
World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012 Executive Summary

Davos-Klosters, Switzerland 25-29 January

The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models

Purpose

We are living in the most complex, interdependent and fast-paced era in recent memory. It is also the new context in which leadership will be exercised for the foreseeable future. Thus, the purpose of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012 is to ensure that leaders exercise their responsibilities – jointly, boldly and strategically – to improve the state of the world for future generations.

In Davos, leaders will share insights on what has changed fundamentally in the world, explore new conceptual models that are emerging, catalyse sought-after solutions and collaborate on the risks and opportunities that lie ahead. To this end and for over 40 years, the Annual Meeting has provided an unrivalled platform for leaders from all walks of life to shape the global agenda at the start of the year.

The New Context

Across the world, decision-makers are struggling to take action on critical economic, political and societal issues arising in a variety of contexts. Most apparent is that the speed of change continues to accelerate worldwide, fuelled not only by globalization, but also by increasingly sophisticated technology.

The contextual change at the top of minds remains the rebalancing and deleveraging that is reshaping the global economy. In the near term, this transformation is seen in the context of how developed countries will deleverage without falling back into recession and how emerging countries will curb inflation and avoid future economic bubbles. In the long term, both will play out as the population of our interdependent world not only passes 7 billion but is also interconnected through information technology on a historic scale. The net result will be transformational changes in social values, resource needs and technological advances as never before. In either context, the necessary conceptual models do not exist from which to develop a systemic understanding of the great transformations taking place now and in the future.

Integrating people, systems and technologies is an indisputable leadership challenge that ultimately requires new models, bold ideas and personal courage to ensure that this century improves the human condition rather than capping its potential. Thus, the Annual Meeting 2012 will convene under the theme, **The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models**, whereby leaders return to their core purpose of defining what the future should look like, aligning stakeholders around that vision and inspiring their institutions to realize that vision.

The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models captures not only the context but also the purpose with which leaders must now act – ensuring that our future is one of inspired collaboration and bold solutions to global, regional and industry challenges and not a return to *status quo*. As is the tradition of the Annual Meeting, the programme will challenge long-held assumptions about society, politics, technology, business and economics to generate the powerful ideas and collaborative spirit desperately needed to manage the future course of world affairs.

Thematic Roadmap: The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models

A complex, interdependent and fast-paced world creates not only diverse outcomes but also unintended consequences that constantly test the cognitive limits of leaders and force us to shape new models. Thus, the four sub-themes of the Annual Meeting programme are conceptualized as dual imperatives to underscore the linkages between various models when addressing complex global, regional and industry issues.

- **Growth and Employment Models**

The policy prescriptions, industry models and performance incentives that emerged from an era of consumption and debt-driven growth must be transformed to deliver quality growth. Growth that is sustainable, entrepreneur-driven and employment-creating should be the outcome of the rebalancing and deleveraging of the global economy. As traditional work opportunities decline as a result of production increasingly based on knowledge and ingenuity, individual entrepreneurship will become a critical factor for future job and growth creation.

- **Leadership and Innovation Models**

The leading countries and global governance institutions of the Cold War era must create space for major emerging economies, private sector institutions and multistakeholder partnerships. These new actors should have the responsibility not only to address important global and regional challenges but also to introduce innovative solutions. The future will also show that younger and older generations will play a greater role compared to today. Thus, the rebirth of intergenerational responsibility must be embedded in leaders to avoid a future demographic divide.

- **Sustainability and Resource Models**

The realization that human activities have a major impact on Earth's ecosystem must drive future changes in behaviour and policies. Our ecological footprint will have to be fully internalized in business models. A new mindset should drive collaboration and innovation among governments, industries and companies to ensure that future resource constraints do not lead to greater energy, food and water insecurity.

- **Social and Technological Models**

The next wave of technological innovation, particularly in life sciences, nanotechnology and artificial intelligence, will not just deliver productivity gains but will also transform us by adding new dimensions to our lives. At a societal level, the norms, behaviours and values that are protected and celebrated in the physical world are neither clearly established nor firmly anchored in the digital world. As the "Internet of things" that connects billions of sensors and devices becomes a reality, stakeholders should work together to safeguard the knowledge, data and networks that are critical resources for our future development.

The World's Foremost Multistakeholder Community

Participation in the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting is by invitation only and limited to the world's leading:

- Chief executives of our 1,000 Partner and Member companies
- Political leaders (from the G20 and other relevant countries)
- Heads of international organizations
- Experts representing our Global Agenda Councils
- Representatives from key civil society stakeholder groups
- Young Global Leaders
- Social Entrepreneurs
- Technology Pioneers
- Global Shapers (under the age of 30)
- Media Leaders
- Spiritual and Cultural Leaders

The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012 will provide participants with strategic insights from each of the four thematic clusters, with the development of a Risk Response Network among its defining legacies. Particular emphasis will be placed on addressing the question of "How" in the true Davos Spirit, and elaborating innovative ideas and solutions to global challenges in a multistakeholder environment.