



Spheres of influence in the coming decades: Four alternative scenarios

Presentation of a report jointly produced by
the Stimson Center's Strategic Foresight Hub
and the Pardee Center for International Futures

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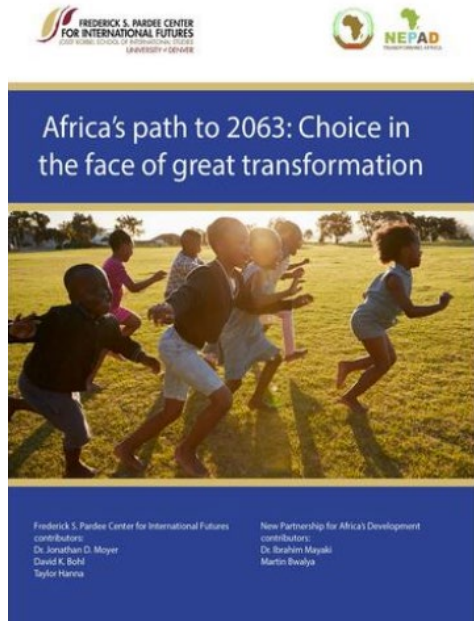
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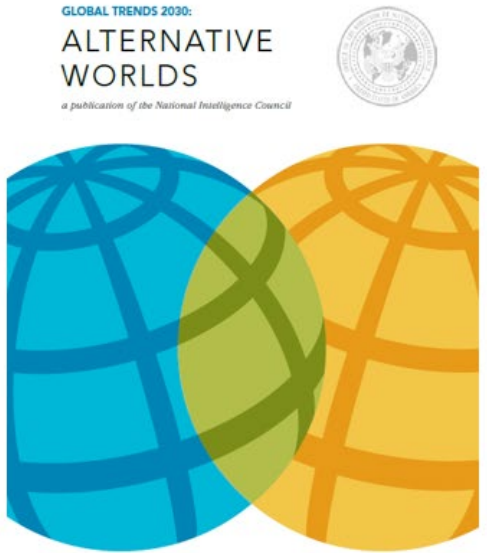
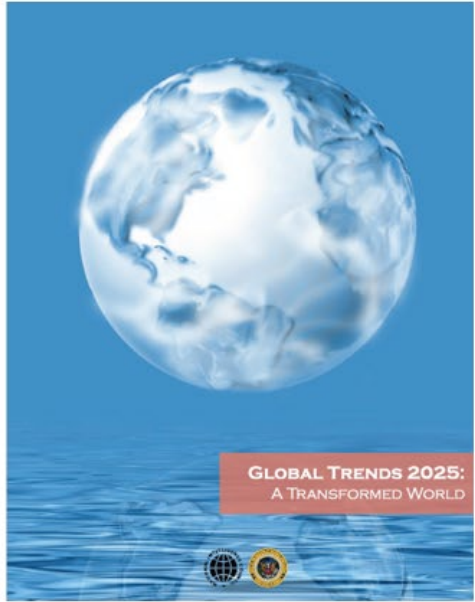
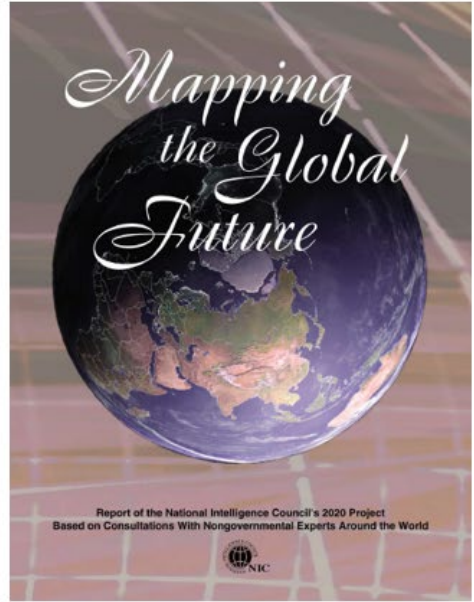


SCENARIO SURVEILLANCE ANALYSIS

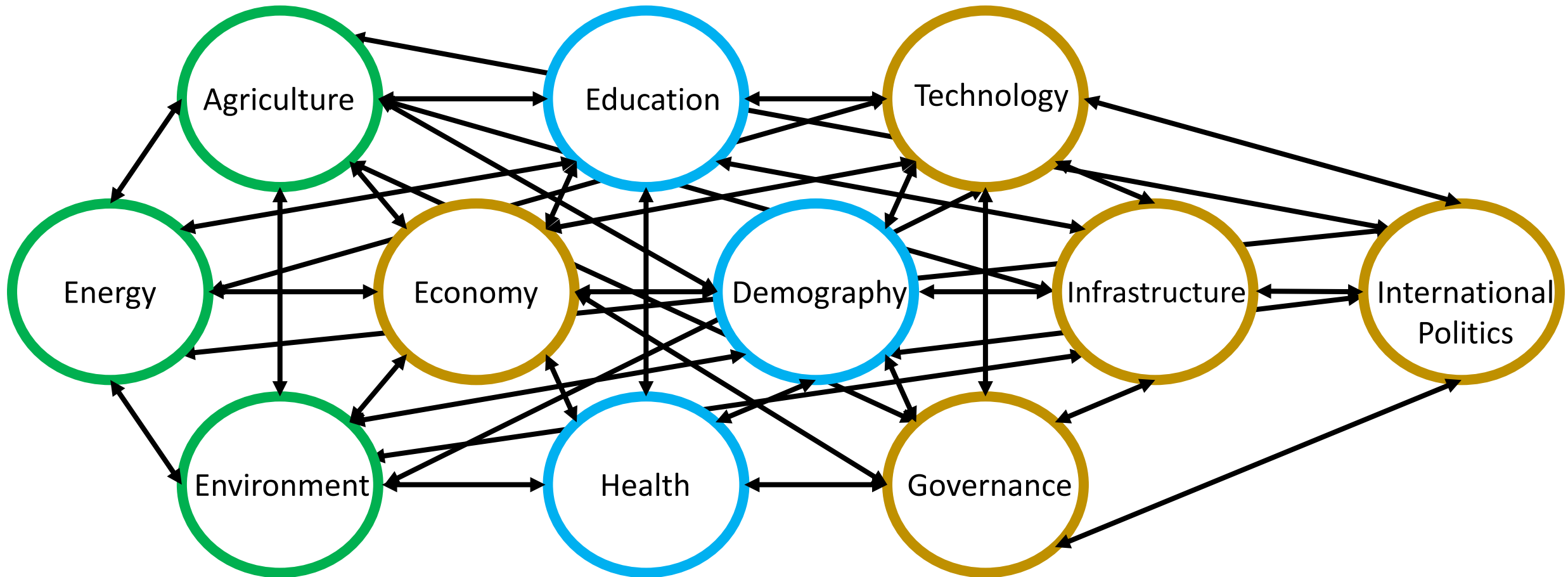
USAID/UKRAINE MONITORING AND LEARNING SUPPORT CONTRACT

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May 16, 2021

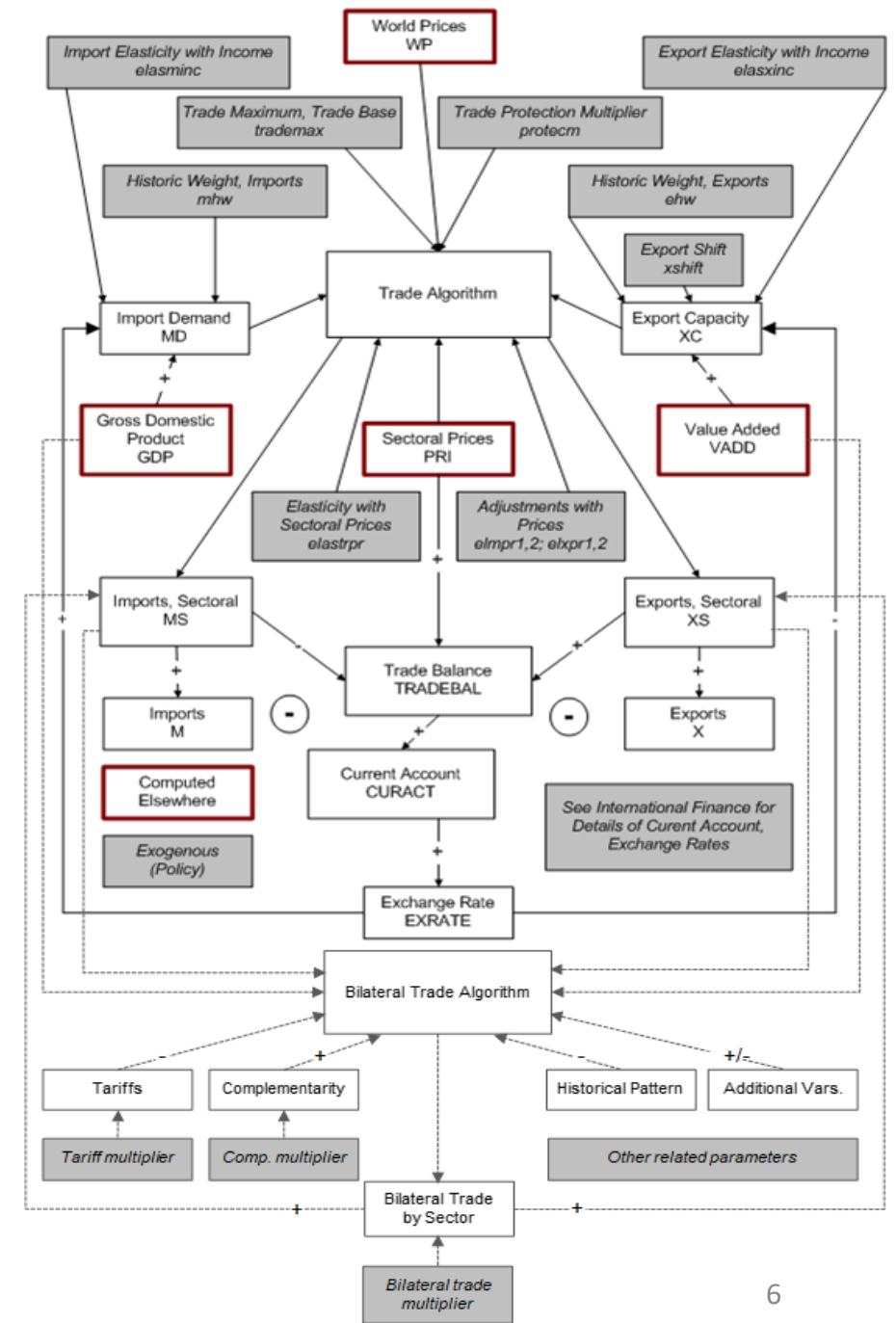
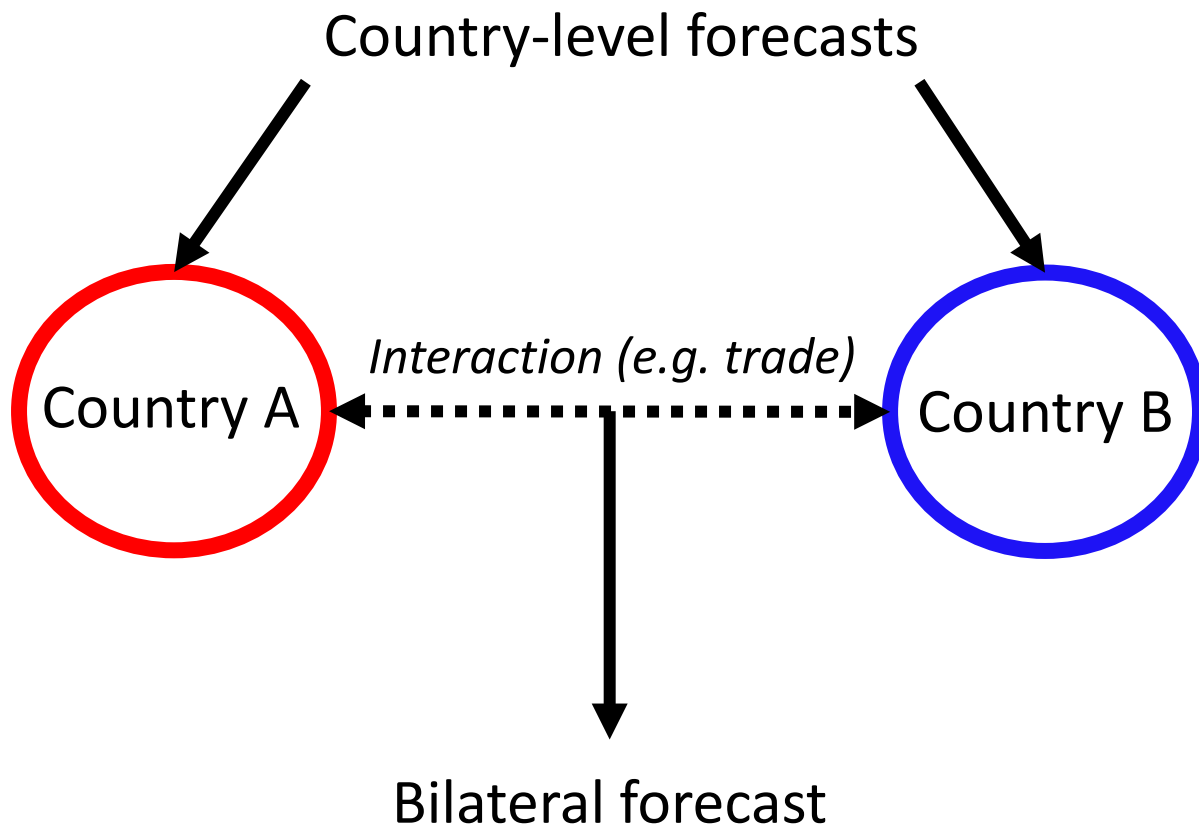
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Forecasting influence: *International Futures*

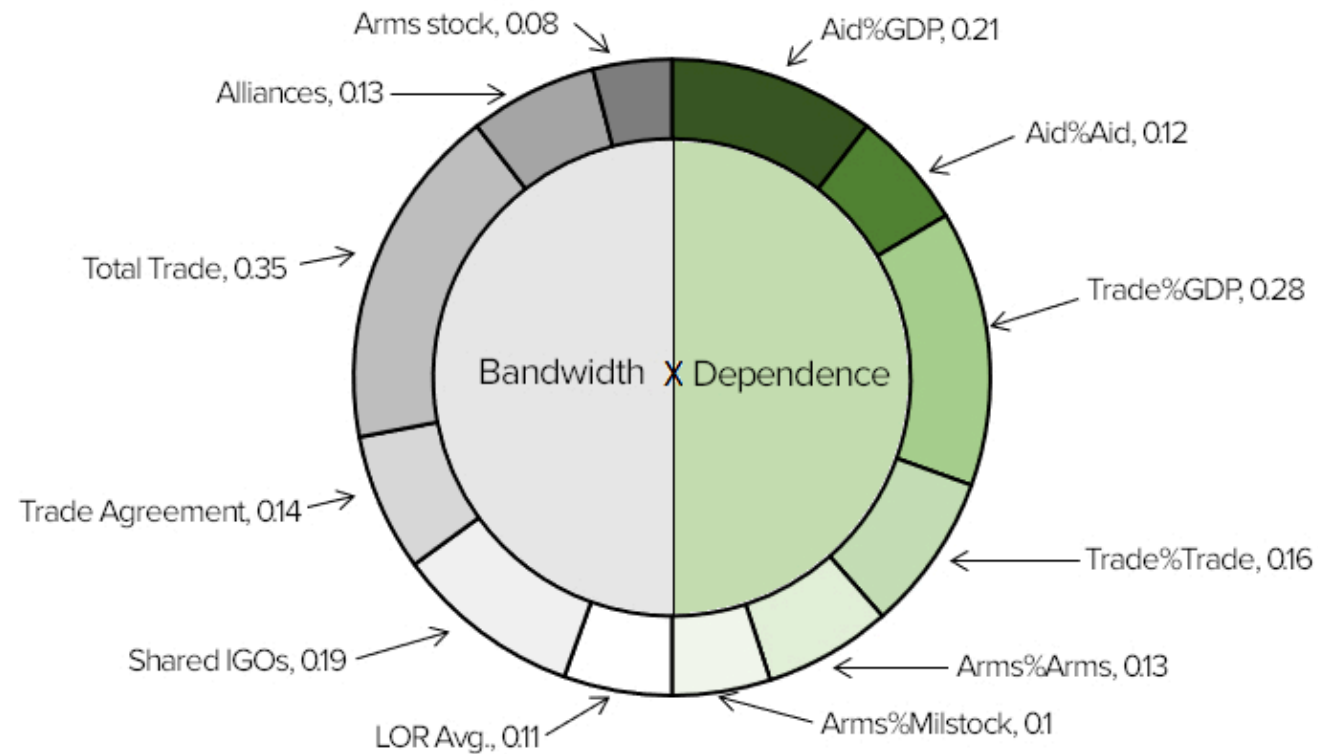


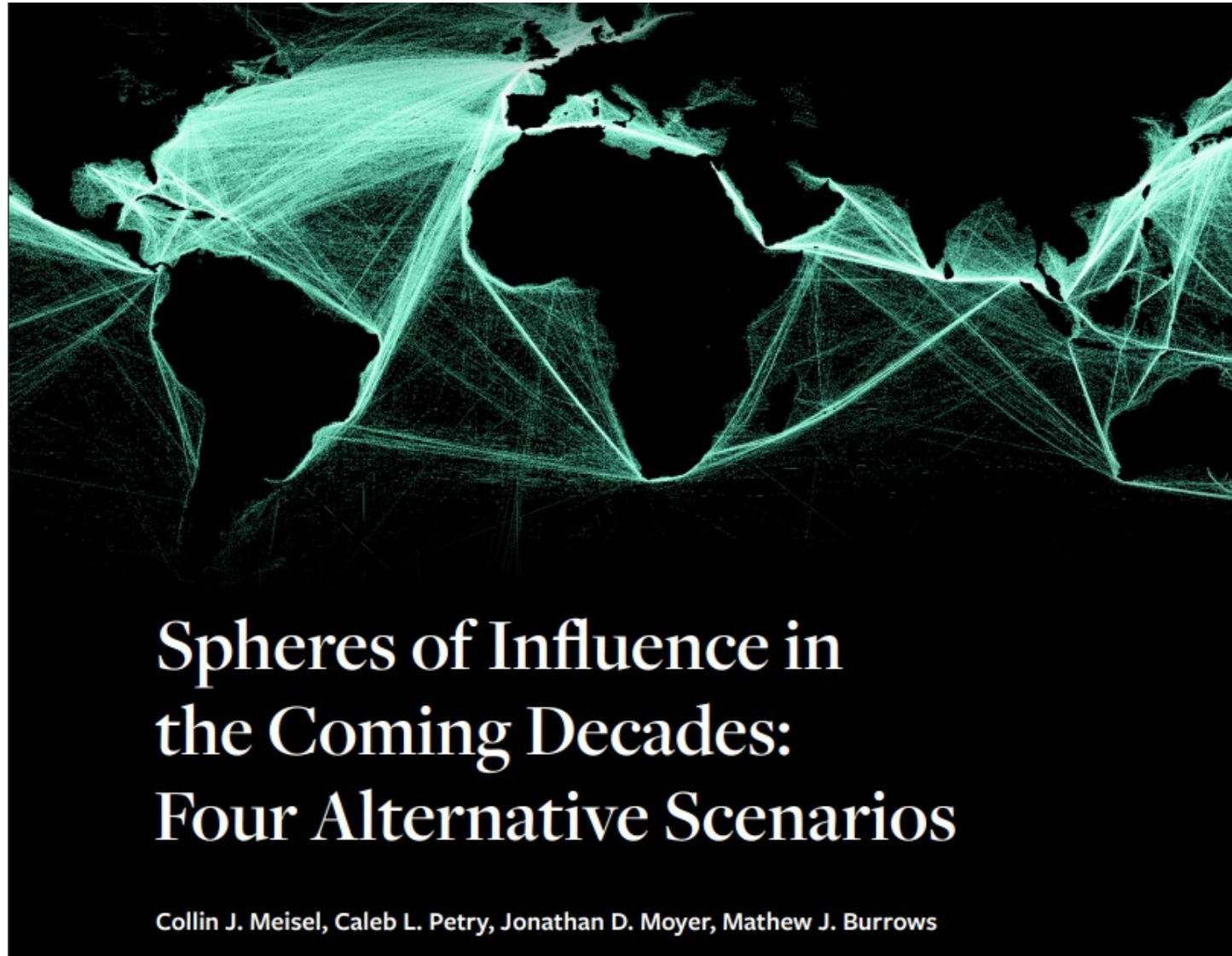
Forecasting influence: *Bilateral forecasts*



Measuring and forecasting influence

Formal Bilateral Influence Capacity





Spheres of Influence in the Coming Decades: Four Alternative Scenarios

Collin J. Meisel, Caleb L. Petry, Jonathan D. Moyer, Mathew J. Burrows

<https://www.stimson.org/2023/spheres-of-influence-in-the-coming-decades-four-alternative-scenarios/>

Questions motivating this report

- What are the implications of Russia's war in Ukraine for the shape of the international system and, more specifically, patterns of geopolitical influence in the coming decades?
- Have Putin's fateful decision and the events since then changed the trajectory of international relations, and if so, how and by how much?

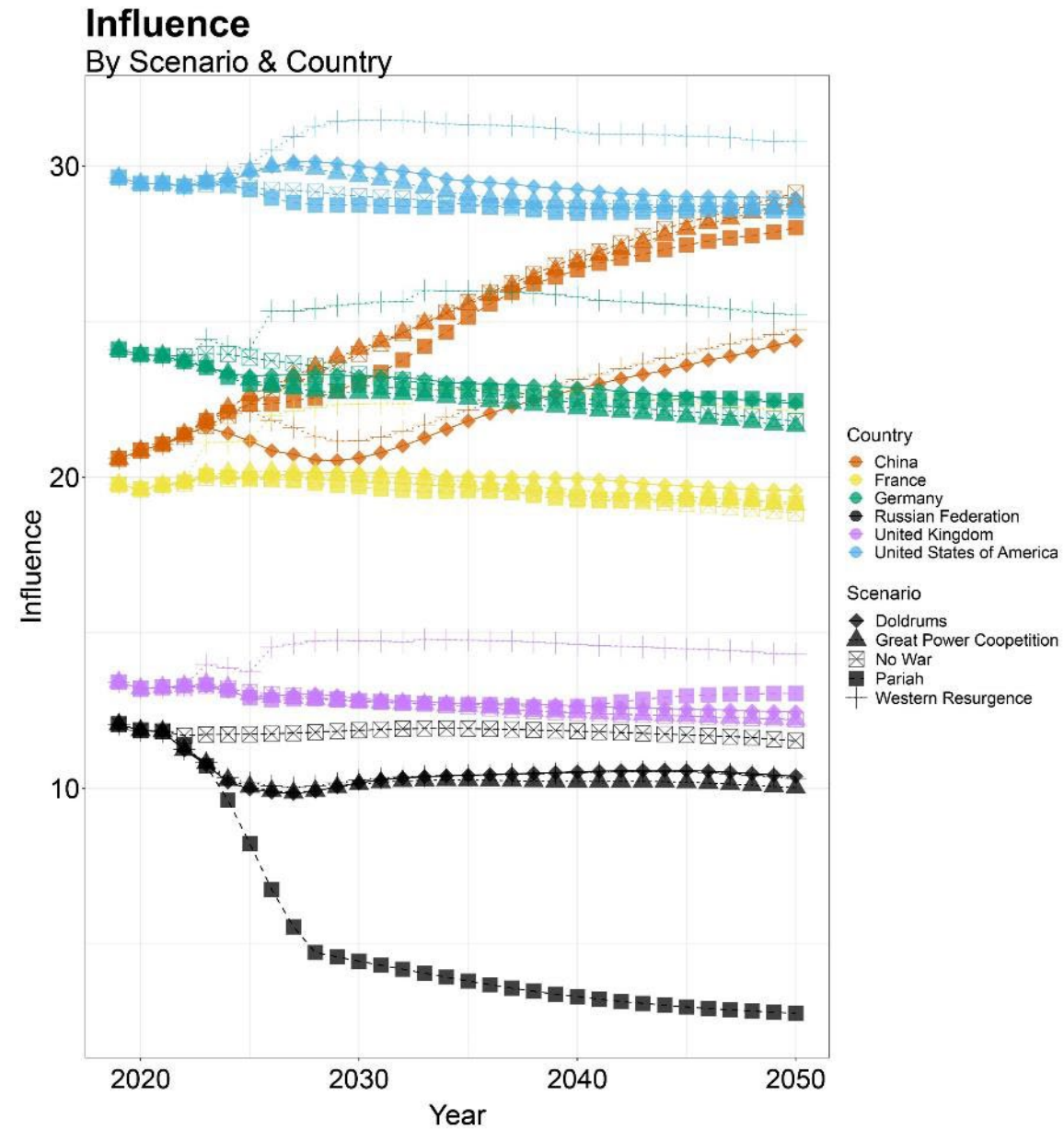
Scenarios

<p>Great Power Competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Business-as-usual future.- The war in Ukraine grinds on, as does the global economy, with Ukraine's military and the majority of the world's economies seeing modest gains in 2023.- Long-term US-China relationship → Competition.	<p>The Doldrums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Global growth veers into a long recession.- The war in Ukraine stalls as Western support flags.- Long-term efforts by the U.S. and China to maintain or expand each country's geopolitical influence see few absolute gains, although the U.S. is better able to weather the storm, leading to relative U.S. gains.
<p>Western Resurgence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Western economies and Ukraine's military see much better than expected gains in 2023.- Long-term balance of geopolitical influence tips in the West's favor relative to China given ample inward migration and increased productivity.- The West confidently invites interdependence.	<p>Pariah State</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Russia violates nuclear first use taboo.- Much of the world recoils; China & Russia further deepen their "comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era."- Countries look inward amid volatility and radical uncertainty.

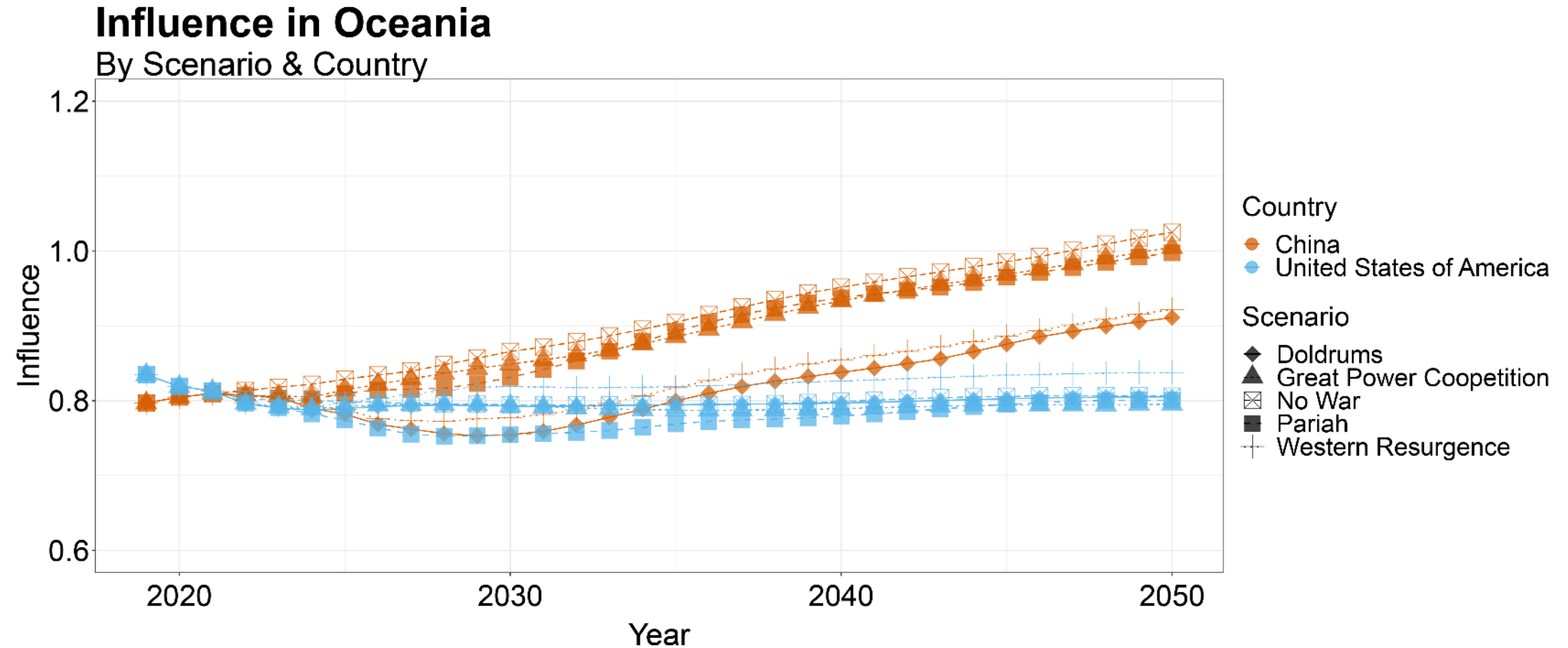
Key findings

- We expect China to pass the U.S. as the top global influencer by 2045
- There is a ~5-year window of opportunity for the U.S. to regain lost strategic ground and delay the US-China transition
- Still, the era of U.S. dominance in the Middle East is over.
- U.S. influence in sub-Saharan Africa can only match that of China if the U.S. develops a coordinated aid, trade, and diplomatic strategy with other Western partners
- We expect Russia to retain a sphere of influence separate from China

Global influence

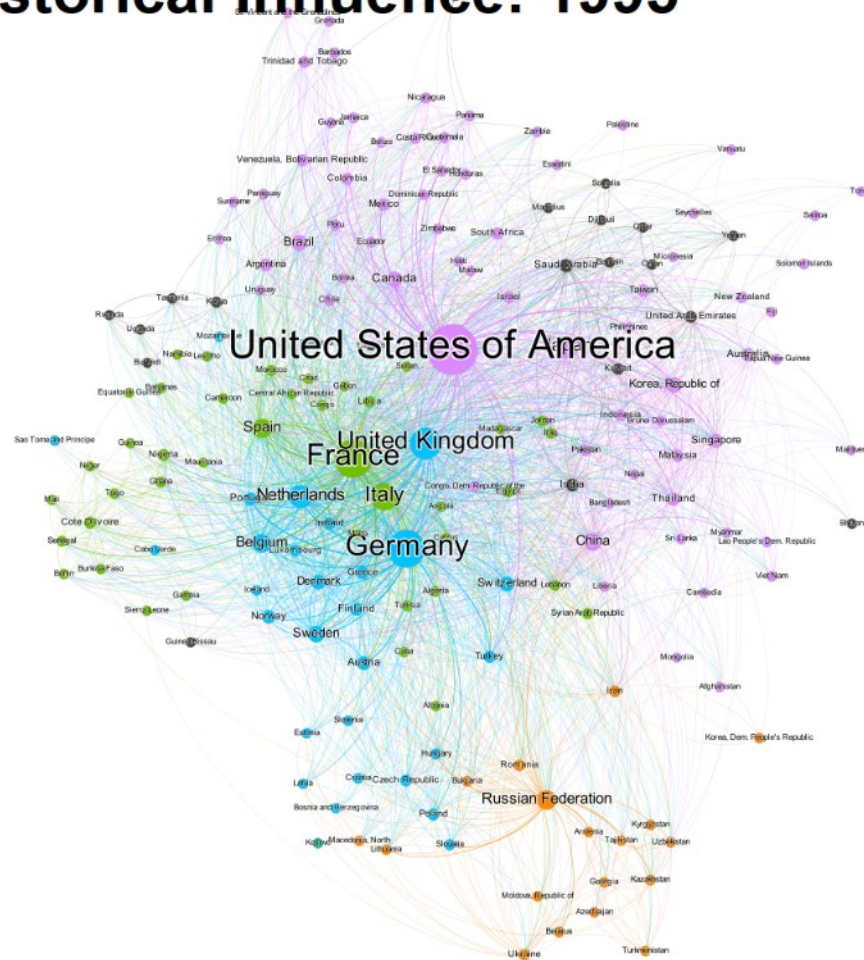


Regional influence

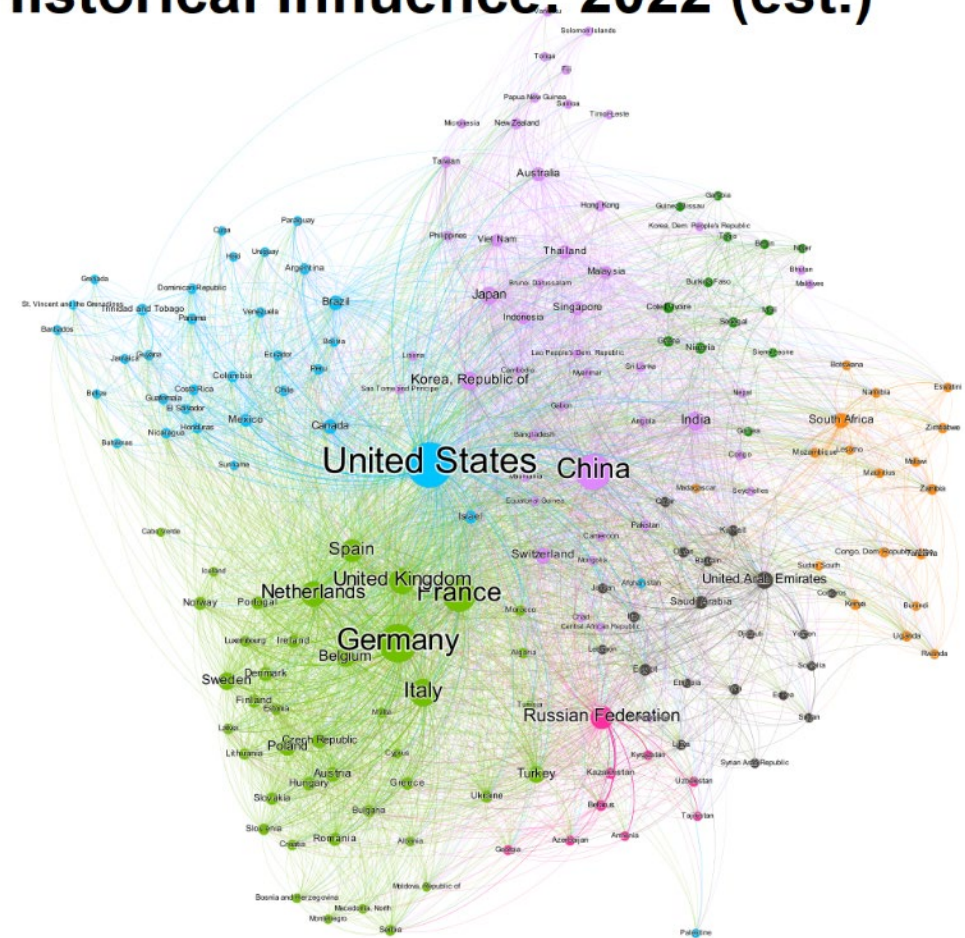


Spheres of influence: *past & present*

Historical Influence: 1995

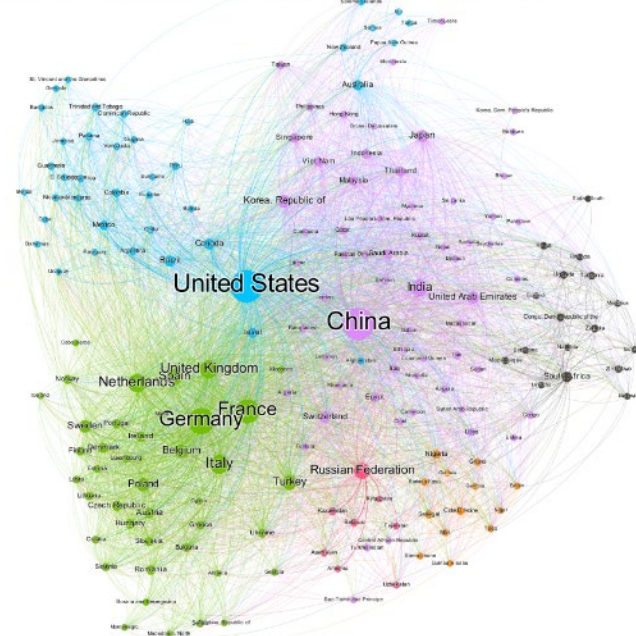


Historical Influence: 2022 (est.)

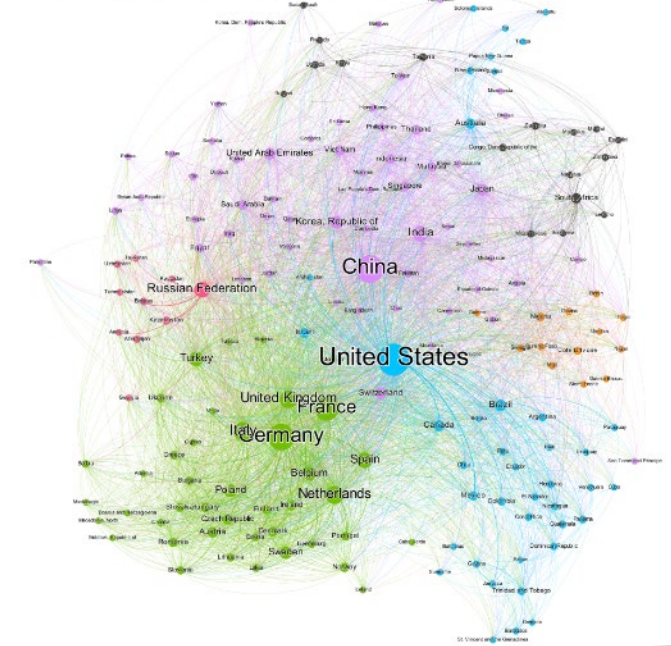


Spheres of influence: *forecasts*

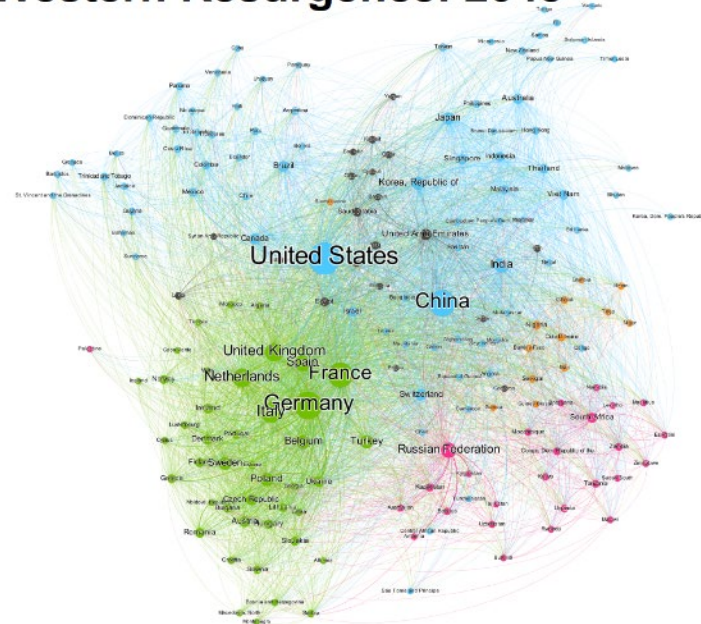
Great Power Cooperation: 2045



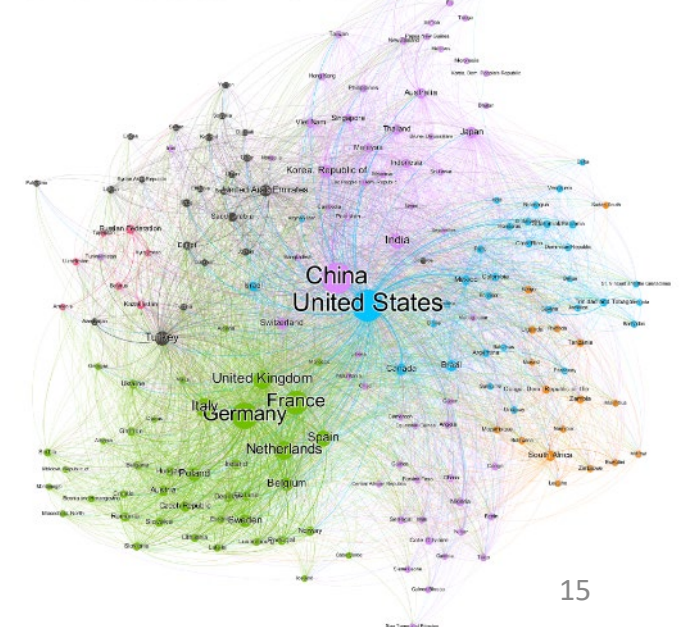
The Doldrums: 2045



Western Resurgence: 2045

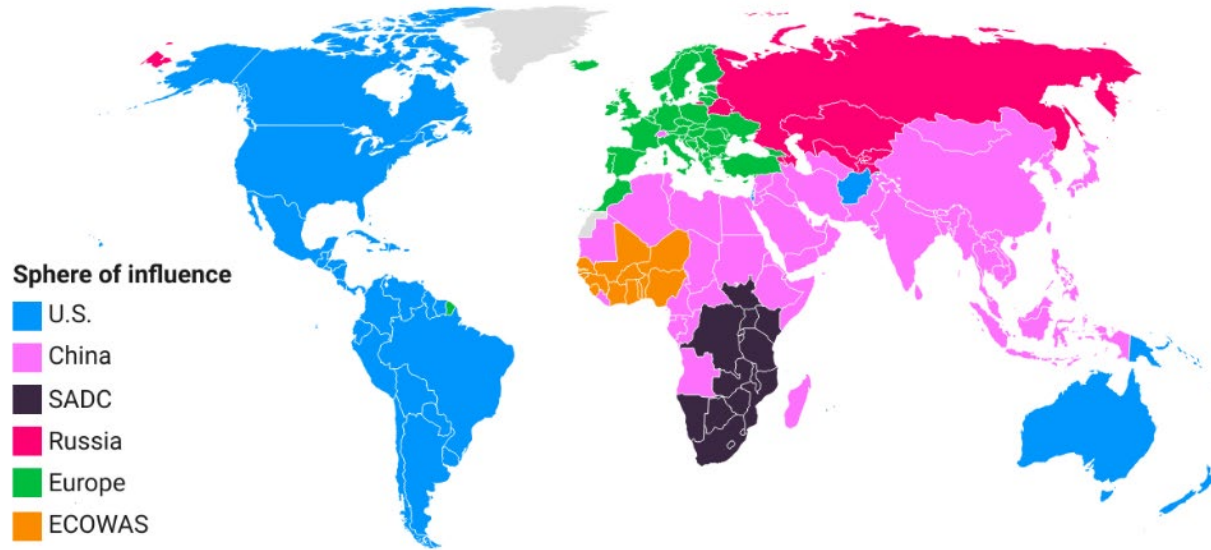


Pariah State: 2045



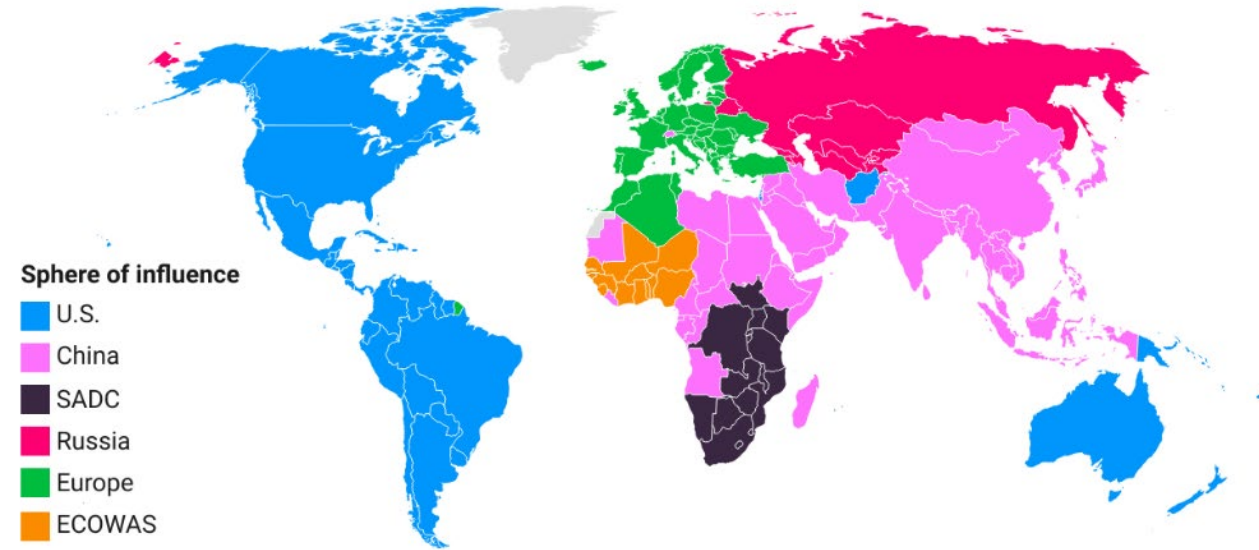
Spheres of influence: *forecasts*

Great Power Competition: 2045



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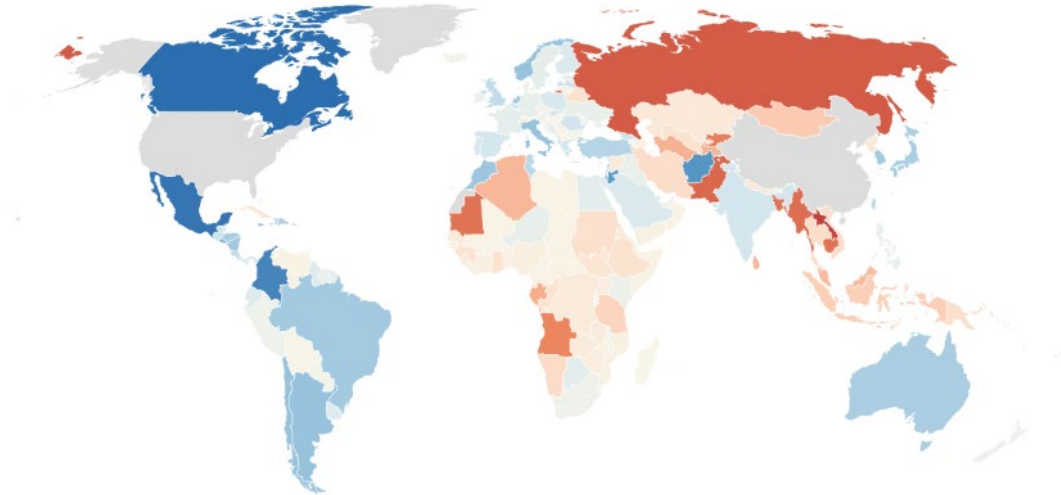
The Doldrums: 2045



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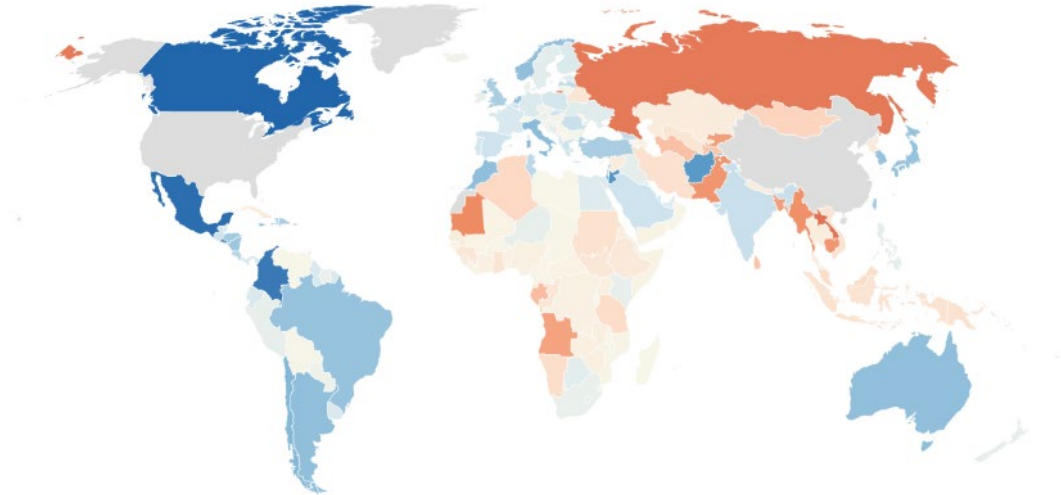
US-China competition: *forecasts*

Net US-China influence capacity: GP Cooperation 2045



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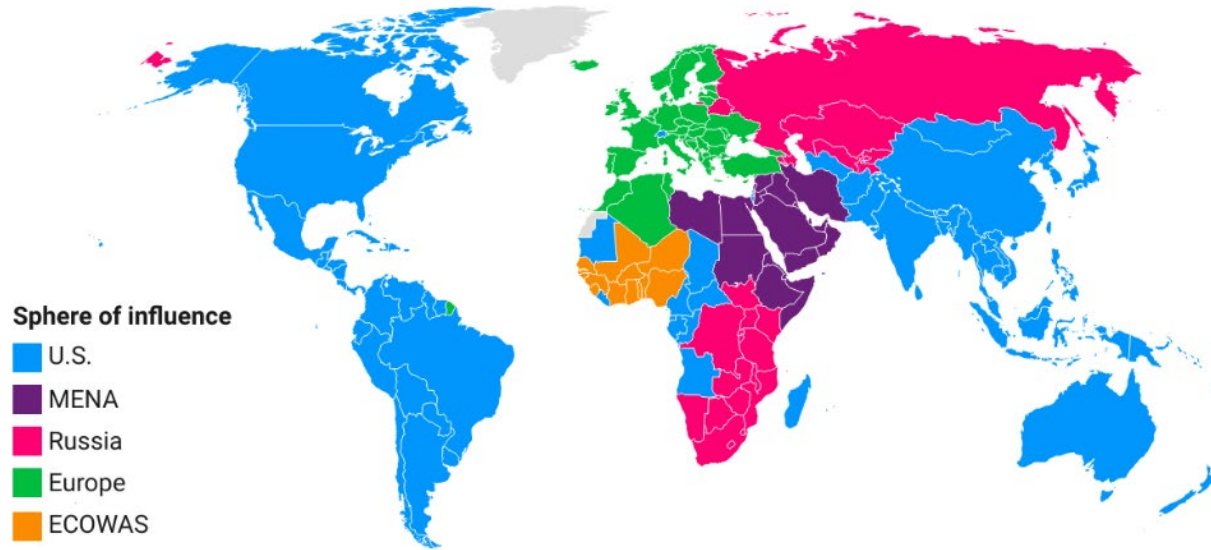
Net US-China influence capacity: The Doldrums 2045



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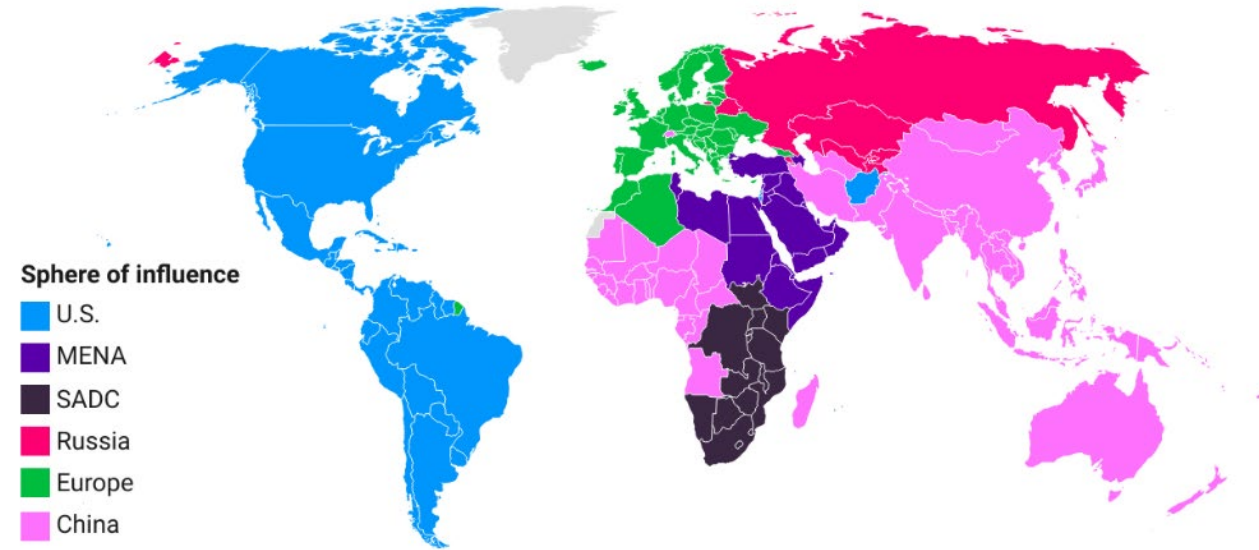
Spheres of influence: *forecasts*

Western Resurgence: 2045



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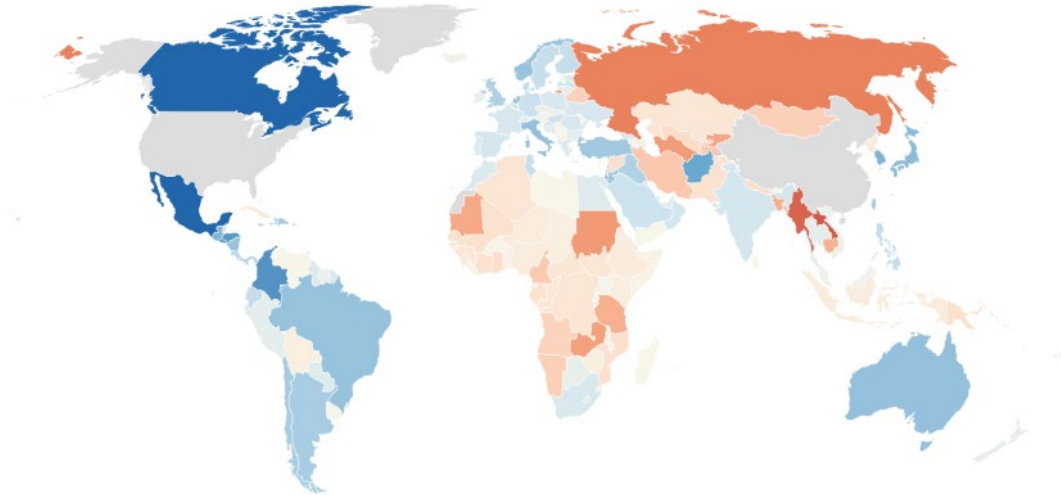
Pariah State: 2045



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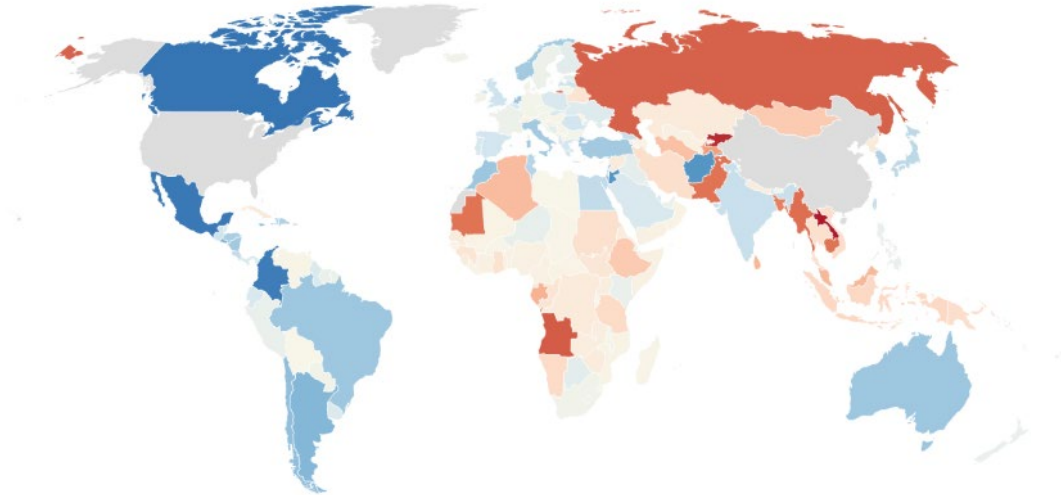
US-China competition: *forecasts*

Net US-China influence capacity: Western Resurgence 2045



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Net US-China influence capacity: Pariah State 2045



Source: Frederick S. Pardee Center for International Futures • Created with Datawrapper

Key recommendations

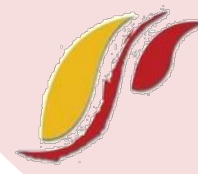
- Establish trade agreements while conditions remain favorable
- Re-gear diplomacy to better recognize the views of the Global South
- Connect the concepts of FBIC and integrated deterrence
- Identify alternative sources of power where the U.S. can compensate for losses in formal bilateral influence capacity
- Leverage the U.S. capacity for innovation

Scenario-specific recommendations

<p>Great Power Competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Enhance U.S. ties with rising regional powers, such as India in South Asia and the United Arab Emirates in the Middle East and Eastern Africa, to build influence capacity via network effects.- Re-gear U.S. diplomatic efforts toward an increasingly multipolar reality.	<p>The Doldrums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Resist the urge for increased trade protectionism, which, although potentially bolstering selected industries, will further harm economic growth prospects and reduce U.S. influence capacity.- Encourage increased inward migration.
<p>Western Resurgence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Further reduce trade barriers.- Expand government spending to allow for increased foreign aid.- Provided that Russian leaders abandon revanchism, rebuild Western ties with Russia, demonstrating that the liberal order offers its best path forward.	<p>Pariah State</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dramatically increase energy and agricultural production and exports from the U.S. and European partners, especially the Netherlands, to fill the vacuum left by Russia.- Federally back investments in critical industries to reduce uncertainty.

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Appendix: Conceptualizing power

