ART —— Analysis and Research Team

Prospects for 2024

What others are saying

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Council of the European Union
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Introduction

At the beginning of each year, journalists, analysts and commentators of current affairs like to take time to reflect on the year ahead and try their hand at predicting the risks and opportunities the year is likely to bring.

With our annual Forward Look, we at the Analysis and Research Team offer a tool to help colleagues across the GSC to understand the world in which the Council and the European Council will operate in the coming year. But just like any other attempt to look into the future, our work can never be exhaustive, or cover all possible views. This document is therefore intended as a companion piece to the Forward Look 2024, providing an overview of what other experts consider will be the key trends, what they expect in terms of economic development and which risks and opportunities they think should be watched.

This document draws on 15 different outlook reports published by newspapers, think tanks, consultancy companies, and research institutes. A complete list of references can be found in the annex. For ease of reading, the predictions have been grouped together under five different categories: (geo-)politics, economy, environment, technology, and society. Each of the predictions has been made by at least two different sources, unless otherwise indicated.

To broaden our horizon in an age of competing narratives, we have included in each category a Chinese perspective, based on a compilation of a number of forward-looking articles from Chinese sources.

This document also includes an overview of the ten conflicts to watch in 2024, according to the International Crisis Group, and of the red herrings of 2024, as defined by Eurasia Group. Finally, to show that the discipline of foresight is much older than we think, we have included a collection of newspaper clippings from 1924, which make a number of fascinating predictions about life in 2024.

RESOURCES:

Most of the predictions you will find in this overview come from multiple sources. Whenever we use a direct quote, or where a statement is based on a single report, we have included a reference to the report.

To create this overview, we have consulted the following sources:

Western Sources:

- Chatham House: Global issues to watch in 2024
- CIDOB: The World in 2024: ten issues that will shape the international agenda
- Council on Foreign Relations (CFR): Visualizing 2024: Trends to Watch
- Deutsche Bank: What are 2024's trade megatrends?
- The Economist: Tom Standage's ten trends to watch in 2024
- Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU): Global Risk Outlook
- EY: Top 10 geopolitical developments for 2024
- Financial Times (FT): FT writers' predictions for the world in 2024
- Forbes: 15 Global Trends For 2024
- Le Grand Continent: Tendances 2024
- The Guardian: The World in 2024: Guardian writers on what to look out for
- Ipsos: Global predictions for 2024: Optimism is on the rise as more think next year will be better
- Oxford Analytica: Prospects 2024
- RANE: 2024 Annual Forecast: A Global Overview
- World Economic Forum (WEF): Strategic Intelligence Outlook: climate litigation, economic strains and more in store for 2024

Chinese Sources:

- ChinaChina Daily: 2024 world's economy brief outlook and China's economy perception
- China Youth Daily: Experts look forward to the world economy in 2024 The world will recover moderately in slow growth (
- Hong Kong Centre for Globalization: Top 10 Predictions for 2024 (香港全球化中心重磅发布: 2024年十大预测)
- The Paper: Year-end Interview | Yan Xuetong: In 2024, the world will move towards more confrontation on the basis of anti-globalization (年终专访 | 阎学通：2024年，世界在逆全球化基础上将走向更多对抗）
- Shanghai Observer/ Chinanews.com: Preview of the international situation: In 2024, these major events may change the world! (国际局势前瞻：2024年，这些大事或将改变世界！)
- Xinhua: 2024, a year of ongoing crises and unyielding hope for peace

(Geo-)Political

2024 WILL BE A YEAR OF ELECTIONS

- Almost all commentators highlight the uncertainties and long-term implications generated by 2024's **"global elections supercycle"** (EY), where more than half of the global population will vote in 76 elections. 40 of these elections will be national, in countries representing 41% of the global population and 42% of GDP.

- Elections will affect the political situation on almost every continent. For **Europe**, the key issue to watch will be the degree of support for right-wing parties. The **UK** government could attempt to gain popularity by cutting taxes and curbing immigration, but abrupt policy changes could occur (RANE).

- Incumbents are likely to remain in power in **Georgia and Moldova** amid rising internal tensions and deep divisions over the future geopolitical trajectories within each country (RANE).

- In **South Asia** elections will take place against a backdrop of rising authoritarian tendencies and could lead to the return of familiar faces. **India**'s elections will be influenced by Modi's popularity, while efforts to limit inflation could fail amid rising spending in the run-up to the elections.

- Elections will dominate **Mexican** politics and economy with a risk of unrest, whilst the presidential elections and uncertainty over sanctions will play a large role in **Venezuela** (Oxford Analytica).

- National elections and the government's response to multiple crises will be critical for **South Africa**. Lack of preparations by ruling juntas in **East Africa and the Sahel** ahead of upcoming elections increases the risk for unrest (Oxford Analytica).

- In **Russia**, President Putin will most likely be re-elected amid tightening domestic repression and an overall stable economy.

A THIRD YEAR OF WAR IN UKRAINE IS ALMOST CERTAIN

- The war in Ukraine is **likely to continue for a third year**, whilst an escalation of the war into a global conflict remains a remote risk. Resource and political constraints could lead to a **decline in Western support** amid a de-facto stalemate on the battlefield throughout the year, but a ceasefire or even **substantive negotiations appear unlikely** (RANE, Guardian).

- Domestic events could affect events on the battlefield, as **Russia will have to choose** between a more offensive strategy or continued war of attrition. Ukraine's strategic actions could also be affected by possible political turbulences in Kyiv.

THE MIDDLE EAST REMAINS AT RISK OF ESCALATION

- Developments in Middle East are set to **remain uncertain**, with the risk of the conflict spreading to East Jerusalem and the West Bank a particular point of concern.

- **Escalating tensions with the Hezbollah** could lead to more direct involvement from the US and Iran, but both appear eager to avoid a broader regional conflict. Israel might choose to **retaliate against Iran** for supporting Hamas, which increases the risk of regional escalation (RANE).

- A power vacuum after the end of hostilities could lead to **de-facto control of Gaza by Israel**, and negative fallout for the West Bank. Israel could face insurgencies and increasing diplomatic pressure.

A FATEFUL CHOICE FOR THE US ELECTORATE

- US politics will be dominated by the **upcoming presidential elections**, with President Biden's track record on the wars in Ukraine and Gaza as well as the economy featuring prominently. Meanwhile, disinformation is expected to reach unprecedented levels.

- The US elections will have **consequences around the globe**. A **return of Trump** could lead to drastic foreign policy shifts, such as on the green transition or support to Ukraine, and put the future of alliances like NATO into question. China will likely try to exploit these tensions.

- **Trump could be convicted** in at least one of his multiple ongoing trials, which he will frame as evidence for political persecution by the "Biden crime family"(FT). However, **President Biden is likely to be re-elected** by a narrow margin.

TAIWAN'S ELECTIONS ARE UNLIKELY TO PROVOKE AN ATTACK

- **Taiwan's elections** will be an important flash point, which could lead to escalating tensions with China. Chinese assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific is set to increase, fuelling US-China rivalry and increasing the **risk of military incidents** in the South China Sea and on the Korean Peninsula.

- However, an **outright attack** on Taiwan seems **unlikely**, with the Chinese government opting to coerce Taiwan into unification through infiltration, diplomatic isolation, economic incentives and military intimidation.

NEW CONFLICTS LOOM

- Wars have increasingly become a probable tool for countries to assert themselves. The distraction of global powers could lead to an **eruption of frozen conflicts** around the globe.

- Rising instability could lead to escalating violence in the **Sahel and across East Africa**, whereas poorly prepared elections and internal military tensions raise the risk of coups (Oxford Analytica).

- There could be progress on a **peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan**, but the risk of flare-ups and a return to a full-scale war remains.

- **Afghanistan** will likely further destabilise its region, with insurgents from China, Uzbekistan and Pakistan openly training with the Taliban. Armed resistance to the Taliban has been limited, but this may change if neighbouring countries decide to support opposition groups (Chatham House).

- A failure of diplomatic tools and sanctions as well as difficulties in striking deals to end conflicts and contribute to peace-making could increase **distrust in the international system** (WEF).

"2024 IS INHERITING GEOPOLITICAL TURBULENCE LIKE NEVER BEFORE" (FORBES)

- The **global order and established norms will be challenged** by conflicts, rising cost of living and environmental concerns. It remains to be seen whether the international community will be able to prevent an unprecedented humanitarian crisis amid decreasing international aid (CIDOB).

- Geopolitical **competition over key resources**, like critical raw materials, access to food and water, as well as to the world's oceans will intensify in 2024, with far-reaching implic ations.

- The tech competition between the US and China and the race to regulate AI are set to accelerate a **shift towards geopolitical blocs**.

NEW ACTORS ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

- The **'Global South'** has established itself as a key player on the global stage and will be courted by many other global actors, such as China, India and the West.

- The **enlargement of BRICS** will likely be formalised in October 2024 and could provide an indicator on the shifting geopolitical landscape, but it also raises questions on the group's cohesion.

- 2024 will also see a rise in influence of **"geo-political swing states"** and smaller players aiming to shape the global order. This is set to create a more complicated "geopolitical multiverse" (EY).

Chinese views

US-CHINA RIVALRY TAKING CENTRE-STAGE

- **US-China rivalry** is an important topic for many Chinese observers, with one even stating that the world order has shifted to a bipolar one, dominated by the two rivals (The Paper). Their relationship has entered an era of **"cold peace"** (Hong Kong Centre for Globalization), with coercive behaviour on military issues that avoids direct confrontation, cooperation on the economy and trade, and risk prevention on high tech, economic aspects and supply chains.

RISE OF THE GLOBAL RIGHT

- The many elections taking place in 2024 will **exacerbate international uncertainty** and increase polarisation both on the international and domestic level. Right-wing forces and Trump-style populists are on the rise, which could lead to more anti-globalist tendencies and usher in a **global shift to the right**.

US ELECTIONS AS A PIVOTAL MOMENT

- Analysts expect fierce competition between Biden and Trump during the US elections and consider a **negative impact on Sino-US relations** inevitable.

- A change in government would have global consequences "as the United States tends to intervene in other countries' affairs" (Xinhua). But no matter the outcome, the overall role and **international influence of the US is expected to weaken**, as countries in Europe and the Asia-Pacific will begin to question their close alignment with the US.

US "MEDDLING" IN CHINA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD

- **US "meddling" in the Asia-Pacific**, especially in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea, is expected to intensify. Important elections in the region, especially the "election of the leader of the Taiwan region"(Hong Kong Centre for Globalization) will increase the risk of US provocation.

- However, most countries in the region want to maintain stability and "a non-aligned position among major powers"(Xinhua), so the situation in the region is **expected to remain peaceful**.

CHANGING FORTUNES IN UKRAINE

- Russia is likely to "persist in its struggle with the West regarding Ukraine"(Xinhua), and is expected to gradually take the initiative and even have an advantage. Analysts expect the US and EU to re-evaluate and even decrease their support without disengaging completely.

- **Growing divisions within US and EU** could lead them to push for a political solution, which Putin could use to achieve a ceasefire, although a solution over disputed territories seems impossible. **China** could have an opportunity to **play a constructive role** in the process and position itself as a responsible power (Hong Kong Centre for Globalization).

- Chinese observers note that the EU **will have to choose** whether it is in its interest to continue following the US lead on Ukraine. They expect the EU to be more hesitant on supporting Ukraine and even consider a **return to economic cooperation with Russia** a possibility.

UNCERTAINTY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- Whilst some are uncertain whether Israel will stop its military operation, others believe that Israel will gradually realise that it **cannot eliminate Hamas completely**.

- Hamas seems to have won many supporters among Shiite militant groups and common people across the Arab world. This and the strong US support for Israel will **increase the rift between Israel and Arab states** and make a normalisation of relations futile in the short term.

- Only a **two-state solution** will truly resolve the root cause of the conflict, and efforts to find a political solution could resurface after the end of the current incident (Shanghai Observer).

RISE OF THE "GLOBAL SOUTH"

- Although the role of smaller countries and established international institutions will decline further, the **status of the Global South** will continue to rise and give countries collective strength.

- **Africa's** role in global affairs will be strengthened following the inclusion of the AU in the G20 and Egypt and Ethiopia joining BRICS, whilst major countries in the **Middle East** are emerging as an important force within the Global South.

- **China-Africa cooperation** will continue to thrive, and the upcoming **China-CELAC Forum** "will serve as a powerful demonstration of the broad consensus and positive progress of the "Global South" in **changing the international system**" (Xinhua).

Economy

A TWO-SPEEDS ECONOMY

- As global GDP growth and trade will weaken in light of geopolitical challenges, high interest rates, budgetary constraints and volatile markets, the global economy will operate at **“two speeds”** (Forbes).

- While **emerging economies charge ahead**, advanced economies will still need to take measures to slow down and avoid rising inflation. Poorer countries are likely to struggle with “low growth, strong dollar, and high debts” (The Economist).

- **US economic performance** will be better than predicted before the pandemic, while **China**’s is set to be worse. **Europe**’s performance relative to the US will continue to struggle following its existing poor results (Oxford Analytica).

- Geopolitical stresses will also drive a **fragmentation of global trade** and commodity markets, though this will vary from region to region.

HOW TO STIMULATE GROWTH?

- While “governments who cannot borrow as freely are vulnerable to recessions” (The Economist), the **easing of U.S. monetary conditions** will provide some financial relief to struggling developing economies and a financial boost to more stable economies

- The **US economy** itself will continue to be supported by **massive government borrowing**.

- Although high wage growth and decreasing inflation will provide relief to customers, **growth in the Eurozone** will remain **below 1%**, with scope for stimuli limited by low fiscal capacity (Oxford Analytica).

CHINA'S ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

- Although China's economy will slow down, the impact on emerging economies will be manageable. **GDP growth** – "assisted by a medley of debt bailout packages, fiscal stimulus initiatives and other forms of official support" (FT) – is still **set to exceed 4%**.

- China's measures to stimulate economic growth will be constrained by the already **high levels of provincial government debt**. Failing economic stimuli might lead to more direct state control, which could damage private sector confidence (EIU). Decreased Chinese growth potential – depending on the recovery of consumption – will **negatively affect the global economy**.

- With Chinese exports of electric vehicles, lithium batteries and renewable technology rapidly growing and gaining more global market shares, **advances in technology will remain strong**. China is also likely to expand its investments in overseas ports (CFR).

INTEREST RATES AND INFLATIONARY PRESSURES

- As US debt worries are rising, inflation will remain **too high to reach the 2% target** for most rich economies. Re-accelerated inflation from rising global demand and commodity prices (especially oil) could trigger a tightening of monetary policy and even a global recession.

- Meanwhile, **tougher financing conditions** will **limit fiscal policy**, following the rapid rise in borrowing to tackle COVID-19 and the impact of the war in Ukraine.

- While widely expected **high interest rates** could spark bankruptcies and tip the Eurozone into recession, 2024 will be the year the Japanese central bank finally ditches yield curve control and negative interest rates. Contrary to market expectations of several further increases, however, Japan's rates will end the year no higher than zero (FT).

- With the risk of a global financial crisis being low, volatility will be created by **localised crises and weaker lending** (Oxford Analytica).

- Fragmenting commodity markets due to geopolitical tensions could **slow down the energy transition** in advanced economies and **undermine food security** and increase debt distress in developing economies (Oxford Analytica).

US-CHINESE RIVALRY

- The US-China rivalry might lead not only to **increased protectionist tendencies** but also inefficiencies due to the **relocation of supply chains**.

- The Indo-Pacific will witness the continuation of Chinese economic influence. While Beijing's involvement in regional trade frameworks could increase, the US will lag behind due to lack of formal trade agreements in the region (CFR).

- Having to function in a **multipolar world** for which they are insufficiently prepared, most companies lacking a complex de-risking scenario will need to pay closer attention to the foreign policies of countries in which they are headquartered, especially the US and China (WEF).

Economy

DE-RISKING

- **Economic security measures** will feature prominently in geostrategic competition in 2024. As a result, the backdrop to international trade will be one of conflict, and trade professionals will be dealing with an ever more complex sanctions and export control regimes.

- De-risking global interdependencies might lead to **South-East Asia** hosting more manufacturing supply chains for Western markets. Meanwhile, aspiring **middle powers like Türkiye** will turn to de-risking to gain more foreign policy independence, whilst de-risking could increase economic competition between the **Gulf states** (RANE).

- Various political risks stemming from the diversification of value chains will be awaiting companies wishing to enter or expand in alternative markets.

Chinese views

SLOWDOWN IN GLOBAL GROWTH

- Chinese analysts agree that **global GDP growth will be low** and expect a slowdown of global inflation to a speed "between creeping and walking" (China Daily).
- Some analysts predict that the **large number of elections** around the globe may actually be **useful for the global economy,** as ruling parties will strive to protect their economies ahead of elections (China Youth Daily).

GLOBAL GROWTH SHARES ARE CHANGING

- **Emerging and developing economies** will **outperform advanced ones** as they focus more on domestic investments to develop local economies and improve livelihoods.
- At the same time, the **GDP gap between the United States and other large countries** will widen further (The Paper), even though US growth is expected to slow down.

DE-COUPLING DECEPTION?

- Whilst some Chinese observers believe that **de-globalisation**, manifested in "de-coupling, de-risking and internal circulation" (The Paper), will continue, others point to strengthening regional economic cooperation and trade even in times of intensifying competition (China Youth Daily).
- Other analysts state that most multinationals will still **consider China an attractive place for FDI**, and believe that **de-coupling is just a hype** created by a few politicians (China Youth Daily).

TRADE FRICTIONS WILL INTENSIFY

- The **ongoing tech war between China and the US** will continue, with China's three main industries – electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and solar panels – likely to be the most affected.
- Multiple analysts fear that the US and EU implementing their economic security strategies in 2024 and their possible opening of anti-dumping procedures on lithium batteries could lead to **"transatlantic technology control cooperation"** (Hong Kong Centre for Globalization), which will escalate tensions.

CHINA'S ECONOMY: ON THE UPSWING

- **China's economy will continue to fluctuate** slightly, with some industries hampered by geopolitical challenges and others, especially those related to domestic consumption, on the upswing. The decline in the real estate industry is approaching the bottom and will stabilise or even improve.
- Chinese economic policymaking is likely to **focus on investing in new technologies and infrastructure**, and on stabilising **local debt** and the **real estate sector**.

POLITICAL PUSH-AND-PULL

- The numerous elections taking place in 2024 could have a big impact on climate policy and a **"Greenlash"** (The Economist) – a backlash by voters hostile towards climate policy, which they consider an elitist conspiracy – seems likely. The **US elections** will be a particularly decisive moment for global engagement on climate change.

- An **ICJ advisory opinion on climate change** could increase pressure on the international community, but diverging opinions between advanced and developing economies will likely prevent major breakthrough agreements. Meanwhile, the **climate record** of major organisations like the **World Bank** could face critical scrutiny (Oxford Analytica).

YET ANOTHER WARMEST YEAR IN HISTORY?

- 2023 broke global temperature records bolstered by the El Niño climate pattern. **2024 is expected to be even hotter**, leading to a rise in extreme weather events. Adapting to the physical risks of climate change will be an increasingly urgent topic.

- **Extreme weather events** could disrupt global supply chains and lead to shortages in case of severe impacts on production. **Food shortages** could trigger conflict or mass migration (EIU).

LOSING NATURE

- **Climate tipping points** are approaching at ever-faster speed and the 1.5C threshold is set to be breached in 2027 (The Guardian).

- The issue of nature loss, which has been undervalued so far, will become more prominent, as its consequences become more visible in everyday contexts. Humanity will be responsible for the **largest loss of biodiversity since the age of the dinosaurs** and has failed to meet a single UN target (The Guardian).

IT'S THE ECONOMY, STUPID!

- In 2024, the **shift towards more sustainable, regenerative economic models** becomes even more important. National goals of economic growth and energy security will drive countries' climate policies, but rising economic costs and the political consequences of climate policies could **limit Western efforts on climate change**.

- Diverging policies and funding for clean energy between the US, EU, China and other major emerging economies will show the **"multispeed nature of sustainability regulations"** (EY) which could slow down the green energy transition.

- A **green subsidy race** could even trigger a global trade war, which would create incentives to return to fossil fuels and limit the West's ability to support the transition in emerging economies (EIU).

A CHANGING ENERGY LANDSCAPE

- Changing patterns of energy generation and consumption will create **new winners and losers** in economic terms. Countries with large supplies of minerals needed for the green transition will experience high demand. However, oil demand is set to rise as the global economy rebounds, making a quick end to fossil fuels difficult to achieve.

- **Renewables** will likely generate **more than one third of global power**. Their share is expected to outstrip coal within the next few years, but not yet in 2024 due to China's reliance on coal (FT).

- Following the statements at COP28, 2024 could be an **important year for nuclear power**, with possible new investments in Europe especially on small modular reactors (Grand Continent).

Chinese views

AGREEING ON THE PROBLEM BUT NOT ON THE ACTION

- Global climate change is the **biggest future challenge for mankind** and extreme weather events will increase in 2024. But despite a general consensus reached by the international community on reducing the use of fossil fuels, there will still be **disagreement on the next steps**, which would need to be carried out as soon as possible.

A GREENER ECONOMY

- 2024 could be a key year for the **"eco-economy"** focused on developing different industries for a more inclusive, sustainable development (Hong Kong Centre for Globalization).

Technolgy

(NOT EVEN) SKY IS THE LIMIT

- While the far side of the moon, Mars, Venus, and Jupiter might host new robots following several **space missions** planned for 2024, NASA is planning to send **astronauts around the moon**. 2024 might also witness the first-ever **all-female commercial spaceflight**.

'EVERYDAYSATION' OF AI

- With Google, Meta, OpenAI and others releasing new AI models, their increased usage in journalism, customer service and software development will mean that **using generative AI becomes the norm**.
- As consumers' and businesses' curiosity about the potential of AI increases, states will have to weigh AI safety against favourable business conditions.
- As the regular use of AI is extremely resource-intensive, AI firms will increasingly reach out to the **energy sector** to explore ways fulfilling their needs (Le Grand Continent).

AI'S IMPACT ON WORK

- While AI could lead to new jobs, many nevertheless expect **job losses** in their own countries. Concerns about the AI's impact on workforce could then lead to a 'backlash' (The Economist).
- Although AI could be transformational and change traditional meetings with innovations like real-time analysis, AI-powered assistants or translation, **it could take years** for AI to have a major effect on productivity.
- The **value of office space will decrease** with the 'ongoing hybrid work revolution' (Forbes).

AI REGULATORY RACES

- With increasing awareness of the risks and technological transformation brought by AI, 2024 will see a **race to exploit, develop and regulate it**.

- The EU's AI Act will be implemented. **Over 800 legislative measures worldwide** might come into effect and the debate over which global body is the regulator of the AI could be settled.

UP-RISKING

- Trust in political institutions could be undermined as AI-created **deepfakes, disinformation, and large-scale targeted intrusions** might disrupt elections already under threat by foreign manipulation.

- **Quantum computing** will increasingly become a risk for cybersecurity (World Economic Forum).

CHIPS AS A MAIN

- More effective global enforcement of **US tech sanctions** (focused mostly on **semiconductors**), such as through increased US pressure on Middle Eastern countries, may limit China's ability to buy chips.

- Chip shortages could create **"bottlenecks for AI development"** (Forbes) as manufacturers struggle to satisfy the rising demand.

Chinese views

CHINESE HIGH-TECH EXPORTS WILL CONTINUE TO GROW

- Chinese high-tech exports, especially of the **"new three"** (China Daily) – electric cars, solar panels and li-ion batteries – will continue their rise in popularity around the globe. But as some analysts point out, **this export growth is not a goal in itself**, but rather a result of the popularity of China's high tech goods, was a deliberate attempt to create trade surpluses.

AI'S RISE NEEDS A GOVERNANCE RESPONSE

- Analysts believe that new technology like AI will increasingly be **implemented into social governance** to enable more intelligent social monitoring and improve efficiency. But AI's rapid adoption has led to many **new security risks**, which will need to be mitigated by an ethics-first approach to AI governance.

- There will be a push to introduce and implement new AI regulations in countries and regions around the world. But **a global public governance approach is urgently needed**. Such an approach should pay special attention to the needs of developing countries, as proposed by China's Global AI Governance Initiative.

Society

FEELING THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT

- Big global sport events like the **Paris Olympics** could create brief moments of unity (The Economist).

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

- The speed of societal and political changes and masses of news content have taken their toll on an increasingly large number of people. New and old conflicts and uncertainty over elections could lead to further **news fatigue** and increase the disconnect between society and the political system.

- At the same time, attempts to **repress reporting** around the elections taking place in 2024 and **attacks on the press** will continue, especially via legal threats based on non-journalism laws (Chatham House).

INCREASING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

- Inflation and wages that rise too slowly to make up for rising prices could lead to **industrial action** and **spark social unrest** with significant economic consequences.

- Problems caused by **China's ageing population** will become more visible, with policy measures to incentivise young women to have more children falling flat and an increasing number of pensioners expecting more government support.

MOVING MIGRANTS

- The recently agreed EU measures against irregular migration are **unlikely to curb migration numbers** significantly. There could be more deals with non-EU countries to prevent EU-bound migration in exchange for advancements of their membership procedures (The Guardian).

- Migration to the EU could decrease slightly as asylum seekers revert to increasingly hazardous routes, but the **death toll is set to rise** (The Guardian). Meanwhile, disinformation on migration issues could lead to a rise in xenophobia, discrimination and radical anti-migrant policies.

A CRUCIAL YEAR FOR SOCIAL RIGHTS

- Women's rights have been removed and restricted around the globe on recent years. The extent of oppression in places like Afghanistan could lead to a legal initiative on **gender apartheid** (Chatham House).

- After the enactment of Uganda's draconian Anti-Homosexuality-Act in 2023, more countries across Africa could pass equally harmful legislation, which could lead to further **increases in violence against LGBTQ people** (Chatham House).

Chinese views

MORE TARGETED SEASONAL COVID-19 MEASURES

- Although the pandemic has plateaued, seasonal outbreaks of COVID-19 could put it back into the spotlight. "More science-based" **health monitoring mechanisms** focusing on prevention and limited interference in everyday life may be necessary once again to limit concentrated outbreaks (Hong Kong Centre for Globalization).

GEN Z COULD CHANGE SOCIETIES

- **Gen Z** will gradually become the main force in the workplace, which will pose challenges for business managers and social governance. They have already shifted online consumption patterns as they tend to focus on emotional value and authenticity rather than superficial consumerism.

- Attempts to change their **"potentially unconventional behaviour"** could lead to conflicts and frustration on both sides. Instead, businesses and "social managers" will need to find ways to integrate them and their values (Hong Kong Centre for Globalization).

10 conflicts

1. GAZA

Three months into the conflict, it has become even clearer that Israel will not be able to destroy Hamas completely. Continued attempts could lead to existential consequences for Gaza.

2. WIDER MIDDLE EAST

Although neither Iran and its allies nor the US and Israel want a wider escalation of the war in Gaza, there are many ways for this to happen.

3. SUDAN

The possibility of another genocide or even a collapse of Sudan looms over the ongoing civil war between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The window for negotiations is shrinking as RSF comes closer to seizing the country.

4. UKRAINE

With Ukraine facing a hard winter and Western support for its war efforts increasingly politicised, Russia sees time on its side. The course of the war will determine the prospects for Europe's security.

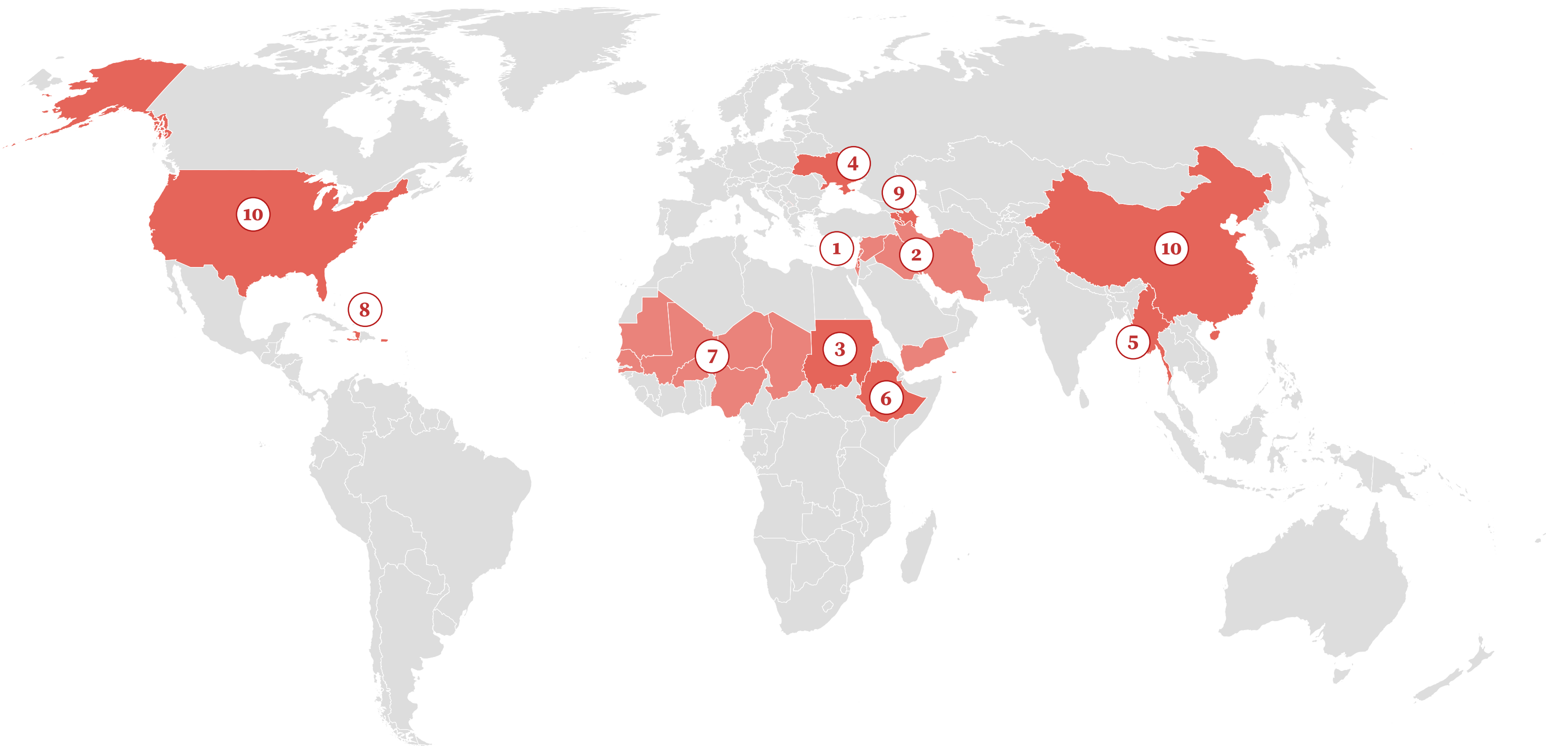
5. MYANMAR

An offensive by a coalition of armed rebel groups, which seized parts of the north-east of the country from the army, has emboldened rebel groups elsewhere to attack. These uprisings pose the biggest threat yet to Myanmar's ruling junta, with no end in sight for the ongoing crisis.

6. ETHIOPIA

A deal between the government and regional leaders led to relief in war-torn Tigray in 2023, but prepared the ground for fighting in two other powerful regions, Amhara and Oromo. Tensions with Eritrea over Ethiopia's "right" to sea access create further concerns.

10 conflicts to watch in 2024



7. THE SAHEL

The army governments established after coups in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso are yet to deliver on their promises to decrease violence in their countryside. Instead, they rely on support from Wagner and newly acquired weapons to continue futile offensives against jihadist and separatist groups.

8. HAITI

Foreign forces led by the Kenyan police to tackle Haiti's problem with brutal gangs are set to arrive early this year. But they will face a difficult mission fighting heavily armed gangs in chaotic shantytowns without harming civilians, and against a backdrop of increasing chaos in Haitian politics

9. ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN

After Azerbaijan's sudden offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh led to an exodus of almost everyone living there, it is uncertain whether Azerbaijan will advance further on Armenia or whether the ongoing talks may finally lead to peace.

10. U.S.-CHINA

A November meeting between the leaders of both countries ended the downward trajectory of US-China relations. But tensions in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea remain, and the risk of involuntary collusions of military planes or ships is high.

Red Herrings
according to Eurasia Group

Some of the more recurrent predictions made by commentators are nonetheless questioned by others. The Eurasia Group in particular has highlighted three predictions which it challenges and which it sees as "Red Herrings".

1
There will be a US-China crisis

Despite a number of potential irritants, the US and China will maintain rather stable ties. Preserving stability is in the interest of both sides amid domestic challenges and ahead of the US elections.

2
Eurosceptics and populists will take over the EU

Although far-right and populist parties could capture up to 25 percent of the EP's seats, an alliance with parties at the centre is unlikely.
The EU's traditional political centre will still hold in 2024.

3
BRICS+ will emerge as the China-led counterweight to the G7

Finding a consensus among the expanded BRICS has become even more complex. China will have significant influence, but India's ambitions and a desire of many BRICS+ members to maintain ties with both the US and China will limit China's power.

Predictions

What people in 1924 thought about 2024

The discipline of foresight is much older than we think. Here are some newspaper clippings from 1924, which make a number of fascinating predictions about life in 2024, once again compiled by researcher Paul Fairie in a viral Twitter thread.

Future of the Horse

Another scientist says that the horse is to be extinct, and he sets the date a century hence. The extinction process may be at work, says the Washington Star, but whether the horse will go to the vanishing point in that time one does not know.

If horses would decrease in the same ratio as in the last ten or twenty years, it might be easy to tell when the last horse would give up his stall to an automobile and pass on to that realm where good horses should go, and perhaps where old Pegasus still rears and canters through the clouds.

But the decrease in horse population —or in "hippolation"—may not decrease in arithmetical progression, and we may still find a horse on a farm near Washington as we now find a white turkey, a hand churn, a muley cow, a hearth broom of sedge, or something else quaint and rare.

A Century Hence

Who knows what may not come to pass in the next century? Already the world is making such rapid strides ahead that it is hard for anyone to keep up with it.

In a century people will be flying around and exploring space. Aeroplanes will travel at what is now thought of as an incredible speed, yet the people of that age will not think any more about it than we now think about the present speed records. In the days that are coming people will think no more of going to some planet that is sailing gloriously around through space than we now think of a trip across the ocean.

EXTENDING LIFE'S SPAN.

AVERAGE EXPECTATION IN 2,024.

Sir H. Kingsley Wood, M.P., presiding last night at the centenary festival dinner of the London Friendly Institution, at Stewart's Restaurant, Piccadilly, said there was no doubt that by 2,024 the average expectation of life would be at least 100 years, and a person at 75 would be a comparatively young man. Medical science and

What Will the Music of 2024 A. D. Be Like?

Many inconveniences which the touring artist now has to suffer will no doubt be eliminated. It will not be necessary to travel great distances. The strain of the concert tour will be dispensed with. The changes in living habits and daily regimen that make these trips trying even to the seasoned performer will be dispensed with. Artists may not even have to leave their homes, to endure the artificialities of the concert platform.

NEW YORK, Jan. 10, 2024.—The airplane and the bootlegger have proved the greatest modifying forces except feminism upon the styles of the past century. Every one now wears flying clothes out of doors, those of men and women being practically similar in cut, and differing only slightly in material. The most fashionable suits for men are made of the inner skin of the Patagonian elephant lined with steel wool, experiment having proved this combination at once durable and cold-resisting, as well as expensive.

An eminent scientist predicted that a century hence men's legs would be atrophied from lack of exercise, due to continued use of the automobile. He made no mention of the pedal extremities of the pedestrian, but we presume he expects us take it for granted that the specie will have been completely exterminated by the afore mentioned motorist.

* * *

THINKS JAZZ MUSIC WILL BE CLASSICAL CENTURY FROM NOW

Paul Kochanski, Russian Violinist, Says It Is Not Destructive Force.

"Jazz music is a powerful force for development of music in America, and in a hundred years will be accepted as classical."

"In the year 2024 the most important single thing which the cinema will have helped in a large way to accomplish will be that of eliminating from the face of the civilized world all armed conflict. Pictures will be the most powerful factor in bringing about this condition. With the use of the universal language of motion pictures the true meaning of the brotherhood of man will have been established throughout the earth. . . All men are created equal. . . .

FOOD IN 2024

Not very many years ago men ate meat and bread principally, with a few vegetables. Nowadays we have a large variety and great quantity of foodstuffs. We even take some of our edibles and drinkables from coal and other minerals.

Col. William Boyce Thompson has founded an Institute of Plant Research whose experts will try to counteract the food shortage which is predicted for 2024. Many scientists believe that the human family will be at the point of starvation in or near that year.

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