



FUTURE TRENDS

Report

Issue no. 16 - November 2025



TRENDS RESEARCH & ADVISORY



Future Trends Report

Future Trends Report, published in English and Arabic by TRENDS Virtual Office in Montreal, stands out as a distinctive publication dedicated to highlighting:

1. the most important forward-looking studies that aim to identify future trends, analyze various variables that may influence these trends, and determine the best future scenarios.
2. the most important applied studies that explore the application of knowledge, scientific theories, and information to solve current problems and overcome future challenges.
3. the most important illustrative and graphic forms that visually summarize significant studies, helping readers understand the trends and challenges of the future world.

Editorial board

Wael Saleh, PhD.

Hamad Al Hosani

Marie Fally

Amany Fouad, PhD

Sara Alneyadi

Maryam Shadi

Editing and Proofreading, Moulay Hamzaoui

Design, Wael Abd Almajied

CONTENTS

1- Prospective research

Building a Scientific Backbone for AI Safety Governance.....	4
How AI Is Permeating (and Reshaping) Disciplines.....	6
Diasporas as Strategic Actors in a Changing Order	8
Embedding Geopolitics Within Planetary Ecologies.....	10
How Dissemination Norms Shape AI Policy Futures.....	12

2- Applied research

Applied AI for Newcomer Services: Needs, Prototypes, Guardrails.....	14
From Alt-Data to Decisions:	16
Operationalizing Risk Intelligence with AI.....	18
Geopolitics 2025: Scenarios and Playbooks.....	20
Turning Scholarship into Practice: Applied Insights from the Field.....	22

1 Prospective research

Building a Scientific Backbone for AI Safety Governance

Bengio, Y., et al. (2024). International scientific report on the safety of advanced AI (Interim report) [Preprint]. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2412.05282>

The Bengio et al. (2024) interim report brings together a large cross-disciplinary team to map out what is empirically known—and remains unknown—about threats of increasingly capable general-purpose AI systems. The authors' main goal is to establish a shared vocabulary for discussing hazards and subdivide four broad categories:



misuse, systemic risks, capability-driven risks, and catastrophic events. They present a common framework by which researchers, policymakers, and civil society actors to position specific challenges within a broader context. Supplementing this taxonomy, the report identifies technical and socio-technical mitigation strategies that span the entire AI life cycle, from model development to deployment.

At the technical level, the report recommends several research priorities: ensuring reliability under distributional shifts, managing interpretability limits of large models, improving adversarial robustness, and scaling human agency for increasing system complexity. These avenues not only present technical challenges but also highlight the need for infrastructure that can manage systematic examination. Socio-technical levers, by contrast, focus on governance mechanisms such as secure compute access, standardized evaluation regimes, incident reporting structures, and pre-deployment risk assessments tied to capability thresholds rather than model branding or parameter counts.

A recurring theme throughout the report is the call for epistemic humility. The vast majority of extreme-risk claims remain contested or unproven by empirical evidence, but precautionary actions such as red-teaming, sandboxed evaluations, or tool usage prohibitions are considered

"low-regret" steps. The authors argue that frontier-model threats are not an effect of single-system autonomy but emerge due to sociotechnical coupling: the interplay of models, data pipelines, agent frameworks, plug-ins, and human incentives within institutions.

Governance proposals emphasized developing an ecosystem framework, including safety-case documentation, independent audit capabilities, and globally interoperable notice channels for model changes and incidents. One significant proposal is to bifurcate capability governance—focusing on what models can technically do—into two separate streams: capability governance and application governance, which addresses who can deploy particular systems. This bifurcation aims to avoid either stifling beneficial innovation or insufficiently regulating high-risk usage.

Overall, the interim report advocates for a realistic "middle path." It neither sensationalizes existential risks nor dismisses valid concerns. Instead, it redefines AI safety as a cumulative engineering and institutional challenge, akin to the safety cultures in aviation or biotechnology. Its main value lies not in articulating radically new theories but in pulling together disconnected strands of work into an actionable, coherent map that can guide research funders, AI labs, regulators, and civil society toward shared priorities, standards of evidence, and practical next steps.



Frontier-model threats are not an effect of single-system autonomy but emerge due to sociotechnical coupling.



AI governance proposals stress an ecosystem framework with safety-case documentation, independent audits, and global notice channels for model changes and incidents.

Prospective research

How AI Is Permeating (and Reshaping) Disciplines

Duede, E., Dolan, W., Bauer, A., Foster, I., & Lakhani, K. (2024). Oil & water? Diffusion of AI within and across scientific fields [Preprint]. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2405.15828>

This article documents a large-scale bibliometric study on the dissemination of artificial intelligence across and within scientific fields. Their central question is whether AI integrates seamlessly into disciplinary practices—what they term “mixing”—or whether it remains largely partitioned from established epistemic frameworks, creating “segregation.”



To investigate this, the authors employ embeddings of article text, citation network analysis, and temporal diffusion models, tracing AI’s adoption from its computer science origins outward into disciplines such as biomedicine, physics, and the social sciences.

There are extremely heterogeneous trajectories, with some fields, like protein structure prediction and medical imaging, having incorporated AI into their methodological framework and utilizing machine learning not only as technical support but also as a source of theoretical innovation. Other fields have relegated AI to the role of secondary support functions, such as cleansing data or conducting prediction side-experiments with minimal impact on design conceptualizations. The study calls for identifying shallow uptake and deep epistemic change.

Two new indicators of integration are put forward by the authors. Semantic integration checks the degree to which AI jargon co-occurs with specialist lexicons in articles as a sign of conceptual blending. Institutional integration tracks the rise of multidisciplinary teams, particularly mixed-method teams and cross-departmental co-authors. These metrics measure the emergence of new hybrid micro-fields, such as

“AI for materials design,” that serve as portals for enhanced uptake. Following stabilization, such niches accelerate boundary-crossing knowledge flows and normalize AI-native measures of evaluation.

The paper describes three scenarios for the future. On a complete fusion trajectory, AI could become an invisible infrastructure, with disciplinary theory co-evolving alongside model-driven discovery. While this promises the potential for efficiency, there is also the danger of hyper-optimization on proxy measures and increased obscurity in causal claims. Second, in a dual-track context, AI can remain a service layer, creating a bifurcation between mainstream and AI-based practices, with uneven access to enhanced capabilities. Third, in a fragmented enclave context, diffusion may stall outside a handful of data-intensive domains, strengthening disparities and replication deficits.

The lesson is clear: diffusion is not determinism. Institutions and leaders can influence trajectories by investing in translational infrastructure—co-coordinated seminars, co-advised students, and interoperable toolchains—that make uptake possible while protecting disciplinary theory from management by black-box convenience.



AI could become an invisible infrastructure, with disciplinary theory co-evolving alongside model-driven discovery.



Whether AI and science merge fruitfully, remain separate, or fragment into enclaves will depend as much on institutional design as on technical competence.

Prospective research

Diasporas as Strategic Actors in a Changing Order

Adamson, F. B. (2024). *Diasporic geopolitics, rising powers, and the future of international order*. *Review of International Studies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210524000214>

In this essay, Adamson builds on the concept of diasporic geopolitics to explain how transnational communities are becoming ever more a part of global geopolitics. The article theorizes diasporas as strategic infrastructures: networks of people, capital, media spaces, and organizational assets that can be mobilized to project soft power, shape narratives, and even exert coercive power.



The argument unfolds in three steps. First, Adamson situates diaspora governance within state strategies. These encompass instruments of cultivation such as dual citizenship policies and diaspora ministries. Strategies of co-optation are presented in the form of business councils or cultural institutes that align transnational communities with state interests. Coercive strategies involve more dubious practices like digital surveillance, transnational repression, or the policing of dissidents abroad. Second, the article places a strong emphasis on diaspora agency. Rather than being passive extensions of state power, diasporas consist of entrepreneurial elites, civil society networks, and youth movements mobilizing resources and identities across borders to frame global recognition contests, sanctions politics, and war stories. Third, Adamson examines the technologies and institutions—digital media, remittance systems, education systems—that facilitate ties between diaspora homelands and diaspora communities even as they increase state reach and diaspora autonomy. Empirical vignettes illustrate these dynamics. Indian diaspora communities, for instance, facilitate technology transfer and investment flows, while Turkey employs diaspora lobbying in European capitals. China's diasporas similarly

structure science and business ties, but are also arenas of contest over regime legitimacy. Such examples highlight the dual-edged nature of diaspora politics: diasporas are potentially powerful forces for influence but also conduits for political tension. Looking ahead, Adamson outlines several trajectories. One is the institutionalization of diaspora policy toolkits within foreign ministries. Another is the development of triangulation, where host states proactively seek diaspora capital while containing interference threats. A third is the expansion of platform geopolitics, as end-to-end encrypted messaging, fintech, and influencer networks reshape communications and political mobilization at scale. The theoretical contribution is to re-center peoplehood within international relations and thereby challenge state models that disregard social infrastructures. For practitioners, the implication is pragmatic: policies that do not engage diasporic circuits will underperform, while strict control over them might generate counter-mobilization as well as reputational harm. Adamson concludes by inviting a cumulative research program for diasporic power, integrating migration, security, and political economy approaches while being attentive to ethics and inequality.



Transnational communities are increasingly becoming a part of global geopolitics.



Diaspora politics is dual-edged: diasporas are potentially powerful forces for influence but also conduits for political tension.

Prospective research

Embedding Geopolitics Within Planetary Ecologies

Kearns, G. (2025). *Critical geopolitics 2.0: Geopolitics in the web of life*. *Geography Compass*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.70029>

In this article, Kearns (2025) calls for a reinvention of critical geopolitics in the face of planetary crisis. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecological instability, he argues, cannot be boiled down to background conditions for human strategy. Instead, they are co-constitutive with the infrastructures, supply chains, and territorial orders on which modern power relies.



This perspective situates geopolitics within Kearns's "web of life," challenging conventional metaphors of bounded space, linear control, and thinly anthropocentric security. The article draws upon three intellectual currents to substantiate this ecological reinterpretation. The first is socio-ecological metabolism, which views states and corporations as energy-converting actors whose action flags are circumscribed by material throughput flows and waste sink capacities. This draws attention to environmental constraints that rein in national and corporate power. Infrastructural geopolitics comes second, emphasizing how pipelines, grids, data centers, and rare-earth mining are spatial fixes that reterritorialize peripheries while creating new sites of dependency and vulnerability to choke points. Third is multispecies politics, which foregrounds the agency of non-human actors—disease vectors, pollinators, invasive species—that recalculate human security logics and disrupt traditional threat models. Following these foundations, Kearns proposes methodological innovations to critical geopolitics. These include the combination of remote sensing data with discourse analysis, the pairing

of life-cycle analysis with territorial mapping, and attentiveness not only to spectacular crises but also to "slow violence" that unfolds gradually. This better captures the complex and multi-scalar imbrications of ecological and geopolitical processes. Looking ahead, the article examines how decarbonization, electrification, and even geoengineering could redraw global lines of dependence and influence. New alliances are conceivable around battery critical minerals, water intensity in semiconductor production, and the creation of climate risk insurance markets. Yet such changes also involve risks. Kearns warns of a tendency toward "green securitization," whereby ecological restoration is framed as justification for militarized intervention, exclusionary zoning, or authoritarian strains of environmentalism. The article concludes by invoking scholars to craft narratives that neither assume technological salvation nor succumb to apocalyptic pessimism. Instead, critical geopolitics 2.0 should offer publics and policymakers cartographies of both limit and possibility, foregrounding justice, adaptation, and the material limits of power in an ecologically interdependent world.



Decarbonization, electrification, and even geoengineering could redraw global lines of dependence and influence.



Governance has to be organized in polycentric arrangements, mobilizing city networks, watershed authorities, and standards organizations.

Prospective research

How Dissemination Norms Shape AI Policy Futures

Suh, S., Bang, J., & Han, J. W. (2025). The shift towards preprints in AI policy research: A comparative study of preprint trends in the U.S., Europe, and South Korea [Preprint]. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2505.03835>



Suh, Bang, and Han (2025) investigate the unexpected explosion of preprints in AI policy research, canvassing metadata for thousands of articles in the United States, Europe, and South Korea.



Their central contention is that dissemination norms are not impartial: the infrastructure of preprints shapes the pace, inclusivity, and power dynamics of policy discussion. Charting regional paths, the paper depicts how preprints are increasingly becoming a strategic feature of AI regulation.

The study detects dramatic divergence by region. Institutions and researchers in the US were early adopters, jumping quickly to arXiv and SSRN, with compressed cycles of adoption and exposure. Europe has been shaped by diverse mandates, grant obligations, and a range of repositories, resulting in fast expansion but disjointed governance. South Korea, however, adopted preprints later but with strong government-related research institution involvement, representing a more state-led trend. The topical mapping finds clusters of AI safety, governance evaluation, and technical standards—topics where earlier circulation of findings credibly influences the timing of regulation and international coordination. The authors present two potential arguments of significance. First, preprints truncate policy discovery cycles: stakeholders are presented with contested evidence and proposals months before journal publication, which is critical in fast-evolving fields like AI. Second, openness redistributes agenda-setting power. Individual researchers, think tanks,

and industry research labs can enter conversations earlier without waiting for traditional peer review, accumulating both strengths in coordination and risks of hype amplification or inadequate quality control. Methodologically, the study triangulates delays between submission and citation, co-authorship networks, and institutional affiliations. Results show that preprints generally outcompete journal articles in shaping white papers, draft standards, and legislative hearings. The authors therefore call for institutional guardrails to preserve the benefits of speed while enhancing reliability. These include open revision audit trails, conflict-of-interest disclosures, and "living bibliographies" that update citation links as research evolves.

For practitioners, the working takeaway is clear: regulators, civil-society groups, and audit agencies must develop capacity for tracking, triaging, and synthesizing preprints, supported by guidelines on when provisional evidence is sufficient for policy review. For scientists, incentives will encourage rigorous preprint behavior, such as open data, reproducible code, and explicit statements of limitations. By redefining dissemination as infrastructure, Suh and coauthors shift the focus of AI policy: not just the content of research, but also the circuits of circulation that determine how quickly and widely societies can respond to new threats and possibilities.



Dissemination norms are not impartial: the infrastructure of preprints shapes the pace, inclusivity, and power dynamics of policy discussion.



Regulators, civil-society groups, and audit agencies must develop capacity for tracking, triaging, and synthesizing preprints.

2 Applied research

Applied AI for Newcomer Services: Needs, Prototypes, Guardrails

Nejadgholi, I., Molamohammadi, M., Missaghi, K., & Bakhtawar, S. (2024). Human-centered AI applications for Canada’s immigration settlement sector [Preprint]. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2409.01461>

Nejadgholi, Molamohammadi, Missaghi, and Bakhtawar (2024) provide operational human-oriented AI research in Canada’s immigration settlement sector. This ecosystem—comprised of nonprofits, municipalities, and government agencies—holds a pioneering status in facilitating newcomers in terms of shelter, work, legal status, and language.



The article employs interviews, workflow analysis, and small-scale prototyping to reveal AI prospects that are implementable, equitable, and empathetic within organizational constraints. High-promise opportunities are identified for multilingual triage chatbots that can answer common questions, summarization tools for lengthy case files, appointment optimization software, and referral routing via compromised service networks. More notably, the authors emphasize that AI should be used as supporting infrastructure augmenting human staff rather than replacing it. The metrics of success are therefore defined in terms of staff time saved, accuracy of information delivered, and user satisfaction among linguistically and culturally heterogeneous populations. The study also identifies domain-specific critical risks. Hallucinated output can mislead clients regarding their legal rights. Immigration files carry extremely personal information, and therefore, pose issues concerning privacy and security. Smaller agencies, having limited capital, are exposed to computational inequalities, technical compatibilities, and online literacy. To address these, the authors recommend a series of guardrails: retrieval-augmented generation based on trusted Canadian content; human-in-the-loop verification at critical decision points; audit logs capturing the advice received; and

participatory community co-design for accessibility, such as phone-first and low-bandwidth interfaces. Pilot outcomes show that near-term value lies in back-office functions like summarizing and translating, where AI can process staff workload without high liability issues. External-facing advising instruments, however, require caution in response to the hazards of misinformation and the vulnerability of client confidence. A collaborative public-interest model educated on settlement-related content subsidized by federal and provincial stakeholders would reduce dependence on commercial vendors and enable smaller agencies to maintain currency. Frontline worker training programs—consisting of response crafting, privacy safeguarding, and managing errors—are positioned as essential additions to technical proficiency. In the future, the document outlines an organized process of evaluation. Suggested methods include randomized rollouts to measure throughput gains and fairness impacts, bilingual benchmark precision to evaluate representativeness, and stress testing for robustness to disinformation during crisis peaks, e.g., sudden policy changes. The authors’ approach offers a blueprint for operational, justice-aware AI applications in social services, with augmentative, accountable, and inclusive methodologies.



AI should be used as supporting infrastructure to augment human staff rather than replace it.



Immigration files carry extremely personal information, and therefore, pose issues concerning privacy and security.

From Alt-Data to Decisions: An Applied Finance Toolkit

Cao, S. S., et al. (2024). Applied AI for finance and accounting: Alternative data and emerging applications. *Journal of International Accounting, Auditing and Taxation*. Advance online publication. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0927538X24000581>

Cao et al. (2024) chart how applied AI is reshaping finance and accounting, specifically highlighting the role of alternative data. The article documents how models ingest unconventional signals—anything from web traffic and satellite imagery to supply-chain scans and ESG text corpora—to power forecasting, credit scoring, fraud detection, and compliance analysis. Rather than focusing on general promises, the authors define the workflows necessary to implement such systems:



data cleansing and acquisition pipelines, feature engineering for noisy, non-stationary inputs, and human review loops for materiality assessments. A few examples are provided to demonstrate these procedures. Invoice anomaly detection systems use representation learning to reduce false positives in fraud warnings, making them more efficient without overburdening auditors. Credit risk models combine bureau data and firm-level "digital exhaust" to improve default predictions. Natural language processing engines examine the Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) sections of company reports, highlighting potential earnings management risks requiring human inspection. These examples illustrate how AI can evolve from frivolous correlation-hunting to concrete decision support in finance. Governance emerges as a theme that unites these efforts. The article stresses the necessity of model risk management practices, explainability standards that would suit auditors and regulators as much as anyone else, and provenance trails for verifying that data were obtained legally and ethically. One clear caution is that the portability of models across jurisdictions can introduce unexpected compliance exposures: what constitutes material information, personal data, or insider

information may vary by jurisdiction. To mitigate such risks, the authors recommend a stack of controls that includes detailed data lineage documentation, scenario-based verification, challenger models for verifying robustness, and approval gates before deployment.

In the future, the authors foresee the convergence of continuous auditing and real-time analytics, shifting the profession toward real-time anomaly detection rather than hindsight checks. However, they caution against fitting too closely to short-term alternative data relations, which may vanish with regime changes or policy tweaks. Human judgment remains indispensable: interpreting accounting standards, contextualizing risks, and explaining to boards and clients are activities that black-box models cannot be trusted to perform. For smaller businesses, the report outlines "minimum viable" paths to implementation. These include leveraging cloud-native technologies, subscribing to vetted data sources, and using common model libraries trained for execution in domain-specific environments.

Overall, the article positions applied AI as a useful toolkit for accounting and finance: effective but circumscribed, reliant on careful governance, and functioning best to complement rather than replace human judgment.



Applied AI is transforming finance and accounting by elevating the role of alternative data.



Human judgment is still indispensable.

Operationalizing Risk Intelligence with AI

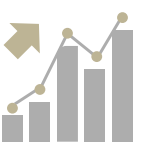
Stratfor/Worldview. (2025, May 21). Applied geopolitics: Leveraging AI to anticipate and mitigate geopolitical and supply chain risks. Worldview by Stratfor. <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/applied-geopolitics-leveraging-ai-anticipate-and-mitigate-geopolitical-and-supply-chain>

This podcast published by RANE gathers Rodger Baker, Executive Director of the Stratfor Center for Applied Geopolitics, and Alina Park, CEO of Ekho Labs, to talk about how AI can be applied to predict and mitigate geopolitical and supply chain risks. Their discussion moves beyond theoretical potential to the practical engineering of designing AI systems that provide decision-makers with earlier warnings, clearer categorization, and faster responses during periods of disruption.



At the center of their discussion is a modular design for AI comprising four stages. The first is the ingestion of enormous streams of raw signals, including multilingual news reports, regulatory bulletins, shipping records, and social media discussions. The second stage feeds this content through event and entity extraction, tagging actors and events with place and time. A third stage maps these outcomes onto an existing taxonomy of risks—sanctions, conflicts, labor actions, or infrastructure failures—and ensures that signals can be uniformly categorized. The final stage feeds scenario engines that yield disruption probabilities and potential rerouting or mitigation strategies. Rather than predicting, Baker and Park highlight the objective of decision utility: actionable insights that help procurement, logistics, and compliance personnel move earlier and with greater confidence. The episode illustrates this with real-world examples. One example is mapping port congestion using the integration of shipping flows with localized news streams, enabling companies to predict bottlenecks ahead of time. Another highlights how early export control signals can be sensed and communicated to compliance officers before public

announcements are made. A third illustrates how weak signals from local demonstrations or work stoppages can be detected before they develop into larger operational concerns. Through these illustrations, human-machine partnership is placed at the core. AI models can highlight anomalies, but analysts must confirm them, incorporate local context, and transform them into executive advisories that can be utilized. Looking ahead, the guests foresee more integrated corporate risk functions with government early warning mechanisms and greater use of synthetic scenarios to stress-test supply chains under compounded risks such as conflict, regulatory shocks, and weather extremes. Ethical challenges are acknowledged as well: threats of surveillance creep, vendor concentration, and unauthorized geospatial data use. For practitioners, the value of this discussion is its action plan; placing emphasis on data engineering choices, taxonomy design, and governance methodologies, the podcast demonstrates how AI can bridge the gap between geopolitical analysis and daily operational decision-making so that organizations can move from awareness to timely, auditable action.



AI can be applied to predict and mitigate geopolitical and supply chain risks.



Goal of decision utility: actionable insights that help procurement, logistics, and compliance personnel move earlier and with greater confidence.

Geopolitics 2025: Scenarios and Playbooks

World Economic Forum. (2024, November 22). Strategic outlook on geopolitics 2025 [Podcast episode]. Agenda Dialogues. <https://www.weforum.org/podcasts/agenda-dialogues/episodes/strategic-outlook-on-geopolitics-2025>

The World Economic Forum podcast episode "Strategic Outlook on Geopolitics 2025" (2024) brings together practitioners to discuss the critical stressors shaping the international setting in the coming year. The conversation establishes 2025 as the intersection of five overlapping pressures: splintering trade blocs, disputed technology stacks (chips, cloud, AI), energy transition volatility,



election-driven policy whipsaws, and climate shocks. Rather than offering theoretical projections, the panel stresses readiness for action, and listeners are provided with concrete landmarks and response guidelines.

Guests outline scenario indicators that organizations need to monitor, such as export-control escalation, maritime security incidents, or coalition formation for sanctions. Every signpost has associated real-world measures of mitigation: diversification of suppliers, pre-clearing reroute agreements, automating compliance procedures, and establishing public-private information-sharing networks. These recommendations highlight one of the underlying themes of the episode: geopolitics is not an off-stage condition but a workflow requiring well-practiced responses.

A standard finding is the problem of policy latency. Legislation and rulemaking typically lag behind de facto regulation via standards bodies, procurement rules, and platform regulation. This means organizations must closely observe the standards processes within areas such as AI safety, cybersecurity, and emissions reporting because these are frequently employed as leading indicators of market-access conditions. The discussion also references the middle power agency of Canada, EU member states, and Gulf states to broker energy and technology

deals, suggesting coalition possibilities beyond great-power rivalry.

For artificial intelligence, the panel refers to two dynamics. On the one hand, AI is rapidly expanding into business processes through productivity and analytic value adds. On the other, red-team exercises have revealed vulnerabilities such as prompt injection attacks and supply-chain model threats. Best practices include keeping detailed models, conducting ongoing incident-response training, and fostering close interaction between policy teams and CISOs to exercise control over export-control exposure. Equity issues are also mentioned in the discussion, such as possible unequal access to data and computational capabilities that further expand North-South gaps. The panel stresses incorporating capacity building and open tools in global collaborations. The pragmatic value of the episode lies in the systematic readiness checklists. These include horizon-scanning cadences, building cross-functional "war rooms" at regulatory turning points, and establishing KPIs to monitor time-to-decision when emergencies hit. The lesson is a scenario-ready mindset: organizations must engage with geopolitics not as a distant story but as an operating discipline with defined roles, thresholds, and scripted responses aligned to risk appetite and social responsibilities.



Five overlapping pressures define 2025: fractured trade blocs, contested technology, energy transition volatility, political swings, and climate shocks.



Organizations must approach geopolitics as an operating discipline, with defined roles, thresholds, and responses aligned to risk appetite and social responsibility.

Turning Scholarship into Practice: Applied Insights from the Field

Hurst, W., & Nilsson-Wright, J. (Hosts). (2025). On geopolitics [Podcast series]. University of Cambridge. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/on-geopolitics/id1557305775>

The On Geopolitics podcast series (2025), which is housed at the University of Cambridge and hosted by William Hurst and John Nilsson-Wright, aims to convert academic expertise into decision-making applicable information by pairing area specialists with policy practitioners. Episodes feature applied questions at the research-practice interface: How do sanctions architectures function in practice?



What do election cycles in swing states hold for trade and security agreements? How do AI-enabled surveillance and information operations affect domestic stability? And how do secondary powers balance between U.S.–China rivalry while advancing their own industrial policies? The hosts emphasize looking beyond high-level heuristics or stylized narratives. Instead, students examine real case material—such as semiconductor export regimes, Red Sea shipping disruptions, or governance contestation over digital platforms—through specific empirical indicators. These include licensing and customs statistics, shipping manifests, and ballots in international standards bodies. A constant theme is methodological pluralism: the combination of qualitative fieldwork, quantitative tracking, legal analysis, and technical audits of digital systems produces findings that are empirically well-founded and operationally significant. Several episodes bring to the fore the double-edged role of AI in contemporary policy. On one hand, practitioners talk about building in-house dashboards that integrate open-source intelligence and model-backed entity resolution for improved situational awareness. On the other, guests discuss the ethical and strategic pitfalls of outsourcing analytic capacity to commercial providers whose models are untransparent, biased, or

trained on questionable datasets. Such controversies underscore the importance of institutional design. Effective systems must include feedback loops so that frontline experience—by diplomats, journalists, or NGOs—can update analytic priors. Scenario exercises, too, must feed directly into procurement decisions, staffing, and contingency planning, rather than be confined to reports. Looking ahead, the series suggests greater emphasis on “meso-level” forums where much contemporary rule-making now occurs. Sectoral coalitions, standards consortia, and transnational city networks regularly shape outcomes as directly as formal treaties or summity do. This calls for a new type of leadership education that attains fluency across the borders of law, technology, and economics. Teams must be educated to recognize when advances in technical areas—such as the development of more autonomous AI agents—demand policy redesign accordingly. For students, officials, and practitioners, the practical lesson is the virtue of disciplined curiosity: challenging sources, testing narratives against evidence, and designing institutions that turn analysis into timely and authoritative decisions. Lastly, On Geopolitics shows how to engage with geopolitics not as theory or commentary only, but as a craft—empirically rigorous, ethically reflexive, and embedded in organizational decision cycles.

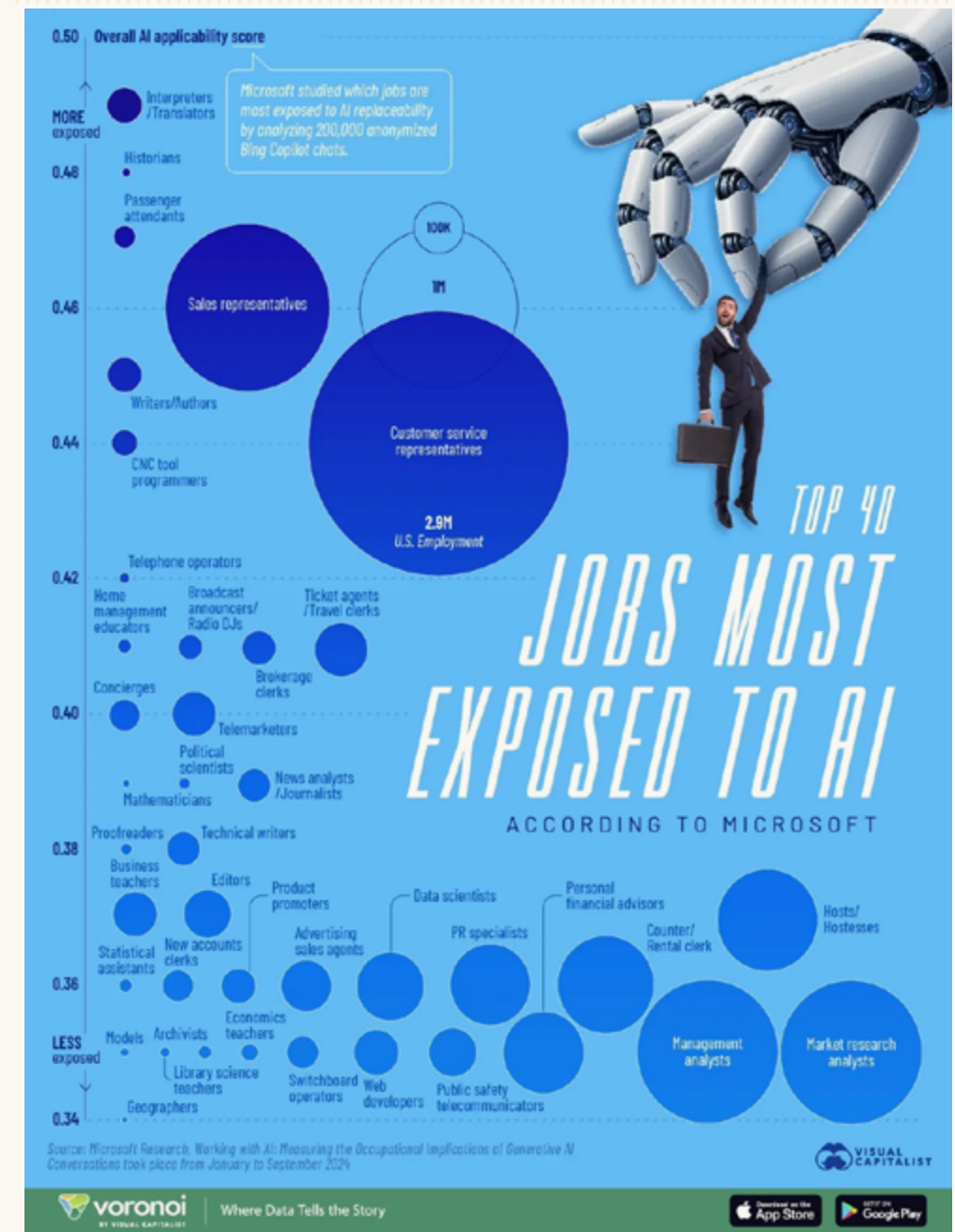
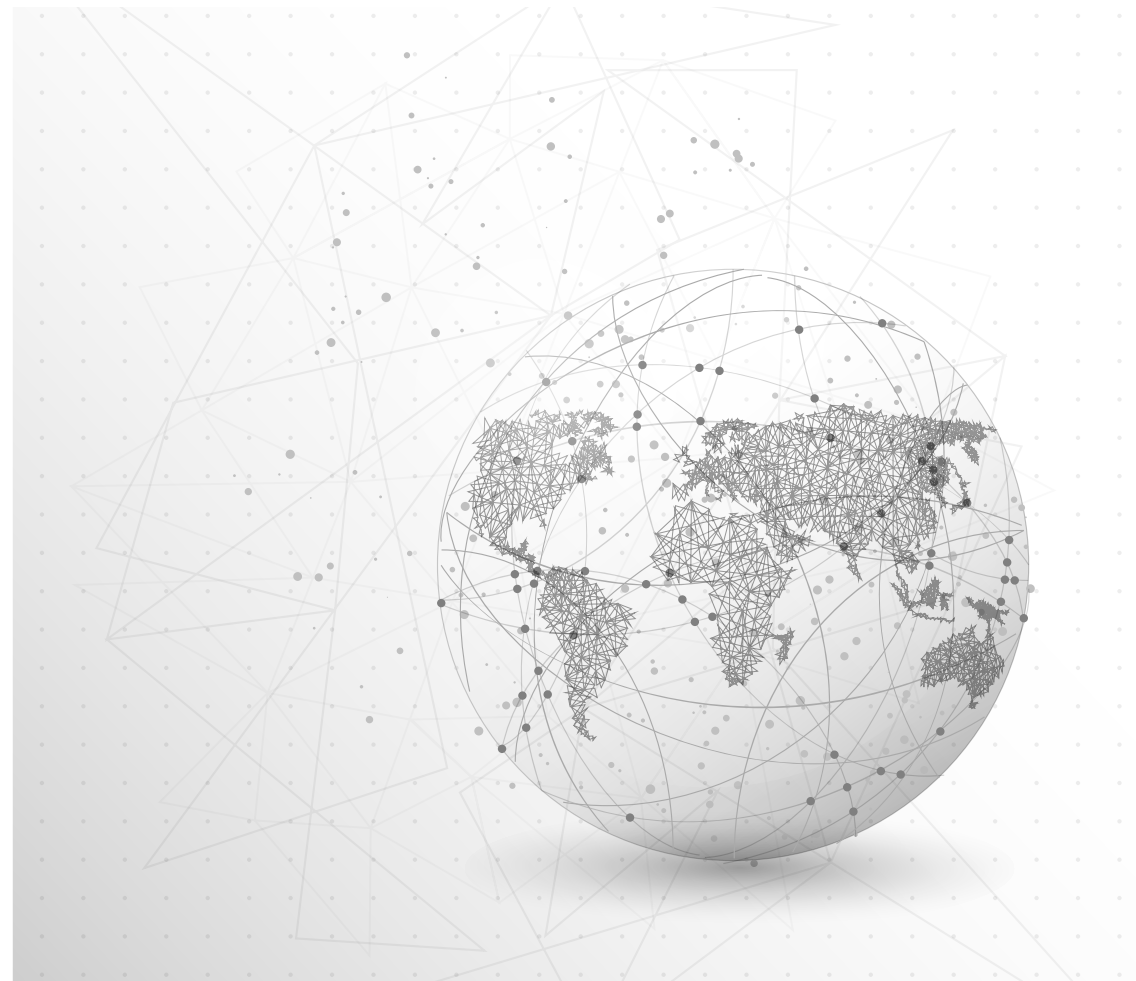


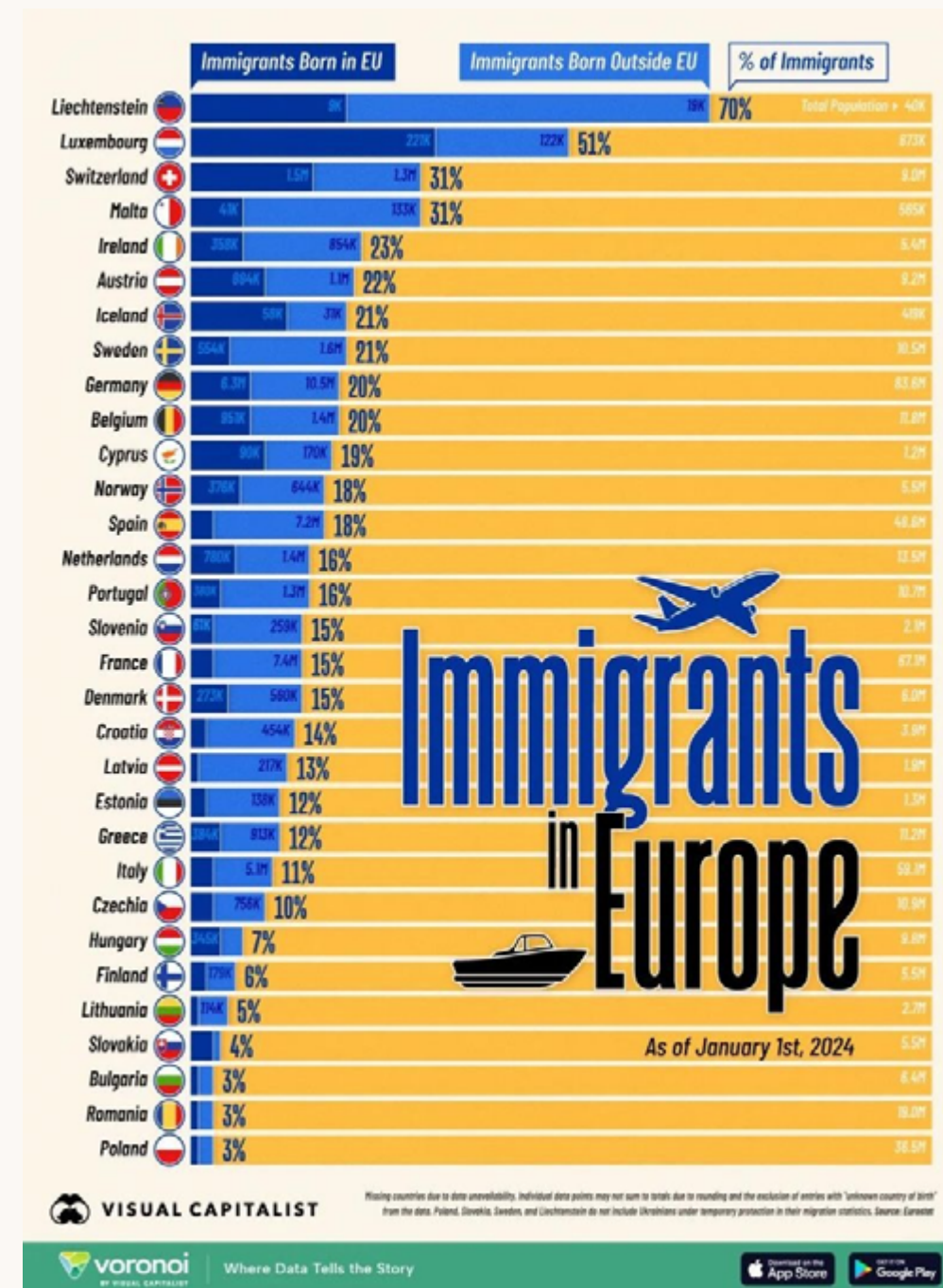
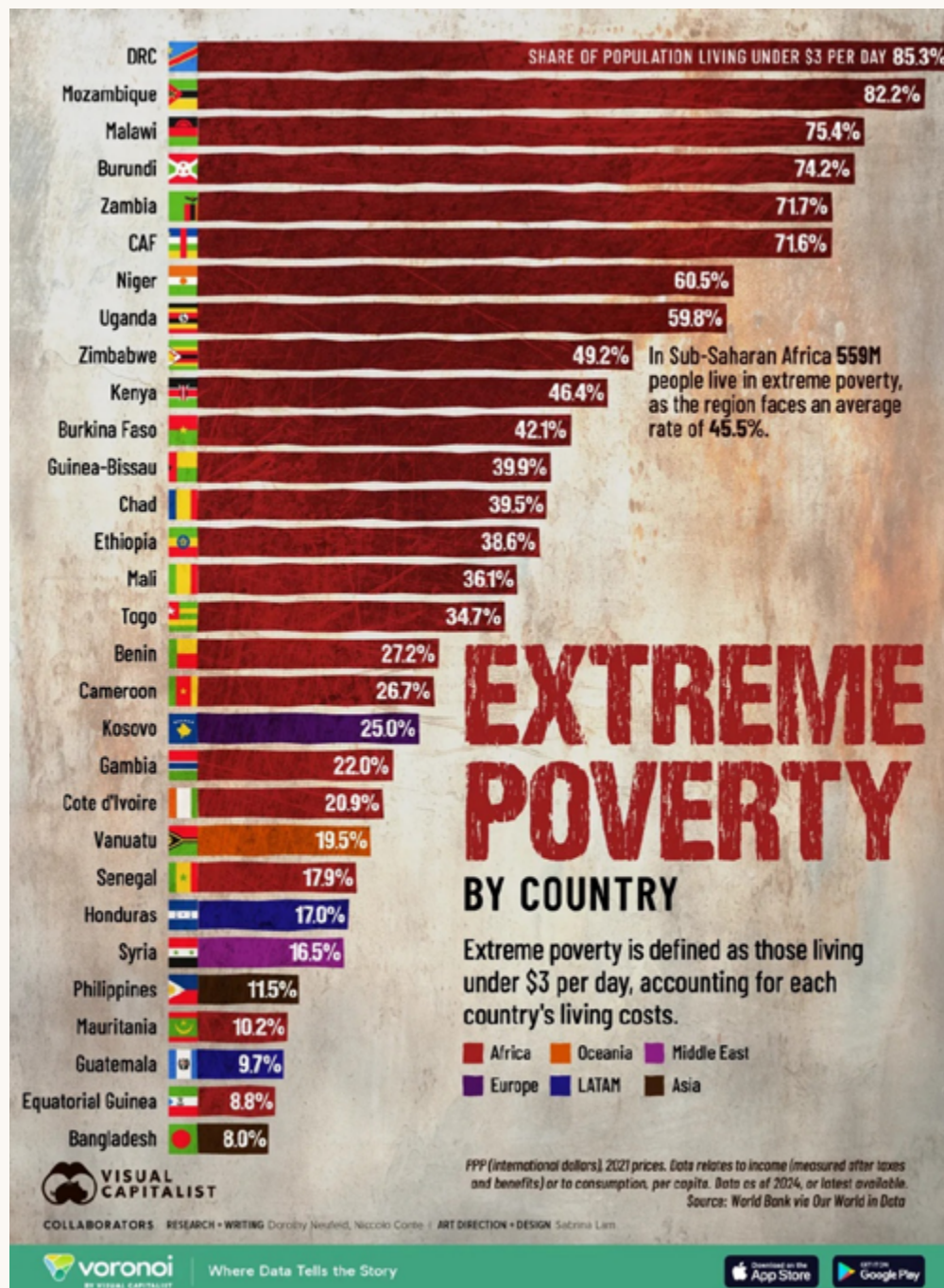
Translating academic expertise into actionable insights for policymakers by pairing area specialists with practitioners.



Students, officials and practitioners alike must cultivate disciplined curiosity: testing narratives against evidence.

3 The future in numbers

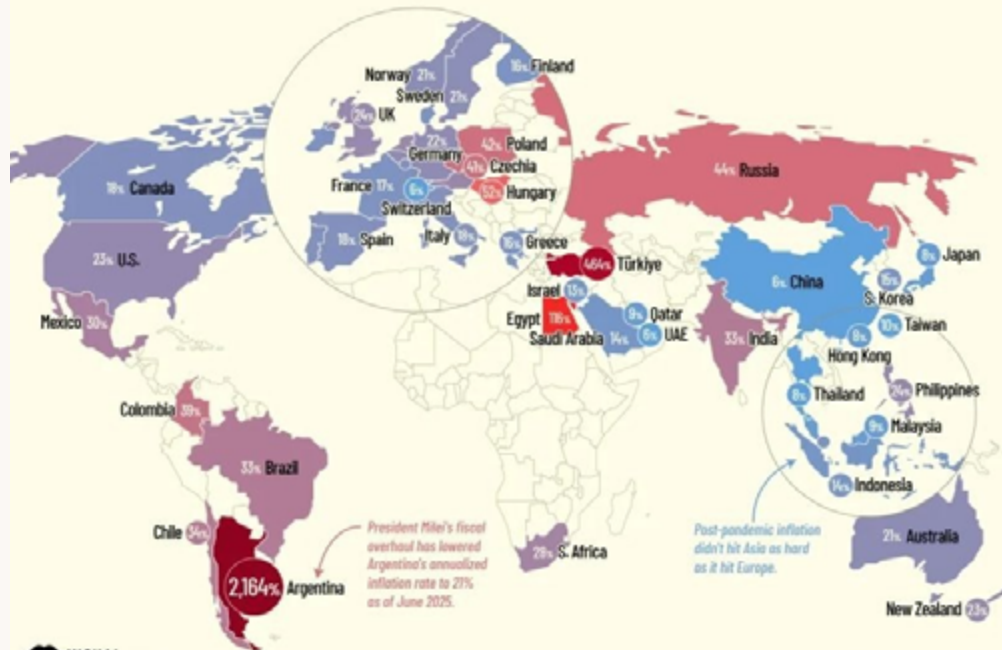




Consumer Inflation

2020 - 2025

Consumer Inflation Cumulative Change, 2020-2025



President Milei's fiscal overhaul has lowered Argentina's annualized inflation rate to 27% as of June 2025.

Post-pandemic inflation didn't hit Asia as hard as it hit Europe.

Source: Deutsche Bank, Data as of June 2025



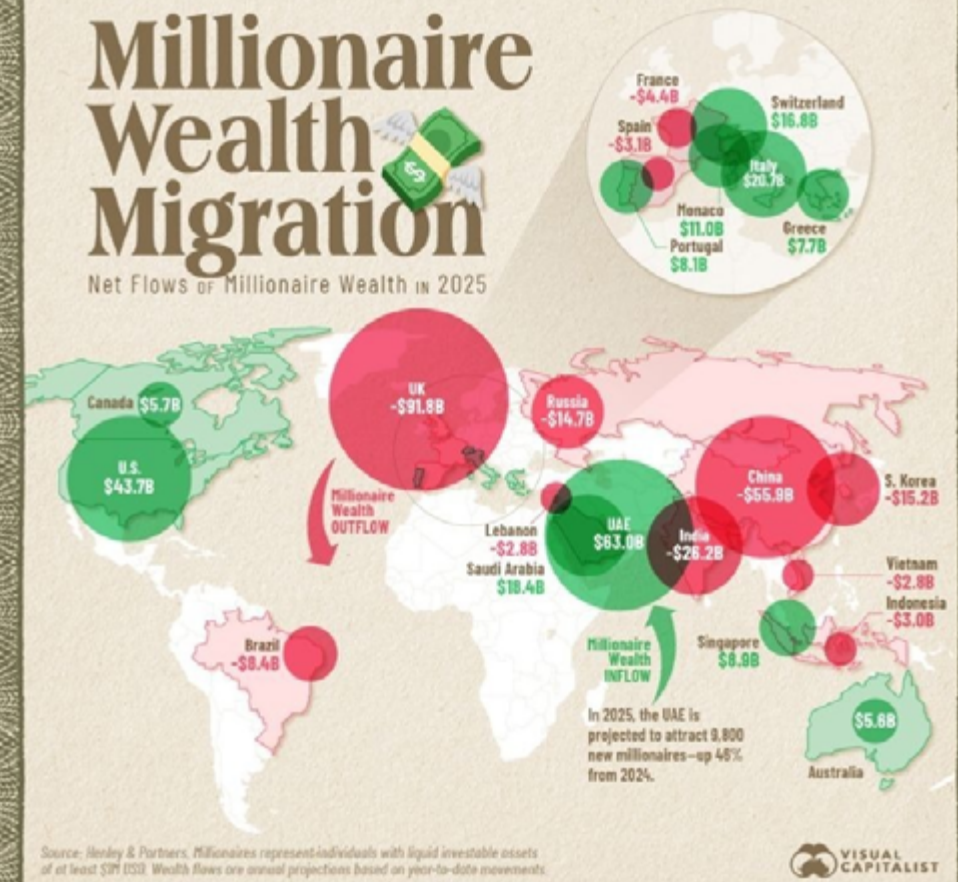
voroni

Where Data Tells the Story



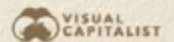
Millionaire Wealth Migration

Net Flows of Millionaire Wealth in 2025



In 2025, the UAE is projected to attract 9,800 new millionaires—up 48% from 2024.

Source: Henley & Partners. Millionaires represent individuals with liquid investable assets of at least \$1M USD. Wealth flows are annual projections based on year-to-date movements.



voroni

Where Data Tells the Story



