

Conference

# BEYOND-GDP: ALIVE AND KICKING?

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY MAPPING OF RECENT ACADEMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

FRIDAY MAY 24TH - 9.30 AM - 6 PM

BRUSSELS - UCLOUVAIN SLB - P02

## Programme

**9:30 Session 1 : Recent indicators proposals at regional and national levels**  
Fanny Dethier and Philippe Roman (ICHEC Brussels Management School),  
Annegeke Jansen (Leiden University), Claire Soupart and Brent Bleys (UGent)

**11:30 Session 2 : Explaining GDP's strength: The GDP paradox updated**  
Norman Vander Putten (UCLouvain Saint-Louis - Bruxelles),  
Quentin Dufour (ENS-EHESS), Sébastien Roux (INSEE)

**2:15 Session 3 : Barriers to existing national institutional BGDG initiatives**  
Felicien Pagnon (Kedge business school), Fabio Battaglia (London School of  
Economics), Raphael Kaufmann (ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies),  
Romina Boarini (OECD)

**4:00 Panel discussion: Institutional B-GDP futures at a global level**

**5:30 Keynote by Tom Bauler (ULB)**

Registration is free but mandatory. Please use this link if you wish to attend the conference:

<https://forms.office.com/e/DkiqCcXvyh>



## Concept note

Since the seventies, many economists, non-governmental organisations and international organisations have elaborated (sets of) indicators to complement or replace Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in order to include social and/or environmental dimensions. Examples include the index of sustainable economic welfare, the human development index, gross national happiness, well-being economy indicators, sustainable development indicators or natural capital indicators (Gadrey and Jany-Catrice 2016; Bleys, 2012; Hoekstra, 2019; Malay, 2019). They belong to different categories (composite indexes, sets of indicators, accounts) and frameworks that are partially intertwined (e.g. well-being, human rights, post-growth, sustainable development, satellite accounts...).

However, even when promoted by (international) public institutions, these initiatives do currently not enjoy a significant level of uptake by policy-makers or, more generally, by a wider audience (Laurent, 2018; OECD, 2020; Masood, 2022). Ten years after the adoption of the law on beyond GDP indicators in Belgium, and eight years after the French law on “new indicators of wealth”, there still seems to be an “accounting push” that does not meet an adequate “policy pull” (Vardon et al., 2016). Indeed, despite its multiple blind spots, GDP remains dominant both as a stabilised quantification device (Dufour 2019; Radermacher 2020; Kaufmann et al. 2023) and as a “powerful idea” (Mügge 2016). While there seems to be comparatively little interdisciplinary works on the quantification of prosperity to date, new collective academic projects have recently emerged with the aim to fill this gap, including by adopting institutional approaches. Furthermore, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights will present to the UN General assembly in October 2024 a report focusing on ‘beyond GDP’ approaches to human rights.

In light of recent research in ecological economics, sociology, political science and law on Beyond GDP-related matters, this conference aims to bring together scholars and institutional officers working from different perspectives on indicators in order to map the most relevant developments in the field. This will be done by looking at (i) recent academic proposals regarding the production and standardisation of existing or new B-GDP metrics ; (ii) institutional factors that explain GDP’s resilience ; (iii) elements impeding the uptake of new indicators in public debate ; and (iv) the latest global developments that are taking place in institutional circles.

### Bibliography

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