Funding the Future

Understanding economics: a new video series

Published: August 8, 2026, 6:11 am

I mentioned a few days ago that I was planning a video series that would, over time, provide an introduction to many of the key concepts I talk about when discussing economics.

This plan has now been the subject of much discussion in the team here, and we have made three or four trial videos just to see how things go. The first of those is published this morning. It announces that it is the first in a series, and it builds directly on an infographic previously prepared.

The critical point when announcing such things is to have a plan for where the series might go. We have got such a plan. Having already prepared a list of about 120 titles that could be used for infographics, preparing a list of videos that we might need to produce was not especially hard, although deciding how to structure them was more difficult.

Just to give some idea of what we are thinking of doing, I reproduce below the current planned list of titles, and the groups in which they might be structured.

I stress a number of things.

Firstly, although many people might flinch at the idea of producing 80, or more, videos of around seven minutes each (which will be the target length, to encourage their use in classes as the basis for discussion), this will only represent a bit over 20% of our output of videos over the next year. As a result, we think this target is entirely achievable and, in fact, makes our work of planning our video production schedule easier, not harder. As the production pattern settles down, we might publish these on regular fixed days of the week to make them more predictable, with a goal of at least two a week being sensible.

Secondly, this list is not fixed. I can, and do, change my mind. Suggestions for additions are welcome, and if it looks as though some topics overlap across different lists, that does not worry me. Repetition is a part of education. Note that the subnumbered videos are parts of a sub-series. How these will be structured is not certain as yet. The topics are vital. The issue is how to keep the flow. I will work that one out.

Thirdly, I expect that there will be infographics to support most of these videos. Some, of course, I have already made. The two series will, therefore, go together, and that appeals to me and my sense of efficiency.

Fourthly, experience so far suggests that these videos are, as far as I am concerned, fairly easy to make. I feel as if I am in front of a class again, and I always enjoyed that experience.

Feedback is welcome.

Understanding economics: series plan

Series 1: Introduction

* What is economics?

* What is the economy for?

* What is microeconomics?

* What is macroeconomics?

* What are resources?
* What is labour?

* What is the environment?

* Why does energy matter?

* Why does time matter in economics?

* What is capital?

* What is wealth?

* What is sustainability?

* What is income?
* What are wages?

* What is profit?

* What is rent?

* What is interest?

* What are earned and unearned income?
* What is wealth?
* What is poverty?
* What is inequality?
* Does inequality matter?

* What is work?
* What is business?
* What are markets?
* What is money?
* How is money created?
* How does money get its value?
* What does money mean?
* Why do we trust money?
* What is money used for?

* What is tax?
* What is tax for?
* What does a good tax system look like?

* What is inflation?
* What is debt?
* What is government debt?
* What is a government deficit?
* What is the exchange rate?
* What is the balance of trade?

Expanding on the Building Blocks

* What is government?
* What is the state?
* What is society?
* What is democracy?
* What are public services?

* What are public goods?
* What is the purpose of business?
* What are firms?
* What are companies?
* What are groups?
* What are central banks?
* What are commercial banks?
* What is the welfare state?
* What should government do?
* What is growth?
* What is austerity
* What is recession?
* What is depression?

Economic Ideas

* What is Marxism?
* What is socialism?
* What is social democracy?
* What is capitalism?
* What is neoliberalism?
* What is monetarism?
* What is Keynesianism?
* What is a politics of care?

Deconstructing Economic Jargon

* What is Gross Domestic Product (GDP)?
* What is Gross National Product (GNP)?
* What is Fiscal Policy?
* What is Monetary Policy?
* What are base interest rates?
* What is the National Debt?

* What is a Budget Deficit?
* What is Austerity?
* What are ‘balanced budgets’?
* What is public spending?
* What is tax for?
* What does ‘Fiscal Responsibility’ mean?
* What is a ‘Free Market’?
* What is deregulation?
* What is privatisation?
* What is trickle-down economics?
* What is supply-side economics?
* What is demand-side economics?
* What is quantitative easing?
* What is quantitative tightening?
* What are multiplier effects?
* What are sectoral balances?
* What is capital maintenance?
* What is the Green New Deal?