

# [My Hopes and Expectations for the 2020s \(and a Review of the 2010s\)](#)

My favorite thing about the new decade is that it offers an opportunity to practice *long-term thinking*. I'm aware that the effect is purely *psychological*. What matters is, that it works!

So let's put the weekly, monthly, quarterly and yearly rhythms aside, and focus on decades for a change.

## **Review of the 2010s**

### **Tech is mature and mainstream**

Companies like Facebook and Twitter lost their startup status and became mature. The sentiment changed, especially for Facebook. At Google, employee tensions are rising, and Amazon kept growing super fast. Tech companies are now a huge part of the economy, and are there to stay.

### **Mobile first**

Mobile apps became a central channel how humans interact with the world. Everyone has a supercomputer in their pocket, filled with audiobooks, podcasts and of course, a credit card. Now, there's an app for everything.

### **Social media addiction**

We became addicted to social media, longing for likes and followers, and competing for attention on Instagram and Snapchat. Slowly, people are becoming aware of this. People started quitting social media, or dramatically adjusting their behavior.

### **Age of surveillance**

Edward Snowden, and the bumpy 2016 US election, reveal the downsides of the new information age. We become aware of how much data is collected and stored, and that this information can easily be stolen. Now, everyone must assume that *everything* about us is collected somewhere. The uneasiness about it is growing, yet we don't know what to do about it.

### **Aftermath of financial crisis 2007-08**

The financial crisis was top of mind when we started the decade. Many of us believed that the crisis was far from over, and that it could return anytime. While it did locally, it didn't globally. What we got instead was unprecedented money-printing and record-low interest rates. And ever increasing regulation in the financial sector.

### **Cryptocurrencies**

Bitcoin is a new technological and social breakthrough. It has its roots in the [Cypherpunk](#) movement, and also the frustration that arose from the financial crisis. It builds on open source and decentralization. The rise of Bitcoin was fueled by the [Cyprus banking crisis](#) in 2012-13 (and especially the one-time tax on deposits) and the inflation problems in South American countries. We also saw huge bubbles, speculation and scams.

### **Awareness of unsustainable living**

Slowly we are becoming aware that the way we have been living for the past 100 years is not sustainable. The [concentration of CO2](#) in the atmosphere is rising. [Air pollution](#) is killing millions of humans per year. Oceans are [filled with plastic](#). Movements like [FridaysForFuture](#) were born. We

start seeing signs of hope with the electrification of vehicles and increasing deployment of solar, but it's still early days.

### **New Work**

We started to rethink how we work. Co-working spaces, remote working, nomadic lifestyles are on the rise. Many of us are sick of the old paradigm, and are seeking something better. One example is the [FIRE movement](#), where people seek financial independence and early retirement. Blogs like [Mr. Money Mustache](#) have exploded in popularity.

### **New space race**

Companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin have demonstrated the re-usability of rockets, and kicked off what might be called the "new space race". The historic [Falcon Heavy launch](#) was one of my personal highlights.

## **Hopes and Expectations for the 2020s**

### **More digital and global**

The Earth will become increasingly digital and global. This is "obvious", but it has, and will have, profound implications for a long time to come. This, together with increasing population, will be the engine of the world economy (and stock markets). There will be bumps, occasionally huge ones, but the long-term momentum cannot be denied.

### **Privacy and encryption**

People will realize that the only way to protect themselves is to encrypt and control as much of their data as possible. Privacy focused products will experience tailwinds, while data driven business models will face headwinds. We will also see a trend towards decentralization.

### **Exponential technological development**

The technological development is far from over. The pace of innovation will increase further. Full self driving ([Level 5 autonomy](#)) will be solved and rolled out fast. Medical breakthroughs will be made. Cashierless stores will be rolled out. Revolutionary products and services, increasingly powered by artificial intelligence, will be invented and deployed.

### **Unforeseen catastrophe**

Something big will hit us. If not this decade, then one of the next. It will come out of the blue. A new vector. A bio attack, a pandemic, cyber warfare, eruption of a huge volcano. Something we won't be expecting. Something that will change society overnight.

### **Death of heroes**

We might experience some tragic losses: The Dalai Lama, Warren Buffett, Charlie Munger, or many of our other heroes, might all have 20 more years in them. Or they might not.

### **Climate change**

As John Mihaljevic [suggested](#), we need a robust framework for pricing externalities, so that we can start tackling air pollution, carbon concentration and plastics pollution. I also hope we will see the shutdown of many coal plants, and a massive deployment of solar and other renewables. We might also want to have a look at new, safer nuclear reactor designs.

### **New regulation**

Tech companies will start getting regulated, and the trend towards ever increasing regulation in the financial markets will continue. The big question is: will this all be a net positive or a net negative?

## Universal basic income

I hope to see the adoption of universal basic income in at least one country. Switzerland was one of the first to hold a [national referendum](#) in 2016. And I'm proud that my home canton (Basel-Stadt) had the highest approval rate of 36% (the national result was 23%).

---

Here are my initial tweets on this topic:

Hopes for the 2020s:

- people consuming less, investing more
- people voting with their \$ and feet instead of complaining
- shutting down coal plants
- massive deployment of solar & storage
- majority of produced cars electric
- replacing plastics with consumer compostable ones

— Remo Uherek (@remouherek) [December 28, 2019](#)

- massive increase in price of CO2
- rethink farming and meat production
- asking why more often
- doing the hard instead of the easy
- focus on health of self, society, planet first, then on wealth
- safe deployment of full self driving
- return humans to Moon, 1st human on Mars

— Remo Uherek (@remouherek) [December 28, 2019](#)

- recognize mental health as crucial part of overall health
- asking „what's the point?“ more often
- more people challenging the status quo
- more relaxing vibes
- more humor
- more love

What else? Add your hopes below [#hopes2020s](#)

— Remo Uherek (@remouherek) [December 28, 2019](#)

Hi Remo, adding/extending a couple of hopes:

- robust framework for pricing externalities so that profit-seeking firms do not unduly transfer costs to the rest of us
- global adoption of universal basic income to eradicate poverty and unleash the full creativity of humankind

— John Mihaljevic (@JMihaljevic) [December 29, 2019](#)



Image by [julieedgley](#)