

EUROPE'S TRANSFORMATION:
WHERE PEOPLE MATTER

www.growthintransition.eu/conference2018/

14-15 NOVEMBER 2018 AUSTRIA CENTER VIENNA

Call to Action

1. We do not wait for the future – we shape it!

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) lay out a clear vision for a sustainable future. The EU responds to the SDGs with a strong strategic approach, recognising the fundamental challenge of contributing to prosperous societies and human well-being, while fully embracing the boundary conditions of the planetary ecosystems and resources. A robust follow-up and review mechanism for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires a solid framework of indicators and statistical data to monitor progress, and annual reporting based on an integrated assessment logic, to inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders.

ECO-INNOVATION

3. In general, eco-innovation is enabled under EU environmental law. However, environmental legislation is often based on current technology or designed for classical business models and production sectors. Thus, while the goals of the legislation are still valid, the means to deliver them may no longer be the most appropriate. Policy initiatives should support innovative business models. Governments can help innovative companies to overcome barriers to market entry.

Examples of behaviour changing principles related to circular economy or climate change may also foster inspiration among practitioners.

Fair pricing in order to guarantee ecological and social responsible production will enhance eco-innovative business models, too. In this context, the bio-economy as a future-proof economic concept enables a more sustainable use of natural resources. Policy initiatives, such as the EU strategy on bio-economy may fuel the circular economy and should support eco-innovative solutions.

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SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

4. The transition to a more sustainable economy is strongly supported, or even requires, a transition in the financial systems. The mobilisation of private capital is a key enabler and a precondition for the transition. The fundamental integration of strong sustainability considerations into the logic of investment decisions is an essential component to change towards a sustainable economy. The European Union's legislative initiative to pursue ambitious targets regarding Sustainable Finance, proposing effective regulations in accordance to the commitments made at the climate summit in Paris 2015, is an important step in this direction.

DEMOCRACY

5. EU and national decision makers should strengthen the active involvement of citizens in shaping the transformation process towards sustainability. The participants call upon the European Commission and national leaders to address the relevant issues such as decarbonisation, circular economy, sustainable management of natural resources, mitigation of climate change and digitalisation in the framework of the ongoing EU citizens' dialogues and consultations.

More opportunity for citizen engagement in the creation of knowledge and action at the local or city level should be stimulated and seen as essential to the transition towards a sustainable society.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

6. More research to address the multiple knowledge gaps is needed to provide a strong knowledge base in support of successful implementation. Particular emphasis needs to be put on synergies and trade-offs between the different SDGs and the corresponding sub-targets. Further, more empirical research into the environmental, economic, and social impacts of new trends, such as collaborative consumption or service-based business models, bio-economy, is urgently needed. Consequently, a more focussed, strong systemic,

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and strategic approach towards these issues under Horizon Europe is needed.

SUSTAINABILITY MUSEUM/FACTORY/LABORATORY

7. As to make sustainability visible, we recommend the foundation of a Museum/Social Innovation Ideas Factory/Laboratory for Sustainability Development. At this 'museum' creative, communicative and reflective spaces should be opened up - people need to be able to feel and grab sustainability.

This museum should have a physical, virtual and strong social network dimension. It should be a space that leads to actionable co-created sustainability approaches.

IS THE MEDIA ENCOURAGING TRANSFORMATION?

8. In a changing landscape of media, and trust in information, strong support for reliable, trustworthy and critical information is an essential component of a mature democratic debate on sustainability. A better understanding of media logic(s), can lead to better framing of messages, and analysis and empower citizens as they connect information better to their everyday life.

KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY

9. In a digitalised, knowledge-based society, the creation of exchange value - wealth - has shifted from material goods to knowledge and ideas. Using the potential of this shift in society to strengthen citizens and businesses to make more sustainable choices, based on better, easily available, and appropriate information is a priority.

At different stages of the new life-long learning principle, core understanding of sustainability should be strongly embedded.

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INTERNATIONALISATION

10. Participants welcome the initiative Growth in Transition as a fruitful platform to explore and discuss instruments of cross-sector implementation of the SDGs and to foster the transition towards a sustainable future. They would like to see this initiative to further extend on European level and are prepared to participate in it.

The Platform should include a stronger global dimension, recognising Europe's impact and global footprint, and the need to contribute to stronger global governance towards ambitious implementation of the SDGs.



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