

HANDBOOK



CONGRESMUN XII





UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



HANDBOOK



Presentation of the Committee

Dear Delegates from the Economic and Social Council:

On behalf of the Executive Committee, welcome to the meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The directive chair greets with cordiality all member delegates of ECOSOC, by its acronyms, participating in CONGRESMUN 2019.

During three days, the council will be able to approach different topics, with great importance for each delegation, that involve the whole international community. Both topics have been rigorously analyzed and studied by all members of the chair, in order to allow each delegate to address many of today's international issues.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council members overtake expectations and work together to achieve a better quality of life, providing us with a better future. Thus, it is imperative for each delegate to act according to the requirements of a representative of the United Nations looking forward to achieving a universal agreement for the common benefit of all nations.

The members of the chair encourage each delegate's voice to be heard and hanker for an active participation inside and outside the committee for an enjoyable experience to take place. ECOSOC's directive chair will be welcome to clear any query or restlessness regarding academic or protocol procedure and looks forward to sharing this experience with all the delegates participating in CONGRESMUN 2019.

Sincerely,



The United Nations Economic and Social Council

Ana Caterina Marino
President

Diego Cortés Álvarez
Moderator

Ginevra Casini
Conference Officer



Introduction to the Council

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as part of the UN major functional organs, works mainly to promote sustainable development in nations, focusing on the strength of the social, economic and environmental spheres. It was created in 1945 and now it belongs to the six principal organs of the UN, being the UN's largest subsidiary body. Historically, the ECOSOC has worked with perseverance to achieve different goals related to human rights, international cooperation, equality and development. Remaining within the legal international framework, the council has usually encouraged programs such as the United Nations Development Programme, the technical cooperation inside its national commissions and the mandatory presentation of periodical reports.

The ECOSOC, under the supervision and mandate of the UN General Assembly, works as a forum to examine international issues and give normative recommendations. Its primary tasks involve advisory functions and the coordination of UN activities in the fields of economic and social cooperation plus the promotion and tutelage of human rights.¹ In these sectors, the Council partly shares its functions with the General Assembly. Additionally, it also drives queries with Non-Governmental Organizations to maintain the tie with the civil society. Through specialized commissions, the Council also promotes economic development and the support to Least Developed Countries, proposes and compels the conduction of studies on economic, social and sanitary issues, which emerge throughout different areas.

Furthermore, ECOSOC has a pivotal role in the coordination of the relations between the UN and the specialized entities of the United Nations. It is, in fact, responsible for:

- Promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress;
- Identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems;
- Facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and
- Encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In conclusion, the ECOSOC produces studies, recommendations and resolutions for the international community and the General Assembly in the sectors of culture,

¹ Obtained from official documents from Resolutions from the Economic and Social Council 1992. Supplement 1, page 14. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/NR0/732/73/IMG/NR073273.pdf?OpenElement>.



health, technology, education and related matters. Furthermore, it coordinates many United Nations activities from different organs as one of its major subsidiary organs.²

Structure of the Council

The Economic and Social Council is composed by 54-member states.³ The current president of the ECOSOC is Inga Rhonda King, who was elected on July 26, 2018 as seventy-fourth president of Council. The Vice-Presidents are Ambassador Omar Hilale, Ambassador Teodoro Lopez Locsin Jr., and Ambassador Tore Hattrem. The presidential elections for the Council are conducted annually.

The ECOSOC incorporates eight functional commissions: The Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission for Social Development, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Commission on Population and Development, the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

The Council also disposes of regional commissions that work within their territorial domain: The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and lastly the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

² Obtained from ECOSOC official website. <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/es/home>.

³ Obtained from ECOSOC website, members supplement.
<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/es/content/members>.



Topic A. Enhancing the Official Development Assistance (ODA) for Least Developing Countries

Since 1961, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), has been measuring official and non-official economic aid and resource flows granted by developed countries to least developed ones. The Official Development Assistance, ODA for short, is a term coined by the DAC in 1969 to indicate the official part of this resource flow. The reality of the world has changed since the creation and regulations of ODA, thus, it is important to strengthen the international community's support and deter countries from withdrawing from the economic contributions, as well as reinforcing the distribution of these resources among the receiving states.

The ODA initiative has been of essential importance to the collective of actions taken by the ECOSOC to ensure the achievement of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. By having twenty-two developed countries economically support least developed ones, the ODA sought to bolster balance between states and to stabilize those in a situation of economic insecurity. However, because of the wake of the global financial crisis, ODA's development has significantly stagnated, with only six donor countries having reached the minimum UN target, overall to be of 0.7%.⁴

As part of ECOSOC's major purposes, the eradication of poverty, the achievement of sustained economic growth, the promotion of sustainable development and an equitable global economic system (which were established in the Monterrey declaration of 2002, where ODA commitments were also ratified), it was agreed to prioritize a list of actions including the following: appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks, good governance, pursuit of growth, poverty eradication, fight against corruption, pursuit of macroeconomic policies, a system to manage economic resources and investment in social infrastructure. Moreover, in the aforementioned Monterrey declaration, the Official Development Assistance was established as an essential initiative to achieve sustainability and equality.

Nonetheless, the ODA had to pass through several modifications before becoming what is today. At first, the OECD proposed, based on the work of Jan Tinbergen, a Nobel-Prize winning author, a target of 0.75% of gross national product

⁴ Obtained from Integrated Implementation Framework website, ODA supplement. <http://iif.un.org/content/official-development-assistance>.

to be attained by 1972. The due date for this target was later extended to 2015 and decreased to 0.7%, due to most countries not reaching the intended goal.

The ODA is today a concessional initiative and its main goal is the aid and promotion of the economic and industrial growth of Least Developing Countries. For this reason, it doesn't include military aid, peacekeeping expenditure that border on military costs, nuclear energy not fit for civilian purposes and cultural programs whose only objective is to promote the donor country's image in the receiving country (meaning that those programs that are of help to the cultural capital of the receiving country still count as ODA).

The Official Development Assistance **works** as a complement to finance development, mainly in LDCs and those nations with fewer private investments. The declaration anticipates that with the proper use of it, targets such as better education, health and public infrastructure among others have the potential to be achieved. On the other hand, the Monterrey declaration also states, "we recognize that a substantial increase in ODA and other resources will be required"⁵, encouraging either a possible upsurge in the percentage of the GNI donated or more countries to join the donors list.

As aforementioned, according to the 34th session in the General Assembly on 1980, it was agreed twenty-two Developed Countries to designate 0.7% of their Gross National Product to the ODA for 130 least developed countries. However, the major problem the international community has faced is that only six countries have been able to achieve this commitment: Denmark, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Norway, United Kingdom and Sweden. However, countries like the United States of America, Germany and France place themselves as major contributors, being even part of the top five donors to the ODA although their contribution is lower than the agreed 0.7% of their GNP, giving an approximate of only 0.2%, as the following graphic shows us.⁶

⁵ Obtained of Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development. March 2002. <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/monterrey/MonterreyConsensus.pdf> in which are stated all the international agreements and regulations of ODA.

⁶ Obtained from The Guardian, "UK among six countries to hit 0.7% UN aid spending target". <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jan/04/uk-among-six-countries-hit-un-aid-spending-target-oecd>.

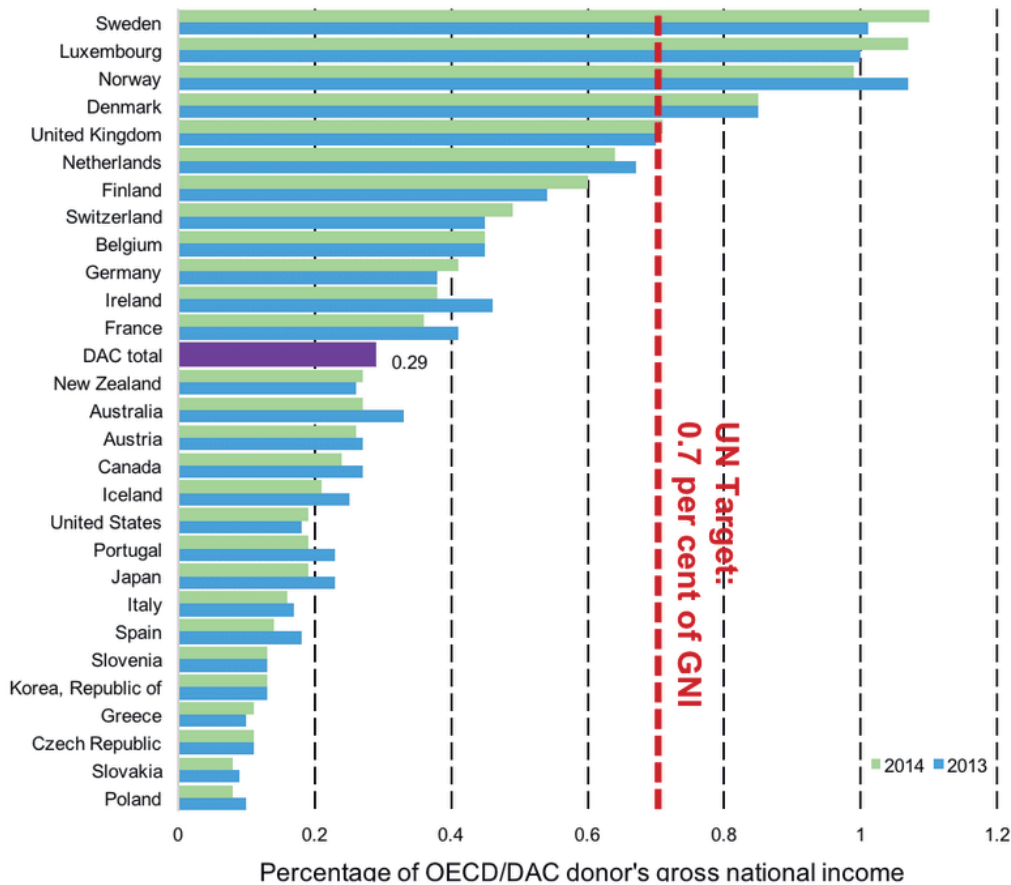


Figure 1. Net ODA in 2015 as a percentage of GNI. Source: OECD Website.

The Economic and Social Council, in this field, has established the Development Cooperation Forum to enhance international communication and cooperation to increase contributions for the ODA. In contrast, the United Nations have received private donations and loans from institutions like the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the International Monetary Fund. Moreover, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development endorsed conditions for the distribution of the economic aid, declaring that military aid as not part of the funds reported as ODA as well as nuclear energy not used for civilian purposes in order to avoid a misuse of the assigned resources.

The Official Development Assistance, if fairly distributed, could have the potential to benefit Least Developed Countries in a great variety of ways by boosting the following elements:

- Human capital asset;
- Economic vulnerability of receiving countries;



- Knowledge and innovation capacities;
- Quality of governance;
- Infrastructure quality; and
- Environmental vulnerability.

The aforementioned are all characteristics needed for a country to be classified as an LDC and to have the need for financial aid, thereby through the bolstering of these assets; the effectiveness of the new allocation of resources would be considerably raised.

The ECOSOC has worked to emphasize the different approaches into which the ODA should be specified and divided. However, it is a major necessity to improve the distribution of the resource's assignation as well as the fulfillment of the established percentage donated from the GNP to ODA. The council, taking all this into consideration, looks forward to achieving a proper and righteous agreement, in which not only the receiving countries may be benefited, but also the donor ones. As previously stated, the ODA must evolve, change and be adapted to the new times the world is facing, considering necessities and priorities, being able to fulfill the new terms established and the previously agreed.

Guide questions

1. What is the Official Development Assistance and why was it created?
2. When was the ODA created and under which initiative?
3. Were there any past funds created for this purpose?
4. How is the ODA related to the ECOSOC and how can this council regulate it?
5. What is the ODA's importance in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?
6. Which are the donor countries and the receiving countries inside the ODA initiative?
7. What is required to be a receiving country?
8. How is a country chosen to be a donor one?
9. Which are the regulations given by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development?
10. How are the actual resources distributed?
11. Why do major contributors do not fulfil the required 0.7% GNI?

12. How has the ODA been used as a political weapon/resource for major donors and receivers?

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Topic B. Strategies for renewable energy integration in Least Developing Countries

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an established plan to achieve through the years which includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets. It was created to keep on pursuing what the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could not completely achieve: “This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.”⁷ Currently, countries considered as LDCs,⁸ have lagged in the implementation of renewable energy, remaining dependents to the use of oil, gas and coal.

Throughout past years, the LDCs have been progressing to deal with economic and social challenges presented inside their territory. Many Least Developing Countries have achieved large growth rates while others have been left behind maintaining high poverty. After the MDGs were concluded in 2015, the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals Agenda was introduced as a plan of action to continue enhancing prosperity, equality and assuring a better life quality.

At least ten of the Sustainable Development Goals have the potential to be bolstered by the integration of renewable energy, including: Good Health and Well-Being, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Industry, Innovation and infrastructure, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life on Land, Life Below Water and Partnerships for the Goals.⁹

Historical Background

At the beginning of the 21st century, the world leaders attended the Millennium Summit, a meeting at the United Nations organized in order to prepare the international community and the world to face the new century. During this meeting, several delegations ratified the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This declaration, “contained a statement of values, principles and objectives for the international agenda for the twenty-first century. It also set deadlines for many collective actions”.¹⁰

⁷ Obtained from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

⁸ Least Developing Countries.

⁹ Obtained from United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

¹⁰ Obtained from <http://www.un.org/en/development/devagenda/millennium.shtml>.

On the other hand, the declaration included the world's faith in the United Nations and its Charter, as well as the necessity for a fairer world. "The Summit Declaration cited freedom, equality (for individuals and nations), solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility as six fundamental values to international relations for the twenty-first century."¹¹ During the course of the Millennium Summit, eight international goals were established to be achieved by 2015, and all 191 United Nations Member States committed to these goals.

All UN Member States signed the Millennium Development Goals, set to be reached by 2015. By the aforementioned due date, they would be committed to:

- End extreme poverty and hunger worldwide;
- Globalize primary level instruction;
- Promote gender equality and independence for women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Fight AIDS/HIV and malaria, among other illnesses;
- Guarantee environmental sustainability; and
- Establish a universal partnership for development.

Each of these goals were included with specific sub-targets to facilitate their achievement. However, on September 11, 2001, the rhythm set for carrying out the Millennium Development Goals was slightly hindered, when several countries' priorities mutated from ending world poverty to fighting terrorism, consequently deviating the resources meant for funding the battle against underdevelopment to the war against extremism.

In 2005, the finance ministers of the G8 countries agreed to grant funds to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank. These measures had the objective to undo the debts of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) by 40-55 billion dollars, to give them the chance to repurpose resources for social programs destined to alleviating poverty.

¹¹ Obtained from <http://www.un.org/en/development/devagenda/millennium.shtml>.

MDG results and the Sustainable Development Goals

As of 2015, the progress made in the reaching of the MDGs was significant, even though the completion of the objectives set by the goals was still quite out of reach. Concerning the first goal, thanks to the combined efforts of the development partnership, the number of people who live in extreme conditions decreased by 1.9 billion, with now 836 million people still in conditions of extreme poverty. As for the spreading of primary education worldwide, significant progress has been made with 91% of the world population having gained access to it, rather than the 83% from the 2000s.

The third goal, promoting gender equality, has fully been attained with the initial rate of inscription to primary, secondary, and tertiary education for women being fulfilled. As for the reduction of child mortality, the road to completely eradicating it is still long, but compared to 1990, the death rate concerning children below the age of 5 has been halved from 90 to 43 for every 1000. In the field of maternal mortality, medical assistance has been significantly improved worldwide, and the use of contraceptives has increased.

Regarding the sixth goal, the cases of infection from HIV have been reduced by 40%, while thanks to proper medical intervention; 6.2 million lives have been saved from Malaria. Concerning the environmental sustainability goal, as of 2015, 91% of the global population had gained access to potable water, compared to 76% from 1990. Finally, within the universal partnership for development, the Official Development Assistance (ODA), consisting of concessional economic donations to LDCs, has recorded an increase of 66%.¹²

After the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals was reached, the United Nations created and promoted the Sustainable Development Goals, valid from 2016 until 2030. This new agenda borrows various objectives from the MDGs, adding however a few more focused on environmental sustainability. In total, there are 17 objectives and 169 sub-targets.

The following picture show us the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals:

¹² United Nations. Millennium goals. Obtained from [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20rev%20\(July%201\).pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20rev%20(July%201).pdf).





Figure 2. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Source: United Nations Website

The SDGs and the Implementation of Energy in LDCs

Within the 17 SDGs, one of the most pressing issues the United Nations are facing today is the effective and permanent implementation of energy in Least Developed Countries. A quite recent publication by the UN, states, “The average access to electricity across LDCs hovered as low as 44.8 %, and 540.9 million of the world’s 1 billion people without electricity live in LDCs. There has been progress in LDCs in recent years, but while access to electricity increased faster between 2000 and 2016 than in the previous decade, the expansion rate is still far from what is needed to achieve universal energy access by 2030.”¹³ The integration of energy in these countries would greatly benefit the 2030 agenda for development in several fields, having positive repercussions in different established goals.

Otherwise, according to the Pennsylvania State University, “renewable energy is energy that is generated from natural processes that are continuously replenished. This includes sunlight, geothermal heat, wind, tides, water, and various forms of biomass.”¹⁴ Energy that comes from biomass is the one that comes from either animals or plants, this matter contains energy accumulated from the sun. This solar energy is absorbed by the plants through photosynthesis. When the matter called biomass is burned, the energy is released as heat.

Nowadays, this kind of resource can be either burned directly or transformed into liquid biofuels or biogas¹⁵. Some examples of the production of energy through

¹³ Obtained from <https://www.un.org/ldcportal/energy-access-and-main-challenges-in-the-ldcs/>.

¹⁴ Obtained from <https://extension.psu.edu/what-is-renewable-energy>.

¹⁵ Obtained from https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.php?page=biomass_home



biomass are animal manure and human sewage (converted to biogas), wood products leftovers¹⁶, hemp, grass and miscellaneous woody fuels. According to several studies, in the United States of America, 5% of the total primary energy was obtained from biomass fuels in 2017. Moreover, experts underline that electricity production from biomass will be a promising method for renewable energy. Countries like United Kingdom, Finland and Poland have been the protagonists in the establishment of biomass energy production plants.¹⁷

On the other hand, solar energy refers to the exploitation of the energy the sun produces every day. It is also considered a type of renewable energy and unlikely others, it is inexhaustible. Solar energy has been considered of great potential, since the quantity of irradiation the sun produces in one day is ten thousand times greater than the energy consumed in one day.¹⁸ This kind of energy is contained in the solar radiation and it may be transformed in either electric or thermal forms of energy.

The agents in charge of collecting the solar energy are the solar panels, which vary in prices, capacity and technology. Furthermore, geothermal heat refers to the energy which is obtained from the heat underneath the subsoil of our planet. This energy may be used for the generation of electric energy, industry, services and residential purposes.¹⁹ Currently, many countries have increased their production of renewable energy, among these major contributors to transform the use of clean energy we can highlight Sweden, Finland, Latvia, Austria, Denmark, Norway and Costa Rica.

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), one of the subsidiary bodies of the ECOSOC, since 2011 has been conducting official studies and analysis on the status and various key aspects of the renewable energy field, including supportive policies, skills and education, energy access and gender.²⁰ In the recent years, the renewable energy sector has become a significant employer, with approximately 6.5 million employees only in 2013.

Notwithstanding the great advantages that the implementation of renewable energy could bring to LDCs, most of these countries still adopt oil, gas and coal as primary energy sources; even when they could have easy access to a broad range of clean energy sources thanks to their extended pool of natural resources. On this

¹⁶ Obtained from <http://visionlaunch.com/7-examples-biomass-fuels/>

¹⁷ Obtained from <https://elperiodicodelaenergia.com/las-10-mayores-plantas-de-biomasa-del-mundo/>

¹⁸ Obtained from <https://solar-energia.net>

¹⁹ Obtained from <https://twenergy.com/energia/energia-geotermica>

²⁰ Obtained from <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/integration/2015/pdf/irena.pdf>



matter, the ECOSOC has held several integration meetings aimed at the effective assimilation of new technologies and renewable energies in financially challenged countries. In 2018, the Committee's focus for the meeting (held on May 1st to 3rd) was the improvement of resilience and the support of an integrated approach for the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication.²¹

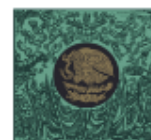
Guide questions

1. What is renewable energy?
2. What is a LDC?
3. Which countries are categorized as LDCs?
4. Which are the 2030 Agenda goals?
5. Which 2030 goals are related to renewable energy?
6. How are the chosen 2030 goals related to renewable energy?
7. How does ECOSOC encourage renewable energy implementation?
8. What would be the advantages of an effective integration of renewable energy in LDCs?
9. Which of ECOSOC's specialized commissions would have jurisdiction within this topic?
10. Different countries have different needs. In this context, how would energy implementation strategies vary from one country to another?
11. How could each country's needs be identified throughout this committee?
12. Which limitations/achievements has the ECOSOC had in this topic?
13. Which previous strategies have already been implemented?

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