

Greens leader Richard Di Natale is calling for a reimagining of the way Australians approach work. “What we’re saying is: let’s have a look at some of the models around the world,” he says.

“It’s absolutely possible, as we’ve seen in places like Sweden, where in the aged-care sector people are working a six-hour day rather than an eight-hour day, but they’re actually delivering a productivity dividend. They’re happier. They’re healthier at work. They’re actually producing just as much as they would be doing in an eight-hour day.”

With the future likely to see many jobs lost to automation, the Greens are keeping an open mind to the notion of “guaranteed adequate incomes”.

“It’s a system that gives people a wage, irrespective of income. It’s not actually means-tested.

“It makes sure that everybody’s got enough to live on. There are a whole range of benefits to the economy. There are few overheads in administering it. So we’re looking ... at the trials. We’re watching them very closely in Canada, in Scotland, in France and so on.”

In the wake of an energy crisis, both the federal and South Australian governments are placing a renewed focus on gas in Australia’s energy mix. But Di Natale says we’re having a debate that “belongs in the last century”.

“We shouldn’t be spending a cent on new gas infrastructure. We’ve got some legacy issues with existing gas plants and obviously existing coal-fired power plants. We’ve got to have a transition plan to make sure we can transition away from old, polluting energy generation to new renewable, clean-green generation. That’s the plan that needs to be put in place.”

*Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.*

## Politics podcast: Richard Di Natale on the future of work

Written by The Conversation

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