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altausterity.mcmaster.ca

PRESS RELEASE

International Project Aiming to Expand Policy and Public Conversations on Austerity Launches

Hamilton, ON - the 'Austerity and its Alternatives' team is proud to publicly launch their project, striving to make research accessible to policy communities so as to achieve meaningful impact.

We define austerity as a network of policies including fiscal consolidation (e.g. spending cuts), public sector restructuring, and labour market reform. The effects of these policies across advanced economies has been quite consistent: healthcare, education, social transfers, and public sectors workers are often the first targets of cuts, while labour market reforms aim to reduce worker protections and wages.

Despite robust evidence which indicates that austerity has a *negative* effect on economic growth and disproportionately affects the vulnerable, it is still highly salient and part of everyday political and policy discussions. Yet, alternatives—including revenue restructuring, changes to tax expenditures, and changes to infrastructure spending—are not reflected in policy choices and discussions nearly as much.

The 'AltAusterity' project brings together researchers and practitioners from academia, independent institutions, and NGOs in Canada, the UK, Ireland, Australia, and Germany to stimulate greater conversations about alternatives to austerity. The participating institutions include the Think-Tank for Action on Social Change (TASC) in Ireland, Carleton University and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) in Canada, the Tax Justice Network (TJN) and the University of Hull in the UK, and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Germany.

The project aims to expand the boundaries of research, data, and insights on austerity, its effects, and alternatives so as to include broader audiences and achieve real policy impacts. Our approach is based on clarity, variety in outputs, collaboration, a diversity of voices, and a focus on everyday life.

AltAusterity launches with a website (<https://altausterity.mcmaster.ca/>), a Twitter page (<https://twitter.com/AltAusterity>), and an email newsletter (on our 'about us' page). New content will be uploaded on Tuesdays along with a weekly digest of austerity news on Fridays.

On the site you will find information about us, our research, media, and contact information.

We hope you find our work useful and interesting, and that you'll join in #altausterity conversations!