

postgrowthguide.com

Beyond Growth Policies

An introduction to 13 policies
that can change the business world

Overview

Free Public Transport
Unemployment Insurance Schemes
Ban on Planned Obsolescence
Debt Cancellations
Peak Polluter Buy-backs
Banning Ads

Universal Basic Income
Job Guarantee Scheme
Shorter Working Week

Resource & Energy Limits
Ecological Tax Reform
CEO/Worker Wage Ratio
Progressive Wealth Tax

**6x policies which
are already in place**

01

Free Public Transport



01

Summary

Nearly 100 cities offer some or all their public transport for free.

01

Cases

Estonia's public transport network is free outside the capital, Tallinn.

Luxembourg provides free public transport throughout the country.

Germany provides cheap (not free, though) public transport at €49 per month for trains and buses.

02

Unemployment Insurance Schemes



02

Summary

Unemployment insurance schemes are a part of legislation **in 26 countries.**

02

Cases

In Denmark, you can receive an unemployment benefit - but only if you have been a paying member of an unemployment insurance fund for at least one year.

Though managed by private funds, the benefits are mainly financed by the state.

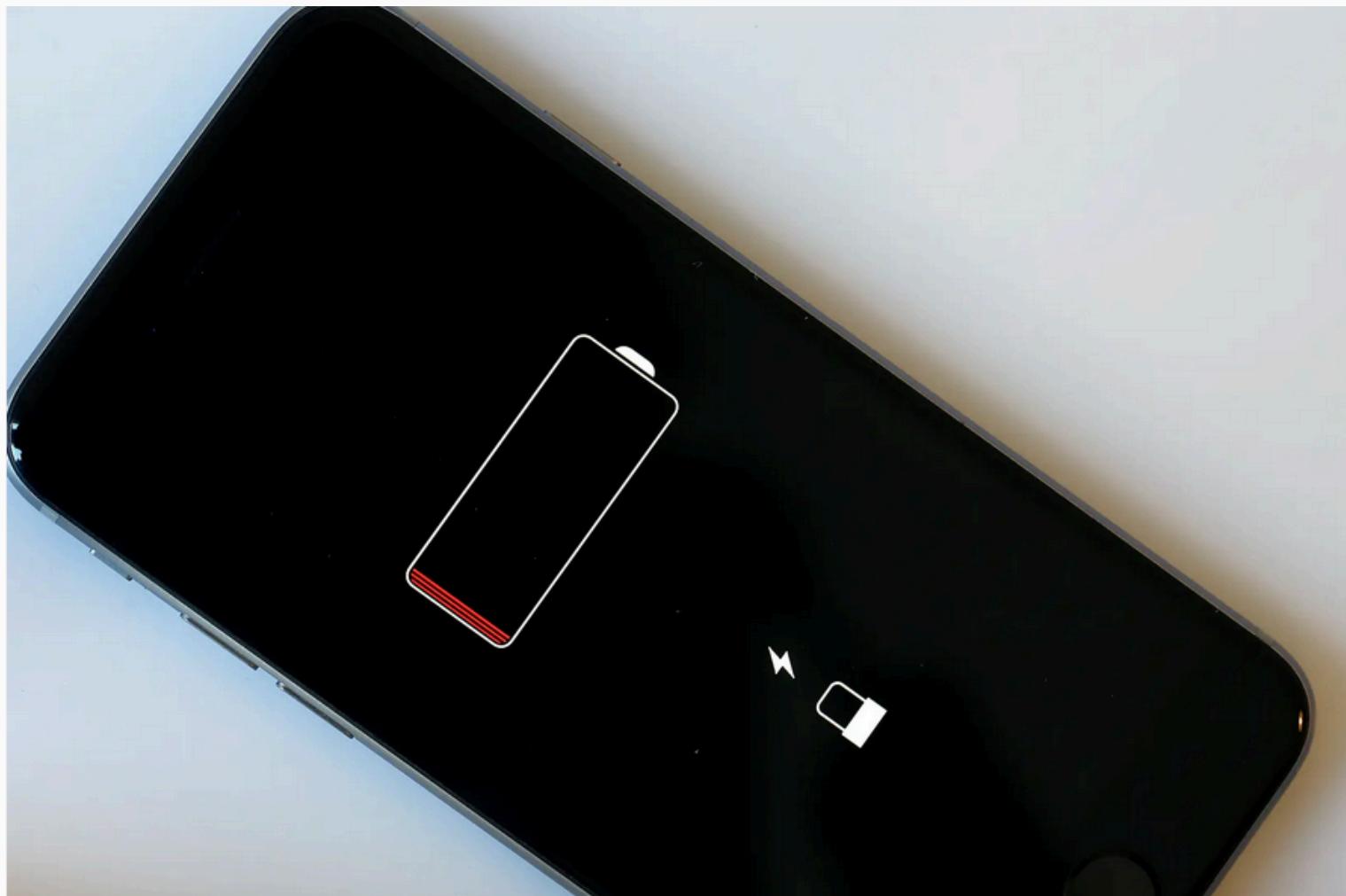
02

Cases

In 2022, the New Zealand government proposed a scheme to support workers with 80% of their income for up to 7 months if they lose their job through no fault of their own. Currently, it's put on ice.

03

Ban on Planned Obsolescence



03

Summary

In 2015, France banned planned obsolescence, where companies intentionally design products that break and that are difficult and expensive to repair - intending to sell more new products

03

Case

In France, planned obsolescence is now a criminal offense punishable by a two-year prison sentence and a fine of up to €300,000 or 5% of the company's average turnover.

03

Bonus Case from France

France passed a law to crack down on fast fashion in early 2024.

The law looks to address fast fashion's environmental impact by (1) banning the advertising of certain ultra-fast-fashion companies (Shein and Temu are mentioned again and again) – and (2) penalizing them with annually increasing increments of up to 10 euros (£8.54 or \$10.92) per article of clothing by 2030.

04

Debt Cancellations



04

Summary

Debt cancellation has a long history, all the way back from antiquity, and has since the late 20th century started to experience a renaissance.

04

Cases

The Jubilee 2000 Coalition led a pressure campaign, signed by millions of people, that resulted in **the cancellation of more than US\$100 billion of debt owed by 42 low-income nations.** Now known as Debt Justice.

04

Cases

In 2022, the Biden Administration announced a plan to cancel student debts in the US, and it is currently being heard in the Supreme Court.

05

Peak Polluter Buy-backs



05

Summary

In 2022, the Dutch government announced its plan to buy up and shut down 3,000 'peak polluting' companies (mainly farms) to comply with the EU's nitrogen regulations.

Not an easy task.

05

Case

The Dutch Government created a £22bn program to buy out the businesses at more than 100% of their value.

Alternatively, the businesses can receive financial support to drastically reduce emissions, transition to a new kind of business, relocate, or “voluntarily stop.”

05

Case

The responses from farmers have been all over the news: **tractor blocks blocking government buildings, manure on highways, and the birth of a populist pro-agricultural party** that won the elections in March 2023.

What hasn't received the same attention is **that 750 Dutch farmers have signed up for the buy-out scheme.**

06

Banning Ads

Edinburgh set to ban adverts for high-carbon products including fossil fuels

The City of Edinburgh Council is set to ban out-of-home advertising for fossil fuel companies and several high-emission forms of transport, stating that a failure to do so would undermine the credibility of its climate emergency declaration.

06

Summary

Cities around the world are starting to ban out of home ads for highly polluting product categories.

06

Cases

Edinburgh bans out of home ads for cruises, SUVs, airlines, and oil and gas companies because "it undermines the council's commitment to tackling the climate emergency."

06

Cases

A few examples of other cities enacting similar policies: Amsterdam, Sydney, Cambridge, Liverpool, and Norwich

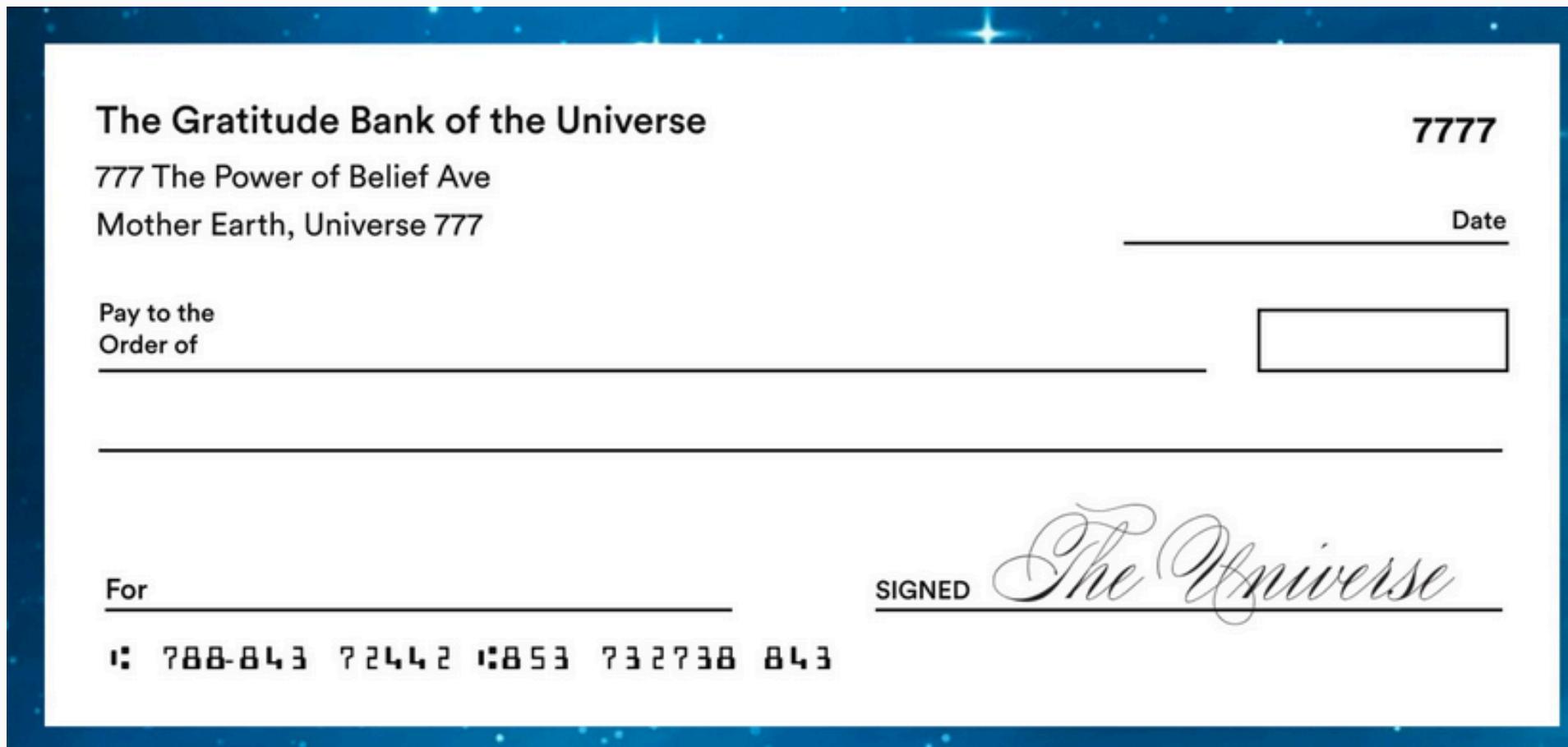
On a national level, France has a ban that forbids advertising fossil fuels such as gasoline and diesel.

In a 2024 speech, UN secretary-general António Guterres also called upon “every country to ban advertising from fossil fuel companies.”

**3x policies which
are being tested**

07

Universal Basic Income



07

Summary

Universal basic income (UBI) is a program in which the state gives a check to citizens for just being alive - wiping out extreme poverty.

07

Cases

The world's most extensive UBI test is currently underway in Kenya at **the cost of US\$30 million, delivering cash transfers to 200+ rural villages for up to 12 years.**

07

Cases

Since 1982, Alaska has given each citizen an annual check, no strings attached. The money – between \$1,000 - \$2,000 – comes from a state-owned fund financed by oil revenues (nothing is perfect).

Economists found that "the dividend did not affect employment" overall.

07

Cases

Other UBI studies are happening in North Carolina and California in the US, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands.

And previous studies have been carried out in Spain, Iran, India, China, Japan and many more.

07

Preliminary results

Several studies show that UBI doesn't reduce employment - in some places, it even increases, while it improves life satisfaction and mental health.

What the right amount of money is and how to fund it still proves difficult questions.

08

Job Guarantee Scheme

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

MADE AND ENTERED INTO BY AND BETWEEN:

with address at:

herein represented by _____ duly authorized hereto
(hereinafter referred to as the "EMPLOYER")

AND

with address at:

(hereinafter referred to as the "EMPLOYEE")

WHEREBY THE PARTIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. **APPOINTMENT**

The EMPLOYEE, who hereby accepts the appointment and is appointed as a _____ for the EMPLOYER.

2. **DURATION**

- 2.1 This agreement will become affective as from _____ (insert date) and it will continue for an indefinite period until it has been cancelled in terms hereof.
- 2.2 The EMPLOYEE's appointment (in the instance of new appointments) is subject to a 2 (two) month's probationary period during which period the EMPLOYER may terminate the services of the EMPLOYEE for any fair reason. One week's written notice of termination of service to the EMPLOYEE, prior to the end of the probationary period will be given.

08

Summary

Following the principle of the state as an employer of last resort, the idea is for the state to provide jobs relevant to the green transition and/or people's needs and well-being.

08

Cases

The world's first job guarantee scheme experiment is running in a town in Austria at the cost of €7.4 million. It offers a universal guarantee of a properly paid job for three years to every resident unemployed for more than 12 months - which is approx. 150 people in this case.

09

Shorter Working Week



09

Summary

A shorter working week of 4 days/30 hours has proven to reduce carbon footprint and increase well-being without negatively affecting organizations (in specific sectors) - if they design their operations for it.

A shorter working week is critical to distributing work (and income) in a smaller economy.

09

Cases

A 3-year pilot program in Spain is trialing a 32-hour or 4-day working week across 200 companies, with a €50 million investment from the government to make up the salary difference.

09

Cases

In 2022, 60 UK companies tested a four-day work week. More than 90% of participating businesses continue the experiment, with 18 adopting it permanently. In this case, there was no government funding involved.

09

Cases

Belgium is the latest country to offer employees the option to request a four-day workweek (though still a 38-hour work week).

As a part of the same legislation, workers earned the right to disconnect (ignore emails and calls after work hours).

**4x policies being
researched and
promoted**

10

Resource & Energy Limits



10

Summary

Based on the planetary boundaries framework, countries would cap resource and energy use at existing levels and reduce the cap every year until planetary boundaries are reached within a scientifically established timeframe - and without compromising social boundaries.

10

Background

Since current global agreements, CO2 quota systems, and (the rare) local CO2 taxes have not been sufficient to create radical change, some experts advocate for this policy.

11

Ecological Tax Reform

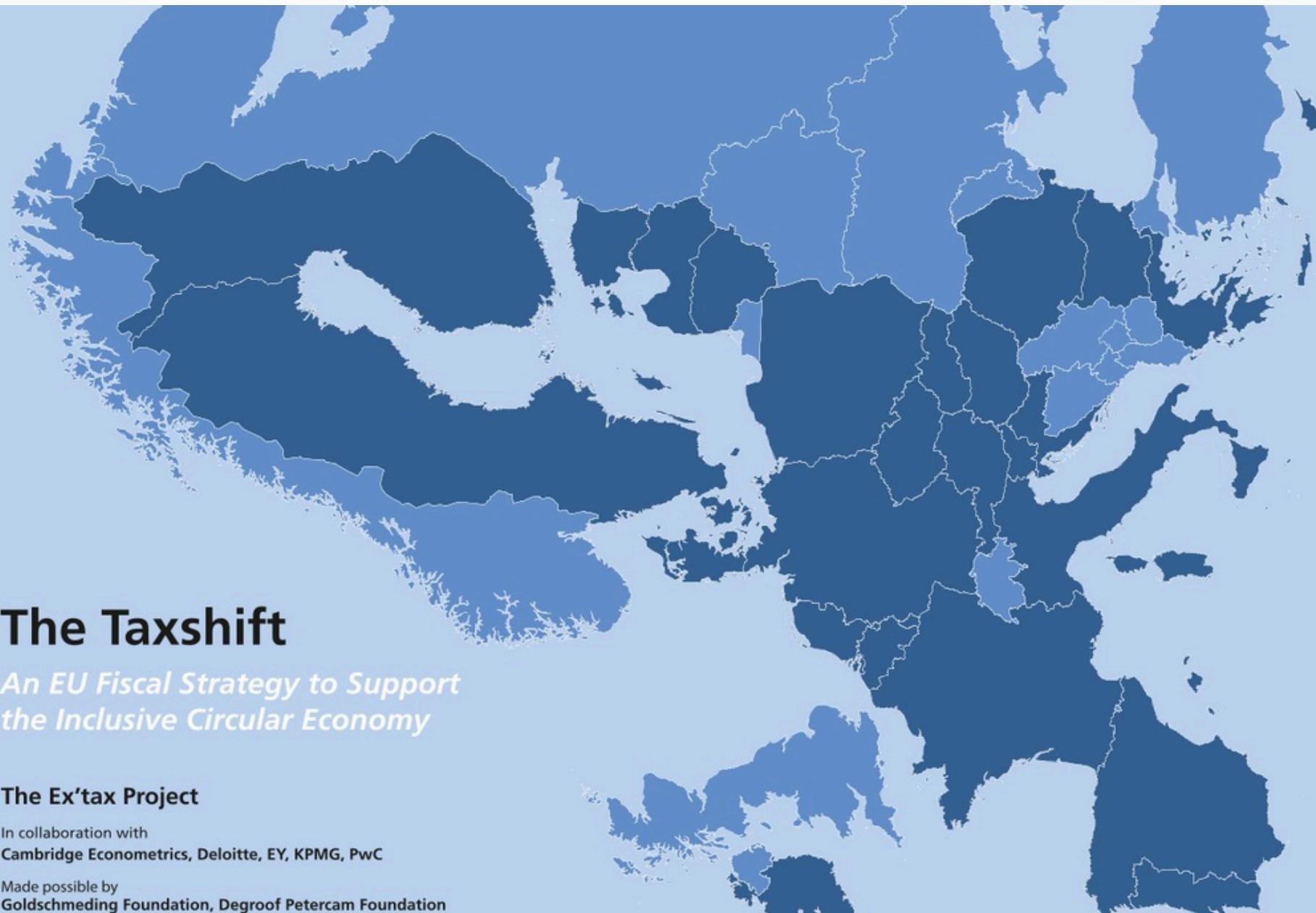
The Taxshift

*An EU Fiscal Strategy to Support
the Inclusive Circular Economy*

The Ex'tax Project

In collaboration with
Cambridge Econometrics, Deloitte, EY, KPMG, PwC

Made possible by
Goldschmeding Foundation, Degroof Petercam Foundation



11

Summary

Tax resource use and pollution, not people working. That's the idea behind an ecological tax reform that helps align business incentives with the planetary and social boundaries.

11

Case

There is more than one unit working on it. One of them is the Dutch Ex'Tax Project. It was founded in 2010. In 2022 it released an extensive report, The Taxshift, illuminating how shifting the tax burden from labour to pollution and resource use supports an inclusive circular economy.

In 2023, it was mentioned in the Dutch central government budget, and in 2024 Six ministers have sent a letter to the Dutch Senate, stating that the taxshift is ‘economically sensible’.

12

CEO/Worker Wage Ratio



12

Summary

Some propose limiting how much a CEO can earn based on the wages of the lowest-paid workers in the company.

12

Background

The goal is to reduce inequality and increase fairness.

In 2020, CEOs were paid 350 times as much as the typical worker in the US, and that's quite the (unnecessary) increase compared to a 21-to-1 ratio in 1965. One proposal has been to impose a 10/1 ratio.

13

Progressive Wealth Tax



13

Summary

Many (incl. Thomas Piketty and Jason Hickel) have proposed a progressive global wealth tax: The more wealth you have, the more you pay in tax.

13

Background

A progressive wealth tax could reduce inequality and fund many vital policies without lowering the quality of life.

At Davos 2022, there was a group of millionaires and billionaires (Patriotic Millionaires) pleading for political leaders to make them pay more taxes.

In 2024, Fortune wrote “"Nobel laureate Esther Duflo proposes taxing 3,000 billionaires to protect the world's poorest from climate change—and most Americans likely agree with the plan.”