

# Academic WorldQuest

Official Study Guide | 2023-2024



WORLD  
AFFAIRS  
COUNCILS of  
AMERICA

# Table of Contents

- 3** Our Sponsors
- 4** Who We Are
- 6** About Academic WorldQuest
- 10** Academic WorldQuest Study Guide
- 11** NATO: Alliance and Collective Defense in a Changing World
- 13** Population Shift in Africa
- 15** The Global South
- 17** Sports and Diplomacy
- 19** Country in Focus: South Korea
- 21** Promoting a Green Europe
- 23** Women's Contributions to Track II Diplomacy
- 25** Navigating AI: The Global Workforce
- 27** Great Decisions
- 29** Current Events



# Thank you to our Sponsors



**The Carlos and Malú Alvarez Academic WorldQuest National Competition** is made possible by the generosity of **Mr. and Mrs. Alvarez** of San Antonio, Texas.



The World Affairs Councils of America is an **independent, nonpartisan** organization dedicated to **engaging the public** and leading global voices to **better understand the world**, America's international role, and the policy choices that impact our daily lives and our future.



# Who We Are

Established in 1986 as a nonprofit membership organization in Washington, DC, the World Affairs Councils of America (WACA) carries out its mission by:

- **Supporting 90 World Affairs Councils across the United States** and promoting their programs and educational initiatives for diverse, multi-generational audiences. We bring the world to classrooms, C-Suites, and conferences in the nation's capital and town-hall-style forums in your community
- **Developing Councils' convening power nationwide** by provided face-to-face connections and dialogue with global leaders, business executives, policy experts, social innovators, and distinguished opinion makers
- **Exploring new ideas in dozens of dynamic Council events each week** that shape public discourse on a range of critical issues
- **Challenging the next generation** to develop leadership skills and global acumen so that our communities can better compete, collaborate, and make informed decisions
- **Partnering with organizations** that seek to reach out to “grassroots” and “grasstops” citizens, disseminate research, mutually expand networks, and transform how people, enterprises, and governments think
- **Expand informed, respectful public discourse** about international relations and current events

The World Affairs Councils of America takes no institutional positions on matters of policy. Any opinions expressed in the resources are the views of the authors.



# Academic WorldQuest

## Introduction

One of the greatest challenges facing our nation is preparing the next generation for the globally interconnected world of the 21st century. America's ability to face the economic and security challenges and seize new opportunities depends on an **informed citizenry and a well-educated workforce**.

This year, we host the 22nd annual Academic WorldQuest (AWQ), the flagship education program of the World Affairs Councils of America. **Academic WorldQuest is a unique, competitive educational program** that exposes youth to the world outside our borders and prepares them for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Academic WorldQuest is a team game testing high school students' knowledge of international affairs. In the game, four-person teams compete by answering questions divided into ten unique and engaging thematic categories. The winner is the team with the most correct answers.

## Structure of the Program

During the academic year preceding the 2023 National Academic WorldQuest National Competition, **over 4,000 students participated in local AWQ Competitions** hosted by some 50 World Affairs Councils across the U.S.

This information packet includes the AWQ study guide, which provides detailed resources on each of 10 question categories to help students and teachers to prepare for the competition (with the exception of the Current Events category). Questions for the competition are drawn from the resources in the AWQ study guide.

**One winning team is invited to represent their high school, city, and local World Affairs Council at The Carlos and Malú Alvarez Academic WorldQuest National Competition, held in the spring each year.**

## Common Core Standards

Academic WorldQuest contributes to the national Common Core State Standards initiative by fostering reading comprehension skills for informational text.

# Academic WorldQuest

## AWQ 2023-2024 Categories

The categories for this year's Academic WorldQuest National Competition reflect several of the most critical global and U.S. foreign policy issues.

They have been selected by the World Affairs Councils of America National Office with input from member World Affairs Councils across the country.

- **The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Alliance and Collective Defense in a Changing World**
- **Demographic Dividends - Population Shift in Africa**
- **The Global South**
- **Sports and Diplomacy**
- **Country in Focus: South Korea**
- **Promoting a Green Europe**
- **Women's Contributions to Track II Diplomacy**
- **Navigating AI: The Global Workforce**
- **Great Decisions**
- **Current Events**

## Study Guide Overview

The official Academic WorldQuest study guide has been prepared by the World Affairs Councils of America. Questions for all of the above categories, with the exception of Great Decisions and Current Events, are drawn from the resources included in the AWQ study guide.

## Event Details

The Carlos and Malú Alvarez 2024 Academic WorldQuest National Competition honors the tremendous dedication and philanthropic support of WACA Board Member Carlos Alvarez and his wife Malú to our flagship program and the Academic WorldQuest Endowment Fund. (For information on making a gift to the AWQ Fund, please visit WACA's website.)

**The National Competition is attended by 200-250 of the nation's most promising high school students each year, along with their parents, teachers, and chaperones. The 4-hour AWQ competition is a unique chance for students to explore the nation's capital and the educational, cultural, and political opportunities it provides.**

# **AWQ Rules and Regulations**

## **Qualifying**

All teams that compete in The Carlos and Malú Alvarez 2024 Academic WorldQuest National Competition must win a local AWQ competition sponsored by a member Council of the World Affairs Councils of America.

Teams may compete in only one (1) local competition in order to qualify to compete in the National Competition. A team consists of four (4) primary teammates who are currently high school students (freshman–senior year). No more than four players per team will be able to compete in the National Competition. Teams of fewer than four students are allowed to compete, but this is strongly discouraged.

## **How to Play**

There are 10 rounds in the competition, each round having 10 questions. Teams will have 45 seconds at the local competition and 45-30 seconds at the National Competition to answer each question. NOTE: For the AWQ National Competition, all of the categories are multiple choice. For Local AWQ Competitions organized by Councils, you may use the multiple-choice format for the Current Events category.

## **Scoring**

One (1) point is awarded for each correct answer. No penalty for incorrect answers or no answer. The team with the most correct answers out of all 100 questions is declared AWQ Champion. If, at the conclusion of the competition, there is a tie for 1st through 3rd place, tiebreaker rounds will be played.

# AWQ Rules and Regulations

## Team Regulations

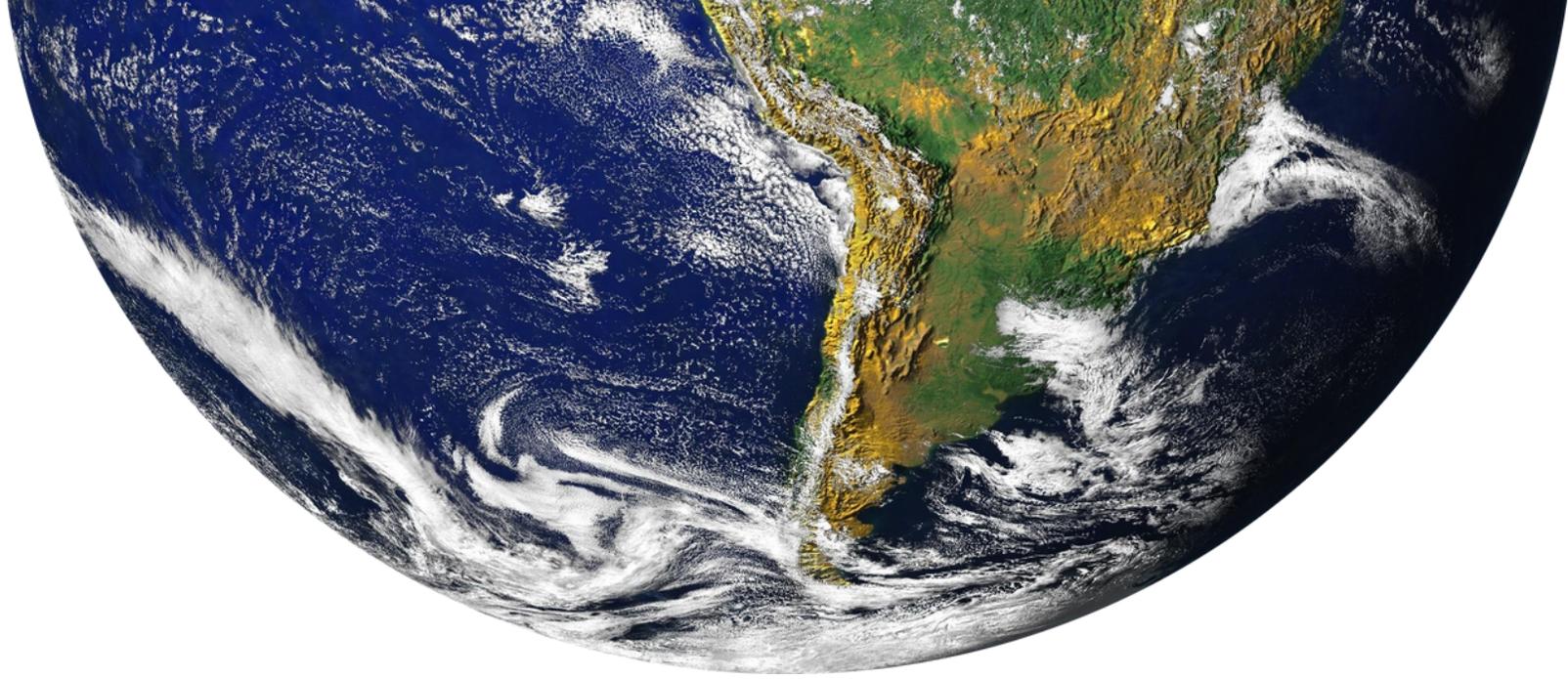
A team consists of four (4) players. Player substitutions are not allowed.

Teams are **not allowed to consult with the audience, wireless devices, cell phones, other teams, books, or other written materials at any point during the competition.** Any team found by World Affairs Councils of America judges, staff, or volunteers to be violating this rule will be automatically disqualified and ejected from the Competition.

If a team believes another team is cheating, a player may alert a World Affairs Councils of America representative. However, if the other team is not found to be in violation of any rules, the accusing team will forfeit two (2) points.

Exposing students to world issues and other cultures **empowers and equips** them to engage in thoughtful discourse to address and potentially help **solve global problems.** Students develop a sense of understanding that they can **make meaningful and positive contributions to the world around them.**

**- John Scott**



# Academic WorldQuest

## 2023-2024 Study Guide

**All questions for this year’s Carlos and Malu Alvarez Academic WorldQuest Competition will be drawn from the sources in this study guide.**

The overall aim of the AWQ study guide is to help you learn about important international topics of the day and to help prepare you for your future careers. When preparing for the AWQ competitions, use your critical thinking skills to synthesize and understand the material. Competition questions are typically not based on memorization but rather require broader synthesis of the readings.

The AWQ study guide is best viewed in a current version of Adobe Reader. If you are having trouble clicking any of the included links, please copy and paste them into your browser.



TOPIC 1

# **The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Alliance and Collective Defense in a Changing World**

# **The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Alliance and Collective Defense in a Changing World**

In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded with the signing of the Washington Treaty. This security alliance consists of 30 member countries spanning North America to Europe, and its primary mission is to ensure the protection of its members' freedom and security through political and military means. As NATO approaches its momentous 75th anniversary, explore its foundational principles, objectives, and its pivotal role in fostering collective defense and security cooperation among nations in North America and Europe. This topic will also delve into the evolving challenges and opportunities confronting NATO in the ever-changing global landscape of the 21st century, providing you with a comprehensive perspective on this enduring alliance's past, present, and future.

## **Sources**

- **“What’s NATO All About?” Stuff You Should Know**
- **“How Secretary Albright Advocated to Expand NATO” National Museum of American Diplomacy**
- **“NATO and the Invasion, One Year On” Center for Strategic and International Studies**
- **“NATO’s Sub-strategic Role in the Middle East and North Africa” German Marshall Fund**
- **“What Happened at NATO's Vilnius Summit?” Center for Strategic and International Studies**
- **“Future of NATO” by Sarwar Kashmeri for Great Decisions (FPA)**

## TOPIC 2

# Demographic Dividends - Population Shift in Africa



# Demographic Dividends - Population Shift in Africa

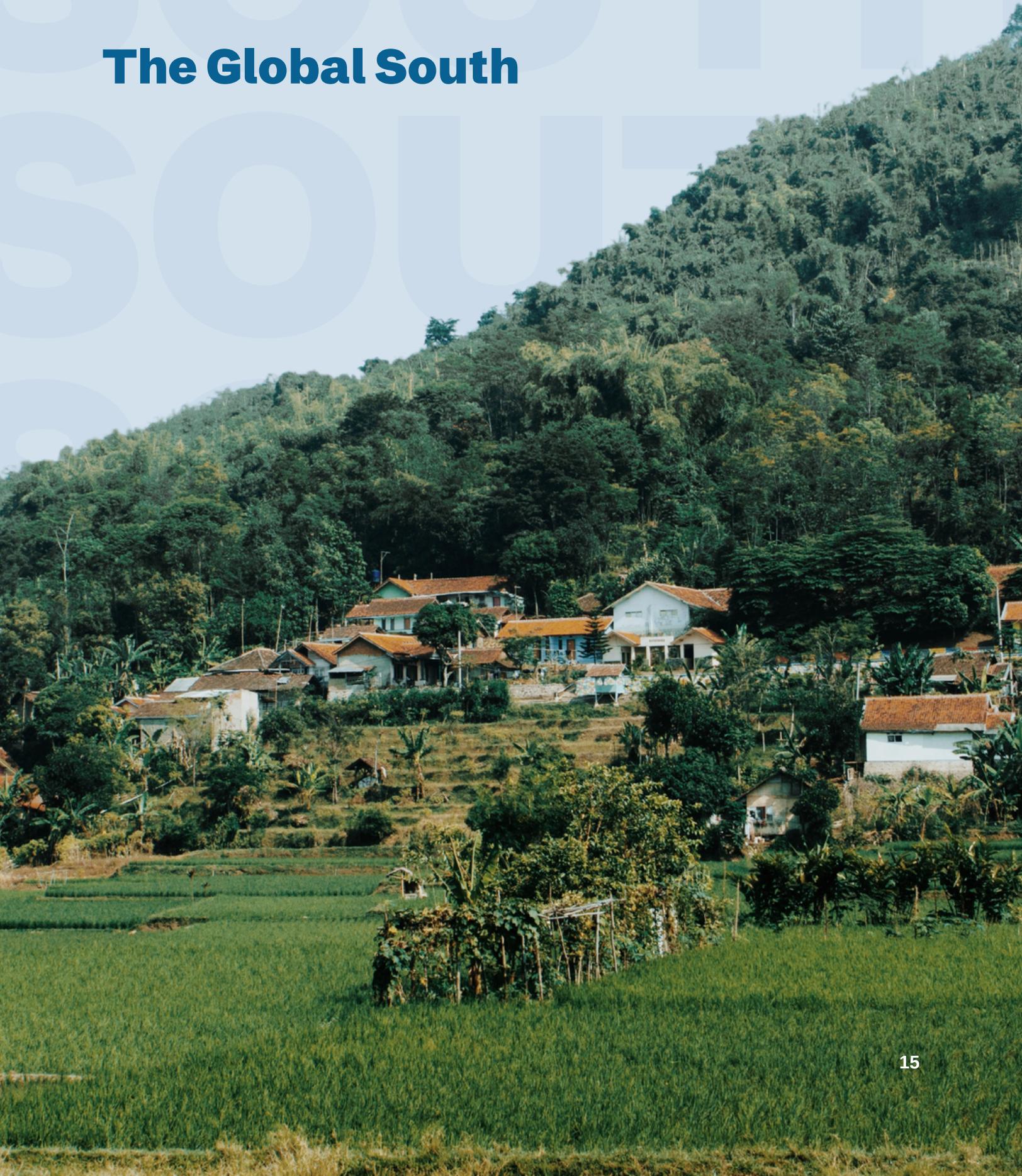
Africa is currently undergoing a significant demographic shift, characterized by a rapidly growing and predominantly young population, with 70% of sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 30. This demographic transition holds the promise of demographic dividends, where a large working-age population can fuel economic growth and innovation. However, alongside this potential, Africa faces various challenges, including the necessity for job creation, improved education and healthcare systems, and infrastructure development. Urbanization rates are rising as cities expand, requiring effective urban planning. Realizing these demographic dividends hinges on investments in education, healthcare, and gender equality, as well as the implementation of government policies that strategically address the unique challenges and opportunities posed by this population shift. This topic will explore how Africa's demographic transformation presents a dual opportunity and challenge, with the potential for significant economic advancement contingent upon strategic planning and proactive development efforts.

## Sources

- **“Africa’s Youthful Population: Risk or Opportunity”** Population Reference Bureau
- **“Generation 2030 | Africa 2.0”** UNICEF | Chapter 2, pg. 30-41
- **“Demographic Change in North Africa: A Case Study by Country”** Center for Strategic and International Studies | Pg. 1-5, 21-25
- **“How Will Africa’s Population Boom Change the World?”** Council on Foreign Relations
- **“What Tanzania tells us about Africa’s population explosion as the world hits 8bn people”** *The Guardian*
- **“How can African countries address climate change problems and optimise demographic dividends for socioeconomic development?”** The Journal of Population and Sustainability
- **“Africa 2050: Demographic Truth and Consequences”** Hoover Institution

TOPIC 3

# The Global South



# The Global South

The term "Global South" encompasses less economically developed regions primarily found in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Oceania. It serves as a lens to underscore the profound disparities in wealth, influence, and progress when compared to the more affluent and developed Global North, consisting of North America, Europe, and select parts of East Asia. This division can be traced back to historical factors such as colonization and the processes of globalization. Within the Global South, numerous challenges persist, including poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and environmental concerns. Nonetheless, it is essential to recognize the considerable cultural, economic, and political potential inherent in these regions. As our world continues to grow more interconnected, this topic will delve into the ever evolving role of the Global South in international affairs, politics, and development.

## Sources

- **“Everyone's talking about the Global South. But what is it?”** *Associated Press*
- **“Urbanization in the Global South”** Oxford - African Centre for Cities
- **“The Realities of Current Urbanization in the Global South”** World Resources Institute
- **“The race for the Global South”** International Political Sociology Journal
- **“China-Global South Relations”** Atlantic Council
- **“BRICS: Emerging counterweight in a multipolar world?”** *Deutsche Welle News*
- **“A [new] world order: What, why, and how?”** Stimson Center

TOPIC 4

# Sports and Diplomacy



# Sports and Diplomacy

Sports have played a pivotal role in diplomacy, fostering international relations and goodwill for many decades. While the term "sports diplomacy" is relatively new, it describes an ancient practice dating back to early civilizations, where competitions were used to resolve conflicts and forge alliances. The significance of sports diplomacy resurged during the Cold War when both the United States and the Soviet Union leveraged it to showcase their ideologies and project soft power globally. Notable events like the "Ping Pong Diplomacy" between the United States and China in the 1970s and the utilization of sports to promote peace in conflict zones highlight the enduring role of sports in diplomatic efforts. This topic will explore how sports continue to act as a bridge between nations, fostering cultural exchange, nurturing relationships, and promoting diplomacy on a global scale.

## Sources

- **"What is Sports Diplomacy?"** TeachMideast
- **"The domestic dimension of sports diplomacy"** Review of Nationalities
- **"The Mixed Record of Sports Diplomacy"** Council on Foreign Relations
- **"Diplomacy After Hours: The Power of Olympians, Paralympians, and Sports Diplomacy"** National Museum of American Diplomacy | 0:00-33:20
- **"In Sport, Politicians Can Go Much Further Than In The World Of Politics: An interview about Sport Diplomacy"** Warsaw Institute
- **"How rugby, ping-pong and other sports have mended political rifts"** CNN
- **"Sports and Soft Power: Qatar Diplomacy in light of Football World Cup"** Nickerled & Dimed



TOPIC 5

## Country in Focus: South Korea

## Country in Focus: South Korea

South Korea, officially known as the Republic of Korea, is a vibrant and rapidly evolving nation located on the Korean Peninsula in East Asia. With a rich history spanning millennia, South Korea has transformed itself into a global economic powerhouse and a hub of pop culture. In recent decades, South Korea has made a global impact through its cultural exports. The "Korean Wave," or Hallyu, represents the global popularity of South Korean music (K-pop), television dramas, films, fashion, and cuisine. K-pop groups like BTS, Blackpink, and EXO have achieved international stardom, captivating fans worldwide. This surge in popularity has not only brought South Korean culture to the forefront but has also contributed significantly to the nation's soft power and global influence. South Korea is a nation characterized by its remarkable transformation, strong international partnerships, and its remarkable ascent in the world of pop culture. With a blend of tradition and modernity, it continues to captivate the world's attention as a dynamic and influential player on the global stage. This topic will focus on an overview of the state; an introduction to U.S.-South Korea relations; and the rise of South Korea in pop culture.

## Sources

- **“South Korea”** Britannica | Introduction, Geography, People, Culture
- **“Throughline: How Korean culture went global”** National Public Radio
- **“The Growth of South Korean Soft Power and Its Geopolitical Implications”** U.S. Department of Defense
- **“South Korea Beyond Northeast Asia: How Seoul Is Deepening Ties With India and ASEAN”** Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- **“South Korean Policy in the Indo-Pacific Era”** Brookings
- **“Can South Korea Trust the United States”** George Washington University | Pg. 109-119

TOPIC 6

# Promoting a Green Europe



# Promoting a Green Europe

The issue of climate change first gained international recognition in June 1972 during the UN Scientific Conference held in Stockholm, Sweden, also referred to as the First Earth Summit. Over the subsequent 25 years, global concern for the environment and the planet's climate slowly garnered increased attention and led to action. In December 1997, a significant milestone was achieved with the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, marking a pivotal moment in addressing climate change. This protocol aimed to curtail overall emissions from industrialized nations. Since then Europe has taken on a central role in the global endeavor to combat climate change. With flagship initiatives such as the European Green Deal launched by the European Union, active participation in international agreements like the Paris Agreement, and proactive efforts to promote green finance and innovation, Europe has emphasized the importance of creating a greener and more sustainable future. This topic explores Europe's comprehensive efforts to combat climate change and promote a more environmentally conscious Europe.

## Sources

- **“The EU Green Deal - a roadmap to sustainable economies”**  
Switch2Green
- **“The European Green Deal: How the 27 EU countries are preparing for 2050”** Enel
- **“Making the European Green Deal Work for People: The Role of Human Development in the Green Transition”** World Bank | Pg. 19-29, 93-101
- **“A breakdown of EU countries’ post-pandemic green spending plans”**  
Bruegel
- **“How Putin made Europe go green faster”** *Deutsche Welle*
- **“Why Europe Is Looking to Nuclear Power to Fuel a Green Future”**  
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace



TOPIC 7

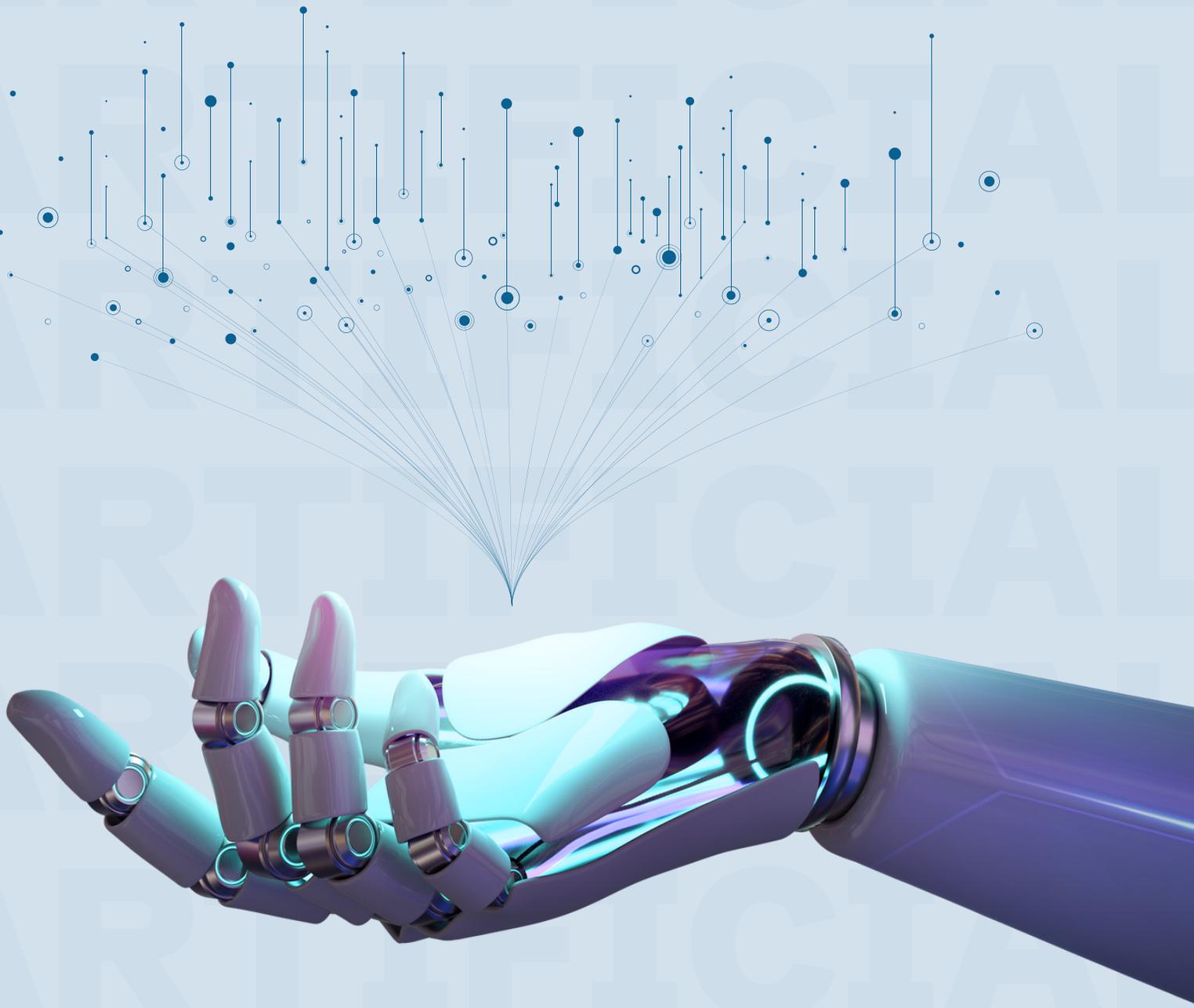
## **Women's Contributions to Track II Diplomacy**

# Women's Contributions to Track II Diplomacy

Diplomacy encompasses a myriad of forms, each serving a distinct purpose in international relations. Scholars have classified these forms into different "tracks." Track I diplomacy centers around official government-to-government negotiations and interactions, while Track II diplomacy operates on unofficial channels, engaging non-state actors like civil society groups, academics, and individuals to address complex global issues. Within the sphere of Track II diplomacy, women have emerged as integral contributors. Their involvement injects a rich tapestry of diverse perspectives and innovative problem-solving approaches into diplomatic discourse, with a resolute focus on human rights, gender equality, and social justice. As women actively participate in these unofficial dialogues, they promote inclusivity, counteract historical gender imbalances in diplomatic settings, and amplify a broader spectrum of voices. This topic will spotlight the profound influence of women's contributions in Track II diplomacy, underscoring how their diverse perspectives and collaborative endeavors enrich the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts and contribute to the advancement of a more harmonious global landscape.

## Sources

- **“The gender turn in diplomacy: a new research agenda”** International Feminist Journal of Politics
- **“Reframing Women’s Roles in Peace Processes: Beyond the Negotiating Table”** Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security
- **“Advancing Women’s Participation in Track II Peace Processes: Good and emerging practices”** Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security
- **“Building Peace in the Shadow of War: Women-to-Women Diplomacy as Alternative Peacebuilding Practice in Myanmar”** Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding
- **“Women’s informal peace efforts: Grassroots activism in South Sudan”** Chr. Michelsen Institute
- **“Tajikistan’s Peace Process: The Role of Track 2 Diplomacy and Lessons for Afghanistan”** United States Institute of Peace “Pg. 9-13, 20-28
- **“Not a noisy gun’: The women peacebuilders of Liberia”** Al Jazeera



TOPIC 8

# Navigating AI: The Global Workforce

# Navigating AI: The Global Workforce

In the rapidly evolving landscape of artificial intelligence (AI), one of the most critical challenges we face is the transformation of the global workforce. As AI technologies continue to advance and reshape industries worldwide, questions about employment, skills, and the broader socio-economic impact become increasingly pertinent. This topic delves into the multifaceted dimensions of how AI is impacting jobs, industries, and the workforce on a global scale. It seeks to shed light on the opportunities and challenges posed by AI, the need for reskilling and upskilling, and the strategies required to ensure a future where humans and AI can coexist and thrive.

## Sources

- **“Generative AI and jobs: A global analysis of potential effects on job quantity and quality”** International Labour Organization | Pg. 28-42
- **“The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Future of Workforces in the European Union and the United States of America”** White House | Pg. 4-23
- **“Here's how artificial intelligence is changing the job market”** CNN
- **“Workforce ecosystems and AI”** Brookings
- **“The three challenges of AI regulation”** Brookings
- **““Why would we employ people?’ Experts on five ways AI will change work”** *The Guardian*

TOPIC 9

## Great Decisions



## Topic 9: Great Decisions

Great Decisions is an annual program that focuses on critical international issues provided by the Foreign Policy Association, a member of the World Affairs Councils of America.

**NOTE:** In the 2023-2024 AWQ Competition, WACA has changed the way we present Great Decisions as a topic. In previous years, we used all 8 topics in the AWQ Competition and recommended the same for local AWQ Competitions. This year, we will focus on two topics from Great Decisions 2024. These topics will be used for both the local and national competition. These selected articles are not yet available by FPA, once available they will be uploaded to the links below.

### Sources

#### **“Mideast Realignment“ by Marc Lynch**

- **The United States and Middle East are at a crossroads. In spite of a reduced presence in the Middle East, the U.S. still has significant national interests there and the area is a key arena for global power politics. Can the U.S. continue to defend its interests in the Middle East and globally with a lower level of military and political involvement, or should it recommit to a leading role in the region?**

#### **“High Seas Treaty” by FPA editors**

- **Areas of the seas beyond national jurisdiction comprise the high seas, which are facing a degradation of ecosystems due to climate change and the increase in human activities, such as shipping, overfishing, pollution, and deep-sea mining. The recently negotiated High Seas Treaty, also known as the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty, will attempt to address these issues. How difficult will it be to convince nations to participate?**



## **Topic 10: Current Events**

For the Current Events category questions are composed from the Monday and Thursday editions of Daily Chatter.

Daily Chatter is free for all students and faculty with a valid school email. To subscribe to Daily Chatter, please follow this link here:

<https://www.dailychatter.com/subscription/> or at  
<https://www.dailychatter.com/highschools/>

### **Local Competition**

Current events sources for the National Competition will be composed of only Daily Chatter Monday and Thursday Editions between September 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023. Earlier editions of Daily Chatter may be found at <https://www.dailychatter.com/archive/>.

### **National Competition**

Current events sources for the National Competition will be composed of only Daily Chatter Monday and Thursday Editions between January 1, 2024 and March 31, 2024.

# Will we see you in Washington?

**AWQ National Competition | April 19-20, 2024**

