

# ESDNewsletter July 2022

This ESDNewsletter informs about the following topics and activities on sustainable development in Europe.

- **Announcements from the ESDN:**
  - **7<sup>th</sup> Peer Learning Platform** on VNRs took place on 14 June 2022 in Brussels
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> ESDN Youth Workshop** on 2-3 September 2022 in Berlin
  - **European Sustainable Development Week** – Event registration is open until 08 October 2022
  - **ESDN Conference 2022** on “Europe’s Position as Leading Change Agent against the Triple Planetary Crisis – Climate Change, Biodiversity Loss and Pollution” on 4-5 October 2022 in Bucharest
  - **20<sup>th</sup> ESDN Workshop** on “SDGs and Human Rights” – 23 November 2022 (virtual)
  - **ESDN Spotlight Videos** on “Sustainable Development in the Business Sector” and “Integrating the SDGs into National Recovery and Resilience Plans”
- **News on Sustainable Development Governance from European Countries:**
  - **Belgium** – Inspirational guide on SDG monitoring and reporting for local governments
  - **Hungary** – Newly elected Hungarian government reorganised the responsibilities of sustainability issues
  - **Netherlands** – Preparing a second Voluntary National Review for the High Level Political Forum
  - **Switzerland** – Adoption of the new Swiss VNR and the new web portal
- **News on European Governance for Sustainable Development:**
  - **Eurostat SDG Monitoring Report 2022** was published in May 2022
  - **European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils Network (EEAC Network) Annual Conference** on 14-15 September 2022 in Helsinki

## **Announcements from the ESDN**

### **7<sup>th</sup> Peer Learning Platform**

**“Voluntary National Reviews: Challenges, Successes and Lessons Learned”**

The 7<sup>th</sup> Peer Learning Platform was held on 14 June 2022 in Brussels, Belgium on “**Voluntary National Reviews: Challenges, Successes and Lessons Learned**”. It was organized by the ESDN and the European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils Network (EEAC Network) at the Permanent Representation of Romania to the EU.

For more information on the results of the Peer Learning Platform, please visit the ESDN website, where you can download the [Platform Report](#). All Peer Learning Platforms take place under the Chatham House Rule, so no names were used.

## **ESDN Youth Workshop 2022**

### **3rd ESDN Youth Workshop on 2-3 September 2022 in Berlin**

Following up on the successful Youth Workshops in 2020 and 2021, the ESDN is preparing the **ESDN Youth Workshop 2022** as a hybrid meeting on **2-3 September** in Berlin. Youth delegates from all over Europe will be invited to be part of the informal **mutual learning** platform of the ESDN to discuss their views on sustainable development and to learn about **policy processes**.

We will keep you informed via email and the [ESDN Website](#).

## **European Sustainable Development Week 2022**

### **Event Registration open until 08 October 2022**

The European Sustainable Development Week will take place this year from **18 September – 08 October**, with the core of the Week taking place 20 September – 26 September! The ESDW is a European-wide initiative to stimulate and make visible activities, projects and events that promote sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ESDW 2022 hopes to build on last year’s success of 5,440 events in 28 European countries with over 10 million participants.

**Event registration** on the [ESDW website](#) is open in until **08 October 2022!** Register your events and show Europe and the world what you are doing to help achieve the SDGs. We are looking forward to your engagement and interesting events this year!

So far, the **ESDW 2022 has over 300 events that are taking place in 14 countries!**

## **ESDN Conference 2022**

**“Europe’s Position as Leading Change Agent against the Triple Planetary Crisis – Climate Change, Biodiversity Loss and Pollution” on 4-5 October 2022 in Bucharest**

We will be organizing our Conference 2022 in cooperation with the Romanian Government Office's Department for Sustainable Development.

We will keep you informed regarding further developments via email and the [ESDN website](#).

## **20<sup>th</sup> ESDN Workshop:**

### **SDGs and Human Rights – 23 November 2022 (virtual)**

We will organize our 20<sup>th</sup> Workshop in cooperation with the Luxembourgish Ministries of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development and for Foreign and European Affairs **on 23 November 2022** on “SDGs and Human Rights”.

We will keep you informed regarding further developments via email and the [ESDN website](#).

## **ESDN *Spotlight* Videos Published**

### **“Sustainable Development in the Business Sector”**

Can companies be a driver for sustainable change? And if so, how?

Jan Noeterdame, Co-Founder of CSR Europe, is certain that the key is to gain critical mass, both of passionate people within a company and of companies that are passionate about sustainable development.

In this Spotlight Video, he also explains the important role that industry associations play in the sustainable transition in Europe and how CSR Europe is supporting their projects for sustainability.

CSR Europe is the leading European Business Network for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility (CSR). It supports businesses and industry sectors in their transformation and collaboration towards practical solutions and sustainable growth.

Visit the [ESDN website](#) and watch the full interview there.

### **“Integrating the SDGs into National Recovery and Resilience Plans”**

“This opportunity is not one that we can afford to miss!” says Ricardo Rio, Mayor of Braga (Portugal) and Rapporteur at the European Committee of the Regions in this Spotlight Video. At this critical point in time, coming out of the pandemic, resilience and sustainability need to be included in all recovery efforts!

He also highlights the importance of involving local and regional authorities in sustainable development. He reveals the results of a Committee of the Regions study on local involvement and the role of SDGs in National Recovery and Resilience Plans.

Visit the [ESDN website](#) and watch the full interview there.

# News on Sustainable Development Governance from European Countries

## Belgium:

### **Inspirational guide on SDG monitoring and reporting for local governments**

The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) recently developed an [inspirational guide on SDG monitoring and reporting for local governments](#). The guide is based on discussions with a working group of Flemish municipalities and on international experiences. The guide provides information on the added value of SDG monitoring and reporting, on how to effectively integrate SDG monitoring and reporting throughout the local policy cycle, how to determine SDG indicators and targets, and useful data sources. Although the primary target audience are Flemish municipalities, the guide contains a lot of useful information and ideas for local governments worldwide.

## Hungary:

### **Newly elected Hungarian government reorganised the responsibilities of sustainability issues**

The newly formed Ministry of Technology and Industry's [TIM] Minister prepares the government's sustainable development strategy and coordinates the implementation of government strategies for sustainable development, as well. Also, the Minister represents the Hungarian Government in international organizations for sustainable development.

According to the government decree 182/2022 (V.24.) about the (new) government's responsibilities, the newly formed Ministry of Technology and Industry [TIM] is responsible for (among others):

- energy policy;
- environmental protection;
- the transition to a circular economy and product value chain management; and
- the coordination of sustainable development tasks in the circular economy and waste management.

On 10 May 2022, the new President of Hungary was also elected. Mrs. Katalin Novak's focus areas are on family friendly values and young talents. With the launch of the new President's office, the office of the President of the Republic has been restructured and the former independent Environmental Sustainability Directorate is no longer in place.

## Netherlands:

### Preparing a second Voluntary National Review for the High Level Political Forum

The Kingdom of the Netherlands presented its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) in July this year during the yearly United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) about the SDGs. The VNR has been produced through close cooperation of the four countries belonging to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The report will have a joint introduction followed by four separate chapters of each country illustrating the progress and ambitions of the Kingdom of the Netherlands regarding the SDGs since the presentation of the first VNR in 2017. For the data of the Netherlands, six dialogues with stakeholders were held, in which different SDGs were discussed. These dialogues were based on the six transitions as formulated by the UN Global Sustainable Development Report from 2019.

The Netherlands' full report can be found [here](#).

## Switzerland:

### Adoption of the new Swiss VNR and the new web portal

Switzerland is well positioned to implement the 2030 Agenda. It is highly competitive and can rely on high-quality education and healthcare systems and well developed infrastructure. Since its last country report four years ago, there have been positive developments, including the achievement of marriage equality and an increase in the percentage of women in the Federal Assembly and in cantonal parliaments.

Despite this progress, Switzerland's domestic and foreign policies are not well enough aligned to the SDGs. To achieve all the goals by 2030, significant action and coordination are needed, particularly in the areas that the Federal Council has identified as priority themes in its Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 (SDS 2030): sustainable consumption and production, climate, energy and biodiversity, and equal opportunities and social cohesion.

The focus for Switzerland is on challenges such as reducing resource and energy consumption (high in this country per person in international and European comparison), reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving biodiversity, and expanding renewable energy. In addition, Switzerland strives to ensure equal opportunities for all and to promote each individual's empowerment. It has set itself the goal of achieving de facto gender equality. Civil society, the private and financial sectors, educators, researchers and innovators, joined by the cantons and communes, can contribute substantially to implementing measures aimed at achieving the goals.

Switzerland's VNR can be found [here](#). Furthermore, a statistical annex to the VNR can be found [here](#).

In addition to the country report, the new [SDGital2030.ch website](https://www.sdgital2030.ch) details the current status of Switzerland's implementation of the 2030 Agenda. From 4 May 2022, assessments of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets will also be published there. These assessments are the result of the stocktaking survey that

involved not only the federal government, the cantons and the communes, but also numerous actors from the private sector, the scientific community and civil society who are committed to sustainable development. They were invited to submit their assessments of Switzerland's achievement of the goals during the 2018-22 survey period and to highlight their own contributions to the global sustainability goals.

Switzerland's comprehensive digitalisation of the 2030 Agenda process was ground breaking. The new solution makes it possible to bundle the entire stocktaking work, from data collection to consultation, translation and publication, into a single, seamless process. This has created a sustainable, transparent and structured database that can be maintained and continuously updated until 2030 and beyond.

Read more about how Switzerland is integrating stakeholders and new ideas [here](#).

## News on European Governance for Sustainable Development

### Eurostat

#### **Eurostat SDG Monitoring Report 2022 was published in May 2022**

Monitoring is an essential component in realising the 2030 Agenda's vision, both globally and in the EU, by assessing and visualising the progress made so far towards the 17 SDGs. Since 2017, Eurostat has been preparing annual reports monitoring the progress towards the SDGs in the EU context. The 2022 edition of Eurostat's SDG monitoring report is the sixth report in this series, analysing the EU's progress towards the goals based on the [official EU SDG indicator set](#).

Over the most recent five-year period of available data, the EU achieved the strongest progress towards fostering peace and personal security within its territory and improving access to justice and trust in institutions (SDG 16). Significant progress was also visible for the goals on reducing poverty and social exclusion (SDG 1), on the economy and the labour market (SDG 8), on clean and affordable energy (SDG 7) and on innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9). It is important to note that in the area of poverty (SDG 1), available data partly refer to the period up to 2019 only and therefore do not yet fully take into account the pandemic's impacts. In contrast, the favourable assessment of SDG 7 is strongly influenced by a remarkable reduction in energy consumption in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 related restrictions on public life and lower economic activity. The EU has also achieved good progress towards the goals on health and well-being (SDG 3), life below water (SDG 14) and gender equality (SDG 5). Progress towards the remaining goals was markedly slower, with few goals even experiencing slightly unsustainable overall trends over the most recent five-year period of available data.

The complete SDG monitoring report is available on the [Eurostat website](#).

## EEAC Annual Conference

### **“The Critical Decade of Action: Mobilising Sustainability Transformation in Europe” 14-15 September 2022 in Helsinki**

This year, the Annual Conference of the [EEAC Network](#) – entitled: “*The Critical Decade of Action: Mobilising Sustainability Transformation in Europe*” will take place in Helsinki on September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 and will be hosted by Finland’s three independent science panels, the Finnish Expert Panel for Sustainable Development, the Finnish Climate Change Panel and the Finnish Nature Panel.

The two-day conference brings together experts, particularly from academia and government, to discuss the next steps for facilitating the much-needed transformation in the critical decade of action. The conference will hear interesting keynote speeches and engage in sessions, including on the following themes:

- Medium-term actions needed against the biodiversity crisis;
- Joining forces for sustainability transformation; and
- Europe’s global responsibility in climate change.

Find our more [here](#).