

Greens call for citizens' assembly to choose what economy we have after coronavirus



5 June 2020

UK citizens should be allowed to choose how the Government uses public money as it prioritises which sectors will survive if the economy shrinks due to the coronavirus crisis.

Ahead of Degrowth Day on 6 June [1], the Greens have published a report [2] which makes clear how the Government can help manage the potential crash in a way that ensures we are all better off with a smaller economy.

Following the Office for Budget Responsibility's prediction that the UK economy could shrink by more than a third [3], Green Party finance spokesperson Molly Scott Cato has set out the government must ensure we emerge a fairer and more sustainable society.

Scott Cato said:

"Projections suggest that we may lose as much as a third of our economic output as a result of the Coronavirus. If that is the same third that was causing pollution, creating carbon emissions, and generating stress and mental illness, then we can consider ourselves better off with a smaller economy.

"Since most companies will only survive as a result of the investment of public money, citizens have a right to choose what sort of economy we become after the crisis either through our elected representatives or a citizens' assembly.

"We can direct the emergency economic support in such a way that it breathes life into the long overdue proposals for a Green New Deal and energises the transition to a sustainable economy.

“With the impact coronavirus is having on the economy it feels inevitable that we are going to see jobs lost and so we must commit to ensuring that workers are retrained and reskilled for the many high-skilled and well-paid jobs that are essential to enable us to build our economy back better.”

The report also sets out how the costs of preventing the economy from descending into a recession could be borne by the wealthier members of society, ensuring that we come out of the pandemic a more equal society as well as one more ready to tackle the accelerating climate emergency.

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.degrowth.info/en/globalday/#:~:text=The%20next%20Global%20Degrowth%20Day,life%20for%20all%20is%20possible!>

2

The report “Less is More: How To Be Better Off With A Small Economy” [is available to read here](#)

3

<https://obr.uk/coronavirus-analysis/>

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