Global Issues

Table 10.1: Sustainable Progress Index

Country	Index Score	Country Rank
Sweden	78.96	1
Denmark	74.81	2
Finland	65.76	3
Netherlands	54.98	4
Germany	54.82	5
Austria	53.67	6
United Kingdom	50.96	7
France	50.71	8
Belgium	49.62	9
Ireland	44.25	10
Luxembourg	43.75	11
Spain	40.53	12
Portugal	39.76	13
Italy	35.74	14
Greece	22.92	15

Source: *Social Justice Ireland,* Sustainable Progress Index 2018

Figure 10.1: EU Progress towards the 17 SDGs

Source: Eurostat, Sustainable Development in the European Union — Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context, 2017

Global Issues

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development were adopted at the UN General Assembly on 25th September 2015 and came into effect on 1st January 2016. These goals make up the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda which is defined as a 'plan of action for people, planet and prosperity'. In this process world leaders have committed to 17 Global Goals (also known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) containing 169 targets to achieve three distinct aims: to end poverty, fight inequality and tackle climate change over the next fifteen years.

Ireland was one of the key stakeholders in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals, however our progress in implementing them has been lacking. Every February, *Social Justice Ireland* publishes a Sustainable Development Index, benchmarking Ireland's progress against our EU15 peers. In our 2018 publication, Ireland ranked just 10th of the EU15 (see Table 10.1). Our progress on the Environmental indicators, on which we rank 13th, is particularly poor. While the overall ranking represents an improvement on the previous year, when we ranked 11th, there evidently remains a lot of work to do.

The Eurostat monitoring report on the progress of European countries under the SDGs[1], based over a five-year span, found that Europe had made progress across all goals. However, with some indicators (for example, SDG 15 – Life on Land) that progress has not necessarily been enough to make a real change for Europe (see Figure 10.1). Of those SDGs for which trend data was available, moderate progress was made in SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 2 (End Hunger), SDG1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The five SDGs on which the most moderate progress has been recorded are those most associated with people and society.

Social Justice Ireland welcomed the launch of the SDG National Implementation Plan 2018-2020 in April 2018, and the commitment of Government to document the specific SDGs to which each current and new Government policy relates. *Social Justice Ireland* calls for the addition of an impact assessment for each of those policies in achieving Ireland's goals and the closing of data gaps to support the development of an achievable SDG strategy. However, only one of the 19 actions specifically relates to how Ireland might achieve its SDG commitments - Action 2, in which Government plans its SDG strategy. This strategy must contain tangible targets for Ireland under each SDG, based on Ireland's current position, together with a roadmap and timeline to 2030 of how we get there.

In July 2018, Minister Naughten presented Ireland's Voluntary National Review to the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. While understandably this Review presented Ireland in its best light, and *Social Justice Ireland* welcomes the acknowledgement of the need for greater data collation, it underplayed the significant work Ireland needs to do to meet our 2030 targets.

Policy Priorities

- Resource the CSO to collate adequate data on Ireland's progress towards the SDGs.

- Develop an SDG strategy which contains tangible targets for Ireland under each SDG, together with a roadmap and timeline to 2030.

---

[1] Sustainable Development in the European Union — Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context, 2017