

Degrowth and the Politics of Space

Tools for Thought and Action

International conference – Call for contributors

Deadline for abstracts submissions is **1st December 2025**.

Date of conference: 21-23 October 2026

Organizers:

Federico Savini, University of Amsterdam

Silvio Cristiano, University of Florence

Sofia Greaves, Independent researcher, editor of the degrowth journal

Karl Krähmer, University of Turin

Filka Sekulova, University of Barcelona

Angelos Varvarousis, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Sarah Ware, Vienna University of Economics

Jin Xue, Norwegian University of Life Sciences

We invite contributions to the first international conference on *degrowth and the politics of space*.

Degrowth has gained wide traction as both a critique of contemporary capitalism and an agenda for emancipatory and democratic spatial politics. Scholars from many disciplines, activists from socio-ecological movements and progressive government figures recognize the potential of degrowth propositions to address the intertwined challenges of worsening social inequality, ecological breakdown, and democratic backsliding. In political practice, degrowth is also bridging multiple communities, inspiring struggles for reduction of the social metabolism, sufficiency, care, labour rights, as well as those advocating for phasing out fossil capital, capping extreme wealth, and fostering anti-authoritarianism and anti-colonialism.

Despite its increasing visibility and popularity in both research and practice, degrowth still lacks a thorough and systematic development of a spatial perspective. Consequently, degrowth-informed research and agendas run the risk of scalar traps, especially universalism or localism. A clearly spatial perspective, which is multiscalar and relational, can help to both calibrate radical degrowth practices to specific socio-cultural contexts and to interconnect them across scales and sectors. This is the challenge that this conference will tackle, both for research and for practice.

The conference opens a dialogue between degrowth and spatial politics for both research and practice. Space is a relation of power, and it is simultaneously a condition, a means and a target of degrowth politics. A degrowth transformation necessarily implies a reorganization of socio-metabolic relations and socio-material flows of matter, capital and energy across spatial scales, as well as a different cultural imaginary of how we as humans, think about our relation to spatial dynamics. Space is also a target of radical politics that aims to address the destructive impact of endless economic growth onto marginalized social groups and endangered ecosystems while guaranteeing the provision of essential and universal goods and services for all. Degrowth envisions a spatial politics that questions hierarchies and borders and surpasses the underlying socio-cultural frames that sustain intrinsically toxic growth, like anthropocentrism, patriarchy and racism.

This conference brings together contributions from both research and practice to develop *tools for thought* and *tools for action*. Contributors should indicate their preferred section. At the conference, both groups will come together to discuss their ideas in conversation with each other.

Tools for thought: this type of contribution seeks a conceptual advancement within the fields of degrowth studies. It focuses on the development of theories, concepts, heuristics, and methodologies for examining, critiquing, and advancing our understanding of the spatial dynamics of growth and degrowth. Submissions can be critical, analytical and propositional, including critiques of existing spatial analyses by degrowth studies and approaches that deepen our understanding of spatial dynamics. Understanding the spatial politics of degrowth requires research frameworks that adequately reflect and express the co-productive relationships between biophysical conditions (e.g. flows of energy and matter, land use, and ecosystems) and the social, cultural, and economic dimensions of life. We seek critical engagement with the context-specific impacts of these interrelations as well as the broader geographies and geopolitics of degrowth.

Tools for action: this type of contribution is concerned with the approaches, modalities, tactics and strategies for advancing a spatial politics of degrowth, and is addressed to audiences interested in practice, policy and social mobilization. We envision a spectrum of approaches to ‘practicing’ spatial politics: revolutionary (e.g. enacted by social-ecological movements), institutional (e.g. radical policies) and prefigurative (e.g. creation of alternatives within larger alliances). These might range from formal governance processes to self-organized and insurgent spaces of resistance and action. We aim to cover all these equally and reflect upon their synergies. We invite contributions from non-academics and engaged academics who are willing to reflect on broader strategies of popular mobilization, and how different subjects can put pressure on institutions. Examples might draw on strategies transgressing formal and informal spaces of participation. Contributions might explore the potentials of practices of resistance, from insurgent, transgressive movements to radical policies. Contributions should provide a *forward-looking reflection*: not case studies, but - if resorting to real examples - trying to learn from them in dialogue with other practices, contexts, and scales of action.

We welcome contributions from a wide range of disciplines, including—but not limited to—urban studies, planning studies, economics, sociology, humanities, mobility and housing studies, cultural studies, ecology, political ecology, geography, and geosciences. All contributors are encouraged to adopt an inter- and trans-disciplinary perspective and reflect upon the value of their approach for other fields and practices.

As a framework of critique, degrowth clearly blurs the artificial boundary between research, activism and policy practice, and between knowledge and tools. Contributions can address how knowledge production in spatial politics transcends the boundaries between research and practice. These contributions might involve participatory, arts-based, strategies for knowledge co-creation.

Contributions should:

- Explicitly engage with one of the two themes explained above: tools for thought, or tools for action.
- Explain the critique, contribution and positionality relative to existing approaches in degrowth studies.
- Be a maximum of 700 words, including 3 keywords.
- Please send contributions to this email: **degrowthPSconference@proton.me**
- Please note that the use of AI-generated content (including text produced by tools such as ChatGPT or similar) **is not permitted** in the preparation of this submission. All submissions must be the original work of the author.

The organizers will select about 35 contributions in total. All authors of these contributions will join a conference in Amsterdam, held from 21 to 23 October 2026. We expect all authors to actively participate in all sessions and deliver a draft paper before the conference to be shared with the rest of the participants of approximately 4000-5000 words.

Preliminary schedule:

1st December: deadline for abstract submission

1st February: communication of acceptance to the conference

1st September: deadline for delivering a draft of the contribution (about 4000-5000 words).

Book publication:

After the conference the organizing team will curate and produce a book including a *selection of* the presented contributions. The selection of contributions for the book will be carried out by the organizers after the conference to guarantee quality and coherence to the book.