

Deep Societal Innovation for Sustainability and Human Flourishing (DSIS)



EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024

Deep Societal Innovation for Sustainability and Human Flourishing (DSIS) Project Launch Agenda

Date: Thursday 12th December 2024

Venue: Áine Hyland room, Student Hub, University College Cork main campus

Time	Activity	Facilitator
9.30 am	Arrival & coffee	
10.00 – 10.15	Welcome, setting the scene, timetable & overview of the EPA funded DSIS project - DSIS Generative Model of Transformation 2-step methodology for reimagining social institutional transformation pathways	Prof. Edmond Byrne (DSIS PI) and Prof. Maggie O'Neill (DSIS co-PI)
10.15 – 10.30	Narratives and Policy	Bob Grumiau (DSIS PhD student)
10.30 – 11.30	Institutional Transformation through Narratives and Policy	Prof. John Barry, QUB (launch guest speaker)
11.30 – 11.50	Coffee break	
11.50 – 12.30	Response to John Barry	Dr Gerard Mullally (DSIS co-PI)
12.30 – 1.15	Group discussion	
1.15 – 1.30	Concluding remarks	
1.30 pm	Lunch	

EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024

DSIS Project:

- Team
- Context/Rationale
- Objectives
- Structure

EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024

Deep Societal Innovation for Sustainability and Human Flourishing (DSIS)
(EPA funded 2024-2028)

The Team..

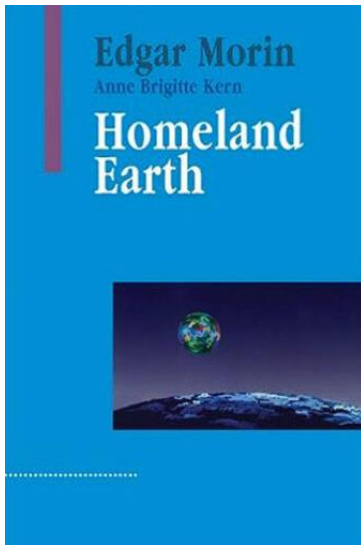
- Bob Grumiau (PhD (Gender, Education, Religion))
- Ciara Norman (PhD (Politics, Economics, Technology))
- Prof. Maggie O'Neill (Director, UCC Collective Social Futures)
- Dr. Gerard Mullally (School of Society, Politics and Ethics)
- Dr. Ian Hughes ((Irish Govt.) Dept. of Education, MaREI)
- Prof. Edmond Byrne (School of Engineering and Architecture)



EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024

Crisis?



What Polycrisis?

“The Polycrisis”

Morin and Kern (Homeland Earth, 1999, p.74):

“There is no single vital problem, but many vital problems, and it is this complex intersolidarity of problems, antagonisms, crises, uncontrolled processes, and the general crisis of the planet that constitutes the number one vital problem”

FINANCIAL TIMES

S COMPANIES TECH MARKETS CLIMATE OPINION LEX WORK & CAREERS LIFE & ARTS HTSI

Opinion **Global Economy**

Welcome to the world of the polycrisis

Today disparate shocks interact so that the whole is worse than the sum of the parts

ADAM TOOZE [+ Add to myFT](#)




Financial Times,
28 October 2022

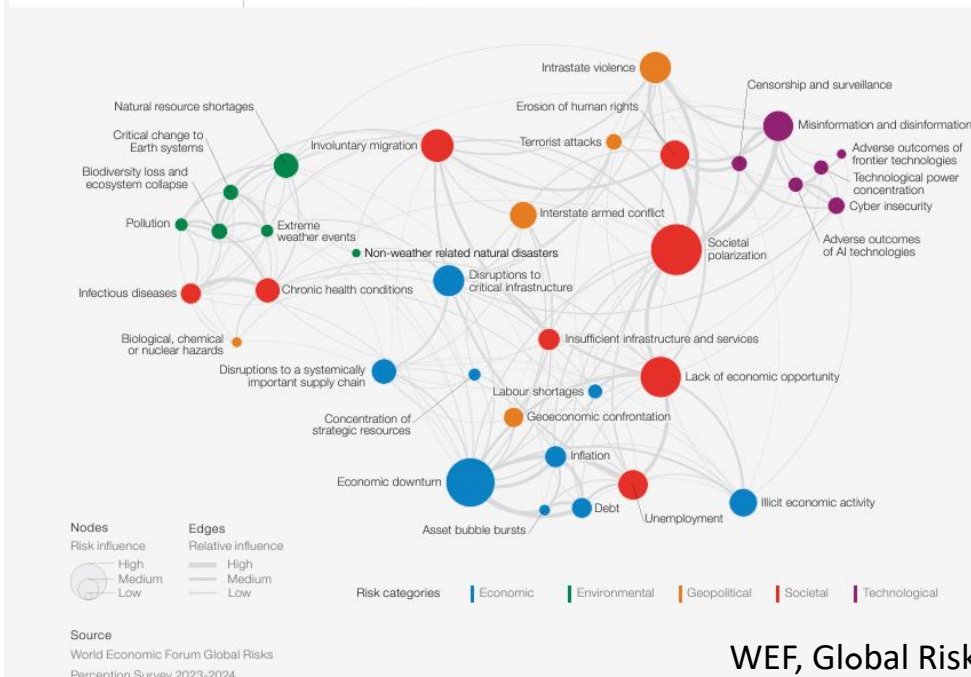


This is why 'polycrisis' is a useful way of looking at the world right now

Mar 7, 2023



FIGURE D | Global risks landscape: an interconnections map



WEF, Global Risks Report 2024

WEF, Global Risks Report 2024: “Environmental risks could hit the point of no return

“..respondents disagree about the **urgency** of environmental risks, in particular **Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse** and **Critical change to Earth systems**. **Younger** respondents tend to rank these risks **far more highly**..

..The **private sector** highlights these risks as top concerns over the **longer term**, in contrast to **respondents from civil society or government** who prioritize these risks over **shorter time frames**.

This **dissonance in perceptions of urgency** among key decision-makers implies **sub-optimal alignment and decision-making**, heightening the **risk of missing key moments of intervention**, which would result in **long-term changes to planetary systems**.”

10 years



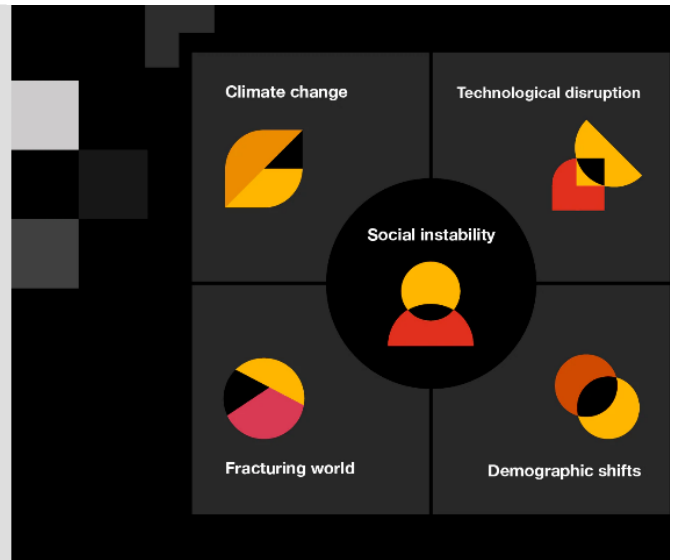
Global risks ranked by severity. WEF Global Risks Report 2024

Megatrends

Five global shifts reshaping the world we live in
September 2024

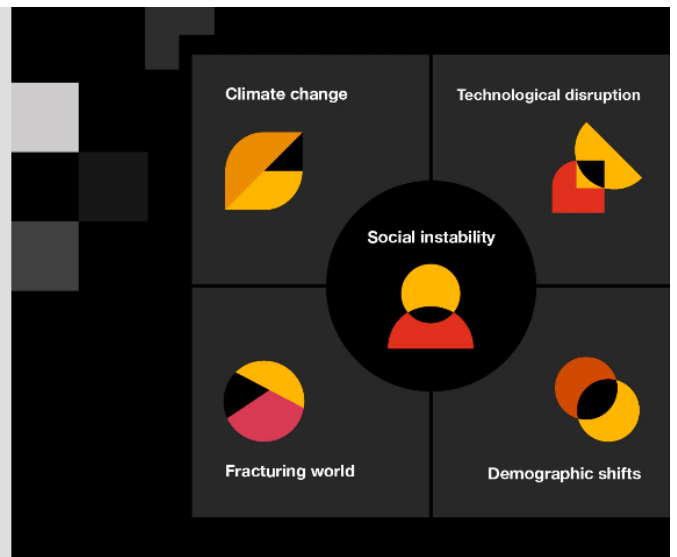
Megatrends

pwc, September 2024



The five Megatrends have already and will continue to change the world for many years to come. Each one of them implicates existential questions and has the potential to bring humanity to a tipping point. But it's the interaction between these Megatrends that makes them particularly hard to deal with. Each Megatrend is exacerbating the social challenges the world faces, and the magnitude of the social challenges makes it difficult for societies to come together and fight the negative effects of climate change, technological disruption, demographic shifts, and a fracturing world.

**There is no equivocating:
Humanity is in a race against
time.**



pwc, Megatrends, September 2024

“Metacrisis vs. Polycrisis

Metacrisis **overlaps** with polycrisis in viewing collective crises through the lens of **systems thinking**, but differentiates itself in addressing the **social dynamics** and **affective experience** of crisis—the way these interconnecting crises **feel** to us, what this does to our psyches (individually and collectively), how it impacts our ability to live **meaningful lives**, and how all of that generates **unexpected emergent properties**.”

Explaining Polycrisis and Metacrisis

(Jesse Damiani, 2023)

EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024

THE IRISH TIMES WEEKEND

Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

If our overheating planet is a result of human greed, then it must be a **special kind of greed**, a kind that emerged puzzlingly late in the long history of our species and then with a sudden vengeance. But we can give it a better and more specific name:
capitalism

OUR BURNING PLANET

BY SALLY ROONEY

Cover story | 3



Project Objective

DSIS seeks to:

**There is no equivocating:
Humanity is in a race against
time.**

develop a *methodological basis for conceptualising the*
deep whole of society transformation required
to engage on a trajectory towards
authentic sustainability and human flourishing,
which can create
narratives for deep, rapid, whole of society transformation,
and employ those narratives to
inform policy making and public discourse
on climate change and sustainability.

EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024

Exploring Transdisciplinary Transformation to Sustainability and Human Flourishing



Work Package 1 - Develop the DSIS Generative Model of Transformation

Work Package 2 - Reimagining Social Institution Transformation Pathways - Indicative Blueprints for Deep Societal Innovation

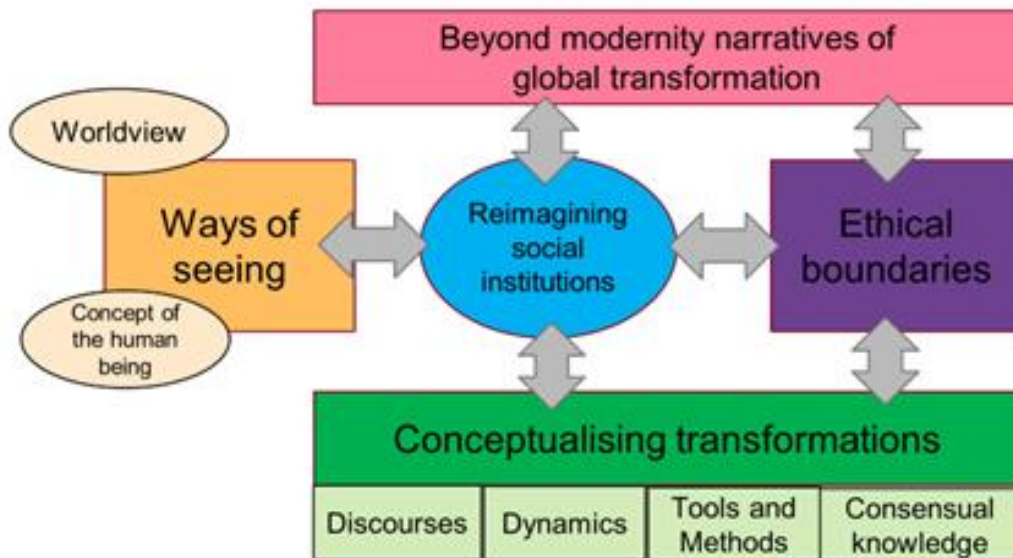
- Politics
- Religion/Spirituality
- Economics
- Gender and Racial Equality
- Technology
- Education

Work Package 3 – Narratives of Whole of Society Transformation

Work Package 4 - Knowledge Co-creation, Communication, Dissemination and Knowledge Transfer - Stakeholder stock-take and interaction

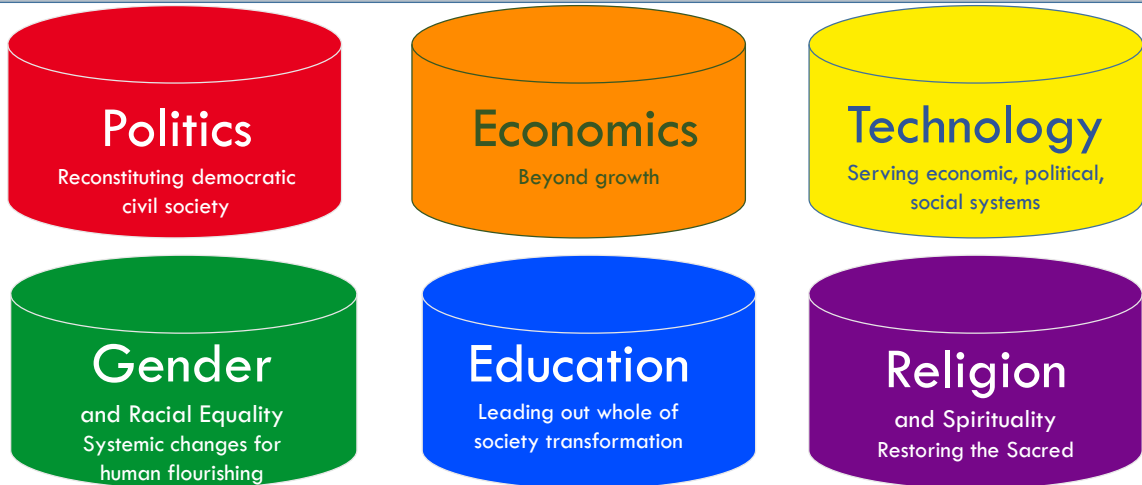
Work Package 5 – Management, coordination and communication

Work Package 1 - Develop the DSIS Generative Model of Transformation



Work Package 2 - Reimagining Social Institution Transformation Pathways - Indicative Blueprints

- **Step 1:** Validate initial starting points through development of **working papers, workshops, public events**
- **Step 2:** Explore and articulate **indicative changes** in **organisational forms** and **social practices** within each individual social institution that could realise the corresponding ideational goal



Megatrend Two Technological disruption

*“there generally isn’t sufficient consideration of the **unintended consequences** of technology in the design process, and, given the ubiquitous nature of technology, those unintended consequences are likely to happen quickly, be more severe, and affect more people. Without intense focus on preempting those unintended consequences before they appear, **there is great potential for negative implications of technology to outweigh positive ones.**”*

[pwc, 2024]

Implications for individuals

- **Significant capacity enhancement:** Technology is making information more available, processing information and collaboration smoother and more effective, boosting sensorial input, improving operations, helping self-actualisation, thereby allowing individuals and teams to achieve more, with less effort. 
- **Massive disruption of work:** A significant share of jobs is at risk of automation. And although AI will likely create many new jobs, the transition will be disruptive for many people, requiring them to upskill to maintain employability. 
- **Loss of privacy:** The value of data is further increasing given the pressure to feed AI with real-life data, and the technology to capture, process, and combine data in real time is ubiquitous, making it more difficult for people to protect their digital identities. 
- **Increasing disinformation, misinformation and fraud:** Distinguishing truth from fiction gets more difficult in a world where everyone can publish content, AI-powered deep fakes are increasingly impossible to differentiate from reality, and social media algorithms feed people with what they want to hear or what others may want them to believe. 
- **Growing mental health issues:** The prevalence of digital technology in all aspects of our lives will accentuate its harmful effects on brain health, including attention-deficit symptoms, impaired emotional and social intelligence, technology addiction, social isolation, stunted brain development and disrupted sleep. 

Megatrends: Technological disruption | 11

DSIS Workshop, ERI, 29 November 2024



Activities/Engagements/Outputs/Network Development



Work Package 3 – Narratives of Whole of Society Transformation

- Step 1: Exploring Systemic **Linkages** between Social Institutions and Articulating Whole of Society Change
- Step 2: Generating **Narratives** for **Global Ethical Transformation**

Politics

Reconstituting democratic
civil society

Economics

Beyond growth

Technology

Serving economic, political,
social systems

Gender

and Racial Equality
Systemic changes for
human flourishing

Education

Leading out whole of
society transformation

Religion

and Spirituality
Restoring the Sacred

Deep Societal Innovation for Sustainability and Human Flourishing (DSIS)



EPA DSIS Project Launch

Áine Hyland Room, The Hub, UCC, 12th December 2024