

# What is a megatrend?

**Megatrends** are 'long-term global driving forces' that are expected to continue to have a significant influence on our lives for decades. The European Commission monitors a series of megatrends, pivotal in driving change across all policy areas and all aspects of life.

## Why look at megatrends?

**Foresight** aims to explore, anticipate, and shape the future. **Megatrends** are major global trends and key drivers of change. By analysing them you can explore how they could impact a policy area, and what consequences this could have. Megatrends analysis provides a way to look at **systemic change** and complexity, and to look at **potential futures**. When broad stakeholders come together in these discussions, it can provide valuable insights to help **shape new policies** and ensure their longer-term future effectiveness.

Specifically megatrends analysis is useful for:

- **Strategic planning** to understand global trends and patterns.
- Proactive and forward-looking **policy development**. This aids in **future proofing** decisions and strategies by ensuring they consider possible futures, are less biased, and are relevant.
- Identify blind spots, vulnerabilities, and potential risks to support **risk management and preparedness**.
- Early awareness **for innovation and opportunities**.
- Starting **scenario planning work**. The tool can help prioritize key drivers. Scenarios then help to envision and prepare for multiple futures based on different combinations of long-term trends and their implications.
- Bring different perspectives together to discuss emerging trends, complex issues, and **imagine possible futures** and plan joint actions.



To freely access the brochure, poster, cards and full toolkit to run your own workshop, you can download and print everything from the JRC Megatrends Hub via the QR code or link: [knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/foresight/tool/megatrends-hub\\_en](https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/foresight/tool/megatrends-hub_en)

## Who can use them and how?

- Megatrends assessments are a valuable exercise for policymakers and other decision makers because they are an easy-to-use foresight exercise in a **short participatory workshop**.
- Workshops **can and should** be tailored to the specific topic, needs, and time availability - as described in the brochure
- As part of the EU's **Better Regulation** toolbox, the workshop can help test the robustness of a policy and its future-fitness for better evidence- and futures-informed policies in impact assessments.
- Assessing megatrends can contribute to the **EU's capacity for anticipatory governance**.

## Design your workshop

The **Megatrends Guideline for Facilitators** brochure provides a step-by-step guide to allow anyone to design and run a Megatrends Assessment Workshop by themselves, allowing to:

- STEP 1: Map and prioritise trends;
- STEP 2: Anticipate and examine potential future consequences;
- Optional: Identify blind spots, wild cards, dependencies and links among trends;
- STEP 3: Explore policy implications;
- STEP 4: Plan relevant actions.

\*Also available in other EU languages soon

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