Sustainable work for all in a post-growth society - Local currencies as a leverage

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Economics is a societal function

1. Efficient (= ascendent & resilient)  
2. allocation

3. of (limited) resources  
4. to the wellbeing of all  
   (humans & other species)
Economic ‘infrastructure’ in the Industrial era

*Centralised energy, mass production & financial growth*

1. Political & economic ‘laws’  
2. Bank issued money

3. Fossil based production  
4. Mass consumption
Current bank money creation is structurally imbalanced and artificially scarce → making ‘growth’ necessary

Banks (with government ‘fiat’)

1. € = digitally created = exponentially growing (unlimited)

2. To be paid back by participation in real economy on a limited planet

Real productivity must grow to avoid monetary collapse of ‘the’ economy

Economic actors
Consequences of this money scheme

• Means-end reversal:
  – From economics serving the well-being of people & planet
  – To people & planet serving the growth of ‘the’ economy

• Work is defined as being employed for contributing to private profit of a company

• So the solution is to redefine the aim as ‘contributing to thriving communities’

• and then explore means & models to get there (community based with government support)
Types of work needed for the well-being of all

Sustainability: keeping the balance

Self work

Social work

Productive work

Care work

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Types of work needed (and out of balance in growth economics)

Sustainability: keeping the balance

Politics support growth economy

Competitiveness

Productivity

Self work

Productive work

Care work

Social work

Inequality

Human survival
Classical ‘correction’ mechanisms

• Social wellfare only by government ‘redistribution of money’ (so reinforces growth logic and public debt)

• Contradictory legislation:
  – Taxes and bills only payable in € (so competition and extraction are necessary)
  – Only *excesses* of extraction & exploitation are curbed
  – Companies *need* € profit to survive, and so... (Dieselgate, planned obsolescence, offshores, etc) = systemic!

• EU support for green, inclusive and circular economy, but without touching € monopoly (so requiring growth, using biomass & trash to ‘feed the industry’...
Gender implications

- Men are seen as more productive (less care tasks)
- Technical skills bring more productivity/profit
- Care for future generations = non-productive

- Feminism 1st generation = claim same power as men → inequality between classes/ethnic groups
- Eco-feminism = claim re-definition and re-valorisation of all roles (male and female)
- Women’s definition of work (four roles in balance) as an alternative
Sustainable systems = two parameters + governance

**Resilience** ‘Niches’
Diversity and connection (pioneers)

**Ascendency**, ‘Regime’
Streamlined, linear (monoculture)

(Source: Ulanowicz et al, 2009)
Work: from ‘being employed’ to ‘contributing to the collective well-being’ (or: fulfilling the ‘economic function’)

Gig economy

Local economy

Jobs

Mutual Aid Networks
Time Banks, LETS
Gift economy
Repair cafe

Sustainability: keeping the balance

Self work
Productive work
Care work
Social work
Sustainability governance: creating legal spaces for (resilient) innovative economic and monetary models

- Legislation to facilitate circular & commoning economy
- Legislation to limit/repair excesses & externalities of exploitation & extraction
- Support use of ‘community oriented’ complementary currencies
- End the ‘fiat’ monopoly of growth/bank money!
Feel free to share these slides

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