

Sustainable Development Goals Tracker

NORWAY 2026

Voluntary National Review





Norwegian Ministry
of Local Government and Modernisation
Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Report

Voluntary National Review 2021 Norway

Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Norway VNR 2021
Report

NORWAY

INITIAL STEPS TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA.

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW PRESENTED AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (HLPF)

UN, NEW YORK, JULY 2016

SUMMARY

The 2030 Agenda: A roadmap for national action and global partnership

Norway regards the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a transformative global roadmap for our national and international efforts aimed at eradicating extreme poverty while protecting planetary boundaries and promoting prosperity, peace and justice. It is a universal agenda, to which all countries and all relevant stakeholders can and must contribute. With the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change in place, the SDGs will be a powerful driver for national policy action, international cooperation, and collaborative partnerships.

Norway will follow up the 2030 Agenda, nationally and internationally, and in cooperation with other member states. The process of preparing Norway's initial Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) has in itself contributed to greater political and public awareness about the SDGs in Norway. The Government has already taken important steps to identify challenges and integrate SDG reporting into the annual budget documents. The Prime Minister is also engaged internationally, as Co-Chair, with the president of Ghana, of the UN Secretary-General's SDG Advocacy Group. This review starts with a summary of key features of Norway's initial national follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. Details of national and international follow-up are covered in the Policy section, under 'Goals and targets'. This Summary highlights policies, partnerships and practices that Norway believes could be of particular interest to the wider UN membership and stakeholders.

Challenges at the national level

UN reports and various international indexes show that Norway ranks high in terms of global implementation of the SDGs. At the same time, it is evident that implementing the 2030 Agenda will be demanding for Norway, too. The Government has identified a number of targets that pose particular challenges for domestic follow-up in Norway. These challenges relate to several of the SDGs and all three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic, and environmental. Among the targets that are likely to remain the focus of political attention and policy development are those relating to sustainable consumption and production, health and education, equality, employment, and migration. The Government is giving priority to ensuring quality education and employment, especially for young people and those at risk of marginalisation. This is an important contribution to realising the 2030 Agenda vision of leaving no one behind. Challenges that have been identified at the national level include:

Norway VNR 2016
Report



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Voluntary National Review 2026 Norway

Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Norway VNR 2026
Report



DOI: 10.47556/R.UN-VNRS2026.17

Norway

2026

Voluntary National Review (VNR)

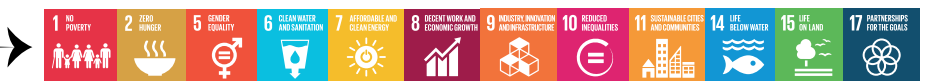
VNRs Submitted: 3 (75%)



SDGs Achieved: 3 (18%)



SDGs On-Track: 12 (70%)



SDGs Off-Track: 2 (12%)



SDGs No Progress: 0 (0%)

Introduction

Norway's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2026 presents the country's progress in implementing the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Norway previously presented its second VNR in 2021, while the 2026 review represents its third VNR. The review assesses progress across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, drawing on official data and contributions from government, civil society, youth, social partners, academia, business, local and regional authorities, and Indigenous representatives. The VNR shows that Norway remains well positioned to contribute positively to the 2030 Agenda, supported by strong institutions, a comprehensive welfare state, high levels of trust and broad societal participation. It reports particularly strong performance in areas including poverty reduction, gender equality, public services, effective institutions and international partnerships. At the same time, the review identifies significant challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss, widening inequalities, high material consumption, environmental spillover effects, social and health inequalities, housing and labour-market pressures, and the need to accelerate emission reductions. The VNR was prepared under the leadership of the Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with contributions from all government ministries and in accordance with the UN voluntary common reporting guidelines (United Nations, 2026a; United Nations, 2026b).



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

A VNR is a self-assessment process through which the 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 Norway'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 Norway'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 Norway SDG Report)

This analysis applies the *VNR framework* to Norway’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 Norway’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 Norway’s progress towards achieving economic growth, highlighting strategic areas for improvement, innovation, and sustainability.

Overall Progress

Table 1 presents Norway’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		
Justification	- Norway has a comprehensive public welfare system covering the entire population, with universal access to economic resources, financial services, healthcare and education. The VNR states that no one lives in extreme poverty as a result of universal welfare schemes. - Norway has among the lowest levels of income inequality and poverty, supported by high employment rates, free education, public welfare schemes and sustained economic growth. - In 2022–2024, 9.5% of the population, excluding students, was classified as having persistent low income, while the corresponding figure for children in families with persistent low income was 10.2%.	
Challenges	- The main challenges are maintaining low-income disparities, preventing poverty from being transmitted to future generations and increasing labour market participation among vulnerable groups. - The VNR identifies particular concerns regarding children living in households with persistent low income, especially those from families with an immigrant background and single-parent families. - The number of homeless people is also increasing. Rising living costs have disproportionately affected low-income households. - The civil society assessment further identifies poverty risks among people with weak labour-market attachment, disability-benefit recipients, single adults and immigrants. It also reports increased material and social deprivation during the cost-of-living crisis.	

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Norway has maintained universal welfare schemes and introduced measures to strengthen labour-market participation and social inclusion. - These include active labour market measures, a youth guarantee introduced on 1 July 2023, increased efforts to include immigrants in working life and society, increased universal child benefit, and reduced parental fees for kindergartens and out-of-school care. - Norway also uses its development policy to combat poverty and inequality internationally. Official development assistance amounted to NOK 58.9 billion in 2025, representing 1.03% of GNI.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Persistent low income, child poverty, inequality of opportunity, labour market exclusion among vulnerable groups and increasing homelessness remain unresolved. - The civil society assessment calls for improved poverty metrics, stronger protection of the real incomes of vulnerable groups, accelerated labour-market inclusion, more affordable childcare and housing, and strengthened measures to address child poverty. - It also highlights the need to restore or increase the share and volume of development assistance reaching least-developed and low-income countries.

Score : 4

2 ZERO HUNGER



<i>Justification</i>	- Norway's food security status is described as good, with access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food throughout the year. - The nutritional status is also generally good. - Norway has well-developed institutions in the agricultural and seafood sectors that provide access to knowledge, financial services, technology and other productive resources. - Sustainable food production in agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture forms an important basis for national food security.
<i>Challenges</i>	- The VNR identifies overweight and obesity, unhealthy diets and the risk of undernutrition among frail older people as important challenges. - Over 50% of the adult population are overweight or obese. The population consumes too little fruit, berries, vegetables, whole grains and fish, and too much salt, added sugar, saturated fat, and red and processed meat. - Exclusive breastfeeding rates also appear to be declining. Agriculture must adapt to climate and environmental changes while protecting soil resources and maintaining animal and plant health. - Sustainable reindeer husbandry faces increasing pressure from land use, while aquaculture faces challenges related to high mortality, mainly associated with sea lice.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Norway has established strong institutions and regulatory frameworks supporting food security and sustainable food production. - The Government has introduced measures for climate adaptation and more resilient farming practices, including a climate agreement with farmers' unions, the establishment of Bionova in 2023 and a Food System Commission. - The VNR also identifies several policy initiatives, including the Revised Soil Protection Strategy (2023), the Strategy for Increased Self-Sufficiency in Agricultural Goods, Norway's Path Towards a Sustainable Food System (2024), the National Strategy for Organic Agriculture 2025–2032, and the Roadmap for the Agriculture-Based Food Industry (2025). - Internationally, food security is a priority in Norway's development policy. Development assistance to agriculture, fisheries and food security amounted to NOK 2.1 billion in 2025, with a large proportion channelled through UN and multilateral institutions.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The VNR continues to identify malnutrition among vulnerable groups, unhealthy and environmentally unsustainable dietary patterns, food waste, dependence on imported livestock feed, agricultural emissions and pressures on biodiversity as unresolved challenges. - The civil society assessment also highlights pressures on rural livelihoods, environmental impacts from aquaculture, market concentration in the grocery sector and rising nutritional inequalities. - The assessment calls for stronger nutrition competence and staffing in institutions and home-based care, healthier and more sustainable diets, reduced food waste, greater domestic resilience, stronger regulation of aquaculture, reduced greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture and food systems, conservation of agricultural biodiversity, and sustained development assistance for food and nutrition security.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Score: 5

<i>Justification</i>	- Norway's population generally enjoys good health and a high quality of life, supported by systematic public health efforts and universal health and care services. The country has strong prenatal, maternity and childbirth care and very low maternal mortality. - Norway is also among the countries with the lowest neonatal mortality rates. Overall life expectancy was 81.6 years for men and 84.8 years for women in 2024. - Declining smoking rates and improved treatment have contributed to reductions in cardiovascular disease and cancer. - Access to sexual and reproductive health services is available to everyone, while prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis is also accessible.
<i>Challenges</i>	- Non-communicable diseases account for the largest share of Norway's disease burden. Although mortality from non-communicable diseases has declined by 20% since 2015, there remains scope for improvement in diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. - The suicide rate has increased, particularly among men. Substance use, overdose deaths, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity also remain significant concerns. The VNR also identifies increasing mental health problems, particularly among young people, social inequalities in health, challenges in dental health services, and the need for improvement in vaccination and measures addressing antimicrobial resistance.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Norway has a high level of universal health coverage and a national vaccination programme with high coverage. In 2024, more than 95% of the population completed the DTP, MMR and pneumococcal vaccine courses, while HPV coverage was 92.5% for girls and 90.0% for boys. - Norway has also strengthened implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and supports international cooperation on medical research, vaccines and medicines. - The Government has introduced policy measures addressing public health inequalities, health emergency preparedness, health and care services, fair prioritisation, and general practitioner and emergency medical services. These include the National Strategy to Reduce Social Health Inequalities and the National Health and Interaction Plan 2024–2027.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Health inequalities remain a major unresolved issue. The civil society assessment identifies shorter life expectancy among people with the lowest household incomes and barriers to health services for people living in remote areas, people with disabilities and undocumented migrants. - Racism and discrimination in health services, insufficient access to timely rehabilitation, challenges in elderly care, mental health and substance-use treatment, and undernutrition among older people also remain concerns. - The VNR's civil society assessment calls for stronger preventive health measures, implementation of the strategy to reduce social health inequalities, improved access to basic and mental health services, more inclusive health services for people with disabilities, action against racism and discrimination, stronger measures for mental health and substance-use disorders, and increased funding for universal health coverage and global health priorities.



Score: 5	
<i>Justification</i>	- Norway provides free and accessible primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. - Higher education is also free and accessible to all. Access to education is universal, while sustainable development, public health, life skills, democracy and citizenship are prioritised in education.
<i>Challenges</i>	- The quality of kindergarten services varies, and there are challenges in recruiting and retaining kindergarten teachers. - Learning outcomes in reading, mathematics and science have declined. - Completion rates remain lower in vocational programmes, with inequalities also affecting educational outcomes.
<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- The Government has reduced kindergarten fees and introduced measures to strengthen learning, well-being and reading skills. - The share of students completing upper secondary education has increased by ten percentage points over the past decade. The new Education Act entered into force on 1 August 2024.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Teacher and support-staff shortages, bullying, limited inclusion for children with disabilities and declining reading proficiency remain unresolved. - Education for Sustainable Development is also implemented unevenly across schools.



Score: 4

Justification	- Gender equality in Norway is high, with equal opportunities to work and start a family. - Public services and social rights support gender equality, while access to sexual and reproductive health services is universal. - Norway also has comprehensive equality legislation and policies.
Challenges	- Women continue to earn less than men and are more likely to work part-time. The labour market remains gender-segregated, and women are under-represented in senior positions in the private sector. - Violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape and honour-based violence, remains a major challenge.
Progress/ Solutions	- The gender pay gap has narrowed, with women's earnings reaching 87.9% of men's earnings in 2025, compared with 85.3% in 2015. - Gender quota rules for corporate boards were implemented from 2024, and the Government has introduced plans addressing violence and abuse, negative social control and honour-related violence.
Unsolved Challenges	- Persistent gender-based social and economic inequalities, occupational inequalities and gender-based violence remains unresolved. - The civil society assessment also identifies gender segregation, women's under-representation in leadership, discrimination related to parental leave and increasing digital violence as continuing concerns.



Score: 4

Justification	- Norwegians have access to safe and affordable drinking water and universal sanitation and hygiene. - Overall water quality is good, and integrated water management has been achieved through regional water management plans for 2022–2027.
Challenges	- The main challenges concern wastewater, pollution and the significant backlog in upgrading water and sewage infrastructure. - Leakage from municipal water pipelines, insufficient wastewater treatment capacity and vulnerability to floods, extreme weather and other unforeseen events also remain concerns.
Progress/ Solutions	- Norway has implemented measures for wastewater treatment and water ecosystem restoration. - The Action Plan for the Oslofjord includes wastewater measures, while funding has been provided for nitrogen reduction, peatland and wetland restoration, and water-environment projects.
Unsolved Challenges	- Improving the ecological status of water bodies, protecting wetlands, restoring freshwater ecosystems and upgrading water and wastewater infrastructure remain unresolved. - The VNR also highlights slow implementation, climate pressures and infrastructure renewal needs as risks to achieving SDG 6.



Score : 4

Justification	- Norway has universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services. Almost all electricity production is based on renewable energy sources, primarily hydropower, complemented by wind power. - Energy intensity is low and gradually improving.
Challenges	- Increasing electrification of industry and transport may increase electricity demand and put pressure on the power balance and electricity grid. - Consumers in southern Norway have also experienced periods of high and fluctuating electricity prices.
Progress/Solutions	- In 2025, renewable energy accounted for 99% of electricity production, with hydropower accounting for about 90%. - Norway is also developing offshore wind and has initiated significant investments to strengthen the electricity grid.
Unsolved Challenges	- Very high energy consumption per capita, continued oil and gas exploitation, limited prioritisation of energy efficiency and potential environmental and social conflicts from renewable energy expansion remain unresolved challenges.



Score : 4

Justification	- Norway has high GDP per capita, high productivity, strong innovation capacity and high employment with low unemployment. - The working environment standard remains high, while measures are also in place to address forced labour, human trafficking and work-related crime.
Challenges	- An ageing population creates a need to increase labour supply and encourage more people to remain in work for longer. - The inflow of young people into health-related benefits also remains a concern.
Progress/Solutions	- The Government has launched the Youth Employment Initiative and announced measures to improve labour-market participation and reduce the number of people receiving health-related benefits. - The Transparency Act has also strengthened corporate responsibility for human and workers' rights.
Unsolved Challenges	- Labour-market exclusion, exploitation of vulnerable workers, limited resources for labour inspection and insufficient participation of people with disabilities remain unresolved. - Policy coherence between human rights, workers' rights, environmental protection and trade interests is also a concern.



Score: 4

Justification	- Norway has well-developed and accessible transport and digital infrastructure. Norwegian industry and businesses are adapting towards greater sustainability, while the country has high levels of publicly funded research and development and widespread access to digital networks.
Challenges	- Infrastructure remains vulnerable to landslides and flooding. Industry continues to generate significant emissions, while access to finance can be more challenging for small and medium-sized businesses. Norway is also still below its goal for research and development investment.

Progress/ Solutions	- Over 99% of Norwegian households have access to 5G networks and over 99% have access to high-speed broadband. - The share of electric vehicles more than doubled from 2020 to 2024, while road-traffic emissions fell by 6.5% from 2023 to 2024.
Unsolved Challenges	- The civil society assessment highlights the need for a more sustainable transport system, greater freight transport by rail and sea, stronger domestic capacity for critical medicines and medical equipment, and greater technology transfer to developing countries.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Score: 4	
Justification	- Norway has low social and economic inequality, supported by a progressive tax system, welfare schemes, universal education and health services. - In 2023, income inequality remained roughly at the same level as in 2014.
Challenges	- Persistent low income, wealth inequality, labour-market exclusion and social disparities remain concerns. Vulnerable groups include immigrants, young people and people with health-related barriers to employment.
Progress/ Solutions	- Taxes and transfers reduce income inequality, while several measures were implemented during 2021–2025 to strengthen redistribution. - Norway has also introduced action plans addressing racism, discrimination, gender and sexual diversity, and universal design.
Unsolved Challenges	- Growing inequalities in housing, wealth and labour-market participation remain unresolved. Rising living costs disproportionately affect low-income groups, while social mobility appears to be stagnating.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Score: 4	
Justification	- Norway has generally good living conditions, access to basic services, waste management and transport systems. - Cities and urban areas also have low levels of air pollution, with local air quality having improved over the past decade.
Challenges	- Housing affordability, limited housing supply, accessibility, climate-related hazards and differences in public transport between urban and rural areas remain challenges. Flooding, landslides and heatwaves are increasing pressures on infrastructure and land use.
Progress/ Solutions	- Norway has introduced the Housing White Paper, State Planning Guidelines for Land Use and Mobility, and the National Architectural Strategy. Municipalities have also developed climate budgeting, cycling infrastructure, circular economy initiatives and digital participation tools.
Unsolved Challenges	- Housing inequality, fragmented urban policies, insufficient municipal support, unsustainable transport planning and gaps in climate-resilient urban development remain unresolved.

Score: 3	
Justification	- Norway has strengthened its policy framework for circular economy and sustainable consumption and production. - An action plan for the circular economy was published in 2024, followed by a national mission in 2025.
Challenges	- Material consumption per capita remains very high, while waste volumes and food waste remain significant. The circular material use rate has remained low, indicating considerable scope for improvement.
Progress/Solutions	- A 24% reduction in food waste was achieved during 2015–2024. Norway has introduced the Circular Economy Action Plan, the Act on Sustainable Products and Value Chains, and a national mission for circular economy.
Unsolved Challenges	- Norway continues to have very high resource consumption, low circularity and high municipal waste generation. Food waste and consumption-based environmental impacts also remain substantial challenges.

Score: 3	
Justification	- Norway is relatively resilient to climate change and has strong capacity for climate adaptation. - Climate measures are integrated into national policies, with emissions regulated through economic instruments, legislation, standards, agreements and subsidies. - Norway's 2030 target is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% compared with 1990, while its 2050 target is a 90–95% reduction.
Challenges	- In 2024, Norway's greenhouse gas emissions were 44.6 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents, about 21% below the 2007 peak. - However, existing policies were projected to achieve only about a 26% reduction by 2030 compared with 1990, indicating that additional action is required. - Climate change is also expected to increase adaptation needs and costs.
Progress/Solutions	- Norway strengthened its climate targets through the Climate Change Act, including a 70–75% reduction by 2035, adopted in June 2025. - Norwegian climate finance amounted to approximately NOK 18.7 billion in 2024. - The Climate Investment Fund also helped finance 7.9 GW of renewable capacity during 2022–2024, expected to avoid 17.6 million tonnes of CO₂ annually when operational.
Unsolved Challenges	- The civil society assessment identifies slow domestic emission reductions, continued oil and gas production, insufficient coherence between climate policies and continued fossil-fuel exports, and inadequate adaptation finance as key unresolved challenges. - In 2024, emissions were reported as 12.8% below 1990, remaining far from the 55% reduction target for 2030.

Score: 4	
Justification	- The ecological quality of Norway's coastal waters and large parts of its marine areas is generally good. - Norway has comprehensive systems for marine management and conservation, and approximately 4.5% of its marine areas fall under protected areas, national parks and conservation zones. The majority of commercial fish stocks remain above the precautionary biomass level.
Challenges	- Marine ecosystems face pressures from climate change, rising sea temperatures, eutrophication, invasive species and pollution. - Sea lice remain a significant challenge for aquaculture, affecting farmed salmon and wild salmon populations. Data on plastic pollution and microplastics also remain limited.
Progress/Solutions	- Norway has established 23 marine protected areas and four national parks containing extensive marine zones. Area-based fisheries measures cover 44% of Norway's Exclusive Economic Zone. From 1 January 2024, new sampling requirements for industrial catches were introduced to improve reporting of species composition. - In 2025, Norway launched the Arctic Ocean 2050 programme, with NOK 100 million annually for 10 years involving 18 institutions.
Unsolved Challenges	- Civil society identifies continuing biodiversity pressures, nutrient pollution, fishing and aquaculture impacts and limited marine protection. - It reports that only around 4.2% of sea areas under Norwegian jurisdiction are formally protected. Ghost fishing gear, marine pollution, pressures on fish stocks and knowledge gaps regarding cumulative ecosystem impacts remain unresolved.

Score: 4	
Justification	- Norway has established comprehensive legislation and management systems for conserving terrestrial ecosystems. 37% of Norway's land area is covered by forest, with nearly 100% certified under global forest management certification systems. 34% of Norway's mountain ecosystems are protected areas.
Challenges	- Land-use change is identified as the greatest threat to terrestrial ecosystems, alongside climate change, invasive alien species and pollution. - Protecting threatened species and habitats, maintaining soil resources and integrating biodiversity into regional and municipal planning remain major challenges.
Progress/Solutions	- Approximately 17.7% of mainland Norway is protected under the Nature Diversity Act, equivalent to 25.7% when Svalbard and Jan Mayen are included. - Around 75% of rivers and lakes have good or very good ecological status under the Water Regulation. In 2024, the Government presented targets and measures for improving the ecological condition of forests. - Norway contributed NOK 4.9 billion in 2024 to initiatives aimed at conserving biodiversity, while NOK 3.5 billion was provided through the International Climate and Forest Initiative for biodiversity conservation in the tropical forest belt.

Unsolved Challenges	- Biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation continue, mainly driven by land-use change. The civil society assessment reports that land-use change affects around 90% of threatened species, while 21% of assessed species were on the Norwegian Red List in 2021. - Protection gaps remain, particularly for productive forests and lowland ecosystems, while invasive species and pressures on threatened wildlife continue.
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Score: 5	
Justification	- Norway is a relatively peaceful society with low crime rates. - Democracy, human rights and the rule of law are core pillars of governance, supported by transparent, accountable and high-quality public institutions.
Challenges	- Partner homicide and violence against women remain serious concerns. During 2015–2024, 69 people were killed by a partner or previous partner. - Violence and abuse also affect children and young people, with an increasing share occurring online. Discrimination, hate crime, criminal networks and gang-related crime remain concerns.
Progress/Solutions	- The register of beneficial owners was established in 2024, following legislation adopted in 2019. In 2024, courts received increased permanent funding through the Rule of Law Enhancement Initiative. - A new financial means-testing model adopted in 2023 expanded access to free legal aid. In 2025, the Government allocated NOK 90 million to strengthen efforts against money laundering and corruption. Norway also launched a national strategy against human trafficking in May 2025, an action plan addressing harassment and discrimination of the Sami for 2025–2030, and an escalation plan against violence and abuse covering 2024–2028.
Unsolved Challenges	- Discrimination and harassment remain significant, while minorities experience discrimination at higher rates. Civil society also identifies gaps in anti-corruption capacity, transparency of ownership, access to legal aid for people with disabilities and political participation among some immigrant groups.



Score: 4	
Justification	- Norway is an active participant in global cooperation and a strong supporter of the multilateral system. - Its national and international policies are grounded in the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Compromiso de Sevilla and international human rights.
Challenges	- International cooperation is under severe pressure from interconnected crises, including growing inequality, climate change, debt challenges and conflicts. Global ODA levels have declined, weakening financing for the SDGs, while several traditional donor countries have reduced their aid budgets.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- In 2025, Norway provided 1.03% of GNI as ODA, amounting to NOK 58.9 billion, and was among only four countries that reached the UN target of 0.7% of GNI. Norway also supports debt-relief processes, multilateral development banks, digital public goods, technology cooperation and statistical capacity-building in developing countries. - Norway's Higher Executive Forum for the SDGs, established in 2022, supports a more coherent and integrated approach to sustainable development. Statistics Norway also supports SDG monitoring and statistical capacity-building internationally.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- Policy coherence across sectors remains a major challenge. Civil society notes that Norway lacks systematic assessment of whether its contributions to SDG 17 accelerate or hinder progress in partner countries. - In 2026, more than 25% of the aid budget was allocated to Ukraine, with reductions affecting some programmes in least developed countries. Trade, digitalisation and development policies also require greater coherence. - The VNR further reports that Norway's 2025 Spillover Index score was 55.41, below the OECD average, with negative effects linked particularly to high material consumption and extensive imports.

Source: (United Nations, 2026a; United Nations, 2026b).

Major Challenges

- **Implementation gap:** The VNR identifies implementation, rather than ambition, as Norway's main challenge towards achieving the SDGs. The gap between stated ambitions and actual outcomes remains particularly visible in climate, environment, and responsible consumption and production.
- **Climate action:** Norway needs to accelerate emission reductions while managing the transition towards a low-emission society.
- **High material consumption and environmental spillovers:** High levels of material consumption and environmental spillover effects remain significant challenges for sustainable development.
- **Persistent inequalities:** Social and health inequalities, exclusion from work and education, and pressures on housing and labour markets continue to require stronger action.
- **Policy fragmentation:** Fragmentation across sectors, governance levels and policy instruments is identified as a primary barrier to further SDG progress.
- **Trade-offs between SDGs:** Climate action, environmental protection, value creation, social equity and preparedness compete for land, energy, capital, labour and political attention.
- **International spillovers:** As an open and globally connected economy, Norway's production, consumption, trade and investment create international spillover effects that influence global SDG achievement.
- **Geopolitical and global pressures:** Climate change, biodiversity loss, widening inequalities, geopolitical tensions and democratic backsliding are undermining global SDG progress.

Key Lessons Learned

- **Action must follow ambition:** The VNR explicitly identifies action, rather than ambition, as the defining challenge in the final years towards 2030.

- **Mainstreaming alone is insufficient:** Integrating the SDGs into ordinary policy processes has strengthened ownership, but must now be accompanied by concrete and accelerated action.
- **Policy coherence is essential:** Stronger coherence across sectors is necessary to manage the economic, social and environmental trade-offs associated with sustainable development.
- **Cross-sectoral challenges require cross-sectoral governance:** The SDGs where progress is slowest are those where goal conflicts and trade-offs are most difficult; these need to be addressed at the appropriate political level rather than incrementally within individual ministries.
- **Participation should influence decisions:** Civil society, children and youth, academia, business and social partners should be meaningful participants in SDG governance, rather than being consulted only.
- **Research must be translated into practice:** The VNR stresses that well-documented knowledge on what works is too rarely reflected in implementation.
- **International responsibility matters:** Norway's SDG performance is closely connected to developments beyond its borders; international responsibilities and spillover effects therefore need to be integrated into domestic SDG implementation.
- **The 2025 Citizens' Panel demonstrated the value of participation:** The panel submitted its recommendations to the Government in February 2025, and these were subsequently incorporated into the White Paper on national SDG follow-up adopted by Parliament in March 2026.

Notable Contribution

- **2024 – Climate finance:** Norway provided approximately NOK **18.7 billion** in climate finance.
- **2024 – Biodiversity:** Norway contributed NOK **4.9 billion** to initiatives aimed at conserving biodiversity, nearly doubling the amount disbursed in 2015.
- **2024 – Food waste:** Norway achieved a **24%** reduction in food waste during 2015–2024.
- **2024 – Renewable transport:** The share of electric vehicles more than doubled between 2020 and 2024, while road-traffic emissions fell by **6.5%** from 2023 to 2024.
- **2024 – Marine protection:** Norway had **23** marine protected areas and **4** national parks containing extensive marine zones.
- **2024 – Biodiversity and forests:** Approximately **17.7%** of mainland Norway was protected, increasing to **25.7%** when Svalbard and Jan Mayen were included.
- **2025 – Renewable electricity:** Renewable energy accounted for **99%** of electricity production, with hydropower accounting for about **90%**.
- **2025 – Development assistance:** Norway provided NOK **58.9 billion**, equivalent to **1.03%** of GNI, in official development assistance and was among the four countries reaching the UN target of **0.7%** of GNI.
- **2025 – Climate target:** Norway adopted a **70–75%** emissions-reduction target for 2035 in June 2025.
- **2025 – Circular economy:** The Government launched a national mission for circular economy in 2025, following the Circular Economy Action Plan and the Act on Sustainable Products and Value Chains.
- **2022–2024 – Renewable capacity:** The Climate Investment Fund helped finance **7.9 GW** of renewable capacity, expected to avoid **17.6 million** tonnes of CO₂ annually when operational.

Recommendations

- Accelerate implementation of the SDGs, moving from broad ambition towards concrete and measurable action.
- Strengthen horizontal coordination across ministries and improve vertical coordination between national, regional and local levels.
- Address SDG trade-offs explicitly through clearer political prioritisation rather than managing them separately within individual policy areas.
- Strengthen policy coherence across economic, social and environmental policies, including systematic consideration of Norway's international spillover effects.
- Institutionalise meaningful participation of civil society, children and youth, social partners, academia, business, local authorities and Indigenous representatives in decision-making.
- Translate research and knowledge into policy implementation more systematically and strengthen education and skills for sustainable transformation.
- Strengthen action on climate, biodiversity and responsible consumption and production, where the VNR identifies a substantial gap between ambitions and outcomes.
- Reduce social exclusion and inequality through stronger pathways into education, skills development and employment, particularly for groups at risk of being left behind.
- Continue international cooperation and development assistance, while addressing Norway's global environmental and economic spillover effects.
- Implement the Government's Plan for Norway for 2025–2029, including priorities on employment, immigrant integration, housing, public-sector efficiency, low-emission transition, learning outcomes, health, preparedness and international cooperation.

Conclusion

The VNR 2026 demonstrates that Norway has established strong foundations for sustainable development through effective institutions, a comprehensive welfare system, high levels of trust and broad participation. The country has made significant progress across many SDGs, while maintaining a strong commitment to the principle of Leaving No One Behind. However, the review makes clear that implementation is now the central challenge rather than ambition. Progress is constrained by fragmentation across sectors and governance levels, difficult trade-offs between economic, social and environmental priorities, and the gap between policy commitments and actual outcomes. The VNR therefore emphasises the need for stronger policy coherence, clearer prioritisation, stronger cross-sectoral coordination and accelerated implementation. Research and knowledge should be translated more systematically into practice, while civil society, youth, social partners, academia and business should have meaningful roles in governance and decision-making. Norway's progress towards 2030 will ultimately depend on its ability to convert its strong institutional foundations and established policies into faster and more coherent action, both nationally and internationally. The review stresses that Norway's domestic development is closely connected to global developments and that addressing international spillover effects is an integral part of achieving the SDGs.

Reference

United Nations (2026a): Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2026. Available at: <https://hlpf.un.org/2026>

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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

ISSN: 2978-2384 (Print) - 2978-2392 (Online)



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