

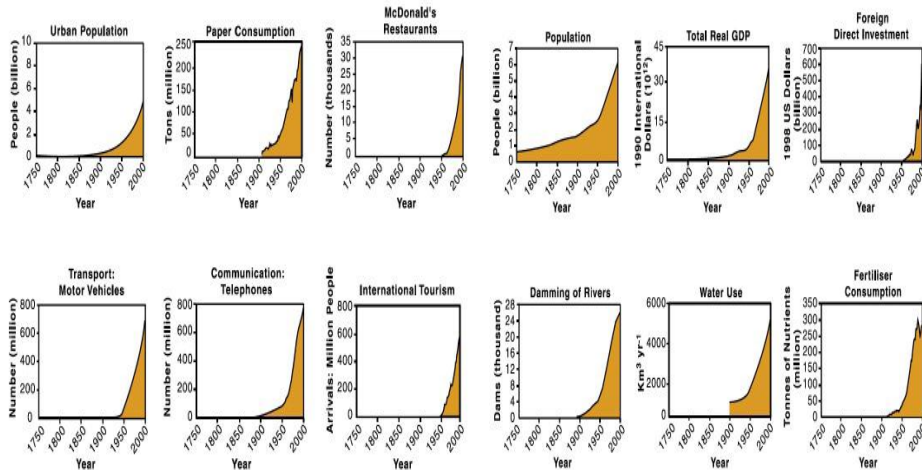
## Do we need a new kind of growth?

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### The “Great Acceleration”: Growth is the defining feature of our era



Growth of human activity (global scale) 1750---2000

Source:

## GDP growth defining our political agenda

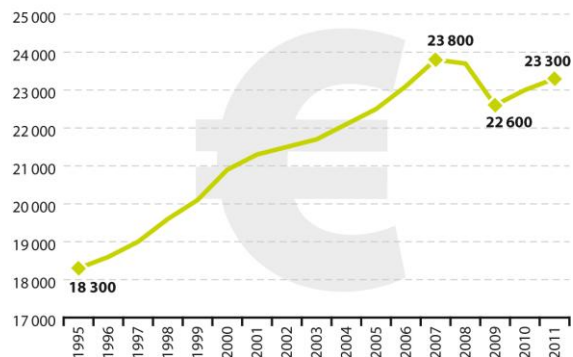
### GDP growth

- as the motor and benchmark for economic progress
- as a means to reduce poverty and social inequality
- as a source of revenues for ever expanding public budgets
- as –still – *the main* indicator for “well being”
- as a new model to solve environmental problems: green growth?

## Years of economic growth interrupted

- GDP grew fairly constantly in the EU until 2007
- After the 2008 ‘crash’ the economy started to contract, shrinking 4.6 % in 2009
- Baltic states were hit hardest by the crisis

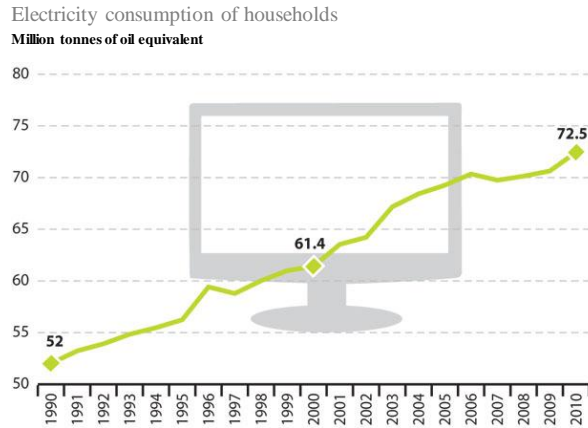
Real GDP per capita, EU-27  
Euros (deflated)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tsdec100](#))

## Households using more and more electricity

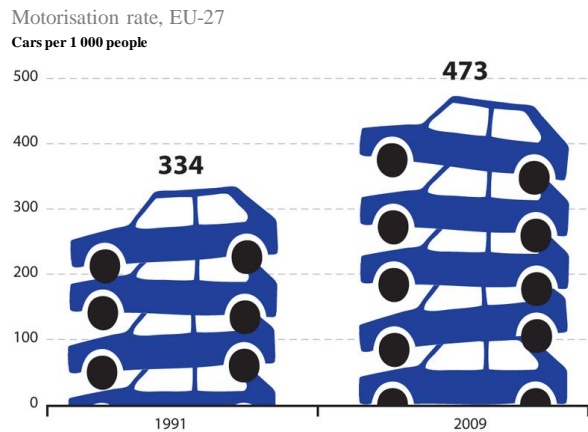
- Electricity use by households has grown fairly constantly in the EU
- It has risen by about 40 % over the past 20 years
- The 'rebound effect' has offset technological improvements



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tsdpc310](#))

## More and more cars on the road

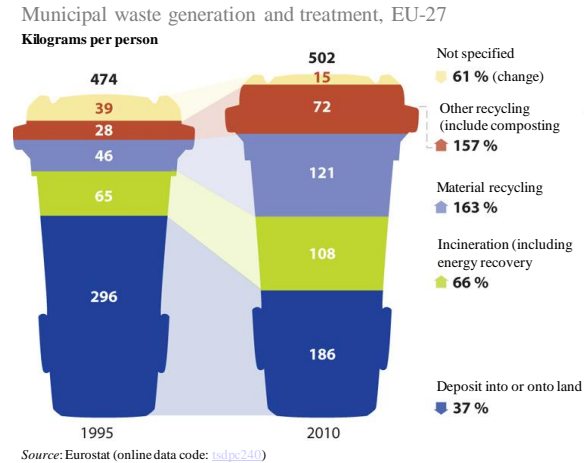
- The number of cars per 1 000 people has grown by 40 % since 1991
- Huge differences exist between Member States
- In nine Member States there is at least one car for every second person



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tsdpc340](#))

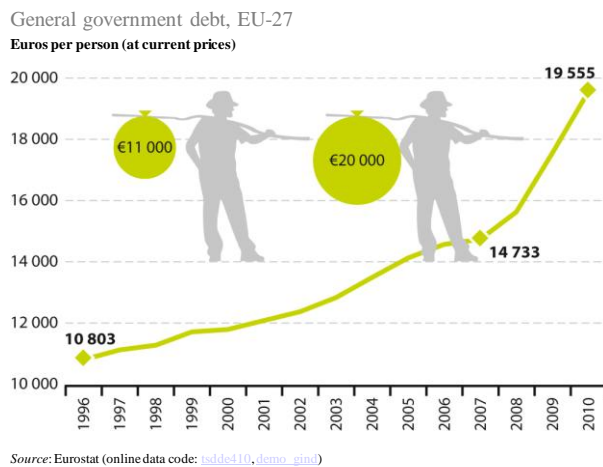
## More and more waste being generated

- Waste generation rose from 1995 to 2002 but has remained stable since
- Waste treatment by incineration, recycling and composting has risen remarkably
- Therefore less waste needs to be buried in landfill



## Government debt per person has also grown

- Public debt per person (in current prices) has almost doubled in the past 15 years, while the inflation rose by only 30 % during this period
- The sharp rise since 2007 reflects the effects of the economic crisis



## 7.7 Long-term unemployment trends

- People unemployed for more than a year are considered long-term unemployed
- From 1994 to 2008 long-term unemployment has shown a falling trend in the EU
- People who lost their jobs at the onset of the crisis will increasingly join the ranks of the long-term unemployed

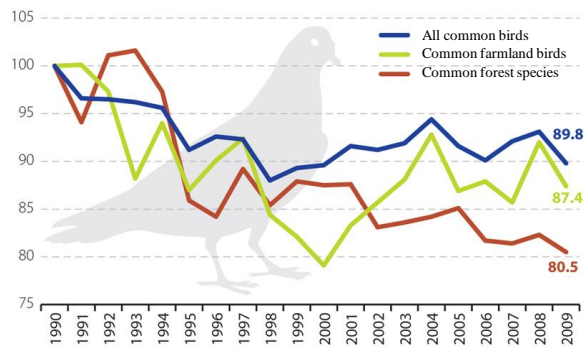


Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tsdsc330](#))

## Changes in bird numbers

Common bird index, EU

Index 1990 = 100

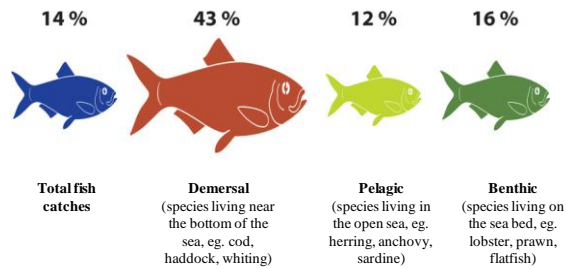


Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tsdnr100](#))

## Over-fishing of endangered fish stocks

- There has been continuous over-fishing in EU-managed waters since 1994
- Demersal species (living near or at the bottom of the sea) are under most pressure
- Over-fishing also poses economic risks for the fishing sector

Fish catches from stocks outside safe biological limits:  
Status of fish stocks managed by the EU in the North-East Atlantic, 2010

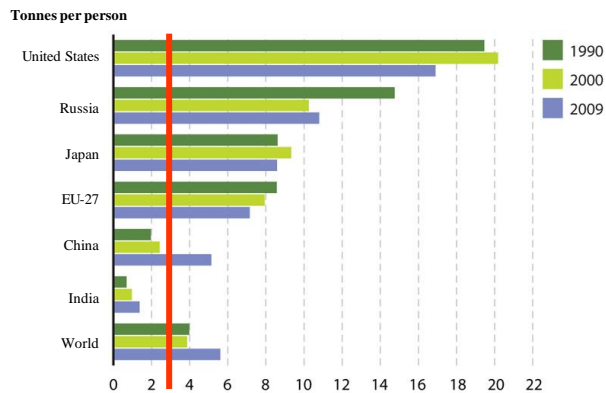


Source: European Commission services, ICES (online data code: [isdnr110](#))

## CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per person

- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per person have fallen in the USA, Russia and the EU
- Emissions per person have grown in China and India, but their levels are still well below those of industrialised countries
- Since 2007, China's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have been above the global average of 4.3 tonnes per person

Global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per person from fuel combustion



Source: International Energy Agency

## The growth-model – part of the problem!

### Our growth

- ...was it just not big enough?
- ... or was not „intelligent“, not „innovative“ enough to solve our problems?

### Obvious limits of the growth-model:

- *Environment*: no endless growth on a planet with boundaries (overuse of natural resources) → envi crises
- *Economy/ Financially*: overuse of financial resources → economic/ financial crises
- *Society*: social inequality despite GDP-growth

more comprehensively. For a long time, GDP has been used as the primary indicator for wellbeing and for economic and societal progress. Today there is a consensus in scientific, political and civil society spheres that GDP has clear limits as the key indicator for identifying progress in societies. Increasing growth rates no longer necessarily entail an improvement in quality of life. There are

## „optimistic“ outlook

IMF yesterday (jan 15), worldwide:

- 2013 + 2,4%
- 2014 + 3,2%
- 2015 + 3,4%
- 2016 + 3,5%

not a single word on negative consequences!

## any vision?

- SDS is dead
- no energy and climate goals after 2020?
- any debate on the Stern or TEEB report within the ecofin council
- recycling of envi promises (like: stopp the loss pf biodiversiry)



## The paradigm shift to a **new development** model

- A new kind of "green" growth or a new sustainable development model?
  - Human well-being and prosperity in the centre; GDP wrong indicator
  - Respecting planetary boundaries and environment
  - 'Beyond GDP' = beyond growth: we need more than a new kind of measurement
- need sustainable development

... not easy to find a path the majority  
wants to follow



**EURONATUR** STIFTUNG

**Thank you very much for your attention!**

For further information:

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.sdo-observatory>