

SDG Information Pack

Contents

- ▶ Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- ▶ Understand
- ▶ Act
- ▶ Share

**ECONOMIC
GROWTH DOESN'T
MEAN ANYTHING
IF IT LEAVES
PEOPLE OUT.
JACK KEMP**

#GlobalGoals

Goal #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



SDG 8 Aim

Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

What is Decent Work?

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZpyJwevPqc>

Workshop outlines:

1. Page 31 - <https://www.developmentperspectives.ie/ResourcesPDFS/Stepping%20stones%20for%20SDGs.pdf>
2. Page 67 – <https://www.developmentperspectives.ie/ResourcesPDFS/Understanding-the-SDGs.pdf>

Goal #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

By 2030, the UN wants to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment, and decent work for all.

In detail, the UN wants to:

- 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7% GDP growth per annum in the least developed countries.
- 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation.
- 8.3 Promote development-orientated policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalisation of micro, small and medium sized enterprises.
- 8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Goal #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.

Goal #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

How is the UN going to make this happen by 2030?

8.A Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.

8.B By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdjQXmLaXPQ>

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



Understand

- Facts and Figures:
- In 2021, 6.2 per cent of the global population were in a situation that was considered unemployed. (Source: [Worldbank](#)). However, the full extent of labour underutilisation (e.g. those in need to work more hours) is understood to be much higher. (Source: [ILO](#)).
- More than 13 per cent of the 15 to 29 year olds in the EU were neither in employment nor in education and training in 2021. (Source: [European Commission](#))
- Men are reported to earn 12.5 per cent more than women in 40 out of 45 countries with data. (Source: [ILO](#))
- Ireland's volume of unpaid care work is amongst the highest in Europe, ranking 3rd in the EU for weekly hours. Housework and childcare are economically productive with value in Ireland of €3.14bn. (Source: [SJI](#))
- Women provide 38 million hours of unpaid care work every week, contributing 'at least €24 billion of value to the Irish economy every year'. (Source: [Oxfam](#))
- The number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide – an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years. (Source: [UNICEF](#))
- In developing countries, 80% to 90% of persons with disabilities of working age are unemployed, whereas in industrialized countries the figure is between 50% and 70%. (Source: [UN](#))
- Want to find out more? Check out [here](#) (FAO Website)!



Understand

- Decent Work
- Productive employment and decent work are key elements to achieve a just, fair, and equal world. Decent work necessarily places emphasis on a people-centred approach to the globalisation process.
- With regards to Decent Work, SDG 8 does not only aim to provide employment for all, but also to reduce child labour and human trafficking through the promotion of labour rights and safe working conditions.
- Four pillars of decent work:
 - 1) Employment Creation
 - 2) Social Protection
 - 3) Rights at Work
 - 4) Social Dialogue
- Read more about it [here](#)!
- How are we in Ireland doing in terms of Decent Work?
- According to Social Justice Ireland's [Sustainable Progress Index 2022](#), Ireland is doing well in terms of GDP growth, but is still struggling with some elements connected to the labour market. Because of this, Ireland is ranked 6th out of the 14 EU countries considered for the report, for SDG 8 overall.



Understand

- Affordable and Clean Energy in Ireland:
- The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is the official source of energy data in Ireland. This [report](#) gives an overview of Irelands Renewable Energy usage (2021). Some of the insights include:
 - The targets set for 2020 (including the binding EU target of 16% of gross final consumption generated through renewable energy) haven't been met.
 - Ireland is only on track for the target related to renewable transport; the target for renewable electricity was missed by less than 1%, but only half of the target for renewable heating and cooling was achieved.
 - In 2020, Ireland's total energy consumption went down, but almost all those reductions were linked to the transport sector. It is understood that, with the ending of the Covid-19 related restrictions, this would have likely returned to pre-Pandemic levels.
- According to Social Justice Ireland's [Sustainable Progress Index 2022](#), Ireland ranks 11th out of the 14 EU countries represented in the report. While Ireland's final energy consumption in household per capita has decreased between 2000 and 2021, Ireland's share of renewable energy is still one of the lowest among EU countries.



Understand

Unemployment

While global unemployment decreased slightly between 2021 and 2022, it is still higher than it was before the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic, with 207 million people out of work (which is around 5.9 per cent of the global population). Labour market predictions show that the global employment might recover more slowly than anticipated, due to the ongoing uncertainty, e.g. connected to new variants emerging (Source: [Aljazeera](#)).

Especially Youth unemployment remains a global challenge and a top policy concern. Globally, an estimate of almost 18 per cent of 15-25 year olds are unemployed (the highest figure in the last 30 years), but in some regions this figure is much higher (Source: [Worldbank](#)).

Unemployment in Ireland

According to the [Central Statistics Office](#) (CSO), the unemployment rate in Ireland lies currently at around 4.8 per cent, which equals to approximately 135,000 people out of work (see graphic).

<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/unemployment-jumps-to-25-on-back-of-renewed-lockdown-1.4475019>

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Unemployment

	Number of persons unemployed	Unemployment rate (%)
June 2021	160,900	6.3
May 2022	128,100	4.7
June 2022	134,900	4.8
	Number	Percentage Points
Change in month	6,800	0.1
Change in year	-26,000	-1.5



Understand

Youth unemployment in Ireland:

Recent [figures](#) show that Ireland currently has the lowest rate of youth unemployment among EU countries (with 5.4 per cent of young people being out of work). However, looking at statistics from the past months and years, and taking into account issues such as the cost of housing, it still needs to be considered as a considerable issue which needs to be addressed (Source: [Oireachtas](#)). At the intersection between SDG 8 and SDG 5 (Gender Equality), it is also interesting to have a look at the gender gap in youth unemployment: in June 2022, females between 15 and 24 years were almost twice as likely to be without work than males of the same age (Source: [CSO](#))

For some more in-depth information about this, why not look at Social Justice Ireland's [website](#)?

The term 'NEET' refers to young people who are not in employment, education or training – which (in contrast to youth unemployment) also includes the element of education. The rate of those considered 'NEET' is with 14.2 per cent quite high, especially compared with other European countries (Source: [SJI](#)).

Have a look at the Irish Government's '[Pathways to Work Strategy 2021-2025](#)', and particularly how the issues around youth unemployment and NEET will be tackled.



Understand

Disability and Employment:

Ireland has one of the lowest employment rates for people with disabilities in the EU, and the gap between persons with a disability and persons without a disability in employment lies at approximately 36 percent vs. 72 per cent, for those aged 20 to 64 years (Source: National Disability Authority).

As this goes against the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the situation is addressed through the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities (2015-2024) and the OECD report 'Disability, Work and Inclusion in Ireland'. Find out more about the latter on the National Disability Authority's website [here!](#)

Read more about the situation around disability and employment in this Irish Times [article!](#)

Discussion point: reduced working hours?

In the past few years, trials have been carried out in different countries (including Canada and Iceland), aimed at assessing whether a reduction of working hours/days has an impact on both the country's productivity and the wellbeing of their population.

Why not have a look at these two articles: [BBC Worklife](#) and [The Independent](#)?

They look at the debate from different perspectives – but what is your take on this?



Understand



Campaigns related to Decent Work

Living Wage:

The idea behind the living wage is to establish an hourly wage rate that provides employees with a sufficient income to achieve a minimum acceptable standard of living. It is understood as a wage that provides for needs, not wants.

Find out more here: <http://www.livingwage.ie/>

In June 2022, Ireland's Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar, outlined a proposal to bring in a living wage for all, over the next four years. This would be set at 60 per cent of the median wage (which, in 2022, would be €12.17 per hour and thus lower than what the Living Wage Campaign asks for). Read more about this [here](#)!

What are your thoughts on the idea of a living wage?

Universal Basic Income:

The concept of a universal basic income suggest that “the government should make a regular payment to every individual resident regardless of circumstances, without any means test or work requirement” (Basicincome.ie).

Read more about it in this Irish Times [article](#)!



Understand

Economic Growth – or rather Degrowth?

Economic Growth is currently primarily measured through a country's GDP. Critics, including the Degrowth movement, have claimed for decades that this isn't sustainable, and that certain facets of how well each country is doing aren't taken into account merely by looking at its GDP.

What is meant by 'Degrowth'?

Degrowth is described as *"an idea that critiques the global capitalist system which pursues growth at all costs, causing human exploitation and environmental destruction"* (Degrowth.info).

Another [source](#) defines degrowth as 'a counter-hegemonic movement that has the ambitious aim to of transforming society towards social and ecological justice'.

Sustainable degrowth more specifically is understood as *"a downscaling of production and consumption that increases human well-being and enhances ecological conditions and equity on the planet."* (Degrowth.org)

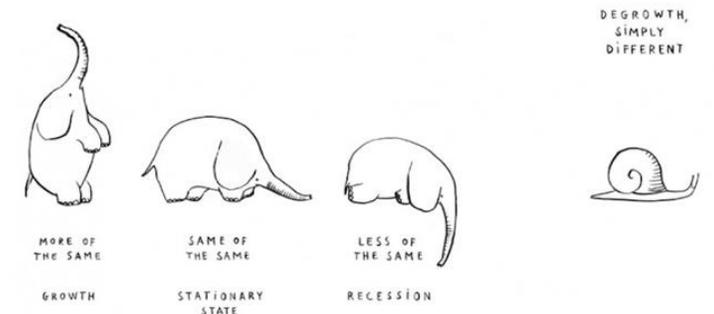
Even though Degrowth addresses issues related to economics, it is not understood as an economic concept.

Find out more through these resources:

Video: [Degrowth explained](#) (with oranges);

Watch the documentary '[Fairytale of Growth](#)' to delve deeper;

And/or read this [opinion piece](#) on the Degrowth movement in times of Covid-19.



UNDERSTAND



Understand

Economic Concepts linked to Degrowth

1. Doughnut Economics (Kate Raworth)

What does a doughnut have to do with the economy, you might ask?! In the concept of Doughnut Economics, it is used as a powerful, relatable image – a ‘compass for human prosperity in the 21st Century’ (Doughnuteconomics.org), without leaving anyone behind, or destroying the planet. Find out more [here!](#)

Doughnut Economics in Ireland:

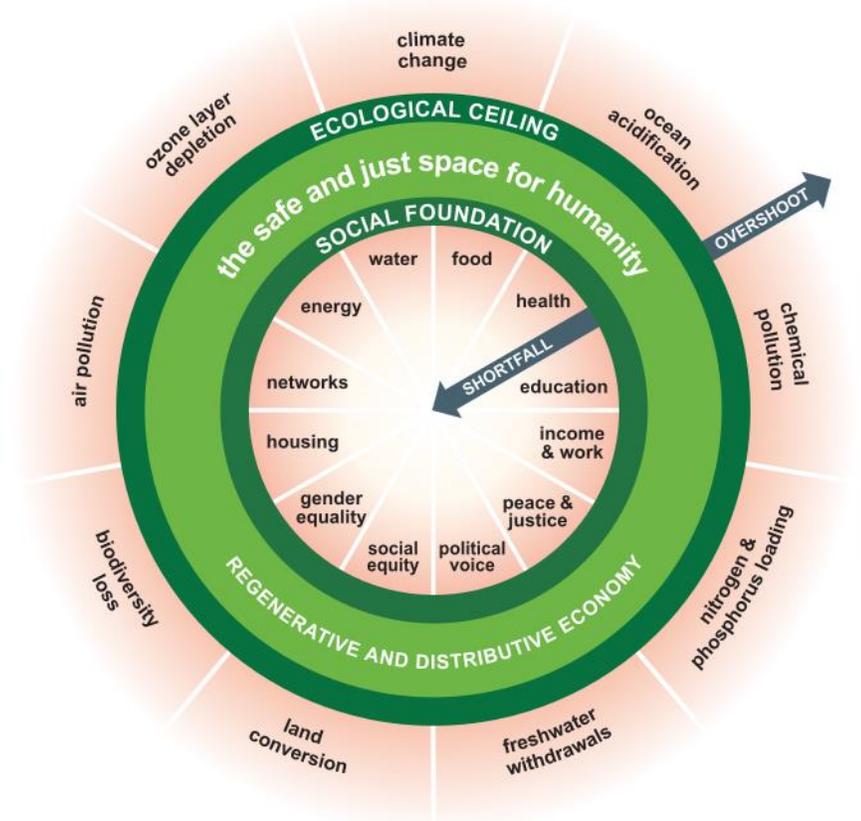
The Irish Doughnut Economics Network meets regularly for virtual cuppas and book discussions. Keep up to date [here!](#)

And did you know that Doughnut Economics is [supported by Ireland’s President?](#)

2. Economy for the Common Good (ECG)

ECG is an [economic model](#) which makes a good life for everyone on a healthy planet its primary goal and purpose.

Leading Values: Human Dignity; Solidarity and Social Justice; Environmental Sustainability; Transparency and Co-Determination.



Understand

3. Wellbeing Economy

As a 10-year project, the Wellbeing Alliance aims to 'transform the economic system into one that delivers social justice on a healthy planet' (Wellbeingeconomy.org).

Vision:

- Human and ecological wellbeing instead of economic growth as basis for policy-making.
- Role of businesses: provide dignified lives, meet social needs & contribute to nature's regeneration.
- Collaboration rather than competition.



A 'The Business of Wellbeing Guide' resource by Wellbeing Economy Alliance. Illustrated by Marina Roa from SenseTribe.

4. Happy Planet Index (HPI)

The [Happy Planet Index](#) show 'how efficiently residents of different countries are using environmental resources to lead long, happy lives'. It is calculated by looking at a country's **Wellbeing**, multiplied by their **Life Expectancy**, and then divided by their **Ecological Footprint**.

From HPI's perspective, a country shouldn't be considered as successful or efficient if they have a very low level of wellbeing, or a very high ecological footprint, no matter how well they fare on the other indicators. This is to take into account that we can no longer afford to strive towards long and healthy lives while dismissing our environment's needs.



Understand

Action for SDG 8

Here are just a few organisations/initiatives that are making a difference for SDG 8, in Ireland and worldwide (in addition to the campaigns mentioned above):

Have a look at [‘Good Clothes Fair Play’](#), a campaign that demands living wage legislations across the garment, textile and footwear sector.

[Financial Justice Ireland](#) recently launched a new course for the Adult and Community Education sector. Their works aims at demystifying issues related to our economic system, such as the tax system.

Check out the story of [‘First Harvest’](#), a sustainable social enterprise that produces peanut butter in the Phillipines.

In line with ideas linked to Degrowth, groups such as [‘Zero Waste Ireland’](#) provide opportunities to offer and search for items within your community - for free! Why not have a look?

Do you know (of) any other organisations or initiatives? Share them with us!



Understand

SDG 8 and Covid-19

The global Covid-19 Pandemic has strongly affected the economic life and the labour market worldwide. The world is understood to be facing the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

Especially in the hospitality sector, lockdowns left many without work, and new or increased family responsibilities (e.g. home schooling) made it necessary for some employed people to reduce their hours, and for unemployed persons to put a hold on their job search.

A few further examples on the effect of Covid-19 on SDG 8:

The rate of those who are working, but living in poverty, increased in 2020 – for the first time in two decades! (Source: [ILO](#))

Unemployment rates peaked in all regions around the world during the Covid-19 Pandemic – in some parts even to unprecedented rates. (Source: [ILO](#))

GDP dropped in the EU, but has since increased again. (Source: [European Commission](#))

Young people were disproportionately affected with regards to their labour market situation. (Source: [EC](#))

Hiring of new staff was more likely to be delayed or stopped, due to financial uncertainty. This can still be felt in our daily lives, e.g. at airports. (Source: [OECD](#))

Further Reading:

<https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/launch-report-socio-economic-impacts-covid-19>



Act

Action is a key component to achieving Goal #7: Affordable and Clean Energy. Take one or more of the challenges below this month to make your contribution to the #SDGchallenge:

Get informed – Engage with articles, blogs, videos and campaigns.

Be Political – Political action is key in creating change - contact your local politicians about clean energy solutions. **Write to the Ministers at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.**

Educate – Host a workshop, talk, or initiate a discussion about Goal #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Engage - #EconomyForCommunity – Let's brainstorm together to see what we as communities need!



ACT

Act

Challenge #1 – Get Informed

Let's get reading! We are asking you to read up and inform yourself about Goal #8 Decent Work and Economic Growth and learn about the efforts and initiatives being made around the world. You can begin this journey of learning by reading the articles or watching the videos in the 'Understand' section of this pack.

Challenge #2 – Be Political

Time to write to our Ministers. Write to Leo Varadkar, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and also to Damien English TD, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, highlighting the need to recognise the need for decent work and a living wage – but that this also needs to go hand in hand with an improvement of issues such as living conditions and affordability.

Contact them at leo.varadkar@oireachtas.ie and damien.english@oireachtas.ie.

Letters can be sent to:

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

23 Kildare Street

Dublin

DO2 TD30.



ACT

Act

Challenge #3 – Educate

This challenge invites you to discuss Decent Jobs and Economic Growth with your friends, family and colleagues. It can be an informal chat with a cuppa or an organized workshop where you can tackle head-on with a group. Be sure to share any educational activities with us using #SDGchallenge.

Challenge #4 – #EconomyForCommunity

For this month's challenge, we invite you to think about your country/region/community, and what you think you and the people around you need in order to get closer to the idea of a 'Happy Planet'. What would you like to see measured as part of an economic system? How would you (re)design the world of work?

Just complete this short and completely anonymous [survey](#) and share your ideas and wishes! Throughout the month, we will share some of the insights from the survey - we're already excited to see what you come up with!

If you decide to share something about the challenge as well, don't forget to use #SDG8 #Degrowth #HappyPlanet



ACT

Share

Sharing our actions on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram allows us to raise awareness about Decent Jobs and Economic Growth in Ireland and around the world and about the Sustainable Development Goals.

Please click on the icons below to link to our pages:



No matter which challenge you take, be sure to share it! Check out our Facebook page. You can share your actions here and inspire other SDG advocates!



Or you can Tweet us @devperspectives. Follow us for daily updates and interesting reads on Decent Jobs and Economic Growth for this month!



Follow us on Instagram @devperspectives and make sure to tag #SDGs and #globalgoals in your posts