

Europe and the World at a Glance  
**FRESACH GROWTH CHARTER**

### **Prosperity through growth**

The widespread prosperity in the Northern Hemisphere, especially in Europe and the USA, is due to the strong economic growth in which many people participate - albeit to varying degrees. Social and economic inequality has not been significantly reduced, and prosperity is based on the overexploitation of natural resources and the exploitation of the Global South, including slavery.

An end to growth across social classes and regions - without massive redistribution - would entrench existing inequality and social injustice. On the other hand, a continuation of current growth patterns would not fundamentally change inequality and lead to a climate catastrophe. Because the increasing global warming is caused by humans, we live in the Anthropocene.

### **Fairer globalization**

Meeting even modest climate goals requires an intelligent combination of technical innovations and behavioral changes from all of us. The transformation in the production and use of energy plays a key role. It's about saving energy, energy efficiency and sustainable forms of energy production. Cooperation projects between regions with different climatic conditions and resource availability could lead to a new, sustainable and fair form of globalization, in case they are based on open exchange of knowledge and fair trading conditions.

The European Union wants to become a pioneer of such a cooperation with its southern neighbors - especially states in Africa. Long periods of inhumane colonial exploitation and a purely economic neo-colonialism must be followed by a new cooperation on equal terms - this is also because the rich north produced the majority of climate-damaging emissions for over two centuries, and the - poorer - south still suffers from the consequences.

### **Broad communication**

A sustainable world with growth that is fair for all people and nations must also be a world of increased population engagement. The new growth pattern from energy transformation to sustainable nutrition - here we should refer to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) - requires profound changes in all matters, from political decision-making processes to corporate management and into the personal sphere of the individual.

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This sometimes triggers insecurities and fears, but on the other hand arouses resistance and is repeatedly exploited by political forces for their own purposes, whose goals lie in particular interests and not in prosperity and justice for all. Only through broad discussions and calm communication designed as a search and communication process the people can be persuaded to take part in these change processes.

Political dictates for ecological behavior contradict our democratic achievements as well as fundamental and freedom rights, but the growth and energy transformation must not fail due to our democracy because its instruments are misused in a senseless and inappropriate manner. We, the state and society, need a new, comprehensive enlightenment as a democratic process of knowledge- and reason-based approach to solutions and compromises.

### **New growth prospects**

Future growth must be understood in many senses; it must be social and cultural, environmentally and humanly compatible. It must lead to greater social justice. It must place more emphasis on social cohesion and include all social classes and regions. This newly understood growth must lead to a culture of respect - towards all people, indeed all living beings and nature itself. Last but not least, it must be based on innovations that are always checked for their social results and consequences.

The new growth must lead to a more open culture of discussion with which conflicts and contradictions - especially when pursuing climate policy goals - are dealt with and resolved. And it must also take seriously and include into the discourse all statements made by artists who want to contribute to the transformation of our society.

### **Sustainable future**

The end of growth - in the traditional sense - must be the beginning of a new, enlightened civil society for which future growth is lived, organized and pursued in the spirit of sustainability - locally and regionally as well as nationally, European and globally, in any field, organizational and institutional context. Only with and from this perspective, as a consensus of global society, does the dynamic growth that sustains life and is thus able to shape relationships in line with human dignity and responsibility.

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Dr. Hannes Swoboda, ETG-Präsident