

Building the future: Children and the sustainable development goals in rich countries ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpted from the Introduction

This Report Card offers an assessment of child well-being in the context of sustainable development across 41 countries of the European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This group includes both high- and middle-income economies, but here we refer to them all as 'high-income countries' – or 'rich countries', for convenience. The concept of child well-being is rooted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) but the Agenda for Sustainable Development adds new dimensions. Progress across all these dimensions will be vital to children, and advanced economies will therefore need to monitor the situation of children and young people both nationally and globally.

Specifically, this report seeks to bring the SDG targets for children in high-income countries into meaningful operation (while staying true to the ambitions of the global agenda) and to establish a point of departure for reviewing the SDG framework in these contexts. It focuses on those goals and targets with most direct relevance to the well-being of children in high-income settings. Where appropriate, it adapts the agreed SDG indicator, the better to reflect the problems facing children in such countries.

Although limited by the lack of comparable data in some domains, this report compares 41 countries across 25 indicators. As in other Report Cards, countries are ranked on their achievements in well-being for children according to the selected indicators. The Report Card cannot provide an in-depth analysis of the reasons behind differences, nor of the policy options available for making progress on selected indicators. Nonetheless, by illustrating variation along key dimensions of child well-being related to the SDGs – from ending poverty to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies – it suggests areas where policy efforts or public investment may be targeted to improve outcomes, and reveals where data inadequacies still need to be addressed.

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