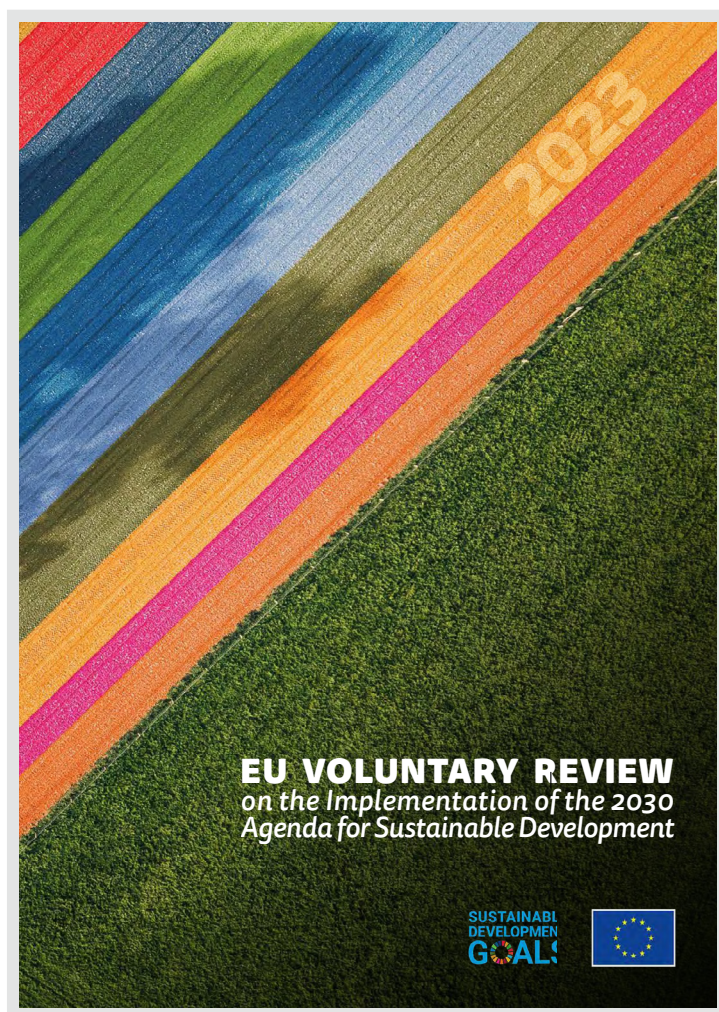


Sustainable Development Goals Tracker

EU 2023

Voluntary National Review





European Union VNR 2023 *Report*



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European Union

2023

Voluntary National Review (VNR)



Introduction

The European Union's (EU) 2023 Voluntary National Review (VNR) marks a historic milestone as the first supranational assessment presented to the High-Level Political Forum, reflecting the shared commitment of **27** Member States and **447 million** citizens to the **2030 Agenda** for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Produced against the backdrop of a complex “*poly-crisis*” shaped by the ongoing socio-economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the review highlights how the von der Leyen Commission has embedded the SDGs at the core of its political programme through a comprehensive “*whole-of-government*” approach. It outlines the EU's use of the European Green Deal, the Global Gateway, legislative frameworks, and major financial instruments such as NextGenerationEU and the European Semester to translate ambition into systemic action, advancing climate neutrality alongside social fairness and economic resilience (United Nations, 2023a; United Nations, 2023b).



VNR Framework Approach to assess EU's Progress Towards the 2030 Agenda

A VNR is a self-assessment process through which the United Nations (UN) Member States review and report on their progress in implementing the **2030 Agenda** for Sustainable Development and its **17 SDGs**. These reviews are voluntary, country-led, and inclusive, allowing each nation to share experiences, identify challenges, and highlight best practices.

VNRs are essential because they promote accountability and transparency in the implementation of the SDGs, allowing countries to demonstrate their commitment and progress openly. They help governments track progress, identify gaps, and strengthen policies, ensuring that national development strategies remain aligned with the **2030 Agenda**. Moreover, VNRs facilitate knowledge sharing among nations by enabling the exchange of experiences, innovations, and lessons learned. They also encourage multi-stakeholder participation, bringing together government institutions, civil society, the private sector, and academia in a collaborative effort to advance sustainable development. Finally, the VNRs serve as the foundation for the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) reviews, providing evidence-based insights that guide global discussions on accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Objectives of VNRs

- Assess a country's progress towards achieving the SDGs.
- Identify key challenges and barriers to implementation.
- Share lessons learned and innovative approaches.
- Mobilise support, partnerships, and policy coherence for sustainable development.

Methodology to Measure VNRs Progress

VNRs assess development performance using quantitative and qualitative data, aligning national priorities with SDGs targets. Countries use available indicators and national statistics to evaluate whether they are:

- Achieved, on-track, moderately off-track, seriously off-track or no progress.
- Facing data gaps or methodological challenges.

Due to incomplete or inconsistent data, some assessments rely on proxy indicators or qualitative descriptions of progress. Each SDG is rated on a **0–5 scale** to measure EU's progress towards the **2030 Agenda**.

- 0 – No Progress:** No measurable progress or data available.
- 1 – Severely Off-Track:** Very little advancement; major gaps persist.
- 2 – Off-Track:** Limited progress with minimal improvement.
- 3 – Moderately Off-Track:** Some progress achieved, but key challenges remain.
- 4 – On-Track:** Noticeable progress made; close to achieving the target.
- 5 – Achieved:** Goal fully met with sustained performance and monitoring in place.

This scale helps to quantify EU's SDGs performance, showing where strong progress exists and where further policy actions are needed. VNRs are vital tools for evaluating and accelerating progress towards the **2030 Agenda**. They enable countries to reflect on achievements, recognise shortcomings, and strengthen collective action for a more sustainable and equitable world.

Explanation of Analysis (Applied to European Union SDG Report)

This analysis applies the *VNR framework* to EU's SDG Report. Initially, the report was processed using an AI tool to extract, summarise, and categorise data related to the **17 SDGs**. The AI provided preliminary insights into EU's progress, challenges, and measurable indicators. Following the AI review, the information was cross-verified by two independent human experts to ensure factual accuracy, contextual relevance, and alignment with the official UN SDG indicators. This validation step strengthened the reliability of the data interpretation.

Finally, a team of SDG experts conducted an in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis to identify key challenges, potential solutions, and policy-level recommendations. The comprehensive approach, integrating AI-driven insights with expert validation, provides a balanced, evidence-based assessment of EU's progress towards achieving economic growth, highlighting strategic areas for improvement, innovation, and sustainability.

Overall Progress

Table 1 presents EU's progress across the **17 SDGs**, with ratings assigned to each goal based on the report's findings. The ratings reflect the extent of progress made, highlight areas where challenges have been addressed, and identify those that remain unresolved.

Table 1. SDG Progress Scoring

Score: 4		1 NO POVERTY
Justification	- Poverty undermines people's lives, weakens social inclusion and cohesion, and diminishes overall wellbeing. - Without effective education, healthcare, labour market and social protection systems, the risk of poverty is often transferred from one generation to the next, leading to lower productivity and hindering inclusive and sustainable growth. - Achieving SDG 1 in the EU context therefore requires addressing the multidimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion, including income poverty, social deprivation, labour market participation and the fulfilment of basic housing needs.	
Challenges	- Despite progress, significant challenges persist in reducing poverty and social exclusion. Children remain disproportionately affected, with many still living in poor households across the EU. - Recent rises in energy and food prices—further aggravated by the war in Ukraine—have placed additional strain on low-income households, which spend a higher proportion of their disposable income on essential goods. - These pressures risk reversing previous gains and deepening inequalities.	
Progress/Solutions	- The EU has made notable progress in reducing poverty and social exclusion between 2015 and 2020, supported by strong public intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic. - By 2021, 95.4 million people (21.7% of the EU population) were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, down from 104.9 million (24.0%) in 2015. - The number of children at risk also fell, from 22.3 million in 2015 to 19.6 million in 2021. - In-work poverty decreased, with the rate falling from 9.7% in 2015 to 8.9% in 2021. - Improvements were also seen in housing indicators, including reductions in housing cost overburden and severe housing deprivation. - Key EU initiatives—such as the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan, the European Child Guarantee, and the Directive on adequate minimum wages—are helping to address structural drivers of poverty, break intergenerational disadvantage and support fair working conditions. - Externally, the EU supports poverty eradication and social protection in partner countries through multiannual programmes, Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) and investments under the Global Gateway.	

Unsolved Challenges	- Despite current progress suggesting that the EU-wide poverty reduction target may be within reach, meeting the specific goal of lifting at least 5 million children out of poverty will require an accelerated pace of improvement. - Citizens have also called for stronger action to end in-work poverty, ensure fair rights for platform workers, and eliminate unpaid internships. - Further work is needed to secure reliable access to essential services and to strengthen collective agreements for solo self-employed workers. - Globally, challenges remain in building universal social protection systems, enhancing digital interoperability, and ensuring coordinated, complementary action across the EU and its Member States to support SDG 1 both internally and internationally.
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2 ZERO HUNGER



Score : 3	
Justification	- A succession of crises — including the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian war against Ukraine and the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution — has intensified pressure on global food systems, placing food security firmly at the top of the political agenda. - Although the EU remains largely self-sufficient in key agricultural products and has seen favourable production trends, significant environmental impacts and inequalities persist. - Addressing SDG 2 in the EU context therefore requires ensuring both the long-term resilience of food systems and universal access to safe, nutritious and sustainable food.
Challenges	- Despite its strong agricultural base, the EU faces notable challenges, including water stress, rising nitrate concentrations in groundwater, and the decline of farmland birds and pollinators. - Food insecurity remains a reality for 36.2 million people who cannot afford a quality meal every other day, while an estimated 10% of food available to consumers is wasted. - Unhealthy food environments contribute to increasing rates of overweight and obesity: by 2019, 16.5% of adults were obese, and one in three children aged 6–9 were overweight or obese. - These trends have significant social and economic costs, including reductions in life expectancy and pressures on national health budgets.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- The EU has introduced a broad set of initiatives to support sustainable agriculture, improve nutrition and reduce environmental impacts. - The common agricultural policy provides income stability and promotes productivity, while the Farm to Fork and biodiversity strategies set clear targets, including reducing pesticide use by 50%, cutting nutrient losses by 50%, and expanding organic farming to 25% of agricultural land by 2030. - Progress to date includes a 55.6% increase in organic farming area between 2012 and 2020, a 14% reduction in chemical pesticide risk by 2020 compared with 2015–2017, and a one-third reduction in antimicrobial sales for farmed animals by 2021. - Complementary initiatives — such as the biodiversity strategy, the EU contingency plan for food security, Solidarity Lanes for Ukraine, and measures to support farmers and consumers affected by rising input costs — further strengthen system resilience. - Externally, the EU supports sustainable agriculture and food systems through multiannual programmes, the Global Gateway strategy and targeted initiatives in Africa and beyond.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Despite ongoing efforts, the EU remains some distance from meeting several key 2030 targets, including the expansion of organic farming and the reduction of pesticide use and nutrient losses. - Persistent food insecurity, high levels of food waste and continued environmental degradation highlight the need for deeper systemic change. - The Commission's forthcoming proposals — including a legislative framework for sustainable food systems, EU-level food waste targets, revised marketing standards and a new soil health law — will be crucial but require strong political will and coordinated implementation across Member States. - Globally, the EU must continue strengthening food system resilience while providing short-term humanitarian support to the most vulnerable, ensuring that long-term sustainability and immediate needs are addressed in parallel.



Score: 3

<i>Justification</i>	- Ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all remains a central EU priority, reflected in a wide range of SDG 3 targets that address maternal and child health, communicable and non-communicable diseases, universal health coverage, and the reduction of deaths linked to air pollution and road accidents. - Progress had been made across many of these areas, yet the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted healthcare systems, delayed diagnoses and treatments, and led to a decline in life expectancy. - Mental health problems also increased substantially, compounded by ongoing global crises. - Achieving SDG 3 therefore requires sustained and coordinated efforts to strengthen prevention, treatment, and resilience across health systems.
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Challenges	- The pandemic exacerbated pre-existing pressures, fuelling rises in mental health issues, unhealthy lifestyles and non-communicable diseases. - By 2022, 84 million Europeans were affected by mental health problems, and depression among young people had more than doubled. - Nearly half of young Europeans reported unmet needs for mental healthcare. - Lifestyle-related risk factors, including poor diet and physical inactivity, have contributed to growing obesity rates, which negatively affect life expectancy and strain health budgets. - Although deaths from HIV, tuberculosis and hepatitis have fallen overall, significant inequalities persist across the EU in prevention and care, and disrupted services risk reversing earlier gains.
Progress/ Solutions	- To address these challenges, the EU has launched several major initiatives. - Europe's Beating Cancer Plan (2021), supported by EUR 4 billion through EU4 Health, aims to improve prevention, early detection and treatment, and works alongside the Horizon Europe Cancer Mission. - The Healthier Together initiative addresses key non-communicable diseases, while updated legislation strengthens cross-border health threat preparedness, including surveillance of HIV, viral hepatitis and tuberculosis. - Smoking prevalence has declined from 31% in 2006 to 25% in 2020, supported by EU tobacco legislation and alignment with WHO standards. - Progress has also been made in reducing air pollution impacts under the Zero Pollution Action Plan, and road deaths have fallen by 36% between 2010 and 2020, aided by EU-wide safety frameworks. - Continued actions on prevention, health system resilience and integrated care are central to meeting SDG 3 targets.
Unsolved Challenges	- Preventable mortality rose by 8.2% between 2015 and 2020, and mortality linked to viral hepatitis may increase without stronger intervention. - Mental health services remain under severe strain, and inequities across Member States hinder consistent progress on communicable disease control. - The EU fell short of its 2020 road safety goal, and early indications suggest that the pace of improvement remains insufficient to meet the 2030 target. - Air pollution reductions are promising but still leave a high health burden, necessitating further alignment with WHO guidelines. - Achieving SDG 3 will require sustained investment, political commitment and cross-sectoral action to ensure all Europeans can benefit from robust, accessible and resilient health systems.

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



Score: 4

Justification	- A skilled and culturally literate workforce is essential for a prosperous and inclusive economy, making quality, accessible and equitable education central to achieving SDG 4. - In the EU, the focus lies on strengthening basic skills, early childhood education and care, reducing early school leaving, expanding tertiary education, and improving adult learning and digital competences. - While the EU has made substantial progress towards many of its 2030 targets—particularly in early childhood education, reducing early school leaving and increasing tertiary attainment—persistent gaps in adult learning, digital skills and foundational competences continue to hinder inclusive growth and social participation.
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Challenges	- Developments since 2015 show uneven progress, with adult participation in learning and basic digital skills stagnating and one in five young Europeans still lacking adequate reading, mathematics or science competences. - The share of low-achieving 15-year-olds increased between 2015 and 2018 across all core subjects, reversing previous improvements and highlighting entrenched inequalities. - The COVID-19 pandemic further deepened socio-economic divides, as school closures disproportionately affected children and young people from disadvantaged, migrant or minority ethnic backgrounds, amplifying gaps in access to quality education and learning outcomes.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has introduced a comprehensive set of initiatives to accelerate progress towards SDG 4, including the European Skills Agenda (2020), the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, and the strategic framework for the European Education Area 2021–2030. - Key measures, such as the European Year of Skills (2023–2024) and the Council Resolution on adult learning (2021–2030), aim to boost lifelong learning, upskilling and reskilling, particularly in support of the green and digital transitions. - The EU also promotes stronger mobility opportunities for learners, enhances STEM education—particularly for women—and supports inclusive training pathways. - Externally, through the Global Gateway and TEIs, the EU is scaling up support for education systems in partner countries, including teacher development, youth mobility and digital and vocational skills programmes.
Unsolved Challenges	- Adult participation in training still falls far short of the 60% annual target for 2030, and digital skills remain significantly below the ambition of 80% basic proficiency. - The persistently high share of low achievers among 15-year-olds continues to pose a structural challenge, compounded by widening educational inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic. - Ensuring that policies effectively reach vulnerable and disadvantaged groups remains essential, and progress must accelerate significantly if the EU is to build an inclusive, future-ready education and skills landscape by 2030.

Score: 4		5 GENDER EQUALITY
Justification	- Achieving gender equality is a core EU priority and a fundamental value grounded in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. - However, the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 crisis have persisted, with women's rights organisations reporting significant increases in violence against women from the outset of the pandemic. - Longstanding barriers to women's full participation in the labour market also remain, with women disproportionately represented in lower-paid sectors, restricted in career choices by gender stereotypes and care responsibilities, and facing persistent employment, pay and pension gaps. - Women likewise remain underrepresented in political and economic decision-making, with the share of seats held by women in national parliaments falling from 33.1% in 2021 to 32.5% in 2022, although representation on corporate boards has steadily improved.	

Challenges	- Despite some progress, structural inequalities continue to impede the achievement of SDG 5 across the EU. - The gender employment gap stood at 10.6% in 2022, mirroring the gender pay gap of 12.7% in 2021 and contributing to a gender pension gap of 27.1%. - Women remain significantly underrepresented in digital sectors, accounting for only 19% of ICT specialists and one in three STEM graduates, undermining inclusive participation in Europe's digital transformation. - Gender-based violence remains widespread, including in online spaces, and women continue to face barriers to leadership in both public and private spheres. Overall, the pace of change is insufficient to meet 2030 ambitions.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has advanced several major legislative and policy initiatives that have the potential to be transformative for gender equality. - The 2020–2025 Gender Equality Strategy provides the overarching framework, supported by the Commission's task force on equality and a gender-balanced College of Commissioners. - Key measures include the proposed directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence (2022), the Digital Services Act (2022) to tackle illegal online content, and the Pay Transparency Directive (2023), which strengthens workers' ability to challenge pay discrimination. - Complementary efforts include gender mainstreaming across EU policies—from the European Green Deal to health and safety strategies—and targeted support for gender equality in external action through the Global Gateway, humanitarian programmes, and multiannual partnerships with third countries.
Unsolved Challenges	- Despite these developments, the EU remains some distance from achieving full gender equality. - Persistent gaps in employment, pay, pensions and digital participation underline the need for accelerated and more comprehensive action. - Women continue to face high levels of gender-based violence, and political representation has recently declined. Uneven progress in corporate leadership and continued underrepresentation in STEM fields further highlight structural obstacles. - Delivering on SDG 5 will require sustained political commitment, more effective implementation of existing initiatives, robust gender mainstreaming across all policy areas, and targeted support to ensure that no woman or girl is left behind.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



Score: 3

Justification	- Clean and accessible water is essential for human health, nature, agriculture, energy, industry and transport, and is recognised as a basic right under the European Pillar of Social Rights. - While almost all EU households have access to safe drinking water and sanitary facilities, inequalities remain between and within Member States, particularly disadvantaging rural and low-income communities. - Water quality continues to be affected by pollution from industry, households and agriculture, as well as by structural changes to waterbodies, all of which disrupt ecosystems, reduce water reuse potential and undermine EU freshwater and marine environments.
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Challenges	- Despite progress in earlier decades, EU ground and surface waters have shown little improvement over the past 10 years, and many waterbodies have yet to reach good status. - Climate change is intensifying water stress through more frequent droughts, lower summer water levels and higher surface water temperatures, causing ecological damage and economic losses of up to EUR 9 billion per year. - Water availability is declining across the continent, and water stress is increasing even in traditionally water-abundant regions of western and northern Europe, highlighting growing vulnerabilities.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has developed a comprehensive body of legislation to support SDG 6, including the Water Framework Directive, the Drinking Water Directive, the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and new rules on water reuse applicable from June 2023. - Bathing water quality remains high, with 93% of sites meeting minimum standards in 2021, and wastewater treatment now covers 82% of urban wastewater in line with EU requirements. - The EU is working to modernise water policy to address emerging pollutants and climate pressures, while promoting integrated water management, restoring aquatic ecosystems, improving efficiency across all sectors and supporting alternative water sources such as treated wastewater.
Unsolved Challenges	- Significant gaps remain in achieving good ecological and chemical status for surface waters, with only 40% and 33% meeting these thresholds in 2016. - Access to drinking water also remains limited for 23 million people, and 1.8% of the population still live in dwellings without indoor flushing toilets. - Climate change continues to exacerbate water scarcity, making it essential to improve the implementation of existing legislation, scale up water-saving measures, and ensure equitable access to safe water and sanitation for all. - Sustained action is needed to strengthen water resilience and prevent further deterioration of Europe's freshwater and marine environments.

7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



Score : 3

Justification	- Achieving a clean, secure and affordable energy system is central to the European Green Deal and to meeting SDG 7. - The EU has made solid progress since 2015, with renewable energy consumption rising from 17.5% in 2015 to 22.1% in 2020, exceeding the 20% target. - The EU also achieved its 2020 energy efficiency objective of a 20% reduction compared with 2007. - These advances contribute to climate protection, economic resilience and improved living standards, especially as the energy transition directly supports long-term sustainability and competitiveness.
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Challenges	- Despite these improvements, the EU continues to face significant challenges. Energy consumption rebounded in 2021 after the COVID-19 downturn, highlighting the need for sustained long-term efficiency gains to meet the 2030 target of at least 32.5%. - Energy poverty remains a pressing issue, with over 34 million people affected, and the energy price crisis has further exacerbated inequalities. - The Russian military aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 exposed Europe's vulnerability to external fossil fuel dependencies, reinforcing the urgency of accelerating the clean-energy transition while ensuring security of supply.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has established a comprehensive legislative framework, including the Energy Union, the Clean Energy Package, and national energy and climate plans guiding decarbonisation to 2030. - The share of EU residents unable to keep their homes adequately warm fell to 6.9% in 2021, down from 9.4% in 2012. - Recent political agreements have raised the 2030 renewable energy target to at least 42.5%, with an aim of reaching 45%, and set a binding energy-efficiency target representing an 11.7% reduction in final energy consumption. - The EU is also advancing major reforms on buildings, methane reductions, electricity market design, and the development of renewable and low-carbon gases, supported by the REPowerEU plan.
Unresolved Challenges	- Despite progress, several issues remain unresolved. Energy consumption is still too high to guarantee achievement of the 2030 efficiency targets, and energy poverty continues to affect millions, especially vulnerable households. - Much stronger investment and implementation efforts are required to meet the ambition of zero-emission buildings by 2050 and to ensure a just transition across all regions. - Achieving full energy independence from Russian fossil fuels and scaling up renewable deployment at the required pace remain substantial challenges, and continued global cooperation will be needed to ensure the successful delivery of SDG 7 both within and beyond the EU.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Score : 4

Justification	- Achieving sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth is central to the EU's ambition to build a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy that reaches climate neutrality by 2050 while ensuring that no person or region is left behind. - Between 2014 and 2019, the EU experienced strong economic expansion, creating over 14.5 million jobs, and by 2022 the employment rate had risen to a record 74.6%. - Although the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily halted progress in 2020, Europe's recovery plan helped the economy rebound sharply in 2021 and 2022, supporting job creation and reinforcing the EU's commitment to an economy that works for people.
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Challenges	- Inflationary pressures, tighter financial conditions and the continuing Russian war of aggression against Ukraine weigh heavily on economic prospects. - GDP growth is estimated at 3.5% in 2022 and projected to slow to 0.8% in 2023 and 1.6% in 2024, with employment growth expected to stagnate. - Long-standing challenges remain regarding the labour-market participation of women, young and older workers, people with a migrant or minority ethnic background, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, while labour and skills shortages have exceeded pre-pandemic levels. - Addressing in-work poverty through adequate minimum wages also remains a critical concern.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has advanced a broad set of initiatives to promote decent work, sustainable growth and social inclusion. - The European Green Deal and the European Pillar of Social Rights action plan provide the strategic framework for a just and inclusive transition, supported by targets such as achieving a 78% employment rate and reducing the share of not in education, employment or training (NEET) to below 9% by 2030. - Key legislative measures include the Directive on adequate minimum wages adopted in October 2022, strengthened Youth Guarantee, and initiatives supporting long-term unemployed people and improving working conditions. - The European Semester continues to integrate the SDGs, while the EU's comprehensive economic governance reform launched in 2023 aims to strengthen debt sustainability and promote green and digital investments. - Efforts to deepen the capital markets and banking unions also support more resilient and equitable economic growth.
Unsolved Challenges	- Employment growth is projected to stagnate, and inequalities in labour-market participation remain substantial. - Young people continue to face barriers, with NEET levels rising to 11.7% in 2022, and many regions still struggle with demographic decline and skills shortages. - Further progress is needed to ensure quality jobs, strengthen social protection, and support businesses through the twin green and digital transitions. - Continued international cooperation, including through the Global Gateway strategy and TEIs, will also be essential to advance sustainable growth and decent work beyond the EU.



Score: 5

Justification	- Implementing SDG 9 is essential to strengthening the EU's industrial base, enhancing innovation and ensuring resilient, sustainable infrastructure. - Between 2015 and 2022, the EU faced multiple shocks — from the COVID-19 pandemic to geopolitical tensions — which exposed vulnerabilities in supply chains and industrial capacity. - Despite these pressures, the EU's commitment to open strategic autonomy helped maintain stability. - Industrial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have decreased, but progress remains too slow to align with the EU objective of reducing emissions by at least 55% by 2030. - Research and development continue to be a critical pillar, though R&D investment still varies significantly across Member States, ranging from 0.5% to 3.5% of GDP in 2020, with only seven countries meeting their 2020 targets.
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Challenges	- The resilience of EU infrastructure and industry has been repeatedly tested by environmental, health and geopolitical crises. - Supply and value chain disruptions remain a central concern in an increasingly unstable international context. - Transport systems were severely affected by the pandemic, hindering progress towards milestones such as doubling high-speed rail traffic by 2030. - Furthermore, industrial transformations must be carried out while ensuring environmental compliance and maintaining free movement within the internal market. - R&D intensity remains uneven across Member States, risking widening innovation gaps. Although EU innovation performance improved by 9.9% between 2015 and 2022, structural barriers persist in scaling new technologies.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has responded with a comprehensive twin green and digital transition agenda supported by multiple policies. - The “<i>Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy</i>” sets clear goals for sustainable transport, while Horizon Europe has allocated 37.2% of its 2021/22 budget — and over 42% of the 2023–2024 programme — to climate action. - Major legislative proposals including the EU Taxonomy, the Net-Zero Industry Act and the EU Critical Raw Materials Act aim to steer investment towards clean technologies and secure supply chains. - The New European Innovation Agenda further supports start-ups, scale-ups, regulatory sandboxes and the development of regional innovation valleys. - Reforms to textile regulations, waste rules and microplastics reduction also contribute to more resilient and sustainable industrial ecosystems.
Unsolved Challenges	- Many Member States continue to lag behind in meeting R&D investment targets, limiting the EU’s capacity to remain globally competitive. - Transport infrastructure development under the Trans-European Transport Network still depends on substantial funding and coordinated implementation to reach the 2030 and 2050 goals. - Industrial emissions reductions must accelerate to keep climate ambitions on track, and supply chain vulnerabilities persist in critical raw materials. - Globally, the successful implementation of the Global Gateway strategy — including major digital and transport projects — will require sustained partnerships, long-term funding and effective coordination to deliver tangible progress towards SDG 9.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Score: 3

Justification	- Addressing various forms of inequalities is a fundamental part of combating poverty, enhancing social cohesion, and fulfilling human rights. - Achieving SDG 10 within the EU context requires tackling disparities both within and between Member States, as well as promoting migration and social inclusion. - While EU countries have shown long-term convergence in GDP and income, northern and western Member States continue to have higher gross disposable income per capita compared with eastern and southern countries. - Regional growth remains uneven, with several areas, particularly in southern Europe, at risk of falling into “<i>development traps</i>.” Reducing inequalities is therefore crucial to ensure equitable opportunities and well-being across the Union.
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Challenges	- Income inequality within countries, which had been decreasing between 2015 and 2019, rose again in 2020, with the top 20% of earners receiving almost five times the income of the lowest 20%. - Regional disparities remain, especially in rural areas with limited access to services, weaker labour markets, and educational deficits. - Women continue to face a gender pay gap of 12.7% in 2021 and bear disproportionate care responsibilities, while migrants' labour market participation has been disproportionately affected. - Recent energy and food price increases, exacerbated by the Ukraine war, have hit the poorest households hardest, threatening progress on social cohesion.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has implemented a broad range of policies to reduce inequalities. - The European Semester coordinates economic and employment policies, while the European Pillar of Social Rights sets out 20 principles to promote fair labour markets, social protection, and upward convergence among Member States. - Initiatives such as the Disability Employment Package, European Disability Card, and Accessible EU resource centre support the inclusion of persons with disabilities. - The 2021–2027 Cohesion Policy has narrowed the urban–rural poverty gap from 3.1% in 2015 to 0.6% in 2021 and reduced gross household income variation by 3.8% between 2015 and 2020. - Additional efforts include supporting regions in development traps, addressing demographic changes, and promoting sustainable, digital, and resilient industry. - EU-wide migration initiatives, social protection programmes, and the Global Gateway strategy further contribute to inclusive growth and poverty reduction.
Unsolved Challenges	- The midterm effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty and inequality are still uncertain, with vulnerable groups, including women and migrants, disproportionately affected. - Persistent north–south and west–east divides continue to influence GDP per capita and household income. - The ongoing twin transitions, demographic challenges, and geopolitical tensions may exacerbate inequalities if not carefully managed. - Furthermore, regions in development traps and rural areas remain particularly vulnerable, requiring continued targeted support and monitoring to prevent widening disparities.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Score: 3

Justification	- European cities and communities offer substantial opportunities for employment, economic activity, and cultural engagement. - At the same time, many inhabitants face environmental and social challenges, including housing shortages, pollution, noise, waste management, and crime. - Cities are home to almost 75% of EU citizens and account for more than 70% of CO₂ emissions, highlighting their crucial role in achieving sustainable urbanisation. - The EU supports cities through funding, capacity-building, and knowledge sharing to ensure inclusive urban development, territorial cohesion, and progress towards SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities.
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Challenges	- In 2020, 4.3% of the EU population experienced severe housing deprivation, while 7.8% were overburdened by housing costs, reflecting ongoing affordability issues. - Urban road safety, though improving, remains a concern, with around 20,000 fatalities and up to six times as many serious injuries each year; 70% of urban road deaths involve vulnerable users. - Noise disturbance affects 77 million people, and harassment in public spaces was reported by 29% of EU residents. - Cities also face the dual challenge of climate adaptation and energy transition, with low rates of deep energy renovation and increasing waste generation, despite progress in recycling.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has implemented a range of initiatives to address these challenges. Housing deprivation has decreased since 2015, and recycling rates of municipal waste have increased from 27.3% in 2000 to 49.6% in 2021. - Sustainable mobility is being promoted, with 3.39 million battery-electric vehicles and over 4,000 hydrogen fuel cell vehicles registered in 2022. - Urban renovation efforts are underway, although deep energy renovations currently cover only 0.2% of buildings per year. - Programmes such as SAFE, REPowerEU, the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative, and the Renovation Wave for Europe support vulnerable households, promote renewable energy, and foster sustainable urban infrastructure. - The EU also supports global urban development through TEIs in countries including Romania, Germany, Bangladesh, Chile, India, and South Africa.
Unsolved Challenges	- Noise and pollution continue to affect millions of urban residents, and urban road safety improvements are slowing. - Housing affordability and deep energy renovation rates remain low, while climate resilience and adaptation require accelerated action. - Cities must transition to sustainable mobility, implement circular economy practices, and address social vulnerabilities. - Furthermore, continued engagement with local stakeholders and application of the SDGs at the municipal level are essential to ensure no one and no place is left behind. - The ongoing global deployment of urban initiatives, such as through Global Gateway, is critical to complement EU efforts and achieve broader SDG 11 targets.



Score: 3

Justification	- Europe's high quality of life has been built on increases in income, production, and consumption, which have historically relied on extensive resource extraction and processing, generating significant environmental impacts. - Buildings alone account for around 50% of resource extraction, 40% of energy consumption, more than 30% of the EU's total waste, and 36% of GHG emissions. - Achieving SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production is therefore essential to reduce environmental pressures, support climate action, protect biodiversity, and ensure sustainable water management. - Sustainable consumption and circularity are also key to decoupling economic growth from resource use and enhancing resilience to future crises.
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Challenges	- Hazardous chemical consumption has increased since 2015, and food systems remain unsustainable, with EU agriculture contributing 10.3% of the EU's GHG emissions. - Nearly 59 million tonnes of food waste are generated annually, equivalent to 131 kg per inhabitant, with an estimated market value of EUR 132 billion. - Waste generation remains high, with 2,153 million tonnes produced in 2020 (4.8 tonnes per capita), and plastic packaging recycling is still only 38%, with absolute amounts of waste increasing by 23% from 2010 to 2020. - The EU consumption footprint continues to transgress planetary boundaries in several impact categories.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has implemented multiple measures to promote circularity and sustainable production. - The Circular Economy Action Plan (2020) encourages sustainable consumption, waste prevention, and resource efficiency. Since 2015, the EU material footprint has decreased by 2% to 13.7 tonnes per capita in 2020, while the circular material use rate reached 11.7% in 2021. - Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) collection increased from 3.0 to 4.7 million tonnes between 2012 and 2020, with recycling and preparation for reuse rising by over 61%. - Food waste reduction, textile circularity, and microplastic management are targeted under upcoming legislation, while international initiatives, including Team Europe projects and Global Gateway investments, support sustainable production and consumption globally.
Unsolved Challenges	- Food waste reduction is not yet sufficient to meet the global SDG 12 target of halving waste by 2030. - Deep structural changes are required to reduce the EU's consumption footprint and ensure widespread adoption of circular practices. - Hazardous chemical use continues to rise, and reliance on primary raw materials for renewables and e-mobility poses future sustainability risks. - Continued coordination between the EU, Member States, and global partners will be essential to accelerate circularity, reduce environmental impacts, and ensure long-term sustainable production and consumption patterns.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



Score: 3	
Justification	- Through the European Green Deal, the EU is taking decisive action on SDG 13, committing to climate neutrality by 2050 and a reduction of net GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. - The EU and its Member States have already met their 2020 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) commitment to reduce emissions by 20% compared with 1990, achieving a 32% reduction in total GHG emissions, excluding LULUCF and including international aviation. - Climate action is central not only for environmental sustainability but also for economic resilience, energy security, and global leadership in mitigating climate risks.

Challenges	- Emissions from buildings, road transport, and certain industrial sectors continue to require accelerated reductions to meet the 2030 target. - The net removals by the land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector have declined in recent years, with 230 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent removed in 2021, falling short of the 2030 target of 310 million tonnes. - The COVID-19 pandemic and the energy crisis have led to temporary increases in EU ETS emissions, highlighting the need for faster adoption of renewable energy, alternative fuels, and sustainable practices across all sectors.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has implemented comprehensive measures to support the green transition. The Fit for 55 Package, adopted in July 2021, targets industry, transport, buildings, land use, and the energy market. - The EU emissions trading system (ETS) has driven a 34.6% reduction in emissions from stationary installations since 2005, raising over EUR 100 billion in auction revenues for climate action. - Average CO₂ emissions from new passenger cars fell by 9.4% between 2015 and 2020, and the share of zero-emission vehicles rose from 0.4% to 5.3%. - Member States are developing 10-year national energy and climate plans, submitting progress reports every two years, while EU funds and instruments, including the Sustainable Finance Action Plan and REPowerEU, support the transition at national and local levels. - Internationally, Global Gateway and TEIs support partner countries on climate adaptation, renewable energy, sustainable transport, and resilient agriculture.
Unsolved Challenges	- LULUCF net removals are below target, zero-emission vehicle uptake must accelerate, and all sectors need faster emission reductions. - The energy and food crises triggered by geopolitical shocks, particularly the war in Ukraine, underline the urgent need for renewable energy deployment and energy resilience. - Globally, the EU aims to enhance climate finance, implement adaptation measures, and support partner countries in meeting their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), yet the collective global goal of mobilising USD 100 billion annually remains unmet. - Continued coordinated action is essential to ensure both domestic and international climate objectives are achieved.



Score: 3

Justification	- SDG 14 underpins the EU's Ocean policy, guiding efforts to achieve a sustainable blue economy, protect marine biodiversity, and ensure responsible fisheries management. - The EU has exceeded the target for marine protected areas (MPAs), with 12% of EU waters designated, and pursues a zero-tolerance approach to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. - Sustainable fishing practices are progressing in the North-East Atlantic and Baltic Sea, and the renewed agenda on international ocean governance supports global ocean sustainability, reinforcing the EU's commitment to preserving marine resources.
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Challenges	- Good environmental status, as defined by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, has not yet been achieved. - Pollution remains high: 46% of European coastal waters suffer from eutrophication, marine litter is widespread, and underwater noise more than doubled between 2014 and 2019. - Biodiversity loss persists across seabed habitats, and many fish stocks in the Mediterranean and Black Seas remain overfished. - Nutrient management, pesticide use, and chemical contamination continue to pose threats to marine ecosystems.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has put in place comprehensive legislation and initiatives to tackle these challenges. - Key instruments include the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive, Birds and Habitats Directives, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and the Common Fisheries Policy. - Marine restoration, fisheries management, energy transition in aquaculture, and reductions in nutrient losses and chemical pesticide use are supported through targeted actions. - In 2022, guidance for designating additional protected areas was adopted, and integrated nutrient management, microplastics mitigation, and enhanced ocean observation are planned for 2023. - Internationally, the Global Gateway strategy and TEIs support sustainable marine and coastal resource management in partner countries.
Unsolved Challenges	- Only 1% of EU seas are strictly protected, and many MPAs lack effective management. - Good environmental status has not been attained, and overfishing persists in several regions. - Nutrient and chemical pollution remain a concern, and marine litter continues to threaten ecosystems. - The EU will need to accelerate restoration, enhance monitoring, implement stricter protection measures, and ensure global cooperation on fisheries subsidies, marine biodiversity frameworks, and protection of areas beyond national jurisdiction to meet SDG 14 targets by 2030.

15 LIFE ON LAND



Score: 3

Justification	- Europe's biodiversity is a cornerstone of environmental sustainability, supporting ecosystem services, carbon sequestration, and food security. - Despite modest expansions in forest area and terrestrial protected areas, more than 80% of EU protected habitat types remain in poor condition, and pressures from land-use change, climate change, pollution, and invasive species continue to intensify. - Globally, the EU contributes to biodiversity protection through international frameworks such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) adopted in December 2022, which sets targets for 2030 including protection of 30% of land and water, ecosystem restoration, and reductions in invasive species, food waste, and excess nutrients.
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Challenges	- The expansion of agricultural land and urban areas since 1992 has resulted in habitat loss, while European pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, continue to decline, with one in three species showing decreasing populations. - Connectivity in forest ecosystems has decreased slightly, and primary and old-growth forests, covering only 3% of EU forest area, remain vulnerable. - Land take continues at 539 km² per year (2012–2018), while soil contamination and drought affect large areas, highlighting ongoing pressures on ecosystems.
Progress/ Solutions	- The EU has developed a comprehensive set of policies and initiatives to restore biodiversity and enhance ecosystem resilience. - The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the proposed Nature Restoration Law, the EU Soil Strategy, and the EU Pollinators Initiative set binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, plant three billion trees by 2030, and achieve land degradation neutrality. - Protected areas have increased from 19.7% to 26.4% of EU terrestrial land (2015–2021), and ecosystem accounting is being developed to monitor ecosystem condition, services, and contributions to national planning. - The EU is also advancing the implementation of international commitments and tackling invasive species and pollution risks.
Unsolved Challenges	- Only 1% of EU seas are strictly protected, and many terrestrial ecosystems are still degraded. - Pollinator decline persists, forest connectivity has decreased in certain regions, and soil contamination continues to pose risks. - Land take and drought impacts remain significant, and current restoration efforts are insufficient to meet the 2030 targets fully. - Accelerated action, stronger enforcement, and international cooperation will be required to achieve SDG 15, including effective implementation of the Global Gateway and TEIs to support biodiversity both within and beyond the EU.



Score: 4

Justification	- The EU is founded on values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, which underpin SDG 16. - These values support a society based on pluralism, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and gender equality, while promoting peace and wellbeing for EU citizens. - The EU's longstanding commitment to fundamental rights and democracy was recognised in 2012 when it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing peace, reconciliation, and human rights in Europe.
Challenges	- Despite improvements over the last decades, threats to the rule of law, corruption, and crime remain significant challenges. - Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has reintroduced the reality of conflict near EU borders. - Civic space has degraded in several Member States, a trend intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic. - Corruption persists despite the EU's comparatively high ranking, with some differences among Member States. - Trust in EU institutions, while increasing overall, faced setbacks during crisis periods, and the independence of judicial systems continues to require careful monitoring.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- The EU has strengthened its legal and institutional frameworks to promote SDG 16. - The European Rule of Law Mechanism, launched in 2020, provides annual reports and recommendations for Member States, with the 2022 report highlighting specific reforms and improvements. - Citizens' perception of judicial independence improved, with 53% rating it as 'very good' or 'fairly good' in 2022, up 3% from 2016. - Initiatives such as the European Democracy Action Plan, upgraded Have Your Say platform, and forthcoming anticorruption packages aim to bolster democratic participation, transparency, and public trust. - Externally, the EU supports partner countries through multiannual programmes and Global Gateway initiatives promoting governance, rule of law, human rights, and democracy.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Corruption, particularly in certain Member States, persists as a systemic issue, and civic space continues to be under pressure. - Judicial independence varies across countries, and crime remains a threat in some regions. - Further efforts are required to ensure full adherence to the rule of law, strengthen democratic participation, and maintain trust in institutions. - Internationally, scaling up support for partner countries and ensuring consistent implementation of programmes such as the Global Gateway are essential to meet SDG 16 targets by 2030.

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Score: 5	
<i>Justification</i>	- SDG 17 underpins the EU's commitment to global partnerships for sustainable development, as reflected in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA, 2015) and the EU Report on Investing in Sustainable Development (ISDR). - The EU, its Member States, and European development financial institutions support partner countries through financial and non-financial means of implementation. - This includes promoting domestic resource mobilisation, sustainable finance, debt sustainability, and international cooperation, ensuring that investments contribute to the achievement of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement objectives.
<i>Challenges</i>	- Progress on SDG 17 has been negatively affected since 2020 by consecutive global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated rising debt burdens and heightened the risk of debt crises in low- and middle-income countries. - Public debt levels and digital divides pose additional obstacles, and ensuring coherent policy across EU internal and external actions remains complex. - While the EU and its Member States aim to provide 0.7% of GNI as official development assistance (ODA) and 0.2% to least developed countries (LDCs) by 2030, collective ODA stood at 0.59% in 2022 and 0.11% to LDCs in 2021, indicating a gap to be closed.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- The EU has strengthened coordination and impact through a ‘Team Europe’ approach, with over 160 TEIs implemented globally. - The European Financial Architecture for Development (EFAD) and the Global Gateway strategy, launched in 2021, support green and digital transitions, sustainable infrastructure, and investment in transport, health, climate, energy, and education/research. - Connectivity has improved within the EU, with high-speed internet coverage rising from 25.2% in 2016 to 70.2% in 2021, and rural coverage increasing from 7.7% to 37.1%. - The EU continues to promote sustainable finance, green bonds, and international tax governance, including supporting the Inclusive Framework on BEPS and fighting illicit financial flows in Africa.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Despite these efforts, challenges persist in ensuring sustainable debt levels, closing the digital divide, and scaling up ODA to meet collective targets. - Policy coherence across internal and external EU actions requires further reinforcement to avoid unintended negative impacts on partner countries. Monitoring and data collection for SDG progress, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, remain areas for improvement, as does fully integrating sustainable finance practices and innovative investment mechanisms globally. - Strengthening these elements is critical to achieving SDG 17 by 2030.

Source: (United Nations, 2023a; United Nations, 2023b).

Major Challenges

- **Poly-crisis Impact:** The convergence of COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, and the energy crisis has placed significant strain on EU resources, slowing progress in areas such as poverty reduction, health, climate action, and sustainable economic growth. Recovery requires coordinated policies that address multiple crises simultaneously.
- **Spillover Effects:** The EU’s consumption and production patterns have transboundary impacts, including deforestation, overfishing, GHG emissions, and environmental pollution in partner countries. Efforts are ongoing to assess, report, and mitigate these effects through sustainable supply chains and international partnerships.
- **Inequalities:** Persistent disparities exist both within and between EU regions and social groups, affecting income, access to education, healthcare, and digital services. Addressing these inequalities is essential for social cohesion and requires the full implementation of a “*Just Transition*” framework that supports vulnerable populations.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Despite ambitious legislative frameworks such as the European Green Deal and the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the EU continues to face challenges with biodiversity loss, land and soil degradation, marine pollution, and climate adaptation. Accelerated implementation and enforcement of environmental policies are required to reverse these trends.
- **Demographic and Migration Pressures:** Aging populations, migration flows, and urbanisation are creating pressures on labour markets, social services, housing, and infrastructure. Adapting policies to meet these demographic changes is crucial for long-term social and economic sustainability.
- **Governance and Rule of Law:** Variations in governance quality, corruption, and civic participation affect the effective implementation of EU policies and SDGs. Strengthening the rule of law, transparency, and democratic accountability remains a priority.

- **Financial and Investment Gaps:** Achieving the SDGs requires mobilisation of both public and private finance. Gaps in funding, sustainable investment, and ODA commitments limit progress in areas such as climate action, infrastructure, and social development. Innovative financing mechanisms are needed to fill these gaps.
- **Digital Divide and Innovation Gaps:** Unequal access to digital infrastructure and emerging technologies threatens inclusion, competitiveness, and education outcomes. Scaling up digital connectivity, skills, and innovation capacity is essential to achieve SDG targets.
- **Health and Pandemic Preparedness:** Health crises like COVID-19 have exposed vulnerabilities in healthcare systems. Strengthening resilience, healthcare infrastructure, and public health preparedness is necessary to mitigate future risks.

Key Lessons Learned

- **Whole-of-Government Approach:** Effective implementation of the SDGs requires integrating sustainability across all policy areas, ensuring that it is mainstreamed rather than treated as a separate or isolated agenda.
- **Legal Anchoring:** Embedding SDG-related targets in legislation, such as the European Climate Law, provides legal certainty, encourages compliance, and drives both public and private investment.
- **Data Importance:** Robust monitoring and statistical reporting, notably through Eurostat, are essential to ensure transparency and credibility. However, gaps remain, particularly in capturing the EU's transboundary "*spillover*" impacts, which need to be addressed.
- **Global Interdependence:** The EU recognises that domestic sustainability is intrinsically linked to global stability. Consequently, external action, including initiatives such as the Global Gateway, forms a core component of the EU's strategy to achieve the SDGs both at home and abroad.

Notable Contribution

- **2019:** Adoption of the European Green Deal.
- **2020:** Adoption of the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Gender Equality Strategy.
- **2021:** Enactment of the European Climate Law; launch of the Global Gateway.
- **2022:** Adoption of REPowerEU to end fossil fuel dependency; launch of the Digital Decade policy programme.
- **2023:** Presentation of the first EU Voluntary Review at the UN High-Level Political Forum; adoption of the Nature Restoration Law proposal.

Recommendations

- **Accelerate Implementation:** Move from legislative adoption to the rapid implementation of the "*Fit for 55*" package to achieve the 2030 climate and energy targets.
- **Strengthen Social Cohesion:** Fully operationalise the Social Climate Fund to protect vulnerable citizens during the green transition and ensure an inclusive transition for all.
- **Enhance Policy Coherence:** Systematically assess and mitigate the negative spillover effects of EU internal policies on partner countries and external stakeholders.

- **Deepen Partnerships:** Leverage the Global Gateway to mobilise private investment and strengthen cooperation with partner countries to support sustainable development globally.
- **Improve Monitoring:** Develop better indicators for “*well-being beyond GDP*” and for spillover effects to guide future policy and track overall progress.

Conclusion

The EU’s 2023 VNR highlights a union actively pursuing sustainable development as a guiding principle in a complex and rapidly changing world. While substantial progress has been made through initiatives such as the European Green Deal and the European Semester, persistent challenges—particularly in halting biodiversity loss, addressing social inequalities, and managing economic pressures—remain. The EU’s future strategy emphasises the accelerated implementation of green and digital transitions, strengthened global partnerships, and the promotion of an inclusive, human-centred economy, signalling a continued commitment to embedding sustainability at the core of its policies and actions.

Reference

United Nations (2023a): Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2023. Available at: <https://hlpf.un.org/2023>

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The SDG Tracker (SDGT) is a global research initiative, developed under the auspices of the World Association for Sustainable Development (WASD), designed to systematically analyse and score the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) submitted by United Nations member states. The SDGT aims to enhance global accountability, promote transparency, provide evidence-based insights for policymakers, and facilitate cross-country comparison and benchmarking, with all its comprehensive findings made publicly available on the dedicated SDGs Tracker Platform. For more information about this report and/or any other activities of the initiative, please visit: www.sdgstracker.org and contact us: director@sdgstracker.org.



WASD COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

WASD is delighted to be working very closely with various United Nations Agencies, most specifically with the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). Both JIU and WASD are inspired by the conviction that the UN Agenda **2030** for Sustainable Development (SD) and the **17** Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the momentum for renewed UN engagement with the public and private sectors.

In **2018**, WASD collaborated with JIU on the UN project **Strengthening policy research uptake in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, aimed at reviewing the policy research uptake in service of the **2030 Agenda** for SD. For the first time in its **52** year history, the UN (aided by WASD) officially consulted academics and researchers from all over the world on the policy research uptake in the UN.

In **2019**, WASD also worked very closely with the UN JIU to undertake a UN system-wide review of policies, programmes, and platforms to support learning and enhancing the adequacy of training policies in the UN. The report **Policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination, and convergence** was launched officially on **28** October 2020 at the opening of WASD's Online Learning Conference.

These various initiatives and events with the UN JIU have encouraged WASD to launch its **Sustainable Development Goals Tracker (SDGT)**.



Sustainability Tracker

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