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Social Inclusion

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Frontier Technologies For A Sustainable Future



<https://social.desa.un.org/sdn/frontier-technologies-for-a-sustainable-future>

Frontier technologies are innovative and often grow fast, with the potential to transform societies, economies and the environment. In recent years, we have seen examples of this in the form of artificial intelligence and machine learning, renewable energy technologies, energy storage technologies, electric and autonomous vehicles and drones, genetic engineering, as well as cryptocurrencies and blockchains. These frontier technologies can help eradicate hunger and epidemics, increase life expectancy, reduce carbon emissions, automate manual and repetitive tasks, create decent jobs, improve quality of life and facilitate complex decision-making processes. In other words, these technologies can make sustainable development a reality, improving people's lives, promoting prosperity and protecting the planet.

However, advances in these technologies also present ethical and moral challenges, as well as risks of unemployment, underemployment and inequality. A new report, the World Economic and Social Survey 2018: Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development reviews the advances in frontier technologies and analyses their economic, social and environmental impacts.

The Survey identifies policy measures at the national level – striking a balance among economic efficiency, equity and ethical considerations – to both maximize the potential of frontier technologies and mitigate their risks.

The Survey recognizes that no nation alone can manage the impact of frontier technologies. The United Nations is in a unique position to forge a global consensus and promote international cooperation to harness the full potential of frontier technologies for a sustainable future.