



## WE Party Conference

15 – 18 October 2020

**Title:** Reimagining the UK Economic and Political System

**Proposed by:** The Women's Equality Party's Policy Committee

**Proposer:** Tabitha Morton

**Type of motion:** Policy Motion

**Motion text:**

1 In order to build a solid foundation and pave the way for a truly gender equal society, WE need  
2 dramatic change in how we think about and plan our economy and how the political system that it  
3 operates within is organised.

4 Specific changes WE are calling on all UK governments, at national and local level, to enact are:

- 5 • Stop using GDP as the primary measure of economic success or progress, instead measuring  
6 the wellbeing of citizens and the environment.
- 7 • Use the 'doughnut model' of economics to assess every budget and initiative at all levels of UK  
8 government, from Westminster through to Parish Councils.
- 9 • Respect and encourage engagement in local and national politics by convening citizens'  
10 assemblies to scrutinise spending decisions and major policy strategies.
- 11 • Include 5% Local Authority members chosen at random from the electorate for a term that  
12 allows a large range of people to participate effectively.

**Motion rationale:**

13 GDP has routinely excluded women's immense contribution to society by not accounting for the  
14 essential unpaid care work and other labour done largely by women<sup>1</sup>. The global pandemic has  
15 highlighted the inherent failings and fragility of an economy based on goods, services and the  
16 pursuit of endless growth, rather than people's quality of life.

17 It is women, and particularly working class women, women of colour, disabled women and  
18 LGBTIQ+ people, who are most disadvantaged by an economic and political system drawn up by  
19 18th Century men with no concern for who would provide care work and who would be exploited  
20 by the system<sup>2</sup>. As Jacinda Ardern said, "Economic growth accompanied by worsening social  
21 outcomes is not success, it is failure."<sup>3</sup> WE need to set a new bar for measuring the progress of  
22 our country.



23 The doughnut model of economics<sup>4</sup> provides a framework of assessment that means policy  
24 decisions are taken based on two key factors: reaching the UN's sustainable development goals<sup>5</sup>  
25 (which explicitly include gender equality); and maintaining the ecological integrity of the planet.<sup>6</sup>  
26 This provides a tangible and consistent way for every level of government to assess the gender  
27 impact of their policies, and justifies making decisions on that basis rather than through the narrow  
28 and unimaginative lens of old-school economics. WE have developed and will present a UK  
29 tailored and gendered version of the doughnut model for use by our elected officials.

30 The impacts that need to be assessed are wide-ranging and the make-up of politicians in the UK is  
31 startlingly lacking in diversity. For example, as of 2019 two thirds of councillors were male and  
32 96% were white<sup>7</sup>. As such, citizens' assemblies provide the perfect counter-weight to this lack of  
33 diversity and an excellent 'power to the people' framework to provide scrutiny at local and national  
34 level via a representative group of citizens deliberating issues and providing recommendations.<sup>8</sup>

35 In order to ensure that voices beyond the political elites and usual suspects are involved, political  
36 participation at a local level needs to be increased and enhanced. WE propose that every council  
37 in the UK has 5% of its members chosen at random from the electorate for a period or service  
38 designed to accommodate the range of people necessary to bring a diverse range of participation  
39 to the role. This would be using the same guidelines as jury service<sup>9</sup> apart from financial  
40 compensation and time off work which would be the same as that of elected councillors.

## References:

- 1 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03086534.2018.1431436>
- 2 <https://economics.com/who-cooked-adam-smiths-dinner/>
- 3 <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/jacinda-ardern-goalkeepersunga-2019/>
- 4 <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/safe-and-just-space-humanity>
- 5 <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- 6 <https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>
- 7 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-47947867>
- 8 <https://citizensassembly.co.uk/>
- 9 <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/constituency-casework/jury-service/>