

Polish Digital Resilience Agenda 2040
a model of strategic preparedness
for the antinomies of digitalisation.

Scenario: Stratified worlds

**strategic area: Education, schooling and science
science**

Warning scenario for the transformation of Polish education by 2040

Starting point: three debunked myths

Myth	Reality
Automation creates jobs	Eliminates 2.5–3.5 million places, creates 400–600 thousand. new ones
Education guarantees equality	The Internet creates a "use gap", it does not eliminate divisions
The market will regulate itself	Without intervention, the spirals of degradation become irreversible

Three worlds: society no elevators

Three-class stratification
practically no possibility of promotion

	Class A: Cognitariat	Class B: Service precariat	Grade C: Marginalized
Participation	8–12%	45–50%	35–40%
Income	3–5× median	median or lower	Social transfers (UBI light)
Education	Continuous learning, AI, globally	Ad hoc, passive	Entertainment, no advancement
Identity	The global creative class	Conformism threatened	Cognitive exclusion
Kids	Access to elites, mobility	Uncertain future	Minimal chances for promotion
Environment	"Gated communities"	Between worlds	Permanent marginalization



The main paradox "The Aristocracy of Exploitation"

- 95% of households have access to broadband Internet
- And yet the social divide is widening
- Cognitariat uses the Internet for continuous learning
- The precariat uses it ad hoc and passively
- The marginalized use it as entertainment

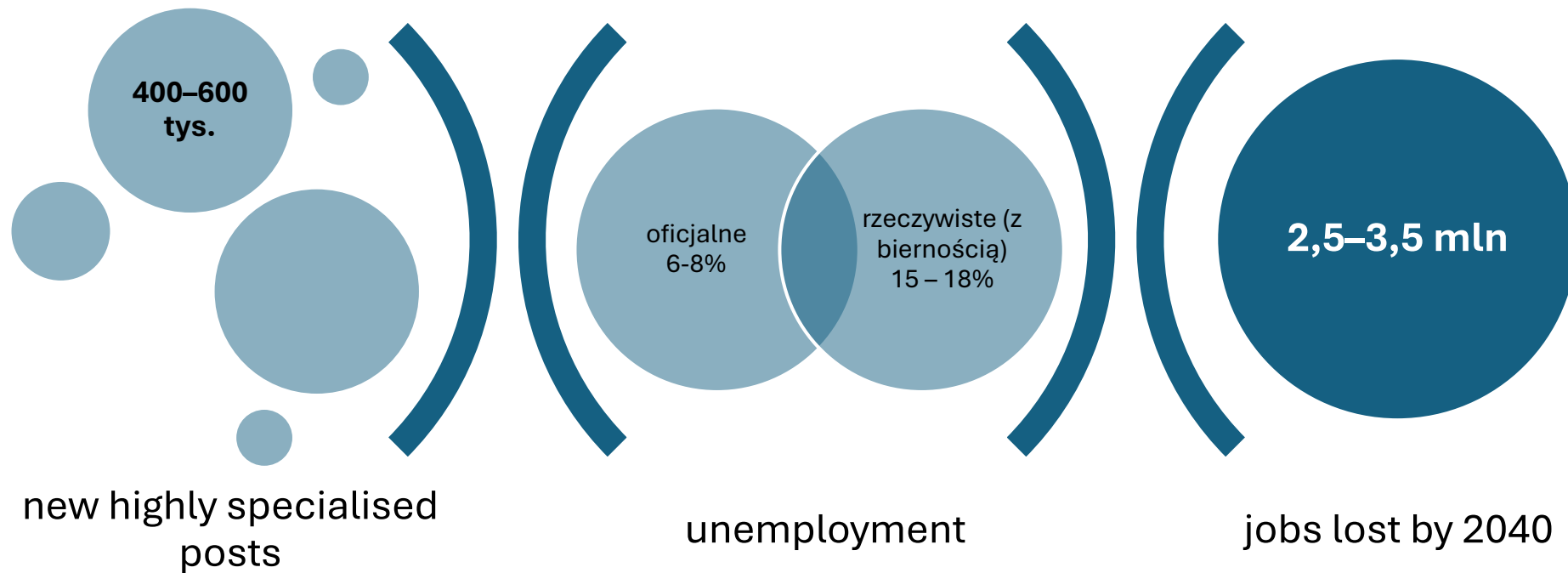
Catalyst: the breakdown of public education

Commercialisation of content — a mass exodus of the middle class towards commercial hybrid AI models; 30–40% of urban pupils in private/hybrid models by 2035.

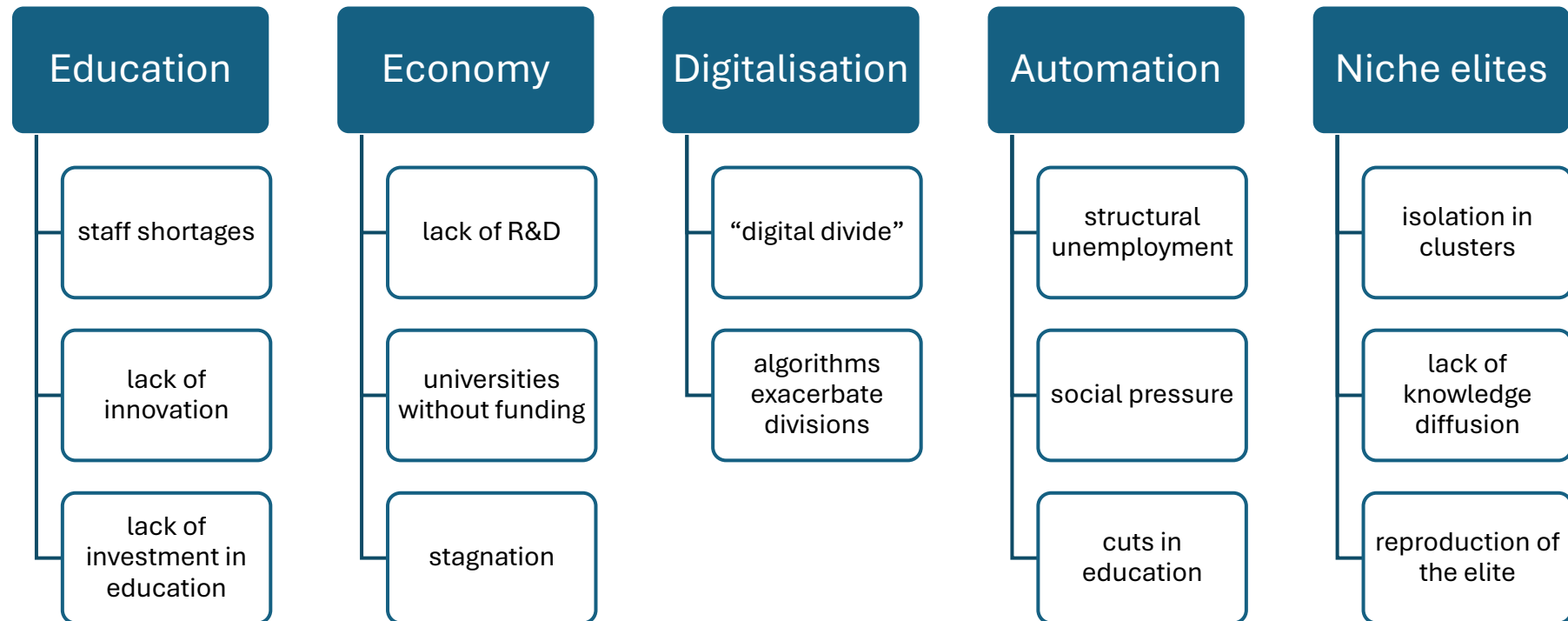
Exodus of teaching staff — teachers' salaries at 60–70% of the national median; the best are leaving for the private sector

Regulatory asymmetry — barriers to the use of AI in state schools; state schools are turning into social care institutions

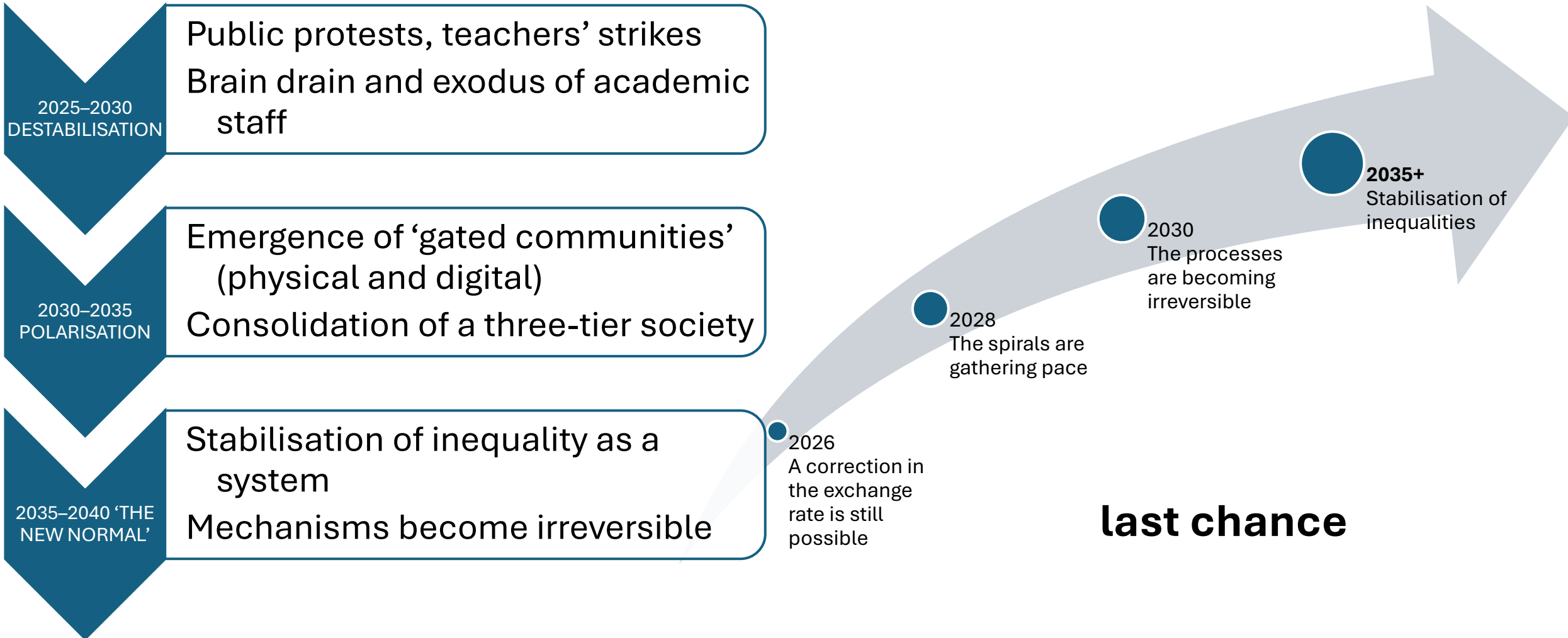
The scale of the labor crisis: the balance of automation



Five spirals of degradation



Three phases of system degeneration



Recommendations: what will stop the spiral

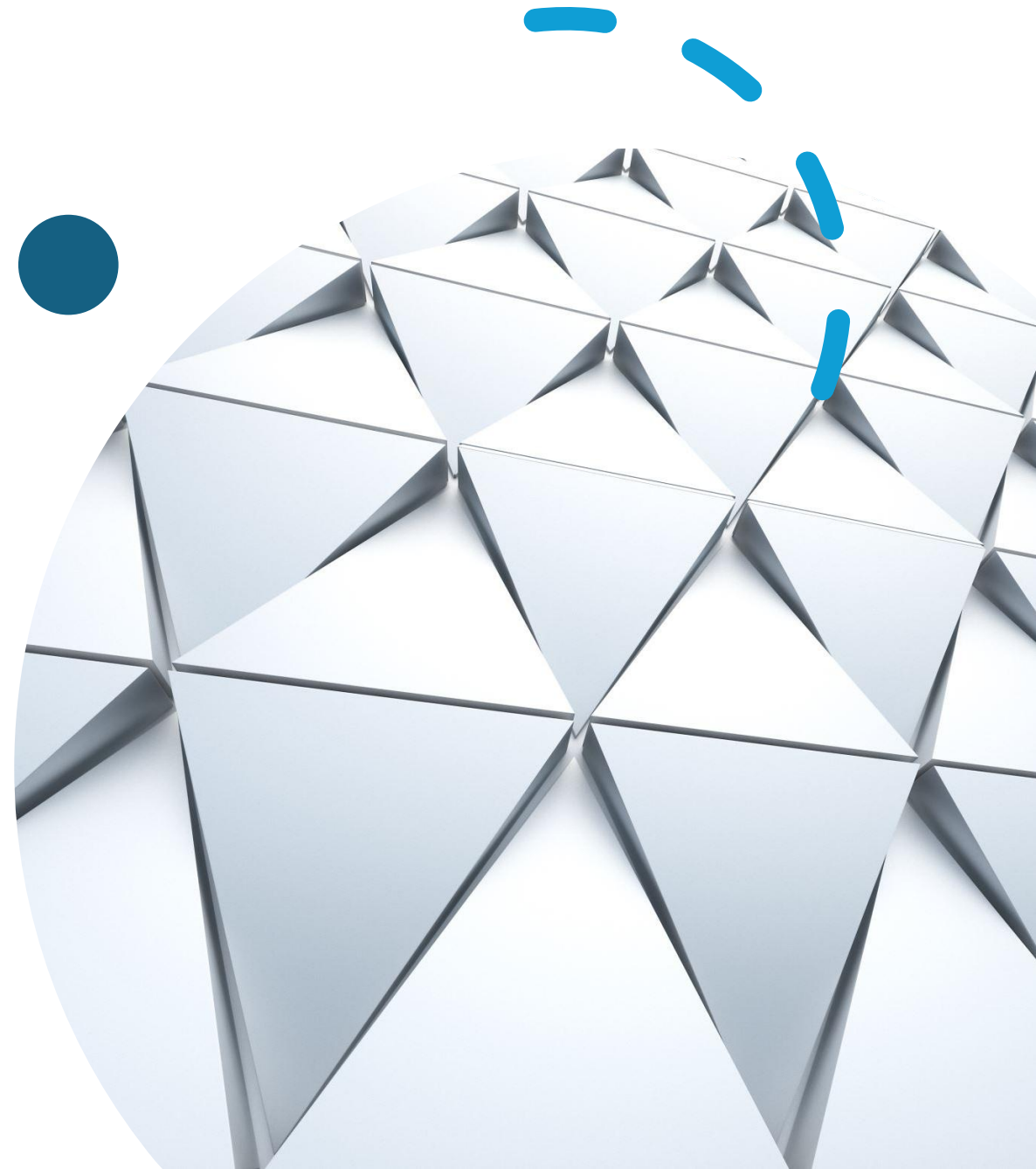
Four urgent systemic interventions:

Massive investment in public education — halting the brain drain, raising wages above the median, and levelling the playing field in access to technology

Pro-innovation industrial policy — breaking free from the low-cost model trap, and supporting R&D and technology transfer

Redistribution of the benefits of automation — taxing AI/robotisation to fund retraining and adult education

Democratisation of cultural capital — levelling the playing field from early childhood, not just access to the internet, but the ability to use it creatively



Bottom line: technology is not neutral

"Poland has become an example of how technologies that were supposed to democratize access to knowledge can become a catalyst for unprecedented polarization."

Three script lessons:

- Digitizing infrastructure alone is not enough – what matters is the cultural capital of its use
- Market mechanisms without state intervention reproduce inequalities
- The costs of inaction are incomparably higher than the costs of action



Ministerstwo Nauki
i Szkolnictwa Wyższego



Polish Digital Society

<http://cyfryzacja.org>

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Postscript: one-page script

This is a warning scenario - an dystopia built not on fiction, but on the extrapolation of real processes. Instead of becoming the "digital tiger of Europe", Poland is becoming a textbook example of how technologies intended to democratize knowledge can become a catalyst for unprecedented polarization.

The main paradox is: universal access to the Internet and open educational resources, instead of equalizing opportunities, widens the gap. Technology is not neutral. In the hands of a class with high cultural capital it becomes an elevator. In the hands of others - a mirror that holds you in place. An "aristocracy of use" is emerging - not of possession, but of the ability to use.

The narrative is built around five self-reinforcing spirals of degradation that fuel each other: the breakdown of public education denies economic opportunities for innovation, economic stagnation deprives universities of funding, and the lack of human resources perpetuates the "assembly plant" model. Each coupling closes the door to subsequent generations. Society crystallizes into three parallel worlds with no bridges between them.

The scenario is not fatalistic - it puts forward the thesis that change is possible, but the decision-making window will finally close after 2030. There is still time in 2026. After 2030, the mechanisms will become irreversible.