

# PROGRAMME

# UNLOCKING NEW ECONOMIC THINKING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

21TH APRIL 2021  
9.00-16.30  
ONLINE

# COFACE Families Europe

## Unlocking new economic thinking for a sustainable future

Brussels, 21<sup>th</sup> April 2021

9.00-16.30

Online

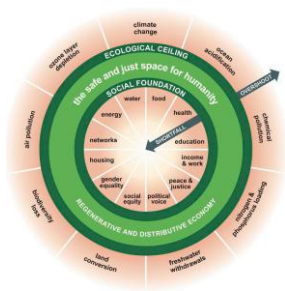
### BACKGROUND

COFACE Families Europe is a European civil society network representing families (all types, without discrimination), through its 50+ organisations across 23 countries, shaping EU policy and legislation which impacts families: [www.coface-eu.org](http://www.coface-eu.org). We monitor a wide range of policies which impact the lives of families and children including worklife balance, disability, education, consumer policy, migration and digitalisation.

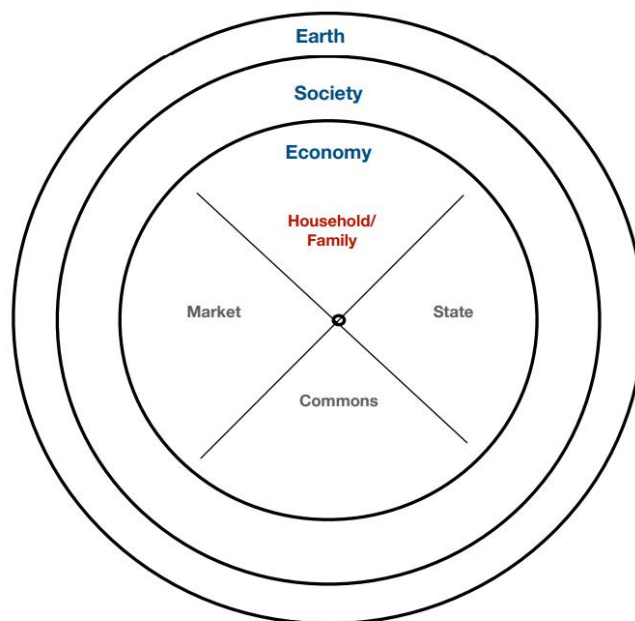
This conference will be held online for COFACE members and EU stakeholders on building a caring economy which works for families and children, especially important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic during which families acted as the main social safety net. We will start with a reality-check of the new needs of families of today in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, followed by a discussion on the social and environmental sustainability of the current economic system, and try to trigger actions to sustainably reduce social inequalities, building an economy that works for society.

Taking a holistic economic and societal approach, using the Doughnut economics model as a starting point, we will look at three key dimensions of the economy: **households, the market, and the State**. The discussions and proposals will serve to build key COFACE recommendations for EU and national policy-makers to unlock new thinking for a more social, environmental and economic future.

#### Doughnut economics



A holistic approach which aims at balancing basic human needs (access to water, food, energy, housing...), with the limitations of our planet (climate change, air pollution, depletion of resources...), putting the economy and the financial sector at the service of society.



#### What is the place of families?

- I. **Earth** which is life-giving, so respect its boundaries
- II. **Society** which is foundational, so nurture its connections
- III. The **Economy** which is diverse, so support all of its systems
- IV. The **Household/Family** which is core, so value its contribution

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

09.00-9.30	<p><b>Welcome address</b> Annemie Drieskens, COFACE-Families Europe President</p> <p><b>Presentation of COFACE-Families Europe's work in the field of economics</b> Martin Schmalzried, Senior Policy and Advocacy Manager, COFACE Families Europe</p>
09.30-11.00	<p><b>Households: family associations' role and perspective in the aftermath of COVID-19</b> Households, consumers, families, play an essential role in the economy. It is often overlooked due to the pressures that the "demand" side faces. In a world filled with fear of losing your job and income, where the unpaid care of families is invisible, where everything is made to keep consumers busy with little time to think, consumers have been viewed as automats, consuming mindlessly what they are being told to buy through advertising, social norms and other forms of pressure. But times are changing, and more and more families are waking up to the harsh reality that in order for their children to have a world to live in, things need to change. What is needed for empowering families to contribute to creating a more sustainable economic environment? In this session we focus on three economic dimensions: energy, work-life balance, and environment.</p> <hr/> <p>Moderator: Isabell Wutz, Senior Communication Officer, COFACE Families Europe</p> <p>Daniel Alvarez, Project manager, Isadora Duncan, Spain Joyce Knappe, CEO, Pro Parents Netherlands Sven Iversen, Director, Association of German Family organisations, Germany</p> <p>Q&amp;A</p>
11.00-11.30	<p><b>Tea&amp; stretching break</b></p>
11.30-13.00	<p><b>Market: making the economic environment more sustainable.</b> Private actors in the market play a major role in contributing to create a more sustainable economic environment, but how to make sure they deliver? In an economic and financial system which puts profits before people, what actions can be put in place to rein in the race for short term gains, crushing the competition and cutting costs, and replace it with long term social and environmental sustainability goals?</p> <hr/> <p>Moderator: Martin Schmalzried, Senior Policy&amp;Advocacy Manager, COFACE Families Europe</p> <p>-Thierry Philipponnat, Head of Research and Advocacy, Finance Watch -Jan Mayrhofer, Senior Policy Officer, Sustainable Development, European Youth Forum -Katy Wiese, Policy Officer for Economic Transition, European Environmental Bureau</p> <p>Q&amp;A</p>

13.00-14.00	<b>Lunch break</b>
14.00-15.30	<p><b>State and local administrations: Policy leadership of public administration in reducing inequalities</b></p> <p>Inequalities have risen steadily for the last few decades, with a clear acceleration since the 2008 financial crisis, and again following the COVID-19 pandemic. But poverty and inequalities are not just a matter of social justice. They are the bedrock of rising extremism, and a threat to economic and financial stability. In a debt based monetary system, since all money in circulation is debt, anyone accumulating or hoarding too much wealth without spending it into the economy increases the risk of economic actors defaulting on their loans. How can policy makers address inequalities? What tools do they have at their disposal?</p> <hr/> <p>Moderator: Elizabeth Gosme, Director, COFACE Families Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme poverty and Human rights</li> <li>-Mirzha de Manuel Aramendía, Member of cabinet of Executive Vice-President Dombrovskis for an Economy that works for the People, European Commission</li> <li>-Barbara Trachte, Brussels Secretary of state for Economic transition</li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A</p> <p>with EN-FR interpretation</p>
15.30-16.00	<p><b>Conclusions and recommendations</b></p> <p>Annemie Drieskens, President of COFACE Families Europe</p>
16.00-16.30	<p><b>The world in 2042: an inspirational tale from the future</b></p> <p>Martin Schmalzried, Senior Policy&amp;Advocacy Manager, COFACE Families Europe</p> <p>Most of us know what is wrong with the world, what needs to be fixed. But will it help build a better future? Sometimes, it is a good idea to focus on the light at the end of the tunnel than getting rid of all the surrounding darkness. Through the use of visionary story-telling and science fiction, we can draw inspiration and positive energy to create a better future, much like the tales of Jules Verne sparked the imagination and enthusiasm of people for science and progress in his days.</p> <p><i>Please note: This video is not an official COFACE-Families Europe position, but is meant as a thought provoking exercise to inspire and spark debate.</i></p>

# A BETTER SOCIETY FOR ALL FAMILIES



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