

## **Debating work and growth. Inseparable twins?**

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The ecological crisis, stagnating growth rates and unemployment, gender inequalities as well as the growing social divide call for an urgent social-ecological transformation. Such a radical shift fundamentally challenges one of the key categories of any socio-economic system: Work. Given the essential social, ecological and economic role of work, it is crucial to explore how work can be conceptualised, transformed and organised in a sustainable economy. This special session covers this question in an interactive way, facilitated by an interdisciplinary group of researchers from all over Europe.

The session starts with a participatory introduction, revolving around the meaning of work and its features and properties, and should be followed by four short inputs. These elements will provide the basis for the centrepiece of the session: an inclusive and in-depth fishbowl discussion, encouraging all participants to share their knowledge, ideas, and creativity. This discussion aims at bringing actors with different scientific and institutional backgrounds into dialogue in order to envision how work could and should be organised in a sustainable economy. The format facilitates knowledge-sharing as well as mutual learning among the participants, and makes use of their different regional and societal backgrounds.

The four inputs mentioned above should represent spotlights on current research and practice. We thereby aim at combining conceptual reflections with institutionalist viewpoints and empirical insights: We envision the session to involve an input on a new theoretical definition of work and “sustainable” work, based on the eco-feminist concept of (Re) productivity and the human scale to development approach. The second input might discuss the interlinkages between workers’ rights and labour law, the prevailing growth paradigm among governments and financial institutions, and the growing ecological and economic crisis. This should be followed by two empirical investigations: The first might address the implications that a working-time reduction might have for resource consumption and well-being. The second might present insights from a case study on firms where working time was reduced, discussing major barriers and supporting factors for implementing working-time reduction on the firm level.