

Where are our female entrepreneurs?

Only four per cent of start-ups are founded by women alone

In recent years, women's roles have undergone unprecedented change. Does this mean we are moving unerringly towards equality or are there still some issues to be resolved? Even when they are equally well-qualified, women still face more difficulties than men in the workplace. But it is not only female employees who are still impacted by this trend – it also affects the start-up sector. According to researchers at the *Boston Consulting Group* (BCG) in Berlin, young women make up just four per cent of all entrepre-

neurs. This figure means that Germany still lags behind France and the UK. So do women suffer systemic discrimination in the workplace? Is it that women lack the assertiveness needed in the tough world of business start-ups? Or, on average, are fewer women interested in setting up their own business? Four successful young women address these issues in the online magazine *Gründerszene*.

bit.ly/TTR2_2020_10a

@BGC

bit.ly/TTR2_2020_10b

@gruenderszene

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Ekologinen petroli

Biofuel for aviation

When it comes to green innovation, a company with revenues of 15 billion US dollars that operates 2,000 filling stations in Finland, Russia, the Baltic States and Poland might not be the first thing that springs to mind. *Neste's* environmental record is not exactly glorious. Anyway, the company realised that alternative fuel will play a key role, especially in aviation. Every year, flying emits almost one billion tonnes of CO_2. That's why Neste has been working on an aviation fuel that can be produced from renewable resources and waste. It may be a while before this fuel is sufficiently cost-effective for the global market. *Neste*, Espoo, Finland

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_4

🐦 @NesteGlobal

ECONOMY

Global trade = global rules?

Why the house of commerce needs to be renovated

The world of commerce has left the brick-and-mortar marketplace far behind. People have accustomed to fibre optic cables, e-commerce and online banking. Though, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has failed to adapt to the economy's zeitgeist. While a total overhaul of structures and contents has yet to occur, a recent report from the *Brookings Institution* warns of the need to pay special attention to e-commerce, including the creation of comprehensive regulations and suitable frameworks. More specifically, the Institute proposes establishing the WTO as a platform and fixed point for dealing with e-commerce in order to overcome barriers and enforce consistent rules. The new report from the *Brookings Institution* in Washington, D.C., USA, highlights how market certainty could be improved through the orientation of economic actors towards the resulting best practices.

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_2

🐦 @BrookingsInst

AI RESEARCH

In the face of the challenge

How progress stimulates, enriches and frightens us

Technical innovation is as old as humankind itself. But in recent decades this progress has accelerated at a breathtaking pace. Much of this is because of advances in AI – whether it's Siri, smart homes or share dealing, artificial intelligence has become a fixture in many areas of our lives. AI is becoming ever more important in medicine, and soon it may even be able to save lives, either therapeutically or through data processing. A recent review by the *Institute for Innovation and Technology* (IIT) in Berlin, Germany looks at the potential of AI in medicine and the associated ethical issues.

Development of global investments in AI and robotics start-ups (in million US dollars)
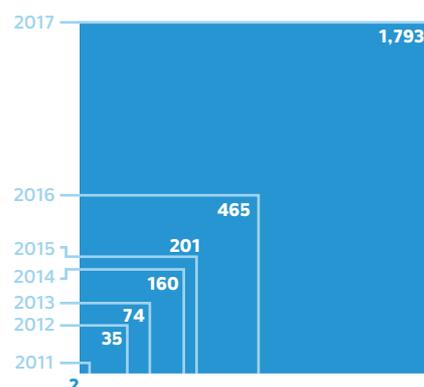
Source: iit based on crunchbase (2018)

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_3

🐦 @VDIVDE_IT

CHINA

Uyghurs for sale

From cultural genocide to modern forced labour

Since 2017, more than one million Uighurs and members of other Muslim minorities have been interned in "re-education camps" in the Xinjiang region of western China. Under the guise of combating religious extremism, experts claim that a "systematic, government-led programme of cultural genocide" is being carried out through ideological indoctrination. And now this state-controlled "re-engineering" has entered a new phase. Between 2017 and 2019, the *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* estimates that at least 80,000 Uighurs were assigned to factories throughout the country – supported by the Chinese government. The internet is awash with advertisements for "qualified and reliable" Uighur workers who can undergo "semi-military style management" and withstand hardship –

"Minimum order 100 workers". Subject to constant surveillance and with limited freedom of movement, these Uighurs work in factories that are part of the supply chain of at least 83 well-known global brands in the technology, clothing and automotive sectors, including Apple, BMW, Gap, Huawei, Nike, Samsung, Sony and Volkswagen. A report by the *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (ASPI) in Canberra, Australia provides more details about the companies involved and proposes some solutions to this kind of forced labour.

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_1

🐦 @ASPI_org

WORKING WORLD

McKinsey and the "next normal"

What do companies need to consider?

The coronavirus has brought radical changes to our working lives. Wherever possible, we now work from home – via video conferencing or the traditional telephone, and physical proximity with customers has to be avoided. Nobody can predict what will follow this crisis, but this is not the first time that we have experienced far-reaching changes to the economy, both domestic and global. But what will our new "normal" look like? What will determine our everyday work and what does that mean for businesses? Will governments play a more active role in the economy, or will consumer behaviour be reshaped forever? A new report by management consultants *McKinsey & Company* in New York City, USA, describes the factors that are likely to play an important role for businesses and their managers in the post-coronavirus period.

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_9

🐦 @McKinsey

BREXIT

Friends or opponents?

A love-hate relationship for the EU and UK?

There is a wide variety of views about the future relationship of the European Union and the UK. What will be the role of institutions like the European Court of Justice; and what will remain of EU regulations and directives, for example on fishing or occupational health and safety? Despite the fact that both sides would like to enjoy continued dialogue, friendship, freedom of movement and a special relationship, the likelihood of reaching an agreement still seems remote. The main conflict arises from the fact that, from the British perspective, the extensive adoption of existing EU regulations could quickly lead to renewed dependence on Brussels. On top of this, the ongoing problems caused by the coronavirus pandemic are placing some major obstacles in the path of the negotiations. A paper by the *Centre for European Reform* in London, UK, provides an insight into these problems.
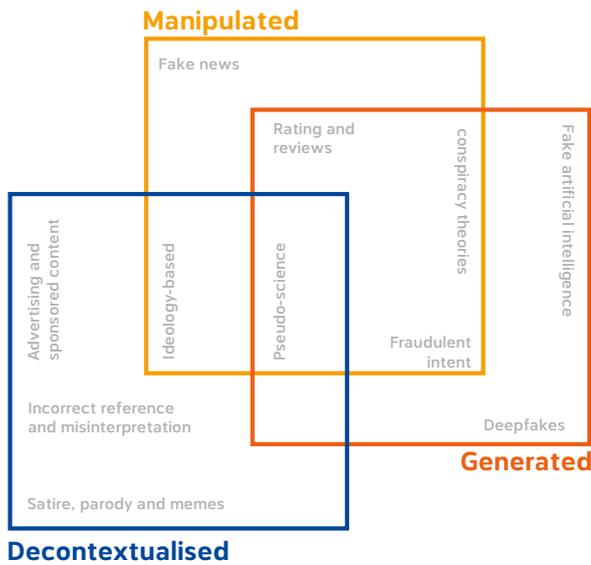
🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_8

🐦 @CER_EU

DISINFORMATION

From Moscow with love

How Russia is conducting disinformation campaigns in Germany and the UK

Categories of disinformation

Cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, fake news and external party financing are some of the key instruments being used by certain countries to further their foreign and strategic policy objectives. Russia is an obvious example of this. With the help of a range of non-military instruments, the Russian government is trying to weaken Western states at home and reduce their standing in the world. Interestingly, Russia does not necessarily take a particular stance, but uses disinformation campaigns to sow doubt and confusion in particular debates. In the case of the UK, the focus is on certain non-mainstream groups, such as right-wing extremists, the British Muslim community, and Scottish and Northern Irish separatists. Russia is also trying to exploit specific vulnerabilities in Germany, so far without success. How Germany and the UK are dealing with Russian disinformation campaigns and what lessons other countries can learn from them is the subject of a new project launched by the *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (CSIS) in Washington, D.C., USA.

Manipulated

Fake news

Rating and reviews

conspiracy theories

Fake artificial intelligence

Advertising and sponsored content

Ideology-based

Pseudo-science

Fraudulent intent

Incorrect reference and misinterpretation

Deepfakes

Generated

Satire, parody and memes

Decontextualised

Source: DeFacto.space

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_5a

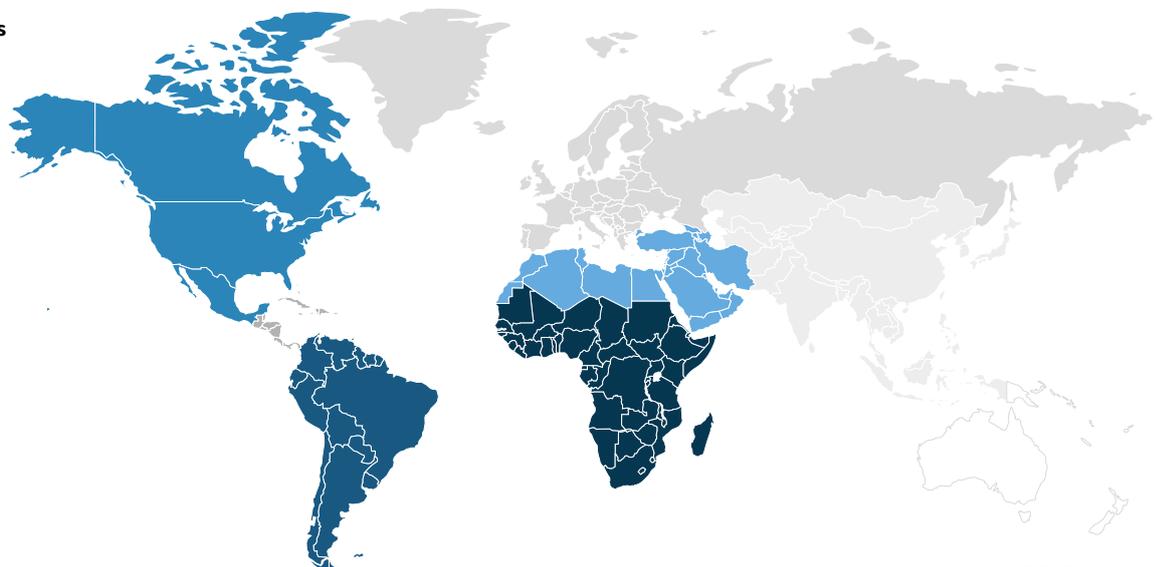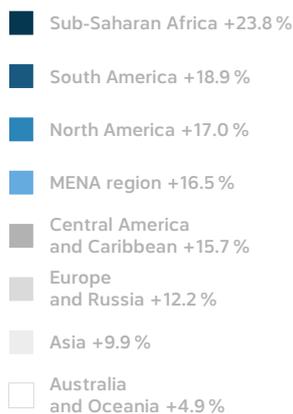🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_5b

🐦 @CSIS

PROTESTS

The voice of the many

How mass protests are changing the world

Large protests have always had a lasting impact on the world. Whether it is demonstrations in Hong Kong, Santiago de Chile or Fridays for Future, the number and intensity of mass movements has increased dramatically in recent years – by around 11.5 per cent

a year between 2009 and 2019. This is particularly evident in the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. The study by the *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (CSIS) in Washington, D.C., USA, analyses what lies behind this development and what motivates people to take to the streets.

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_6

🐦 @CSIS

Global increase in mass protests by region 2009 to 2019

- Sub-Saharan Africa +23.8 %
- South America +18.9 %
- North America +17.0 %
- MENA region +16.5 %
- Central America and Caribbean +15.7 %
- Europe and Russia +12.2 %
- Asia +9.9 %
- Australia and Oceania +4.9 %

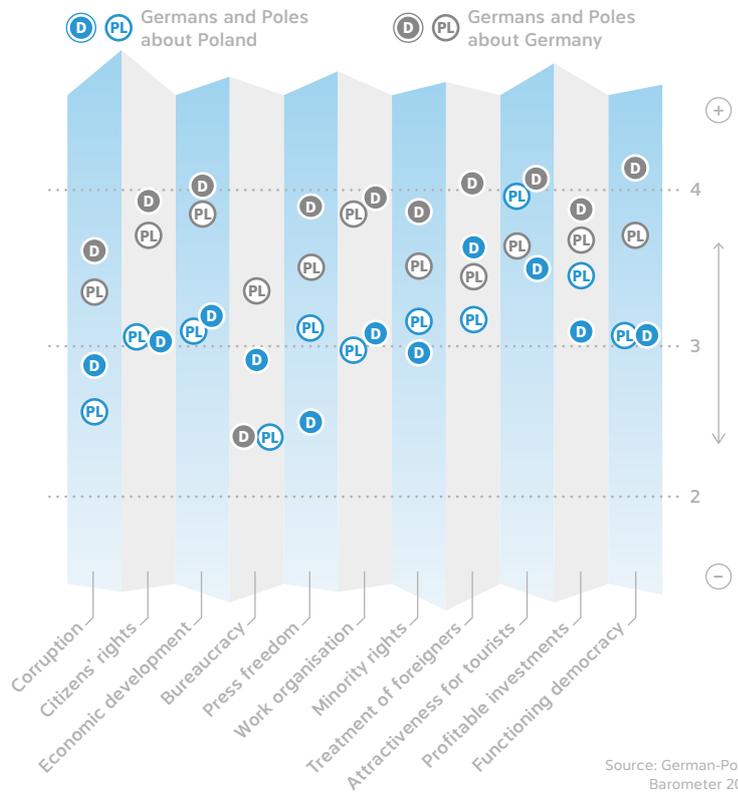Source: CSIS (2020) based The GDELT Project (2019)

BILATERAL RELATIONS

How we see each other
The latest on German-Polish relations

Our eastern neighbour has its troubles. Over the last few years, Poland has regularly been in the spotlight thanks to its nationalist government, highly controversial judicial reform, and its gradual shift away from the European Union. But politics and people's perceptions are often very different. *The German-Polish Barometer* regularly reflects what Polish and German citizens think about each other. The latest survey reveals that German perceptions of Poles have been gradually improving, but it seems many Poles are feeling less clear about how they should view Germany. There has been a drop in positive opinions about Germans, but this has not been matched by an increase in negative attitudes. A joint project involving the *Institute of Public Affairs*, the *German-Polish Institute*, the *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Poland and the *Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation*.

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_17

f @deutschespoleninstitut

Opinions about Germany and Poland
(averaged survey responses in 2020)

Ⓓ Ⓟ Germans and Poles about Poland   Ⓓ Ⓟ Germans and Poles about Germany

Corruption, Citizens' rights, Economic development, Bureaucracy, Press freedom, Work organisation, Minority rights, Treatment of foreigners, Attractiveness for tourists, Profitable investments, Functioning democracy

Source: German-Polish Barometer 2020

Global nuclear weapons arsenal
2019 and 2020

USA	−6.2 %	
Russia	−1.9 %	
UK	+7.5 %	215
France	−3.3 %	290
China	+10.3 %	320
India	+7.1 %*	150
Pakistan	0 %*	160
Israel	0 %*	90
North Korea	+33.3 %**	30–40
Total	−3.3 %	13,400

* Changes relate to the highest estimate of stockpiles for the previous year when a range was given.
** Rough estimate

2019 — 2020 — 5,800 — 6,375
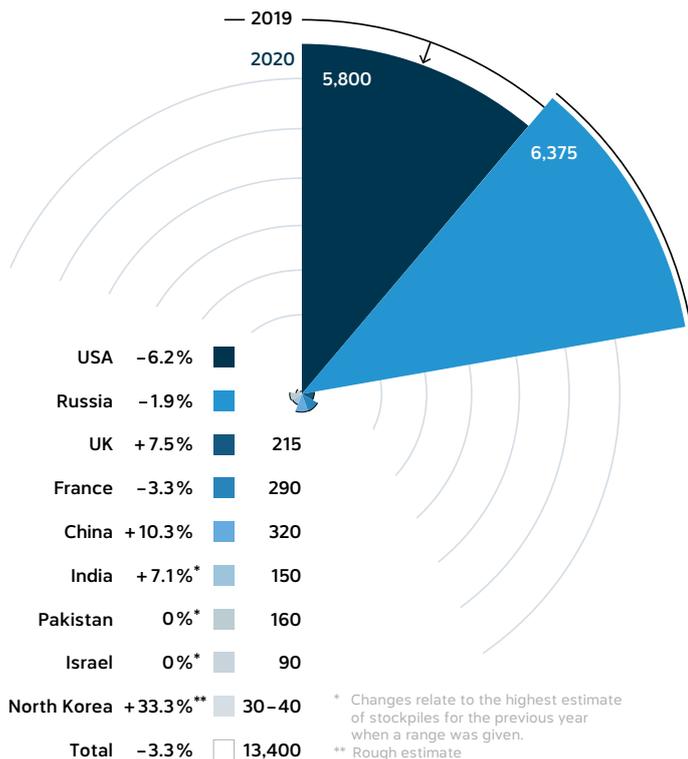
Source: SIPRI (2020)

ATOMIC WEAPONS

Nuclear weapons – boundless scare or necessary evil?
Why humanity musn´t stop discussing about nuclear weapons

"How much is enough?" This question is often asked with regard to nuclear weapons. It is clear that a nuclear winter would have a devastating effect on humankind and our whole eco-system, with nuclear fallout, mutations in subsequent generations and scorched earth all being the inevitable consequences of such a catastrophic event. Despite of all the threats, nuclear weapons are a central instrument in international relations. Thanks to prisoner's dilemma. At the same time, humankind should think about possible consequences of a nuclear escalation and aim to force nuclear disarmament. In a new study, the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* analyses the consequences of nuclear war for the environment and food and studies the framework of international agreements and international law. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Washington, D.C., USA

🌐 bit.ly/TTR2_2020_7

🐦 @CarnegieEndow

OBSERVED

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Opportunity or threat?

How the EU is seeking to shape the development of AI

On 19 February 2020 the *European Union* published its White Paper "On Artificial Intelligence – A European approach to excellence and trust". AI is considered to be one of humankind's greatest inventions since the discovery of electricity. Ultimately, it opens the door for intelligent systems to act largely autonomously. Self-driving cars, personalised marketing, face recognition and high-precision surgical procedures are no longer mere pipedreams. Despite this, optimising the benefits while ensuring the protection of people's data and freedoms is a tricky balancing act. In its White Paper, the EU presents the European approach to this technology, and pays particular attention to how the US and China are tackling this issue.

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🐦
@Europarl_DE

DIGITAL STATE

The government in your phone

How Ukraine is going digital

Have you ever wished you could store your ID card, driver's licence or other important documents on your phone – not just as photos, but as fully valid documents? Ukraine's Ministry of Digital Transformation has developed a new app to do just that, with the aim of making all government services available online. *Diia* ("Action") is an app that gives every Ukrainian citizen access to more than 27 services – from digital documents to setting up a business. The plan is to digitalise all government services by 2024. *Diia* has already had more than three million downloads in just three months. Alongside the immediate benefits for users, this automation of citizens' interactions with the government is also a practical tool for the fight against corruption at all levels.

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bit.ly/TTR2_2020_12b

DISEASE RESEARCH

Fight COVID-19 from your couch

How can we help to fight the coronavirus?

Scientists are using computer simulations in molecular modelling to find treatments for diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's and Huntington's. However, these simulations are too complex to run on a single computer, so the task has been fragmented to benefit from the computing power of many individual computers. *Stanford University* has been using distributed systems to help with disease research since 2000. The project *Folding@home* now means we can volunteer to bring our own computing capacity into the cluster. *Folding@Home* is currently also involved in the fight against the new coronavirus, using simulations to find out how human cells behave in the event of a COVID-19 infection.

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🐦
@foldingathome

FACES

Virtual queuing

The relaxation of lockdown restrictions means that many shops are now reopening. But this can lead to long queues because of the need to maintain social distancing inside stores. Although there is less danger of infection outdoors, the risk is still significant. That's why it is important to ensure customers are not only safe inside stores, but also while they are queuing to go in. Walter Ballheimer has come up with a solution – his app, *2Meters*, is a way of digitalising physical queues. It allows retailers to define how many people are allowed in their store, then the app auto-matically creates an access plan where customers can register. This helps business owners to manage their queues while allowing customers to save time and avoid unnecessary contact.

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INNOVATION

Advertising for a good cause

We all know the annoying and largely ignored ads that pop up when we're using an app. Berlin-based entrepreneur Tim Koschella and his company Kayzen provide the software for placing such in-app advertisements. But recently Koschella decided his company should look beyond profit and set up an educational campaign: *#Appsfightcovid*. With the help of this young entrepreneur, World Health Organization videos are now being aired all over the world, spreading reliable information on hygiene measures. It also makes it possible to register with the WHO chatbot in order to access the latest information. The video attracted more than 18 million views in just ten days, and 650,000 people have registered for the chatbot. Donations to the campaign can be made via the company's website, and a gift of just ten US dollars means the video can reach another 10,000 people, bringing a new dimension to the idea of donating.

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SUSTENANCE

The food of the future

Meat-eating is bad for the planet – particularly in terms of water consumption. On average, it takes 15,000 litres of water to produce one kilogram of beef. Mazen Rizk feels we cannot continue consuming natural resources in this way, so he has come up with an alternative: mushrooms. With his *Mushlabs* project, Mazen Rizk is seeking to tap into the potential of fungi as a food source. Just like animal products, mushrooms are a great source of protein, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates and fibre. Rizk believes in the power of biotechnology and wants to use *Mushlabs* to bring about lasting changes to the food system, not only by replacing the meat on our plate but by revolutionising how we eat.

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