

What is the Economy for the Common Good?

The Economy for the Common Good (ECG) is an alternative economic model to capitalism and communism. It is a liberal and ethical market economy, which is not based on profit-maximisation and competition, but on the common good and co-operation. Success is measured not primarily by financial earnings, but with the common good examination for investments, the Common Good Balance Sheet for enterprises and the common good product for national economies. The aim is to bring the laws of the market economy into line with the fundamental values of democratic societies. The ECG movement is implementing this vision on an economic, social and political level.

Who is involved?

The Economy for the Common Good was founded in Austria in 2010, based on the book of the same name by the Austrian author Christian Felber. The ECG movement has already achieved numerous milestones and successes and has been awarded several prizes. It currently comprises 11,000 supporters worldwide, more than 4,000 active members in more than 150 local chapters, 31 ECG associations, 500 companies and other organisations, almost 60 cities as well as 200 universities worldwide. This growing network promotes, implements and further develops the vision of the Economy for the Common Good. At the end of 2018, the International ECG Federation was founded by nine national ECG associations which coordinate and pool their resources.

How is the Economy for the Common Good organised?

The Economy for the Common Good is open to all — everybody, every company, every organisation and every community can get involved and actively participate. Individuals can get involved in local chapters or hubs, such as the Consultants Hub, the Communication Hub or the Speakers Hub. Companies and communities can draw up Common Good Balance Sheets and thus become pioneers of the movement. Joint decisions are made by all groups at the annual delegates assembly. An international coordination team was set up in 2013. This was followed in 2018 by the foundation of the International ECG Federation, by nine national ECG associations, extending from Sweden to Chile (03/2019).

Further information is available at www.ecogood.org/en

How does it work?

Companies, universities, municipalities and other organisations have the opportunity to draw up a Common Good Balance Sheet. This balance sheet is based on the Common Good Matrix, which describes 20 themes that make a company's contribution to the common good visible. Each company can achieve a maximum of 1,000 points. Thus, for the first time, the result of a CSR standard can be compared across all sectors, legal forms and company sizes. The ECG Balance Sheet fulfils the European Union's requirement for non-financial reporting.

The long-term goal of the Economy for the Common Good is to make this kind of impact assessment visible on products. The audited result of the Common Good Balance Sheet should decide on the legal advantages or disadvantages of a company, e.g. taxes, customs duties or public procurement. With the help of these incentives, the current cost and competitive disadvantage of ethical companies is reversed into a price and competitive advantage.

Who's got a Common Good Balance Sheet?

- ARGEkultur gemeinnützige GmbH, A-Salzburg
- Traperos de Emaús de la Región de Murcia, ES-San Javier
- BKK Pro Vita, D-Bergkirchen
- Can Cet, ES-Badalona
- Cultiva, CL-Santiago
- Ecotopia på Österlen, SE-Tranås
- elobau GmbH & Co. KG, D-Leutkirch
- Grüne Erde GmbH, A-Scharnstein
- Herzogsägmühle Diakonie in Oberbayern e.V., D-Peiting
- Hotel La Perla, I-Corvara
- La Congregación Mariana, CO-Medellin
- Märkisches Landbrot GmbH, D-Berlin
- Mundo de Virtudes, CL-Santiago
- Odin, NL-Geldermalsen
- OiKOPOLiS, LU-Munsbach
- PAUMA Gestión de recursos sociales y educativos, ES-Pamplona
- Polarstern GmbH, D-München
- Proqualitas Consultores, CL-Santiago
- Raiffeisenbank, A-Lech am Arlberg
- Sparda-Bank München eG, D-München
- Sotronik GmbH, CH-Winterthur
- Vägen Ut! kooperativen, SE-Göteborg
- VAUDE Sport GmbH & Co. KG, D-Tettnang

The city of Stuttgart, Germany has certified two municipal companies, Leben & Wohnen and Stadtentwässerung Stuttgart. The first universities to publish a balance sheet are the Business School Lausanne (CH), the FH Burgenland (A) and the IGC of the Hochschule Bremen (D).
A list of our members and companies with a balance sheet can be found on the website.

Where is there official political support?

The first certified common good communities are Mäder and Nenzing in Vorarlberg, Austria. In Germany, Kirchanschöring in Upper Bavaria and the Schleswig-Holstein municipalities of Breklum, Klixbüll and Bordelum are leading the way. Baden-Württemberg, Salzburg and Valencia have the common good economy in their government programmes.

The European Union Economic and Social Committee approved the ECG in an 'own-initiative opinion' in 2015 by 86% and considers it suitable for the integration into the legal framework of the European Union and its member states. In 2017 it counts them among the "new sustainable economic models".

What about scientific evidence for the model?

The Economy for the Common Good is also increasingly active in the field of science and research. The German-speaking ECG research association takes part in research projects and develops tools to improve the Common Good assessment tools. For this purpose, the association operates a networking platform with more than 150 scientists from German-speaking countries. In June 2018, a scientific advisory board coordinated by Dr. Günter Koch was established.

Since June 2017, the University of Valencia, Spain holds the world's first ECG Chair. In autumn 2018, the Master's program "Applied Common Good Economics" began at the Saalfelden Study Centre in cooperation with Burgenland University in Austria.

Currently (early 2019), three scientific studies on the ECG are available from the University of Valencia, University of Flensburg, University of Kiel and University of Bremen, which distinguish the ECG as a "social innovation", attribute the impact of higher ethical and financial performance to the Common Good Balance Sheet and regard it as a suitable instrument for implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals at company level.

ECG Spokespersons are available for information, interviews and discussions. ECG Ambassadors support the ECG in their specialty fields. Please contact us and we will get you in touch with the right person in your area or field of expertise.

Contact

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