



# ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS



ECOSOC  
United Nations

SHSMUN '21

**Table of Contents:**

Introduction to Committee.....3

Topic #1.....4

Introduction to the Topic.....4

History of the Topic.....5

Topic Discussion and Developments.....6

Digitalization.....7

Recommendations.....7

Questions to Consider.....8

Topic #2.....9

Introduction to the Topic.....9

Topic Discussion and Developments.....12

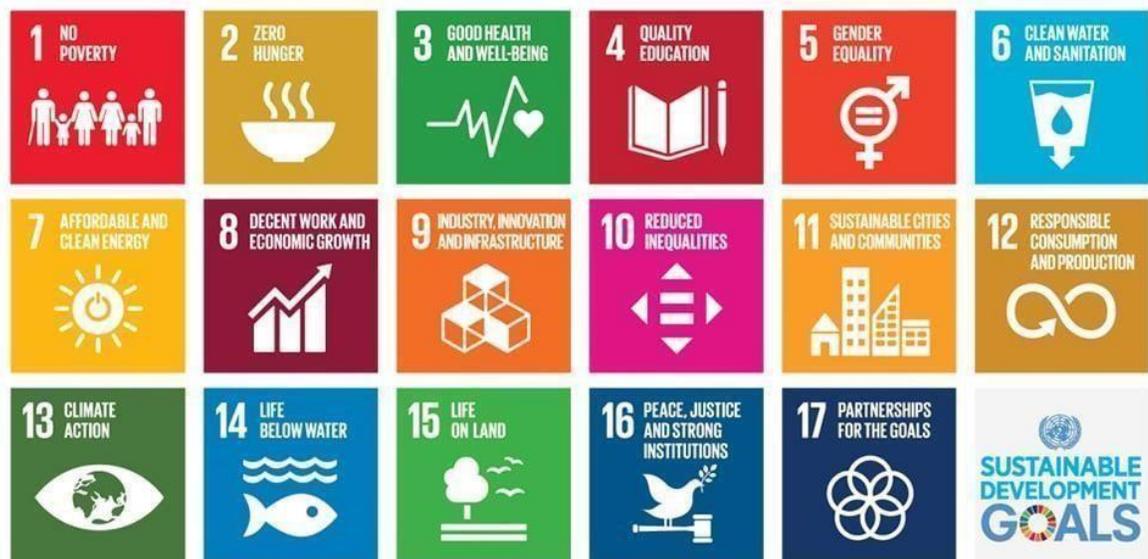
Recommendations.....16

Questions to Consider.....16

References.....18

## Introduction to Committee:

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (UN), acts “as one of the six main organs of the United Nations” It was formed in 1945 in conjunction with the UN Charter, which established it as such. It was formed under the mission of acting as a unified “platform” aimed at encouraging discussions, “innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals,” all as a means of allowing countries to achieve “sustainable development – economic, social and environmental”. Below you will find the UN set Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of which the improvement of economic factors plays a major role:



ECOSOC is comprised of 54 elected member states, which are annually rotated after being elected and given three year terms by the United Nations General Assembly. These include states from across the world including 14 African, 11 Asia-Pacific, 6 Eastern European, 10 Latin American/ Caribbean, Western European and other states.

**TOPIC #1:** The implementation of virtual procedure that is supportive of economic functions and activities.

**Introduction to the Topic:**

Since the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the world has been in a very unique position, historically speaking, with many aspects of life altered to suit the pandemic-based circumstances and era. Among the many changes, two in particular can be highlighted- the concept of achieving “social distancing” as a means of disease contraction prevention, and “flattening of the curve” as a means of preventing the collapse of healthcare systems around the world. This “social distancing” technique and belief has had a mega effect in its application on many aspects of basic human life and interactions. Whether it is the closure of schools, which are seen as natural “amplifiers” of diseases, the usage of masks and other means of protection to go outdoors, or even the way businesses operate, many things have changed as a result of COVID-19. However, if one thing is very apparent with “social distancing,” it is how the importance of modern telecommunications and information technology have been used as alternatives to conduct human interaction that might have been done in a face to face or social manner. This includes areas such as education, business activity, and even friendly meetups. However, this rush to go digital/virtual has both its benefits and negatives. The topic touches on the bureaucratic nature of numerous countries and the effect that it has on the economy through businesses and vital operations. The closure of institutions and services (e.g. banks, shops, governmental institutions, offices and more) has led to a standstill in some countries that were not completely digitized or were not ready for it. As a result, countries hastened to develop digitization technology, especially in essential services (e.g. e-banks, e-gov, e-learning, e-shopping) and that is to avoid future economic constraints that may come in case of a new pandemic.

## **History of the Topic:**

Ever since technologies were first created by mankind, a continuous cycle of growth and development has ensued. These technologies were not only shaped as a means of addressing human needs and wants, but also played a role in shaping human societies by extending such needs and wants, as well as bringing with it means of developing human doctrine by allowing for changes in livelihood. Among the important technologies that continuously shape society, is the way we communicate with each other. Whether in the form of entertainment, information, or straight out personal conversations, communication is key to human development. From simple messages on cave walls, to letters, and even today's electronic messaging systems, communication has been evolving constantly. However, with the developments in the last few decades, communication has become as easy, convenient, and direct as typing on a black digital screen and pressing the send button. This impressive feat of technology has made things so much easier, that unlike other historical times, people can socialize without even needing to meet face to face. This has both its negatives and positives, creating room for debate over the application of such technology and its effect on basic human interactions. ECOSOC aims to encourage such discussions by linking them to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, and allowing for member states to jointly establish a resolution or more, aimed at allowing the usage of such communication technologies, including telecommunications and information technology, in a way that allows both its member states and the greater general international community, a sustainable way in using such platforms as both temporary means in the COVID-19 era, as well as in the long term post-COVID-19 eras.

## **Topic Discussion and Developments:**

COVID-19 Pandemic:

In order to understand the topic, a rough timeline, as of the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2019 is available below. However, since the SHSMUN conference is expected to be held during early 2021, all delegations are advised to constantly follow up on the developments concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

31<sup>st</sup> of December, 2019:

According to the World Health Organization Website, COVID-19 was first detected in the 31<sup>st</sup> of

December 2019, after its People's Republic of China offices "picked up a media statement by the

Wuhan Municipal Health Commission from their website on cases of 'viral pneumonia' in

Wuhan, People's Republic of China".

9<sup>th</sup> of June, 2020:

This "viral pneumonia" was confirmed by the WHO be a strain of the novel coronavirus.

11<sup>th</sup> of March, 2020:

After months of development and the continuous spread of COVID-19, the WHO decided to label the outbreak as a pandemic. The WHO also warned "countries to take urgent and aggressive action" to prevent or control the spread of the virus.

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2020:

The "WHO reported that over 1 million cases of COVID-19 had been confirmed worldwide- a more than tenfold increase in less than a month". 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2020:

As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2020, there are "10,357,677 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 508,055 deaths, reported to WHO". More and updated details can be found in the link below:

<https://COVID-19.who.int/>

### **Digitalization:**

Despite the ongoing debate over going virtual, schools and businesses started the implementation of online meetings and classes to avoid further spreading of COVID-19. This has caused a great insight for the future while also causing a lot of harm to a lot of businesses and schools. While these measures helped maintain social distancing and slowed the spread of COVID-19, they also raised concern over health issues such as the harm caused to the eyes and to other parts of the body. There is also the concern of privacy for businesses and government officials because of recent allegations on zoom for providing China or America with confidential information, depending on which of these two nations you ask. Therefore, the discussion about whether or not to use online platforms to share business and government secrets is at hand. While some businesses can digitalize, most other businesses are unable to.

### **Recommendations:**

As this topic has global implications, ECOSOC recommends that all delegations attempt to form a unified set of resolutions that may tackle the various challenges of going digital and online in a way that may suit the greater international community, as well as individual states in a convenient, relevant, affordable, logical, and most importantly sustainable manner. These can include one single unanimous resolution, or different resolutions tackling different circumstances. For example, one resolution can be for developed countries and one for the developing, or even one for more risk-bearing states and one for less risk bearing states. The possibilities are endless. However, the committee would like to remind all delegations that its resolutions are not legally binding, so if more than one resolution were to pass, there would be no problem, with the ratification and application of respective resolutions being at the discretion of each state.

## **Questions to Consider:**

1. Is digitalization feasible in all states?
2. What should and shouldn't be digitalized?
3. What are the pros and cons of going digital?
4. How will going digital affect the environment?
5. What are the social implications of going digital?
6. How can going digital be done in a sustainable manner?
7. What are some health concerns that need to be addressed?
8. What are the short and long term implications of going digital?
9. How can fewer developing economies go digital if they lack the proper infrastructure?
10. Who is responsible for digitalization- the state, businesses or private public partnerships?
11. Will sudden digitalization overwhelm internet, electricity, and other forms of infrastructure?
12. Can going digital complement "social distancing" and other health measures in the COVID-19 era?
13. How will digitalization affect the sectors of both national and international economies?
14. How can digitalization be done in a way that minimizes risks such as hacking and privacy breaches?
15. How can ECOSOC work with individual member states and other relevant UN bodies to coordinate digitalization efforts?

**TOPIC #2:** Mobilizing financial resources for small islands and developing countries with emphasis on tourism and trade.

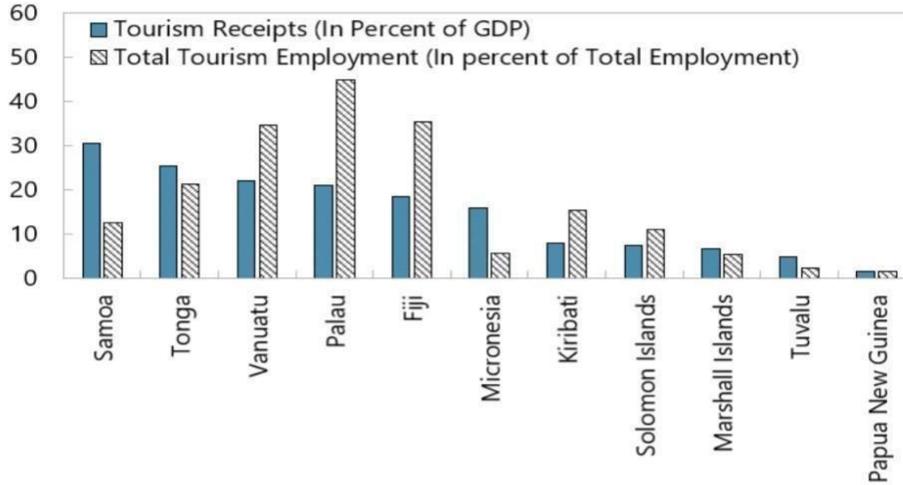
**Introduction to topic:**

COVID-19 has been a stab in the heart for many Pacific, Caribbean, and Indian islands. The virus has forced nations to adopt a state of emergency and enter a phase of lockdown. Small islands are accustomed to rely on tourism to fuel their economy because of their parasail ecosystems. Many islands, especially the ones located in the Pacific, have suffered greatly with losses estimated to reach approximately millions of US Dollars, which result in crises including unemployment, inflation and many other economic concerns.

# Empty hotels

Pacific island countries depend on tourism for jobs and growth...

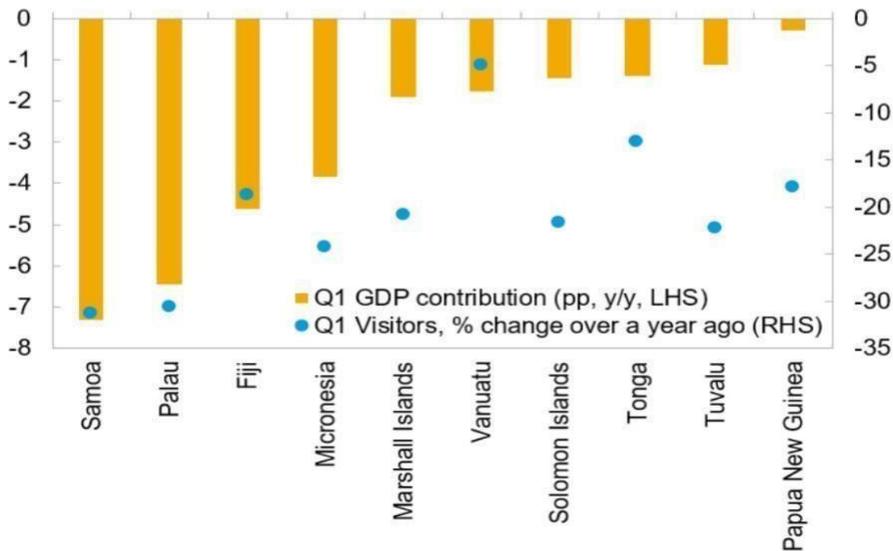
Small States - tourism receipts and tourism employment (latest available estimates, mostly 2018 data)



Sources: National tourism offices, national statistics offices, South Pacific Tourism Organization, and IMF staff estimates.

...but the COVID-19 pandemic is keeping tourists away.

Tourism estimates for 2020Q1



Source: IMF staff estimates.

Since these islands rely on farming, agriculture, and the exporting of their goods to other nations, some of them might be facing starvation, and a lack of resources due to the halt of trade. While the Caribbean islands are considered to be well supplied, due to their training in hurricane season food storage, other islands are still recovering from previous natural disasters, and COVID-19 created even more unimaginable complications. Many of these islands are in need of economic support to reignite their-economies, as most of them do not have any other main industries to rely on. The dilemma is that all islands have been severely struck by COVID-19, many nations around the world are willing to send in economic support, yet, the United Nations is in need of a wellstructured economic plan to help revive those countries' economies.

Trade is another crucial factor that has affected many of the islands that relied on importing necessities and expanding their exports of mainly tropical fruits to markets around the world. Large nationwide shipping companies need to propose a relief shipping trade aid for those countries to revive trade, as many of those countries cannot afford to invest in those trading activities. In addition, more touristic sites, beaches, clubs, and services sectors, which those countries are mostly reliant on, are in need of economic support to recover. Countries such as, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, and Egypt have all restricted their food exports so that their own citizens could survive, which limits those smaller countries to what they have from resources and goods to survive. Relief efforts should be a main focus during the flow of the debate to ensure that the event of the starvation of people living there does not occur. Another main concern that must be taken into account, is the political instability, and protests that are insatiably engulfing countries suffering greatly from those increasing number of problems. In most nations undergoing this crises, people are blaming their governments for the post COVID-19 crises, which creates further more complications as to how help can be delivered.

Moreover, inflation is another a major issue, in nations that rely on their imports, as foreign markets affect them with rampant price increases, which leads to heavy economic recessions in those places.

In brief, unemployment, trade, necessities unable to reach those nations, and political instability, all contribute to furthermore affected the post-COVID-19 crises, which has already affected those nations dramatically. The UN is calling on nations that have recovered, or are recovering, to help other nations, especially the smaller, and isolated ones, through an efficient touristic, trade-related, and economic based plan.

### **Topic Discussions and Developments:**

Possible problems that emerge in countries that are reliant on sectors like tourism and trade, which were heavily affected by COVID-19 and the implementation of lockdowns, are for example,

- 1- Food shortages: COVID-19 sparked the risk of a food-price spike across the globe, which would trigger crises in many countries both developing and undeveloped. In the poorest of these, food accounts for 40-60% of the consumption basket;

On the supply side, global grain stockpiles are healthy, but could quickly be exhausted, as the virus disrupts food production and distribution. Countries, especially those in remote, and far areas on Earth, that are mostly reliant on tourism to make profit, will be prone to high food shortages, as their level of profit will decrease significantly, as well as, the percentage of imported food.

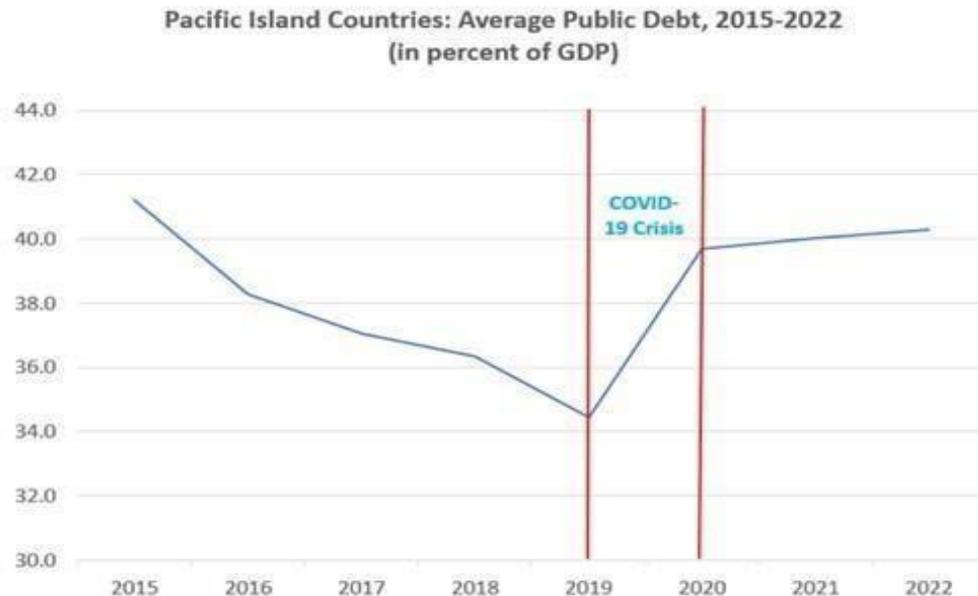
- 2- High unemployment: Due to the ongoing recession, and the dead-like flow of income in most economies, small businesses, especially the ones depending on tourism, such as restaurants, hotels, sightseeing tours, airlines and many others, will have to start

implementing cuts in their budget, which would include firing many employees. As many people get laid-off, the chances of a global high unemployment rate is unavoidable, therefore, further affecting the economy and people's lives.

- 3- Recession: The COVID-19 pandemic has forced more than a third of the world's population into a lockdown to stop the spread of it. It has caused severe consequences for economies across the world, as both producers and consumers stayed in isolation. The global recession that resulted, which arose as an economic consequence of the pandemic showed on the 2020 stock market crash on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April that all of the G7 nations were entering into a "deep recession." The IMF projections suggest that the coronavirus recession will be the most severe global economic downturn since the Great Depression, and that it will be "far worse" than the Great Recession of 2009, especially in countries that are reliant on tourism and their touristic sites, as they will encounter severe and deadly drops in the numbers this year.

## Public debt on the rise

Pacific island countries have taken on more debt since the start of the COVID-19 crisis.



Sources: World Economic Outlook Database and IMF Staff estimates.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

- 4- Protests/Revolution: During the coronavirus pandemic, many people were prone to lose their jobs due to economic inflation and nosedive. This issue causes further implications on the livelihood of people which puts them at risk of poverty. In those cases, people take their concerns to the streets and protest due to the negative consequences that the virus has instigated on the population.
- 5- Starvation: Throughout the course of history, especially in times of war or world pandemics, starvation has been so common and that is due to several reasons. First, some

normal families that once lived normally can now no longer afford food due to the loss of a job. Second, vulnerable groups of people can also not afford the basic necessities that they once had due to the lack of production of crops and cheap foods. Hence, the corona virus has hindered the economy of all nations, putting production rates at a decrease which caused tremendous amounts of negative effects such as starvation.

- 6- Long recovery process: It is no secret that the corona virus has instigated bad effects on the international community and this process will take a long time to recover. First, many people were left unemployed and now are at a risk of reaching the poverty line; hence, they will need time to recover from this atrocious position. In addition, small businesses will need great effort to recover from this pandemic due to the lack of sales throughout this course of time. Finally, the nationwide economy as a whole will require much effort to regain its power due to the negative impacts that the corona virus has imposed on the international community.

Despite the rough results that COVID-19 has forced upon the entire globe, many countries have tried helping in several different ways to fight it, whether medically, by sending doctors, nurses, military supply, and staff to countries heavily fighting the pandemic, to logistic methods, such as supplying basic products, food, masks and other sanitary material.

Fighting the pandemic also requires fighting the consequences mentioned above, many countries will be facing tragic numbers, and collapsing economies, as they rely on particular sectors to prosper. International actions have to be taken, to strengthen the bond between nations, therefore, enable each government to help the other in the most basic ways possible.

### **Recommendations:**

Understand what nations are most affected and at danger from the negative economic effects of COVID-19.

- Present some realistic economic plans that can be implemented to effectively relieve the economic dangers.
- Find ways that can put global trade to maximum efficiency to aid developing and island nations.

### **Questions to Consider:**

- Will people's lives be put at risk if lockdowns are eased?
- What can be considered more essential, economies, or the number of cases?
- How can countries financially, or logistically help each other out?
- What international relation issues between several nations may be a problem in resolving these crises?
- Can the international community feasibly help those islands/remote areas?
- Is the resulting economic recession avoidable?
- Is it possible for the international community to solve this crisis without bias towards supporting the countries that are more influential and how?
- What is the best source of nutrition that can be economically viable and healthy for food deficient starving regions to consume?
- How can recovery from the symptoms of COVID-19 on the global economy be sped up?
- How can global unemployment be negated?

- In what ways can nations inspire productivity and decrease restlessness in the form of protests to pave the way for complete economic improvement?

In conclusion, ECOSOC aims to find solutions on a realistic, economic, and social basis. Many points must be taken into consideration when tackling the pandemic, most importantly the health of citizens, as well as, the economic wellbeing of the people. Several points and considerations must be prioritized, while crucial solutions are discussed and resolutions are formed. The importance to come together, and that of international relations between countries is another important factor that must be considered throughout the entire conference.

## **References:**

*International Monetary Fund - Homepage*, [www.imf.org/external/index.htm](http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm).

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-trade-food-factbox-idUSKBN21L332>

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/COVID-19-quarantine-sick-pay/>

About Us | UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/about-us>

Members | UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/content/members>

Timeline of WHO's response to COVID-19. (2020, June 30). Retrieved from

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/29-06-2020-covidtimeline>

United Nations Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). Retrieved from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Economic\\_and\\_Social\\_Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Economic_and_Social_Council)

WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard. (n.d.). Retrieved

from <https://COVID19.who.int/>

About Us | UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/about-us>

Members | UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/content/members>

Timeline of WHO's response to COVID-19. (2020, June 30). Retrieved from

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/29-06-2020-covidtimeline>

United Nations Economic and Social Council. (n.d.). Retrieved from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Economic\\_and\\_Social\\_Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Economic_and_Social_Council)

WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://COVID19.who.int/>