

FORWARD

The *2013–14 State of the Future* is the most extraordinarily rich distillation and integration of data, information, and intelligence about the future that The Millennium Project has ever produced. This is the seventeenth edition. It has benefited from the feedback received year after year and from integrating new insights and research. In addition, this year the Global Futures Intelligence System presented in Chapter 5 was used for more systematic updating from a broader range sources, reviewers, and feedback systems. While this report presents the distilled results of recent research by The Millennium Project, GFIS contains the detailed background and data for that research, plus all of The Millennium Project's research since its founding in 1996. It also contains the largest internationally peer reviewed set of methods to explore future possibilities ever assembled in one source. Readers of this report should subscribe to GFIS to keep up to date and participate in improving insights about future possibilities.

The purpose of futures research is to systematically explore, create, and test both possible and desirable futures in order to improve decisions. Just as the person on top of the mast on old sailing ships used to point out the rocks and safe channels to the captain below for the smooth running of the ship through uncharted waters, so too futurists with foresight systems for the world can point out problems and opportunities to leaders around the world. Since decisionmaking is increasingly affected by globalization, global futures research is increasingly valuable for decisionmaking by individuals, groups, and institutions. The quality of democracies emerging around the world is enhanced by better-informed publics; understanding issues and opportunities in this report can contribute to improved democratic decisionmaking.

This report is for thought leaders, decisionmakers, and all those who care about the world and its future. Readers will learn how their interests fit into the global situation and how the global situation may affect them and their interests. The *State of the Future* and GFIS provide an additional eye on global change. These are information utilities that people can draw from as relevant to their unique needs. They provide an overview of the global strategic landscape. Business executives use the research as input to their strategic planning. University professors, futurists, and other consultants find this information useful in teaching and research.

The challenges of our time are increasingly transnational in nature, requiring transdisciplinary approaches to be understood and trans-institutional implementation strategies to be dealt with. The Millennium

Project responds to these new conditions as a global participatory think tank of futurists, scholars, scientists, business planners, and policymakers who work for international organizations, governments, corporations, NGOs, and universities. It was selected to be among the top 10 think tanks in the world for new ideas and paradigms by the 2013 University of Pennsylvania's GoTo Think Tank Index and as a 2012 Computerworld Honors Laureate for its innovations to collective intelligence systems.

The purposes of The Millennium Project are to assist in organizing futures research, improve thinking about the future, and make that thinking available through a variety of media for consideration in policymaking, advanced training, public education, and feedback, ideally in order to accumulate wisdom about potential futures.

The Project's diversity of opinions and global views is ensured by its 50 Nodes around the world. These are groups of individuals and organizations that interconnect global and local perspectives. They identify participants, conduct interviews, translate and distribute questionnaires, and conduct research and conferences. It is through their contributions that the world picture of this report and indeed all of The Millennium Project's work emerge. The Node Chairs and Co-chairs are listed in the Appendix.

Through its research, publications, conferences, and Nodes, The Millennium Project helps to nurture an international collaborative spirit of free inquiry and feedback for increasing collective intelligence to improve social, technical, and environmental viability for human development. Feedback on any sections of the book is most welcome at Jerome.Glenn@Millennium-Project.org and may help shape the next State of the Future, GFIS, and the general work of The Millennium Project. Comments can also be entered online anywhere throughout GFIS.

Jerome C. Glenn
Executive Director
The Millennium
Project

Elizabeth Florescu
Director of Research
The Millennium
Project

Theodore J. Gordon
Senior Fellow, Ret.
The Millennium
Project