

## Part 1 – Global Risks 2015:

### Preparedness at the Regional Level Is Different

As most efforts to address global risks are undertaken at the national and regional levels, it is important to look at preparedness from a disaggregated perspective. Figure 1.7 illustrates for each world region those risks for which survey respondents indicated their region is the least prepared. Preparedness reflects a combination of exposure to a risk and the measures that have already been taken to mitigate or prepare for it.

It is striking that every region presents a wholly different set of issues for which it is least prepared. For example:

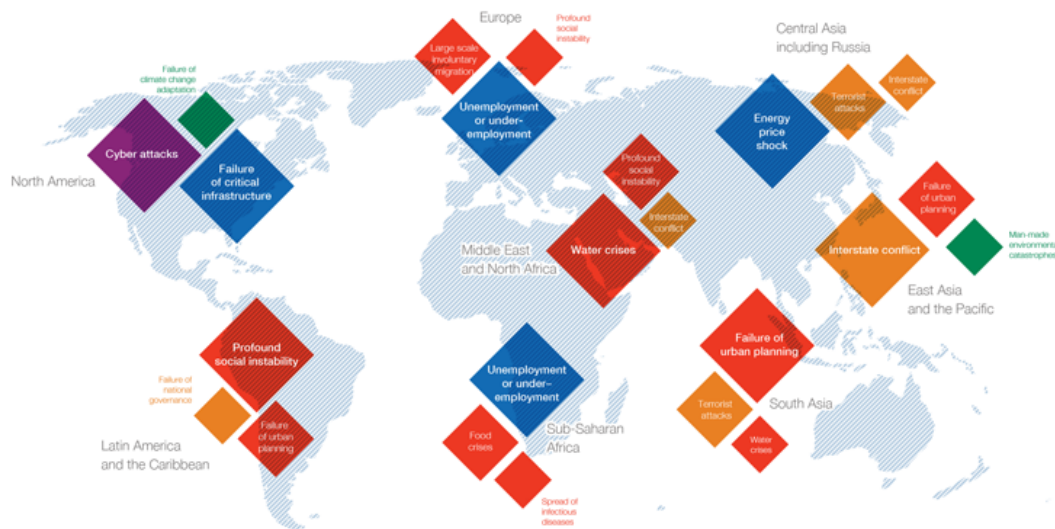
- High structural unemployment or underemployment is seen as the risk for which **Europe** is least prepared, followed by large-scale involuntary migration and profound social instability. Both unemployment and migration flows into Europe are expected to remain high on the agenda going forward and are driving factors of social instability. <sup>24</sup>
- **North America** identifies failure/shortfall of critical infrastructure, large-scale cyber attacks and failure of climate-change adaptation as the three risks for which it is least prepared. Major breakdowns of infrastructure in the wake of Superstorm Sandy and the sheer number of cyber attacks illustrate the low level of preparedness.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa** is considered least prepared for infectious diseases and unemployment. Both are of key importance given recent events and the fact that strong population growth is expected to exacerbate unemployment in the coming years, despite expected economic growth.
- Many regions, including Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the **Middle East and North Africa**, also include profound social instability among the risks they are least prepared for.
- **East Asia and the Pacific** is perceived as least prepared for interstate conflict and failure of urban planning. It is also the only region that reported being least prepared for man-made environmental catastrophes following the 2011 Fukushima incidence.
- Failure of urban planning is among the first three risks in East Asia and the Pacific, **Latin America and the Caribbean**, and **South Asia**. In such regions, urbanization is especially rapid and the failure of urban planning can lead to a wide range of catastrophic scenarios from social unrest to pandemic outbreak ([Part 2](#)).

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Figure 1.7: For Which Global Risks Is Your Region Least Prepared?



Source: Global Risks Perception Survey 2014, World Economic Forum.  
 Note: Respondents were asked to select three global risks that they believe their region is least prepared for. For legibility reasons, the names of the global risks are abbreviated. Please see Appendix A for the full name and description. Oceania is not displayed because of the low number of respondents.

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