Alternative Economies: Uplifting Activities for a Sustainable Future, U.S. Survey Results

October 2023

Written By
Adoma Addo
Kelley Dennings
This report analyzes results from a survey intended to gauge perceptions and knowledge about different economic models, including capitalism. Since these terms were not defined in the survey, there may be variances in how respondents understood the models. Capitalism, in particular, is a complex system rooted in racism, sexism and classism. It is not the intention of this report to ignore or diminish associated injustices.
Our extractive economic system relies on endless growth and exploitation and hurts humans and wildlife. The harms of this system range from continued fossil fuel combustion, which threatens our health and climate, to voter suppression and growing wealth inequality.

Research conducted by the Pew Research Center found that more than 65% of people in the United States believe that the American political, economic and healthcare systems must be completely reformed or need major changes. The growing frustration with our present systems has caused people to turn to alternative economy practices, like participating in community-supported agriculture, land trusts or sharing and bartering programs.

The creation of an alternative economy requires community-oriented solutions grounded in equity, cooperation, democratic practices and sustainability. These alternative economy values embody the belief that the needs of people should be prioritized over the endless pursuit of profit.

But creating and scaling alternative economy practices so they’re widely accepted requires an understanding of how people perceive the present economy and support an alternative economy. To gain that understanding, the Center for Biological Diversity conducted an online survey of the U.S. public to get a sense of their existing knowledge of alternative economy principles, their perceptions of the role corporations play in the economy, and their willingness to engage in community-level alternative economy actions.

The survey revealed that three-fourths of Americans agree that our economic system needs to change but only one-third are comfortable using alternative economy language in conversation. It also found that the majority of those surveyed are familiar with alternative economy practices, but financial resources and time significantly limit their ability to participate in them.

Our recommendations to overcome these barriers include creating resources for the public and policymakers to support scaling alternative economy actions and advocating for increased corporate transparency and accountability in the political process and the economic system.

The results of this survey provide crucial insight into the public’s existing beliefs about our current capitalist economic system and people’s understanding and willingness to participate in a new and inclusive alternative economy. It’s our hope that the wisdom gained from this survey will help environmental advocates build support for a new economy.

I. Executive Summary
II. Key Findings

1. Respondents agree that our present economic system needs major changes.

Three-fourths of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that an economy shaped by major corporations is compatible with a sustainable future but our current economic system needs major reforms to ensure everyone has clean air and water regardless of race, class or gender. Respondents also believed that corporations have too much power and influence in the political process.

Three-fourths of respondents were familiar with alternative economy terms such as “degrowth economy,” “democratic socialism,” “just transition,” “new economy,” “post-capitalism,” “redistributive economy,” “solidarity economy” and “steady-state economy.” However, only one-third of respondents said they’d be comfortable using these terms in conversation.

Respondents said that all five pillars of the solidarity economy — cooperation, equity, environmental sustainability, democracy and pluralism — are important to them, but cooperation and equity were the top two choices.

2. Respondents are already knowledgeable about alternative economy practices but many face financial and logistical barriers to participation.

More than 90% of respondents were familiar with alternative economy practices like community land trusts, community supported agriculture (CSAs) and gardens, co-operatives, credit unions, do-it-yourself (DIY), mutual aid and sharing. More than 63% of respondents indicated they support these alternative economy practices. However, only 30% said they currently participate — or have participated in the past — in these practices.

More than 60% of respondents said they support, or are willing to engage in, activities that represent an alternative economy such as participatory budgeting, community sharing and cooperative ownership, but 51% indicated that lack of financial resources — and 49% said lack of time — held them back.
Our current capitalist socioeconomic system is defined by overconsumption, extraction, endless growth, and the exploitation of people and natural resources. From pollution to habitat destruction, the pursuit of limitless profit threatens the welfare of both human and wildlife communities. As fossil fuel extraction, water pollution and deforestation worsen climate change, wealth inequality worsens too.

The challenges of climate change, social injustice and resource extraction unfairly burden vulnerable communities and have caused people to see the need for alternative economic systems. In fact, a 2021 Pew Research Center survey found that more than 65% of people in the United States believe that the American political, economic and healthcare systems must be completely reformed or need major changes.¹

Because of the environmental and social harms of capitalism, people and communities have been turning to each other and engaging in alternative economic practices. One of these alternative economies is the solidarity economy, which highlights principles like equity and cooperation across society, democratic practices, sustainability, and addressing the needs of people over the endless pursuit of profits.²

The Center for Biological Diversity believes we need a new economic model that isn’t based on extraction, exploitation and endless growth — one that allows people and the planet to thrive and equitably access resources. But in order to create a new way forward, we must first understand how society feels about our current dominant economic practices and alternative practices, theories and terms.

III. Introduction

Our current capitalist socioeconomic system is defined by overconsumption, extraction, endless growth, and the exploitation of people and natural resources. From pollution to habitat destruction, the pursuit of limitless profit threatens the welfare of both human and wildlife communities. As fossil fuel extraction, water pollution and deforestation worsen climate change, wealth inequality worsens too.

The challenges of climate change, social injustice and resource extraction unfairly burden vulnerable communities and have caused people to see the need for alternative economic systems. In fact, a 2021 Pew Research Center survey found that more than 65% of people in the United States believe that the American political, economic and healthcare systems must be completely reformed or need major changes.¹

Because of the environmental and social harms of capitalism, people and communities have been turning to each other and engaging in alternative economic practices. One of these alternative economies is the solidarity economy, which highlights principles like equity and cooperation across society, democratic practices, sustainability, and addressing the needs of people over the endless pursuit of profits.²

The Center for Biological Diversity believes we need a new economic model that isn’t based on extraction, exploitation and endless growth — one that allows people and the planet to thrive and equitably access resources. But in order to create a new way forward, we must first understand how society feels about our current dominant economic practices and alternative practices, theories and terms.
Image 1: Alternative Economy Advocacy Framework

Image 1 depicts the human and planetary needs that would be met by an alternative economy, highlighting the areas of social, political and economic advocacy that are key tenets of a system that benefits both people and planet, defined by justice and solidarity.

With that in mind, the Center surveyed the U.S. public about their perspectives on the current dominant economy and alternative economies, the role of corporations in shaping a sustainable future, and the knowledge and acceptance of alternative economic practices.

This groundbreaking data provides new insight into the general public’s present knowledge of alternative economy practices and principles. It can serve as a guide to help campaigners build on the public’s existing values to expand and explore community action toward a just, sustainable future.
IV. Survey Methodology

The survey results were derived from a national, random, paid, age 18+ sample of the general public conducted via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), carried out by geographic location with a representative population sample.

To calculate a minimum sample size for a 95% confidence level, we used the Sample Size Calculator available online at OpenEpi2. We assumed a large population (N = 1,000,000), a 50% frequency in the population of each measure with +/- 3.5% confidence limits and a design effect of 1.00. Given these criteria, a 95% confidence level required a minimum of 784 survey respondents. The Center funded a total of 894 surveys, after quality-control removals (detailed below). Therefore the 95% confidence level margin of error for an 894 individual survey is less than +/- 3.5%.

The questions were initially tested in a convenience sample survey that was shared with Center members, online supporters and employees, along with friends and family and external partners. These results are not included in this report but indicated a widespread frustration with the present economic system, specifically regarding how it limits opportunities for effective environmental and social solutions.

Respondents in the random sample were recruited using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online marketplace that compensates people for participating in surveys. All respondents completed surveys in the platform Survey Monkey, and the results were processed and verified in Microsoft Excel. The survey was translated into Spanish, and both an English and a Spanish version were available.

Respondents in the national, random MTurk sample were paid $0.20 for completion of the 6-minute survey. The MTurk samples were carried out in batches of 20 on a regional geographic basis. Responses were from all 50 states and included a total of 894 responses using both English and Spanish survey instruments.

The survey included some quality-control questions to ensure a quality standard and prevent responses from bots. We used consistency in age, city and state, and a question requiring respondents to select the correct answer as three quality-check metrics. Given that some low-quality responses were still present following quality-control measures in previous surveys, using multiple quality-control questions allowed us to better sort through low-quality responses.

In addition to cleaning and aggregating the data, the answers were statistically analyzed to test for differences between response frequencies. Each comparison of response frequencies was reviewed to determine if the difference was statistically significant at the 90% and 95% confidence level.

Several of the questions prompted respondents to write in their own responses or allowed respondents to specify “other” responses. That qualitative data was analyzed and aggregated based on similarities in language and themes. All written responses are presented in italics, with minor edits for spelling and/or clarity.
V. Survey Results

A. PERCEPTIONS, FAMILIARITY AND ATTITUDES

1. Choose your level of agreement for each statement below. (Mark only one answer for each of the questions.)
This question gauged public perspectives on the role of corporations in society, politics, and our economic system. The goal of this question was to determine if the frustrations with the current economic system observed in the convenience sample survey and alluded to in the 2021 Pew Research Center survey were present in our general public results.

Chart A.

Choose your level of agreement for each statement below.

![Bar chart showing responses to statements about corporations and the economy.]

- An economy shaped by major corporations is compatible with a sustainable future.
- Our current economic system needs major reforms to ensure everyone has clean air and water regardless of race, class or gender.
- Corporations have too much power and influence in the political process.

Legend:
- **Strongly agree**
- **Somewhat agree**
- **Somewhat disagree**
- **Strongly disagree**
- **Don't know**
Three-fourths of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that an economy shaped by major corporations is compatible with a sustainable future. However, 84% also somewhat or strongly agreed that our current economic system needs major reforms to ensure everyone has clean air and water regardless of race, class or gender. Finally, 85% of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that corporations have too much power and influence in the political process.

The results of the question show widespread concern about the reach and impact of corporations. The public’s strong agreement with all three of these statements indicates that they believe that corporations can be a part of a sustainable future, but it also suggests that they believe reforms are needed to regulate how much power corporations have in the political process and to ensure that people have access to a healthy environment.

One interesting note: While the response for “strongly agree” looks similar among the statements, statistical analysis found a stronger belief that our system needs major reforms and corporations have too much power when compared to a belief that an economy shaped by major corporations is compatible with a sustainable future.
2. Which of the following terms are you familiar with and which would you feel comfortable using in conversation? (Check all that apply.)

This question sought to gain insight into survey respondents' understanding of terms associated with alternative economies, ranging from well-known socioeconomic systems such as “democratic socialism” to more specialized environmental terms like “just transition” and “redistributive economy.”

Chart B.

Which of the following terms are you familiar with and which would you feel comfortable using in conversation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Familiar with</th>
<th>Comfortable Using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrowth economy</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic socialism</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just transition</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New economy</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-capitalism</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistributive economy</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity economy</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady-state economy</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A.
The following table presents the differences between familiarity and comfort in the terms associated with alternative economies. While respondents may be familiar with the terms, understanding how comfortable they are using them provides helpful information in our education and outreach work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Familiar with</th>
<th>Would feel comfortable using</th>
<th>Percent difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrowth economy</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic socialism</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just transition</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New economy</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-capitalism</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistributive economy</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity economy</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady-state economy</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data shows that there is a relationship between the terms people were familiar with and the terms they were comfortable using. The results reveal, with a 95% confidence level, that “democratic socialism” was the term most people were familiar with, followed by “post-capitalism” and “redistributive economy.” “Democratic socialism” and “redistributive economy” were the terms that the greatest number of respondents indicated they felt comfortable using.

Statistical analysis found that respondents were more comfortable using the term “democratic socialism” than “just transition,” “solidarity economy” or “post-capitalism.” “Democratic socialism,” in particular, possibly represents a term that’s already widely known and a common part of contemporary political culture. In contrast, “degrowth economy” was the term respondents were least familiar with.

As depicted in Table A, aside from “democratic socialism,” the respondents demonstrated similar levels of knowledge and comfort with most of the terms, producing inconclusive results for a second favored term. There was also a large gap, of 41% on average, between existing knowledge and usage of each term. This gap is represented in the last column of Table A. One of the Center's goals is to create campaigns that help people who are familiar with a term become comfortable using that term. Additional research could be necessary to ensure clearer insight into the connotations respondents associate with each term.
3. Which of the following solutions do you think would have the greatest positive impact on U.S. society? (Mark only one.)

This question presented the five pillars of the solidarity economy, one of the alternative economic systems. The five pillars present the aspired values of a new system, highlighting tenets of the solidarity economy.

Chart C.

![Chart](chart.png)

Respondents said they think the solutions with the greatest positive impact on society are support and cooperation among different classes and social groups and equity. There was a statistically significant difference between the top two choices and the bottom two choices, suggesting that people were slightly more likely to favor support, cooperation and equity over democratic practices and diverse solutions.

Overall, respondents to this question demonstrated similar appreciation for each of the solutions. The results reaffirm the importance of considering all five pillars of the solidarity economy when addressing the present system of endless growth.
B. ALTERNATIVE ECONOMY EXAMPLES

4. Which of the following activities are you familiar with, supportive of or are currently doing/have done in the past? (Check all that apply.)

The first questions in this survey sought to understand the public’s knowledge of the names of alternative economies and their perspectives on the role of corporations in society, which is critical to advancing economic reform. The questions in this section of the survey sought to understand current support for and participation in existing solidarity economy activities, which is crucial for helping the public understand what alternative economies look like in practice.

Chart D.

Which of the following activities are you familiar with, supportive of or are currently doing/have done in the past?

- Banking at credit unions (non-profit, cooperatively-owned financial institutions)
  - Familiar: 94%
  - Support: 63%
  - Current: 30%

- Do-It-Yourself (making, altering or repairing your own items)
  - Familiar: 96%
  - Support: 71%
  - Current: 36%

- Establishing, buying from or participating in community supported agriculture or community gardens
  - Familiar: 95%
  - Support: 66%
  - Current: 26%

- Establishing, buying from or participating in worker/community owned co-operatives (co-ops)
  - Familiar: 93%
  - Support: 63%
  - Current: 27%

- Participating in community land trusts (non-profits that manage land for the public good rather than being privately owned)
  - Familiar: 90%
  - Support: 64%
  - Current: 29%

- Sharing (e.g., little free libraries, little free pantries, community tool sheds)
  - Familiar: 94%
  - Support: 69%
  - Current: 29%

- Supporting networks of mutual aid (financial or otherwise) among community members
  - Familiar: 90%
  - Support: 64%
  - Current: 25%
Across the board the results revealed that 90% or more of respondents were familiar with alternative economy practices and over 60% supported these practices. Respondents were most supportive of mutual aid (77%), community-level sharing initiatives (69%) and community-supported agriculture/gardens (66%). The most common activities respondents were currently doing or had previously done were do-it-yourself (36%) and banking at credit unions (30%).

Do-it-yourself (DIY) was the most widely supported activity, with over 90% confidence. Additionally, DIY was the activity that most respondents were presently or previously involved in with over 95% confidence. These results demonstrate overall positive perceptions of solidarity economy practices and community-led initiatives, however, there is a behavior intention gap as noted in the last column of Table B. While more than 60% of all respondents supported these activities, only around 30% were actively doing them or have done them. Future campaigns need to address this gap by first identifying the barriers to each action and segmenting those challenges by audience demographics. Then we can build tailored resources, toolkits, programs and policies to overcome them.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>I support this</th>
<th>I am currently doing/ have done in the past</th>
<th>Percent difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banking at credit unions</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do-it-yourself</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing, buying or participating in community supported agriculture/ community gardens</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing, buying or participating in worker/ community owned co-operatives</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in community land trusts</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting networks of mutual aid</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Which of the following ideas were you previously familiar with and which do you support? (Check all that apply.)
This question focused on examples of the larger structural changes that reflect key principles of an alternative economy. Short descriptions of each idea were provided. Unlike the previous question, these ideas require larger policy shifts, collective engagement, and more than just individual action. The goal of this question was to determine existing familiarity with, and attitudes about, these topics.

Chart E.

Which of the following ideas were you previously familiar with and which do you support?

- Time banks: a system in which participants exchange labor for time credits to be used for other services
  - Familiar: 81%
  - Support: 46%

- Universal basic income: regular government assistance to adult citizens to pay for basic needs
  - Familiar: 89%
  - Support: 40%

- Participatory budgeting: community members democratically decide how a public budget is spent
  - Familiar: 83%
  - Support: 47%

- Political finance reforms: regulating the flow of money into the political process
  - Familiar: 86%
  - Support: 46%
Respondents were most familiar with universal basic income (89%) and least familiar with time banks (81%). However, they indicated that they support time banks, participatory budgeting, and political finance reforms over universal basic income.

These results suggest that a significant number of respondents are familiar with the ideas that represent needed structural changes in the present economic system but less than half support them. Further inquiry could examine how to effectively advocate for these changes in the face of potential social and political differences.
6. Indicate your willingness to engage in each of the following activities. (Check only one answer per row.)

This question sought to learn which activities are currently being done by respondents, which ones they support, their willingness to engage in different activities, and which activities they need more information on. The activities were provided in the survey based on a perceived scale from easier to harder and grouped together based on similar topics. For example, donating to a Little Free Library® is an easier action than building a Little Free Library®.
## Table C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>I engage in or am willing to engage in this activity</th>
<th>I am willing to engage in this activity, but I need more information</th>
<th>I support this activity but am unwilling to engage in it</th>
<th>I am unwilling to engage in this activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donate to a Little Free Library®</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a Little Free Library®</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop at a co-op</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be on a co-op board</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take an article of clothing in for repair</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn how to repair my own clothing</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate for participatory budgeting</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in participatory budgeting</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results suggested that over 60% of respondents are currently engaged in, support, or are willing to engage in activities that represent the solidarity economy, including participatory budgeting, community sharing and cooperative ownership. Respondents were most likely to be currently engaged in or willing to engage in donating to a Little Free Library® (20%) and learning how to repair their own clothes (18%). They were least likely to advocate for participatory budgeting (10%) and be on a co-op board (9%).

As expected, respondents were more engaged in the perceived easier activities between each pairing than the perceived harder activities (for example, 14% of people indicated they would shop at a co-op but only 9% said they would be on a co-op board). Likewise, 20% of respondents said they were willing to engage in the easiest perceived action — donating to a Little Free Library® — while only 11% of respondents said they would engage in participatory budgeting, the hardest perceived action.

While donating to a Little Free Library® had the greatest percentage of respondents who were engaged in or willing to participate in the activity (44%), a significant number of respondents (27%) claimed they were unwilling to engage in donations to a Little Free Library®. Additional research could provide insight into the values that people associate with community-oriented actions such as book donations and cooperative ownership.

Another important takeaway is that around one-quarter of respondents were willing to engage in activities that represent the solidarity economy but said they needed more information. They were also more likely to indicate that they supported an action but were unwilling to engage, suggesting that the perceived barriers prevent action and may require additional investigation.
7. What are some barriers you expect or have personally encountered to participating in the examples above? (Check all that apply.)

This multiple-choice question sought to determine the perceived barriers to participation in solidarity economy activities.

Chart F.

The results suggested with over 95% certainty that lack of financial resources and time were primary barriers to participating in solidarity economy activities. This suggests that many aspects of the solidarity economy may be perceived as costly, high-commitment, or time consuming, revealing opportunities for more constructive and positive messaging.

A small number of respondents opted to write in their own answers using the “other” response. They can be grouped into the following themes:

- Larger ideological disagreements: Most of this sounds like socialism. Not interested.
- Concerns about effort, accessibility or convenience: [The actions provided are a] waste of effort when I could be making money to retire early.
- Issues specific to participatory budgeting: I believe that [people doing] participatory budgeting only end up in voting for [their] own pet project.
C. DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic profile for this survey was largely white (82%), male (66%) and in their 30s (40%) with a household income over $50,000 (60%).

Chart G.

What is your gender identity? (Mark only one.)

- Male: 66%
- Female: 33%
- Transgender: 0%
- Non-binary: 0%
- I prefer not to answer: 0%

Chart H.

What is your age in years?

- 20s: 34%
- 30s: 40%
- 40s: 14%
- 50s: 8%
- 60s: 4%
- 70s: 1%
Chart I.

Race and Hispanic origin: How would you describe yourself?

- White: 82%
- Asian: 17%
- Hispanic or Latino: 7%
- Black or African American: 6%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 6%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: 4%
- Two or More Races: 5%

Chart J.

What is your political party affiliation?

- Democrat: 41%
- Republican: 38%
- Independent: 18%
- I prefer not to answer: 1%
- Other (please specify): 1%

The most common “other” response was libertarian, followed by constitutionalist and not affiliated.
Chart K.

What is your estimated annual household income?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $20,000</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 to $34,999</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Recommendations

These survey results provide crucial insight into perspectives on alternative economy practices and the larger systemic changes required of corporations and the political process. The findings in this report will help inform future outreach and advocacy campaigns as well as future research. Our recommendations for next steps are listed below.

1. **Conduct additional research into communication strategies and campaigns that will motivate participation in alternative economy actions.**
   The results in question 2 about terminology suggest that additional research is needed to determine the best messaging to engage people in alternative economy outreach and advocate for these practices across political differences. This research could also include investigation into which terms can most effectively mobilize and motivate action. Additional research could also include a deep dive into ways to overcome the perceived barriers to action to help build better campaigns.

2. **Create resources for the general public and policymakers to support the scaling of alternative economy actions.**
   The survey results suggest that additional resources and support from local governments, organizations, funding entities and community advocates are needed to address the barriers of time and money and make it easier for people to engage in alternative economy examples. This could involve the creation of educational resources, outreach initiatives and technical assistance to increase knowledge about easy, convenient, and low-cost ways of getting involved in alternative economy activities like community organizing through land trusts, shopping at co-ops, and participating in mutual aid.

   In addition to the work needed to scale alternative economies, advocates must simultaneously uplift the fights of all communities who are facing harm from the extractive nature of our present economic system. This includes promoting policies that limit corporate influence and involve diverse stakeholders. There needs to be an increased commitment from academics and organizers alike to discuss alternative economies and provide education to policymakers and the business community.

3. **Advocate for increased corporate transparency and accountability in the political process and economic system.**
   Survey respondents demonstrated concern about the economic and political power that corporations hold in society. The transition from a system based on extraction and exploitation to a system based on sustainability, regeneration, solidarity and equity will require policies that hold corporations accountable for the harm they cause to people and the environment. This could include advocacy for public access to information about production processes, regular labor audits, enforcement of existing environmental and labor laws, environmental impact assessments and accessible and understandable information about political campaign contributions.
VII. Conclusion

While alternative economic practices already exist in our communities and are not new or foreign, scaling these practices will require investments from all sectors and opportunities for people of all backgrounds to easily participate. Bad actors must also be held accountable. There are certainly challenges to transforming a complex, entrenched economic system upheld by powerful interests, but the combination of public support, participation in existing practices, and the urgency of our environmental crises creates an opportunity for us to reimagine an economy that values the wellbeing of all life on Earth.
VIII. References


## Survey Instrument

1. Choose your level of agreement for each statement below. (Mark only one answer for each of the questions.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An economy shaped by major corporations is compatible with a sustainable future.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our current economic system needs major reforms to ensure everyone has clean air and water regardless of race, class or gender.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations have too much power and influence in the political process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Which of the following terms are you familiar with and which would you feel comfortable using? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>I’m familiar with this</th>
<th>I would feel comfortable using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just transition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-capitalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic socialism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistributive economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrowth economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady-state economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Which of the following solutions do you think would have the greatest positive impact on U.S. society? (Mark only one answer.)

- Support and cooperation between different classes and social groups.
- Democratic practices like voting nationally, locally and in the workplace.
- Equity, including race/ethnicity, national origin, class, gender, and sexuality.
- Environmental sustainability such as protections for people and the planet.
- Recognition that multiple and diverse solutions are needed to solve issues.

4. Which of the following activities are you familiar with, do you support or are currently doing or have done in the past? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>I am familiar with this</th>
<th>I support this</th>
<th>I’m currently doing this/ have done this in the past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting networks of mutual aid (financial or otherwise) among community members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing (e.g., little free libraries, little free pantries, community tool sheds)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing, buying from, or participating in worker/community owned co-operatives (co-ops)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in community land trusts (non-profits that manage land for the public good rather than being privately owned)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing, buying from, or participating in community supported agriculture or community gardens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking at credit unions (non-profit, cooperatively-owned financial institutions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Which of the following ideas are you familiar with and which do you support? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea</th>
<th>I am familiar with this</th>
<th>I support this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time banks: a system in which participants exchange labor for time credits to be used for other services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal basic income: regular government assistance to adult citizens to pay for basic needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory budgeting: community members democratically decide how a public budget is spent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political finance reforms: regulating the flow of money into the political process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Which of the following ideas are you familiar with and which do you support? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>I engage in or am willing to engage in this activity</th>
<th>I am willing to engage in this activity, but I need more information</th>
<th>I support this activity but am unwilling to engage in this activity</th>
<th>I am unwilling to engage in this activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donate to a Little Free Library®</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a Little Free Library®</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop at a co-op</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be on a co-op board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take an article of clothing in for repair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn how to repair my own clothing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate for participatory budgeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in participatory budgeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. What are some barriers you expect or have personally encountered to participating in the examples above? (Check all that apply.)

- Lack of time
- Lack of knowledge/ awareness
- Inaccessibility of services and support
- Lack of financial resources
- Minimal local/ community engagement with these issues
- Other (please specify)

8. What is your gender identity? (Mark only one.)

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Non-binary
- I prefer not to answer
- Other (text box)
9. In what year were you born? (Please enter 4-digit year only.)

10. Race and Hispanic origin: How would you describe yourself? (Check all that apply.)
- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Two or more races
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other (text box)

11. What is your political party affiliation? (Mark only one.)
- Democrat
- Independent
- Republican
- I prefer not to answer
- Other (text box)

12. What is your estimated annual household income? (Mark only one.)
- Less than $20,000
- $20,000 to $34,999
- $35,000 to $49,999
- $50,000 to $74,999
- $75,000 to $99,999
- Over $100,000
- I prefer not to answer