



## Sustainable Development Goals

United Nation House of Scotland (UNHS) acts as a platform between the government and civil society to communicate and to reinforce the positive future that we share as a nation. The following issues have always been the central concerns that the UNHS tries to tackle. However, we believe that the only way to address the problems is to engage with our society about the Sustainable Development Goals.



The life expectancy of women and men in Scotland is 81 and 77 respectively. Although the number increases, it is still lower than other European countries and it varies in different places. The correlation between poverty and health issues is proven when statistics show that the difference in life expectancy between the best and worst postcode areas in Edinburgh is 22 years. Being healthy means people are free from diseases. This is essential, as the demands on healthcare providers are critical, especially when many of the patients at NHS Tayside need to wait more than 12 weeks for an outpatient appointment. Furthermore, being healthy also means people can live longer and work productively. Therefore, good health is vital as it makes positive contributions to society both economically and socially. However, 29% of children in Scotland are at risk of being overweight, and 14% who are at risk of being obese. Statistics show that the poorest children in Scotland are twice more likely to be obese while those in affluent areas are not. What is concerning is the affordability and availability of high sugar and high in contrast with the healthy food. In order to prevent our next generation suffering from these diseases, it is crucial for Scotland to reflect on our diet and to increase the supply of healthy food so people can access it more easily and cheaply.



According to the data from the United Nations, one extra year of education in 114 countries during 1985 to 2005 is associated with a reduction of the Gini coefficient by 1.4 percentage points. The quality of education is key in order for the other Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved. Education provides lifelong knowledge and skills for social mobility. The vicious cycle of poverty could then be broken when children can become employed. However, there are still 57million children in developing countries who do not access basic education. On the other hand, pupils from less privileged background in Scotland are only half as likely to go onto further education than other students; due to various reasons including peer pressure, fear of large debt and loss of motivation when they are working with students who are from privileged backgrounds. It is true that the number of school leavers who are from deprived areas have only slightly increased from 2012. Just 15.6 percent of entrants to Scottish universities in 2017 to 2018 were from the most deprived areas. The admissions department of one of the top Scottish universities, St Andrews, said that the major reason for these students failing to meet its standards is due to the lack of educational and social support from an early age. Therefore, our focus should not only be put on improving compulsory education in less developed countries but also, we should be aware that students from less privileged backgrounds in Scotland need lifelong learning opportunities from a young age. In addition, Oxford University promises that it will offer 25% of the undergraduate places for students who are from disadvantaged areas in the following four years, which is a 10% increase compared to last year. This shows that institutions are willing to give opportunities to these disadvantaged students, and thus open to improving the quality of their own services.



The United Nations calls for urgent climate action under Sustainable Development Goal 13, as the world continues to face an increase in greenhouse gas concentration and rising sea levels. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 20% to 30% of species will be at risk of extinction if global mean surface temperature increases by 1.5 degree Celsius. In addition, The Scottish Environment Protection Agency has produced a map of areas at risk of flooding that would be caused by Global Climate Crisis. It would affect nearly 4% of total Scotland's properties and it would cost more than £50million. It has undeniably affected every aspect of the ecosystem; including human well-being and it is essential to slow down this climate emergency. Therefore, The Climate Change (Scotland) Act in 2009 aims to reduce greenhouse gas emission at least by 80% by 2050. According to a new report, the carbon emissions in Scotland have been reduced significantly by 50%. The fact that Scotland has already reduced emission of greenhouse gas by 42% in 2014, six years before the target they set in 2009, encourages our society to be more active in making a positive change on the environment. We believe that further improvement could be made if our society pays more attention on climate change. UNHS encourages discussions between communities to investigate the issues in order to transform Scotland to a low carbon society for the benefit of our environment.