



YOUNGER GENERATION LEADERS NETWORK  
ON EURO-ATLANTIC SECURITY



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NETWORK

# YGLN Annual Trend Survey 2019

April 2020

**The European Leadership Network (ELN) is an independent, non-partisan, pan-European network of nearly 200 past, present and future European leaders working to provide practical real-world solutions to political and security challenges.**

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# Introduction

The Younger Generation Leaders Network on Euro-Atlantic Security (YGLN) has conducted the first of a series of trend surveys with its members in December 2019. The report derived from the survey examines some of the most important disruptive trends affecting the Euro-Atlantic region. YGLN members from wider Europe and North America were asked to provide us with their opinion on upcoming challenges and opportunities for the area, including their views on the future of bespoke trends, including on climate change, emerging technologies, populism, weapons of mass destruction and West-Russia relations.

## About the YGLN

The YGLN was launched as a young pan-European initiative in 2014 and understands itself as a platform for dialogue between young experts and future leaders. Its diverse membership of around 90 talents in their 20s and 30s who are working in the fields of economics, civil society and media, security policy and rule of law, makes it a yardstick for looming and existing trends in the Euro-Atlantic sphere and provides a dynamic pool of new thinking. YGLN members tend to have their fingers on the pulse of what is happening in the region.

## About this survey

For this survey, around a third of the YGLN members provided insights, and all four YGLN working groups (Civil Society, Economics, Rule of Law and Security) were represented which allows the researchers to look at trends from an interdisciplinary and cross-nationality perspective. Respondents to this survey have 15 nationalities, amongst them Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Russia, Serbia, the UK, Ukraine, and the US.

This report does not reflect a narrow picture of answers to the survey but rather consists of an interpretation by the researchers looking into the data. We thus want to draw a more comprehensive and readable picture of the data, presented in an accessible format.

# 1. General picture

Most YGLNers who participated in the survey tend to identify themselves as European, thus suggesting that “Europe” is perceived in its widest sense, including Eastern Europe, Turkey and Russia. A smaller number affiliate themselves with the Euro-Atlantic region, despite the YGLN being a Network that deals with the challenges for the Euro-Atlantic sphere. The latter observation holds particularly true for US members of the YGLN - almost all of them tend to identify themselves as North Americans, while Russians are more likely to affiliate with the Euro-Atlantic region.

We wanted to know from YGLN members what threats and challenges on the one hand, and goals and values, on the other hand, they find are most relevant for the Euro-Atlantic sphere. Respondents were asked to rank a set of 10 predefined topics for each question. One can state with reasonable confidence that the group of respondents identified *climate change* and *poverty & economic inequality* as the two most important issues. *Right-wing populism* ranks as the third most relevant, while *left-wing populism* is judged as the least relevant.

*Weapons of Mass Destruction* and *disinformation campaigns* were also ranked high. This ranking mirrors to some extent discussions in the

“Respondents identified *climate change* and *poverty & economic inequality* as the two most important issues.”

Network which regularly addressed the above-mentioned topics. *Right-wing extremism* and *climate change*, in particular, became relevant topics for discussion in the last two years.

Respondents also had to rank the relevance of a set of predefined values for the Euro-Atlantic region. *Sustainable economies, judicial independence & strong institutions* and *human rights* were ranked as most relevant. In comparison, *gender equality, protection of minorities* and *multilateralism* were ranked as less important. However, the weighted average for both graphs in Appendix 2 shows that the distribution is less nuanced for Q6 (3.54-7.54) than for Q5 (3.0-8.19).

## 2. West-Russia relations

West-Russia relations are a dominant theme around which a large part of YGLN roundtables and internal discussions traditionally tend to evolve. Accordingly, YGLN members have a profound insight into the current state of relations between Russia and the West, looking at the matter not only from their national but from a broader, Euro-Atlantic perspective. They thus have a good sense of what might happen in the region, and how current prevailing tendencies might evolve in the future.

Respondents were largely pessimistic when it came to the current state and future of West-Russia relations.

Data can be interpreted in a way that most participants in the survey think relations deteriorated in 2019 and will continue to do so in 2020. Only a small group express a feeling that relations have or will remain unchanged. Only a few members think they will improve.

YGLNers who participated in the survey were asked to provide a clearer sense of why they think relations have deteriorated and why they don't believe an alleviation of tensions is coming. An overall lack of dialogue and conflicting interpretations of international rules and codes of conduct was mentioned as important factors. These aspects are further aggravated by prevailing negative narratives on both sides, most importantly spread by traditional journalism and social media.



Our interpretation of the data suggests that the spread of fake news and disinformation campaigns are more critical in US-Russia relations than in relations between Russia and other European states. Generally speaking, there is an indication in the data that respondents split West-Russia relations into US-Russia and Europe-Russia relations, which is possibly a result of recent fractures within NATO and an overall deterioration of relations between Europe and their US counterpart. There are concerns among respondents that this US-Europe divide contributes to weakening the West and could give way to Russian hybrid operations.

The US-Europe divide is thematised also in a different context. While elections are looming in the US in 2020, and as they will hugely affect US-Russia relations, regardless of whether there will be a change in Administration or not, some respondents indicate that preoccupations with domestic politics in the US might be giving a small leeway to European actors for carrying out low-profile engagement with their Russian counterparts.

Regarding developments in the military field, respondents raised concerns that armaments on the Russian and the US side, as well as a prevailing disregard for arms control agreements such as the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty, contribute to reinforcing an unfortunate climate for West-Russia, and especially, US-Russia relations.

**“Respondents raised concerns that armaments on the Russian and the US side contribute to reinforcing an unfortunate climate for West-Russia, and especially, US-Russia relations.”**

There are other geopolitical circumstances where Western and Russian interests violently collide, with Ukraine and Syria being the most alarming examples in recent times. While recent initiatives by the French and Ukrainian presidents appear as first steps in the right direction, there are mixed feelings among the respondents with regards to the implementation of the Minsk agreement and the Steinmeier initiative.

While some think the time for progress has yet to come, others doubt that these initiatives are anything other than missed chances. Those who expect that there will be progress in the near future see a resumption of meaningful discussions in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine in

October 2019 and, more strategically, of the Normandy Four Summit in December in Paris as possible indicators for a higher level of political engagement. While the conditions and sequencing of this process have already been widely discussed and partially agreed upon (for example in the context of the Steinmeier formula),

and while they might provide for a solid basis to build progress on the ground in Eastern Ukraine, the Crimean question is expected to remain pivotal, and perhaps unsolvable. The latter one is regarded as the key issue that is likely to decide whether the conflict will ultimately be solved at a certain point, or whether it will become protracted.

### 3. Emerging technologies

New technologies like machine learning, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, deepfakes, and sophisticated cyber capabilities have seen an incredible advancement over the past decade. As these disruptive technologies are developing at overwhelming speed, Euro-Atlantic societies are struggling to keep pace with their benefits and risks alike. These topics have become an ever more important field of discussion within the YGLN, and the group is committed to dedicating more time to explore the different threats and benefits that come along with these developments.

#### **New technologies are both beneficial and detrimental**

As the discussions within the YGLN are usually shaped by a broad range of opinion, it is not surprising that respondents in the survey expressed diverging views with respect to the possible benefits and disadvantages of new technologies for Euro-Atlantic societies. In particular, they stressed the problem of a widely unregulated application of emerging technologies.

While on the one hand, new technologies have already proven beneficial, for example in the fields of medical and other research, weather forecasting, and in enhancing the efficiency of work processes, on the other hand, the use and development of new technologies are not yet



An example of deepfake technology: actress Amy Adams in the original (l) is modified to have the face of actor Nicolas Cage (r), Wikimedia Commons

limited by international standards, thus posing a risk for open societies. At some point, open societies could find themselves in a situation where they are confronted with some sort of technological authoritarianism (China's cutting edge surveillance techniques already give us a foretaste of this). These are the most relevant reasons as to why respondents were sceptical about the benefits of new technologies. Less than a third think that they have already proven beneficial, while almost half of them state the opposite. Respondents were only slightly more optimistic when they were asked whether new technologies will bring more benefits for Euro-Atlantic societies in the future.

However, there is a general mood among respondents that it might be too early to draw a clear picture of a region that is as heterogenous as the Euro-Atlantic space, especially given that governments and societies themselves have not yet developed a clear understanding of how they could use new technologies in a beneficial way, and how they can effectively protect themselves against the downsides of these developments. Also, the question of whether societies will be able to successfully adjust to a changing environment is dependent upon a number of factors, including the development and maintenance of good governance, strong institutions and wise foreign policy approaches.

With regards to the latter aspect, the advancement of deepfakes

**“The advancement of deepfakes and cyber-attacks could negatively affect already eroding mutual trust in the Euro-Atlantic sphere”**

and cyber-attacks could negatively affect already eroding mutual trust in the Euro-Atlantic sphere, which is even more significant in times when extremist groups and state actors across the whole spectrum are engaging in disinformation campaigns, leading to what is called “information warfare”. This also includes, as already mentioned in the West-Russia section of the report, producing manipulative narratives on all sides that quickly spread via social networks.

Some respondents acknowledge that addressing risks associated with these developments on the political level remains highly difficult due to the known attribution problem and an overall lack of regulation. If the global geopolitical situation tends to grow ever more unstable, we may see an accumulation of significant cyber incidents with tangible results - for example attacks on critical civilian

and military infrastructure. Such incidents could function as a political wake-up call and a push towards more cooperation in an effort to limit these activities. This is most likely to happen in conflict zones where traditional interstate conflicts are taking place in parallel to cyber operations.

### **Cybersecurity measures**

With a view to individual countries' cybersecurity measures, a clear majority of respondents think that their respective country has not yet taken appropriate steps to protect its citizens and institutions. US respondents, in particular, expressed disappointment with the measures their country has taken in the past, which most of them finding it far from satisfying. Most US respondents also doubt that the US will take appropriate steps in the near future.

Respondents with Russian nationality tend to draw a similar, albeit slightly less pessimistic picture. While expressing a less nuanced dissatisfaction with Russia's current cybersecurity measures, most of them do not see room for improvement or even think the situation will deteriorate. Only a small portion are unconcerned about the efficiency of actual cybersecurity measures in Russia, hence predicting that in the future cybersecurity measures in their country are likely to become more efficient.

In sum, only one-third of the respondents agree that their country has already taken appropriate cybersecurity steps to protect its citizens and institutions. The remaining two-thirds are concerned over the current situation, or undecided and many of them doubt that the situation inter-country will significantly improve in the future.

### **Workplace automation & growing inequality**

Another aspect that YGLN respondents referred to is the effects of new technologies on work in modern societies, namely through the automation of processes. Some raise concerns with the alarming unpreparedness for the coming onslaught of technological under- and unemployment caused by workplace automation. If this trend goes on without proper measures by our governments, new technologies could contribute to increasing socio-economic inequality, rather than doing what they should do in a best-case scenario, which is fostering prosperity. This trend could reinforce already existing tensions in the Euro-Atlantic region, including the rise of right-wing populism.

## 4. Climate change

Climate change and its consequences for the Euro-Atlantic sphere, including extreme weather, high temperatures and flooding, is regarded as a highly relevant theme by YGLN members in general. This is reflected by around 80% of the respondents in the survey who think climate change and its impacts on states and societies are an important matter for the region. Only a very small proportion of respondents judge the risks as being low, thus making this question less controversial than other topics in the survey.

Obviously the same applies to the question of whether climate change and its consequences are something that can only be dealt with collectively

by the governments of the Euro-Atlantic region. Again, around 80% of the respondents think that this holds true, while only 20% believe that climate change can better be solved by individual countries. This could be because either they see multilateralism per se as an inefficient tool in this context, or because they do not perceive climate change as a major concern for the region at all.

Among those who think that climate change is a problem that can only be solved collectively by the political leaders of the Euro-Atlantic states, there are mixed feelings about the actual capability of those countries to take appropriate action. One-third of those respondents who prefer a multilateral approach are confident



that governments in the region are able to implement appropriate steps, while the large majority remain sceptical.

However, opinions tend to be less polarised when it comes to the question of whether decision-makers should exert more pressure on the private sector to incentivise climate-beneficial consumer choices, notably in those fields where carbon emissions are exceptionally high, such as housing, travel and food production. Over 70% of the respondents think that this would be a good idea, while less than 30% are undecided or against this approach. Russian participants appeared slightly more sceptical than their US and European counterparts. However, this is not a general trend among Russian respondents, since a number of them expressed strong support for this way of addressing the challenge.

In sum, respondents judge climate change and its consequences for Euro-Atlantic societies to be exceptionally relevant. They make a strong case for a less consumerist, greener and more equal economy, based on a decoupling of development and GDP growth and taking into account that these problems cannot be solved as long as the market does not fully take into account real costs. This opinion reflects, to a large degree, the content and tendencies of YGLN discussions in the past months.

Respondents also pointed to the link between climate change and migration, and the difficulty of considering these problems through a national, rather than a global, lens. Far-thinking, they stress, is required by the most powerful actors, as well as a general willingness to act multilaterally, since the rise of populism and the first pains of climate change can be regarded as twin symptoms of short-sighted thinking that does not consider the future outcomes for later generations of humans.

As a positive trend, respondents underline the fact that environmental issues are gaining a lot more attention today than in the past. However, they are concerned about an alleged divide between the West and the East in this regard, with the latter appearing slower in acknowledging that this threat will eventually have geopolitical consequences.

**“They make a strong case for a less consumerist, greener and more equal economy, based on a decoupling of development and GDP growth.”**

## 5. Populist movements and political extremism<sup>1</sup>

The discussion around climate change and its impacts on the lives of the poorest, which in turn will likely lead to more migration in the future, cannot be conducted without looking at its already mentioned twin symptom: the rise of right-wing populism. YGLN members have addressed this linkage regularly during a number of past meetings. This was mainly due to the fact that many countries across the Euro-Atlantic region have seen an alarming shift to the right in the past few years, not least fueled by anti-migrant sentiments. Populist and right-wing extremist parties like the

National Rally in France, Fidesz and Jobbik in Hungary, the Alternative für Deutschland in Germany, the Freedom Party in Austria and the Lega Nord in Italy have substantially gained ground by using xenophobic narratives. Scandinavian countries weren't spared of this trend either, as the example of the far-right Danish People's Party, the Sweden Democrats and others show. Although their performance might vary over time, they all continue to pose a major risk for our open and liberal societies.

This overall trend was reflected in the YGLN survey. Most respondents indicated that 2019 saw a rise of populist movements and political extremism, compared with the years before. Only 10% think that political populism in the Euro-Atlantic region



had not increased in the past year. Accordingly, around 85% of the respondents think that populism is a threat that is seriously challenging peace and security in the region. However, not all respondents were pessimistic with regards to the future. While roughly two-thirds think that political populism and extremism will be on the rise in 2020, at least one third does not predict such an increase.

### **Migration and the situation in the Middle East**

Respondents identified migration as a possible reason for a further rise of populist parties in central and Western Europe. With climate change already having severe consequences in Africa and with more violent escalations in the Middle East - a highly vulnerable region that could potentially give birth to full-scale conflicts and humanitarian catastrophes - Europe has to expect more migration movements in the future. Some respondents suggest that a return of the migration crisis, or its intensification, could add fuel to the fire of the far-right, resulting in ever more securitisation and social conflicts. Western states will have to develop a national consensus or be further divided, in turn risking exploitation by external actors. There is a general mood among many

1 In a YGLN context, the implications of right-wing populism are generally regarded as more harmful than left-wing populism (see "general picture"). In this section we therefore focus on the right-wing manifestation only.

**“Most respondents indicated that 2019 saw a rise of populist movements and political extremism, compared with the years before.”**

respondents that finding a joint solution, not only on how to deal with future migration movements but also on how to bring peace to Syria and to reassure Iran, is key.

### **Implications of Brexit**

Some respondents also mentioned the implications of Brexit, especially for EU countries, as a critical issue here. They indicate that there might be a small chance that unburdened by the "will they, won't they" uncertainty, Europe might regain its role as an economic and regulatory superpower with massive diplomatic potential after Brexit. Evoking a less optimistic scenario, some mentioned that the centrifugal powers triggered by Brexit could intensify after the UK has left the EU, potentially resulting in a strengthening of right-wing populism and EU scepticism, and with more far-right leaders calling to leave.

## 6. Weapons of Mass Destruction

Weapons of mass destruction, especially the implications of nuclear deterrence for Euro-Atlantic stability and the unravelling of treaties and agreements, have always been a key topic for the YGLN. In particular, the Network traditionally looks at armament dynamics between the US and Russia and the consequences of a sped-up arms race for European states.

A majority of respondents in this survey think that the current state of nuclear arms control in the Euro-Atlantic region can be characterised as “unfortunate”. A third of them believe it’s in extremely bad shape, while only

a small portion describes the current situation as “rather fortunate”.

Respondents are more optimistic when it comes to possible new opportunities for arms control achievements in 2020. Slightly less than half of them predict there will be new chances for arms control, while the rest express the opposite opinion. However, there is a strong agreement among the entire group that arms control is highly important for peace and security in the region.

Regardless of whether one confronts the current trend of the unravelling of arms control structures in the Euro-Atlantic region with optimism or scepticism, any possible progress depends upon a whole range of external factors that will likely shape



the future environment for arms control. Among those, respondents identified the factors listed below.

### **Responsibility of state actors and international organizations**

Progress in arms control depends upon political leaders, therefore, world powers have to renew their commitment to arms control. Likewise, the role of international organisations like the UN, OSCE and NATO should be used more constructively in order to make substantial progress. With regards to state actors, the gravity has shifted from a Russia-US dichotomy to a triangle that includes China. Still, respondents think that US domestic politics and, most importantly, the upcoming elections, will likely have a significant impact on where the country stands vis-à-vis Russia and towards the future of multilateral arms control architecture.

However, some respondents are concerned that Russia is likely to stress that it does everything to preserve the old frameworks, at the same time continuing blame-games and staying ready to raise the stakes in an arms race that has already begun. China, still acting as a silent giant, might be wanting to become a more active actor at some point and, consequently, add more variables to the entire arms control environment. The future of arms control architecture will thus revolve around this triangle, and lack of progress in this field will have consequences for the wider (Euro-Atlantic) region.

**“the states of the Euro-Atlantic region first have to develop a collective understanding of the sources of cyber and ICT operations and attacks...”**

### **New START and the future of arms control**

With a view to the looming expiration of the New START Treaty - one of the last functioning arms control agreements - respondents raise the point that there is still an outside hope that the US administration and Russia will decide in favour of an extension of the treaty that will otherwise end in 2021. Yet, this does not seem very likely and there are currently no hints in that direction. Especially with a US president and a National Security Council in the US that remains strongly opposed to multilateral agreements, there is little hope that the current administration will join a new deal that could replace expiring or banned agreements.

Thereby, respondents stressed that it is highly important to preserve the existing frameworks. The next Review Conference to the Non-Proliferation

Treaty (postponed to 2021 due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis) will certainly be a litmus test and will potentially shape our expectations for the overall climate for arms control in the upcoming years.

### **Looking beyond traditional threats**

An important aspect emphasised by respondents is that the international community has to go beyond a 20th-century arms control perspective by widening their views and more thoroughly assessing what constitutes

other means to carry out offensive activities. This includes, for example, sophisticated cyber operations. While there is a potential to regulate this area and to find common standards, the states of the Euro-Atlantic region first has to develop a collective understanding of the sources of cyber and ICT operations and attacks and of the potential risks and viable ways to address them. However, there will probably be no substantial progress until we see a major incident happen which would make it a necessity for political leaders to act.

## Summary

The YGLN Annual Trend Survey 2019 puts a spotlight on some of the most relevant challenges for the Euro-Atlantic region and how they might develop in 2020 and beyond. The interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative data that we gathered from a subgroup of YGLN members does not claim to provide a holistic picture but reflects a range of topics that are relevant for them and how they see them developing. Although only around a third of the Network's members have provided us with their opinion, the general views and priorities can be seen as reflecting wider discussions in the Network. The report, therefore, makes available a taste of what a diverse group of young leaders from across the Euro-Atlantic space are concerned about and where they see opportunities for the future.

It is striking that the young leaders participating in the survey generally prefer multilateral approaches over unilateral ones, however, there are doubts as to whether in some cases multilateralism can solve crises such as climate change or challenges like migration in times when European states lack cohesion and NATO allies are divided.

Respondents recognise the importance for European and transatlantic decision-makers to take more action than they have done in the past. In particular, they want to see more active engagement with respect to fighting

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climate change and cybersecurity measures. In the field of arms control, they prioritise the US's and Russia's role (and, partly, China's) over Europe's. In general, international cooperation is seen as a tool to overcome some of the looming crises, or at least mitigating their effects.

The spread of disinformation campaigns and fake news resulting in negative narratives, both in the West and Russia, is a major concern for respondents but also for the Network more generally. During roundtables and in private discussions, YGLN members have addressed these problems exhaustively and they see a need for the Network to develop positive counter-narratives. They all made the experience that cross-border and cross-cultural conversations are a good start to find common ground and reduce prejudices, be it between Americans and Russians, or Ukrainians and Russians, or among Europeans of different nationalities. Not surprising,

the spread of negative narratives was mentioned as particularly harmful in the survey, and the Network itself is seen as the best example of a concrete step to reduce those negative images.

While respondents (like all other Network members) by no means agree on all the issues discussed in this report, the value of the YGLN lies in its ability to address different perspectives and to reflect upon the arguments of the other side. Therefore, some judge the state of West-Russia relations more pessimistically than others and topics, such as the benefits and risks of new technologies, can be

seen from vastly different viewpoints. Instead of lowering the informative value of this report, the divergence of opinions and predictions contribute to drawing a realistic picture of some of the most pertinent challenges for the Euro-Atlantic region today. This variety of views is a strength of the YGLN and provides the basis for in-depth discussions and learning experiences which we share, in the form of this report, with a wider audience. We will continue doing trend surveys on a regular basis and publish them on our website, not only to provide information but to offer connecting points for a broader public discussion.

# APPENDIX 1: Survey design and methodology

## 1. Survey design

This report is based on an interdisciplinary approach using an expert survey as our main tool for collecting qualitative and quantitative data. The young experts who participated in the survey were all members of the Younger Generation Leaders Network (YGLN). 31 out of 89 submitted their answers which equals an engagement rate of 35%. The survey consisted of 27 questions. The set of questions was divided into four personal/general questions, 16 ranking scales (Likert-type scales), two multi-item scales and five open-ended questions in which respondents could provide their thoughts on bespoke topics. The report is structured according to the following thematic issues:

- (1) West-Russia relations
- (2) Emerging technologies and cybersecurity
- (3) Climate change
- (4) Populist movements and political extremism
- (5) Weapons of mass destruction.

Closed questions were primarily used for quantification of expert positions, while open questions allowed us to collect qualitative data, i.e. a more detailed insight into what YGLN members perceive as relevant trends in the Euro-Atlantic region. The aim of this survey was not to provide an assessment of cause-effect relationships, but instead to assemble young leaders' thoughts on the current situation in the Euro-Atlantic sphere, their expectations for 2020 and beyond.

## 2. Methodology

### Analysis of multi-item scales

YGLN members were asked to express their opinion on a set of issues in two multi-item scales, consisting of 10 items each. Answers were sorted according to a weighted average, indicating which topics are most and least relevant for participants.

### Analysis of Likert-scale type questions

We used descriptive statistics to analyse the answers we gathered with Likert-scale type (closed) questions. Descriptive statistics were used to organise, simplify, and, in an understandable manner, describe the data gathered in the questionnaires. A descriptive approach is more applicable in this context than inferential statistics. While the latter one can be used when trying to infer from the sample data what the population might think, it requires a representative sample.

In the survey, 15 out of 28 nationalities were represented. There was a moderate over-representation of Russians and US citizens: around 45% accumulated in comparison to 33% in the Network. As some nationalities have not taken part in the survey, or are underrepresented (e.g. Ukrainians), we cannot confidently make generalisations about a group as heterogeneous as the YGLN.

Nationality is a critical factor when addressing challenges of the Euro-Atlantic region, as the Network values the diversity of its membership and their different opinions. Therefore, the data gathered in the survey has, where appropriate, been checked against the background of its respondents, and is sufficiently highlighted in the descriptive part of the report. However, even without conducting an extrapolation of data to the YGLN population, the report provides useful and reader-friendly insight into discussions in the Network and the priorities and views of a selected number of YGLN members. The qualitative nature of the report is its strength even though it will not allow for generalisations.

In order to gather Likert-scale data, we used 11 point (ordinal) ranking scales from 0-100 with steps of 10. The answers usually ranged from 'agree' to 'don't agree' with 50 being 'undecided'.

In the first part of the report, current trends and data derived from the open and closed questions on a deductive basis are being described in a readable manner and organised around the five key topics outlined above. In the second part, the data for closed questions is represented as frequency distributions, taking into account the categories of the measurement scale ( $x$ ), the number of individuals in that category ( $f$ ), and the proportion of the total number of responses that fall into a category ( $p = f/N$ )<sup>2</sup>. Data was simplified by combining the 11 categories on the Likert-scale to three nominal categories (e.g. strongly agree/strongly disagree/undecided).

<sup>2</sup> Cumulative frequencies (cf) and cumulative percentages (c%) cannot sensibly applied in this type of Likert scale questionnaire, where respondents had to chose between agree/disagree/undecided or similar responses. Also, the mean (or average) is of limited value as it is significant only when data follow a classic normal distribution. Therefore, a frequency distribution is more sensible in this context.

## **Analysis of open-ended questions**

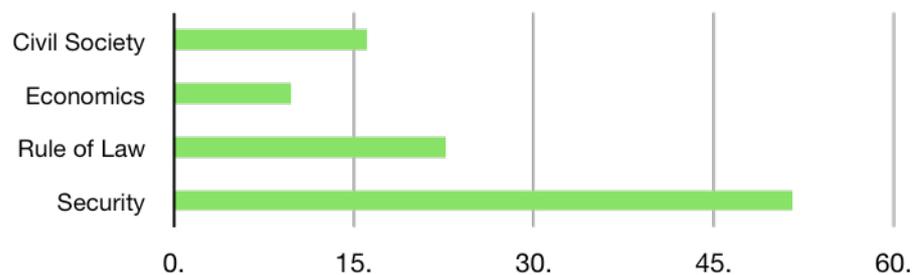
In addition to quantitative data, the survey is complemented by a qualitative part. As the scope of possible topics covered by closed questions is limited by nature, open-ended questions can provide a helpful tool to address matters that might otherwise be overlooked by the designers of the questionnaire. It might also give us a broader view on these topics. Hence, five open questions were included and respondents were asked to formulate scenarios or just condensed thoughts (whatever they preferred) on the topics we listed above. Answers to those questions were highly divergent so that it was sensible to abstain from carrying out a full-scale coding exercise. Instead, viable points gained through these answers were included in the descriptive part and have been marked as the expression of opinion by a sub-group, or single respondents.

## APPENDIX 2: Data set

### Q2<sup>3</sup> Nationalities represented in the survey

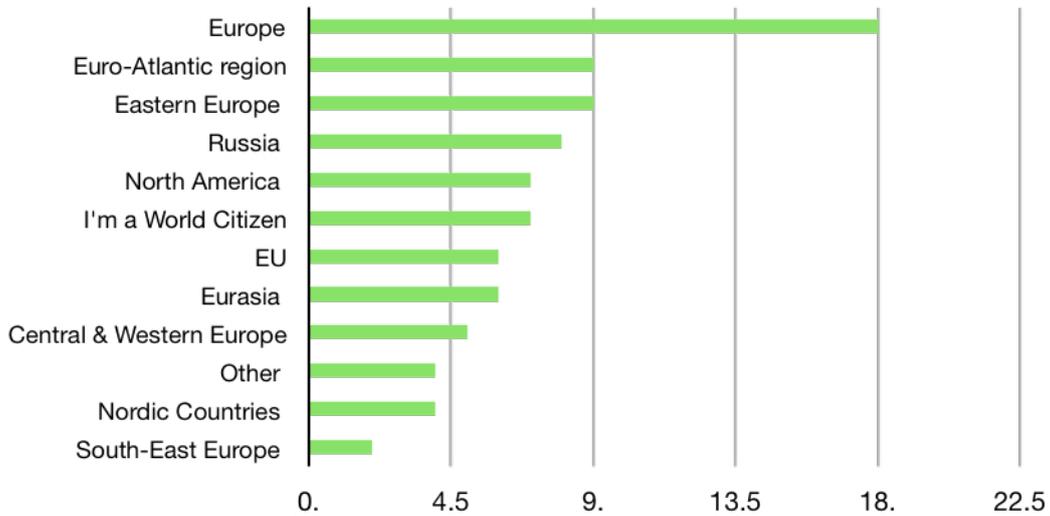
Country	Units	% of respective group in the
Armenia	1	33 %
Azerbaijan	1	50 %
Belarus	1	33 %
Belgium	1	100 %
Denmark	1	100 %
Estonia	1	100 %
France	1	25 %
Georgia	1	50 %
Germany	1	17 %
Italy	2	67 %
Russia	8	62 %
Serbia	1	100 %
UK	3	60 %
Ukraine	2	20 %
US	5	31 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34 %</b>

### Q3 Which YGLN Working Group do you belong to?

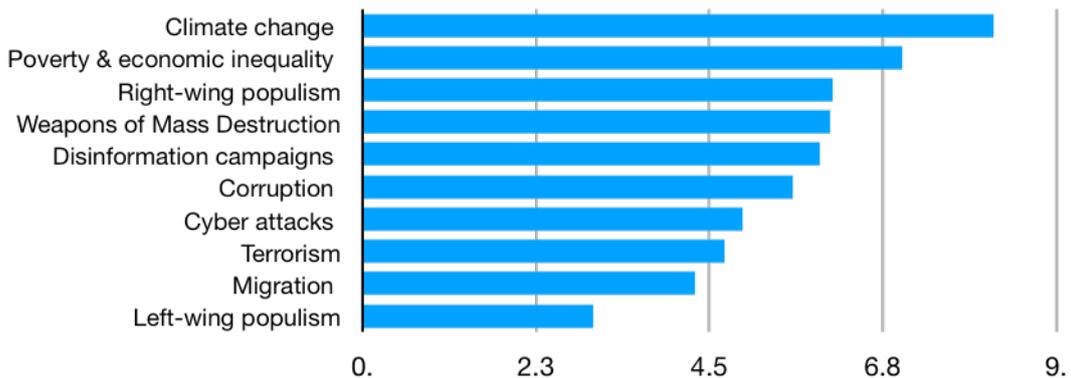


3 We omit Q1 of the survey that was asking for participants' names.

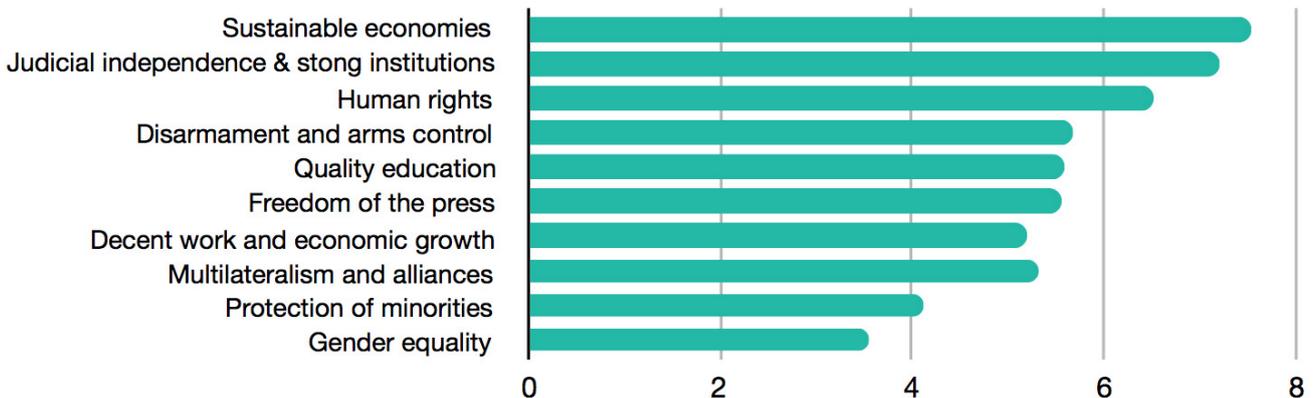
**Q4 Which region do you affiliate yourself with (multiple answers possible)?**



**Q5 Please rank the following threats and challenges from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least relevant and 10 being the most relevant. This of course does not imply that an item ranked 1 is not important at all.**



**Q6 Please rank the following goals and values from 1 to 10, according to how important you believe they are for the Euro-Atlantic region, with 1 being the least important and 10 being the most important one.**



## WEST-RUSSIA RELATIONS

**Q7 When thinking about West-Russia relations, do you believe they have improved or deteriorated in 2019? Please rank on the following scale**

0 = significantly improved

50 = Neither improved nor deteriorated

100 = significantly deteriorated

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	1	4	7	5	8	6	—	—	—	—
p	0	.03	.13	.23	.16	.26	.19	—	—	—	—
%	0	3,1	12,9	22,6	16,2	25,8	19,4	—	—	—	—
Combined %	54,8 %					25,8 %	19,4 %				
N=Σf	31										

**Q8 Looking into the future, do you think West-Russia relations will improve or deteriorate in 2020? Please rank on the following scale.**

0 = significantly improve

50 = Neither improve nor deteriorate

100 = significantly deteriorate

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	1	—	—	6	9	10	4	—	1	—	—
p	.03	—	—	.20	.29	.32	.13	—	.03	—	—
%	3 %	—	—	20 %	29 %	32 %	13 %	—	3 %	—	—
Combined %	52 %					32 %	16 %				
N=Σf	31										

**Q9 Optional question. Please specify your answers to the two questions above. Why do you think West-Russia relations have improved/deteriorated in 2019? Why do you think they will improve/deteriorate in 2020? Please also indicate if you think they have not changed or will not change.**

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND CYBERSECURITY

**Q10 Do you agree or disagree to the following statement: New technologies like machine learning and artificial intelligence have already proven beneficial for our Euro-Atlantic societies.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	2	1	2	3	8	8	4	—	1	1
p	—	.07	.03	.07	.1	.27	.27	.13	—	.03	.03
%	—	7 %	3 %	7 %	10 %	27 %	27 %	13 %	—	3 %	3 %
Combined %		27 %			27 %		46 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q11 Looking into the future, do you agree or disagree to the following statement: New technologies like machine learning and artificial intelligence will bring more benefits than disadvantages for our Euro-Atlantic societies.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	1	2	2	5	11	3	2	3	1	—
p	—	.03	.07	.07	.17	.36	.1	.07	.1	.03	
%	—	3 %	7 %	7 %	17 %	36 %	10 %	7 %	10 %	3 %	
Combined %		34 %			36 %		30 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q12 Optional question: Please specify the answers that you have provided to the two questions above. Why do you think emerging technologies are or will be beneficial or disadvantageous for our Euro-Atlantic societies? Please also explain if you have chosen 'neither agree nor disagree'.**

**Q13 Do you agree or disagree to the following statement: My country has already established adequate measures to provide a high degree of cybersecurity for its citizens and institutions.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	5	4	5	3	1	4	—	5	2	1	—
p	.17	.13	.17	.1	.03	.13	—	.17	.07	.03	
%	17 %	13 %	17 %	10 %	3 %	13 %	—	17 %	7 %	3 %	
Combin ed %	60 %					13 %	27 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q14 Only answer if you chose 'disagree' or 'neither agree nor disagree' in the last question. Do you agree to the following statement: I am confident that my country will in the future take adequate measures to improve cybersecurity for its citizens and institutions.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	3	3	2	4	2	2	1	2	1	2	3
p	.12	.12	.08	.16	.08	.08	.04	.08	.04	.08	.12
%	12 %	12 %	8 %	16 %	8 %	8 %	4 %	8 %	4 %	8 %	12 %
Combin ed %	56 %					8 %	36 %				
N=Σf	25										

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Q15 Please rate the relevance of climate change and its consequences for the Euro-Atlantic region (e.g. flooding, extreme weather, high temperatures) on the following scale.**

0 = Highly important

50 = Neutral

100 = Not important at all

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	1	1	1	—	—	2	3	4	3	8	7
p	.03	.03	.03	—	—	.07	.1	.13	.1	.27	.23
%	3 %	3 %	3 %	—	—	7 %	10 %	13 %	10 %	27 %	23 %
Combin ed %	9 %					7 %	84 %				
N=Σf	30										

**NOTE: As we only considered 2 decimal places, where necessary we rounded numbers in order to achieve 100%.**

**Q16 Do you agree or disagree to the following statement: Climate change is a problem that can only be solved collectively by the countries of the Euro-Atlantic region.**

0 = Strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = Strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	2	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	4	8	13
p	.07	—	.1	—	—	—	—	—	.13	.27	.43
%	7 %	—	10 %	—	—	—	—	—	13 %	27 %	43 %
Combin ed %	17 %					—	83 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q17 Only answer if you chose 'agree' in the last question. Do you agree or disagree to the following statement: I am confident that governments in the Euro-Atlantic region will take appropriate action against climate change.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	1	4	—	4	5	5	6	—	3	—	—
p	.04	.14	—	.14	.18	.18	.21	—	.11	—	—
%	4 %	14 %	—	14 %	18 %	18 %	21 %	—	11 %	—	—
Combined %	50 %					18 %	32 %				
N=Σf	28										

**Q18 Do you agree or disagree to the following statement: Decision-makers should carry out more pressure on the private sector (e.g. in the fields of travel, housing, food production) to facilitate climate-beneficiary consumer choices.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	—	1	—	1	6	5	4	2	2	9
p	—	—	.03	—	.03	.2	.17	.13	.07	.07	.3
%	—	—	3 %	—	3 %	20 %	17 %	13 %	7 %	7 %	30 %
Combined %	6 %					20 %	74 %				
N=Σf	30										

## POPULIST MOVEMENTS AND POLITICAL EXTREMISM

**Q19 Do you agree or disagree that populist movements in the Euro-Atlantic region were on the rise in 2019, compared to the years before?**

0 = strongly agree

50 = Neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	—	1	1	1	5	2	7	6	2	5
p	—	—	.03	.03	.03	.17	.07	.23	.2	.07	.17
%	—	—	3 %	3 %	3 %	17 %	7 %	23 %	20 %	7 %	17 %
Combin ed %	9 %			17 %			74 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q20 Looking into the future, do you think that populist movements will be further on the rise or will they rather decline in 2020?**

0 = further on the rise

50 = stay the same

100 = on decline

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	—	—	3	2	5	3	7	5	4	1
p	—	—	—	.1	.07	.17	.1	.23	.17	.13	.03
%	—	—	—	10 %	7 %	17 %	10 %	23 %	17 %	13 %	3 %
Combin ed %	17 %			17 %			66 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q21 Do you agree or disagree to the following statement: Populism is a threat that is seriously challenging peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic region.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	—	2	—	—	2	4	5	8	4	5
p	—	—	.07	—	—	.07	.13	.17	.27	.13	.17
%	—	—	7 %	—	—	7 %	13 %	17 %	27 %	13 %	17 %
Combined %	7 %			7 %			86 %				
N=Σf	30										

**WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

**Q22 Please assess whether you find the current state of nuclear arms control rather fortunate or unfortunate. Rate on the following scale.**

0 = strongly agree

50 = neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	1	—	—	4	6	1	5	3	9	1
p	—	.03	—	—	.13	.2	.03	.17	.1	.3	.03
%	—	3 %	—	—	13 %	20 %	3 %	17 %	10 %	30 %	3 %
Combined %	16 %			20 %			64 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q23 Do you agree or disagree that there will be new opportunities for arms control achievements in 2020 and beyond?**

0 = strongly agree

50 = neither agree nor disagree

100 = strongly disagree

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	—	4	3	6	4	7	3	2	—	1
p	—	—	.13	.1	.2	.13	.23	.1	.07	—	.03
%	—	—	13 %	10 %	20 %	13 %	23 %	10 %	7 %	—	3 %
Combin ed %	43 %			13 %			43 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q 24 Please indicate whether you believe nuclear arms control is important or not for peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic region.**

0 = not important at all

50 = undecided

100 = highly important

X	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
f	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	5	1	8	12
p	—	—	—	—	—	.07	.07	.17	.03	.27	.4
%	—	—	—	—	—	7 %	7 %	17 %	3 %	27 %	40 %
Combin ed %	—			7 %			93 %				
N=Σf	30										

**Q25 Optional question. If you like, please provide us with more detailed thoughts on current trends in arms control and what we have to expect in 2020.**

**MORE DISRUPTIVE TRENDS IN 2020 AND BEYOND**

**Q26 Please draw a scenario involving one or more disruptive trends (in the areas of transatlantic security, civil society, economics, rule of law) that you believe has serious implications for the Euro-Atlantic sphere or just for one specific region. You can refer to an actual trend or to something that will be happening in 2020 and beyond. You don't necessary need to choose a negative trend, it can also be something positive in nature. Please be as creative and as detailed as you can!**

## **Images**

1. A Royal Netherlands Navy NH-90 aboard Standing NATO Maritime Group Two (SNMG2) flagship HNLMS De Ruyter, Flickr, NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
2. An example of deepfake technology: actress Amy Adams in the original (l) is modified to have the face of actor Nicolas Cage (r), Wikimedia Commons
3. Parents Rise Up march and rally 2019, Flickr, Tim Dennell
4. Jobbik, Flickr, Leigh Phillips
5. Firestorm cloud over Hiroshima, Wikimedia commons



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