

Postgrowth and Wellbeing

“Transition to a postgrowth economic order is now becoming much more widely accepted as essential to long-term social and environmental wellbeing. But the implications for the quality and provision of welfare have hitherto been little researched. This conceptually challenging but at the same time empirically grounded discussion provides a much-needed addition to the literature of the degrowth movement”.

—**Kate Soper** (Emerita Professor of Philosophy at London Metropolitan University)

“Like it or not, growth may be coming to an end. How to sustain welfare without growth is a core question for our times. This book presents the boldest attempt to think what viable welfare systems a global steady state.”

—**Giorgos Kallis** (Research Professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona)

“At a time when leading economists are horrified by the spectre of secular stagnation affecting advanced capitalist economies, theorists of ‘postgrowth’ and a global ‘steady-state economy’ embrace the idea that its arrival might even enhance human wellbeing and needs satisfaction. But who knows what kind of views our future selves, even our descendants, may form about the requisites of wellbeing and the good life? Are we trapped in the social practices of mindless consumerism/productivism and GDP fetishism or ready to consider the worth of an economy that minimizes ecologically harmful levels of resource extraction and waste production? Büchls and Koch provide a concise, systematic and crystal clear account of what social sciences (including psychology and philosophy) have to

offer on these questions—a critical account that is clinically clean of jargon and alarmist gesturing”.

—**Claus Offe** (Professor Emeritus of Political Sociology at the Hertie School of Governance)

“Endless economic growth will destroy the planet, but a postgrowth economy threatens security and wellbeing. Büchs and Koch provide an honest and concise account of the dilemma and a guide to some ways forward.”

—**Ian Gough** (Emeritus Professor of Social Policy at the University of Bath; Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics)

“Concise and well-written, this book offers a historical and comparative perspective on the changing relationship between wellbeing, economic growth and ecological perspectives as they intersect with the welfare state. Scholars, university students and activists interested in the relationship between capitalism, environmental policy and the welfare state should read this book.”

—**Daniel Béland** (Canada Research Chair in Public Policy and Professor at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy)

Milena Büchs · Max Koch

Postgrowth and Wellbeing

Challenges to Sustainable Welfare

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	American Broadcasting Company
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
COP	Conference of Parties
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
EROEI	Energy returned on energy invested
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FORMAS	Forskningsrådet för miljö, areella näringar och samhällsbyggande (Swedish Research Council Formas)
FORTE	Forskningsrådet för hälsa, arbetsliv och välfärd (Swedish Research Council for Health, Life and Welfare)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross national product
GPI	Genuine Progress Indicator
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IEWB	Index of Economic Well-Being
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISEW	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NEF	New Economics Foundation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SSE	Steady-state economy

UK	United Kingdom
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
US	United States of America

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