



CURRENT GLOBAL EXISTENTIAL RISKS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GER 2020 CONFERENCE

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PREFACE

Globalization is a complex process that affects all areas of society, often with a tendency to form a uniform global culture in the broadest sense of the word.

Global issues are currently a topic of discussion. Significant global issues are often related to changes in the environment. These issues are of great importance, as they are increasingly influencing the orientation of traditional politics, putting pressure on socio-economic activities and the redistribution of national income between the social and environmental spheres, and becoming the subject of the attention of the civil society.

Today's mankind is particularly troubled by interconnected problems. Sustainable development of human society requires reconciling socio-economic activities not only with the environment in which it directly carries out its activities, but it is also necessary to take into account relations in a broader territorial context, often from a global perspective. Current global challenges need to be seen in particular in the context of scientific, technological, technological, scientific and environmental, socio-economic, political, health and population, ethical, moral and cultural activities and trends.

Global existential risks are increasingly entering the life of a man and in the scope unlikely in the past, are threat to his existence. For this reason, the investigation of existential risks has been the reason for the creation of several workplaces and projects. An example may be the Future of Humanity Institute at the University of Oxford University, founded in 2005 and headed by Nick Bostrom, philosopher and pioneer of transhumanism, or The Cambridge Project for Existential Risks, which became the basis for establishing the Center for the Study of Existential Risks, which was announced in 2012.

In Slovakia, the first activities related to the study of global existential risks were enforced by the Slovak Society for the Environment, a member of the ZSVTS. This society organized from 2011 to 2017 seven experimental conferences on "Global Existential Risks", the core of which was the issue of transhumanism and transhuman technologies and their associated global existential risks.

The issue of exploring global existential risks is related to the development of transhumanism and is explored and elaborated by the leading theoreticians of transhumanism Nick Bostrom, James Hughes, Milan Cirkovic, Ray Kurzweil, Eliezer Yudkowsky, Robin Hanson, Martin Rees, Calum Chace, Vaclav Smil and many others.

The development of transhumanism is linked to the predicted and rather vague risks associated for example with nanotechnology, Gray Goo Scenario, which counts on the loss of human control over nanobots manipulating atoms respectively molecules or with the emergence of superhuman intelligence.



The risks of transhumanism have been elaborated in detail by Nick Bostrom, who analyzed the possible human extinction scenarios as a result of the outbreak of transhumanism under the control of man.

The main risks associated with transhumanism include biological warfare, nano-war, nuclear war, space warfare, artificial intelligence, superintelligence, singularity, nanotechnological pollution, Gray Goo effect, gene manipulation, or something else.

However, global existential risks are also associated with threats other than those associated with transhuman technologies. The threat to human existence may also be outdated economic or political systems, or an unplanned economic or political crisis. According to Nick Bostrom, global existential risks are those that pose a serious threat to human existence on a global scale. For example, global disasters can be caused by natural disasters, volcanic eruptions or pandemic earthquakes, nuclear accidents around the world, tyranny, uncontrollable scientific experiments, climate change, threats from space, or economic collapse.

The persistent and progressive global crisis and the growth of the number of global threats across national boundaries create a negative synergy effect that may result in a negative scenario of the extinction of human civilization or extinction of man as a species.

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Today's mankind is particularly troubled by complex and interconnected problems. In an atmosphere of declining globalization and growing divergence, solutions are being sought much more complicated. In this context, the publication of the annual report on global risks of the World Economic Forum (WEF) is also carried.

One of the main trends in current and future developments is the declining importance of economic risks. It is pointed out that people around the world have the highest standard of living in history after successfully overcoming the worst financial crisis since World War II. The problem is that today's world is unable to address complex challenges, respond to sudden changes and gradually increase additional risks. The reason is the lack of cooperation that would lead to the real systemic changes needed to address this "new normal". Growing income and wealth disparities remain a major driver of global risks in the near future.

While decades ago, during the economic crisis, declining asset prices, a slowing Chinese economy, and chronic diseases, ie economic and social risks, were considered to be the biggest risks, today the nature of risks is shifting to environmental and technological areas.

After the times of globalization, the world has entered a period of divergence. At the same time, the WEF considers geopolitical and geo-economic tensions to be "the most urgent global risk today." Because of this, it is likely to be much more difficult to agree on solutions to humanity's global problems, from environmental protection, through uncontrolled migration, to responses to the ethical challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts a gradual slowdown in economic growth in the coming years. Of particular concern is the fact that the level of the global debt burden is now around 225 % of GDP, which is significantly higher than before the last economic crisis.

The issue of uncontrolled mass migration has dominated the overview of risks in recent years. The risk of migration due to the crisis or economic factors is considered high. The WEF identified topics such as quantum cryptography, monetary populism, affective calculations and the decline of human rights as potential future risks that could surprise society much more intensively in the short term, as it seems today.

Research on global existential risks has undoubtedly become a necessity in Slovakia, as cross-border global impacts of existential risks are increasingly affecting the daily lives of Slovaks.



The aim of the conference "Global existential risks '2020" was to provide a suitable platform for informing the professional and scientific public, exchanging experiences and presenting new results in the subject matter.

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