

‘Post-Growth in World Politics: Exploring the Strange within the Familiar’

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European Workshops in International Studies (EWIS), Brussels, 1–4 July 2020

This workshop challenges research in International Relations (IR) and beyond that fails to interrogate the role of economic growth as a meta-objective in world politics. While mainstream approaches presume economic rationalities to be drivers of inter-state relations, advocates of critical perspectives identify permanent expansion as a trait inherent to global capitalism. Moving beyond this debate, we offer three interventions, making the strange (post-growth/degrowth/non-growth/a-growth) more visible within the familiar (an international system founded on the principle of economic growth). Specifically, the workshop (1) identifies real-world transnational alternatives to the growth paradigm; (2) empirically traces their genesis, thereby examining obstacles and limits to post-growth initiatives, transnational links between them, as well as key proponents of and opponents to such alternative visions for society; and (3) assesses, from a comparative perspective, the extent to which these diverse initiatives have spurred redefinitions of collective understandings of the ‘good life’.

To ground these interventions in transdisciplinary exchange, we bring together scholars working across different fields of study, such as IR, International Political Economy, economic history, ecological economics or human/political ecology. Although important advances have been made, we have yet to take post-growth more seriously as an *empirical* phenomenon. Despite activism by a growing community of post-growth proponents, intellectual effort has focused on elaborating the theoretical and/or normative foundations of such agendas. We therefore still know little about what happens when post-growth ideas encounter the institutions and organisations that govern the global political economy. The workshop provides an opportunity for more closely exploring the international and transnational dynamics of post-growth politics in relation to the prevailing growth imperative.

We invite unpublished submissions from colleagues committed to the empirical study of post-growth in world politics. While we are agnostic as to the concrete methods used, it is important that the papers be more interested in the manifestations of post-growth in certain cases or sites than in the desirability or necessity of post-growth. Suitable papers speak to the following themes (which broadly map onto our three interventions) or closely related ones:

- Political battles:
 - What subnational, national, supranational, international and transnational actors are involved in the promotion and global diffusion of post-growth ideas? What coalitions have emerged? How are these agendas discursively framed?
 - Who opposes post-growth ideas? How is this opposition organised? What counter-frames are employed?
- Political implementation:
 - To what extent have post-growth ideas been put into practice beyond local initiatives? If so, how?
 - What have been key obstacles to implementation? Why have they been overcome in some cases but not others?
- Wider impact:
 - To what extent has welfare (the ‘good life’) been redefined through the influence of post-growth ideas?
 - To what extent has welfare been measured and provided differently?