Policy Review

International edition

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Foreword

Bobby Duffy

It's no exaggeration to say that much of our world is unrecognisable from how it was just a couple of months ago. The coronavirus crisis has upended everything – how we live, how we work, how we interact with one another. The policy landscape has shifted with it. Governments around the globe are refocusing all their efforts and resources to deal first with the pandemic, and then the consequences of the extraordinary measures to contain it.

Our work at the Policy Institute has shifted to mirror this focus on the "now" and "next".

On the immediate challenges, we've published studies looking at how people in the UK are coping with "life under lockdown", as well as their expectations, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours in the current crisis.[1]

We've flagged the importance of understanding how different groups are experiencing the lockdown very differently, with clear distinctions between those "accepting', "suffering" and "resisting".[2] The next study in our series will look at how we're adapting to the long, slow path to a version of normality. We've also explored the health and economic impact of Covid-19 on London,[3] and will be publishing more on the direct impacts on different spheres of life in the coming weeks.

We've also provided a platform for international experts and leaders to unpack the wider and longer-term policy implications of the pandemic. Some of the great contributions we've received are included in this second edition of our *Policy Review*.

Other pieces in this edition come from the now distant days before the crisis, but deal with long-term challenges that will still be around when we eventually make it through this period. The vital importance of gender equality, improving our information environment, and the need for effective national governance, as highlighted by Julia Gillard, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Tony Blair, are only going to grow as we slowly re-emerge. Underneath the well-founded concern about what the future holds, there is the tantalising prospect that we may be able to "build back better" – but this will only happen if we keep our focus on these long-term challenges.

The key connection that knits the pieces in this volume together is their international focus, which seems all the more appropriate at a time when global coordination and sharing of expertise is so central. The Policy Institute has a clear commitment to international policy analysis, and so much of our work has a comparative element. We believe that there is so much more we can learn about individual national contexts from looking to other countries, and that so many policy issues are now truly global in their reach, as this edition demonstrates.

We hope you enjoy reading it, and, as always, if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised here, please do get in touch.

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The impacts of Covid-19 are gendered – but there may be cause for hope

Julia Gillard

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the gender perspective being discussed was that the disease kills more men than women. That is a statistic we should never forget.

However, as the weeks of various forms of lockdown around the world have gone by, the gender discussion has broadened. Day by day, it has become clearer that this crisis exacerbates underlying inequalities.

The roll call of how these pre-existing gender disadvantages are being compounded makes distressing reading.

So far over 1.5 billion children globally have been impacted by school shutdowns. In earlier epidemics like Ebola, the most marginalised children, especially the poorest girls, never returned to school, while early marriage, teen pregnancy and child labour rates skyrocketed. The Global Partnership for Education,[4] which I chair, has mounted the biggest response to date to prevent the rise of an out-of-school Covid-19 generation, but more resources are urgently needed.

More generally, we went into this crisis knowing there is a gender difference to extreme poverty, so we can predict that of the 265 million people estimated by the World Food Programme to go hungry after the pandemic,[5] women will be disproportionately affected.

The story is no better when it comes to the world of work: the job categories that formed the first wave of unemployment – hospitality, non-food retail, the beauty industry – are largely filled by women. And while many of the essential workers who are bravely going out and keeping society running are drawn from traditionally male occupations like bus and truck drivers, police officers and postal workers, globally, women make up 70 per cent of those on the frontlines of the health and social care sectors.[6]
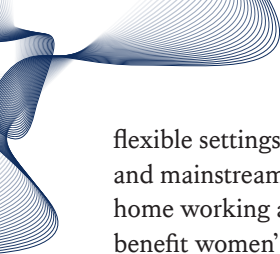
But those who aren't out at their usual places of work, or aren't able to work at all, may also be facing greater physical harm. The key message delivered around the world has been: "Stay safe, stay home". However, for many women and children, the danger of domestic violence lurks. Risks have been increased by the intensity of long periods together. Rapidly rising alcohol sales would also be having an impact. Three weeks into the UK's lockdown, calls to the National Domestic Abuse helpline were 49 per cent higher than normal.[7] The longer the lockdown goes on, the more greater numbers of women will need such help.

Addressing this list calls for short-term action. Out-of-school children and those at risk at home need help now. All frontline workers, male and female, need the best protective equipment. Those out of work need income support and the benefit of government programmes to help them get a new job when economies get back into gear.

But what about the longer term? Might this crisis be the catalyst for more positive gendered change? I think the answer is yes, but there is a need for careful planning to harness the benefits and mitigate the risks.

First, the move to virtual workplaces could create a whole new set of norms for many occupations. There is now a clear operating example of how we can work effectively in remote and

flexible settings. This acceleration and mainstreaming of online and at-home working arrangements should benefit women's careers and improve work-life balance for all employees.

To ensure we embed a positive trajectory, employers around the world will need to consider how to take the best of what has been learned in this period and consolidate it into their future policies.

Unfortunately, not every new practice being contemplated has a positive gender impact. For example, there have been whispers of large corporations cutting the hours or salaries of primary carers with children at home while schools and childcare centres are closed. And experience tells us that the primary carer is likely to be a woman. Equally alarming are discussions of suspending gender targets until business profitability returns to pre-pandemic levels.

To grab the positive and repudiate the negative we have to be pushing employers now to keep gender impacts front of mind. We especially cannot allow the slow progress we are making on gender equality to be reversed.

Second, there are some indications that because families are in lockdown together, new patterns of domestic responsibility are emerging. Where there are two caregivers who are working from home, there is an increased opportunity to share domestic load. The challenge is how to spread this approach to more families and not revert to more unequal and gendered distributions of domestic labour once the crisis abates.

Third, the pandemic has brought into stark relief the reliance we place on our generally under-paid, women-led professions: health, social, disability and aged care, as well as education.

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We need to ensure this clarity of appreciation leads to increased respect, as well as pay equality. In my home country, Australia, childcare has gone from being more expensive than some private schooling to being provided free by the government. While this certainly highlights the essential role early childhood educators play in Australian society, I wonder if the educators themselves, at the forefront of our economy and facing the virus, feel valued enough. One of the lowest-paid professions, 96 per cent of the sector is female.[8] The situation in the UK is similar. Low pay within female-dominated professions such as this must be addressed.

If we collect the evidence and surge our advocacy, we can progress gender equality during this difficult time, and build on what has been learned when we reach the post-pandemic stage. We can celebrate and share new norms, ensure there are strategies to provide continued education for our most vulnerable, and work towards a fairer society. Many of the immediate impacts of Covid-19 may be negative for women and girls, but its long-term legacy need not be.

Julia Gillard is a former Prime Minister of Australia and chairs the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at King's College London and the Global Partnership for Education.

World Questions: A conversation between Hillary Rodham Clinton and Julia Gillard

On 13 November 2019, King's College London launched the "World Questions" event series with a conversation between former US Secretary of State *Hillary Rodham Clinton* and *Julia Gillard*, former Australian Prime Minister and Chair of the Global Institute for Women's Leadership (GIWL) at King's. Clinton and Gillard discussed a range of issues, including the fight for women's equality, US and UK politics, and the impact of social media on political campaigning and public debate. The event was hosted by the Policy Institute and GIWL.

Watch a video of the event, and *read our research* that supported it.

Julia Gillard: Hillary, I want to start by taking you back almost 25 years ago, when you stood in a very cavernous hall at a UN meeting and said: "Women's rights are human rights, and human rights are women's rights," and the world went mad. Can you tell us about that moment as we look forward to marking its 25th anniversary?

Hillary Rodham Clinton: I wanted to go because I thought it was important to highlight the cultural, political, social and legal practices that were holding women back all around the world in so many ways. So in the speech, I spoke about the impact this had on women and made the comment about human rights being women's rights.

It was funny because I was also criticising the practices of our host, China, and at one point they turned off the sound in the rest of the convention centre. They left it on in the room, but the people outside couldn't hear it. Fast forward around 22 years, I get a call from a friend in Beijing, who said: "I'm shopping in a large department store; they usually play music over the loudspeakers but they're playing your speech from Beijing in 1995," and I went: "That's progress!"

JG: If we had a time machine and could go back 25 years, what would you want to say to progressive politicians and activists around the world about what was going to happen? Back then, the Berlin Wall had come down, there was a sense that this was going to be a globally engaged age when the world would be coming together to work on some of the biggest problems. And here we are, 25 years later, [with] Brexit [and] the inward-looking politics of the United States. What did we as progressives miss? What could we have done differently in the intervening 25 years so we didn't end up here?

HRC: That's a really important question, and we should all be considering how to answer that. I think several things were going on at the time. 1995 was just shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, and there was so much energy – New Labour was coming to the fore, we thought freedom, human rights, the rule of law were in the ascendancy – and it wasn't just political; there was a big cultural shift, people were beginning to speak up and speak out, women were beginning to speak out. That's why the timing of the Beijing conference was so fortuitous. It really carried with it a lot of the voices of women around the world, who were saying: "Knock down these barriers to my dreams."

But I also believe there is a pendulum in history: we swing one way and

then we swing back. So when I look back now, I think that we were just beginning to cope with the explosion of technology, and we saw the internet as an amazing way to bring people together. No one in 1995 or 1996 thought it was going to be a platform for hate and disinformation and the worst kinds of human venality.

Then you get into the 21st century and we have an explosion of terrorism with 9/11 and a series of attacks across the UK and Europe. All of this was interrupting this forward movement towards progress and a global community. We then had a disastrous economic collapse, which had terrible consequences for many millions of people and for countries.

Barack Obama was elected on this burst of hope and positive policy platform. But in the United States at least, there is a rule similar to

physics – for every action there is a reaction. So when Obama was dealing with the collapse of the economy and making some very hard decisions, it wasn't particularly satisfying to anybody on the Left or Right. Then we started to have huge flows of immigrants because of the war in Syria, conflicts around the world, and climate change, which was already dispossessing people of their land.

So it's not only that change usually produces some kind of readjustment; it's that there were changed circumstances. And we're just coming to realise in the last few years how technology has literally changed the way we think and relate to one another.

So I now think we're in a struggle for the future of our democracies. They are very vulnerable to pressures like mass immigration and the weaponisation of technology.

JG: What's going to happen in 2020 in US politics, and what are the odds on there being a female president?

HRC: The odds are better by definition, because there are more women running. When I ran, there were more American women in space than running for president. So we've made progress. But I have no crystal ball. I think it's going to

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be a very tough election, probably closer than one would like or expect. Partly because we are so divided as a nation and our partisanship stands for acceptance or rejection of all kinds of cultural changes. It stands for divides between urban and rural. Between fast-growing knowledge-based economies and stagnant, agricultural, manufacturing-based economies.

So I can't sit here and predict exactly what's going to happen. We'll have to see how it pans out.

JG: I'd like to now turn the lens round the other way, and look at British politics. What do you think is going on here?

HRC: I think it's a symptom of some of the very real problems and disagreement that has manifested over here. The UK is about as divided as our country, in trying to figure out what to do with the results of

a referendum that didn't provide the guidance needed to make the decision that the voters apparently voted for. And I watched from a distance as Theresa May tried to come up with something over and over again that fulfilled the voters' preference but could actually work in a way that didn't undermine the UK.

I don't think anyone truly understands all of the consequences. But some of them could be very serious. For example, with Northern Ireland, the decision could very well ignite a movement against the peace process and incite violence again.

You look at the British economy: growth is down and people are unsure what's going to happen, so if a decision is reached, certainty will help – but is it real certainty? These are all tough questions, and I don't think they have easy answers.

But here's what I'm most worried about, for both my country and Britain, given our political deadlocks and divisions. We are missing out on a lot of great opportunities to own the future. We have a lot of work to do, and it's work that could be economically beneficial. We need to embrace diversity as a friend not an adversary. We need to support the best universities to do research that opens new doors. Climate Charge is a perfect example. There's so much we can do to create jobs. In the US, more people are employed in the solar industry than the coal industry. But the current administration wants to keep coal alive. All the while, China states its intention to own the renewable future.

I hope at some point that the UK can get back to showing the kind of creativity to envisage a future that has positive effects around the world.

JG: One feature of the British election was the number of women who decided not to stand again. What is startling about these women is that they had promising careers ahead of them. And many decided to leave politics expressly pointing to the daily threats of violence they received online and offline. What's your reaction when you see that impediment for women coming into politics now?

HRC: There is a growing anxiety among women Members of Parliament about the threats that they face, and of course we remember the MP Jo Cox, who was murdered for her political standing. So I take it very seriously. It's not only a threat to individuals, but it's a threat to our democracies. If people are intimidated out of running for office in a democracy because of these hatemongers, on the Left or the Right, that's the path of authoritarianism, that's the path of fascism.

Isn't it tragic that we have to think so carefully about security and safety now, and that women in particular are making a very rational decision to protect themselves and their families and not run for office?

JG: What would you say to the social media companies to get them to address the disproportionate nature of the vile material online, targeted at women?

HRC: While Twitter decided not to run any political ads, Facebook has taken the position that it will not regulate political speech, which means that it will take money to run advertisements that are blatantly false. It's a deeply irresponsible decision which will make it increasingly difficult for people running for office to persuade voters

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to vote for them based on accurate as opposed to falsified information.

And there's a new development that I think we will see more of in our upcoming election, which is the technology to create "deep fakes". This happened to [Speaker of the US House of Representatives] Nancy Pelosi, where her words were taken from a number of different speeches and pieced together to make a video of her saying things she'd never said.

It was put online, and Twitter took it down, YouTube took it down, [but] Facebook kept it up. This is a problem because more than 50 per cent of the American public get their news from Facebook, and it's their only source.

Technology is outpacing our ability to keep up with it, to understand what's real and what's not. And this is not yet being addressed by our government, the UK government, or any institution in order to ensure we have at least a somewhat level playing field for politics and for elections in our democracies. In the absence of this, all bets are off – it's going to be like the old Wild West. It's a really dangerous situation that needs to be addressed. But that will require not just individuals being aware of disinformation out there; it also requires governments to do something.

The seven early lessons of the global coronavirus crisis

Ivan Krastev

These are strange days we are living in. We do not know when the Covid-19 pandemic will end; we do not know how it will end; and, at present, we can only speculate about its long-term political and economic impact. Historians are clear: epidemics are events, not trends. As the historian of medicine Charles Rosenberg has put it: "Epidemics start at a moment in time, proceed on a stage limited in space and duration, follow a plot line of increasing revelatory tension, move to a crisis of individual and collective character, then drift toward closure."

Rosenberg has also argued that epidemics put pressure on the societies they strike. This strain makes visible latent structures that might not otherwise be evident. As a result, epidemics provide a sampling device for social analysis. They reveal what really matters to a population and whom they truly value. Every known epidemic has been framed and explained not simply as a public health crisis but also as a moral crisis. Certain social groups have been blamed for its emergence and spread. This drama is now playing out with Covid-19, first in China and then in many countries worldwide.

It is too early for any conclusions about the lasting impact of a major global crisis that has just started, but here are seven early lessons.

The first is that the pandemic will force the return of big government. After the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008, many observers believed that crisis-born mistrust in the market would lead to greater faith in the state. This idea was nothing new: in 1929, following the onset of the Great Depression, people demanded strong government

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> The coronavirus will bring the state back in a big way.**"**

intervention to offset the failings of the market. In the 1970s, it was the other way around: people were disappointed with government intervention, so they started to believe in the market again. The paradox of the Great Recession of 2008 is that mistrust in the market did not lead to demand for greater government intervention.

Now, the coronavirus will bring the state back in a big way. Covid-19 made people rely on the government to organise their collective defence against the pandemic, and they rely on the government to save a sinking economy. The effectiveness of governments is now measured by their capacity to change people's

everyday behavior. In the context of this crisis, people's inaction is the most visible action.

The second lesson is that the coronavirus provides one more demonstration of the mystique of borders, and will help reassert the role of the nation state within the European Union. One can already see this in the closure of many of the borders between countries – and in the fact that every government in Europe is focusing on its own people. In normal circumstances, member states would make no distinction between the nationalities of patients in their health systems but, in this crisis, they will likely prioritise their citizens over

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others (this is not a reference to immigrants from other regions but Europeans with EU passports).

The coronavirus will strengthen nationalism, albeit not ethnic nationalism but a type of territorial nationalism. In TV reports and in governments' announcements one can see that co-nationals travelling from corona-infected areas are as unwelcome as any foreigner. To survive, the government will ask citizens to erect walls not simply between states but between individuals, as the danger of being infected comes from the people they meet most often. It is not the stranger but those closest to you who present the greatest risk.

The third lesson of the coronavirus relates to trust in expertise. The 2008 financial crisis and the 2015 refugee crisis generated a great deal of popular discontent with experts. "We don't trust experts" was the winning cry of the populists. But in the current crisis, professionalism is back. Most people are very open to trusting experts and heeding the science when

their own lives are at stake. One can already see the growing legitimacy that this has lent to the professionals who lead the fight against the virus. The return of the state has been made possible because trust in experts has returned.

The fourth lesson is open to interpretation but very important nonetheless. Unfortunately, the coronavirus could increase the appeal of the kind of big data authoritarianism employed by the Chinese government. One can blame Chinese leaders for the lack of transparency that made them react slowly to the spread of the virus in December 2019, but the efficiency of their response and the Chinese state's capacity to control the movement and behavior of people has been impressive. In the current crisis, citizens constantly compare the responses and effectiveness of their governments with those of other governments. And we should not be surprised if, the day after the crisis, China looks like a winner and the United States looks like a loser. The crisis will also additionally escalate

the America-China confrontation. The US media is openly blaming Beijing for the spread of the coronavirus, while China tries to use the failures of Western democracies to respond effectively to the challenge in order to claim the superiority of its model.

The fifth lesson concerns crisis management. What governments learned in dealing with economic crises, the refugee crisis, and terrorist attacks was that panic was their worst enemy. If, for months after a terrorist attack, people changed their everyday behavior and stopped leaving their houses, this would help terrorists achieve their goals. The same was true in 2008: a change in behavior often increased the costs of the financial crisis. So, in the early stage of Covid-19, leaders and citizens responded with messages to "stay calm", "get on with life", "ignore the risk", and "don't exaggerate". Now, governments have to tell citizens to change their behavior by staying at home. And governments' success in this depends on their capacity to scare people into behaving as instructed. "Do not panic" is the wrong message for the Covid-19 crisis. To contain the pandemic, people should panic – and they should drastically change their way of living. While all previous crises of the 21st century – 9/11, the Great Recession, the refugee crisis

– were driven by anxiety, this one is driven by pure fear. People fear infection, they fear for their lives and for the lives of their families. But for how long can people stay home?

The sixth lesson is that the Covid-19 crisis will have a strong impact on intergenerational dynamics. In the context of debates about climate change and the risk it presents, younger generations have been critical of their elders for not thinking about the future seriously. The coronavirus reverses these dynamics: now, the older members of society are much more vulnerable and feel threatened by millennials' visible unwillingness to change their way of living. This intergenerational conflict could intensify if the crisis lasts for a long time. In the classical 20th-century nightmare, a nuclear war threatened to kill almost everybody, and almost at the same time, while in the case of coronavirus, young Europeans who decided to party in

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the time of new plague risk getting sick for a week while their parents risk dying.

The final lesson is that, at a certain point, governments will be forced to choose between containing the spread of the pandemic at the cost of destroying the economy, or tolerating a higher human cost to save the economy. Over time, some may conclude, the cost of a non-working economy will look more threatening than the risk of more infected people.

It is still early days in speculating about the long political impact of Covid-19. But it is already clear that it is an anti-globalisation virus, and that the opening of borders and mixing of peoples will be blamed for the catastrophe. Historically, one dramatic aspect of epidemics is the desire to assign responsibility. From Jews in medieval Europe to meat mongers in Chinese markets, someone is always blamed. This discourse of blame exploits existing social divisions of religion, race, ethnicity, class, or gender identity.

The coronavirus crisis has justified the fears of the anti-globalists: closed airports and the self-isolated individuals appear to be the ground zero of globalisation. It is ironic that the best way to contain the crisis of individualistic societies was to ask people to wall themselves in their

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apartment. Social distancing has become the new name for solidarity.

But, paradoxically, the new anti-globalist moment could weaken populist political actors who, even when they have a point, do not have a solution. It will be the ultimate irony of history if Donald Trump loses the forthcoming US presidential election because of a radical backlash against globalisation that he championed, and if he ends defeated by a virus that originates from China and has the name of Mexican beer.

It remains to be seen exactly how the crisis will affect the future of the European project. The pandemic has dramatically reshaped the EU's response to all the other crises it has faced in the last decade. Fiscal discipline is no longer the economic mantra, even in Berlin, and there is no European government that, at the present moment, will advocate

opening borders to refugees. But it is clear that, ultimately, the coronavirus will call into question some of the basic assumptions on which the EU is founded. What we had not foreseen, as the poet Stephen Spender wrote long ago, is "Wearing of Time/And the watching of the cripple passed/ With limbs shaped like questions."

Ivan Krastev is a political scientist, a contributing writer for the New York Times and the chairman of the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia, Bulgaria. His most recent book is "The Light that Failed".

This is an extended version of a previously published article.

Covid-19 increases the chances that other medicines won't work

Elizabeth Pisani

For a couple of years now, the World Health Organisation has been warning that fake and substandard medicines are on the rise globally.[9] Until recently, the problem has been concentrated largely in countries where most people pay cash for medicines, and where medicine regulation is weak or non-existent. But the hyper-globalised pharmaceutical market is changing that. And the coronavirus pandemic, an equal-opportunity screwer-up of business-as-usual, is about to bring poor quality medicines to your medicine cabinet, wherever in the world you live.

And these issues aren't just going to hit Covid-related meds, you understand. Rising demand, falling supply, public panic, knee-jerk nationalism and distracted regulators will increase the risk of getting bad medicines for diabetes, heart disease, depression, rheumatism, cancer and virtually everything else. In virtually every country.

The problem is rooted in two fundamental (and intertwined) mismatches in the global economy. First, we increasingly look to governments to ensure that demand for affordable medicines is met, while relying on profit-seeking companies to supply that demand. That leads to procurement and production practices that incentivise cost-cutting and undermine product quality.

Second, we want both the price-lowering (and pollution-outsourcing) efficiencies of a globalised supply chain, while simultaneously demanding security of supply at the national level. As the current pandemic is teaching us, you can't have it both ways.

Demand for products needed for critical care, or that have actual or rumoured therapeutic effects against Covid-19, is already rising rapidly in all areas. At the same time, supply of raw materials is already falling, and that affects all medicines.

Wherever your medicines are made, the chances are they contain at least some ingredients that come from China, or a very small handful of other countries. For a few active ingredients, there's only one producer, supplying every manufacturer of finished product worldwide.

China's Zhejiang province, the world's largest producer of active ingredients, was second-worst hit by Covid-19. The impact of the disruption was likely delayed because stocks are routinely built up before the Chinese New Year holiday, when the shutdown began. Northern Italy, another major centre of active ingredient production, has also been very badly hit.

China and other exporters of active ingredients will restrict exports to meet their own national needs,[10] further limiting supply to manufacturers in other countries. These restrictions may be applied selectively for political reasons. The US is particularly vulnerable

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because of the ongoing trade dispute with China[11]; the products that are in highest demand domestically in China, India and other active ingredient-producing countries will be worst hit.

Countries that manufacture finished medicines will also restrict exports of medicines in order to meet national demand. India, which is the world's largest exporter of finished medicines, has already started doing just this.[12]

And as countries and large institutions rebuild stockpiles, profiteering distributors might hold on to medicines too, trying to drive up the price. This will cause localised shortages.[13] In some countries, where public budgets are especially strained, medicines may be drained out of the public health systems to fatten the cushion under the private sector.

All these supply restrictions will push prices up.[14] Countries with limited budgets for health may cut the number of medicines they buy, leaving patients to pick up the tab. Added to this, restricted transport,[15] especially air traffic, will push up the cost of distribution and reduce the timely delivery of medicines,[16] creating localised shortages. Products such as vaccines, which need to be kept cold and transported quickly, will be especially at risk.

The all-encompassing nature of the coronavirus crisis and the extent of the response required will have knock-on effects, too. Manufacturers may face political pressure to switch production capacity to Covid-19-related medicines, disrupting the supply of other essential drugs. We've already seen car companies pressed into service to produce ventilators, but that's fine, we can still drive last year's car. When a maker of cancer drugs switches to making antivirals, the cancer patient dies.

A system-wide focus on Covid-19 coupled with disruptions to normal workflows will also derail routine public procurement systems in some countries,[17] leading to auction failures and shortages in the public sector.

These various supply-side and procurement issues, combined with the inevitable political pressure to be seen to be providing medicines, will oblige more institutional buyers to source medicines from previously untested suppliers. This increases opportunities for falsifiers to introduce products to the supply chain – and for them to make a lot of money doing so.

As shortages push prices up,[18] the profit margin for falsifiers will rise on lower-priced medicines, encouraging more falsification of high-volume items that people are desperate to get

hold of. These include medicines for high-prevalence chronic conditions, including diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, and in some markets HIV, TB and malaria medicines.

When products are in short supply, it's a seller's market. Quality-assured distributors are going to serve their best clients first, and to them, their best clients are the ones that pay top dollar, on time. In lots of countries, national health systems are strapped for cash as well as strapped up in red tape, and are particularly bad at paying bills on time. They're going to be dumped by their regular suppliers, and may have to look elsewhere for stocks.

And with people stuck at home, or going to the health centre or pharmacy and facing empty shelves or sticker-shockingly high prices, sales of medicines on the internet[19] – which is rife with falsifiers – will increase.
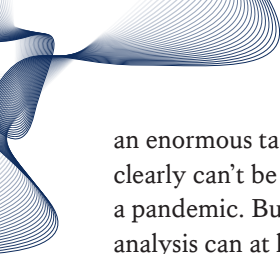
Meanwhile, any deterrent effect of robust regulation and enforcement will diminish as governments concentrate human and financial resources on limiting the spread and impact of the pandemic. With regulatory attention and laboratory capacity diverted,[20] and restrictions on movement in force, oversight of supply chains will suffer, leading to a reduction in the already infinitesimally small proportion of products whose quality gets checked on import, or once they're in the supply chain.

Less oversight will also encourage legitimate pharma companies – whose profit margins will be squeezed due to the restricted supply of raw materials and increased transport costs – to cut costs, compromising quality and leading to substandard production.

Fixing a system as vast and complex as that for the global production and supply of medicines so that it can better respond to crises is

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an enormous task – and one that clearly can't be done in the midst of a pandemic. But in the meantime, analysis can at least flag up which medicines are most at risk, right now.

There are a range of factors that can be combined into an index for regulators to use as an early warning system to trigger inspections, and to warn pharmacists and the public to view particular products or sources of supply with caution.

That might be the best protection we have against fake or substandard medicines during the Covid-19 crisis. But when the next pandemic strikes, let's hope we've learned some lessons from this one.

Elizabeth Pisani is an academic researcher and the director of Ternyata Ltd., a public health consultancy. She is also a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Policy Institute, King's College London.

How will mega-city regions fare after the pandemic?

Mark Kleinman

More and more of the world's people are living in cities, and those cities have been steadily getting bigger and bigger. In 1500, Beijing – then the largest city in the world – had a population of 700,000. By 1900, London was top, with 6.5 million. And in 2000, it was Tokyo, with 34.5 million.[21] From where we currently stand, it's clear that the world's urban centre of gravity is moving, or rather returning, East, with the growth of mega-cities in China, Japan and elsewhere.

In many parts of the world, we have seen the emergence of a new type of urban structure, the polycentric mega-region, in which groups of cities are closely connected. In these mega-regions, populations and economic activities are linked over a wider geographical area, facilitated by improvements in transport (high-speed rail), technology (high-speed internet) and global connectivity (airports and seaports).

This process was first identified by French geographer Jean Gottmann in his study of the Boston-New York-Washington "megalopolis".[22] Peter Hall, working with Kathy Pain, defined the term "polycentric mega-city region", and characterised it as arising from the long-term process of very extended decentralisation from big central cities to adjacent smaller ones, old and new. This process was accelerated by late 20th century regional developments in East and South-East Asia, in places like the Pearl River Delta and the Yangtze River Delta in China, the Tokyo-Osaka corridor in Japan, and Greater Jakarta. Each city and town within the network is both its "own place" and also part of a wider functional urban region, held together by "dense flows of people and information carried along motorways, high-speed rail lines and telecommunications cables".[23]

Is there an economic logic to the development of these new settlement patterns? Perhaps the development of urban mega-regions offers specific economic benefits both to businesses and workers. A recent study from HSBC argued that:

"[those who] live within such a region find that they can work in one city but live, or learn, in another, using improved connections to service a daily inter-city commute. This creates a larger regional talent pool, the opportunity to share and optimise regional assets such as airports, ports, and universities, and it allows each city to 'borrow' the scale and specialist functions of other cities when they compete with other regions for investment, talent, and jobs."[24]

But we don't yet have the evidence on whether this hypothesis is true. It may be that urban mega-regions offer no advantage over ordinary large cities – but rather that infrastructure and other national investments promote greater connectivity without any real economic benefit.

Even before the emergence of Covid-19, these urban trends were far from inevitable. The re-emergence of trade wars, the growth of populism, and the apparent rejection of globalisation all indicated that these shifts could go
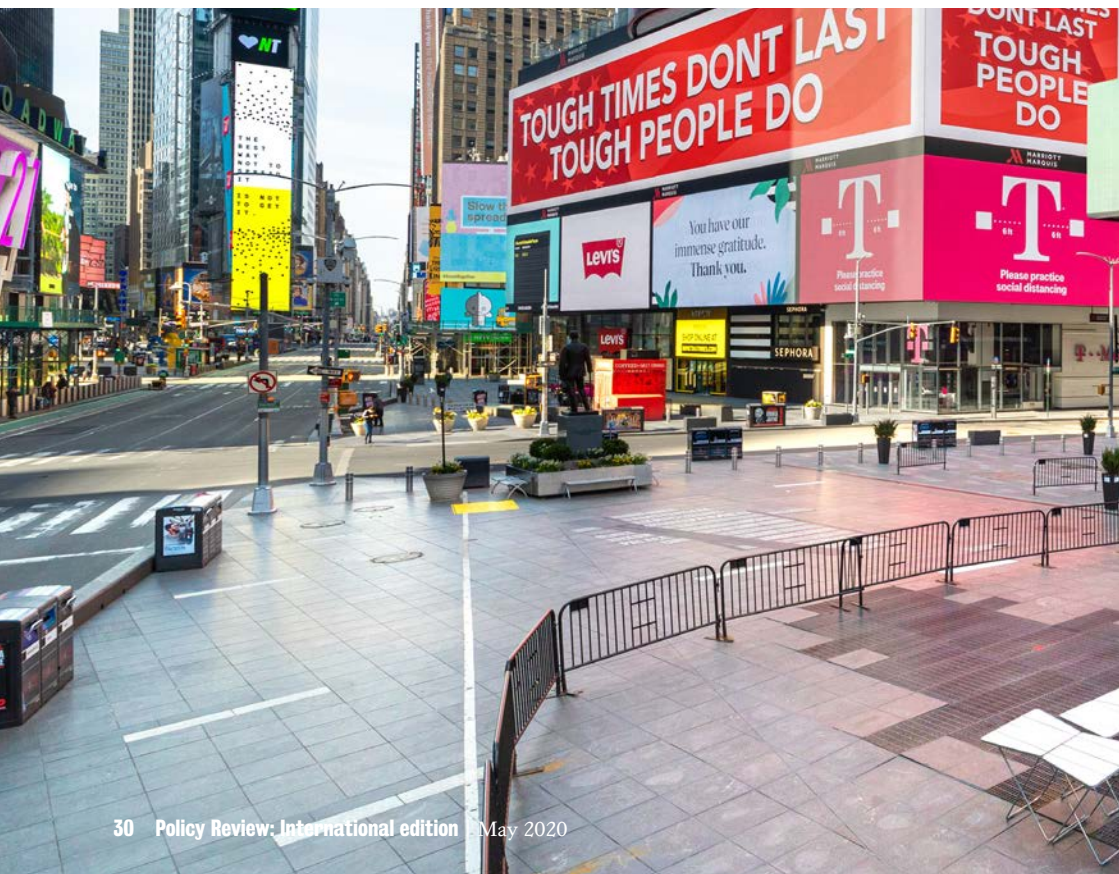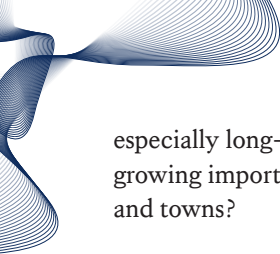
into reverse. Are these massive city-regions crucial to the development of the 21st-century global economy, or are they simply the result of frantic globalisation and hubris?

The global crisis precipitated by Covid-19 has super-charged this discussion. Are we now headed away from a future of ever-greater urbanisation and a few dominant mega-city regions, and instead entering a new Age of Dispersal? An era marked by lower population densities and the spreading out of people, lower rates of mobility –

> **"Are we now headed away from a future of ever-greater urbanisation and a few dominant mega-city regions, and instead entering a new Age of Dispersal?"**

especially long-distance – and the growing importance of smaller cities and towns?

An Age of Dispersal might be seen not only as a response to fears of further global pandemics, but also as a way of reducing and mitigating the effects of climate change and resource depletion. In this scenario, mega-city regions play the role of the large dinosaurs – impressive, terrifying creatures who fail to adapt to a changed environment and lose out over the long term to more nimble, adaptable and smaller rivals.

But the rise of cities, and the emergence of mega-cities, hasn't been just, or even mainly, about population – it is also about the changing global economy and how we produce and distribute goods, services, wealth and investment. As Richard Florida of the University of Toronto puts it: "The basic engine of the new economy is no longer the corporation, but the city. Place – or the clustering of knowledge, ideas, talent, and economic assets in place – has become the basic platform for growth and prosperity."[25]

These economic trends seem to me likely to retain much of their power in the post-Covid world. And the polycentric, mega-region structure may even have some advantages over the traditional urban arrangement of a dense centre of concentrated economic activity, surrounded by successive rings of mainly residential development. A polycentric model might be more flexible in accommodating necessary post-Covid changes, by spreading out economic activity while retaining connectivity and some aspects of centrality. If high-speed rail has to carry many fewer passengers per carriage to allow social distancing, then two-way or multi-way commuting may, along with home-working and tele-commuting, be part of the solution. A multi-polar mega-city could allow more scope for people to live closer to decentralised employment, while still facilitating central agglomeration for those "apex" economic activities which most require it.

Our new era AD (After Density) will differ in important ways from life BC (Before Covid). But cities are still likely to be an important part of the picture – and the polycentric city-region might become more, rather than less, important.

Mark Kleinman is a Professor of Public Policy at King's College London.

The state of trust, facts and democracy in America

Michael Dimock

This piece was written prior to the coronavirus outbreak, but includes a postscript with more recent trends.

The foundations of democracy are increasingly being questioned in many countries, including the United States. The story of how we got here – of how the American political system became so fragile – involves three important Ts: trust, tribes and technology.

There has been a deep decline in trust in America's federal government in recent decades. In 1958, when survey researchers first questioned people on the issue, 73 per cent of US adults trusted the government in Washington to do what's right always or most of the time. This share has fallen to 17 per cent.[26]

What's underpinning this "new normal" of distrust? It seems to concern elected officials in Congress. While concerns around the accountability and careerism of members of Congress aren't new, they have heightened, with 64 per cent who find it hard to trust what elected officials say.[27] And the roots of this distrust stem from a growing unease with the effectiveness of the American electoral system itself, as well as a broader "democratic deficit"

FIGURE 1: % OF AMERICANS SAYING THEY HAVE ___ (OF) TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THE WISDOM OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN MAKING POLITICAL DECISIONS

SOURCE: PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Very great/Good deal

Not very much/None at all

64   59

35   39

'97 '99 '01 '03 '05 '07 '09 '11 '13 '15 '17 '19
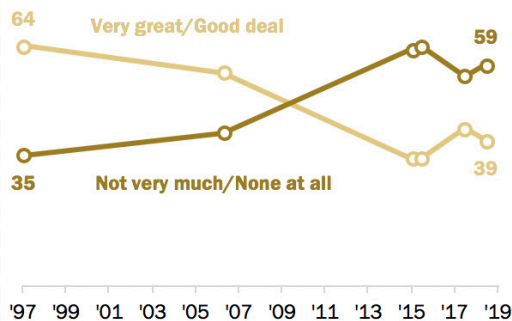
Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

– that is, a sense of what makes for a healthy democracy and where that is lacking in the public's mind.

In some cases, doubts about the electoral system stem from concerns about the uniquely complicated relationship between free speech, money and elections in the US. While most Americans likely don't know the specifics when it comes to money's influence on the system, they do have a growing sense that money is affecting the electoral process in negative ways, and not simply through corruption. They believe money is distorting the public voice and balance of power. For instance, running for Congress or state office now often requires multi-million-dollar campaigns – beyond the reach of most people – and this prevents certain candidates from

being able to enter or stay in the race.

Public distrust is also fostered by other political mechanisms, including gerrymandering. Again, the public on the whole doesn't know the rules of the road, but Americans have seen enough pictures of distorted districts to have a feeling that the way their voice is expressed is being undermined and manipulated for political gain.

There are also growing concerns about the fairness or effectiveness of the voting process itself, including a fear that elections might be hacked and discontent about the role of the Electoral College in presidential elections.

Americans aren't just less trusting of the government; they are also less

trusting of each other, including when it comes to elections. In 1997, 64 per cent said they were confident in the wisdom of the American people to make informed decisions in elections. This has now completely inverted: More than half no longer have confidence in their fellow citizens to make informed electoral decisions.[28]

That brings up the second T – tribes – or more specifically, the way partisan polarisation is creating a growing sense of distance from others in our society. While there are many ways to think about polarisation, Pew Research Center measures it through a "values divide". We ask people about their views on 10 different value items, including immigration, homosexuality, the role of government and more. We then compare this with the positions of their political parties on these issues.

> **"**
> **Views break down more often along the singular dimension of political party. It is almost a magnetic force."**

As recently as 2004, many Democrats agreed with the Democratic Party on five or six or seven of these issues, and with the Republican Party on the other three or four or five. But in the last decade and a half, we've seen an increasing alignment of views with party positions – what some term "political sorting". Today, far more Democrats agree with their party on eight or nine or 10 issues, and the same trend is true with Republicans.[29]

This doesn't mean that Americans are becoming more extreme in their views, nor that the country is intrinsically more divided today than it was in the past. What's unique about this period is the fact that views break down more often along the singular dimension of political party.[30] It is almost a magnetic force, pulling in issues that didn't used to be partisan, such as the environment and immigration.

Partisanship has become a part of social identity in America, creeping into how people interact with each other, including attributing negative traits to the other side at a deeply personal level. Republicans view Democrats as lazy; Democrats see Republicans as closed-minded.[31] And there's a sense that talking about politics – which has always been touchy – is now a third-rail issue, and that you won't be able to connect with, make friends with or find
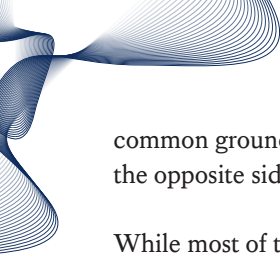
common ground with someone from the opposite side.

While most of these polarisation trends started before Donald Trump was even a presidential candidate, he has been a factor in accentuating and accelerating this pattern. While 55 per cent of Americans say the president has worsened the tone and nature of debate in America, around half of Republicans say he's made it better.[32] This points to a feeling among some Republicans that their voices have been stifled in the American conversation by a cultural elite made up of the media, institutions, governments and universities, which stipulate what is and what is not OK to say. When Trump transgresses that view, it taps into a level of frustration these Americans feel. Ultimately, it helps create an America of two different cultures – a new class divide split across educational levels.[33]

What about the role of technology in these deepening divides? The main takeaway is that while social media is a growing news source for Americans, the majority say they don't trust the things they see on these outlets. Half say they often come across online content that they believe is not fully accurate, and 32 per cent believe they often come across news that's completely made up.[34] And there's an interesting twist to this distrust. While people trust their own ability to tell between truth and fiction online, they don't trust other people's, which comes back to how uneasy they feel about the ability of their fellow citizens to make informed decisions.

FIGURE 2: % OF US ADULTS WHO OFTEN/ SOMETIMES/ HARDLY EVER OR NEVER COME ACROSS POLITICAL NEWS ONLINE THAT IS...

SOURCE: PEW RESEARCH CENTER

	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever/ never
Completely made up	32%	39%	26%
Not fully accurate	51	27	19
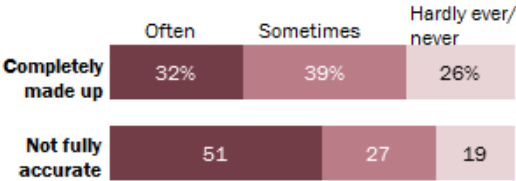
Source: Survey conducted Dec. 1-4, 2016.
"Many Americans Believe Fake News Is Sowing Confusion"

So is there any hope? The overwhelming majority of people – over 80 per cent – believe that trust in government, as well as each other, can be improved. But while there are different suggestions as to how this might happen – from reforming money in politics to leaders setting a better example and the media being less divisive – there is no clear public consensus on what would work.[35] And until trust can be improved and we can listen to each other, it doesn't look like the picture will change anytime soon.

Michael Dimock is President of Pew Research Center.

Postscript (May 2020)

The world has changed since I presented this work at King's College London last fall. But in some ways, the global coronavirus pandemic has brought these themes into even sharper relief.

In the early days of the US outbreak, Americans gave high marks to some of the key actors tasked with responding to the pandemic, from public health officials to state and local elected officials and ordinary people in their communities.[36] This kind of rallying effect is what we might expect to see during a public health crisis, particularly one with such profound effects on day-to-day life.

As time has passed, partisan divisions in some areas are becoming much clearer, including when it comes to the timetable of "reopening" the country and the potential effects of the virus on the November election. Democrats and Republicans are sharply divided over whether the election will be conducted fairly and accurately and whether all citizens who want to vote will be able to.[37] They are also deeply divided over the information they are receiving from the media during the outbreak. Misinformation, meanwhile, appears to be widespread: Around half of Americans told us in mid-March that they had seen at least some completely made-up information related to the virus.

The US is entering a highly uncertain period politically, economically and in public health terms. But the early indications from our polling suggest that the crisis has not fundamentally altered the dynamics that were on display in US society before the virus arrived.

Visit the [Pew Research Center website](#) for continuing coverage of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The success of any nation depends on its governance

Tony Blair

This piece was written prior to the coronavirus outbreak, but has important lessons for government responses to the pandemic.

I f you look around the world today, at countries that are next door to one another, with roughly the same population, roughly the same resources and roughly the same chances, you'll often see that one succeeds while the other fails. There's a reason why some nations prosper and their counterparts

founder. It is governance, and the quality of it, that is the difference.

Take the contrasting fortunes of Colombia and Venezuela, for example, or Rwanda and Burundi, Poland and Ukraine. In fact, the greatest experiment in modern history on different systems of governance between two neighbouring countries can be found on the Korean peninsula. In the 1960s, South Korea had a GDP per head roughly the same as

Sierra Leone's, one of the poorest countries on the planet. Today it's a first-world country, far outstripping the North economically, socially and culturally. It's the quality of governance that has set the two Koreas on their very different paths.

So how do you govern well? You have to start with the right skills. When you're in opposition as a politician, it's all about what you say. Essentially, the skillset that matters is to be a great communicator, a great persuader – you've got to persuade people to change the government, and it's all a process of talking. When you come into government, you suddenly realise that that skillset, while still important, is a lot less relevant – government is all about doing, and doing is infinitely harder than saying. Without the executive skills to go alongside the persuasive skills, you end up talking to no real end.

This quickly became apparent when I first entered Downing Street. Coming off the back of a landslide victory, I went in with the idea that, now I was Prime Minister, I was a pretty powerful person. I thought that if I sat at the cabinet table and made a decision, something happened. And it took me a while to realise that nothing happened just because you chose a particular option – it only happened if you focused on the process of implementation and

delivery. To govern effectively, you need to follow the detail of how things get done.

But the reality is that it takes time to get up to speed on the details. It took me a long time to get out of the rhythm of campaigning and into the rhythm of government. About a year into my time in office, I said to my press people: "I'm learning a lot about governing – I want to go out and be honest with people that I'm learning on the job." Suffice it to say they weren't supportive of this approach. But that's the truth of what it's like to enter government.

> **"**
> It's the quality of governance that has set the two Koreas on their very different paths."

You won't have all the knowledge right away – but you need the capacity to acquire it. Teams from my Institute for Global Change live and work alongside Prime Ministers, Presidents, and senior ministers in countries all over the world, and

> **"**
> My government was criticised for having too many hard targets, but if you're not directing your civil servants to certain goals, things don't happen.**"**

what's important is these decision-makers' *capability* to govern and, by adopting certain core principles, shorten the learning curve of governing. The Institute's strategic advisors help unstick bottlenecks and drive delivery of key priorities that make a positive difference in people's lives.

You won't get far in office without giving due consideration to the four Ps of political leadership. The first is prioritisation. Promise to get everything done and you'll get nothing done. That's a key lesson of government. If you have a term of, say, four or five years, then you're going to have to prioritise.

The second P is policy. While it can sometimes be a crude business, politics is at a certain level also a very intellectual business. Knowing which healthcare policy is right for your country at that time requires a detailed study of healthcare – you can't avoid doing that work and

simply base your policy on a line in a manifesto. You need to be sure that the policy you're implementing is going to be effective.

One of the things I learned about reform is that everyone is in favour of it in principle, but against it in practice. I carried out my first pension reform, and after about a year I asked my team why there didn't seem to be much opposition to it. They tried to convince me it was because it was a great initiative. Then I realised it's because we hadn't really reformed. So you have to get that policy right.

The third P is personnel – and it really matters. If you're a civil servant, you've got to build a team, and it's the same if you're a politician. Political leaders can make anything happen if they've got three or four really capable people around them. As with any other business, if you don't have that capacity and talent on your side, you'll struggle. It's obvious but it's true.

Performance management is the fourth P. Track it to see it's done. Make it measurable. People say you can't import the private sector into the public sector. That's right on one level, but wrong on a number of others. Businesses tend to be good at the process of performance management, and in this respect governments can learn a lot from them. My government was criticised for having too many hard targets, but if you're not directing your civil servants to certain goals, things don't happen.

These are lessons I've learned from my time in Downing Street. My institute works in many different African countries – 14 in total – and although the circumstances and challenges are different, those four Ps are basically the same wherever you go. I know King's College London's new International School for Government is motivated by that same desire to teach these kinds of principles and equip policymakers with what they need to do their jobs well.

The process of government is not just about being part of some great big bureaucracy; it's an intellectual and workplace challenge for which there are lessons that can be learned and applied, no matter where you are in the world. Countries that fail to heed those lessons do so at their peril.

Tony Blair was UK Prime Minister from 1997 to 2007 and is Executive Chairman of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change.

To find out more about the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change's work, visit: institute.global

To find out more about King's College London's International School for Government, visit: kcl.ac.uk/isfg

This piece is adapted from a speech Mr Blair gave at the launch of the International School for Government in September 2019.

How the coronavirus crisis could change the nature of government and democracy

Matthew Taylor

The coronavirus is now the biggest global event since the second world war. Anyone alive today will remember these weeks and months for the rest of their lives, retelling stories about its impacts ranging from the tragic loss of loved ones to the trivial frustrations of home working. It is certain the crisis will have major implications for many aspects of our lives, societies and institutions.

But why, and in what ways, do crises lead to change? There are perhaps three key factors. First, there needs to be a latent desire and capacity for change which predates the crisis. Second, the crisis needs to reinforce that case for change and also in some ways prefigure alternative ways of doing things. Third, there needs to be a political alliance and a policy platform that can come together to turn potential into reality. Two examples provide contrasting illustrations: the AIDS epidemic of the late 1980s and the 2008 financial meltdown. We can see the importance of each factor and how it is far from certain that they will align.

In the former case, an existing gay rights movement plus a wider social liberalism provided the background potential. The scale of the crisis forced the most impacted communities and public health authorities to make a choice: hide away and cover up or demand action and fight stigma and ignorance. Eventually, they firmly chose the latter.

Finally, the crisis pointed to clear and achievable reforms – whether investment in treatment and cure, behaviour change or action to counter homophobia and discrimination.

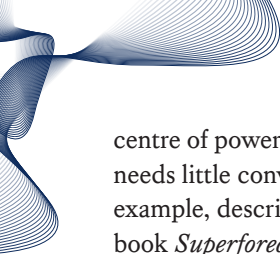The financial crisis was very different. First, the momentum for change

in either the way markets worked or their outcomes was weaker and more contested. Second, people derived different messages from the crisis itself. For some, it was all about the behaviour of rogue bankers; for some, it showed the negligence and irresponsibility of governments; while for others, it revealed the inherent failings of globalised finance. While these arguments aren't totally incompatible, they tend to lead to quite different policy prescriptions.

Finally, the prospects of turning the crisis into an agenda for lasting change were hamstrung not only by a lack of consensus, and the tensions between short-term imperatives and long-term shifts, but by the failure of reformers to create alliances or develop popular reform programmes. Most fatefully for progressive change, the left split between the radicalism of Occupy and the unsuccessful attempts of incumbent

social democrat leaders to adapt and renew. The beneficiaries of the crisis were not progressives but nationalist populists.

On the basis of this analysis, what scope is there for progressive reform of government and democracy following the pandemic? Three areas stand out.

First, the crisis is likely to lead to a greater emphasis on foresight and planning in government. These are already important functions, but they have rarely been seen as politically salient or a priority for spending. As the public is poignantly reminded of the many people and institutions that predicted a pandemic of this sort and argued largely in vain for adequate precautionary investment, the role of government in preparing for possible futures will be strongly reinforced. In the prime ministerial advisor Dominic Cummings there is someone at the

centre of power who apparently needs little convincing. He has, for example, described Philip Tetlock's book *Superforecasting* as essential reading for the kind of "weirdos" he is recruiting to the Downing Street staff.

Perhaps the crisis will better enable politicians and officials to achieve something they have been frequently admonished to do by a variety of experts: focus policy on the longer term. If so, an important concept may be that of "resilience", which has been developed and tested in cities across the world, backed by a major Rockefeller funding programme. Many commentators have already pointed out that the largely ignored

> **"**
> Perhaps the crisis will better enable politicians and officials to achieve something they have been frequently admonished to do by a variety of experts: focus policy on the longer term.**"**

warnings of pandemic experts have an eerie similarity to those of climatologists.

But long-term planning in areas like carbon reduction and climate change mitigation means making difficult and sometimes unpopular choices, a challenge which will be exacerbated by the bleak fiscal position the UK is likely to face after the crisis. The adversarial, soundbite-oriented bear pit of conventional politics is not the place to win complex arguments. Perhaps, then, a second development could be to reinforce the already strong case for the greater use of deliberative democratic methods of engagement and policymaking.

Unlike representative democracy, dominated by our profoundly unrepresentative and deeply dysfunctional political parties, deliberative processes can strengthen trust between governing politicians and the public. And this points to a third post-pandemic imperative.

A noticeable characteristic of the countries that seem to be handling the pandemic best without reverting to authoritarianism – for example, South Korea and Taiwan – is relatively high trust between rulers and citizens. This has meant the public have been willing to accept quite intrusive approaches to personal data, on-the-spot testing, and behaviour

modification as a price worth paying to rulers they trust to act effectively.

To enhance its limited reserves of trust and to try to mobilise a divided nation, the UK government has relied strongly on public health experts as messengers. As Michael Gove gratefully redirects difficult media questions to NHS managers at Downing Street press conferences, the idea we have had enough of experts is exposed as a tendentious myth. Yet, in many areas – like testing and equipment – the government has been seen to have overclaimed and tragically underperformed.

The crisis will eventually pass. But whether it is preparing for the long term or exploiting the incredible potential for public good of data and technology, restoring trust in our governmental institutions is vital, not just to the health of our democracy but to our livelihoods, wellbeing and, perhaps, survival.

In the UK, and even more grimly the US, the pandemic has at times shined a cruel light on the tattered fabric of our public sphere and democratic culture. If this crisis is not to go to waste, we need the resolve and the ideas to start to repair that fabric.

Matthew Taylor is Chief Executive of the RSA.

Global security challenges like Covid-19 call for sex-disaggregated data

Claire Hutchinson

Over the last 20 years, the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda has grown and developed into a recognisable and credible framework to help achieve peace and security.

WPS, at its core, is about the differential impact that conflict, crisis and security has on women and men. The WPS agenda calls for the recognition that gendered impacts must be a consideration, whether in armed conflicts, natural disasters, or outbreaks of communicable disease.

Covid-19 has underscored the importance of applying a gender lens to crises. But more importantly, it has demonstrated that in order to fully understand the short- and long-term impact of the virus, systematic collection, collation and analysis of data disaggregated by sex must be made available.

Current analysis of Covid-19 statistics highlights that more men than women die from the virus, but that women are more directly at risk as they make up the vast majority of hospital workers, residential aged care workers, and the general medical practice and pathology and diagnostic imaging workforces.[38] However, a paucity of data means further analysis of the gendered impacts of the virus is difficult.

Recognising the extent to which disease outbreaks affect women and men differently is a fundamental step to understanding the primary and secondary effects of a health emergency on different individuals,

and necessary for developing and implementing effective interventions.

Since 2007, the World Health Organisation has called on member states to formulate national strategies for addressing gender issues in health policies, programmes, research and planning processes, and to include sex-disaggregated data as part of gender analysis.

Lessons learned from previous disease outbreaks like Ebola and Zika have highlighted how the lack of such data in epidemic preparedness and responses can have grave consequences. Delays in publishing sex-disaggregated data during the 2014-16 West African Ebola outbreak resulted in unnecessary debates about whether or not more women than men were being infected, which in turn delayed responses that could have addressed any inequities.[39]

Governments and global health institutions must consider the sex and gender effects of the Covid-19 outbreak, both direct and indirect. This needs to be undertaken through an analysis of the gendered impacts of the pandemic, as well as incorporating the voices of women on the frontline of efforts to tackle the virus, and within preparedness and response policies or practices going forward.
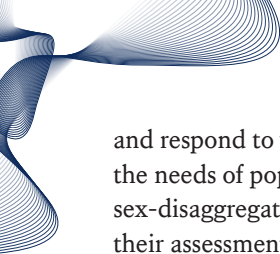
> **"**
> **Governments and global health institutions must consider the sex and gender effects of the Covid-19 outbreak."**

NATO has long recognised that sex-disaggregated data is critical to planning, doctrine and training across all tasks and functions, and in 2018 officially endorsed an action plan committing to the integration of gender perspectives and WPS priorities through the use of such data.

The accessibility of gender statistics has become the cornerstone of the NATO WPS approach. To support inclusiveness and increasing numbers of women in national forces and NATO deployments, NATO's International Military Staff annually gather statistics, disaggregated by sex, on recruitment, retention, work-life balance, and in military operations, across nations. This allows NATO to track the rate of improvement on gender equality and address any persistent challenges.

Military planners can best determine

and respond to vulnerabilities and the needs of populations by using sex-disaggregated data to help shape their assessments of crisis situations. NATO missions capture such data to understand their respective areas of operation and enhance situational awareness. Information disaggregated in this way assists in the planning of patrols and helps to identify women and girls at risk in conflict situations. It also enables planners to deliver more specific protection to civilian activities – for instance, by combatting conflict-related sexual violence.

What's more, this kind of data can be useful in stopping conflicts getting started in the first place. For example, weapons accumulation and proliferation may be one of the principal signs of impending conflict, and local women often know about the location of arms caches, and the routes utilised to transport them. NATO is working on adapting its early warning framework to include indicators that take into account gender-specific signs, which, through robust sex-disaggregated data, can also help recognise domestic violence as a precursor to further violent acts, and point to the potential vulnerabilities of women-headed households in conflict zones.

A gender-blind early warning system could lead to a response that is

inadvertently harmful to women or detrimental to the wider community. But indicators that take gender into account can enable earlier interventions to prevent burgeoning conflict.

Finally, on an organisational level, sex-disaggregated data plays an essential role in developing policies across the Alliance, from human resources to defence investment, which help further promote equality between women and men. It has encouraged broader thinking on policy and reinforced the importance of gender mainstreaming.

The Covid-19 crisis has changed society, forcing us to adapt to new ways of working and living, to adapt to new realities. But we have the opportunity to harness new ways of working and thinking about the world, and in this new thinking women must be included. Analysis based on accurate sex-disaggregated data can provide us with more robust solutions to not only this pandemic, but the many other complex security challenges we face today.

Clare Hutchinson is Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security at NATO.

What will higher education look like after coronavirus?

Jo Johnson

Few institutions have the longevity and deep roots of universities.

Yet even those that have been around long enough to survive plagues, fires and revolutions are finding that the coronavirus is stretching their resilience and endurance to the limit.

As international students scramble home to continue classes online, governments in the English-speaking countries dominant in the global education industry are waking up to the existential threat their disappearance poses to universities young and old.

Over the last decade, the number of international students worldwide has more than doubled to 5 million. Before the coronavirus struck, this trend was set to continue unabated, with some expecting over 8 million overseas students by 2025.

No one today has visibility or confidence in predictions over that sort of timeframe.

What is certain, however, is that they are unlikely to return to physical campuses in North America, the UK and Australia in anything like the same numbers for the start of the new academic year this September.

Governments and university leaders are sensibly preparing for a drop in international students of potentially 50-75 per cent – or worse – that represents a significant reversal for one of the great boom businesses of the globalised economy.

This will be a lesson for politicians who have persistently failed to speak up for international students when they've found themselves tangled up in wider debates about immigration.

They are now waking up to the critical role overseas students have quietly been playing in underpinning the financial foundations of institutions central to the performance of all knowledge economies.

The loss of revenues will force governments to choose between costly bailouts and disorderly failures that push tens of thousands of students out of classrooms, onto the streets, and into a labour market already in turmoil.

In the UK, where some 460,000 international students represent 20 per cent of library ticket-holders, massively cross-subsidise research in Russell Group institutions and contribute £20 billion to the country's annual services exports, these challenges are particularly acute.

The reputational consequences for any country whose institutions mishandle their student populations

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in this time of crisis will be long-lasting.

The Office for Students will need to design and put in place a multi-billion pound stabilisation fund to prevent the collapse of scores of vulnerable English universities.

Access to this fund should be subject to strict non-negotiable conditions, including the phased closure of poor-quality and low-value courses under teach-out arrangements to ensure that students can complete their studies.

If there is a scramble this September to backfill empty places from a shrinking pool of domestic 18-year-olds, as seems likely, there will inevitably be winners and losers.

If groups of financially robust institutions are minded to show self-restraint and want to agree voluntarily to limit their recruitment of domestic student numbers to their 2019 levels plus, say, 5 to 10 per cent, that should be their decision.

The OfS should, however, firmly resist lobbying from weaker institutions for the reintroduction of government-mandated sector-wide student number controls.

It is not clear that any move to reimpose institution-by-institution student number controls for this purpose would work in practice, make much difference to the financial crisis or be consistent with the market regulator's statutory duties to promote value for money.

What is clear, though, is that a return to centralised command-and-control would create perverse incentives, limiting the ability of successful institutions to expand at a reasonable rate at the expense of those offering poorer quality and outcomes.

Artificially constraining supply at excellent providers and corralling students into universities further down the reputational, quality and outcomes pecking order – to which they haven't applied and don't want to go – hardly seems sensible.

It is certainly not in the student interest.

Critically, it would also be a fundamental setback to a powerful driver of social mobility. For, once imposed, number controls would stay for good, satisfying the desire of HE-sceptics to clamp down on the expansion of the sector.

The removal of the "cap on aspiration", announced in 2013 and implemented over the following three years, was a flagship Conservative education policy that modernisers rightly predicted would enable

more people from disadvantaged backgrounds to access a university education.

Young people from such backgrounds are more than 50 per cent more likely today to attend the most selective institutions than they were a decade ago.

If sector-wide government-mandated student number controls return, one of the lasting casualties of the coronavirus will be the role higher education plays in levelling up opportunity across the UK.

That would be an entirely self-inflicted injury.

For all the legitimate and justified anxieties over the coming academic year, pessimism about the medium-term future for international education is overblown.

Students and scholars leaving their homes in search of education and knowledge is hardly a new phenomenon. It will resume.

A QS survey of 11,000 prospective international students found that 85 per cent were still open to applying – although a significant proportion of these intended to defer entry for a year.[40]

The push factors behind international education remain strong. In key developing countries, a shortage of places at prestigious domestic institutions that match social aspirations and academic needs will remain acute for the foreseeable future.

Driven by growth in middle classes in developing countries in Asia and Africa, the demand for higher education is set to increase from 160 million students in 2015 to over 414 million by 2030, according to UNESCO.[41] To meet that surge, the world would have to build four universities that serve 80,000 students every week, every year.

The two largest nations in the world, China and India, which account for a quarter of overseas students, cannot accommodate student demand for higher education within their borders. They are far from unique.

In Bangladesh, a country with a young population of 170 million, and Sri Lanka, there are an estimated five students competing for every available university place, according to the British Council.

In the longer term, the disruption from the coronavirus could

accelerate a new phase of growth for international education.

Traditionally, it has been a privilege reserved for those who either have money, or the know-how to secure financial aid. In future, its benefits will be likely to reach a much wider pool of talent.

This will come about through an acceleration of two trends.

First, future flows of students will be more multi-directional. The flow of talent is today still surprisingly one-way: clever young people from the developing world take their skills and talents to richer countries in the developed world.

Disruption to travel and incomes from the coronavirus crisis will boost the relative appeal of opportunities for intra-regional study. Many Asian students interested in overseas study are increasingly contemplating safe and more affordable study options closer to home, in countries such as Malaysia.

As developing countries increasingly seek to welcome growing numbers of overseas students themselves and improve their own league table performance, international education will cease to be considered in terms of a mainly western and English-speaking archetype.

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> **Disruption to travel and incomes from the coronavirus crisis will boost the relative appeal of opportunities for intra-regional study."**

Second, the crisis will accelerate take-up of online, distance-learning and blended courses (combining online educational materials and classroom interaction with traditional place-based teaching methods). These will be of interest to a broad swathe of mid-income families unable to afford (or unconvinced by the return on investment from) traditional multi-year programmes of overseas study.

Notwithstanding heroic efforts by universities to move to a virtual teaching environment, the crisis has exposed the extent to which UK universities have been lagging behind the best around the world in preparing themselves for the new opportunities in online, distance-learning and blended courses.

The most far-sighted institutions are already in a position to turn this crisis into an opportunity. Others are clearly scrambling to provide anything resembling a coherent online offering. They will pay a steep price in student satisfaction.

Demand for the traditional multi-year programmes of overseas study will return in time for the groups who've always accessed it. Online provision will not replace face-to-face education in the long term for students wanting the academic kudos and status benefits from full-on immersive experiences in other countries.

But the most exciting growth in international education will come from institutions using technology to scale up access for talented students from poor and middle-income backgrounds for whom it has previously been out of reach.

An international education market that is more accessible, less elitist and less carbon-intensive will be at least one good thing to come out of the coronavirus crunch.

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Better policymaking requires a better understanding of people's values

Kirstie Hewlett and Niall Sreenan

Most people would agree that public policy should be informed by the latest and best scientific and academic evidence. All stages of the policy cycle – from inception and design to delivery and evaluation – should have a foundation of robust, reliable and rigorous evidence, so policy agendas can be set, effective interventions designed, and their success or failure clearly understood and learned from.
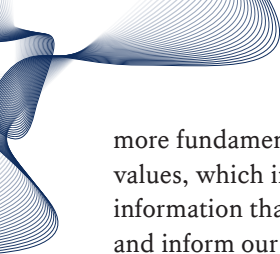
The ethos of this policy approach could be summarised by one of the phrases that came to define Tony Blair's New Labour government: "What matters is what works". That administration's *Modernising Government* white paper established a template for contemporary evidence-based policy in the UK and internationally.

Yet this model of a pragmatic, continuously assessed evidence-based policy process, however worthy, is an idealised one. Among many other factors, policymakers are limited by the need to respond to contingent events, the realities of political powerplay, and the difficulty of capturing and processing a vast and often contradictory landscape of evidence within challenging time constraints.

This has perhaps never been so clearly demonstrated as in recent months. The coronavirus crisis has triggered fierce debates about the "right" evidence to follow, with experts questioning the government's "science-led" approach, disputing the best way forward, and drawing attention to apparent missteps in strategy and confused messaging.

But notwithstanding these types of debate, the very idea of an objective, evidence-based policy process is also undermined by something much

more fundamental: our underlying values, which influence the types of information that grab our attention and inform our decisions, and the type of society we ultimately wish to see.

There is a growing recognition that, in addition to our many biases and misperceptions of reality, fundamental human values shape our decision-making in ways we may not care to admit – if we're even aware of them in the first place.[42]

For example, in what ways do we justify a situation as being fair or moral? How do our enduring beliefs influence our judgements about conduct that is acceptable or preferable, and conduct that is not? What priorities do we set on security, tradition, status or individual achievement? These deeply held, and often unconscious, principles shape our political attitudes and behaviours – among both citizens and political decision-makers.

The current moment of polarisation and populism in many countries around the world underlines this. We might best understand this political fragmentation in terms of competing cultural "values".[43] Indeed, much analysis focuses on how successful populist movements are less concerned with "what works" and rely instead on growing

> **"**
> These deeply held, and often unconscious, principles shape our political attitudes and behaviours – among both citizens and political decision-makers.**"**

distrust of government, perceptions of inequality, and on activating emotional, grievance-led responses rather than "rational" ones.[44]

In this context, it is not difficult to see how an understanding of fundamental human values might be of interest to policymakers. For all our best efforts at strategy, planning and evidence-informed decision-making, it is often the case that values or "culture" are the most significant determinant of a policy's success or failure – whether it's the values of the communities at whom policies are aimed, or those of the policymakers, officials, and "ground-level" bureaucrats who conceive, design and implement those policies.

More profoundly, a system of governance whose values seem to match those of its citizens is more likely to be seen as legitimate. A democratic system in which differing values can be recognised and discussed is also key to producing "good disagreement".
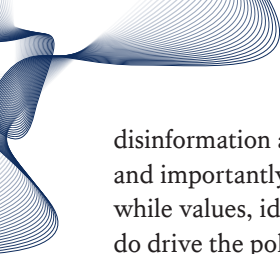
Policymakers internationally are acutely aware of the problems of polarisation and trust in democracy and government. Yet attempts to place human values at the heart of policymaking tend to be crudely rhetorical, often based on the idea of homogenous national identity and values, such as Gordon Brown's attempt in 2005 to reframe his policy agenda as Chancellor around so-called "British values".[45] Anticipating later populist

strategies, this included a call to celebrate rather than denigrate British imperial history, a question upon which the British public are in fact split.

Such efforts – however misguided – show that while there is at least an awareness that policy must engage with human values, there seems to be little understanding of what those values are or how policy can connect meaningfully with them.

Recent years have provided some exceptions. *Understanding our Political Nature*, a report published last year by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, examines a range of challenges for policymakers in the 21st century (including misperception,

disinformation and decline in trust), and importantly acknowledges that while values, identity and emotion do drive the political attitudes and behaviour of both policymakers and the public, they are not well understood.[46]

The report, part of a larger initiative called "Enlightenment 2.0", has called for the establishment of a multidisciplinary "science of values". This would allow us not only to "classify, analyse and compare the values held by citizens and political movements" but, in turn, to develop a practical framework through which policymakers can use these insights to produce better outcomes.

Recent developments in the Republic of Ireland are also promising. The country's legalisation of same-sex marriage in 2015 and its repeal of the constitutional ban on abortion in May 2018 were both the result of recommendations made by deliberative citizens' assemblies, mechanisms that in theory "provided a framework for thoughtful evaluation of the options, improving understanding of the different values that might be at stake". These deliberative mechanisms are credited with shifting public opinion and that of political elites on extremely polarising values-based issues, while also formalising a space for acknowledging opposing views.[47]

But important challenges persist. The nebulous and contested nature of the concept of "values" is itself a barrier to practical action. Nor is this the first attempt in human history to integrate human values and morals into a conception and delivery of the public good. Arguably, this is the fundamental task of politics.

A shift from evidence-based to evidence-informed policymaking is a start, at least acknowledging that as well as data, research and expertise (and ideology), many other intuitively held values inform public policy – from both the public and the decision-makers.

Practically speaking, the rich array of data collected through surveys such as the World Values Survey and European Values Survey should be of interest to policymakers seeking to understand the full complexity of the publics they serve. And more direct and deliberative democratic methods may offer opportunities to meaningfully incorporate the values of individuals and communities in political decision-making.

Systematic attempts to understand and address the values and culture of policymakers and their advisers may prove practically challenging, not least because it isn't always in their interest to reveal their deepest beliefs. These challenges aside, embedding

robust systems of transparency and encouraging genuine diversity in policy circles may help address, at the very least, the sense that policy agendas and measures of success are not connected to the values of the public.

Science and evidence are more important than ever to ensure effective governance. But policymakers who are serious about valuing open, democratic and equitable societies must begin to take values seriously.

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Covid-19 threatens the future of local government

Enid Slack

Covid-19 has placed enormous fiscal pressure on governments around the world as they engage in a massive effort to address the health and economic challenges of their population. Much of the media coverage of the response to the pandemic has focused on national governments, which have taken unprecedented steps to support people and businesses through tax relief, subsidies, job retention schemes, and more.

We should not lose sight, however, of how vital local authorities are during this pandemic. They are on the frontlines, providing essential services and playing a key role in public health emergencies and social care, for example. They are also in charge of public transit, picking up the trash, providing police and fire protection, as well as delivering other services in their communities. Local authorities will also be significant players in the recovery that will follow the pandemic.

But despite playing such a fundamental role in addressing Covid-19, local authorities are facing enormous fiscal pressures that threaten their long-term fiscal sustainability. They are facing a cash crunch both because demands have increased and because revenues have plummeted. Demands on health, social, and emergency services have risen and, at the same time, local

authorities have had to increase spending on cleaning facilities, providing personal protective equipment to workers, and addressing IT issues to allow employees to work from home. There are some reductions in expenditures, however, because municipal facilities such as leisure centres are closed and travel budgets have been cut, etc. These reductions do offset, at least to some extent, some of the added expenditures.

The real hit to local authorities, however, comes on the revenue side of their budgets. Local authorities rely on council taxes, business rate revenues, user fees, commercial and other income, and grants from central government. Many local authorities are offering property tax relief to residents and businesses in the form of payment deferrals, tax rate freezes, and removal of penalty and interest payments. User fee revenues have declined, especially when it comes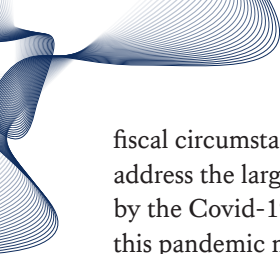 to transit fares in large cities. Transport for London, for example, reports that income from fares has fallen by 90 per cent. Overall, it has been reported that England's 343 local authorities face a potential shortfall of £5 billion over the next year. The shortfall would have been over £8 billion without central government emergency funding.[48]

How are local authorities in the UK addressing such shortfalls? They are doing what local governments around the world are doing – dipping into reserves, cutting expenditures and staff, deferring capital projects, and undertaking short-term borrowing. Central government has provided transfers to local authorities and allowed councils to defer business rate payments for three months. It has also provided business rate relief and will reimburse local authorities for lost revenues.

All of these measures might see local authorities through the short term depending on their individual

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fiscal circumstances, but they do not address the larger questions raised by the Covid-19 crisis: What does this pandemic mean for the long-term fiscal sustainability of local authorities? Do they have adequate revenue sources to carry on? When the recovery begins, will local authorities be able to contribute?

A crisis like this amplifies the problems in the current funding arrangements for local authorities. Covid-19 is putting considerable pressure on local authorities that do not have adequate revenue sources to meet their mounting expenditure responsibilities to fight the pandemic. Council taxes, business rates, and user fees are not appropriate for funding social services, such as children or adult services, which redistribute income from high-earning to low-earning households. The most progressive tax is the income tax, which is more appropriate to pay for social services than a council tax or business rates.

The current mix of revenue sources available to local authorities puts them at particular risk when the country moves into recovery. Council taxes and business rates are not elastic sources of revenue, meaning that they are not responsive to changes in the economy in the same way as an income or value-added tax. When the recovery comes, local

> **"**
> **When the recovery comes, local council revenues will not increase automatically with the growth in the economy."**

council revenues will not increase automatically with the growth in the economy. Moreover, to stimulate the economy as part of the recovery, local authorities will want to invest in infrastructure – but they may not have the resources to do it, especially if they have depleted their capital reserves.

In a report I wrote for the London Finance Commission in 2016,[49] I found that London relies much more heavily than other major international cities on intergovernmental transfers and much less on locally raised revenues. The same is true of other local authorities in England. Other international cities also have the ability to levy other taxes in addition to property taxes, including income and sales taxes, for example. The need for local authorities to be able to raise other types of revenue has been suggested before: the London

Finance Commission made a strong case for the devolution of revenues to London[50] and, more recently, the Institute for Fiscal Studies made a similar recommendation for local authorities throughout England.[51]

Cracks in the municipal funding model are highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic but the crisis also provides an opportunity to revisit how local authorities are funded and what improvements are needed. A new funding model with appropriate and adequate revenues to meet their responsibilities would give local authorities the flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances and allow them to contribute more fully to the economic recovery.

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Young people face a Covid opportunity gap

Michael Sanders

For the past couple of months, governments around the world have effectively suspended formal education for their nation's children. This can't have been an easy choice. But despite the challenges that it brings to working parents and carers, closing schools and nurseries to help halt the spread of coronavirus was clearly the right decision.

In most countries, some provision has remained for the children of essential workers, and in the UK, the government took the additional step of keeping schools open for vulnerable young people – those supported by children's social care, with education, health and care plans, and students in alternative provision. This, too, was the right call.

These vulnerable groups have, on average, lower educational attainment than their peers, and the most to lose when their access to school is withheld.

They are less likely to have access to learning resources when they are at home, and less likely to have access to both the hardware and the high-speed internet needed to properly take advantage of materials provided by their teachers and others.

But despite still being able to go to school, these young people are not getting anywhere near the same educational experience that they would usually receive. School itself is not working as it normally would – the need to socially distance, combined with fewer teaching staff, imposes severe limits on the pedagogy that can happen, even with the best will in the world.

The most vulnerable young people are those who are supported by the social care system. On average, they perform three grades worse on each of their top eight GCSEs compared with their peers, according to research from the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford.

We're also hearing that many vulnerable children in the UK who could be in school at the moment aren't attending – between 75 per

cent and 95 per cent of those eligible. These children are not only missing out on an education; they're also potentially being exposed to greater harm at home.

But those are just the few who can attend school. We shouldn't forget that most young people from lower-income families, who may be suffering extreme hardship at the moment, are not eligible to go to school in the first place. This matters. According to research by UCL's Professor Lindsey Macmillan and her colleagues, differences in access to education already account for half of all social immobility in the UK.

On a global scale, many of those in the developing world, for whom education is a vital engine of economic growth and the escape from poverty, will be missing out on education during their formative years, and without access to the technologies and social safety net that people in the West (mostly) enjoy.

And even where students have access to the right equipment, the benefits of schooling at home are not uniformly spread. An experiment carried out in Russia and published last month looking at the effectiveness of "ed tech" interventions as a substitute for regular teaching, found that students who had the lowest scores to begin with benefited the least. By

contrast, the benefits were twice as large for average-performing students, and three times as large for high-performing students.

The likelihood is, then, that one of the consequences of the coronavirus will be a further widening of the opportunity gap that afflicts young people at home and abroad. Those from lower-income families will become less likely to achieve good grades at school, less likely to attend higher education, less likely to enter the professions, and more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of crime and to experience homelessness. Developing nations with rapid growth rates could see them falter with a very human cost.

The desire to narrow these gaps in opportunities and outcomes has been a priority for governments of all stripes, and one that policymakers,

professionals, charitable organisations and researchers share.

It is also at the core of a large swathe of the UK's What Works Movement, in which successive governments have invested substantially in recent years, through the foundation of the Early Intervention Foundation, Education Endowment Foundation, the Youth Futures Foundation, the Youth Endowment Fund, What Works for Children's Social Care and the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes.

Internationally, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab and

> **"**
> ## After the crisis, we must turn our attention to the young.**"**

Innovations in Poverty Action also aim to build a more rigorous evidence base to alleviating poverty.

While keeping us apart, the crisis has brought us together – whether it's applauding NHS workers in the street, hundreds of thousands volunteering to support the health service, or millions of tiny acts of

kindness that have made the isolation more bearable. This energy, and renewed sense of fraternity, cannot be left to wither after the crisis is over.

The focus during the crisis has been protecting people most vulnerable to coronavirus – the elderly and people with existing health conditions. After the crisis, we must turn our attention to the young, and ensure that we serve the next generation with that same devotion of passion, treasure and intellect.

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How to fix Europe's fraying social fabric

Arthur Shartsis

The Covid-19 crisis is touching just about all aspects of society across nations, but its impact will depend on the stability or fragility of the context it lands in. It is too early to say what the crisis and its after-effects will do to our sense of social connection and cohesion, but it's vital to recognise that we are starting from a social fabric that is often already frayed.

European countries saw high levels of migration in the decades after the second world war, and for much of the latter half of the century, these countries made little systematic effort to integrate new citizens and residents into their societies, and substantial numbers of immigrants remained separate, all contributing to a feeling that societal cohesion had been eroded. It wasn't until the 1990s that European countries began to recognise societal problems resulting from this neglect. Violent attacks at the beginning of the 21st century increased concern about this issue.

> **"** Unless Europe can enrich the participation in society of millions of citizens of recent immigrant background and alienated segments of the population, it can expect increased social friction and political unrest. **"**

"Assimilation" was an early approach for moving new citizens and residents into the mainstream of society. But, over time, it was rejected as a concept because it implied a loss or suppression of cultural origins and practices. "Integration", which remains a mainstream concept, may also have social and political limitations. As one integration specialist at a major foundation said: "How can we talk about integrating a fourth generation Belgian?"

Given that words have political and social significance, a better approach is "cohesion", which is a more neutral way to describe the need to enable all citizens fully to participate in, and benefit from, their own national and local societies. Politically, it is difficult to argue against a more cohesive society. The concept of societal cohesion is rapidly gaining support, and the shift from "integration" to "cohesion" can now be found in both governmental and non-governmental programmes.

Unless Europe can enrich the participation in society of millions of citizens of recent immigrant background and alienated segments of the population, it can expect increased social friction and political unrest. Core challenges include the lack of systematic pan-European cooperation and the absence of a centralised institution where governments and organisations can learn how to implement the best practices for promoting cohesion found in various countries. In fact, it is even difficult to identify all of the government and non-government actors in Europe operating in the areas that contribute to cohesion. Europe needs more comprehensive and innovative efforts to enhance societal cohesion and improve levels of civil discourse, mutual trust, happiness and economic wellbeing. It needs a centre for best practice.

Efforts have been made to provide some form of transnational exchanges and comparisons of programmes.

For example, the CLIP Network (Cities for Local Integration Policy), a group of 30 European cities – not all of which had significant immigrant populations – enabled integration specialists in member cities to learn about, and compare, integration practices across Europe. Unfortunately, when the funding ended, CLIP closed.

There are other networks of different cities that compare local practices beyond just integration and cohesion. In 2011, Mayor Wolfgang Schuster of Stuttgart, one of Germany's outstanding leaders and visionaries for integration, led an effort to create the "European Pact for Integration". Mayor Schuster proposed an organisation that would be supported by the EU and provide policy guidance for European countries in 12 specific areas related to integration. The application for funding was rejected, possibly because the EU was unwilling to support such policymaking power. In any event, this thoughtful effort to create a systematic pan-European approach to integration policy failed.

A centre for best practice need not engage in the difficult and politically fraught discussion of precisely what constitutes societal cohesion for each country. Those policy and ideological decisions are properly left to politicians

and policymakers. Rather, such a centre can identify "what works" in areas that most organisations agree contribute to a cohesive society, including educational and employment opportunity, language facility, access to housing, job training, entrepreneurship, cultural and religious exchanges, youth programmes, mutual acceptance, anti-discrimination and more. If governments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can agree on most or all of these elements, a precise, universal description of societal cohesion is not necessary for the success of an international centre for best practice.

One of the challenges and frustrations for those working in the field of integration is the difficulty in measuring the outcomes of funded programmes. This problem of metrics is, of course, not just limited to the field of integration, but applies to many social programmes. Governments and CSOs could more effectively use their financial resources if they could be more certain of the efficacy of the programmes that they run or support.

One of the most promising new tools to evaluate and improve integration and cohesion programmes is the field of behavioural insights, which draws on findings and methods from behavioural economics, psychology,

anthropology and more, with the aim of encouraging people to make better choices for themselves and their societies. While behavioural insights have been adopted in a wide range of policy areas, there has been no systematic effort to explore the potential benefits of such an approach for societal cohesion and immigrant integration. In a paper funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Behavioural Insights Team in Britain identified cohesion as a field ripe for its modern methodology. In fact, they believe that a shared evaluation framework can be used across different projects, to allow governments and other institutions to compare their effectiveness and identify what works in existing projects.

Communication of best practice to governments and CSOs is essential. One skilled integration official described the current situation as foundations and think tanks coming up with valuable written reports that are "put in a drawer" and never get to those in the field who need them. One city integration office determined that, while it offered valuable programmes promoting integration, its immigrant "customers" often did not know of their existence.

Any organisation that purports to provide European-wide advice about best practice must market its "product" to its "customers". It must disseminate and market its findings to each governmental office or organisation in Europe that promotes that particular aspect of societal cohesion. Without this marketing function, the value of any pan-European centre is limited.

Such a centre would reinforce cohesion as an important national value for individual European states. If they are serious about creating cohesive societies, they must identify and promote what actually works.

Arthur Shartsis is a prominent San Francisco lawyer, currently working to establish a pan-European center for best practices in societal cohesion.

We don't have the right global system to tackle coronavirus

Oliver Letwin

If Covid-19 has taught us anything, it should at least have taught us that humanity has every reason to cooperate.
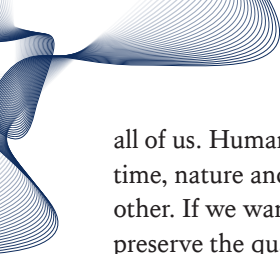
On an outing as a child to the London Planetarium, I first discovered that the time would come (admittedly rather a long time) when planet earth would be swallowed up by the sun. I remember thinking, on my way home on the bus, that replicating the whole of human civilisation in some other galaxy sounded like a rather big technological challenge – at least to my childish ears – and that this made what was then known as the "space race" between the United States and the Soviet Union seem rather irrelevant. The race that seemed to matter was the race of human beings against the expansion of the sun.

Nothing in my adult life has persuaded me otherwise. Today's great challenges – climate change, artificial intelligence, food and water security, disease – are challenges for

all of us. Humanity is on one side; time, nature and machinery on the other. If we want to defeat viruses or preserve the quality of human life, we can't expect to do so effectively as a set of warring or jarring nations. Our chances of success are directly related to our capacity for cooperation.

And this, of course, is as true of Covid-19 as it is of anything. Despite President Trump absurdly calling it "Chinese", there is no reason to suppose that the virus harbours any nationalistic sentiment. In its primeval (and, to date, horribly successful) struggle for survival, this enemy of mankind makes light of national boundaries. It does not differentiate between political systems.

So the rational response for human beings is to work together to defeat it.

But – and here's the rub – in the supposedly awesome array of institutions that constitute the so-called "international rules-based order", we don't have an institution or system capable of bringing together the whole world in a prompt, coordinated and effective response. Yes, the World Health Organisation exists. But it is not what it says on the tin. It has not been given the powers or the capabilities to organise the world into a consistent defence of human health. The virus is unified. The response of humanity is not.

> ❝
> ## The virus is unified. The response of humanity is not."

How can we hope to do better in the future? What kind of organisation do we need to build if we genuinely want to defend the world's health, together? And what kind of relationships must such an organisation have with the nation-states that currently have so strong a tendency to go solo?

If these were easy questions to answer, a satisfactory answer would have been given long ago. There are all sorts of genuine difficulties to be overcome. Nation-states are reluctant to do anything that can be characterised by the nationalists and the populists as "ceding control" to an international body. The rich nations worry about the risk of being forced to pay for measures on which the poorer nations can get a "free ride". The poorer nations worry about the risk of having foisted upon them by the rich nations some set of measures that don't fit with their social or political cultures.

But the fact that these difficulties are genuine does not mean that they are insurmountable. And surmount them

we must, if we are to achieve rational cooperation in the face of a common enemy. Two recent examples show very clearly what can be achieved.

When Ebola struck in West Africa some years back, it became clear that the regional structure of the WHO, and the inability of its central headquarters in Geneva to mobilise funds and teams, was part of the cause of the delayed response. Following that episode, much was done to improve the position – not least, indeed mainly, through the untiring efforts of Dame Sally Davies, who was then the UK's Chief Medical Officer.

Likewise, mainly through the efforts of Dame Sally and Lord Jim O'Neill, a global strategy for tackling antimicrobial resistance has been formulated. There are real signs that the world as a whole is cooperating to prevent the threatened collapse of the antibiotic protections that have so dramatically changed life chances for the whole of humanity since the time of Sir Alexander Fleming.

These inspiring examples of the UK leading the way in forging new levels of international cooperation to fight disease demonstrate that, despite the difficulties, we can improve on the present position – and that the UK can play a major role in making that happen.

A good start would be to use the G20 to establish a new international body to conduct virus surveillance and control. This would obviously fall far short of full-scale reform of the whole structure of the WHO. But it would be much easier and faster to achieve.

The new body could be set up as an independent trust of some kind, and thereby be entirely removed from the clunky and highly politicised assembly that governs the WHO. It would complement Gavi, which administers vaccines, and the recently established arrangements for international sponsorship of the development of vaccines. Its role would be to identify very quickly what viruses were on the way, and work out quickly an entire game-plan for controlling them – drawing, no doubt, on the most advanced techniques already being employed in places like Singapore.

"
We don't have an institution or system capable of bringing together the whole world in a prompt, coordinated and effective response.**"**

A subsidiary benefit of such a move would be the reinforcement of the G20 itself – which is the one international body that brings together all of the nation-states that really determine the fate of our multi-polar world. Unlike the UN Security Council (which lacks permanent representation from India, Japan and the other major emerging powers), the G20 has no official standing; amazingly, it still lacks even the secretariat that Gordon Brown very sensibly tried to obtain for it after the 2008 crash.

Perhaps a silver lining to the dark clouds of this crisis might be not only an improved and depoliticised international system for virus surveillance and control, but also a further step towards giving the G20 the role it needs to have if we are to achieve global cooperation in the face of global threats.

The Rt Hon Sir Oliver Letwin was Minister for Government Policy in the Cabinet Office from 2010 to 2016, and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster from 2014 to 2016. He also served as Conservative MP for West Dorset from 1997 to 2019.

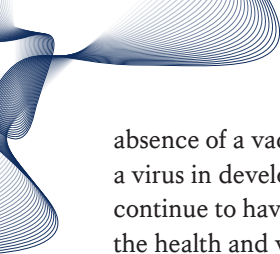# No government can solve this crisis on its own

Douglas Alexander

In the grip of a pandemic, the world urgently needs an agenda for action to tackle Covid-19 and its consequences.

In recent weeks we have seen the virus spread across the globe and overwhelm some of the most advanced healthcare systems on earth. So far, Africa and the Middle East have been spared the worst of the virus. Yet research by Imperial College suggests a delayed response to the pandemic "will cost at least 3 million lives" in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, because even though the number of cases in Africa at the moment is mercifully low, the threat remains huge. The World Health Organisation has urged quick action in the face of the "tremendously fast rise in the number of countries with cases being confirmed". A 2016 report by the RAND Corporation, on the countries most vulnerable to infection outbreaks, confirmed that 22 out of 25 of those countries were African. The others were Haiti, Yemen, and Afghanistan.

While Europe today has one doctor for every 300 people, the continent of Africa has one doctor for every 70,000 people. As the *New York Times* has reported, the United States has some 160,000 ventilators, while Sierra Leone has 13, South Sudan has four, and the Central African Republic has three. This means that doctors and hospitals across Africa and the developing world will only be able to treat a fraction of those needing treatment if the virus takes hold and spreads in the weeks and months ahead through densely populated cities and rural villages. At the same time, it's clear that in the

> **"**
> While Europe today has one doctor for every 300 people, the continent of Africa has one doctor for every 70,000 people."

absence of a vaccine, the presence of a virus in developing countries will continue to have a direct bearing on the health and wellbeing of OECD countries. As Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia, has stated: "Coronavirus anywhere is a threat to people everywhere". In a literal sense we are only as strong as each other's response, and our wellbeing is now bound up with each other's wellbeing around the world.

Yet while Covid-19 is primarily a health crisis, the actions needed to tackle it are already having profound and damaging economic consequences. The United Nations has warned that the loss of income in the developing world could exceed $220 billion. Given the fall in oil and commodity prices, the collapse of tourism, and the wider disruption to global supply chains, the economic impact of the virus is already being felt across the developing world. The IMF has slashed its Global Growth Forecasts and warned of a slump the likes of which the world has not witnessed since the Great Depression of the 1930s. So, the challenge now is to avoid a global recession becoming a global depression and undoing decades of progress in international development.

So far, coordinated global leadership has been singularly lacking in this crisis. Disunity and division not

cooperation and coordination has sadly been the international response to date. The United Nations Security Council has been silent to the point of irrelevance. Back in 2008 to 2010, at the time of the global financial crisis when I served in the British Cabinet as International Development Secretary, the G20 galvanised disparate governments to act together to ward off the threat of a global depression. Of course, today's leaders are different. Of course, the multilateral system has been weakened in the intervening years. Of course, governments have focused first on the crisis within their own countries. But, self-evidently, this is a crisis that no government can solve acting on its own. That's why coordinated action is needed now to meet both the health and economic dimensions of this global crisis.

The contours of that agenda for action are already emerging. To address the most urgent requirements of the Covid-19 response, world leaders must this week commit to $3

billion for vaccines: The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations is coordinating the global research effort to develop and scale up effective Covid-19 vaccines. In addition, Gavi, the international vaccine alliance, will have a key role in procuring and fairly distributing vaccines to the poorest countries and will require $7.4 billion for its replenishment, which needs to be fully funded.

Secondly, the Covid-19 therapeutics accelerator aims to deliver 100 million treatments by the end of 2020 and is seeking $2.25 billion to rapidly develop and scale up access to therapeutics. The World Health Organisation needs support not criticism: to be able to fulfil its mandate effectively at this critical time, it requires an additional $1 billion this year, which must be funded in full by member state governments.

Yet the economic impacts of this crisis also require immediate action. 64 countries globally and 30 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa today spend more on public debt servicing than public health. To take just one example, the Gambia spends nine times its health budget on external debt repayments: for every million people it has 100 doctors, compared to 2,900 in OECD countries. That's why we need to kickstart a comprehensive debt

restructuring process for African and International Development Association countries that need that assistance. Sub-Saharan African countries owe at least $365.5 billion to official and private creditors. That's why action on debt restructuring is necessary now.

Nobody can yet know the full economic, social and political consequences of this pandemic. What we can do is to work together and cooperate across borders to meet the challenge of a virus that recognises neither national borders nor political ideology. Neither nativism nor nationalism offer us a way out of this crisis. Only by working together can we rise to this challenge. A global pandemic can only be met by global action. That action is needed now.

Douglas Alexander is a Visiting Professor at the Policy Institute, King's College London, and a former UK Governor to the World Bank.
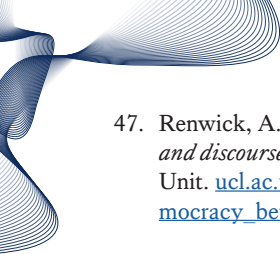
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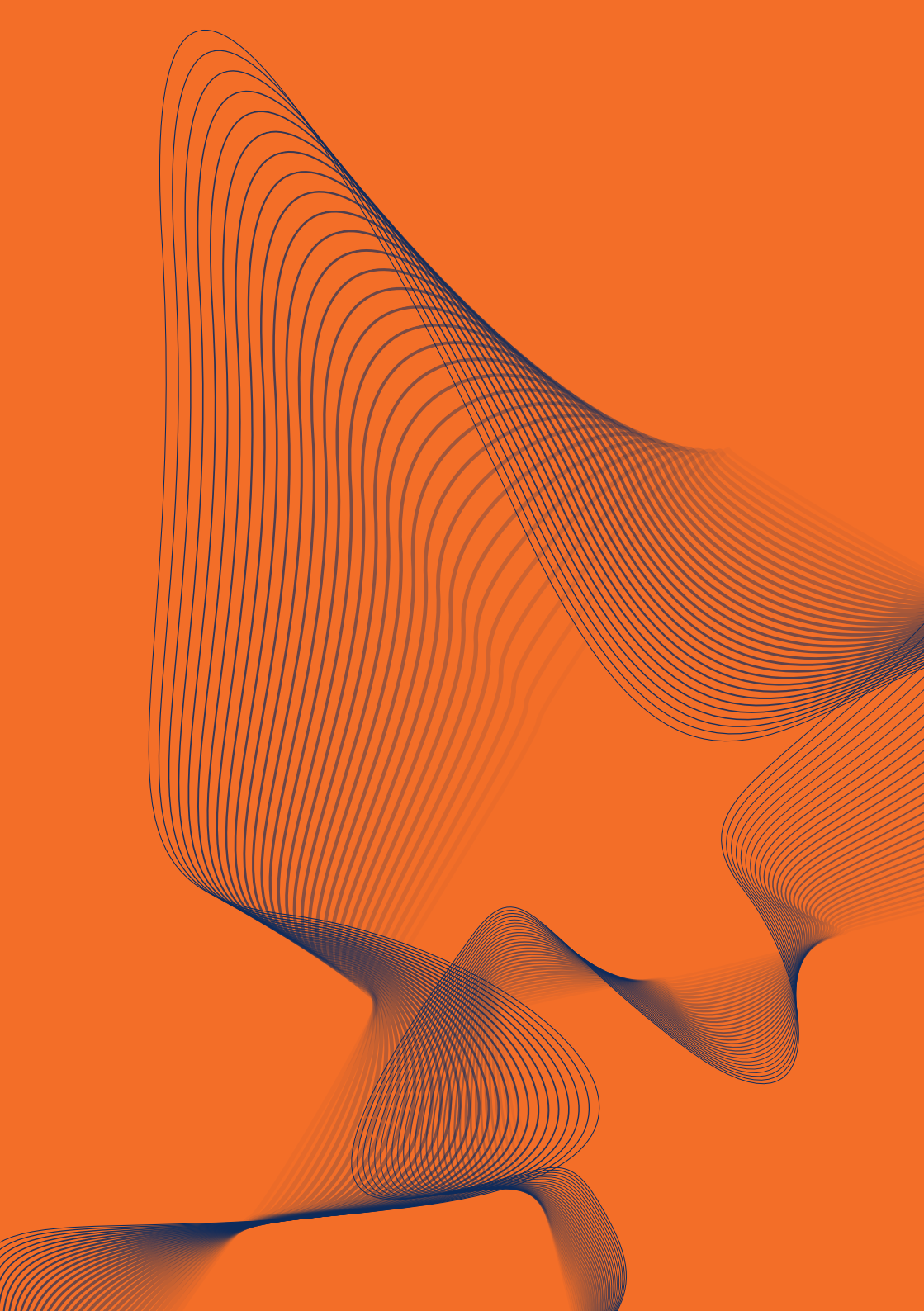
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