



Research & Degrowth International

INTRODUCTION TO DEGROWTH

Online Course



Seventh Edition Oct/ Nov 2026

Syllabus

"INTRODUCTION TO DEGROWTH" ONLINE COURSE

"Introduction to Degrowth" is an introductory online course on Degrowth, developed and delivered by Research and Degrowth. The course is designed to introduce you to the foundational principles, critical debates, and transformative practices of degrowth.

Research & Degrowth is a think-and-act-tank dedicated to the radical transformation of our economies and societies through research, advocacy, education, training and events around degrowth. For more than fifteen years, R&D has successfully organized summer schools and university master's programs focused on degrowth. The online course represents a new educational format to reach out to a broader audience. Upon successfully completing the online course, all participants will receive an **official certificate** issued by R&D.



We have been working hard to create this online course and are excited to be launching it to you. We're looking forward to this educational journey together!

COURSE DETAILS

The seventh edition of the “Introduction to Degrowth” online course will take place from **October 5th**, 2026 to **November 4th**, 2026, **Mondays** and **Wednesdays** mainly from **16:30 to 19:00** Madrid time (10:30–13:00 EDT / 7:30–10:00 PDT until October 21st; 11:30–14:00 EDT / 8:30–11:00 PDT from October 26th–28th; 10:30–13:00 EST / 7:30–10:00 PST from November 2nd–4th).

The 25-hour course consists of **ten classes of 2.5 hours** each over the span of five weeks. Taught by a diverse group of experienced scholars and practitioners **via videocall**, the classes will cover a variety of topics, ranging from the foundations, historical context and intersectional perspectives to real examples and strategies forward.

With **35 students max**, this course fosters an interactive and collaborative learning environment, blending lectures, discussions, and practical exercises. It serves not only as a gateway to understanding degrowth but also as a community-building space for individuals passionate about addressing the challenges of our times.

Timeline

	Oct 05 - Introduction to Degrowth - Marta Conde
	Oct 07 - Green Growth vs. Degrowth - Claudio Cattaneo
	Oct 12 - Capitalism, Colonialism, and Growth - Gabriela Cabaña
	Oct 14 - Decolonizing Economics - Meghna Goyal
	Oct 19 - Commons and Degrowth - Lorenzo Velotti
	Oct 21 - Eco-feminism and Degrowth - Simona Geteova
	Oct 26 - Well-being and Degrowth - Filka Sekulova
	Oct 28 - Strategies for Degrowth - Federico Savini
	Nov 2 - Real-Existing Degrowth - Marula Tsagakari
	Nov 4 - Communication of Degrowth - Alvaro Alvarez

PRICES

To ensure accessibility, we offer a solidarity price system. The standard course fee is €350. If this is beyond your budget, you can opt for the reduced fee of €150. Alternatively, if you are able to support others, you may choose to pay the solidarity fee of €550, helping make the course more accessible to others.



Basic Fee: 350 Euros

The basic fee of 350 Euros covers all costs for the course.

Solidarity Fee: 550 Euros

The solidarity ticket allows us to give away more reduced-fee tickets to people who really need it and helps us support R&D independent projects. If you are getting financed by an institution (e.g. PhD students, researchers, your workplace), or if you come from a higher-income background, we kindly encourage you to choose this option to help sustain the program and make it more accessible to others. We trust that you are honest with your capabilities and mindful of other's needs.

Reduced Fee: 150 Euros

Apply for the reduced fee if you don't have the financial capacity to pay for a standard fee, because you are in a precarious work situation, live in a lower income country, are doing unpaid care work etc. There is only a certain number of reduced fees available. We trust your judgement. To apply for the reduced fee, please fill out the section in the application form.

Two scholarships

The scholarships are intended for individuals who face significant financial barriers and would otherwise be unable to attend the course. To apply for a scholarship please explain your situation to us (see application form).

Week 1: Foundations of Degrowth

Session 1 - Oct 05, 2026 16:00 - 19:00 CEST

Introduction to Degrowth and Ecological Economics



Instructor: Marta Conde is a researcher at the Geo3bcn Institute at Spanish Research Council and is member of Research and Degrowth. She holds PhD from the Institute for Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA) of the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) where is currently coordinating and teaching the Political Ecology Module of the Political Ecology (with specialisation on Environmental Justice and Degrowth) Master. Her research looks at social reactions to the expansion of extractive industries at the commodity frontiers. She links her research and activist work with the degrowth movement, relating all these struggles with the need to end the imperative of endless economic growth.

Class Overview: We will explore some reasons why a degrowth transition is necessary. I will then introduce the main dimensions of degrowth, its sources and history and some of the proposals. We can then have a discussion on strategies and avenues to achieve this.

Readings prior to class:

- Compulsory: Hickel, J. 2021. What does degrowth mean? A few points of clarification.
- Recommended: Kallis, G. 2018. What is Degrowth? Chapter 2 in Degrowth.

Week 1: Foundations of Degrowth

Session 2 - Oct 07 , 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CEST

Green Growth vs. Degrowth



Instructor: Claudio Cattaneo is an ecological economist with a PhD from ICTA-UAB and a senior member of Research and Degrowth. He has been teaching ecological economics and degrowth for more than 20 years to a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate students in universities across the globe. He has been the initiator and director of the masters in political ecology, degrowth and environmental justice and of the online masters in degrowth at UAB. He has also research, teaching and consulting experience in doughnut economics for Barcelona.

Class Overview: This class compares green growth, as framed within a mainstream economics perspective, with the degrowth narrative. It examines the impossibility of green growth: while any absolute decoupling between the economy and its environmental impacts may occur, it is happening far too slowly. The class also explores the degrowth perspective, highlighting how (green) growth is socially and culturally undesirable.

Readings prior to class:

Fanning, A.L., O'Neill, D.W., Hickel, J., Roux, N. (2022). The social shortfall and ecological overshoot of nations. Nature sustainability.

Week 2: Decoloniality and Degrowth

Session 3 - Oct 12, 2026 16:30-19:00 CEST

Capitalism, Colonialism and Growth



Instructor: Gabriela Cabaña is a sociologist and anthropologist, with a PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her doctoral work was on the relation between work, energy and nature in the Chiloé archipelago (South of Chile). She is currently a researcher at Fundación Tantí (Chile) studying the impacts of the emergent green hydrogen industry in the north of Chile, and a member of the Pacto Ecosocial e Intercultural del Sur.

Class Overview: This lecture introduces the relation between capitalism, colonialism and growth from a degrowth and anti-colonial perspective. It also introduces the concepts of unequal ecological exchange, extractivism and green extractivism as a Latin American critique of the growth ideology. It draws from current research on energy “transitions” from a Global South perspective.

Readings prior to class:

- Cabaña Alvear, G., & Vandana. (2023). Only for the Global North? Questioning the ‘who should degrow’ issue. Degrowth.
- Fernandes, S. (2024). “Just” Means “Just” Everywhere: How Extractivism Stands in the Way of an Internationalist Paradigm for Just Transitions.

Week 2: Decoloniality and Degrowth

Session 4 - Oct 14, 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CEST

Decolonizing Economics



Meghna Goyal researches the extraction of surplus value from agriculture in the contemporary global economy. She has interest in studying the logic of the current food system so that it can be transformed under a socialist world order. She is currently doing a PhD at ICTA-UAB. She has training in economics from India - where she studied the mainstream neoclassical economics as well as the heterodox and Marxist streams of economics.

Class Overview: This class will provide an introduction to the core assumptions of economics and the problems associated with it. It will then delve into the early and contemporary critiques from within the discipline to transform the discipline. Finally, the class will conclude with the why and how of decolonizing economics.

Readings prior to class:

- Mandatory: Introduction in Reinert, E. S., Ghosh, J., & Kattel, R. (Eds.). (2016). Handbook of alternative theories of economic development. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Optional: Bharadwaj, K. (1978) Classical Political Economy and the Rise to Dominance of Supply and Demand Theories.

Week 3: Key Contexts

Session 5 - Oct 19, 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CEST

The Commons and Degrowth



Instructor: Lorenzo Velotti is a sociologist and anthropologist researching how social movements create alternative ways of organising and caring for one another. He recently completed his PhD in Political and Social Sciences at the Scuola Normale Superiore, focusing on care within urban commons movements in Naples and Barcelona. His work connects social movements, political ecology and ethnography, with interests in commons, care, housing, anti-touristification and degrowth. He is a Research Fellow at the Scuola Normale Superiore and a member of Research & Degrowth International. He holds an MSc with Distinction in Anthropology and Development from the London School of Economics.

Class Overview: This class explores the concept of the commons and their pivotal role in advancing degrowth. We begin with a historical overview of the commons, followed by an examination of various analytical frameworks, from Elinor Ostrom's institutionalist approach to more critical perspectives, including autonomist theories and their intersections with political economy, feminism, and political ecology. Contemporary case studies will be introduced and analyzed interactively. The class concludes with a discussion on the significance of the commons as a cornerstone for degrowth.

Readings prior to class:

Fournier, V. (2013). Commoning: On the social organisation of the commons. *M@n@gement*, 16(4), 433–453.

Week 3: Key Contents

Session 6 - Oct 21, 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CEST

Decolonial feminisms and Degrowth



Instructor: Simona Getova is a decolonial ecofeminist political ecologist, climate justice organizer, facilitator, and educator from North Macedonia. Her research focuses on intersectional and decolonial praxis in grassroots organizing around Green Deals, studied at Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. She envisions collective liberation by dismantling oppression and extraction to create just, joyful, climate-safe futures. Simona is currently the Director of Operations at Research and Degrowth International.

Class Overview: This class explores how decolonial feminism and degrowth intersect, examining patriarchy, coloniality, extractivism, and racial capitalism. Through discussions and participatory exercises, we'll engage with feminist critiques and the knowledge and praxis of marginalized communities. Focusing on anti-extractivist struggles, especially in the Global South, we'll analyze degrowth through decolonial feminist lenses—rooted in history, territory, and lived experience. Finally, we'll consider transnational solidarity in building fairer, climate-safe futures.

Readings prior to class:

- Section 3.5. Feminist Critique (pp. 133-143) in Schmelzer, M., Vetter, A., & Vansintjan, A. (2022). The future is degrowth: A guide to a world beyond capitalism. Verso Books.
- Abazeri, M. (2022). Decolonial feminisms and degrowth. Futures, 136, 102902.

Week 4: Real Degrowth

Session 7 - Oct 26, 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CET

Well-being and Degrowth



Instructor: Filka Sekulova is a senior researcher based at the University of Barcelona, and part of the IN3 institute. Her work is placed at the intersection of (ecological) economics (PhD, MS, BS), psychology (BS), and social sciences, with focus on degrowth, tourism and urban nature, through the perspectives of justice, community organizing and subjective well-being. Filka is an affiliated member of BCNUEJ lab and a co-founder of Research and Degrowth.

Class Overview: This session will guide you through the well-being stream of degrowth scholarship. We will discuss the multiple approaches to conceptualising and measuring human well-being, along with their critiques. Next, we will explore the economics of happiness, including the latest discussions on the empirical evidence behind the Easterlin paradox, and discuss its relevance for degrowth. The last part of the session will be dedicated to the concept of meaningfulness, the empirical approaches to its measurement and the relation it bears with simplicity, materialism, community action and social mobilization.

Readings prior to class:

Sekulova, F., Anguelovski, I., & Argüelles, L. (2023). Redefining success in organizing towards degrowth. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 48, 100764.

Week 4: Strategies and Communication for Degrowth

Session 8 - Oct 28, 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CET

Strategies for Degrowth



Instructor: Federico Savini is an Associate Professor in Environmental Planning, Institutions and Politics at the University of Amsterdam. He combines approaches of political sociology, spatial planning and critical geography to the study of institutions and socio-ecological change in the process of urbanization. In his works, he studies the relation between changing planning regulations and socio-ecological justice, and critically explores strategic planning approaches able to achieve social justice within planetary boundaries. Beside his research tasks, he is founder and coordinator of the Postgrowth Cities Coalition.

Class Overview: The class will deal with strategic thought in degrowth. It will explain the challenge of a degrowth strategy and the problematic insights available in mainstream degrowth strategic thought. We will define what a strategy is, and why it is important. We will reflect on the social, cultural and institutional challenges of a radical political project such as degrowth. We will address in particular the spatial perspective of a strategy rooted in places, able to mobilize counter-hegemonic coalitions of actors.

Readings prior to class:

Savini, Federico. 2025. "Strategic Planning for Degrowth: What, Who, How." *Planning Theory* 24 (2): 141–162.

Week 5: Real Degrowth

Session 9 - Nov 2 , 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CET

Real-Existing Degrowth



Instructor: Marula Tsagkari is a political ecologist from Athens, Greece. She is currently a Margarita Salas postdoctoral researcher at ICTA-UAB. Her work focuses on energy communities, energy self-sufficiency, technology, and values. Marula holds a Ph.D. from the University of Barcelona and MSc in Environmental Science Policy and Management from Central European University and the University of Lund. In 2022-2023 she was a postdoctoral researcher at TU-Delft.

Class Overview: This session explores the "real-existing degrowth" (RED) concept, including its origins and evolution. Students will learn a framework for understanding RED and apply it to various case studies. The interactive class encourages students to present their own examples of RED, analyze them using the framework, and propose methodological approaches.

Readings prior to class:

Kallis, G., & March, H. (2015). Southern thought, islandness and real-existing degrowth in the Mediterranean. *Mediterranean Politics*, 20(3), 420–437.

Week 5: Strategies and Communication for Degrowth

Session 10 - Nov 4, 2026 16:30 - 19:00 CET

Communication of Degrowth



Instructor: Alvaro Alvarez is a journalist and documentary filmmaker with over 15 years of experience creating a wide range of content, from short digital videos to international documentaries. Born in Argentina and raised in Spain, Alvaro joined the BBC World Service in London in 2011 after working for the Spanish newspaper El País in Spain. Throughout his career, he has covered a variety of issues, travelling to countries such as Cuba, Mexico, Peru, China, and Egypt. In his latest documentary for the BBC, focused on "degrowth economics", he delves into the movement in Barcelona, examining both the academic aspects and the real-world efforts of those implementing degrowth principles in their daily lives. His experience with this documentary has fueled his interest in covering more stories related to climate justice, degrowth and the wellbeing economy.

Class Overview: This workshop will focus on how to bring degrowth to mainstream audiences. We will cover how the far right has been so successful at getting their message out, and ways to counter it. We will look into what matters to mainstream media, what narratives we should use for reaching "outside of our bubbles", and we will engage in exercises and look into examples of what works and what doesn't.

Readings prior to class:

- BBC Documentary - Could Degrowth Save the World?
- How the Right Hijacked the Working Class for Culture Wars
- Work and money worry young people more than culture wars or climate

Contact



Lorenzo Lonardi is a project coordinator at Research and Degrowth with a master's degree in Political Ecology, Degrowth, and Environmental Justice from ICTA-UAB. He is passionate about promoting degrowth ideas and creating accessible educational programs. As the coordinator of the "Introduction to Degrowth" online course and the "Deep Dives" online courses, Lorenzo focuses on organizing and delivering a program that supports learning and collaboration around sustainable and just alternatives to growth-focused economics.



Federico Arcuri is a project coordinator at Research and Degrowth. He is also an alumnus of the master's in Political Ecology at ICTA-UAB, with a thesis on a "Post-growth deal for Italy". He is interested in environmental conflicts, post-growth policy and geopolitics, especially with respect to EU-China relations. He co-organized the last two editions of the Degrowth Summer School, coordinating the bike caravan weeks and facilitating counter-cartography workshops. Co-organizer of the Beyond Growth conference Italia (April 2024), he is active in the Italian degrowth movement.

If you have questions about the "Introduction to Degrowth" Online Course feel free to contact Lorenzo or Federico:

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