

Programme



Pathways towards Sustainable Prosperity in the EU

15-17 May 2023
European Parliament

Coordinators:

François Denuit
Advisor to MEP Philippe Lamberts
francois.denuit@europarl.europa.eu
+32 474 62 08 98

Léa Das Neves Bicho
Advisor to MEP Philippe Lamberts
lea.dasnevesbicho@europarl.europa.eu
+32 6 75 16 38 22

A conference organised by MEPs from

Programme

DAY 1							
From	To	Duration					
07:00	09:00	02:00	Arrival & Registration				
09:00	10:30	01:30	Opening plenary - Limits to Growth: where do we stand and where do we go from here? Hemicycle				
10:30	11:00	00:30	Break				
11:00	13:00	02:00	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Focus panel 1 Narratives Hemicycle</td> <td>Focus panel 2 Industry 4Q2</td> <td>Focus panel 3 Global South 6Q2</td> <td>Focus panel 4 Universal Basic Services 4Q1</td> </tr> </table>	Focus panel 1 Narratives Hemicycle	Focus panel 2 Industry 4Q2	Focus panel 3 Global South 6Q2	Focus panel 4 Universal Basic Services 4Q1
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13:00	14:30	01:30	Lunchbreak				
14:30	16:30	02:00	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Focus panel 5 Social-ecological state Hemicycle</td> <td>Focus panel 6 Tax justice 4Q2</td> <td>Focus panel 7 Care economy 6Q2</td> <td>Focus panel 8 Working time reduction 4Q1</td> </tr> </table>	Focus panel 5 Social-ecological state Hemicycle	Focus panel 6 Tax justice 4Q2	Focus panel 7 Care economy 6Q2	Focus panel 8 Working time reduction 4Q1
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16:30	17:00	00:30	Break				
17:00	18:30	01:30	Plenary 2 - Changing the goal: from GDP growth to social prosperity Hemicycle				
DAY 2							
From	To	Duration					
08:00	09:00	01:00	Arrival & Registration				
09:00	10:30	01:30	Plenary 3 - Addressing the limits of resource consumption: towards a resilient economy Hemicycle				
10:30	11:00	00:30	Break				
11:00	13:00	02:00	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Focus panel 9 Energy Hemicycle</td> <td>Focus panel 10 Digital transition 4Q1</td> <td>Focus panel 11 Role of businesses 4Q2</td> <td>Focus panel 12 Well-being ocean economy 6Q2</td> </tr> </table>	Focus panel 9 Energy Hemicycle	Focus panel 10 Digital transition 4Q1	Focus panel 11 Role of businesses 4Q2	Focus panel 12 Well-being ocean economy 6Q2
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Focus panel 13 Price on nature Hemicycle	Focus panel 14 Circular economy 4Q2	Focus panel 15 Trade 4Q1	Focus panel 16 Food policy 6Q2				
16:30	17:00	00:30	Break				
17:00	18:30	01:30	Plenary 4 - Understanding the biophysical limits to growth to build an economy that respects planetary boundaries Hemicycle				

		DAY 3				
From	To	Duration				
08:00	09:00	01:00	Arrival & Registration			
09:00	10:30	01:30	Plenary 5 - Building post-growth macroeconomic governance framework: aligning tools, rules and policies with EU political goals Hemicycle			
10:30	11:00	00:30	Break			
11:00	13:00	02:00	Focus panel 17 Gender budgeting 4Q1	Focus panel 18 Beyond GDP indicators 6Q2	Focus panel 19 Post-growth finance 4Q2	Focus panel 20 Just transition Hemicycle
13:00	14:30	01:30	Lunchbreak			
14:30	16:00	01:30	Plenary 6 - The power of economic models on decision-making and society at large Hemicycle			
16:00	16:30	00:30	Break			
16:30	18:30	02:00	Closing plenary - Pathways from here: roadmap for a Green and Social Deal Hemicycle			

Remarks

- The plenary sessions set the scene, define the overarching questions and shed light on cross-cutting topics.
- The focus panels aim to deepen the different topics touched upon in the plenary sessions.
- All plenaries and panels below (with one exception) will be chaired by one of the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) organising the Beyond Growth Conference.
- All discussions will have a first round of keynote speeches, an exchange between participants and time for Q&A with the audience both online and onsite.
- Q&A in plenary sessions will be limited due to time constraints but will take a central place in focus panels.
- The application Slido will be used to ensure a participatory approach of the audience.
- Speakers participating in **remote** are marked with an **R**.
- Some speakers will send a **recorded video message**.

Plenary sessions

Opening Plenary – Monday 15/05/2023 09:00-10:30 – Room: Hemicycle

Limits to Growth: where do we stand and where do we go from here?

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to identify the main issues raised by the growth and planetary limits' nexus that we need to address to shift our economic model.

Chair

Philippe Lamberts - MEP and Co-President (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Roberta Metsola - President of the European Parliament

Ursula Von der Leyen - President of the European Commission

Sandrine Dixson-Declève - Co-President of the Club of Rome

Jason Hickel - Professor, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Adelaïde Charlier - Climate Justice and Human Rights activist

Plenary 2 – Monday 15/05/2023 17:00-18:30 – Room: Hemicycle

Changing the goal: from GDP growth to social prosperity

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to propose a redefinition of prosperity beyond the mere criticism of GDP growth. This panel aims to propose an integrated social-ecological approach to the design of a European future-fit economy, one that couples environmental transition with social well-being.

Chair

Aurore Lalucq - MEP (S&D), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Maros Šefčovič - Vice-President of the European Commission for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight

Kate Raworth - Senior Associate, Oxford University

Romina Boarini - Director of the OECD WISE Centre

Florence Jany-Catrice - Professor, University of Lille

Giorgos Kallis - Professor, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Plenary 3 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 09:00-10:30 – Room: Hemicycle
Addressing the limits of resource consumption: towards a resilient economy

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to address the issue of unsustainable interdependencies between resource consumption, GHG emissions and GDP growth, and to discuss the resilient mix necessary to simultaneously integrate limits of natural resources, energy provision and geopolitical stability.

Chair

Martin Hojsik – MEP (Renew Europe), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Virjinijus Sinkevicius – European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Yamina Saheb – Lead author, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Timothée Parrique – Researcher, Lund University

Stientje van Veldhoven – Vice President and Regional Director for Europe, World Resource Institute

Olivia Lazard – Fellow, Carnegie Europe

Plenary 4 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 17:00-18:30 – Room: Hemicycle
Understanding the biophysical limits to growth to build an economy that respects planetary boundaries

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to provide an overview of the concept of “planetary limits”, used to define the planetary playing field within which humanity can live safely, and the current state of the global crossing of planetary boundaries. It will also establish the relation between biophysical limits and economic growth, as well as the link between human activities and predation on biodiversity.

Chair

Fiona Harvey – Journalist at The Guardian

Speakers

Valdis Dombrovskis – Executive Vice-President of the European Commission - **recorded video message**

Johan Rockström – Professor, Potsdam Institute - **R**

Dan O’Neill – Professor, University of Leeds and President of the European Society for Ecological Economics (ESEE)

Julia Steinberger – Professor, University of Lausanne

Farhana Sultana – Professor, Syracuse University - **R**

Aurélien Barrau – Professor, University of Grenoble

Plenary 5 – Wednesday 17/05/2023 09:00-10:30 – Room: Hemicycle

Building post-growth macroeconomic governance framework: aligning tools, rules and policies with EU political goals

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to outline macroeconomic policies that would fit the EU political goals and the Green deal in a post growth perspective. Macroeconomic policies should be debunked and reshaped to foster green and social investments for the future, fight inequalities, allow redistribution through a renewed social contract.

Chair

Manon Aubry - Member of the European Parliament (La France Insoumise), Co-Chair of the Left group in the European Parliament

Speakers

Yolanda Díaz - Second Vice-President and Minister of Labour and Social Economy of Spain, representing the next Presidency of the EU - **recorded video message**

Joseph Stiglitz - Professor, University of Columbia, Nobel Prize of economics - **R**

Maja Göpel - Professor, Leuphana University

Philippa Sigl-Glöckner - Director, Dezernzt Zukunft

Dominique Lallemand - Secretary General of Finance Watch

Louison Cahen-Fourot - Assistant Professor, Roskilde University

Plenary 6 – Wednesday 17/05/2023 14:30-16:00 – Room: Hemicycle

The power of economic models on decision-making and society at large

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to discuss the role of economic models in economic policy decisions – which ultimately shape society as a whole – and present alternative economic models integrating the physical limits of economic growth.

Chair

Sirpa Pietikäinen - MEP (EPP), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Paolo Gentiloni - European Commissioner for Economy - **recorded video message**

Ann Pettifor - Director of PRIME- Policy Research in Macroeconomics

Gaël Giraud - Professor, Director of Research, CNRS - **R**

Valentina Bosetti - Professor at Bocconi University and Senior scientist European Institute on Economics and the Environment

Robert Costanza - Professor, University College London

Closing plenary – Wednesday 17/05/2023 16:30-18:30 – Room: Hemicycle
Pathways from here: roadmap for a Green and Social Deal

Summary

The purpose of this plenary session is to provide concrete recommendations in order to shift the European economy towards a new post-growth model aiming to flourish rather than to grow.

Chair

Philippe Lamberts - MEP and Co-President (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Tim Jackson - Professor and Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP), University of Surrey

Dominique Méda - Director of IRISSO and Professor, Paris Dauphine

Esther Lynch - General Secretary, European Trade Union Confederation

Jakob Hafele - Co-Founder and Managing Director, ZOE Institute

Agata Meysner - Director, Generation Climate Europe

Anuna De Wever - Climate and Social Justice activist

Focus panels

Focus Panel 1 – Monday 15/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: Hemicycle

Which prosperous future? Confronting narratives of growth

Summary

This panel aims to foster debate between and provide a reality-check of some of the major narratives of growth currently experienced and envisaged. In particular, representatives from green growth, post-growth and degrowth will offer their perspectives on new potential narratives, helping to guide our societies towards a more prosperous future.

The narrative of economic growth has given riches to the ambitious, which have promised to eventually trickle down to the less affluent, maintaining peace and a happy life for all. However, despite the optimism placed in technology's abilities to alleviate the ecological losses that result from this pursuit for more, socio-environmental crises have intensified, with inequality on the rise and climate change and biodiversity loss threatening to disrupt our life as we know it. Can the old story be replaced by a new one, and if so, by which one?

Chair

Pascal Arimont - MEP (EPP), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Michael Jacobs - Professor, Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI), University of Sheffield

Maja Göpel - Professor, Leuphana University

Ekaterina Chertkovskaya - Researcher, Lund University

Elina Erikson - Associate Professor in Human-Computer Interaction with a specialization in Sustainability, KTHRoyal Institute of Technology

Focus Panel 2 – Monday 15/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: JAN 4Q2

How to target and future-proof industrial policy towards climate neutrality?

Summary

The panel aims at looking at what is still needed in EU policy to ensure that EU industry and industrial policy is aligned with our climate ambition and respects our planetary boundaries. The US is moving towards a greener industrial policy with the Inflation Reduction Act and Europe is evaluating its countermove. There is a great potential not only to achieve climate targets but also to tackle regional divergence.

Chair

Ville Niinistö - MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Jonathan Barth - Co-founder and Policy Director, ZOE Institute

Monika Sitárová - Head of the International Department of the Metalworkers' Trade Union OZ KOVO, Chair of the Workers' Group of the CCMI, European Economic and Social Committee

Anais Voy-Gillis - Adjunct Researcher at IAE Poitiers and Associate Director at June Partners

Paavo Järvensivu - Co-founder and researcher at the independent multidisciplinary research unit BIOS

Jørgen Skovmose Madsen - Head of Regulatory and Public affairs, New Markets & EU, Ørsted

Focus Panel 3 – Monday 15/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: JAN 6Q2*Beyond growth beyond Europe: What policies and partnerships to make it happen?***Summary**

The aim of this panel is to challenge the notion that Beyond Growth approaches cannot be beneficial for Africa, Latin America and Asia, while emphasising the role the EU needs to play. The discussion will focus on policies and frameworks that can work both for the EU and for partner countries and regions. The panel will also explore whether and how the Agenda 2030 can facilitate a shift towards Beyond Growth and the implications of such a shift for the EU's policies and international partnerships. The panelists will offer their perspectives on the essential components of a new model that can benefit the Global South and urge European policymakers to take specific actions.

Chair

Marisa Matias - MEP (The Left), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Jason Hickel - Professor, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Lebohng Liepollo Pheko - Senior Research Fellow, Trade Collective

Ritu Verma - Professor, Carleton University

Raj Patel - Research Professor, University of Texas, Austin

Focus Panel 4 – Monday 15/05/2023 – Room: JAN 4Q1*Unlocking a just and sustainable economy through Universal Basic Services***Summary**

Moving towards a just and sustainable European and global economy requires universal access to life's essentials - what everyone needs to live well, now and in future. The term Universal Basic Services (UBS) conveys a range of collective measures, enacted through democratic institutions, to ensure that needs are met universally and sufficiently within planetary boundaries: chiefly, public services backed by investment of public funds and regulation for quality and sustainability. Prioritising and radically extending UBS signifies a materially better life for the many by directly reducing poverty and inequality while making reductions in private consumption possible. What is needed to design Universal Basic Services in ways that are growth-independent, broaden economic participation and strengthen democracy? Which experiences can be built on and what could the EU do to promote UBS internally and through its international cooperation?

Chair

Petros Kokkalis - MEP (The Left), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Anna Coote - Principal Fellow, New Economics Foundation

Kahina Rabahi - Policy and advocacy coordinator, European Anti-Poverty Network

Giacomo D'Alisa - Maria Zambrano Fellow, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Corinna Dengler - Assistant Professor, University of Vienna

Focus Panel 5 – Monday 15/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: Hemicycle

From the welfare state to the social-ecological state: how to organise and finance welfare without growth?

Summary

This panel aims to address the issue of how to build and finance welfare systems that are compatible with sustainable economics, that improve citizens' wellbeing and respect planetary boundaries. It will highlight the growth-dependency of European welfare states, their blindness to the social impact of mounting environmental challenges, and the combined pressures that underinvestment, rising inequality and environmental crises put on welfare demand, along with the more recent social aftershocks of the pandemic and energy crises. The main objective of the panel will then be to clarify what it concretely means to move towards a social ecological state: What kind of risks should be covered? Which social and fiscal policies are needed? Who will bear the costs and who will benefit? What role should the EU take given the diversity of European welfare models?

This panel will first have a round of presentations by the speakers on how to cope with welfare without growth and then a round of reactions by discussants with a particular focus on the EU's role.

Chair

Philippe Lamberts – MEP and Co-President (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Juliana Wahlgren – Director, European Anti-Poverty Network

Milena Buchs – Professor, University of Leeds

Timothée Parrique – Researcher, Lund University

Simone d'Alessandro – Professor, University of Pisa

Discussants

Sebastiano Sabato – Senior researcher, European Social Observatory (OSE)

Maria Joao Rodrigues – President of FEPS, former minister of the Portuguese Republic and Professor of Economics at ISCTE-IUL

Anne Van Lancker – President of Solidar

Focus Panel 6 – Monday 15/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: JAN 4Q2

Inequalities in a beyond growth perspective: taxation as an instrument of ecological and social justice

Summary

The mounting evidence that continuous economic growth is not environmentally sustainable has led many in the academic, activist and political spheres to call to move “beyond growth”. Critics have also pointed out that economic growth might as well not be socially desirable since poverty is still a reality and inequalities are on the rise despite the constantly renewed promises of prosperity for all through economic growth. Meanwhile, corporate profits and accumulation by the wealthy reach new peaks every year and contribute significantly to the environmental degradation of our planet. Across the beyond-growth spectrum, proponents have made clear that putting an end to inequality should be both a destination and an avenue to get there. Yet, this poses considerable challenges since welfare states and redistribution policies are also largely entangled in the growth-dependency that we are supposed to get rid of. This applies especially to taxation, one of the main instruments of inequality reduction.

The panel aims at looking at social and environmental inequalities and what policies would be necessary to achieve social and environmental justice in a beyond growth economy, with a focus on taxation.

Chair

Manon Aubry - Member of the European Parliament (La France Insoumise), Co-Chair of the Left group in the European Parliament

Speakers

Lucas Chancel - Professor in Economics, co-director of the World Inequality Lab, Paris School of Economics

Giorgos Kallis - Professor in Ecological Economics and Political Ecology, Institute of Environmental Science and Technology, Barcelona

Njoki Njoroge Njehû - Coordinator of the Fight Inequality Alliance Pan-Africa - **R**

Chiara Pataturo - Inequalities and tax policy advisor, Oxfam EU

Rafael Wildauer - Associate Professor in Economics, Greenwich Business School, London

Focus Panel 7 – Monday 15/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: JAN 6Q2

Care economy: doing away with gender blind policies for a beyond growth future

Summary

This panel will discuss blind-spots in climate, care policy and pay equality and how to better take gender into account when dealing with these policies. More specifically, the focus will be on how these blind-spots affect the socio-economic situation of women and other under-represented groups, including care-workers, and how a well-being approach that goes beyond growth could make for a more sustainable and equal society.

Chair

Maria Walsh - MEP (EPP), Beyond Growth Conference Organiser

Speakers

Mary Collins - Senior Advocacy and Policy Coordinator, European Women's Lobby

Ipek Ilkkaracan - Professor of at Istanbul Technical University, President of the International Association for Feminist Economics - **R**

Tim Jackson - Professor and Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP), University of Surrey

Hans Dubois - Research Manager at Eurofound

Robert Sweeney - Senior Economic and Policy Analyst, Think-tank for Action on Social Change Ireland (TASC)

Laeticia Thissen - Policy analyst for gender equality, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

Focus Panel 8 – Monday 15/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: JAN 4Q1

Cutting the addiction of labour to growth: the 4 days week

Summary

The purpose of this panel is to discuss a key proposal to massively create jobs and fund social security in a no-growth world, facilitating recruitments, improving gender and work/life balance.

The post-Covid world of work is deeply shaken. The economy has been on hold, companies have suffered, workers have suffered, but millions of jobs have been saved by public policies such as temporary unemployment benefits and reduction of working time, supported by European programs like SURE. With the big resignation in the US, rising costs of living and still booming numbers of burnouts and stress at work, a new social contract is an urgent necessity.

Thousands of workers in the UK, France, Ireland, New Zealand, Spain, the USA, Belgium and elsewhere are experiencing the 4 day workweek. Different formulas are being explored, with varying - mostly definitely positive - impacts on facilitating recruitments, job creation, work/life balance, reduction of stress levels, gender equality, climate change mitigation, fiscal space of governments and many more areas.

Particularly in the framework of this event « beyond growth » the 4 day workweek is absolutely key for a new, sustainable, model of development in a future without growth. Actually, this future is already the present. Economic growth has been falling decade after decade for the last 60 years in most European countries, and is oscillating today between recession and levels that are not sufficient to create jobs nor to ensure the sustainability of financing social security. The most powerful tool to ensure massive job creation and finance social security, without relying on the eternal (unsuccessful) chase of economic growth, is the 4 day workweek. In this regard, this concrete solution may be part of the key to reconcile different visions within the labor and climate movements.

Chair

Pierre Larrouturou - MEP (S&D), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Katharina Wiese - Senior Policy Officer, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Hazel Gavigan - Global campaign and activation officer at 4 Day Week Global

Hélène Garzino - Associate at L'Agence verte - **R**

Florent Marcellesi - Co-chair of Verdes Equo and former MEP (Greens/EFA)

Dominique Meda - Director of IRISSO and Professor, Paris Dauphine

Focus Panel 9 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: Hemicycle

Building an energy sector compatible with ecological limits

Summary

Europe is struggling to provide clean and affordable energy to its citizens. In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU has taken crisis measures aimed at energy savings, diversification of energy supplies and accelerated roll-out of renewable energy. But the EU is still far removed from an independent, resilient, clean and socially sustainable energy system. In this panel we look at possible systemic changes the EU's energy architecture would require to provide stable, secure, affordable and clean energy to all. Should we move from energy efficiency to energy sufficiency? What is the appropriate (mix of) ownership for energy provision in Europe? What changes would be required to the governance of European energy infrastructure, to achieve an energy sector compatible with ecological limits?

Chair

Bas Eickhout - MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Antonella Battaglini - Chief executive officer, Renewables Grid Initiative, World Economic Forum

Julia Steinberger - Professor, University of Lausanne

Lisa Fischer - Programme leader, E3G

Dirk Holemans - Coordinator, Oikos

Stephane Bourgeois - European relations and policies manager, négaWatt

Focus Panel 10 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: JAN 4Q1

Building a fair, social, green, autonomous digital future for a postgrowth economy

Summary

The impact of the digital sphere on the economy and society encompasses everything from material production to social dynamics online. Not only does ICT require enormous amounts energy, material resources and affect the environment, the digital transition has led to a more centralised economy with a large power over our online interactions, supply chains, consumer behaviour and even our democracy. A small number of big tech companies have unlimited financial resources and vast amounts of data they have all gained from their powerful position on Tech markets. This is how Big Tech companies leverage into new markets are entering every aspect of our society, infrastructures and even our public services. While our society's dependence on private companies increases, these same companies often exacerbate social inequalities and disproportionately affect minorities in their impacts on society, be it online or offline. What should the digital sphere look like in a postgrowth economy? What are the necessary changes for social-ecologically sustainable business models and infrastructures with a fair distribution? How do we govern our internet, infrastructures and supply chains in the public interest, instead of in the interest of shareholders? Special attention will be given to what the EU can do in this regard.

Chair

Kim Van Sparrentak - MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Rodrigo Fernandez - Senior researcher and author of SOMO report "Financialisation of Big Tech"

Sophie Bloemen - Director, Commons Network

Corinna Schlombs - Associate Professor of History Rochester Institute of Technology

Asha Allen - Advocacy Director for Europe, Online Expression & Civic Space for the Centre of Democracy and Technology, Europe Office

Nakeema Stefflbauer - Tech Executive, Founder & CEO of FrauenLoop

Focus Panel 11 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 11:00–13:00 – Room: JAN 4Q2

Designing businesses in a future-fit economy

Summary

This panel will focus on the integration of sustainability concerns into business conduct. How can small and large companies take up their social and environmental responsibilities when dealing with customers and suppliers? What can corporate leaders do to integrate SDGs into their business strategies? How can regulation create a fair and sustainable environment for businesses that want to go beyond growth? Academics, legislators, social entrepreneurs and company representatives will discuss the way towards a new corporate DNA.

Chair

Pascal Durand – MEP (S&D), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Isabelle Ferreras – Research Professor, Belgian National Science Foundation/University of Louvain & Center for Labor and a Just Economy at Harvard Law School

Judith Kirton-Darling – Deputy General Secretary of IndustriAll European Trade Union

Eva Sadoun – co-chair of Impact France, CEO of Lita.co and Rift

Erinch Sahan – Business & Enterprise Lead, Doughnut Economics Action Lab

Véronique Willems – Secretary General of SMEunited

Focus Panel 12 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 11:00–13:00 – Room: JAN 6Q2

The “Blue Doughnut”: A framework for a wellbeing ocean economy beyond growth

Summary

The ocean, covering over 70% of the earth, is the world’s largest habitat for wildlife and biodiversity. It’s also our most important carbon sink and essential for the planetary biogeochemical cycles that provide us with the air we breathe and the water we drink. However, while the land-based economy hits its growth limits, the “Blue economy” is heralded as a way to tap into additional profits. With ongoing overfishing, the boom of offshore renewables, shipping being projected to multiply over the next decades, and the imminent threat of deep-sea mining, we can observe a dangerous “blue gold rush” moment, to the detriment of both planetary and societal boundaries. It’s time to reframe the “blue economy”, before it’s too late. Drawing on the concept of Doughnut Economics, the “Blue Doughnut” is built on a social foundation, to reverse growing inequalities and prevent people from being left behind, and to ensure that humanity does not collectively overshoot the planetary boundaries. Between the social foundation and the ecological ceiling lies a doughnut shaped space that is both ecologically safe and socially just: a space in which humanity, and our planet, can thrive. The panel will discuss the Blue Doughnut concept as an alternative framing for the blue economy, and test its application on fisheries, shipping and in relation to the European Unions “sustainable blue economy” policy.

Chair

Dino Giarrusso – MEP (NI), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Monica Verbeek – Executive director, Seas At Risk

Kate Raworth – Senior Associate, Oxford University

Ingrid Kelling – Founder and Director of the Global Centre for Social Sustainability in Seafood Supply Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh

Christiaan De Beukelaer – University of Melbourne

Hans Bruynickx – Executive director, European Environment Agency

Christos Economou – Deputy Director for Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security, DG MARE, European Commission

Focus Panel 13 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: Hemicycle

Repairing and restoring Nature in a beyond growth perspective: is putting a price on biodiversity the right way to go?

Summary

“Natural capital”, “nature markets”, “net gain principle”, “ecosystem services”, “nature-based solutions” or “polluter pays principle” are emerging environmental concepts and principles proposing a financial and monetary approach to the repair and restoration of environmental damage. The purpose of this panel is to discuss this growing role of monetary valuations and market based solutions and biocredits in national, European and international biodiversity frameworks. Natural capital accounting is now implemented in the EU and many other countries, and new policy tools and market schemes aimed at protecting biodiversity are being put forward. How promising are these new initiatives? What role should they have in our conservation policies and which lessons can we learn from the past? How can we put a price on nature? Can market mechanisms lead to superior conservation outcomes? Are we creating rights to pollute and destroy the environment and ecosystems through offset markets?

Chair

Marie Toussaint – MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Marco Lambertini – Special Envoy, WWF International

Vandana Shiva – Physicist, social and environmental activist, ecofeminist and anti-globalisation author

Frédérique Chlous – Professor at the National Museum of Natural History (Paris) and President of the Scientific Council of the French Biodiversity Office

Clive Spash – Social Ecological Economist

Frederic Hache – Director and Co-founder of the Green Finance Observatory

Focus Panel 14 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: JAN 4Q2

From Anthropocene to Cyclocene – Will circular economy keep us within planetary boundaries?

Summary

Can the clean tech industry be both helpful and a threat for our planetary boundaries? After all, we will not solve environmental challenges by e.g. only replacing diesel with electric cars – because there are too many cars and too few resources. The circular economy is supposed to offer better solutions, but which are the possible limits and dangers? Crises, like the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Russian invasion into Ukraine illustrate the societal costs of highly and irresponsibly unequal overuse of resources, leading to dependency and weakness. There are alternative and more rational solutions to use resources. Countries like Austria have set ambitious material demand reduction targets. Some industries are working on a more circular economy. However, which regulatory framework is needed to turn this into a socially just and environmentally responsible solution? Could a material footprint indicator – and a reduction target based on it – take away the life-threatening pressure on ecosystems all over the world, being often a collateral damage of the current mining boom? This panel will discuss whether and how the EU and its MSs can set ambitious material reduction targets – with or without the growth paradigm.

This panel aims at looking for solutions to societal challenges that do not depend on their correlation to GDP growth. The circular economy has very promising potential, but much of this potential remains untapped as long as the circular economy is just a tool to grow GDP. Setting the right targets will be key to ensure that the circular economy is part of the solutions we need.

Chair

Manuela Ripa – MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Kate Raworth – Senior Associate, Oxford University

Nick Meynen – Senior Policy Officer for systemic change, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Mathias Miedreich – CEO of Umicore

Michael Braungart – Professor, holder of the Cradle to cradle Chair, University of Lüneburg

Román Arjona – Chief Economist at the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Focus Panel 15 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: JAN 4Q1

The “Blue Doughnut”: A framework for a wellbeing ocean economy beyond growth

Summary

This debate is about setting new goals for economic and trade policy. Their success should no longer be measured by the increase in gross national product, but by the reduction in poverty in the world, by their contribution to the fight against the impending climate catastrophe, by their contribution to achieving by 2030 the sustainable development goals, to which all member states of the United Nations have committed themselves. This event will discuss new indicators of a successful trade policy for politicians, managers, academic discourse and civil society.

The panel will be divided in two separate rounds with the speakers’ presentations and reactions by discussants.

Chair

Judith Kirton-Darling – Deputy Secretary General, industriAll Europe

- Round I -

Speakers

James Shaw – Minister for Climate Change of New Zealand – **recorded video message**

Olivier de Schutter – United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights – **R**

Pedro Manuel Moreno – Deputy Secretary General UNCTAD – **R**

Jean-Marie Paugam – WTO Deputy Director General

Pamela Coke-Hamilton – Executive Director International Trade Centre (ITC)

Discussants

Maria Martin-Prat De Abreu – Deputy Director General DG TRADE, EU Commission

Helmut Scholz – MEP (The Left), INTA Committee, Beyond Growth Conference organiser

- Round II -

Speakers

Pedro Migue da Costa e Silva – Ambassador of Brazil to the European Union,

Anaïs Berthier – Senior Lawier and Head of ClientEarth’s Brussels office

Melinda St. Louis – Director, Public Citizens Global Trade Watch

Souad Aden-Osman – Executive Director Coalition for Dialogue in Africa

Discussants

Maria Martin-Prat De Abreu – Deputy Director General DG TRADE, EU Commission

Helmut Scholz – MEP (The Left), INTA Committee, Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Nathalie Bernasconi-Osterwalder – Vice-President, Global Strategies and Managing Director Europe, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) – **R**

Focus Panel 16 – Tuesday 16/05/2023 14:30-16:30 – Room: JAN 6Q2*Transforming food for the wellbeing of people and planet***Summary**

A transformation of food systems is crucial to go “beyond growth” and foster social prosperity while respecting the planetary boundaries. Food systems should be re-designed in a holistic way to increase resilience and reduce impacts on GHG emissions, prevent natural resources and biodiversity loss, while ensuring fair economic returns for all actors across the chain and addressing food and nutrition insecurity affecting millions of people.

In this context, the policy panel will aim to discuss:

- What are the gaps in the EU Farm to Fork Strategy that have to be addressed for the achievement of a Green and Social Deal and the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;*
- How should a long-term, comprehensive food policy for the wellbeing of people and planet look like;*
- What policy transformations are needed to address the concentration of economic power in the food supply chain and ensure a fair distribution while remaining within the planetary boundaries, including what measures can help reduce excessive food price speculation;*
- What lessons can be learnt from existing initiatives on the ground.*

Chair

Bas Eickhout – MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Timothy Lang – Emeritus Professor of Food Policy at City University London’s Centre for Food Policy

Peter Schmidt – President of the NAT Section, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

Marta Messa – Secretary General of Slow Food

Fairouz Gazdallah – Policy Advisor Governance of Food Systems, Oxfam Belgium

Jeroen Candel – Associate Professor on Food and Agricultural Policy, Wageningen University

Focus Panel 17 – Wednesday 17/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: JAN 4Q1

Challenges to feminist fiscal policies beyond growth: a focus on gender budgeting tools

Summary

This panel aims to explore the role of gender budgeting in implementing feminist fiscal policies that promote gender equality and care economy, with a particular focus on the challenges specific to the European Union (EU). While the EU has numerous programs and funding streams aimed at promoting gender equality, there is a need to make these policies more effective and binding. The panel will discuss how gender budgeting can be used to reshape fiscal policies, and what steps the EU must take to counteract the ongoing backlash against gender rights. An ambitious feminist approach to the care economy, as outlined in the European Women's Lobby's Purple Pact challenges the current macro-economic model founded on unsustainable growth, at the expense of women. Monitoring public expenditures is a powerful tool to reshape fiscal policies towards a redistribution of power and resources to women.

Mainstreaming these guidelines, along with other gender-related aims to the disbursement of funds such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility or the European Social Fund+ could be an effective approach, but we are yet to see real progress on the ground. Besides, most of the EU budget is implemented through member state authorities, and in member states where governments are outright hostile to gender rights. It is particularly challenging to ensure that these funds are used effectively. What do such programs look like from stakeholders' perspective? What should the EU do to counteract the ongoing backlash against gender rights? What is the role of civil society in this process?

The panel aims to discuss the importance of gender budgeting, with a particular focus on the challenges that may arise within the European Union (EU) context. Additionally, it will explore the specific difficulties faced by EU countries that are operating within an illiberal political environment, hindering the implementation of feminist fiscal policies.

Chair

Katalin Cseh - MEP (Renew Europe), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Mary Collins - Senior Policy Advisor and Advocacy Coordinator at the European Women's Lobby

Katalin Keveházi - Director General of the Klebelsberg Library of the University of Szeged

Edina Heal - Head of Equalizer Foundation

Focus Panel 18 – Wednesday 17/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: JAN 6Q2*Beyond GDP indicators***Summary**

If the question is wrong, the answer is not right. The way we measure GDP in financial terms only and the fact that many believe that the welfare of people and societies is mainly linked to GDP growth fails to include other aspects of human development as well as the quality and quantity of ecosystem services and the environmental disruption. As so, GDP fails to count in the environmental damage and societal harm caused by economic actions. To change this, we need a new model for accounting, which sets clear globally harmonised indicators for GDP, public budgets, financial markets and all other economic actors that incorporates societal and environmental factors. The EU should be at the forefront for developing and advocating global change as well as for setting the example in EU regulation and measurement. Therefore, different EU institutions budgets and funds, semesters and national budgets should be under the screen. In addition, taxonomy, CSRD, CSDDD and other relevant financial and economic regulations should be tailored to include these elements. This session studies and explores how this change in the accounting models could be done while incorporating societal and environmental indicators.

Chair

Sirpa Pietikäinen – MEP (EPP), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Hans Bruyninckx – Executive Director, European Environmental Agency

Pedro Conceição – Director of the Human Development Report Office, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Frank Elderson – Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Board, Co-Chair of the Task Force on Climate related risks in financial stability, European Central Bank

Romina Boarini – Director of OECD WISE Centre

Peter Dröll – Director for Prosperity, Directorate-General Research and Innovation, European Commission

Rutger Hoekstra – Professor, University of Leiden

Florence Jany-Catrice – Professor, University of Lille

Focus Panel 19 – Wednesday 17/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: JAN 4Q2

A financial system fit for a postgrowth economy

Summary

For several decades, advanced economies have been witnessing a continuous slowdown of productivity growth, declining real interest rates and a lower or close to zero GDP growth. This trend has become increasingly global in more recent years, and yet growth remained a major policy objective. Policies to attain it relied mostly on a mixture of ever increasing liquidity, financial deregulation and financial innovation, with the overall result of increasing both the financial instability and inequalities of income and wealth.

A postgrowth-oriented policy would break with this approach and raise several questions as for the future of finance. First, what kind of financial system and financial regulations would we need to pursue such a policy while simultaneously reallocating financial flows towards common-good objectives such as climate mitigation and adaptation? Second, what would be the implications for the current financial system, and how would it adapt to the new conditions?

Chair

Aurore Lalucq - MEP (S&D), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Jezabel Couppey-Soubeyran - Lecturer at University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, Scientific advisor at Institut Veblen

Daniela Gabor - Associate Professor at the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol)

Thierry Philipponnat - Chief economist, Finance Watch

Philippe Zaouati - Founder and CEO, Mirova

Focus Panel 20 – Wednesday 17/05/2023 11:00-13:00 – Room: Hemicycle
What does a credible EU-wide, social and economic framework to achieve a just transition look like?

Summary

A truly Just Transition is one that fully exploits the historic opportunity for reducing social and economic inequalities that must be seized now as we undertake the necessary transformation of our societies to environmental sustainability. Environmental and social justice cannot be separated and are a key part of the political movement that proposed the Green New Deal a decade ago, which concluded also that the existing economic model is the biggest obstacle to both.

Achieving that transition in a socially sustainable way is not possible, however, without a radical reform of the current socio-economic model that effectively treats people and the planet as “factors of production” and perpetual economic growth as an end in itself, regardless of the negative consequences, not only for the environment we depend on, but for the equitable distribution of wealth and the mechanisms for social solidarity that are essential for stable and harmonious societies.

During this panel debate we will explore what will the ecological transition require in terms of policies and regulations at EU level to cover key topics as: moving beyond GDP growth; the coordination of fiscal and economic policy; tax reforms to reduce inequalities; gender intersection of a just transition; delivering on new green and decent jobs; among others.

Chair

Ernest Urtasun - MEP (Greens/EFA), Beyond Growth Conference organiser

Speakers

Éloi Laurent - Senior Economist at OFCE, Sciences Po Centre for Economic Research, Paris

Patrizia Heidegger - Deputy Secretary General and Director for EU Governance, Sustainability and Global Policies • EU Policy Team, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Ludovic Voet - Confederal Secretary of European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Brototi Roy - Postdoctoral researcher, jointly based at the Central European University, Vienna and Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Leonor Canadas - Just Transition and Global Climate Jobs Campaign

