

ESDNewsletter April 2018

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- **3rd ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit, 12-13 June 2018, Rome, Italy – “Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Countries and Regions: Sharing for Learning”**
- **ESDN Annual Conference 2018, 1-2 October 2018, Vienna, Austria – “Stakeholder-Policy Cooperation in the Age of the SDGs: What new approaches are required to be successful?”**
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New ESDN Quarterly Report on “SDG Indicators and Monitoring: Systems and Processes at the Global, European, and National Level”

The well-known maxim: ‘If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it’, is not only relevant in the context of business operations, but is also helpful when it comes to global SD governance and the implementation of political priorities, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). Indicators provide an important measuring ability that enables a relation to be made between the current state of affairs, such as how a country is presently doing regarding reaching certain Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and where a country would like to go, or be at, in the future. Indicators also allow progress to be tracked over time, which is important in keeping on track to reach targets and goals, as well as to potentially inform the policy-making process as time goes on.

In the context of the SDGs, quality and timely data and metrics are a powerful ‘management tool’ that can help governments, businesses, and civil society identify main challenges and focus their usually limited financial resources accordingly. Going beyond strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of indicators also help improve transparency and accountability, and thus help to ensure the overall success of the SDGs. The development of global, national, or regional indicators, and their regular monitoring, allows countries to evaluate their progress and learn from the successes of others.

In learning from past shortcomings, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the predecessors of the SDGs, which were characterized by long data delays, large gaps, and lack of metrics for important indicators, such pitfalls can be avoided when defining indicators, collecting data in a timely manner, and proactively dealing with gaps. To avoid repeating this mistake, and to ensure political and financial commitment, it is important that governments and the international community establish metrics and monitoring processes as early as possible for measuring progress made towards the SDGs.

This ESDN Quarterly Report (QR) provides a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, overview of the main existing indicator sets and processes for monitoring the SDGs at the global, European Union, and the national level of European countries.

Please find the ESDN Quarterly Report 48 here: <http://www.sd-network.eu/?k=quarterly%20reports>

3rd ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit, 12-13 June 2018, Rome, Italy – “Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Countries and Regions: Sharing for Learning”

The 3rd ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit will take place this year in Rome, Italy from June 12th-13th, 2018. The Platform will take place on June 12th and will be a full-day event. The Visit will take place on the 13th and will be a half-day event. During the Platform, participants will hear interesting experiences from the 2030 Agenda and SDG implementation at the national and regional level, including positive examples, challenges that were encountered, difficulties that were part of the process and how they have been overcome. Policymakers are invited to register for this event and participate in this peer exchange. All ESDN Peer Learning Platforms

and Visits operate under the Chatham House Rules, which ensures confidentiality so that the Platform can be as open and honest as possible. If you need more information on these events, please contact the ESDN Office at esdn-office@sd-network.eu.

ESDN Annual Conference 2018, 1-2 October 2018, Vienna, Austria – “Stakeholder-Policy Cooperation in the Age of the SDGs: What new approaches are required to be successful?”

The ESDN Annual Conference 2018 will be organized by the ESDN in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism. The conference will be a 1.5-day event (October 1st is a full day and October 2nd is a half-day) and will be organized as an official event of the incoming Austrian EU Presidency. The Conference will bring together policymakers and experts from different stakeholder groups from all over Europe.

The SDGs are broad and complex, which necessitates the cooperation with, and knowledge from, all stakeholders. Given the broad and complex nature of the SDGs, have they changed the way in which the policy world and stakeholder world collaborate? If so, then what is now required to develop successful stakeholder-policy cooperation regarding the implementation of the SDGs?

This conference will therefore look into new ways, approaches, and examples of how the policy world and stakeholder world collaborate by looking at the practical implementation of diverse stakeholder-policymaker collaboration methods, activities, etc. Cutting-edge examples will be presented from many European countries, in which speakers will share the new ways and approaches they are employing stakeholder-policy cooperation methods. In addition, there will be ample time to discuss and reflect upon stakeholder-policy cooperation experiences and needs in various exchange activities throughout the conference.

More information and a draft agenda will be available on the [ESDN homepage](#) soon, so please check back regularly! Registration for the Annual Conference will also start soon and invitation emails will be distributed coming weeks.

European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) 2018, May 30th – June 5th

The ESDW will be organized for the fourth time this year! The [ESDW 2018](#) will take place from May 30th to June 5th 2018. So far, and with a little over 1 month to go until the start of the ESDW 2018, the ESDW has over 1,200 registered events that are taking place in 22 European countries. To discover what events may be happening near you, please visit <https://www.esdw.eu/activities-overview/>. Everyone is encouraged to develop and register events that pertain to the SDGs! Follow the ESDW on Twitter [@EuropeanSDWeek](#) and like us on Facebook at European Sustainable Development Week.

News on the governance of sustainable development from various European countries and the EU:

Belgium: National, Regional, and Local updates

At the national level, the Interfederal Institute for Statistics has created a working group on indicators to monitor the implementation of the SDGs. In a first step, the working group has provided an inventory of existing indicators in Belgium (at the federal, regional and community levels) that correspond to the UN proposed indicators to monitor the sustainable development goals. This working group will continue its task in 2018, with the goal of organizing a database of SDG indicators for Belgium and its regions. As a preview, the working group has prepared the statistical annex of the *Voluntary National Review*, presented in July at the UN-General Assembly. This annex included 34 indicators (2 per SDG) and their disaggregation by sex, age, income level, education, etc. These indicators are available on www.indicators.be.

Marie-Christine Marghem, the Belgian Minister for Sustainable Development, and an external jury, have appointed six ambassadors who will promote SDGs in Belgium and will be able to call themselves “SDG Voices 2018”:

- *Joker* travel agency
- *Natagora* Nature Protection Association
- The Federation of Enterprises of Belgium (FEB-VBO)
- The Association of Cities and Municipalities of Flanders (VVSG)
- The *MOOOV* film festival
- The *Metro* daily

During 2018, the SDG Voices undertake various actions to inform the public and engage them regarding the SDGs. With these actions, the SDG Voices hope to encourage other organizations to integrate the SDGs into their strategy and overall operations. Also, citizens are actively encouraged to contribute to making society a more sustainable place.

To find out more about this campaign and its actors, read the press release in [Dutch](#) or [French](#).

At the regional level, and specific to the implementation of the SDGs, the government of Flanders approved a set of goals tailored to the Flemish competences and circumstances, '[Visor 2030- a 2030 framework of goals for Flanders](#)' on the 9th of March 2018. The stakeholders were consulted on the 23rd of April 2018.

Finally, the city of Ghent was the proud winner of the UN SDG Action Award in communication, which was awarded in March 2018 and handed out in Bonn, Germany.

Finland: SDG activities at Aalto University

Aalto University has signed an international Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Accord as the first Finnish university. By signing the Accord Aalto commits to advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as part of its teaching, research, innovation activities, and campus development.

The Accord is a collective response by universities and colleges to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to strengthen the significant role of universities in achieving the goals of Agenda 2030. Dozens of educational institutions around the world have signed the Accord.

Aalto University will also host a Sustainability Day that seeks new paths for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary sustainability innovations. The events bring together experts, practitioners, students, and citizens to share their knowledge and experience on tackling complex sustainability challenges with novel approaches. Join the university to co-create a better future in the inaugural event of Aalto Sustainability Hub! Register here to attend: <https://personnel.marketing.dynamics.com/LeadManagement/MaintainLeadForm.aspx?SOURCEKEYOID=100441&LANGUAGECODE=en-US>

France: France is elaborating its SDGs Roadmap for 2019

France will elaborate its SDGs Roadmap for 2019. The government will draw up an SDG Roadmap, in consultation with stakeholders, which has been decided upon by the Interministerial Committee for the International cooperation and for the Development (CICID) on February 8th, 2018, and which was chaired by the Prime minister.

In this perspective, a High Level Steering Committee will be officially set up on the 26th of April 2018, co-chaired by the Ministry of the Ecological and Inclusive Transition and of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, and gathering representatives of every ministries and representatives of the major civil society organisations.

The Roadmap shall be based on a review of public policies in regard to the SDGs and will define the action priorities for France to reach the SDGs. Law making, through impact assessment, and budgetary performance indicators, shall integrate the SDGs when relevant and possible. The objective is to adopt the French Roadmap and to present a new National Voluntary Review at the UN High Level Political Forum in 2019.

Greece: Preparation of the Voluntary National Review (VNR) for the HLPF 2018; National Implementation Action Plan for the SDGs scheduled for 2019

Greece is currently preparing its VNR for the HLPF 2018.

Currently, the General Secretariat of the Government is working with the Parliament on the specifics of the involvement of a Parliamentary Committee, where all political parties are represented, in which the discussion on SDGs will be taking place on a regular basis to contribute to, and guide, implementation at the national level, and to monitor national performance from a more qualitative perspective. It is envisaged that a progress report on the implementation of the National Action Plan on the SDGs, which is scheduled to be elaborated in 2019, and its reviews will be submitted by the General Secretariat of the Government to the Parliament, at regular intervals, for its review and political guidance. Therefore, it is expected, that in terms of follow up and review of the implementation of the SDGs, the Hellenic Parliament will undertake an important role.

Hungary: 2nd Monitoring Report of the Hungarian National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development in English published

The National Council for Sustainable Development (NFFT) published the [2nd Monitoring Report](#) of the Hungarian National Framework Strategy on Sustainable Development in English. The renewed SD strategy was adopted by the Hungarian Parliament in March 2013, and, based on this resolution, the NFFT is responsible for publishing a biennial monitoring/progress report. The 1st report was made in 2015, the 2nd in 2017.

Montenegro: Article published about the process of setting up the 2030 National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro

Researchers from Montenegro, Switzerland, and the US have recently published an article in the journal *Environmental Science & Policy* (No. 84, 2018) that deals with the process of setting up the 2030 National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro. This study represents one of the first national level transpositions of the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The article can be accessed freely at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901117307232>.

Poland: Preparing a Voluntary National Review (VNR) for the HLPF 2018; launch of a broad public consultation on the draft report "Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Poland"

On April 5th, 2018, Poland launched a broad public consultation on the draft report "Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Poland. The 2018 Report". The report is a key element of the preparation for Poland's Voluntary National Review, which will take place in July 2018 during the HLPF. The draft document presents in a synthetic manner national priorities for the implementation of all 17 SDGs, indicating the most important activities and strategic projects, as well as presenting examples of good practices for the implementation of SDGs.

The draft report was prepared using a participatory approach. For every SDG, ministerial coordinators have been selected and they have developed proposals for individual parts of the draft document, in cooperation with representatives of socio-economic partners, non-governmental organizations, and other environments. The coordinator of the process of preparing VNR is the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, and cooperation takes place as part of the Special Task Force for the Strategy for Responsible Development with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

At the same time, the Task Force is a body in which the debate and agreeing on issues related to creating conditions for the effective achievement of SDGs in Poland are conducted. In June, the *national stakeholder forum* will take place, providing a platform for substantive debate, exchange of information and experience, and for establishing effective cooperation for the implementation of the SDGs. During the forum, there will be an opportunity to continue the Partnership for the implementation of the SDGs in Poland - subsequent signatories will join this initiative, which was launched in June 2017.

ESDN Country Profile updates

For the following countries, updates have been made on the [ESDN country profiles section](#) on the ESDN homepage:

- Belgium
- Montenegro

Other news:

UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2018 from 9-18 July 2018 in New York

The [HLPF 2018](#) will take place this year from July 9th – July 18th! The theme will be "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies". The set of goals to be reviewed in depth will be the following, including Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, which will be considered each year:

- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The following European countries will present their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) at the HLPF 2018:

- Albania
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Spain
- Switzerland

Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Switzerland

The [Sustainable Development Solutions Network Switzerland](#) was officially launched in February 2018. SDSN Switzerland mobilizes universities, research centers, civil society organizations, business and other knowledge centers to create and implement transformative solutions to achieve the Agenda 2030 and Paris Agreement in Switzerland and beyond.