



Green Jobs, Green Economy, and Just Transition Concepts and Definitions: The UN-ILO perspective

1st meeting of the G7 ETF under German Presidency, Berlin
Thursday, 17th February 2022



Key UN Milestones

ILO and UNEP
report: first policy
definition of **green
jobs**

2008

Rio+20 Conference:
Concept of **green
economy** highlighted
as an important
pathway to
sustainable
development

2012

19th International
Conference of Labour
Statisticians (ICLS):
Adopted **first
international standard
statistical definition of
green jobs.**

2013

2011
UNEP report: first
definition of a **green
economy** by a UN
agency.

2011

2013
International
Labour Conference
discussed report
**Sustainable
development,
decent work and
green jobs**

2013

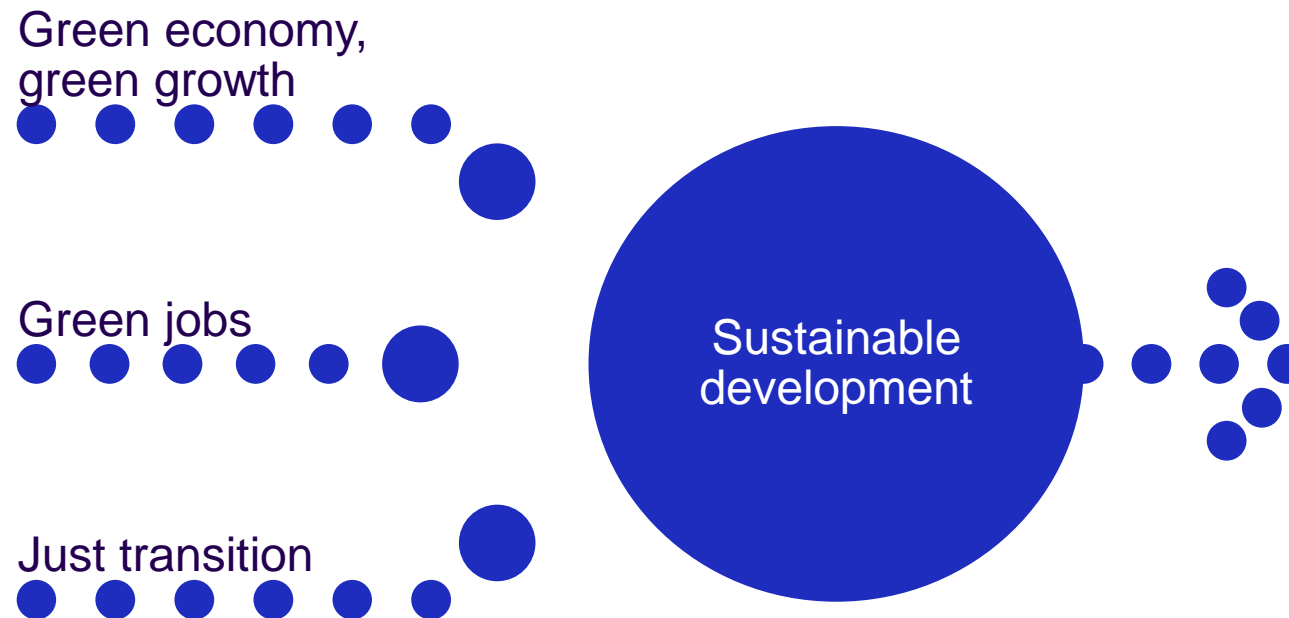
Paris Agreement :
Just Transition of the
workforce and creation
of decent work as
important
considerations for
climate action.

2015

2015
ILO: **Guidelines for a just
transition towards
environmentally sustainable
economies and societies for
all** : policy framework
addressing environmental
sustainability from the
perspective of decent work
and social justice.

2015

▶ The context and perspectives on the definition of concepts



Types of international definitions

Policy

- **Purpose:** support national policy-making and strategic planning, implementation and successful outcomes.
- International policy guidelines are best served by providing **clear and unambiguous definitions for terms and concepts** used.
- **The existence of multiple definitions for a given policy concept** may at times be necessary and should be clarified to allow optimal application; this is the case for ‘green jobs’.

Statistics

- **Adopted by UN statistical standard-setting bodies** (like the ICLS) as part of adopted international statistical standards, i.e. Resolutions or Guidelines
- **Purpose:** internationally comparable labour statistics as well as data comparability within a country over time.
- Usually relate to concepts, definitions, classifications which are agreed as representing **‘best practice’**

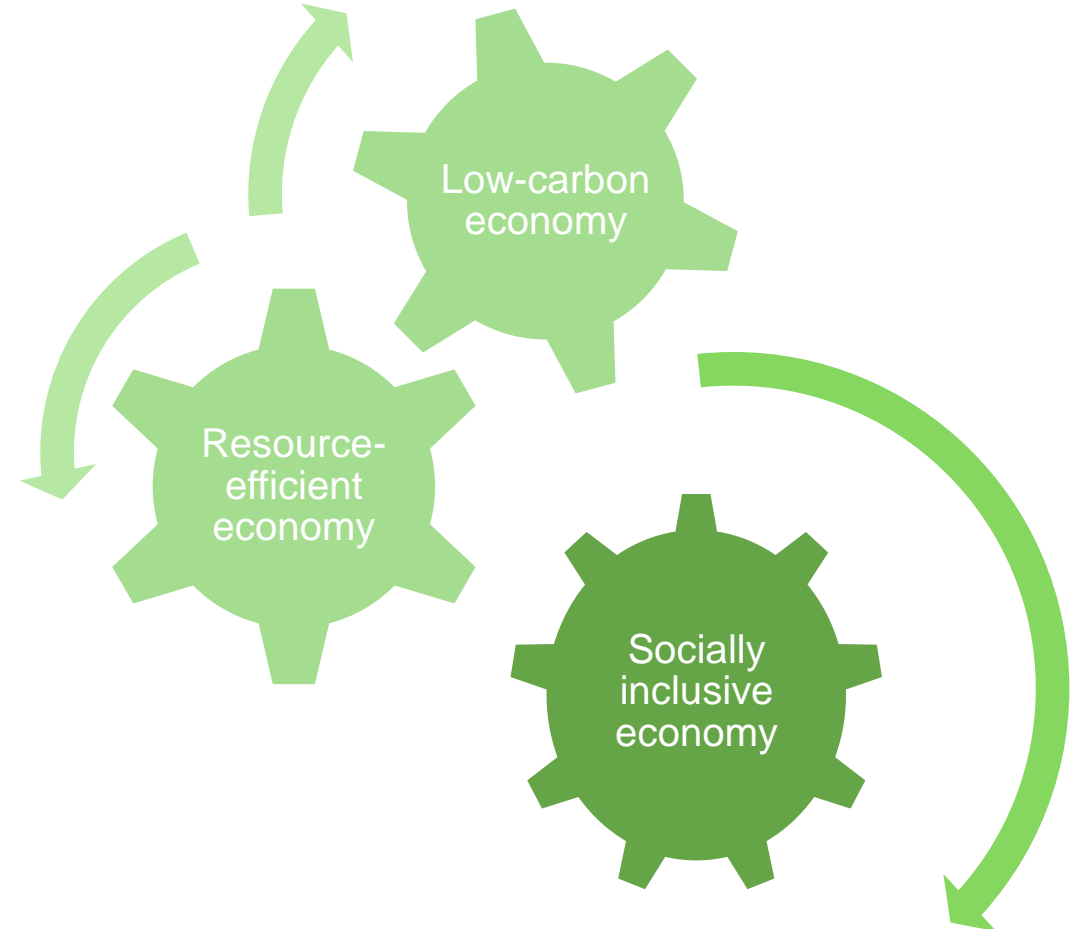
► The concept of green economy (and related concepts)

UN policy concept definitions: Green Economy

An economy that **improves human wellbeing and social equity** while significantly **reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities**.

Growth in income and employment are driven by public and private investments that reduce carbon emissions and pollution, enhance energy and resource efficiency, and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services

UNEP, 2011



▶ The concept of green jobs

ILO-UNEP policy definition

*“We define green jobs as **positions** in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, installation, and maintenance, as well as scientific and technical, administrative, and service-related activities, **that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality.**”*

Specifically, but not exclusively, this includes jobs that help to protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity; reduce energy, materials, and water consumption through high-efficiency and avoidance strategies; de-carbonize the economy; and minimize or altogether avoid generation of all forms of waste and pollution.

*But green jobs [...] also need to be **good jobs** that meet longstanding demands and goals of the labor movement, i.e., **adequate wages, safe working conditions, and worker rights**, including the right to organize labor unions.”*

ILO-UNEP, *Green jobs: Towards decent work in a sustainable, low-carbon world* pp. 35-36


ILO Green Jobs Programme policy definition

“Green jobs are decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment, be they in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and construction, or in new, emerging green sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Green jobs help: (1) Improve energy and raw materials efficiency; (2) Limit greenhouse gas emissions; (3) Minimize waste and pollution; (4) Protect and restore ecosystems; and (5) Support adaptation to the effects of climate change.

[...] green jobs can also be distinguished by their contribution to more environmentally friendly processes. For example, green jobs can reduce water consumption or improve recycling systems. Yet, green jobs defined through production processes do not necessarily produce environmental goods or services.”

ILO Green Jobs Programme website



This dual aspect of green jobs, involving green outputs and green processes, is not captured in the ILO-UNEP concept definition.

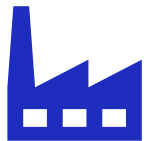
UN - ILO policy definitions of green jobs: Key aspects (1)

- **contribution to preserving or restoring environmental quality or the environment.**
 - Offers valuable policy scope and directional guidance for understanding and applying the concept.
- acknowledge **decent work or employment quality dimension** as a defining characteristic of green jobs



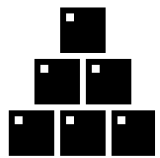
UN - ILO policy definitions of green jobs: Key aspects (2)

ILO-UNEP

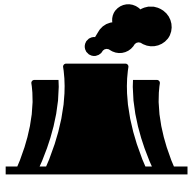


Explicit list of sectors:

Agriculture, manufacturing, construction, installation, maintenance scientific, technical, administrative and service-related activities



Reduce energy, materials and water **consumption** through **high-efficiency and avoidance** strategies

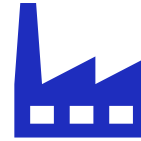


Decarbonizing the economy



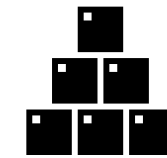
Minimize **or altogether avoid** all forms of waste and pollution

ILO-Green Jobs Programme

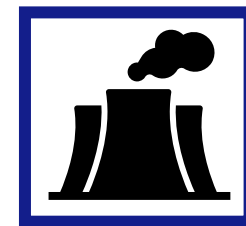


Suggestions for sectors:

Manufacturing, construction, renewable energy, energy efficiency



Improve energy and raw materials **efficiency**

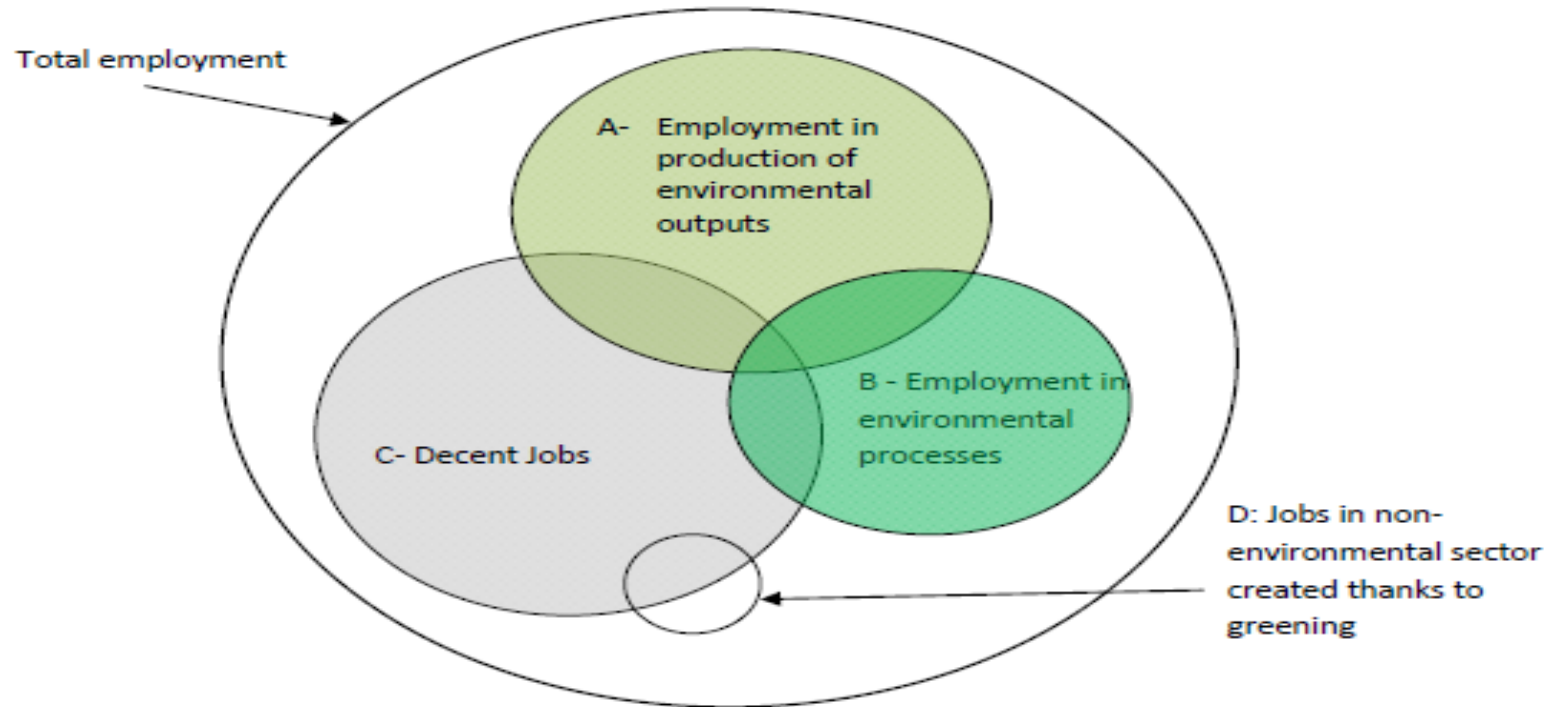


Limit greenhouse gas emissions



Minimize waste and pollution

► Statistical definition: Relationships between total employment, employment in the environmental sector and decent work



Employment in the environmental sector = $A \cup B$

Employment created thanks to greening = $A \cup B \cup D$

Green jobs (employment in environmental sector that is decent) = $(A \cup B) \cap C$

ILO pilot survey testing conducted to support implementation of the 19th ICLS Guidelines

Highlights of lessons learned from the pilot surveys:

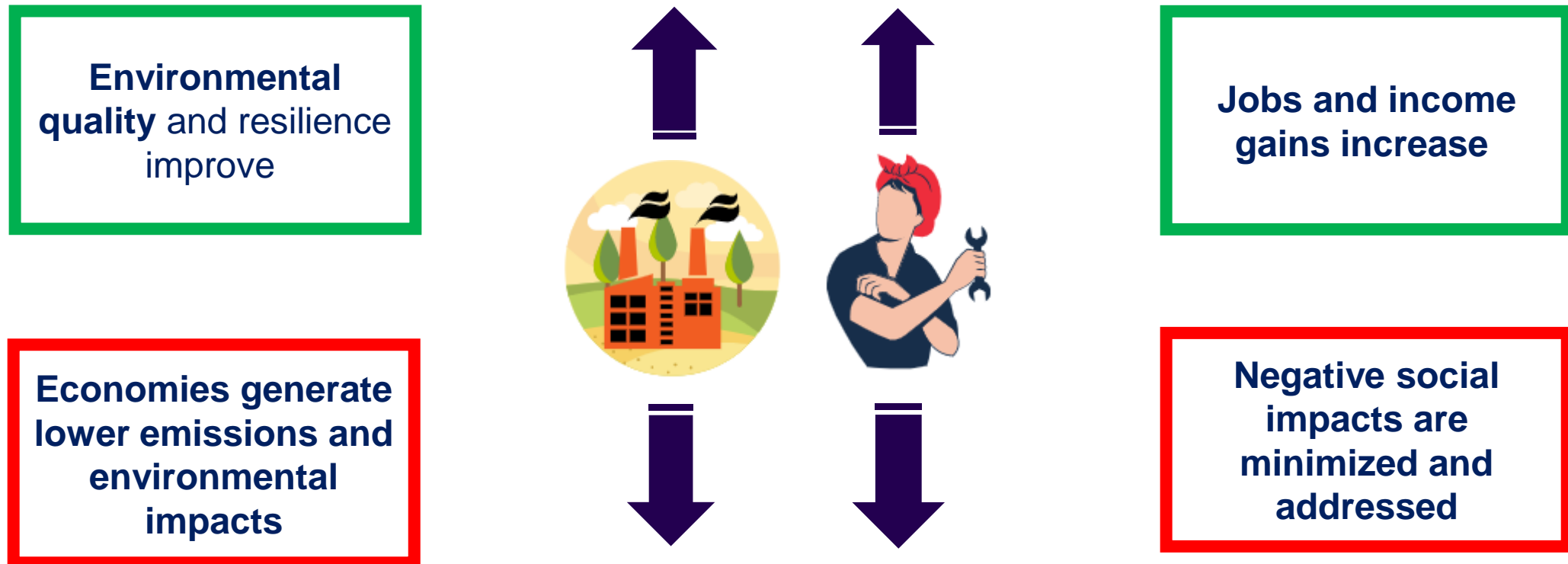
- **The ILO methodology offers a sound, feasible means to measure green jobs** based on the ICLS Guidelines; **testing should continue** to support refining the methodology and provide operational guidance to countries on statistical measurement of green jobs.
- **Concepts and definitions** of environmental goods, services and processes should be **more clearly illustrated or elaborated by examples.**
- **Images and video recordings** of various environmentally-friendly technologies, activities, services, and equipment could be used for **training of enumerators** conducting the green job survey.



▶ The concept of just transition

► Climate action, decent work and a just transition for all

Planning for a just transition has clear positive impact on the labour market



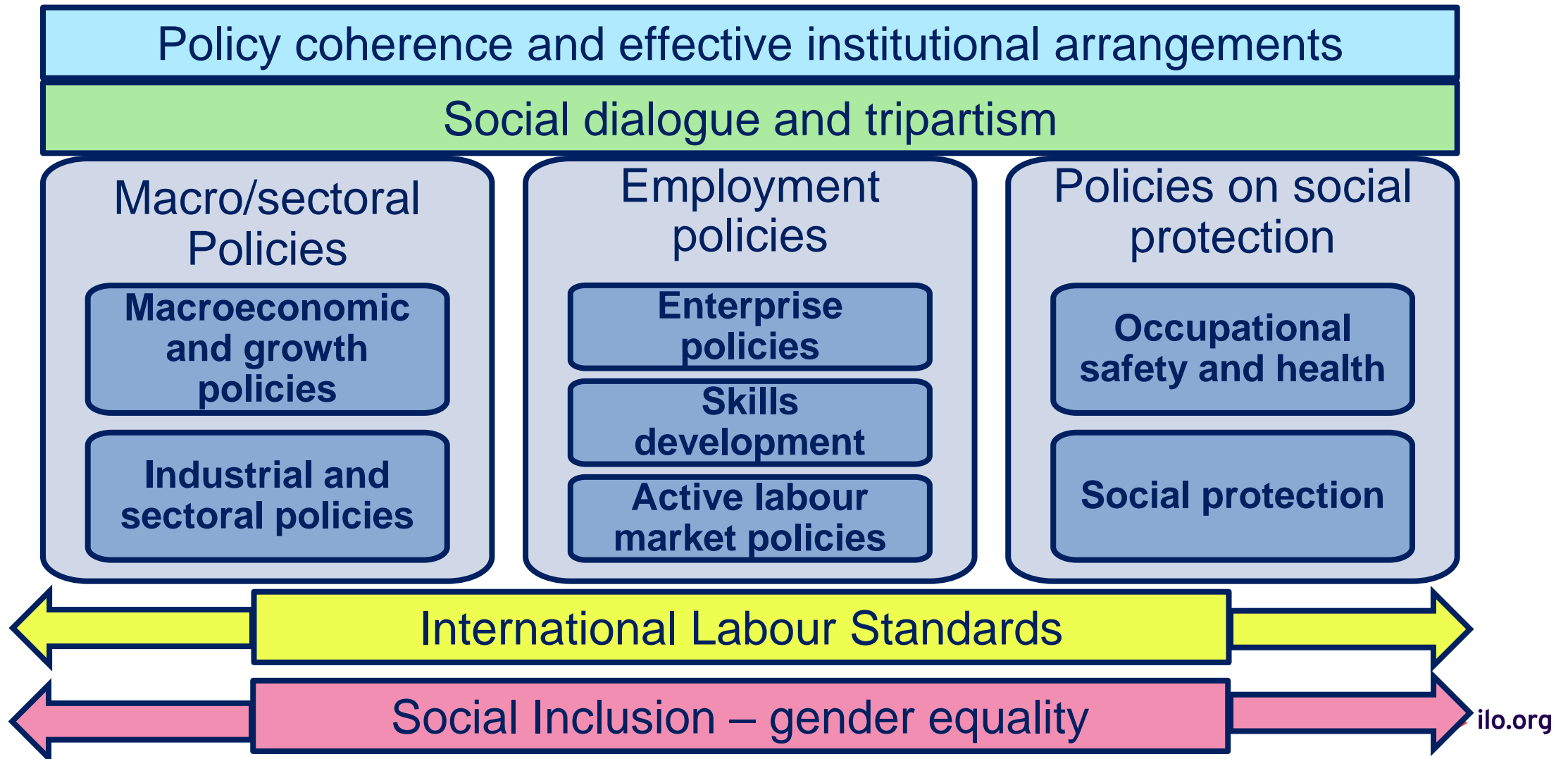
The vulnerable are protected and included

UN policy concept definitions: Just transition

- Greening the economy in a way that is as **fair and inclusive** as possible to everyone concerned, creating **decent work opportunities** and **leaving no one behind**.
- **Maximizing the social and economic opportunities of climate action**, while **minimizing and carefully managing any challenges** – including through **effective social dialogue** among all groups impacted, and respect for **fundamental labour principles and rights**.
- Ensuring a just transition is important for all countries at all levels of development. It is also important for all economic sectors – by no means limited to energy supply – and in urban and rural areas alike (ILO, 2015).



ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, 2015



Thank you for your attention

Please visit the website of the ILO Green Jobs Programme :

<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/lang--en/index.htm>