

2023

POST EVENT REPORT

Geofuture & Geofusion

**The Joseph S. Nye, Jr. Program on The Future of
Economic Powers & Geo-economics (J. Nye
EP&G)**

CONTACT

CSGEF Research Unit.
SIT Tower, Dubai Silicon Oasis.
Dubai, UAE.
T: +971 4 330713
E: research@csgef.org
W: www.csgef.org

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Overview: *This post-event report delves into the challenges, opportunities, and key success factors that nations face in the 21st century concerning sustainability, connectivity, and complexity. The discussion emphasizes the importance of connectivity and complexity in global competitiveness, highlighting the fusion of geography and the role of global cities as drivers of economic growth. Additionally, the report explores the significance of small nations, technological assets, education, and transportation infrastructure in shaping a nation's future success.*



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1. INTRODUCTION

DUBAI, May 11, 2023– The Center for the Study of Global Economic Future hosted an interview with Dr. Norbert Csizmadia as part of the ‘**Interview With Author series**’, an initiative of The Joseph S. Nye, Jr. Program on The Future of Economic Powers & Geo-economics (J. Nye EP&G). The interview address the topic of “**GeoFuture & GeoFusion**” in light of Dr, Norbert’s Books “**GEOFUTURE - Eurasian Complexity Connectivity and Sustainability** and **Geofusion: The power of geography and the mapping of the 21st century**.” Dr. Norbert Csizmadia’ is renowned Geographical Futurist, expert in economic strategy, geostrategy, regional and urban development, and geopolitics. Dr. Norbert was interviewed by Dr. Renny Castaneda, Professor at the College of Security and Global Studies, American University of the Emirates. Mr. Mahmood Sharif, Managing Director-CSGEF, presided the interview. The event provided high-quality content for policymakers, development leaders, geoeconomics, geographer and geopolitical thought leaders and practitioners.

Incipiently, the event participants underscored the Eurasian region's complexity, cultural diversity, and economic significance. Eurasia faces several sustainability challenges, including resource depletion, climate change, and social disparity. However, it also presents immense opportunities due to its substantial population, share of the global GNP, and abundant energy resources. Dr. Norbert emphasized the concept of Eurasia as a global power centre and the Importance of Eurasia in Global Affairs. He elaborated on the significance of Eurasia in global affairs, referring to Mackinder heartland theory and the interconnectedness of geopolitics. The region, encompassing Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa, is pivotal and influences major economic regions like Western Europe and East Asia. He stressed that this geographical centrality positions Eurasia as a key player in shaping global power dynamics.

Dr. Norbert introduced the concept of sustainability, connectivity, and complexity in the Eurasian context. This concept underscores the need to balance economic development with sustainability and recognizes the intricate interconnections between various factors such as geography, economics, and geopolitics. Moreover, the historical examples of cooperation and conflict within the Eurasian region and its implications for the future also discussed. By studying past events, policymakers and thought leaders can gain insights into potential geopolitical and economic trends shaping the next decade in Eurasia. He added that understanding these trends can pave the way for stronger global communities, increased economic opportunities, and a sustainable future.

The interview took in hand the role of geography in comprehending the complexities of the global economic future. Navigating and interpreting maps is crucial for gaining insights into the interplay of geopolitics, economics, and sustainability. Moreover, the discussion delve into the importance of geography and maps in understanding the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. By examining different perspectives and dynamic maps Dr. Norbert unravelled the multifaceted nature of our interconnected world.



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Dr. Norbert pointed out that geography shapes the destiny of nations and individuals alike. Just as sailors rely on maps and navigational tools to traverse the seas, understanding the geographical landscape enables us to navigate through the currents of global affairs. Recognizing geography's influence makes it possible to anticipate the economic, political, and social implications of various regions and their interactions. Further, maps serve as a visual language that transcends borders and cultures. They provide a comprehensive view of the world, allowing us to analyse patterns, trends, and relationships between different regions. Whether examining road maps or world maps from different perspectives, maps aid in comprehending the diverse dynamics of our globalized society.

However, 21st Century maps are different from the earlier maps because, as the world evolves, so do the maps that represent it. Traditional maps centred on Europe offering a Eurocentric perspective, while alternative viewpoints from Asia or China present distinct worldviews. The emergence of new maps that showcase alternative perspectives prompts us to question and challenge conventional narratives, fostering a more inclusive understanding of global dynamics. So, the complexity of our interconnected world demands a deeper understanding of geography. By embracing the concept of connectivity and adopting a system thinking approach, we can uncover the intricate relationships between regions, economies, and cultures. Maps serve as a tool to visualize these connections, allowing us to grasp the complexity of our world. Such complexity can be reduced with 'dynamic Maps for a dynamic world' as static maps are no longer sufficient to capture the dynamic nature of our modern era. Just as a movie unfolds, dynamic maps reveal the ever-changing patterns of our planet. They illustrate phenomena such as climate change, showcasing the shifting productivity of ecosystems, or the growth of cities, mirroring the biological process of coral reefs. Embracing dynamic maps empowers us to recognize and adapt to the evolving global landscape.

The participants then shed light on their 'New World Order perspectives. The age of global cities is a pivotal period in articulating the new world order. One can gain insights into this era's interconnectedness and transformative power by examining specific regions, nations, states, and cities. We can delve deeper into the dynamics shaping the global economic future by utilizing maps and concepts such as connectivity, complexity, and sustainability highlighting the significance of the age of global cities and its impact on various geopolitical entities by citing different examples.



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Initially Dr. Norbert presented Dubai as a Global Hub of Connectivity, Opportunity, and Sustainability. Dubai is an emblematic example of a city that epitomizes the age of global cities. Positioned strategically in the Middle East, Dubai is a global connector, linking diverse regions and facilitating mobility. Its geographic location and connectivity infrastructure enable it to serve as a central hub for international trade, travel, and investment. Furthermore, Dubai demonstrates a commitment to sustainability, with ambitious initiatives aimed at fostering a green and sustainable future.

The connectivity maps feature the fusion and networks that shape the global landscape. By examining knowledge collaboration, such as scientific articles, we witness the growing interconnectedness of various regions. The map showcases the increasing importance of Asia, the MENA region, the Indian subcontinent, and the Far East. This heightened connectivity drives economic growth, innovation, and collaboration among global cities. Moreover, the intricate web of air travel connectivity among different global cities signifies the interdependence and complexity of the age of global cities. Mapping the connections between major airline's travel route and urban centres reveals the arteries through which people, goods, and ideas flow. This network emphasizes the significance of global cities as key nodes in the global economic system.



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Geopolitical Networks and Connectivity boosts geo fusion. Geofusion represents the convergence of geopolitical networks and connectivity. It emphasizes the interplay between political and economic dynamics within and between global cities. This map showcases the extensive infrastructure that facilitates global connectivity, such as internet cables, pipelines, train lines, and highways. The COVID-19 pandemic also demonstrates the impact of connectivity on the rapid spread of viruses, underscoring the need for effective global cooperation and governance. By examining the interconnections between scientific disciplines, it reveals the intricate web of knowledge creation and collaboration, complexity map illustrates the multifaceted nature of the global economic future, Dr. Norbert added. The emergence of new technologies and interdisciplinary research further intensifies the complexity of our interconnected world. Additionally, analysing the map of Twitter connections highlights the growing cooperation and collaboration across nations and cities, Dr. Norbert said.



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Learning from Global City Dubai:

Analysing the characteristics and strategies of Dubai as a global hub, Dr. Nobert presented the lessons that Hungary can learn and apply to foster its growth and development. He highlights six important aspects, including vision, connectivity, innovation, efficient governance, experience-based attractions, and a focus on the future perspective.

Dubai's Vision:

Long-Term Strategy and Quality of Life: Dubai's success as a global city stems from its visionary approach and long-term strategy. Hungary can benefit by adopting a clear vision that outlines its goals for the future. Prioritizing quality of life, environmental sustainability, and infrastructure development are crucial elements that can shape Hungary's path towards success.

Connectivity: Openness and Strategic Positioning, Dubai's connectivity and status as a global connector between the East and the West provide important lessons for Hungary. Enhancing transportation infrastructure, such as airports and efficient transport networks, can position Hungary as a key transit hub and attract investment and trade. Maximizing connectivity with other global cities can boost Hungary's economic growth.

Innovation and Urban Development: Dubai's focus on innovation and urban development serves as inspiration for Hungary. Hungary can enhance its competitiveness and attract talent, investments, and high-value industries by emphasizing the importance of architectural design, urban planning, and creating a conducive environment for businesses and residents.

Efficient Governance and Clear Policies: Efficient governance is key to Dubai's success. Hungary can learn from Dubai's approach to clear and effective government policies that promote economic growth and attract investment. Streamlining administrative processes and providing transparent and supportive regulations can create a conducive environment for businesses to thrive.

Experience-Based Attractions: Dubai's success in developing tourist and leisure attractions is noteworthy. With its rich cultural heritage and natural resources, Hungary can leverage these assets to create unique experience-based attractions. Focusing on family-oriented venues, quality tourism services, and cultural offerings can enhance Hungary's appeal as a destination.

Future Perspective: Talent, Knowledge, Technology, and Capital. Dubai's ability to embrace the future and turn the impossible into possibilities provides valuable insights for Hungary. Emphasizing long-term strategies and investing in talent development, knowledge creation, technological advancements, and capital formation can drive Hungary's economic growth and position it as a regional hub for innovation and creative industries.



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The Role of Asia in the Global Economy and Geopolitics

Asia is the largest continent, covering over 55 million square kilometres, and home to over 5 billion people. Its vast size and population make it a critical player in the global economy. Dr. Nobert and Dr. Renny Castaneda focused on the role of Asia in the global economy and geopolitics within the context of the geofusion experience. The discussion highlights the significant contributions of Asia to the world's economy, the growing importance of the region, and the emergence of Asia as a technological powerhouse. They emphasized the interconnectedness of the Asian continent and its impact on global economic growth.

Asian countries, led by China, have experienced significant GDP growth over the past two decades. China's economic rise has propelled it to become the world's largest economy, surpassing the United States. Other Asian countries, such as India and Indonesia, have also witnessed rapid economic expansion. Moreover, Asia's strategic geographic location has made it a hub for trade and connectivity. It is home to vital sea routes that connect the eastern and western parts of Asia and facilitate global trade. The region's connectivity plays a crucial role in shaping the global supply chain and fostering economic integration.

Dr. Nobert explained that Asia has emerged as a leader in technological advancements, driving innovation across various sectors. The region witnessed the rise of numerous unicorn companies in industries such as big data, educational technology, fintech, health, QR, real estate, and social media. As such, Asian countries focus on technological progress has contributed to its competitiveness in the global economy. Countries in the region have embraced emerging technologies, fostering a favourable environment for startups, research and development, and technological advancements. Europe's relative lag technological progress compared to Asia has posed challenges in terms of competition. Europe's inability to keep pace with Asia's technological growth has led to a gap in innovation and competitiveness.



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Asia's economic rise has resulted in shifting power dynamics in global geopolitics. The region's growing economic influence has elevated its political and diplomatic standing globally, impacting international relations and cooperation. Asia's economic and technological prowess has enabled it to exert increasing influence globally. Asian countries are more active in shaping global policies, participating in international organizations, and influencing regional dynamics. The rise of Asia has spurred both cooperation and competition among nations. Countries are collaborating on various fronts, such as regional trade agreements and infrastructure development initiatives, while competing for resources, markets, and geopolitical influence, Dr. Nobert elaborated.



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Challenges, Opportunities, and Success Factors for Nations in the 21st Century

Challenges:

Dr. Nobert summoned the challenges, opportunities, and success factors for nations in the 21st century.

Challenges:

1. **Sustainability:** Nations face the challenge of adopting sustainable practices to mitigate environmental impact, promote resource efficiency, and address climate change. Balancing economic growth with environmental conservation is crucial for long-term sustainability.
2. **Connectivity:** Enhancing connectivity within and between nations poses challenges in developing robust transportation infrastructure, ensuring seamless communication networks, and bridging the digital divide. Fostering inclusive connectivity is essential for economic development and social integration.
3. **Complexity:** Managing the increasing complexity of global systems, including economic interdependencies, technological advancements, and social dynamics, presents challenges for nations. Navigating complex systems requires adaptive policies, interdisciplinary collaboration, and leveraging diversity and innovation.

Opportunities:

1. **Knowledge and Talent:** Nations can capitalize on acquiring and cultivating knowledge and talent. Investing in education, research institutions, and skills development fosters innovation and competitiveness, driving economic growth and attracting global talent.
2. **Technological Advancements:** Embracing emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and renewable energy, provides opportunities for nations to leapfrog in various sectors. Harnessing technology can enhance productivity, efficiency, and sustainability.
3. **Global Connectivity:** The world's increasing interconnectedness offers opportunities for nations to participate in global trade, exchange knowledge, and collaborate on a broader scale. Access to global markets and integration into regional and global supply chains can stimulate economic growth and diversification.



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Success Factors:

1. **Vision and Long-Term Strategy:** Nations need a clear vision and long-term strategy that aligns economic development with sustainable practices. Setting ambitious goals and implementing coherent policies can drive progress and resilience.
2. **Innovation and Adaptability:** Emphasizing innovation, research and development, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances are crucial success factors. Nurturing a culture of innovation and fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem can drive economic transformation.
3. **Infrastructure Development:** Building robust transportation, communication, and digital infrastructure enables efficient connectivity and enhances a nation's competitiveness. Investing in high-quality physical and digital infrastructure supports economic growth and attracts investment.
4. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Collaboration among government, academia, industry, and civil society is vital for addressing complex challenges. Partnerships facilitate knowledge sharing, resource pooling, and collective action to tackle common goals.
5. **Sustainable Practices:** Incorporating sustainable practices into policies, regulations, and business models promotes environmental stewardship, resource efficiency, and resilience. Transitioning to a green economy and adopting sustainable technologies contribute to long-term success.



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Lessons from Historical Examples of Cooperation and Conflict

The discussion further explores the lessons that can be drawn from historical examples of cooperation and conflict to inform the strategic vision for the future of Eurasia. The discussion also emphasizes the importance of understanding the geographical, societal, economic, and connectivity factors in shaping the region. By analysing past experiences and considering the complex interplay of these factors, policymakers and stakeholders can better navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Historical examples highlight the significance of physical geography, including territorial boundaries, climate, and access to resources. Recognizing the geographical context of the region is crucial for understanding the opportunities and constraints it presents. Further, lessons can be drawn from historical cooperation and conflict that shed light on societal dynamics, demographic trends, educational systems, and cultural exchanges. These factors shape the region's social fabric and influence long-term development and cooperation.

Economic considerations, such as GDP, trade relationships, and military capabilities, are pivotal in shaping cooperation and conflict. Analysing historical economic dynamics can provide insights into growth drivers, regional integration, and economic interdependence. Historical examples demonstrate the importance of connectivity and infrastructure development in fostering cooperation and facilitating trade. Land and sea routes have historically served as critical links between regions, and investments in connectivity can strengthen regional integration and cooperation. For instance, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) serves as a contemporary example of connectivity-driven cooperation. Understanding the historical roots of trade routes, such as the Silk Road, can inform the strategic vision for the BRI's future development and its potential to enhance connectivity, economic growth, and cultural exchange.



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Geopolitical factors, including transport routes, energy lines, and key geographic regions, can shape cooperation and conflict, Dr. Nobert explained . Analyzing historical examples of geopolitical dynamics can inform the strategic vision for leveraging key geographic locations and fostering collaboration. Further, emphasizing sustainability and technological advancements in the strategic vision for Eurasia can promote long-term development, innovation, and environmental preservation. Learning from past experiences can help identify opportunities to integrate sustainable practices and leverage technological advancements for the region's future growth.

CONCLUSION

The discussion with Dr. Norbert shed important light on the intricate nature of the Eurasian continent and its considerable contribution to world geopolitics and the economy. He emphasised the necessity for a balanced economic development strategy that considers sustainability, interconnectedness, and complexity. In order to create a sustainable future for all, the interview aims to promote cooperation and creative ideas among policymakers, economists, and thought leaders. The conversation emphasized the significance of geography and maps in comprehending the future of the world economy and the transformative period of global cities. The lessons learned from international cities like Dubai and how it can inspire development in Hungary & Eastern Europe were illuminated during the interview. The significance of Asia for trade, connectivity, and innovation was highlighted, along with the necessity of leveraging megatrends and adapting to them.



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CSGEF Research Unit
research@csgef.org

About The Interviewee

Dr. Norbert Csizmadia is A geographer, TEDx speaker, and keynote lecturer. Norbert's fields of study include economic strategy, geostrategy, geoeconomics, and geopolitics. Dr. Norbert was/is:

- Former State Secretary in charge of planning coordination for the Hungarian Ministry for National Economy.
- Former Executive Director of the Central Bank of Hungary.
- President of the Board of Trustees of Pallas Athene Domus Meriti Foundation (Innovation and Geopolitics).
- President of the Board of Trustees of John von Neumann University Foundation.
- President of the International Advisory Board of BC4LS (Budapest Center for Long-Term Sustainability).
- Member of the International Advisory Board of the Fudan Institute of Belt and Road & Global Governance, Shanghai – China.



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About US

Established in Dubai, UAE, in 2021, the Center for the Study of Global Economic Future (CSGEF) is a multidisciplinary policy research organization scrutinizing the economic, geoeconomics, socio-economic, and systemic forces that bear upon the future of the economic system worldwide. The aim is to offer an extraordinary methodical perspective on the socio-economic and systemic forces that sustain the global economy's future.

For further details, email us: info@csgef.org or Call us at +971(04) 330 6898



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