

The **Green New Deal (GND)** is a proposed package of [United States](#) legislation that aims to address [climate change](#) and [economic inequality](#).^{[1][2][3][4]} The name refers back to the [New Deal](#), a set of [social](#) and [economic reforms](#) and [public works projects](#) undertaken by President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) in response to the [Great Depression](#).^[5] The Green New Deal combines Roosevelt's economic approach with modern ideas such as [renewable energy](#) and [resource efficiency](#).^{[6][7]}

History



Sustainable agriculture combined with renewable energy generation

Throughout the 1970s and 1990s, an economic policy to move the United States economy away from nonrenewable energy was developed by activists in the labor and the environmental movements.^[16]

An early use of the phrase "Green New Deal" was by journalist [Thomas Friedman](#).^[17] He argued in favor of the idea in [The New York Times](#) and [The New York Times Magazine](#).^{[18][19]} In January 2007, Friedman wrote:

In early 2008, author [Jeff Biggers](#) launched a series of challenges for a Green New Deal from the perspective of his writings from coal country in Appalachia. Biggers wrote, "Obama should shatter these artificial racial boundaries by proposing a New "Green" Deal to revamp the region and bridge a growing chasm between bitterly divided Democrats, and call for an end to mountaintop removal policies that have led to impoverishment and ruin in the coal fields."^[22] Biggers followed up with other Green New Deal proposals over the next four years.^[23]

On October 22, 2008, [UNEP](#)'s Executive Director [Achim Steiner](#) unveiled a *Global Green New Deal* initiative that aims to create jobs in "green" industries, thus boosting the world economy and

curbing climate change at the same time.^[24] The [Green Party of the United States](#) and Green Party presidential candidate [Jill Stein](#) proposed a "Green New Deal" beginning in [2012](#).^{[25][26][27]} A Green New Deal remains officially part of the platform of the Green Party of the United States.^[28]

Proposals to include the Green New Deal in recovery program from COVID-19

There are proposals to include the Green New Deal or parts of it, in the recovery program from the [COVID-19 pandemic in the US](#).^{[29][30]} In the [European Union](#), in April 2020, the European Parliament called to include the [European Green Deal](#) in the recovery program from the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).^[31]

Green New Deal Resolution



Ed Markey speaks on a Green New Deal in front of the Capitol Building in February 2019

Senator [Edward Markey](#) and Representative [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez](#) released a fourteen-page resolution^[8] for their Green New Deal on February 7, 2019. The approach pushes for transitioning the United States to use 100% renewable, zero-emission energy sources, including investment into [electric cars](#) and [high-speed rail systems](#), and implementing the "[social cost of carbon](#)" that had been part of the Obama administration's plan for addressing climate change within 10 years. Besides increasing [state-sponsored](#) jobs, this Green New Deal is also aimed to address poverty by aiming much of the improvements in the "frontline and vulnerable communities" which include the poor and disadvantaged people. To gain additional support, the resolution includes calls for [universal health care](#), increased minimum wages, and preventing [monopolies](#).^[54]

According to [*The Washington Post*](#) (February 11, 2019), the resolution calls for a "10-year national mobilization" whose primary goals would be:^[55]

- "Guaranteeing a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and medical leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States."
- "Providing all people of the United States with – (i) high-quality health care; (ii) affordable, safe, and adequate housing; (iii) economic security; and (iv) access to clean water, clean air, healthy and affordable food, and nature."
- "Providing resources, training, and high-quality education, including higher education, to all people of the United States."
- "Meeting 100 percent of the power demand in the United States through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources."
- "Repairing and upgrading the infrastructure in the United States, including ... by eliminating pollution and greenhouse gas emissions as much as technologically feasible."
- "Building or upgrading to energy-efficient, distributed, and 'smart' power grids, and working to ensure affordable access to electricity."
- "Upgrading all existing buildings in the United States and building new buildings to achieve maximal energy efficiency, water efficiency, safety, affordability, comfort, and durability, including through electrification."
- "Overhauling transportation systems in the United States to eliminate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector as much as is technologically feasible, including through investment in – (i) zero-emission vehicle infrastructure and manufacturing; (ii) clean, affordable, and accessible public transportation; and (iii) high-speed rail."
- "Spurring massive growth in clean manufacturing in the United States and removing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from manufacturing and industry as much as is technologically feasible."^[56]
- "Working collaboratively with farmers and ranchers in the United States to eliminate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector as much as is technologically feasible."^[57]

On March 26, in what Democrats called a "stunt," Republicans called for an early vote on the resolution without allowing discussion or expert testimony. In protest, 42 Democrats and one Independent who [caucuses](#) with Democrats voted "present"^[57] resulting in a 57–0 defeat on the Senate floor. Three Democrats and one Independent who caucuses with Democrats voted against the bill, while the other votes were along party lines.^[58]

Criticism

Many who support some goals of the Green New Deal express doubt about feasibility of one or more parts of it. [John P. Holdren](#), former science advisor to Obama, thinks the 2030 goal is too optimistic, saying that 2045 or 2050 would be more realistic.^[69]

Many members of the Green party have also attacked the plan due to its cutting of multiple parts of their plan, such as the elimination of nuclear power and jobs guarantee, and the changing of the goal from a one hundred percent clean, renewable energy economy by 2030 to the elimination of the U.S. carbon footprint by 2030.^{[32][33]}

Paul Bledsoe of the [Progressive Policy Institute](#), the think tank affiliated with the conservative [Democratic Leadership Council](#), expressed concern that setting unrealistic "aspirational" goals of [100% renewable energy](#) could undermine "the credibility of the effort" against climate change.^[46]

Economist Edward Barbier, who developed the "Global Green New Deal" proposal for the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) in 2009, opposes "a massive federal jobs program," saying "The government would end up doing more and more of what the private sector and industry should be doing." Barbier prefers [carbon pricing](#), such as a [carbon tax](#) or [cap-and-trade](#) system, in order to "address distortions in the economy that are holding back private sector innovation and investments in clean energy."^[70]

When Senator [Dianne Feinstein](#) (D-CA) was confronted by youth associated with the [Sunrise Movement](#) on why she does not support the Green New Deal, she told them "there's no way to pay for it" and that it could not pass a Republican-controlled Senate. In a tweet following the confrontation, Feinstein said that she remains committed "to enact real, meaningful climate change legislation."^[71]

In February 2019, the center-right [American Action Forum](#), estimated that the plan could cost between \$51–\$93 trillion over the next decade.^[72] They estimate its potential cost at \$600,000 per household.^[73] The organization estimated the cost for eliminating carbon emissions from the transportation system at \$1.3–2.7 trillion; guaranteeing a job to every American \$6.8–44.6 trillion; universal health care estimated close to \$36 trillion.^[74] According to [Bloomberg Businessweek](#), Wall Street is willing to invest significant resources toward GND programs, but not unless Congress commits to moving it forward.^[75]

The [AFL-CIO](#), in a letter to Ocasio-Cortez, expressed strong reservations about the GND, saying, "We welcome the call for labor rights and dialogue with labor, but the Green New Deal resolution is far too short on specific solutions that speak to the jobs of our members and the critical sections of our economy."^[76]

In an op-ed for *Slate*, Alex Baca criticizes the Green New Deal for failing to address the environmental, economic, and social consequences of [urban sprawl](#).^[77] Adam Millsap criticizes the GND's [overreliance on public transit to make cities more environmentally friendly, since public transit integrates better in monocentric cities than in polycentric ones](#). He suggests [land use](#)

[reforms](#) to increase [density](#), [congestion pricing](#), and eliminating [parking](#) requirements as measures that can be applied more flexibly to cities with monocentric and polycentric layouts.^[78]

Left-wing criticism

Although the Green New Deal is often presented as a left-wing proposal, criticism of it has come from left-wing commentators who have argued that the Green New Deal fails to tackle the real cause of the climate emergency, namely the concept of [unending growth and consumption inherent in capitalism](#), and is instead an attempt to [greenwash](#) capitalism.^[79] Left wing critics of the Green New Deal argue that it is not the [monetization of Green policies and practices within capitalism](#) that are necessary, but an anti-capitalist adoption of policies for de-growth.^[80]

2020 Presidential Campaign

[Howie Hawkins](#), the [Green Party's](#) 2020 presidential candidate, ran on a Green New Deal platform calling for the U.S. to reach zero greenhouse emissions and 100% clean energy by 2030.^[14]

Democratic Party presidential candidate and president-elect [Joe Biden](#) has declined to endorse the full Green New Deal plan proposed by members of his party, but he has promised to increase generation of renewable energy, transition to more energy efficient buildings and increase fuel efficiency standards for automobiles.^[179] The joint policy proposals developed by the Biden and Sanders campaigns, which were released on July 8, 2020, do not include a Green New Deal.^[180]

International

Various proposals for a Green New Deal have been made internationally. Such efforts became more prominent following the [October 2018 IPPC 1.5 °C report](#), and the popular support that GND received in the United States since late 2018.^{[12][13]} In addition to activity within conventional national & multilateral politics, there has been support for a Green New Deal within [City diplomacy](#). In October 2019 the [C40](#) committed to support a *Global Green New Deal*, announcing there will be determined action from all its 94 cities, with 30 cities having already peaked their emissions and progressing rapidly towards net-zero.^{[181][182]}

Australia

The [Australian Greens](#) have advocated for a "Green Plan", similar to the Green New Deal, since 2009.^[183] Deputy Leader [Christine Milne](#) discussed the idea on the [ABC's](#) panel discussion program [Q&A](#) on February 19, 2009,^[184] and it was the subject of a major national conference of the Australian Greens in 2009.^[185]

Canada

In early May 2019, with rising concerns about the need for urgent global environmental action to reduce potentially catastrophic effects of climate change, a non-partisan coalition of nearly 70 groups launched the [Pact for a Green New Deal](#) (*New Deal vert au Canada* in French).^[186] With

press conferences in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, the coalition called for fossil fuel emissions to be halved by 2030.^{[187][188]} On May 16, 2019 the Green Party released a 5-page summary of their plan entitled "Mission: Possible: The Green Climate Action Plan".^[189]

European Union

Main article: [European Green Deal](#)

On continental Europe, the [European Spring coalition](#) campaigned under the banner of a "Green New Deal" for the [2019 EU elections](#).^{[12][13]} In December 2019, the newly elected [European Commission under Von der Leyen](#) presented a set of policy proposals under the name [European Green Deal](#). Compared to the United States plan, it has a less ambitious decarbonisation timeline, with an aim of carbon neutrality in 2050. The policy proposal involves every sector in the economy and the option of a border adjustment mechanism, a 'carbon tariff', is on the table to prevent carbon leakage from outside countries.^[190]

A pilot program for a four-day workweek, under development by Spain's [Valencian Regional Government](#), has been described as a "helpful counter to ... fearmongering about the bleak, hamburger-free world climate activists are allegedly plotting to create with a Green New Deal."^[191]

In April 2020 the European Parliament called to include the European Green Deal in the recovery program from the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).^[131]

The current proposals have been criticised for falling short of the goal of ending fossil fuels, or being sufficient for a [green recovery](#) after the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).^[192] In its place, it has been proposed that the EU enacts a "Green New Deal for Europe", which includes more investment, and changes the legal regulation that enables global warming from coal, oil, and gas to continue.^[193]

South Korea

In 2020, after the Democratic Party won an absolute majority in the National Assembly, the leadership of the country began to advance a Green New Deal. It includes:

- Achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. [South Korea](#) is the first country in east Asia committing to this target.
- Expanding investments in renewable energy.
- Stopping investments in coal in the country and outside it.
- Establishing a [Carbon tax](#).
- Creating a Regional Energy Transition Centre to ensure that the coal workers will not suffer and will be transitioned to green jobs.^[194]

United Kingdom

In the UK, the [Green New Deal Group](#) and the [New Economics Foundation](#) produced the [A Green New Deal](#) report asking for a Green New Deal as a way out of the Global Financial Crisis back in

2008, demanding a reform of the financial and tax sectors and a revolution of the energy sector in the country. Also, Green MP for Brighton Pavilion, Caroline Lucas, raised the idea during an economic debate in 2008.^[195]

In March 2019, Labour Party members launched a grassroots campaign called *Labour for a Green New Deal*. The aim of the group is to push the party to adopt a radical Green New Deal to transform the UK economy, tackle inequality and address the escalating climate crisis. It also wants a region-specific green jobs guarantee, a significant expansion of public ownership and democratic control of industry, as well as mass investment in public infrastructure.^[196]

In July 2020, while the UK government promised a "green recovery" from the COVID-19 pandemic, this was criticised as being insufficient, and lacking changes to regulation that enabled coal, oil, and gas pollution to continue.^[202] An alternative "Green Recovery Act", widely endorsed by politicians and the media,^[203] was published by an academic and think tank group that would target nine fields of law reform, on transport, energy generation, agriculture, fossil fuels, local government, international agreement, finance and corporate governance, employment, and investment. This has the goal of establishing duties on all public bodies and regulators to end use of all coal, oil and gas "as fast as technologically practicable", with strict exceptions if there are not yet technical alternatives.^[204]