GLOBAL TRENDS ANALYSIS

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Cooperation in a Post-Western World: Challenges and future prospects

DEAR READER,

We are delighted to present this first issue in our new publication series
GLOBAL TRENDS. ANALYSIS. The series links current developments to long-
term trends, provides information about global interdependences and iden-
tifies options for policy action. It thus follows on from GLOBAL TRENDS,
published by the Development and Peace Foundation (sef:), Bonn, and the Uni-
versity of Duisburg-Essen's Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) from
1991 to 2015. Our contributors to this new series analyse the latest research
findings and a wealth of facts and figures in order to fulfil our objective: to
present complex issues in clear and readable text and graphics.

GLOBAL TRENDS. ANALYSIS is our response to changing reading habits. It will
appear more frequently, giving us a more visible presence, and will offer fresh
insights into a range of political topics in the fields of global governance,
peace and security, sustainable development, the global economy and finance,
and the environment and natural resources.

The series stands out for its openness to perspectives from different world
regions. This is reflected in its international editorial team, which includes
renowned academics and practitioners from Brazil, China, India, Lebanon and
South Africa. We are very pleased that they have kindly agreed to contribute.

This first issue looks at the current state of global governance and identi-
fies options for the further evolution of global cooperation for peaceful, sus-
tainable and equitable development. We plan to produce around three issues
a year, which will be available online free of charge in English and German.

We hope to welcome you among our regular readers and look forward to
receiving your feedback and suggestions.

Renate Hendricks
Chairperson of the Executive Committee
of the Development and Peace Foundation
(sef:)

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Spokesperson of the Board of the Institute
for Development and Peace (INEF),
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INTRODUCTION

The post-Cold War world has been characterised by global cooperation, largely driven by Western actors and based on the norms of Western liberalism. Today, global power shifts are accelerating. The Western liberal order finds itself in deep crisis. Its previous anchor, the United States (US), is no longer willing or able to run the system. Its most important former ally, the European Union (EU), is struggling with integration fatigue. New nationalist movements in many Western countries are proliferating. In other parts of the world, too, people fear the impact of globalisation and are seeking to regain national autonomy.

What does this mean for the future of global cooperation? How can the wish for more national autonomy be reconciled with the need to cooperate in the face of unsustainable development, global inequality, conflict and gross violations of human rights? How do changing power constellations affect global cooperation? We suggest that new forms of governance will contribute to sustaining global cooperation. This paper uses the example of the Paris Agreement to illustrate new forms of polycentric and multi-stakeholder transnational governance that are bottom-up rather than top-down. Moreover, constructive coalitions of the willing and more flexibility in global governance provisions might also be key for successful future cooperation.

FIGURE 1

GLOBAL POWER –
DIFFICULT TO MEASURE

Current rankings and trends
according to different indices (2017)

1. France

2. UK
3. USA
4. Germany
5. Canada
6. Japan
7. Switzerland
8. Australia
9. Sweden
10. Netherlands
- - - - - - -
23. China

India (not among the top 30)

Soft Power Index combines data across six categories (government, culture, education, global engagement, enterprise and digital) and international polling from 25 different countries.

engagement
culture

1. USA

2. Russia
3. China
4. India
5. France
6. UK
7. Japan
8. Turkey
9. Germany
10. Egypt

Military Strength Ranking based on over 50 factors such as weapon diversity, available manpower, geographical factors, logistical flexibility, natural resources and local industry influence. Current political/military leadership is NOT taken into account.

weapons
manpower

infrastructure
education

economic capital
militarisation

1. Switzerland

2. USA
3. Singapore
4. Netherlands
5. Germany
6. Hong Kong SAR
7. Sweden
8. UK
9. Japan
10. Finland
- - - - - - - -
27. China

40. India

Global Competitiveness Index measures 12 pillars of competitiveness such as institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, based on more than 100 indicators.

State Power Index 2017 measures state power across 7 dimensions (economic capital, militarisation, land, human resources, culture, natural resources, diplomacy) based on 17 indicators.

1. USA

2. China
3. Russia
4. India
5. Germany
6. UK
7. France
8. Japan
9. Brazil
10. Canada

Source:
Global Competitiveness Index 2017-2018
(https://widgets.weforum.org/global-competitiveness-report-2017/)
2017 Military Strength Ranking
(https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp)

The Soft Power 30
(https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2017-Web-1.pdf)

State Power Index 2017
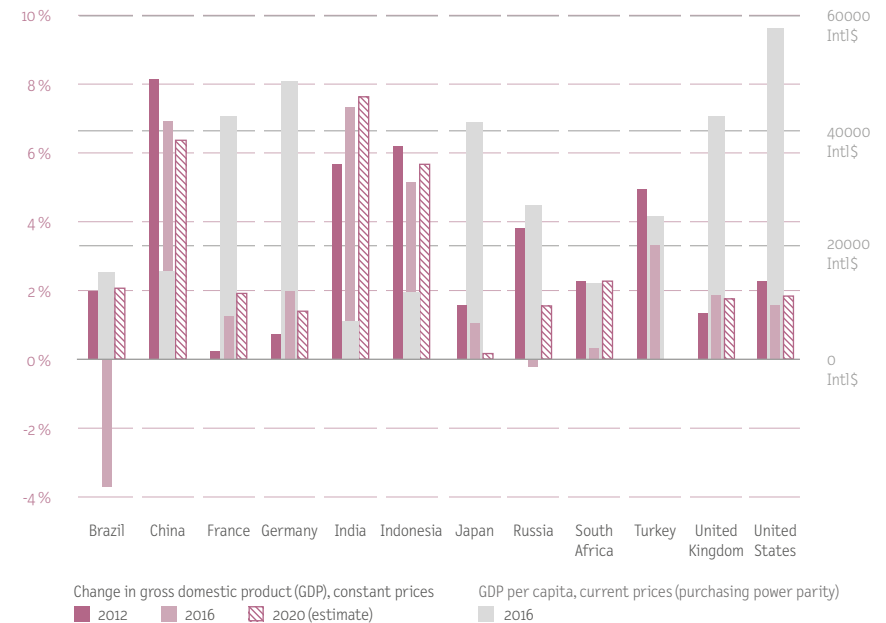(http://index.ineuropa.pl/en/)

1. THE CRISIS OF THE WESTERN LIBERAL ORDER AND THE RISE OF NON-WESTERN POWERS

The purported decline of the Western world and the end of US hegemony have been popular predictions since the beginning of the 21st century. Shrinking relative economic power, an ageing population and failing military interventions seemed to signal the end of a unique period of predominance of Western liberalism. The West's optimism of the 1990s that foresaw a rise of democracy, market economy and the protection of human rights worldwide has long faded. The Western alliance itself betrayed its ideals by leading a "war on terror" that was waged in the name of, but not based on, individual human rights. The idea of rule-based multilateralism and an international rule of law as the basis for solving transnational problems seems to have lost attraction in the West itself and elsewhere. Rising nationalism and populism in Western countries challenge core values of liberal democracies, first and foremost cultural pluralism and cosmopolitanism.

At the same time, a number of major emerging countries – in particular the so-called BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and MIST (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey) – have experienced impressive economic advances in the recent past. However, except for China and India, the economic boom in most of these countries has slowed down – if not come to an end, thus leaving their GDP per capita at a relatively low level [see Figure 2]. Furthermore, several of these countries are shaken by internal political crises rooted in corruption and weak institutions, as well as by a lack of transparency and accountability. And yet China in particular has become a decisive economic and political force in the international arena, while India still seems to act below its potential. Russia under Vladimir Putin, on the other hand, has regained geopolitical influence despite an economic setback.

However, to what extent China, India or any other emerging country or region is able – and willing – to take on (normative) leadership in global cooperation remains unclear so far.

China and India still show impressive growth rates
Difference in gross domestic product per capita remains high

Change in gross domestic product (GDP), constant prices
■ 2012　■ 2016　▨ 2020 (estimate)

GDP per capita, current prices (purchasing power parity)
■ 2016

Source: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, October 2017

1.1 NATIONAL AUTONOMY AS THE NEW MAGIC BULLET

A substantial number of Western countries are currently shaken by a nationalist upsurge rooted in mistrust of the benefits of globalisation and an international system that is perceived to be an elitist project. Discontent with the policies of the centrist parties appears to be widespread, providing scope for more radical responses [see Figure 3]. The Economist describes this phenomenon as the "revenge of the deplorables" (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2017), by those who see themselves as losers in a form of globalisation that leads to ever-growing inequality and deep divisions within societies (World Inequality Report 2018).

US President Donald Trump with his "America first" rhetoric plays on this mood. In his first speech to the UN General Assembly in September 2017, he postulated: "As President of the United States, I will always put America first, just like you, as the leaders of your countries will always, and should always, put your countries first" (The White House 2017).
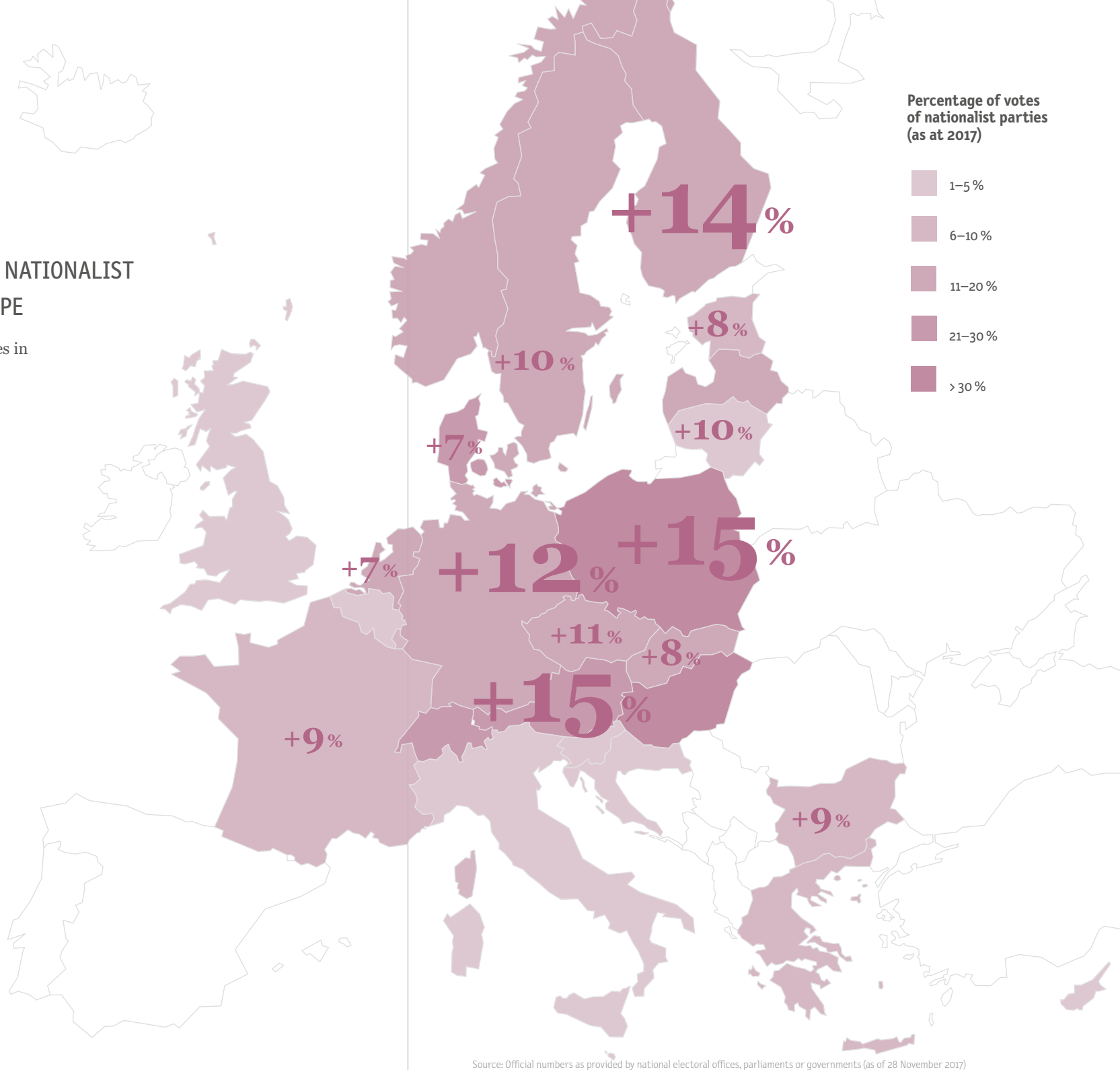
FIGURE 3

INCREASE IN VOTES FOR NATIONALIST PARTIES ALL OVER EUROPE

Election results of national parties in different European countries

Increase within the last decade

+15 % **Austria**
FPÖ — Freedom Party of Austria

+15 % **Poland**
PiS — Law and Justice and KORWiN

+14 % **Finland**
Perus — True Finns

+12 % **Germany**
AfD — Alternative for Germany

+11 % **Czech Republic**
SPD Freedom and Direct
Democracy

+10 % **Sweden**
SD — Sweden Democrats

+10 % **Latvia**
NA — National Alliance

+9 % **Bulgaria**
United Patriots

+9 % **France**
FN — Front National

+8 % **Estonia**
EKRE — Conservative People's
Party of Estonia

+8 % **Slovakia**
LSNS — People's Party Our Slovakia

+7 % **Denmark**
DF — Danish People's Party

+7 % **Netherlands**
PVV — Party for Freedom

Percentage of votes of nationalist parties (as at 2017)

- 1–5 %
- 6–10 %
- 11–20 %
- 21–30 %
- \> 30 %

+14 %
+8 %
+10 %
+10 %
+7 %
+15 %
+12 %
+7 %
+11 %
+8 %
+15 %
+9 %
+9 %

Source: Official numbers as provided by national electoral offices, parliaments or governments (as of 28 November 2017)

Negative developments within Western – and other – countries are imputed to the globalised economy, to external disturbances, to refugees and migrants, etc. Not uncommonly, international agreements and institutions, particularly the EU – and in the US also the United Nations (UN) – are presented as the root of all evil by these nationalist movements.

Put into practice, such an ideology stands for a primacy of short-term national interests as symbolised by the Brexit vote. Obviously, this is to the detriment of cooperative solutions to global and regional challenges. Although it will not usher in the end of international cooperation, it may well signify the end of cooperation as we have known it since the 1990s.

1.2 IS THE CRISIS IN WESTERN LIBERALISM CHANGING GLOBAL COOPERATION?

The Western world no longer speaks with one voice. The pictures of the G7 summit in Taormina, Italy, in 2017 spoke an unambiguous language, as did German Chancellor Angela Merkel when concluding that Europe can no longer completely rely on its longstanding transatlantic ally (https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/28/world/europe/angela-merkel-trump-alliances-g7-leaders.html?_r=0,12.01.2018).

US foreign policy with its lack of predictability is a particular cause for concern with regard to international cooperation. By withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TTP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as well as with Trump's animosity towards other crucial cooperation agreements like the Iran nuclear deal and the North American Free Trade Agreement, the US President provides a role model for the refusal of multilateral solutions.

This strengthens the public perception that international cooperation is in decline. And indeed, regarding some of the most pressing global challenges such as Syria and North Korea, the international community finds itself in a dangerous stalemate. However, these "big issues" only represent a very small – though important – share of global cooperation. By far the largest number of cooperation networks are out of sight of the global public. They operate silently; their contributions to a functioning world society and to the provision of global public goods are taken for granted.

This correlates with the fact that there has been a steady increase in institutionalised forms of cooperation since 1990 [see Figure 4]. While the number of intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) remained almost constant from

1990 to 2015, there has been a notable increase in institutionalised forms of non-governmental cooperation. This also signifies a change in the character of global cooperation. Although the number of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) with universal membership (type B) has remained almost unchanged since 1990, both the number of regionally defined non-governmental membership organisations (type D) and new forms of organisations such as foundations and non-governmental funding organisations (type F) doubled from 1990 to 2015. Very often, newer type F organisations that take the form of networks are non-hierarchical and characterised by a high degree of flexibility. In addition, the number of non-governmental commissions (type E) has risen significantly.

FIGURE 4
Increase in number of INGOs indicates network-like cooperation
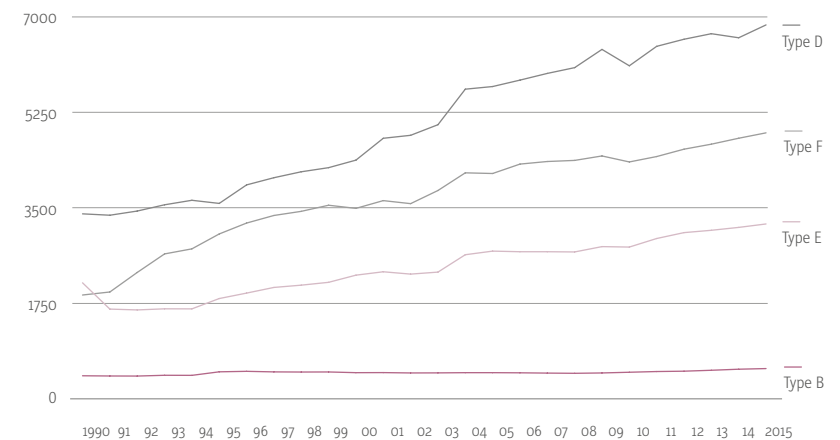
Type B: Universal membership organisations: Membership covers at least 60 countries regardless of distribution, or membership covers at least 30 countries and is equitably distributed over several continents.

Type D: Regionally defined membership organisations: Membership and preoccupations restricted to a particular continental or sub-continental region or contiguous group of countries, and covers at least 3 countries or includes at least 3 autonomous international bodies.

Type E: Organisations emanating from places, persons or other bodies: May include international centres and institutes created by intergovernmental bodies, and joint bodies, regardless of membership.

Type F: Organisations having a special form: May include foundations, funds, banks, and illegal or unusual bodies.

Source: Various issues of Yearbook of International Organizations (Number of international organizations by type), ed.by the Union of International Associations

Furthermore, it would be simplistic to dismiss the current challenges in international cooperation as the result of a nationalist upsurge in Western (and other) countries only. Instead, the protagonists of global governance should critically ask themselves why nationalist anti-liberal movements are in vogue to such an extent today. There certainly are substantial weaknesses and injustices in the way international cooperation has evolved, which actively contribute to the negative impacts of globalisation and inequality rather than preventing them.

The unpleasant truth might be that – in parallel to the constantly increasing significance of international cooperation – its structural weaknesses have become much more obvious: its undemocratic design giving undue weight to a handful of "old" powers; its proneness to vested interests by these states (as well as powerful non-state actors); its persistent lack of transparency and democratic accountability to the world's population; its failure to deliver adequate solutions to a number of particularly pressing problems; its tendency to come up with solutions that do not take national and regional conditions into account.

Prominent fora and networks of global cooperation are often misused to push specific interests. The playing field is hardly ever level. Powerful actors shape cooperation networks for their own benefit – the best example probably being the UN Security Council (UNSC). Although the actors in charge of world peace and security are aware of what is at stake, as the high number of formal meetings of the UNSC shows, the collective ability of the Council to engage and respond to problems appears quite low. The same is true of other international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

So, with the traditional multilateralism shaped by Western liberalism in crisis, who will be pushing for more effective global cooperation in the future? And what will the normative basis look like?

1.3 IN SEARCH OF (NORMATIVE) LEADERSHIP

The self-inflicted retreat of the West challenges the most powerful and stable emerging economies – in particular China and India – to increase their impact on world politics. This not only exacerbates the long-discussed mismatch in the design of core institutions of global governance. It also brings us to the question of who will assume leadership in global cooperation – in

practical terms as well as regarding the normative framework. Leadership remains crucial, although it is rarely found in global cooperation nowadays. As many empirical studies of leadership in multilateral negotiations have shown, much depends on individuals (e.g. Hermann et al. 2001, Tallberg 2010) and parties (e.g. Hampson/Reid 2003) who are willing to take on a particular responsibility for guiding other parties in directions that could lead to joint solutions (Skodvin/Andresen 2006).

Leadership depends on power. However, there are diverse ways to measure power and to rank different countries accordingly [see Figure 1]. In most indices, power is based on quantifiable "hard" indicators like population size and economic and/or military strength. Some indices, however, also take a country's "soft power" (Nye 2004) into account, such as the global reach and appeal of a nation's cultural output, the level of human capital in a country, its contribution to scholarship and its attractiveness to international students (see https://softpower30.com/what-is-soft-power/).

Therefore, leadership too can take different shapes: *structural* leadership is based on material resources, while *intellectual* leadership relies on the cognitive and discursive skills of those who engage in cooperation. However, in negotiation processes, chief negotiators need *entrepreneurial* leadership to persuade others to follow their proposals (see Young 1991). Thus, leadership is not only confined to the (materially) most powerful party. It can even emanate from non-governmental organisations and civil society, as the successful ban on landmines with the adoption of the Ottawa Convention and the establishment of the International Criminal Court have shown. Nonetheless, much depends on states for the future of global cooperation.

At this stage, however, with respect to the different rankings of China and India in the various power indices, much remains unclear in terms of future leadership by particular states. Nevertheless, four observations may be of relevance.

First, it is mainly China that has the power not only for regional but also for global leadership [see Figure 1]. China has become an economic superpower, and it has also massively built up its military capacities. While its ambitions to consolidate its status as regional hegemon have been obvious for quite some time, China's aspirations at the global level have long remained unclear. With the US turning its back to the world under President Trump, there are growing signs that China is preparing to fill the gap. At the

World Economic Forum in 2017, for example, China's President Xi Jinping turned out to be an advocate of free trade, speaking out against the protectionist policies threatening multilateral trade (https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/china-new-world-power-davos-2017/). Another example is China's commitment to the Paris Agreement in contrast to the withdrawal by the Trump Administration, with China joining forces with the EU and Canada to advance the implementation of the Agreement (http://www.dw.com/en/eu-canada-china-try-to-isolate-us-ahead-of-bonn-climate-talks/a-40530601). Due to its population size, India could qualify as another candidate for global leadership. However, it seems to be largely preoccupied with internal challenges and conflicts in its immediate neighbourhoods. Although it has the potential to become an important actor, currently, its ability as well as its will to take on a leading global role are to be questioned.

Second, these emerging global leaders put great emphasis on the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. In contrast to the US (before Trump) or the former superpower USSR, they do not only claim this principle to protect themselves from external interference in their domestic affairs, but elevate non-interference to a global norm that should guide international relations. To what extent this paradigm of non-interventionism will be compatible with the status of a leading world power remains to be seen. China, for example, although officially sticking to the paradigm, in practice is adapting its policy more and more towards what Chinese scholars call "constructive intervention" (Pang 2013, p. 48f.).

Third, there is an ongoing "contestation over who is setting and overseeing the rules of the game" (Newman/Zala 2017, p. 1). But in many cases, China and India do not seem to go for real confrontation with the West to get adequate representation in global governance structures. They use existing structures if their interests are safeguarded. But if they do not feel adequately represented, they do not shy away from building new institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) or the BRICS Development Bank to bypass Western-dominated institutions.

Fourth, beyond the stronger emphasis on non-interference, these new powers do not seem to strive to abolish the normative framework or the underlying principles of the liberal world order. On the contrary, they see themselves as acting within this normative framework – and upholding at least substantial parts of it, while the West seems to be turning away from its own liberal order (e.g. with growing protectionism). Still, the interpretation of the

prevailing norms by leading powers of the future might differ, and the same applies to their priorities. This is certainly true of China, where the new openness to Western liberalism in international politics stands in clear contrast to its internal policies, notably its understanding of the rule of law and civil and political rights.

In sum, the picture remains mixed as far as the prospects for an invigorated normative leadership are concerned. It is necessary, therefore, to take a closer look at how to sustain global cooperation beyond the traditional notion of a clear set of leading powers.

2. REDEFINING COOPERATION IN A WORLD IN TRANSITION

The goal of global cooperation is to solve common problems and secure or provide public goods, such as peace and security, stable financial markets and an intact environment. Global problem-solving is increasingly taking place against a background of uncertainty, resulting from a shift in power relations and a lack of clarity about responsibilities and accountability. This has contributed to growing dysfunctionalities in the current architecture of global governance, epitomised by the UN system. However, even well-disposed observers do not assume that the UN will be reinvigorated by extensive reforms in the short run. Therefore, we need to look at instances of cooperation which exhibit features that help to overcome stalemate in negotiations, establish new avenues of multi-actor and multi-level participation, facilitate learning and knowledge creation, and develop new mechanisms of accountability.

A look at ongoing negotiation processes offers valuable clues. Today, global cooperation is already characterised by an ever-growing number of actors and power constellations on the one hand, and complex global problems on the other. To cope with these new realities, three strategies, which draw upon the example of the Paris climate change negotiations, may be helpful: more variability in coalition-building, a stronger focus on polycentric and hybrid forms of governance, including a vast variety of actors, and finally more flexibility in global governance provisions.

FIGURE 5

NETWORKS OF STATE COALITIONS IN THE PARIS CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

Fragmented and cross-cutting memberships in negotiation groups
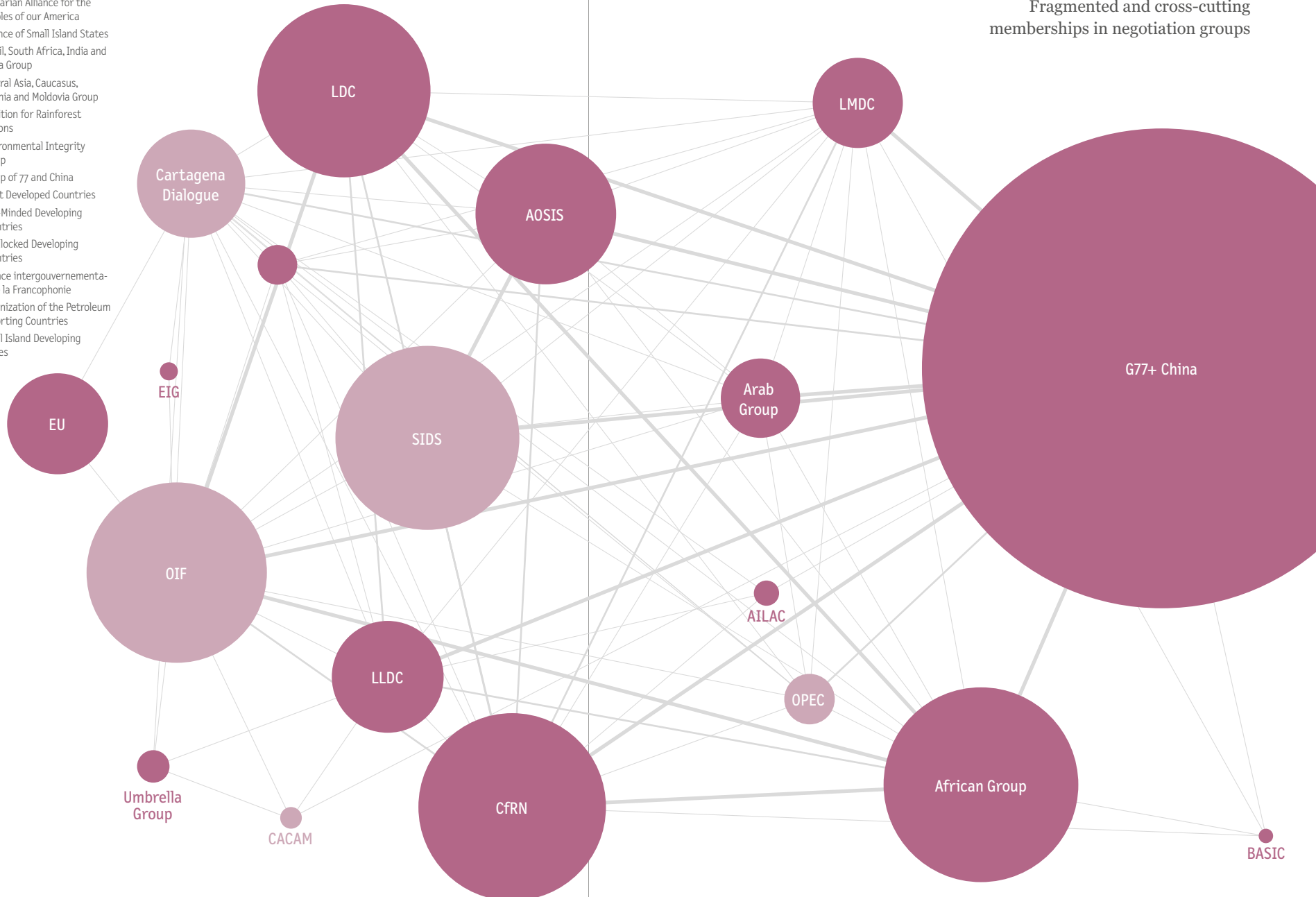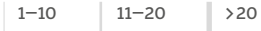
Abbreviations

AILAC — Independent Association of Latin America and the Carribbean

ALBA — Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America

AOSIS — Alliance of Small Island States

BASIC — Brazil, South Africa, India and China Group

CACAM — Central Asia, Caucasus, Albania and Moldovia Group

CfRN — Coalition for Rainforest Nations

EIG — Environmental Integrity Group

G77+China — Group of 77 and China

LDC — Least Developed Countries

LMDC — Like-Minded Developing Countries

LLDC — Landlocked Developing Countries

OIF — Agence intergouvernementa-le de la Francophonie

OPEC — Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

SIDS — Small Island Developing States

Membership
5   10

● UN negotiating group

● Other groups in the climate change process

Countries in common
1—10   11—20   >20

LDC

LMDC

Cartagena Dialogue

AOSIS

EIG

EU

SIDS

Arab Group

G77+ China

OIF

AILAC

OPEC

LLDC

Umbrella Group

CACAM

CfRN

African Group

BASIC

2.1 VARIABILITY IN COALITION-BUILDING

The world of state coalitions has become more varied – and quite volatile. State coalitions that seemed to be able to set the tone in the future, such as G20 or BRICS, seem to be losing ground again. But then, breaking up encrusted and rigid state coalitions offers new chances for more flexible, issue- and goal-oriented coalitions of the willing. They have the potential to go ahead without getting stuck in old turf wars or waiting until the lowest common denominator is reached. Examples are to be found – again – with reference to the issue of climate change. Here, coalitions of states formed negotiation groups with varying and overlapping memberships, often based on regional proximity [see Figure 5]. The way in which parties gather in climate change negotiations has become more fragmented. Although there is still the traditional bloc of G77 countries plus China, over time members of this group of developing countries have also joined other coalitions to further their specific and increasingly diverse interests. A prime example is BASIC, comprising Brazil, South Africa, India and China, emerging economies with different stakes in the negotiations than other alliances of developing countries.

However, focusing on inter-state negotiations should not obscure the fact that global governance is also shaped by a variety of state and non-state actors who cooperate across many levels.

2.2 FOCUS ON POLYCENTRIC AND HYBRID FORMS OF TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNANCE

National governments have long ceased to be the only relevant actors in global cooperation. As the example of the Paris Agreement shows, a more decentralised and polycentric structure in which cooperation takes place might promote a more successful outcome. There are quite hopeful signs, for example, that the Paris Agreement will survive despite the Trump Administration's withdrawal of its support. It was partly offset by a coalition of US states and cities pledging to contribute their share of what the US had committed itself to originally (see https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-us-states-cities-could-meet-paris-climate-goals-without-trump).

The current debate on implementing the Paris Agreement illustrates that membership of international regimes has become more and more diverse and comprises not only national governments but also subnational entities, non-governmental actors like civil society organisations (CSOs) and businesses. Non-state actors have been playing a substantial role in global cooperation for quite some time. Whereas non-governmental or civil society organisations are usually looked upon as legitimate actors and progressive forces in global cooperation, the reputation and record of businesses are somewhat mixed. Due to their nature, it is doubtful whether their engagement in global cooperation really stands for a new understanding of profit-seeking. But then, most enterprises, be they local, national or international, depend on a stable and secure environment to prosper. And a growing number of economic actors are acknowledging their responsibility to actively contribute to such an environment.
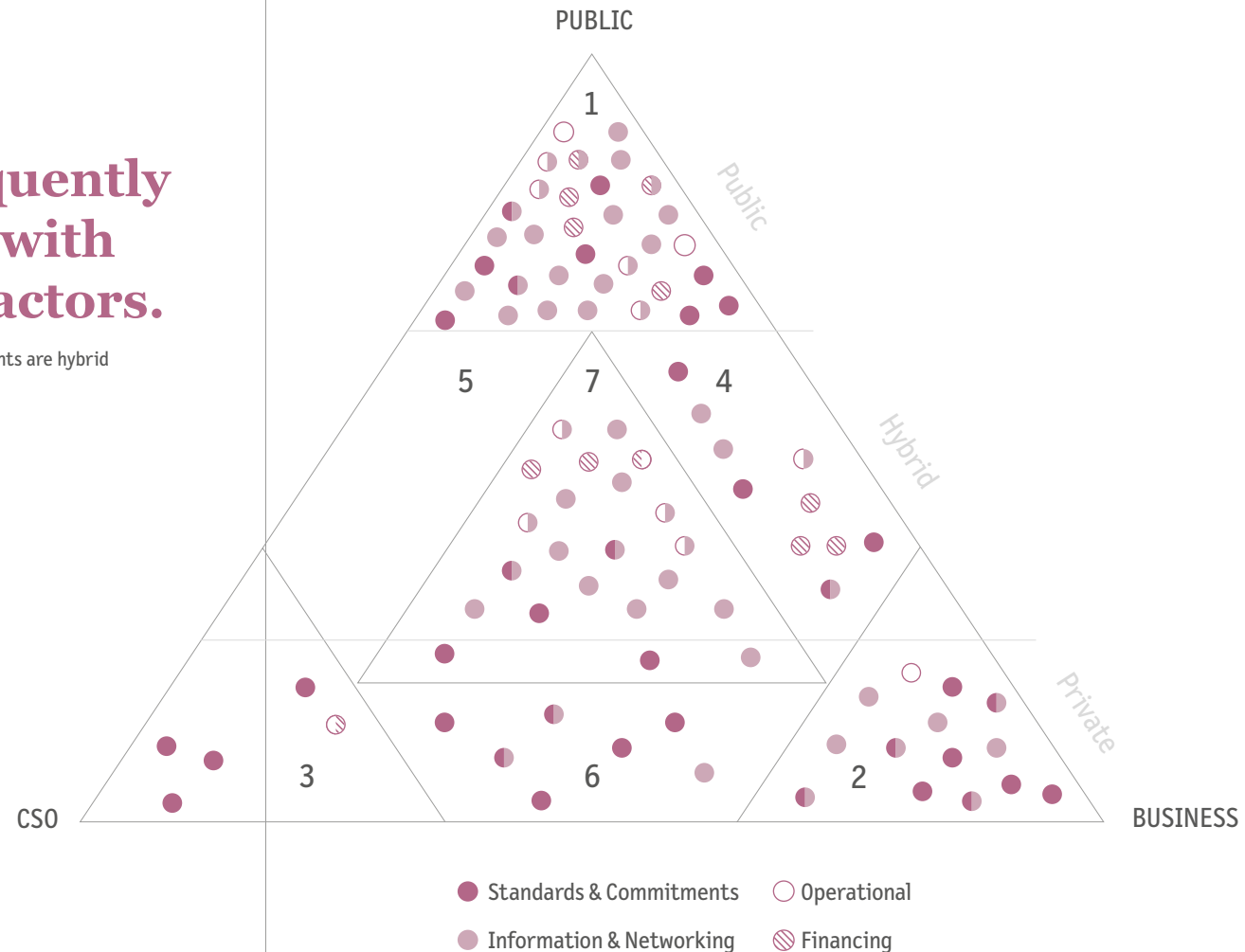
As in many other areas, the governance of climate change is characterised by distinct types of regulations emanating from diverse sets of actors: either *public, private* or – in the case of joint regulation of state and non-state actors – *hybrid*. Abbott and Snidal introduced the concept of the "governance triangle" to capture the diverse forms of regulations that are created by the interaction of all types of actors (Abbott/Snidal 2009b, 2009a). Referring to this triangle with its different zones of interaction (Zone 1-7), Widerberg, Pattberg and Kristensen identified 87 cooperative initiatives with different functions within the regime complex, ranging from setting standards and agreeing on commitments, to information and networking, financing and implementing measures (Widerberg/Pattberg/Kristensen 2016) [see Figure 6].

Interestingly, institutional interactions overlap in areas of public regulation (Zone 1), hybrid regulation of state and business actors (Zone 4) and hybrid regulations between all types of actors (Zone 7), whereas single initiatives by CSOs are only loosely coupled to the network. The message we can infer from this is threefold: first, the state is still a central actor in global cooperation; second, states frequently cooperate with non-state actors; and third, business actors are working more closely with states than with CSOs.

Integrated solutions involving governments and traditional civil society actors, business and academia require non-hierarchical decision-making processes that are open to participation by all stakeholders. Historically, we can witness an evolution of governance arrangements that show higher degrees of integrating diverse actors and more networked forms of governance compared to single regimes or regime complexes [see Table 1]. Some scholars call institutionalised network patterns of cooperation "experimentalist governance" (De Búrca/Keohane/Sabel 2014).

The lessons we can draw from this governance triangle are:

1. The state is still a central actor in global cooperation.

Public authorities participate in 63 arrangements (71 %) of which 31 are purely public, whereas the private tier (Zones 3, 6, 2) represents 26 arrangements (29 %).

2. States frequently cooperate with non-state actors.

More than one third of arrangements are hybrid (32 out of 89 − 36 %, Zones 5, 7, 4).

3. Business actors are working more closely with states than CSOs.

There are no collaborations between public authorities and CSOs (Zone 5), but 10 between public authorities and business (11 %, Zone 4).

Source: Widerberg et al. 2016, p. 15 (adapted version)

FIGURE 6

THE GOVERNANCE TRIANGLE OF CLIMATE CHANGE WITH DIFFERENT ZONES OF INTERACTION

There are 87 (public, private or hybrid) cooperative initiatives with divergent functions within the regime complex, ranging from setting standards and agreeing on commitments, to information and networking, financing and implementing measures.

PUBLIC

Public

Hybrid

Private

CSO

BUSINESS

● Standards & Commitments   ○ Operational

● Information & Networking   ◎ Financing

The "experimentalist" character of governance does not only result from hybrid forms of regulation; it also stems from a non-hierarchical, open process with inclusive participation, ongoing consultation on the definition of problems and normative principles, continuous monitoring and review, and feedback from local contexts. This momentum was created within the framework of a Western liberal order. It remains to be seen if it can be upheld in an era of "shrinking spaces" of civil society participation.

TABLE 1
Increasing degree of integration and networking in governance arrangements

Type of governance arrangement	Major periods	Examples
Comprehensive, integrated international regimes	1945 –	Bretton Woods Monetary System, Air Transport Regime, WTO
Regime complexes: multiple, non-hierarchical sets of institutions	1995 –	Regime complex for climate change based on the Kyoto Protocol, public-private health regime complex, regime complex for food security, maritime piracy regime complex
Experimentalist governance: institutionalised network patterns	1995 –	Forest Stewardship Council, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Source: De Búrca/Keohane/Sabel 2013, p. 744 (slightly adapted version)

Currently, especially with the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the regime complex for governing climate change is beginning to show some of the characteristics associated with experimentalist governance. The new bottom-up approach of the Paris Agreement draws on its stakeholder diversity and acknowledges the need for feedback to local contexts and for the open definition of problems on which understanding must first be reached through a shared communicative process. It also defines a range of responsibilities and accountabilities to be negotiated, and monitoring and review processes yet to be determined. These governance modes facilitate new forms of transparency, confidence-building and verification, which are so urgently needed. Forms of experimentalist governance depend, however, on a fundamental desire to cooperate and overcome the status quo. Otherwise, institutional networking with built-in "learning loops" will not be feasible.

2.3 FLEXIBILITY IN GOVERNANCE PROVISIONS

The Paris Agreement has also been hailed for its flexibility regarding what parties must contribute to fulfil their joint duty to hold the temperature increase below 2°C. This is due to the insight that legally binding universal agreements between parties with extremely different preferences will either only yield the lowest common denominator agreement or end in gridlock (Victor 2016, p. 134). The flexibility to define a "nationally determined contribution" (NDC) is based on the expectation that the level of ambition to what each country might be willing to commit may rise. The underlying consideration is that countries will set themselves achievable goals and tailor their commitments to what they are able – and willing – to deliver domestically.

Furthermore, this specific institutional design opens the possibility to accommodate national interests in a multi-level bottom-up approach where each country shapes its climate policy according to its own national preferences. At best, this will enhance overall compliance with what has been agreed, thus counteracting the spreading sense of global cooperation in crisis. Furthermore, it might become a model of how to appease critics at the national level who insist on non-interference and national sovereignty. At worst, it will make it easier for states to just pay lip service to commitments without any substantive obligations.

However, although more flexible institutional designs such as this leave considerable leeway for different policies at the national level, there is still the need to agree on indicators and benchmarks to assess the results achieved. The process of implementing the SDGs shows that a diversity of voices must sometimes be tuned to produce a certain sound. To meet SDG 3, healthy lives and well-being at all ages, for instance, all states are required to introduce universal health coverage. There are numerous ways to define and achieve this. But still, when moving towards universal health coverage, there are certain normative challenges that must be met, such as who is included, and which services are covered. To make sure that equity concerns are considered, the World Health Organization and the World Bank have developed a framework with measures and targets to monitor progress towards universal health coverage at country and global level (WHO/World Bank 2014). Therefore, flexibility in governance provisions is often accompanied by meta-governance arrangements, provided not only by international organisations but also by transnational multi-stakeholder partnerships. The Forest Stewardship Council, for example, defines and monitors a set of forest management standards that build the framework for individual national and subnational standards.

3. OUTLOOK

The prospects of these strategies making global cooperation fit for a multipolar world and contributing to peaceful and sustainable development are uncertain and sometimes ambiguous. The new flexibility and complexity of regimes, in particular, are not without pitfalls. This might lead to a growing number of conflicting regimes or produce agreements that are irrelevant as the key stakeholders are not involved (as is the case, for example, with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was passed by the UN General Assembly on 7 July 2017). How can we reconcile conflicting regimes? And how can we find common ground on the overall direction of the world's development? As indicated above, there is a growing need to "orchestrate" all this, not only by means of multi-level and polycentric governance but also by meta-governance. The most viable way to achieve this is by "common but differentiated governance" (Meuleman/Niestroy 2015), i.e. through situationally appropriate governance frameworks based on common normative principles. The UN with its manifold organisations and agencies incorporates and reflects a major set of normative principles. Many of them are still acknowledged as "common"; some of them are contested. Certainly, in terms of effectiveness, the UN and its member states do not "deliver" to utter satisfaction. Nevertheless, it is still the institution with a universal membership that can provide the arena for testing common ground.

However, it is no longer incumbent upon the Western world alone to define the framework for global cooperation. Other world regions and rising powers are increasingly shaping this framework. What is needed are profound insights into novel approaches to cooperation, the normative frameworks they are based on, and the interests and perspectives of the different actors – as a prerequisite for identifying a common understanding of how best to provide common global public goods.

The new GLOBAL TRENDS. ANALYSIS series aims to contribute to this better understanding by bringing together voices from different world regions. Based on research, facts and figures, its purpose is to support global cooperation for the benefit of all humankind.

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