

KNOCK OUT ROUND 3 MOTION:

Worldwide, the advantages of economic growth outweigh its costs

In 1995, Concern Debates first put forward the motion “Worldwide the advantages of economic growth outweigh its costs” challenging students to research, analyse and debate economic growth, a fundamental policy goal of most governments. It encouraged them to ask whether the societal and financial benefits of boosting the economy outweigh the profound negative impacts on people and the planet. Since then, most economies have continued to grow, leading to improvements in people’s lives globally. However, this progress has come at the cost of depleting Earth’s natural resources and exacerbating climate change.

Supporters of economic growth argue that it is essential for reducing poverty and improving living standards. Increased income and productivity provide governments with larger tax revenues, which can be reinvested into public services, fostering a cycle of prosperity. This can lead to improved healthcare systems, education and infrastructure, lifting millions out of poverty while creating jobs and reducing unemployment rates.

In contrast, critics highlight the costs of unchecked economic growth, particularly its effects on the environment.

The relentless pursuit of growth contributes to deforestation, pollution and other forms of environmental degradation, threatening both current and future generations. Additionally, opponents argue that economic growth can worsen social inequality: while some reap significant rewards, others are left behind, widening the gap between rich and poor. Some advocate for alternative approaches, such as “degrowth” a model that prioritises sustainable development, community well-being and environmental conservation over the endless accumulation of wealth.

Is it possible to achieve inclusive, environmentally conscious growth that balances these competing goals, or does securing a sustainable future demand a shift away from traditional growth models? Is economic progress a stepping stone or an obstacle: **worldwide, do the advantages of economic growth outweigh its costs?**

Debate it!

