

A post-growth Europe critical to survive and thrive, urge over 400 civil society groups and experts

Authored by:

Timothée Parrique

Kate Raworth

Vincent Liegey

Friends of the Earth Europe

European Environmental Bureau

European Youth Forum

Wellbeing Economy Alliance

Signed by, among others:

Milena Buchs

Eloi Laurent

Ekaterina Chertkovskaya

Julia Steinberger

Camille Étienne

Federico Demaria

Nick Fitzpatrick

Olivier De Schutter

Giorgos Kallis

Robert Costanza

Jason Hickel

Dominique Méda

Adélaïde Charlier

Sandrine Dixson-Declève

Tim Jackson

As political leaders gather for a second conference at the European Parliament on how to move “beyond growth”, we, the undersigned academics and civil society organisations, see the geopolitical crisis as an opportunity to disengage from the socially and ecologically harmful growth competition and instead embrace a wellbeing cooperation.

There is no empirical basis indicating that it is possible to globally and sufficiently decouple economic growth from environmental pressures. The pursuit of endless economic growth by high income nations is a problem as it either reduces or cancels the outcomes of environmental policies. The current climate chaos and unravelling web of life on which our society depends is an existential threat to peace, water and food security, and democracy.

Advancing to a post-growth economy is not only to survive, but also to thrive. This calls for a democratically planned and equitable downscaling of production and consumption, sometimes referred to as ‘degrowth’, in those countries that overshoot their ecological resources. This is Europe’s global peace project, because its current economic growth is causing conflicts both in and beyond Europe.

In the context of high-income nations, a smaller footprint does not mean worse living conditions. Sufficiency policies focusing on frugality, resource reduction, and work time reduction can significantly increase wellbeing and decrease environmental pressures, therefore creating the possibility for sustainable prosperity without growth.

In order to ensure the highest quality of life with the lowest footprint, we must completely change the goals and rules of the economic game. In a post-growth economy, the current focus on quantitative growth would be replaced by the aim of thriving in a regenerative and distributive economy, one that delivers qualitative wellbeing by meeting the needs of all people within the means of the living planet - as elaborated in the framework of Doughnut Economics.

The markets have proven to be ill-equipped to make the most crucial decisions in our society. For the economy to serve the people, rather than the other way around, people must be given back control over the economy. To change the rules of the game, we need to learn from already existing initiatives. For example, upscaling across the EU the model for not-for-profit cooperatives.

In light of these pressing challenges and stimulating opportunities, we call on the European Union, its Institutions, and Member States to implement:

1. **Post-growth European Institutions:** constitute permanent structures at the Commission, the Council, the Parliament, and within Member States to assess post-growth strategies and pathways.
2. **A European Green Deal beyond growth:** design a new flagship programme shaped around a systemic change approach that aspires to create a thriving future within planetary boundaries, with degrowth as a necessary transition phase towards a post-growth destination.
3. **Beyond growth policies** based on the four principles of:
 - **Biocapacity:** fossil fuel phase-outs, limits to raw material extraction and nature protection and restoration measures for healthy and resilient soils, forests, marine and other ecosystems. E.g., a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, a Resource Justice and Resilience Act including a binding material footprint reduction target and real, area-based nature restoration.

- **Fairness:** fiscal instruments to foster a more equal society by eradicating income and wealth extremes, as well as super-profits. E.g., a carbon wealth tax, both minimum and maximum incomes.
- **Wellbeing for all:** secured access to essential infrastructures via an improved, ecologically-sensitive welfare state. E.g., Universal Basic Services (including the human rights to health, transport, care, housing, education and social protection etc.), job guarantees, price controls for essential goods and services.
- **Active democracy:** citizen assemblies with mandates to formulate socially acceptable sufficiency strategies and strengthen policies based on ecological limits, fairness and wellbeing for all and a stronger role for trade unions. E.g., local needs forum, climate conventions, participatory budgeting.

It has been five years since the first “post-growth” conference. Within civil society and academia, growth-critical ideas have been getting ever stronger. The details of these ideas are being discussed in the European Parliament and with the European Commission right now. Scientific knowledge and policy insights are available to make the ideas of degrowth and post-growth a reality. The crises we face are also opportunities to create a new system that can secure wellbeing for all while allowing for a thriving democratic life and a slower yet sweeter mode of living.

References

1. Fitzpatrick, Nick, Timothée Parrique, and Inès Cosme. 2022. “Exploring degrowth policy proposals: A systematic mapping with thematic synthesis.” *Journal of Cleaner Production* 365: 132764.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2022.132764>
2. Fanning, Andrew L., Daniel W. O'Neill, Jason Hickel, and Nicolas Roux. 2022. “The social shortfall and ecological overshoot of nations.” *Nature Sustainability* 5: 26-36.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-021-00799-z>
3. Kallis, Giorgos, Vasilikis Kostakis, Steffen Lange, Barbara Muraca, Susan Paulson, and Matthias Schmelzer. 2018. ”Research On Degrowth.” *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 43: 291-316.

<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-102017-025941>

4. Hickel, Jason, and Giorgos Kallis. 2019. "Is Green Growth Possible?" *New Political Economy* 25: 469-486.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2019.1598964>
5. Hirvilammi, Tuuli, and Max Koch. 2020. "Sustainable Welfare beyond Growth." *Sustainability* 12(5): 1824.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su12051824>
6. Hickel, Jason. 2020. "What does degrowth mean? A few points of clarification." *Globalizations* 18(7): 1105-1111.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2020.1812222>
7. McGreevy, Steven R., Christoph D. D. Rupprecht, Daniel Niles, *et al.* 2022. "Sustainable agrifood systems for a post-growth world." *Nature Sustainability* 5: 1011-1017.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00933-5>
8. Demaria Federico, François Schneider, Filka Sekulova, and Joan Martinez-Alier. 2013. "What is Degrowth? From an Activist Slogan to a Social Movement." *Environmental Values* 22(2): 191-215.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23460978>
9. Keyßer, Lorenz T., and Manfred Lenzen. 2021. "1.5 ° C degrowth scenarios suggest the need for new mitigation pathways." *Nature Communications* 12: 2676.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-22884-9>
10. Mastini, Riccardo, Giorgos Kallis, Jason Hickel. 2021. "A Green New Deal without growth?" *Ecological Economics* 179: 106832.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2020.106832>
11. Vogel, Jefim, Julia K. Steinberger, Daniel W. O'Neill, William F. Lamb, Jaya Krishnakumar. 2021. "Socio-economic conditions for satisfying human needs at low energy use: An international analysis of social provisioning." *Global Environmental Change* 69: 102287.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2021.102287>

12. Creutzig, Felix, Leila Niamir, Xuemei Bai, *et al.* 2022. “Demand-side solutions to climate change mitigation consistent with high levels of well-being.” *Nature Climate Change* 12: 36-46.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-021-01219-y>

13. Jackson, Tim, and Peter A. Victor. 2019. “Unraveling the claims for (and against) green growth.” *Science* 366(6468): 950-951.

<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aay0749>

14. Jackson, Tim. 2019. “The Post-growth Challenge: Secular Stagnation, Inequality and the Limits to Growth.” *Ecological Economics* 156: 236-246.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2018.10.010>

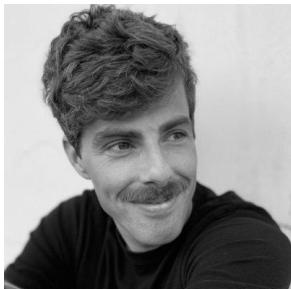
15. Walker, Christine Corlet, Angela Druckman, Tim Jackson. 2021. “Welfare systems without economic growth: A review of the challenges and next steps for the field.” *Ecological Economics* 186: 107066.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2021.107066>

16. Jackson, Tim, Peter A. Victor. 2021. “Confronting inequality in the “new normal”: Hyper-capitalism, proto-socialism, and post-pandemic recovery.” *Sustainable Development* 29(3): 504-516.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2196>

About the authors



Timothée Parrique

Author of "Ralentir ou périr" and "The political economy of degrowth", researcher at the School of Economics and Management of Lund University



Kate Raworth

Author of "Doughnut Economics", Sr Associate at Environmental Change Institute Oxford University, Professor of Practice at Amsterdam UAS



Vincent Liegey

Co-author of "Décroissance, Fake or Not", "Exploring Degrowth, a Critical Guide" and "Un Projet de Décroissance", Engineer & coordinator of Cargonoma, degrowth research & experimentation cooperative



European Environmental Bureau

Largest network of environmental citizens' organisations in Europe



Friends of the Earth Europe

World's largest grassroots environmental network



European Youth Forum

Biggest youth platform in the world



Wellbeing Economy Alliance

Global collaboration of organisations, alliances, movements and individuals

Signatures

Civil society organisations

1. European Environmental Bureau
2. Friends of the Earth Europe
3. European Youth Forum
4. Wellbeing Economy Alliance
5. The Club of Rome
6. International Society for Ecological Economics
7. Institute for Political Ecology
8. Commons Network
9. Economy for the Common Good
10. Degrowth in Action
11. European Policy Centre
12. Ecological Economics For All
13. US Society for Ecological Economics
14. Zero Waste Europe
15. Scientifiques en rébellion
16. WEAll Youth
17. Degrowth Collective
18. France Nature Environnement
19. Seas At Risk
20. SOMO
21. London Mining Network
22. Post Growth Institute
23. Asociación Biodiversa
24. Steady State Manchester
25. Grands-Parents pour le Climat (Belgique francophone)
26. Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia
27. Fridays For Future South Tyrol
28. Climate Vanguard
29. Degrowth Movement Italy (MDF)
30. Les Amis de la Terre Belgique
31. ICLEI Europe
32. HERWIN
33. Vrede vzw
34. LEF/FGE
35. Focus Association for Sustainable Development
36. Policy Lab Slovenia
37. CIDSE
38. Cargonoma, Degrowth research and experimentation cooperative, Budapest
39. Estonian Green Movement
40. Associazione per la decrescita
41. Danish Committee for Health Education
42. ZERO - Association for the Sustainability of the Earth System
43. Teater K
44. PowerShift e.V.
45. Amis de la Terre France
46. European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)
47. SOLIDAR
48. Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability
49. An Taisce - the National Trust for Ireland
50. Ecologistas en Acción
51. REScoop.eu
52. Youth for Climate Belgium
53. Poems for Parliament
54. Wellbeing Economy Lab
55. Canopea
56. Planet-N
57. EKO KROG Slovenia
58. CATAPA
59. Make Mothers Matter
60. European Society for Ecological Economics
61. Hot or Cool Institute gGmbH
62. Zero waste Žalec
63. SDG Watch Europe
64. Good4Trust.org
65. Ekumenická akademie (Ecumenical Academy)
66. Electra Energy Cooperative
67. WFTO- Home of Fair Trade Enterprises
68. Platform for Social Housing
69. CONCORD Europe
70. tools for good
71. Re-set: platform for socio-ecological transformation
72. EUROSOLAR Catalunya
73. Parma Sostenibile
74. Přátelé přírody /Friends of Nature

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|
| 75. | EUROSOLAR.CZ | 113. | Friends of the Earth Estonia |
| 76. | Benzyme Ventures | 114. | Konsent z.s |
| 77. | Ultra sieste | 115. | Garden of Eden Projects Ireland |
| 78. | Zsámboki Biokert Hungary | 116. | Nyt Europa |
| 79. | Bystro | 117. | ArniKa |
| 80. | Lipensko pro život, z.s. | 118. | Amigas da terra |
| 81. | TEREZA Educational Centre | 119. | Surfrider Foundation Europe |
| 82. | Living Economies Forum | 120. | Friends of the Earth Ireland |
| 83. | Fundación vanES Sabayes Spain | 121. | Degrowth.info |
| 84. | Polish Zero Waste Association | 122. | ECOLISE |
| 85. | European Network Against Racism
(ENAR) | 123. | National Society of Conservationists - Friends of the Earth Hungary |
| 86. | Association For Promotion Sustainable Development | 124. | Zero Waste Latvija |
| 87. | The Social Guarantee | 125. | Jordens Vänner - Friends of the Earth Sweden |
| 88. | Sistema B | 126. | Population Matters |
| 89. | Green European Foundation | 127. | An Cláiomh Glas |
| 90. | Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczne EKO-UNIA | 128. | Tactic |
| 91. | Bond Beter Leefmilieu (BBL) | 129. | European Energy Research Alliance |
| 92. | Post Carbon Institute | 130. | greenskills |
| 93. | Fundacja Kupuj Odpowiedzialnie (Buy Responsibly Foundation) | 131. | The Institute of Economics Zagreb |
| 94. | ClimaTalk | 132. | Sustainable Population Australia |
| 95. | Limity jsme my | 133. | Energy Cities |
| 96. | Sciaena | 134. | New Worlds Group |
| 97. | African Circular Economy Network
(ACEN) | 135. | Landsrådet för Sveriges Ungdomsorganisationer |
| 98. | Green Economy Coalition | 136. | Local Futures |
| 99. | eco-union | 137. | Youth and Environment Europe |
| 100. | Nonprofit Ventures | 138. | Waag Futurelab |
| 101. | Rede para o Decrescimento | 139. | The Emergence Network |
| 102. | Alter Kapitae | 140. | Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) |
| 103. | Oikos - Think Tank for Socio-Ecological Change | 141. | Communal Forum on Climate Protection |
| 104. | ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, Europe | 142. | Začni učit!, z.s. |
| 105. | Pro Natura - Friends of the Earth Switzerland | 143. | Vlaamse Jeugdraad |
| 106. | NaZemi | 144. | Aisthanoumai |
| 107. | Hnutí DUHA- Friends of the Earth Czechia | 145. | Green Liberty Lithuania |
| 108. | REVO Prosperidad Sostenible | 146. | Jesuit European Social Centre |
| 109. | Wetlands International Europe | 147. | Laudato Si Movement |
| 110. | Amigos de la Tierra - Friends of the Earth Spain | 148. | Recycling Netwerk Benelux Umweltdachverband |
| 111. | Fundaçao Montescola | 149. | Friends of the Earth Malta |
| 112. | Friends of the Earth Cyprus | 150. | GLOBAL 2000 - Friends of the Earth Austria |
| | | 151. | Milieudefensie – Friends of the Earth Netherlands |

152.	Het Burgerparlement/Le Parlement Citoyen	157.	Association Recherche et Expérimentation sur la Décroissance et la Transition
153.	NOAH – Friends of the Earth Denmark	158.	ACV - CSC
154.	Fridays For Future Austria	159.	Observatoire de la Post-Croissance et de la Décroissance
155.	Syndicat Printamps Écologique		
156.	Za Zemiata – Friends of the Earth Bulgaria		

Academics & experts

1.	Timothée Parrique	39.	Daniele Vico	77.	Mario Pansera
2.	Kate Raworth	40.	Lina Lefstad	78.	James Scott Vandeventer
3.	Vincent Liegey	41.	Camilo Rodriguez	79.	Fernando Andrés Sánchez González
4.	Olivier De Schutter	42.	Matthieu Lietaert	80.	Nika Grabar
5.	Milena Buchs	43.	Jean-Louis Aillon	81.	Elena Hofferberth
6.	Ekaterina Chertkovskaya	44.	Barry McMullin	82.	Dan O'Neill
7.	Robert Costanza	45.	Lucas Remue	83.	Aileen McLeod
8.	Dominique Meda	46.	Max Keijzer	84.	Johana Waldhansová
9.	Eloi Laurent	47.	Giuseppe Massaro	85.	Filka Sekulova
10.	Giorgos Kallis	48.	Lisette von Maltzahn	86.	Gareth Dale
11.	Federico Demaria	49.	Lorenzo Velotti	87.	Anke Schaffartzik
12.	François Schneider	50.	Meera Ghani	88.	Mario Pansera
13.	Eva Fraňková	51.	Riccardo Mastini	89.	Jakub Rok
14.	Jason Hickel	52.	Francesca Magnolo	90.	Ivan Đula
15.	Julia Steinberger	53.	Mladen Domazet	91.	Simone D'Alessandro
16.	Sandrine Dixson-Decleve	54.	Mirjam Scholtens	92.	Doris Fuchs
17.	Adélaïde Charlier	55.	Leila Siebke	93.	Elke Weik
18.	Camille Étienne	56.	Giacomo Luigi Delgado	94.	Max Koch
19.	Tim Jackson	57.	Amelia Elvins	95.	Benjamin Tyl
20.	Nick Fitzpatrick	58.	Martina Logi	96.	Arnaud Diemer
21.	Vedran Horvat	59.	Mathilde Dumoulin	97.	Petter Næss
22.	Alexandra Köves	60.	Gabriel Fabre	98.	Martin Fritz
23.	Tariq Al-Olaimy	61.	Noémie Cadiou	99.	Vasna Ramasar
24.	Silvia Montagnani	62.	Maiko Mathiesen	100.	François Briens
25.	Emma Marzi	63.	Kanika Prajapat	101.	Adam Marshall
26.	Brototi Roy	64.	Till Kellerhoff	102.	Predrag Momčilović
27.	Leonie Saleth	65.	Claudia Fry	103.	Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen
28.	Marceau Challet	66.	Christian Schulz	104.	Adrien Plomteux
29.	Merlin Keitz	67.	Aljoša Slameršak	105.	Alf Hornborg
30.	Juan Pablo Arellano	68.	Óscar Carpintero	106.	Clément Choisne
31.	Claudio Cattaneo	69.	Tommaso Brazzini	107.	Joseba Azkarraga
32.	Nikola Lange	70.	Jesus Martin Gonzalez	108.	Christian Dorninger
33.	Martin Calisto Friant	71.	Mario Díaz Muñoz	109.	Swyngedouw Erik
34.	Emily Meret Bankert	72.	Margarita Mediavilla Pascual	110.	Thomas Smith
35.	Emilie de Bassompierre	73.	Elena Emrick-Schmitz	111.	Hervé Corvellec
36.	David Hofmann	74.	Nathalie Roy	112.	Eduardo Missoni
37.	Milica Kočović De Santo	75.	Lukas Eggler	113.	Manuela Zechner
38.	Myriam Best	76.	Josephine Becker		

Open Letter published all over Europe on day 1 of the EP Beyond Growth Conference (15 May 2023)

114.	Nina Isabella Moeller	159.	Richard Wilkinson	204.	Martin Cerny
115.	Laura Rival	160.	Kimberley Vandenhole	205.	Arnošt Novák
116.	Ana Sofia Poças Ribeiro	161.	Tom Bauler	206.	Fynn M. Schmidt
117.	Michel Pimbert	162.	Félix Garnier	207.	Melen Le Corre
118.	Tilo Meißner	163.	Claire Roumet	208.	Eléonore Fauré
119.	Marion Real	164.	Fabrice Flipo	209.	Milica Kočović De Santo
120.	Eric Ponthieu	165.	Jan Otto Andersson	210.	Lilli Möller
121.	Jennifer B. Hinton	166.	Kate Pickett OBE	211.	Branko Ančić
122.	Peter A. Victor	167.	Kinga Kovacs	212.	Fernando A. Frechosso-Escudero
123.	John Barry	168.	Janne I. Hukkinen	213.	Jean-Michel Hupé
124.	Onofrio Romano	169.	Solène Sureau	214.	Clelia Sirami
125.	Katharina Richter	170.	Julien Vastenaekels	215.	Marc Deconchat
126.	Katerina Brandes	171.	Christian Kerschner	216.	Vanessa Lea
127.	Andri Werner Stahel	172.	Lorenzo Velotti	217.	Julian Carrey
128.	Oriana Rainho Brás	173.	Jakub Kronenberg	218.	Julien Gros
129.	Jennifer Wells	174.	Nathalie Wergles	219.	Mercier Manuel
130.	Helmut Haberl	175.	Sara Pavesio	220.	Florian Debras
131.	Rosemary Venn	176.	Ilona M. Otto	221.	Guasch Cathy
132.	Ben Purvis	177.	Lucía Muñoz Sueiro	222.	Steffen Lange
133.	Orsolya Lazányi	178.	Antoine Tiberj	223.	Dr Beth Stratford
134.	Benjamin Lowe	179.	Benedikt Schmid	224.	Odin Marc
135.	Eeva Houtbeckers	180.	Xavier Gabet	225.	Karine Leblanc
136.	Christopher Boyce	181.	Laure Teulieres	226.	Marianne Blanchard
137.	Ivan Murray	182.	Reynaud Christian	227.	František Jelínek
138.	Ahac Meden	183.	Paul Sutton	228.	Ragueneau Olivier
139.	Pat Devine	184.	Florian Polsterer	229.	Bob Wilson
140.	Robert Winthrop	185.	Patrick Canadas	230.	Patrick Bresnihan
141.	Ester Galende Sánchez	186.	Cécile Renouard	231.	Inge Røpke
142.	Toni Ruuska	187.	Guillaume Le Mailloux	232.	Beatriz Macchione
143.	Jamie Morgan	188.	Tommaso Luzzati	233.	Saes Martin Frébourgfc
144.	Richard Hull	189.	Marie Pratzer	234.	Wolfgang Cramer
145.	Grégoire Wallenborn	190.	Lucia Pezo Alvarez	235.	Elsa Jourdain
146.	Susan Paulson	191.	Amandine Crespy	236.	Laura Schuft
147.	Pasi Heikkurinen	192.	Riccardo Mastini	237.	Emil Weis Brix
148.	Utkuhan Genc	193.	Marta Conde	238.	Mohamed Amine Boussejra
149.	Shivani Kaul	194.	Christophe Coillot	239.	Cédric Sueur
150.	Alexander Paulsson	195.	Albin Emanuel	240.	Malo Mofakhami
151.	Simon De Muynck	196.	Brattberg	241.	Viviane Baladi
152.	Barbora Kleinhamplová	197.	Aiora Zabala	242.	Mathias Rollot
153.	Erik Gomez-Baggethun	198.	Lina Lefstad	243.	Mathieu Chassé
154.	Katherine Trebeck	199.	Phedeas Stephanides	244.	Florence Joly
155.	Eirini Erifyli Tzekou	200.	Sylvie Ferrari	245.	Ethemcan Turhan
156.	Tomislav Medak	201.	Patrizio Ponti	246.	Robert Wade
157.	Giulio Galdi	202.	Nicola Countouris	247.	Joëlle Saey-Volckrick
158.	Barbara Smetschka	203.	Halliki Kreinin		
			Tomáš Imrich Profant		

Open Letter published all over Europe on day 1 of the EP Beyond Growth Conference (15 May 2023)

248.	Favry Anouk	258.	Emilie Letouzey	267.	Marianna Joy
249.	Jenny Ufer	259.	Alex Myerson	268.	Couleentianos
250.	André Barata	260.	Stefanie Gerold	269.	Jean-Louis Martin
251.	Jérémie Cavé	261.	Péter Párdi	270.	Cédric Gaucherel
252.	Guillaume Mandil	262.	Nadia Johanisova	271.	Jennifer Wilkins
253.	Janina Urban	263.	Marco Morosini	272.	Vincent Douzal
254.	Peter Doran	264.	Julien Milanesi	273.	Nicolas Bierne
255.	Iñigo Capellán-Pérez	265.	Cécile Barnaud	274.	Alexandre Gondran
256.	Remi Douvenot	266.	Philippe Borsa	275.	Martine Antona
257.	Tommaso Luzzati				Donnie Maclurcan