

# Alter-Globalization: The Fight for a New World

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 Group #5 – Social Forums  
 Soci 3340 - June 22, 2020

## World Social Forum

The World Social Forum (WSF) is an annual meeting of civil organizations, to create an open space for interactive dialogue between civil society actors, representatives of the state and other intergovernmental organizations to maintain justice, equality and a resistance of globalization and centralized powers.

## History

The WSF began in 2001, taking place for the first time in Porto Alegre, Brazil as an act of defiance against the World Economic Forum (WEF) which prioritized globalization and economic growth over human rights.

## Anti-Globalization

A concept explored early by **Antonio Gramsci**, revolving around the resistance of globalization, creating a counter-hegemony in response to the neo-liberal beliefs of commerce and profit before all else. Although anti-globalization brought the condemnation of centralized power and inequality, it lacked in providing alternative solutions which it was criticized for, causing a shift towards *alter*-globalization! →



Anti-globalization could be seen in cases such as the Zapatistas who went from condemning globalization and initiating a war against the state and then transitioning to a state of alter-globalization, a state of negotiation to present alternatives...

## Is a New World Possible?

The criticisms of anti-globalization brought along alter-globalization, a new frontier, a cause in fighting for meaningful alternatives.

There have been multiple cases of demonstrations around the globe in which civil actors protest and come together in order to share information, create transnational movements in order to bring along positive changes in all aspects of life, whether food and agricultural rights, indigenous and women's rights, workers rights or housing costs and conditions...

## Purpose

In almost all cases, the reason for organizations such as the WSF existing is to resist the concentration of power in a small group of influential actors. The anti and alter-globalization movements serve to inform and bring upon change by decentralizing power and giving equality to all inhabitants disregarding income, circumstances and lifestyle choices.



protest such as forums, where they rally together to inform others of their living situations and disrupt state actors in order to be heard or sometimes even squatting, where they form their own communities on abandoned lands, independent of government assistance in order to make a statement about the challenges they face. This is seen to be an effective method of protest as seen in Villa El Salvador



## Agriculture & Food Sovereignty

Social forums and organizations that stand together in sharing information, spreading knowledge and fighting for a common cause have proven to be successful in bringing a more suitable compromise to a one-sided globalization movement. As seen in the case of La Via Campesina, an effort in solidarity between farmers, peasants, women and the indigenous brought along a new light, demonstrating how important it is for the people to maintain control over their lands and their own food production and consumption. Not only will it be saving the land from industrialization, but it provides income and the preservation of culture and land.

## Housing Costs & Living Conditions

In many cases of globalization, the cost of living tends to increase as a higher concentration of wealth falls into the hands of smaller groups. This in turn results in organizations and communities resorting to means of

## Another World IS Possible

Social forums as we know them today serve the purpose of alter-globalization, effective methods of sharing information, spreading the word, creating transnational movements and bringing upon changes. It IS possible to create another world that is sustainable and fair so long as the resistance keeps the words of Antonio Gramsci in mind; it is crucial to be aware of *transformismo*. This is the state in which those who are resisting become exactly like those they are opposing. As long as those resisting are aware of this conformity then social forums will always bring change, even if it is at a slow pace.