



### Global macro trends of the future and their forecasting

*For the first time in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, unique data of the global trend forecast were presented at the Central Asia Fashion business conference. Milena Ershova, general producer of the CAF International fashion Exhibition, expert, talked about the shortage of resources, toxic optimism, the great migration and the influence of neural networks on the imagination.*

In Almaty, at the business conference of the International Fashion Exhibition Central Asia Fashion Spring-2023, as part of the analytical session “Fashion trends and trend forecasting”, Kazakhstani buyers were introduced to macro trends that affect society and transform the environment in the long term. Exclusive data was provided by the world-famous world leader in the field of forecasting trends and fashion trends – London trend Bureau WGSN. It is widely known that its unique research methodology makes it possible to identify signals of changes, as well as to evaluate, verify and predict with a probable accuracy of up to 90 percent. As a result, four of the most significant macro trends came to the attention of trend forecasters: resource scarcity, great migration, toxic optimism, and strategic imagination.



Speaker of the business conference, fashion expert, general producer of Central Asia Fashion – Milena Ershova

## Macro trend “Resource shortage”

The first and main macro trend of the present and the future during her speech, expert Milena Ershova identified “resource shortage”. Based on the data from the trend bureau reports, the speaker said that as the resources and systems of the planet become more and more depleted, enterprises will use the deficit as an opportunity to ensure more sustainable consumption and sustainable production.

“The data obtained as a result of a large survey of 16 thousand people revealed that the majority of consumers around the world are really seriously puzzled by the topic of environmentally friendly products and production,” the expert said. The ecological agenda has become much more important for them than it was a year ago. At the same time, 49 percent of consumers said that they are now paying and are ready to pay more for their choice, seeing the notes about eco-friendly production”.



Slide from Milena Ershova’s presentation: macro trend No. 1 “resource shortage”

According to the expert opinion, in the future people will treat nature as a board member, and its needs will be at the center of all decisions. As the climate crisis intensifies, the current shortage of resources and economic tremors will force companies to make environmentally friendly decisions to minimize supply risks and ensure a further flow of investment, thereby maintaining brand value and consumer confidence.

Commenting on how the macro trend “resource shortage” is gaining momentum, the speaker gave a number of examples. Thus, Patagonia announced that nature will be its sole shareholder, and all future profits will go to social and environmental projects. In turn, Geneus Biotech is already striving to change the textile industry with the help of laboratory-grown, 100% compostable artificial fur from a biopolymer called Furoid. Meanwhile, a number of major fashion brands have launched a special climate fund for nature conservation to invest in the development of natural solutions that support biodiversity supply chains in fashion and the cultivation of natural carbon sinks.

At the end of the story about the main macro trend, the expert gave an example of Scandinavia, which is ahead of the whole planet in the introduction of green technologies and an eco-friendly lifestyle in general.

“This year, Copenhagen Fashion Week demanded that designers adhere to the principles of sustainable development. Now the brands included in the fashion week schedule must meet 18 minimum requirements covering strategic direction, design, use of innovative materials, working conditions, attracting consumers and production of shows. This is the first season when the requirements are fully implemented, after a two-year pilot testing period. What does this mean? Even fashion weeks have changing standards! And this means that now we can expect the introduction of the same changes from other fashion weeks in New York, Milan, Paris, London. By the way, the concept of a fashion brand that focused on the problem of waste caused a lot of noise in Paris. It was presented in the scenery of three 8-meter towers filled with 1300 kilograms of used jeans, silk scarves and T-shirts, which will be disposed of for the production of a new collection”.



Milena Ershova's speech at the CAF business Conference. Slide on the screen: the main trend of 2023

### **Macro trend “optimism”**

The second main macro trend of the future, according to experts of the trend bureau, the speaker highlighted – optimism. At the same time, noting that according to the most recent polls of analysts, 56 percent of consumers around the world do not trust the state, political processes, the authorities, the government. A particularly critical level of distrust has been formed for several years among the younger generation Z. That is why, as a result, they have a very high level of stress and a lot of aggression.

*“Now generation Z has a very interesting attitude to everything that is happening – it is categorically against the “toxic optimism” that everything will be fine and wonderful. There is a pronounced protest against the silencing of problems. An active position, recognition of the problem and a plan to combat injustice are especially important for young people now. And here, the best means is the well-known shows in the format of “stand-up comedy”. It is this fact that can explain the phenomenon of popularity of such show formats in Europe, Russia, Kazakhstan and around the world. Historically, comedians and buffoons do not just ridicule the problem, but first of all pronounce it, thereby recognizing the problem of society, and not silencing it.”*

Summing up how this macro trend can affect fashion brands, speaker Milena Ershova noted: when the level of aggression around is growing and people do not trust, consumers want to see the leadership positions of brands. They expect brands to be not just observers of the process, but the force of change and pioneers. Thus, brands now have a great opportunity to carefully influence public opinion and, to some extent, even people's political views.

### **Macro trend “The Great Migration”**

The information about the global macro trend on migration caused a real storm of emotions and genuine interest among the audience of the CAF business conference. So, based on the data of the analytical forecast of the famous London trend bureau WGSN, expert Milena Ershova told about the wave of “great migration” gaining momentum.

People all over the world, out of preference or by compulsion, are moving at an ever-faster pace, changing the political and cultural landscape. At the same time, the number of so-called eco-migrants, digital nomads and moral migrants is growing rapidly.

*“The pandemic started this global migration movement, because people moved because of economic problems, as well as to be safe or to be closer to their loved ones,” says the expert of the business conference. Interestingly, for the first time in several decades, record rates of reverse migration were recorded around the world when people returned to the country of their birth. For example, in Europe, already in 2020, 1,3 million Romanians and about 500 thousand Bulgarians returned home were recorded. Even in Lithuania, for the first time in many years, more citizens returned home than left. According to the World Bank, in South Asia, 2020 and 2021 have been described as the “largest mass migration circulation”. Hong Kong was recognized as one of the most affected places as a result of*

migration: according to the Department of Census and Statistics of Hong Kong, the population of the largest city decreased in one year from 7.41 million inhabitants to 7,29 million people.”

## Великая Миграция

Пять лет с 2020 по 2025 год могут войти в историю как современная великая миграция. По собственному выбору или по принуждению люди перемещаются все более быстрыми темпами, при этом растет число **эко-миграций, моральных миграций и цифровых кочевников**, меняющих политический и культурный ландшафт.



Slide from Milena Ershova's presentation: macro trend No. 3 "The Great Migration"

However, it is not only the pandemic-related relocations that will have an impact on the future now and in the future. According to the expert, the forced relocation of people because of their values, or the so-called "moral migration", as well as "ecological migration" and the new working class of digital nomads, will completely rewrite politics in the near future, challenge traditional institutions and shake up the status quo.

So, as a visual illustration of "Ecological Migration", the expert of the CAF business conference, Milena Ershova, cited as an example the sensational book by the British science journalist Gaia Vince – "The Age of Nomads: how Climate mobility will change our world".



Speech by the general producer of Central Asia Fashion – Milena Ershova, at a business conference

*“The author of the scientific bestseller claims that the coming climate change will make significant parts of the globe uninhabitable. Using scientific and environmental data, Vince predicts that climate refugees will leave the warmer latitudes of Asia, Africa and Latin America and move to Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Northern Europe, Russia, as well as to Patagonia, Tasmania, New Zealand and Antarctica. In the hit book, the author says that humanity is already facing an emergency of the species. I will quote from this scientific work: “We can survive, but this will require a planned and deliberate migration, which humanity has never undertaken before. This is the biggest human crisis we’ve ever heard of.”*

Speaking about the moral migration of fashion expert Milena Ershova introduced the audience to the real figures and facts of the manifestation of this macro trend. It is an undeniable fact that now people are increasingly “voting with their feet” and moving to places that correspond to their political values. At the same time, there is more and more information that people are forced to leave for other countries not only by the stagnant labor market, but also by the attitude of the new government to civil rights, gender equality rights or any other universal issues and values.

*“The opportunity to move for ideological reasons is a privilege for some, but for others it is a matter of life and death. We all witnessed first-hand how last year about 400 thousand Russian citizens moved to neighboring countries, including Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Georgia, Mongolia, to avoid conscription and mobilization. We may never know how many people actually moved or temporarily settled with their families in Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and other countries for moral and political reasons,”* – the speaker summarizes.

At the end of the conversation about the global macro trend of the “great migration”, the speaker of the session, the general producer of Sentral Asia Fashion – Milena Ershova, spoke about the phenomenon of “digital nomads”.

*“The idea of so-called “digital nomads” is not historically new. Since the widespread introduction of the Internet and the ability to connect continents, countries and cities, a new kind of nomads has appeared. However, this idea became more accessible to many only during the last, post-pandemic period. The proliferation of distance work, “nomadic visas” and travel incentive programs aimed at digital workers has literally opened a real Pandora’s box! As a result, we see that this whole story not only gives a person huge market opportunities, but also contributes to a broader shift in mindset. Now everyone can organize their life in such a way as to “work to live, and not live to work.”*

*If you try to look a few steps ahead, you can use the forecasts of the founder of Nomad List – Peter Levels, who evaluates and publishes the best places for remote work. According to the scientist’s forecasts, by 2035 the number of “digital nomads of the great migration” will reach one billion people. And this is only a possible manifestation of the macro trend in dynamics.”*

### **Macro trend “strategic imagination”**

Concluding the conversation about macro trends that affect society as a whole and transform the environment in the long term, the speaker of the CAF business conference told the audience about “strategic imagination”.

*“We are moving from the media age to the age of imagination, where our individual and collective creativity and*



## **Стратегическое воображение**

Мы переходим от века информации, где основным двигателем роста являются знания, к веку воображения, когда творчество будет основной валютой, создающей и определяющей бизнес-стратегии.

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*imagination become the main creators of economic value. We all see how fashionable design and creative roles, thanks to the same neural networks, are being rethought before our eyes. Someone sees this as a threat to creative specialties, and someone sees new opportunities and prospects. Obviously, it is the growth and mass accessibility to technology that allows us to see what is best to direct a person's attention to in order to maximize creativity and the value of a creative product. By the projections of experts, such an explosion of synthetic creativity will undoubtedly arouse interest in the transformative properties of physical materials. And various IT technologies, as well as data evaluation tools, will completely change the tools and processes used in the development of the concept and the creation of a creative product,” – expert Milena Ershova summarizes.*

In the impending age of imagination, business leaders will have to adopt a “vuja de” mindset, which is similar to a deja vu projection when something familiar is viewed from a new perspective. Therefore, according to trend bureau analysts, the so-called children's thinking will be a necessary element to start dreaming big and discovering new ideas to solve old problems.

Summing up, the expert of the business conference summarized: *“we will be able to see how quickly and accurately the declared macro trends will manifest themselves in the near future. The main thing is to try to apply them correctly for your business and find practical use.”*

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