

Transformative ideas

Towards the SDGs

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Post-pandemic hopes and realities

- The pandemic exposed structural issues in our societies and set back progress towards SDGs
- Some of us hoped that the post-pandemic period would bring systemic change, but this did not really happen
- Europe (and the world) is faced with a 'polycrisis', and the challenges are immense and to some extent unprecedented
- We need to start thinking about innovative solutions, and (luckily) there are already many ideas out there

(Some) transformative ideas



Universal Basic
Services



Job Guarantee



Beyond Growth



Minimum Income
Schemes



Workplace
Democracy

**Transformative ideas –
ensuring a just share
of progress for all**

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Some of these ideas are discussed in Arabadjieva, Countouris, Fabris and Zwysen (eds), 'Transformative ideas – ensuring a just share of progress for all' (ETUI 2023)

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Fulfilling basic needs

Universal Basic Services

- Collectively generated activities that serve the public interest, essential and sufficient to enable people to meet their needs, where everyone is entitled to services that meet their needs without requirement to pay
- Healthcare, child and elderly-care, education, housing, transport, information technology, energy, etc.
- Reduce inequality, have long-term social returns on investment, promote solidarity and sustainability
- An alternative to Universal Basic Income (UBI), unconditional cash transfers

Fulfilling basic needs

Minimum Income Schemes

- Means-tested and needs-based social assistance benefits that provide a safety net for those in and out of work who lack access to unemployment benefits
- Mitigate economic hardship and ensure a decent minimum standard of living
- Already exist in all EU MS and other countries, but often inadequate
- Need to be set at a level at or above the poverty threshold and to be inclusive, and can benefit those facing financial insecurity and discrimination
- Council Recommendation on MIS 2023 → Directive?

Engaging in the world of work

Job Guarantee

- Intervention by the state to interrupt long spells of joblessness, by offering a direct job and wage to those seeking but unable to find remunerative work
- Voluntary scheme that comes instead of unemployment or other social benefits, for those who want to engage in work as a means to social inclusion, fulfilment, skill development
- Often aimed at generating public benefit to communities, so can have social, environmental and economic benefits, and contribute to ensuring a just transition

Engaging in the world of work

Workplace Democracy

- Democratic involvement and participation of workers and oversight in their workplaces
- Structures for workers to be represented, informed and consulted on company decisions, and be able to participate meaningfully
- Different structures exist in MS and there is a Directive on information and consultation, but often not sufficient → JT Legal Framework?
- Participation empowers workers and fosters democratic values, promotes better outcomes for workers, as well as social and environmental sustainability

Beyond (GDP) Growth

Alternative Indicators

Measuring wellbeing

Doughnut Economics

Respecting social and planetary boundaries

Wellbeing Economy

Economy that serves people and planet

Post-Growth

Recognising limits to growth, focus on alternative goals

Degrowth

Planned reduction of ecological impact, while improving wellbeing

Sustainable Welfare

Satisfaction of needs within planetary limits

In the wake of the pandemic, many of us thought that we would see more transformative policies to address systemic issues – social, environmental and economic – but this has not happened.

Why do you think this is? What are the main challenges that policymakers face in pushing forward truly transformative ideas?