

Destabilising the establishment: An introduction

To

degeneration

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need-oriented economy

doughnut economy

economy for the common good

relational society

gift economy

ecosocialism

post-carbon economy

social economy

green economy

degrowth

happy sobriety

solar communism

economy of permanence

social and solidary economy

zero marginal cost society

society of frugal abundance

What does a sustainable economy look like?

‘économie douce’

positive economy

circular economy

sharing economy

transition towns

convivial economy

“centrale économique”

symbiotic economy

participatory economy

cinderella economy

economic democracy

sufficiency economy

butterfly economy

solar economy

economy-in-society-in-nature

green growth
green economy

natural capitalism

circular
economy

platform capitalism

degrowth

steady-state
economy

postgrowth

New Economy

prosperity
without growth

History of the concept

1979: “décroissance” used as a translated title for one of Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen’s book *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process* (1971)

2001: the concept “sustainable degrowth” is coined as an alternative to “sustainable development”

2002: “Unmaking development, remaking the world”

2003: first book on degrowth (*Objectif décroissance*)

2004: first degrowth magazine; *La décroissance, le journal de la joie de vivre*

2006: creation of the Degrowth Party in France

2007: creation of the collective Research & Degrowth

2008: décroissance enters the English-speaking world; first academic conference in Paris (and then Barcelona 2010, Montreal 2011, Venice 2012, Leipzig 2014, Budapest 2016)

2014: publication of *Degrowth: A new vocabulary for a new era*

planned obsolescence
missile word
heteronomy
anti-utilitarianism
imperial mode of living
entropy
ecosocialism
conviviality
debt audit
utopia
frugal abundance
pluriverse
equity
artisanship
economy of permanence
downshifting
emergency
antiproduktivism
divestment
environmental justice
planetary boundaries
decommodification
EROI
aileation
commons
ecological
resource caps
political ecology
direct democracy
vernacular
cooperatives
diversal
circularity
basic income
repolitisation
disobedience
dematerialisation
smallness
self-reliance
environmental justice
planetary boundaries
steady state economy
commodity frontier
societal metabolism
postgrowth
care
postwork
New Economy
cooperatives
principle of responsibility
postwork
dépense
work sharing
divestment
social limits of growth
decolonisation of the imaginary
public money
rebound effect
solidarity
social acceleration
community currency
shadow work
buen vivir
sustainability
nowtopia
voluntary simplicity
social limits of growth
unequal exchange
self-institution
reciprocity
peak oil
sobriety
bioeconomics
economism
pedagogy of disaster
deep ecology
sufficiency
not-for-profit
gratuity
technique
non-reformist reforms
post-extractivism
GDP
ubuntu
unequal exchange

Degrowth **is**...

- a network of ideas; a frame connecting multiple lines of thoughts and strategies
- a critique of modernity (growth, progress, development)
- a “decolonisation of the imaginary” of Growth; an exit from the economy
- a utopia = deconstruction + reconstruction
- both a process and a destination
- anti-capitalist
- applicable to developed countries only

Degrowth **is not**...

- the inverse of growth (i.e. negative GDP-growth) or austerity (cut in public spending)
- a shrinkage of everything (selective degrowth); and especially not population
- an economic concept; a scientific concept
- a blueprint for another socioeconomic system
- a return to the past
- a universal aspiration (Degrowth in Europe, Buen Vivir in South America, Ubuntu in South Africa, Economy of Permanence in India)

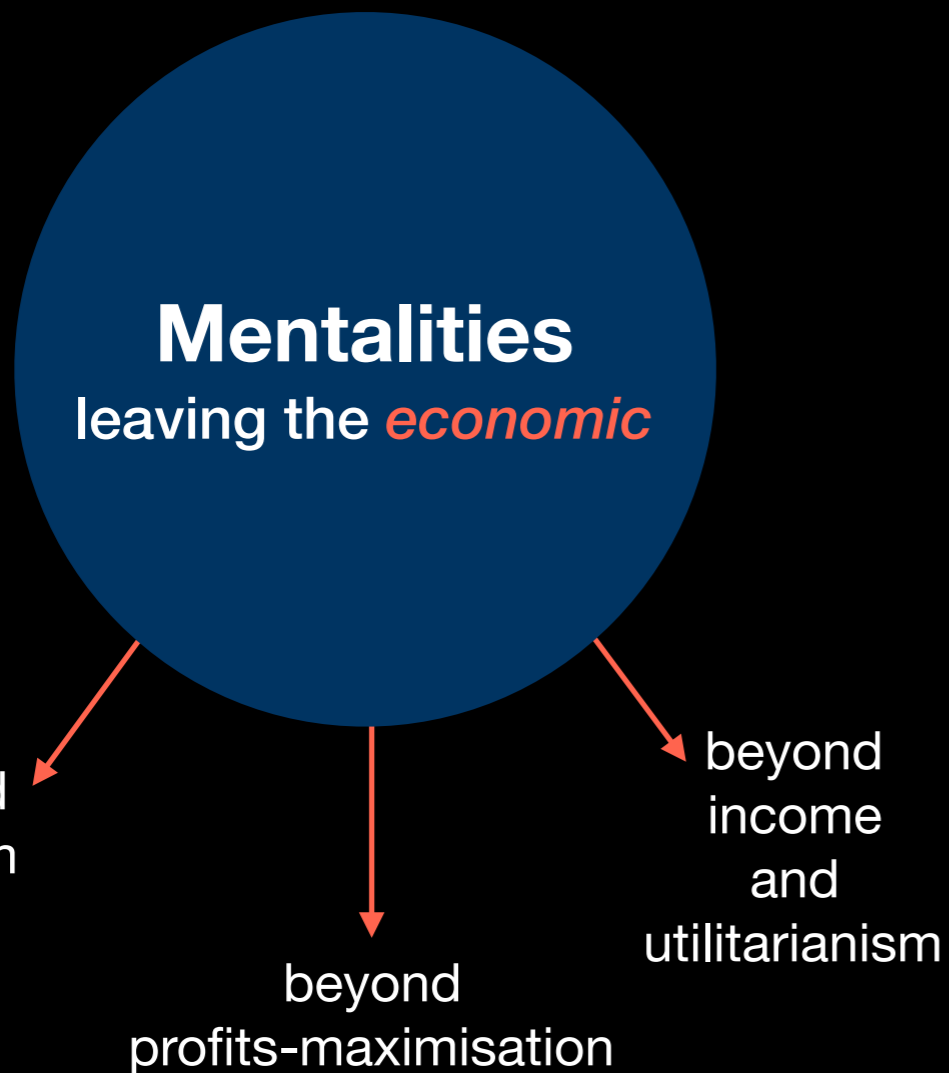
What is **degrowth**?

“An **equitable downscaling** of production and consumption that increases human well-being and enhances ecological conditions at the **local and global** level, in the **short and long-term** (and which is) offered as a **social choice**, not imposed as an external imperative for environmental or other reasons.” (Kallis and Schneider, 2008)

DESECONOMISATION

#AutonomyFromEconomy

IMAGINARY



REAL



Degrowth is an...

economy-in-society-in-nature*

with

financial-in-social-in-moral incentives

- 1 care
- 2 equity
- 3 autonomy
- 4 conviviality
- 5 sufficiency
- 6 proportion
- 7 synchronisation

extraction

production

allocation

consumption

disposal

from global overexploitation to local stewardship, reciprocity, and permacircularity

from productivist for-profit waged-labour corporations to the care of autonomous artisans and the vernacular domain

from commodification, global markets, and general-purpose money to commoning, gratuity, and special-purpose monies

from the utilitarianism of isolated hyperconsumers to the relationality, solidarity, and frugality of autonomous users

from planned obsolescence and waste to collective reuse, convivial repair, and biomimetic recycling

Degrowth is both



a “missile word” or
“semantic bomb” (Ariès, 2005)



a “construction word” (Ariès, 2009)



6 sources of degrowth

1. **Cultural source:** critiques of Development
2. **Meaning of life and wellbeing:** reflections on the purpose of human existence
3. **Ecology source:** Against the exploitation of nature
4. **Bioeconomy source:** No infinite growth on a finite planet
5. **Democracy source:** degrowth will be democratic or will not be
6. **Justice source:** Against the exploitation of other human beings

Replace	Promote
I	we
consumers	citizens
private	community
privatisation	shared ownership
individual	social
profit	prosperity
exploitation	sharing
establishment	empowerment
wants	needs
competition	interdependence
more	enough
convenience	slow
individual ownership	rental
greed	empathy
linear	circular
monetary wealth	participation

3 levels of degrowth

1. **INDIVIDUAL**: voluntary simplicity

Example: slow food, slow travel, downshifting, minimalism, localism, divestment

2. **COLLECTIVE**: collective experiments

Example: local currencies, community gardens, Community Supported Agriculture, time banks, credit unions, collective housing, workers-directed cooperatives, repair workshops, sharing networks

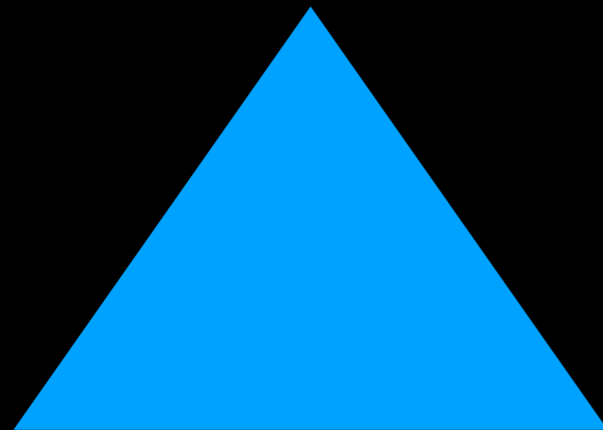
3. **POLITICAL**: public policies

Example: work time reduction, basic income, banking reforms, carbon caps, redistributive taxes, advertisement bans

Strategies for degrowth

3 attitudes towards change:

opposition



reformism

alternatives

4 spheres of change:

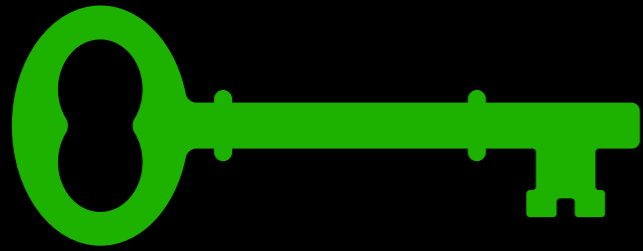
household

community



market

State



PROPERTY

basic income (UBI)

gratuity (UBS)

max. income
& wealth

resource caps



WORK

work time
reduction

job guarantee



MONEY

sovereign
money

complementary
currency