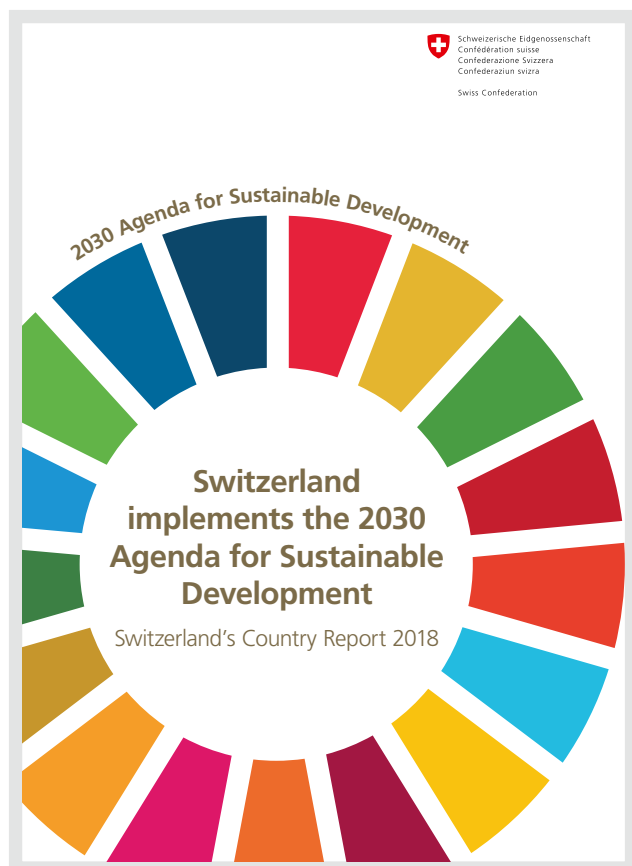


Sustainable Development Goals Tracker

SWITZERLAND 2026

Voluntary National Review

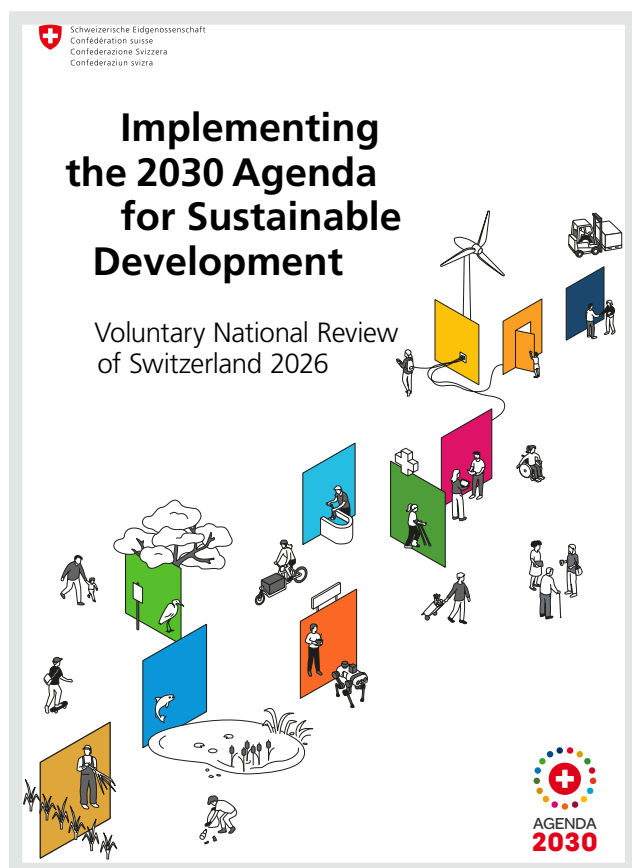




Switzerland VNR 2018
Report



Switzerland VNR 2016
Report



Switzerland VNR 2026
Report



Switzerland VNR 2022
Report



DOI: 10.47556/R.UN-VNRS2026.16

Switzerland 2026

Voluntary National Review (VNR)

VNRs Submitted: 4 (100%)



SDGs Achieved: 0 (0%)

SDGs On-Track: 11 (65%)



SDGs Off-Track: 6 (35%)



SDGs No Progress: 0 (0%)

Introduction

Switzerland's 2026 Voluntary National Review (VNR) presents the country's progress towards the **2030 Agenda** for Sustainable Development and assesses the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through national indicators and the Sustainable Development Goals digital (SDGital2030) assessment. Switzerland's fourth VNR highlights progress in areas including renewable energy, biodiversity financing, international cooperation and sustainable development partnerships, while also identifying persistent challenges in climate action, biodiversity, affordable housing, inequality, sustainable consumption and international cooperation. In 2024, renewable energy accounted for **29.9%** of energy consumption, biodiversity-related expenditure reached CHF 614 million, and **6.7%** of Swiss territory was protected at Federal level. At the same time, greenhouse gas emissions stood at **41.3 million** tonnes CO₂ equivalent in 2024, while the per-capita material footprint declined from **20 tonnes** to **15 tonnes** between 2000 and 2023 but remained insufficient to meet the relevant target. The VNR therefore emphasises the need to accelerate implementation, strengthen cooperation across levels of government and society, and align policies and resources more effectively with the **2030 Agenda** (United Nations, 2026a; United Nations, 2026b).



VNR Framework Approach to assess Switzerland'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 Switzerland'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 Switzerland'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 Switzerland SDG Report)

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

Overall Progress

Table 1 presents Switzerland’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: 3		
Justification	- Switzerland’s progress towards SDG 1 remains important because poverty continues to affect a significant proportion of the population. - According to the 2026 VNR, the poverty rate was 8.4% in 2024, with no statistically significant change since 2014. - The VNR notes that single parents and people who have not completed further education are particularly affected. - The poverty rate is based on the social subsistence level defined by the Swiss Conference for Social Welfare; in 2024, the poverty line was CHF 2,388 per month for a single person and CHF 4,159 for two adults with two children.	
Challenges	- The principal challenge is the persistence of poverty despite existing social protection and poverty-prevention measures. - The cantons are primarily responsible for supporting people in need, while the federal government’s responsibilities focus mainly on poverty prevention. - The VNR also identifies increasing shortages of affordable housing, particularly in urban centres and tourist regions, as a related social challenge. - Social mobility remains problematic, with educational success continuing to correlate with family background; young people from low-income households or migration backgrounds are less likely to complete upper secondary education.	

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland has strengthened its institutional approach to poverty prevention and reduction. - The federal government, cantons, communes and civil society organisations are pooling existing efforts within an overarching national structure. This includes the continued operation of the National Platform against Poverty and its participatory committee, alongside the development of a strategy to combat poverty by 2027. - In 2025, the Federal Council published the first report on national poverty monitoring. In addition, an Action Plan to Combat the Housing Shortage was agreed in 2024, involving all levels of government, the construction and real estate sector and civil society, with the aim of promoting more affordable and needs-based housing.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The central unresolved challenge is the stagnation of poverty reduction. The VNR reports that the 8.4% poverty rate in 2024 showed no statistically significant change since 2014. - Consequently, federal agencies consider achievement of the poverty target somewhat unrealistic, although the majority of external actors consider it realistic. Poverty also remains closely connected with inequalities in housing, education and access to essential services. - The VNR therefore indicates that existing measures have not yet generated sufficient progress to place poverty reduction firmly on track for 2030.

2 ZERO HUNGER



Score : 3	
<i>Justification</i>	- Switzerland's SDG 2 priorities in the 2026 VNR extend beyond food availability to healthy and sustainable nutrition, sustainable agriculture and the transformation of food systems. - The MONET 2030 indicator shows that only 15.6% of the population consumed at least five servings of fruit and vegetables per day in 2022, representing a decline of 18.4% since 2012 and a negative trend. - At the same time, several agricultural indicators show positive developments: the nitrogen balance was 86.9 thousand tonnes in excess in 2023, down 8.0% since 2000; agricultural greenhouse gas emissions were 6.6 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent in 2024, down 8.7% since 2000; and organic farming accounted for 18.4% of utilised agricultural area in 2024, an increase of 108.8% since 2000.
<i>Challenges</i>	- The VNR identifies persistent challenges relating to greenhouse gas emissions, soil fertility, water management, nitrogen pollution and biodiversity. - Access to healthy food is also affected by social inequalities, the high cost of fresh produce and the dominance of highly processed foods. - People on low incomes or without legal residence status are particularly affected. - The negative trend in fruit and vegetable consumption also makes the achievement of the healthy nutrition target more difficult.

Progress/ Solutions	- The Federal Council intends to pursue a holistic approach to food systems along the entire food value chain from 2030 onwards. - The Agriculture and Food Climate Strategy 2050 aims to adapt the food system to climate change and reduce emissions. - The Swiss Nutrition Policy 2025–32 supports the transformation of the food system towards greater sustainability, health, equality and equity of opportunity, while the new nutritional recommendations incorporate environmental factors for the first time. In March 2025, the towns and cities of Aigle, Basel, Bern, Biel, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Moutier, St Gallen and Zurich signed a sustainable nutrition charter. - Progress has also been made in reducing food waste. The Action Plan Against Food Waste, adopted in 2022, contains 14 measures, including an industry-wide agreement involving most major companies and associations in the food industry. - A progress report published in October 2025 found that the nationwide decline in food loss was approximately 5%, although reductions varied between sectors.
Unsolved Challenges	- Food waste also remains unresolved. Although the national decline was approximately 5%, the measures implemented across agriculture, processing, wholesale, restaurants and households have not yet produced sufficiently broad impacts to achieve the objective of halving food waste by 2030. - The complexity of food value chains and delayed effects of some measures continue to constrain progress.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Score: 4

Justification	- SDG 3 remains important within Switzerland's 2026 VNR because access to healthcare and prevention is directly linked to social and economic inequalities. - The VNR reports that 9.8% of the population at risk of poverty in 2024 went without necessary medical care for financial reasons. - The indicator showed no statistically significant change between 2015 and 2022. At the broader level, the VNR recognises progress in maternal and child health, while emphasising that overall progress remains insufficient to achieve the ambitious SDG targets by 2030.
Challenges	- The principal challenge identified by the VNR is the financial accessibility of healthcare. Financial obstacles increasingly prevent people from accessing necessary medical services. - The burden of compulsory health insurance premiums remains an ongoing concern, particularly for people at risk of poverty. - The VNR also links health inequalities with wider social and economic conditions, including poverty and unequal access to essential services. At the international level, the VNR also identifies challenges associated with the structural erosion of healthcare systems worldwide and the withdrawal of traditional donors from global health financing. - Switzerland reduced some financial support for global health programmes from 2025, and support for UNAIDS was discontinued. The VNR further notes difficulties in coordinating multisectoral approaches involving gender equality, education, nutrition and health.

Progress/ Solutions	- Switzerland has undertaken reforms intended to reduce pressure on compulsory health insurance and improve access to healthcare. These include the TARDOC tariff model and cost-containment packages. - The implementation of the counter-proposal to the Premium Relief Initiative, which requires cantons to make minimum contributions towards reducing premiums for low-income households, is identified by the VNR as a step in the right direction. - The VNR also reports progress in maternal and child health and identifies this as one of the areas where positive developments are evident. At the international level, Switzerland continues to use its multilateral engagement and International Geneva to contribute to global cooperation on health and other sustainable development challenges.
Unsolved Challenges	- The principal unresolved challenge is ensuring that financial circumstances do not prevent people from obtaining necessary healthcare. - In 2024, 9.8% of people at risk of poverty went without necessary medical services for financial reasons, while the indicator showed no statistically significant change between 2015 and 2022. Although federal agencies consider achievement of target 3.8 realistic, external actor assessments vary. - The continuing burden of health insurance premiums means that equitable access to healthcare remains an unfinished task.

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



Score: 4

Justification	- Education is an important component of Switzerland's sustainable development approach and is identified in the VNR as an important lever for achieving the 2030 Agenda. - The VNR reports progress in access to education and highlights the role of education, research and innovation in advancing sustainable development. - Education for sustainable development (ESD) has been incorporated into curricula at compulsory schooling and subsequent levels, while universities and research institutions have launched numerous courses and projects addressing sustainability-related issues. - The VNR also identifies education as a means of strengthening equal opportunities. However, educational success continues to be correlated with family background, and young people from low-income households or migration backgrounds are less likely to complete upper secondary education.
Challenges	- A major challenge is the unequal educational opportunities associated with socio-economic and family backgrounds. The VNR states that social mobility remains a challenge in the education sector and that young people from low-income households or migration backgrounds are less likely to complete upper secondary education. - The VNR also identifies challenges in the broad implementation of ESD. Teachers face difficulties in integrating cross-cutting sustainability issues into their lessons alongside other increasing expectations. At university level, there are still few incentives for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects conducted in partnership with stakeholders, or for related academic careers, because these activities often have limited recognition within academia.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland has embedded ESD within compulsory schooling and subsequent study, while universities and research institutions have developed numerous sustainability-related courses and projects. The VNR also highlights innovation funding directed towards areas including the circular economy, mobility, food and defossilisation. - The VNR identifies compulsory schooling and vocational education and training as important multipliers because they provide skills that can contribute to sustainable development across the population over the longer term. It further recommends stronger thematic research programmes, improved dialogue between researchers and policymakers, and better financial and structural frameworks for interdisciplinary and practice-based research and teaching.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The principal unresolved challenge is the broad implementation and recognition of sustainability education. Despite good strategies and some progress, the VNR states that broad implementation remains demanding. Funding cuts under the 2027 budget relief programme also jeopardise the continuity and expansion of educational offers and research projects required for sustainable development. - The VNR further identifies the need for more resources to strengthen education, research and innovation within compulsory education, vocational education and training and the upper secondary level. Greater recognition of sustainability-related teaching and research and stronger incentives for interdisciplinary work remain necessary.

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



Score: 3

<i>Justification</i>	- Gender equality remains an important component of Switzerland's sustainable development agenda. The VNR reports progress in women's participation in the labour market, equal pay and political representation. The proportion of women in management positions is also growing, although slowly. Switzerland has further increased quotas for women on extra-parliamentary commissions and in federal government-associated businesses. - At the international level, gender equality is integrated into Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy for both 2021–24 and 2025–28. Between 2021 and 2024, approximately 80% of programmes and projects included targets to improve gender equality, while just under 4% had gender equality as their primary focus.
<i>Challenges</i>	- Gender equality continues to face substantial challenges. Since 2020, companies with 100 or more employees have been required to conduct an equal pay analysis. However, an interim review found that less than half (approximately 45%) of employers had fully complied with all three legal obligations to analyse, review and provide information. The average pay gap between women and men was 17.5%, almost half of which was unexplained. - Women also continue to perform the majority of unpaid care work, which negatively affects their economic independence and social security. They remain underrepresented in decision-making bodies, while gender-based violence remains a major concern and the number of domestic violence cases continues to rise. Further challenges include sexual harassment in the workplace and cyberviolence.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland has introduced and strengthened several measures to advance gender equality. Quotas for extra-parliamentary commissions and federal government-associated businesses have been increased, and the proportion of women in management positions is growing. The country also operates the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and has strengthened legislation, including an obligation for perpetrators to wear an electronic ankle bracelet and the reform of criminal law on sexual offences concerning rape through the ‘No means No’ approach. - In 2025, the Federal Council adopted the second state report on implementation of the Istanbul Convention, while the first national prevention campaign against domestic, sexualised and gender-based violence was launched. - Internationally, Switzerland has integrated gender equality into its International Cooperation Strategy for 2021–24 and 2025–28, with approximately 80% of programmes and projects between 2021 and 2024 including gender-equality targets
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The major unresolved challenge is that progress towards gender equality remains too slow to achieve the relevant targets by 2030. Although federal agencies consider the equality targets realistic, the majority of external actors consider them somewhat unrealistic. Federal agencies are also less optimistic than in 2022 regarding the achievement of targets on real equality (5.1) and women’s participation in decision-making bodies (5.5). - The persistence of a 17.5% average pay gap, incomplete compliance by employers, women’s disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work, their underrepresentation in decision-making and the continuing rise in domestic violence demonstrate that substantial gender inequalities remain unresolved.



Score: 3

<i>Justification</i>	- Water protection is addressed in the VNR primarily through the protection and restoration of water bodies and the reduction of pressures on groundwater, surface waters and near-natural habitats. - The MONET 2030 indicator for target 6.6, concerning the natural state of water bodies, reports that 24% of watercourses were in an unsatisfactory ecomorphological state (1998–2006). The VNR states that no assessment of the trend is currently possible because there is no time series. - The VNR also reports that just under 20 km of waters were revitalised annually between 2012 and 2024, alongside progress in the ecological refurbishment of hydropower plants. Switzerland is therefore pursuing restoration and protection measures as part of its broader environmental and sustainable development framework.
<i>Challenges</i>	- The major challenge concerns the ecological condition of water bodies and the pace at which watercourse revitalisation is being implemented. The VNR reports that 24% of watercourses were in an unsatisfactory ecomorphological state during 1998–2006, and that there is no time series allowing an assessment of the subsequent trend. - The VNR further identifies continuing pressures from agriculture, infrastructure, energy production, invasive species and climate change. Water protection is also connected with the reduction of risks associated with plant protection products and the protection of groundwater, surface waters and near-natural habitats.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland has established legal and policy instruments to support the restoration and protection of water bodies. Between 2012 and 2024, just under 20 km of waters were revitalised annually, and work also progressed on the ecological refurbishment of hydropower plants. - The Action Plan for Plant Protection Products and the Pesticide Risk Reduction Act aim to halve the risks affecting groundwater, surface waters and near-natural habitats by 2027. These measures provide an important policy mechanism for reducing pressures on water ecosystems and improving the ecological condition of water bodies.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The principal unresolved challenge is the insufficient pace of watercourse revitalisation. The VNR states that implementation of revitalisation measures of approximately 20 km per year does not yet meet the target of 50 km per year. Federal agencies are consequently more pessimistic than in 2022 about target 6.6 concerning near-natural waters. - The absence of a time series for the indicator also means that the VNR cannot assess the trend in the proportion of watercourses in an unsatisfactory ecomorphological state. Thus, although Switzerland has established legal foundations and implemented revitalisation and risk-reduction measures, the scale and speed of implementation remain insufficient to fully address the outstanding challenge under SDG 6.

7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



Score : 4

<i>Justification</i>	- Affordable, reliable and sustainable energy is a central component of Switzerland's 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy (2030 SDS), particularly in the context of reducing energy consumption, improving energy efficiency and expanding renewable energy. - The VNR reports that final energy consumption was 77.8 gigajoules (GJ) per capita in 2024, with the indicator at 97.3% adequacy with the theoretical path towards the target of a 43% reduction compared with the 2000 level by 2035. Foreign energy dependency stood at 67.6% of gross energy imported in total supply in 2024, representing an 11.5% reduction since 2000.
<i>Challenges</i>	- Switzerland still needs to accelerate the expansion of renewable energy and improvements in energy efficiency to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 while maintaining a secure, economical and equitable energy supply. - The VNR identifies lengthy authorisation procedures for energy infrastructure, conflicts between nature conservation and energy requirements, and the energy-efficient refurbishment of existing buildings as major challenges. - Electrification also requires further progress, while solutions are needed to expand electricity networks, increase winter electricity generation and expand storage capacity. - The VNR also notes that commercial and in-house data centres already account for 3.6% of national electricity consumption, and this figure could increase further by 2030 as the sector grows. Emissions from new cars and vans also remain above the targets.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- The Energy Strategy 2050, supported by the Electricity Supply Act, Energy Act and CO₂ Act, aims to gradually phase out nuclear energy, expand renewable energy, increase energy efficiency and maintain a high level of security of supply. - Legislation on accelerated procedures now allows large solar, hydropower and wind energy plants to be constructed more quickly. - The Climate and Innovation Act (CIA) provides targeted measures to replace fossil fuels in buildings and industry. Furthermore, the Electricity Supply Act establishes a target of saving 2 terawatt hours (TWh) of electricity per year by 2035, particularly through efficiency obligations for electricity suppliers. - The VNR confirms positive progress, final energy consumption per capita in 2024 was 77.8 GJ, and the indicator for target 7.3 changed from unchanged to positive compared with the 2022 review.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The main unresolved challenge is the scale and speed of the energy transition. Although renewable energy reached 29.9% of energy consumption in 2024, and electricity generation from hydropower and new renewable sources showed a positive trend, the new renewable electricity indicator was only 67.3% in adequacy with the theoretical path towards the 2030 SDS goal of 17,000 GWh in 2035. - Switzerland must therefore continue accelerating renewable-energy deployment, energy efficiency and electrification while resolving infrastructure authorisation, grid expansion, winter electricity generation and storage constraints. The VNR emphasises that substantially more effort is required to achieve the objectives of the climate strategy.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Score : 4

<i>Justification</i>	- SDG 8 is important to Switzerland because sustainable economic development depends on productivity, employment, decent working conditions and the efficient use of resources. - The VNR reports that labour productivity reached 146.1 index points (1991=100) in 2024, representing an increase of 28.3% since 2000, with a positive trend. The VNR also links SDG 8 with sustainable production and resource efficiency. - The material footprint per capita declined from 20 tonnes to 15 tonnes between 2000 and 2023, a reduction of 26%. However, the VNR states that the rate of reduction is not sufficient to achieve the relevant target.
<i>Challenges</i>	- A major challenge is ensuring that economic growth and productivity improvements are accompanied by sustainable resource use. Although the material footprint has declined, the VNR states that the reduction at the current scale is insufficient. - The 2024 status report on the circular economy in Switzerland concludes that it is unrealistic to assume that the full potential for improvement can be realised by 2030. - The VNR also identifies uncertainty in the economic environment as a challenge. Geopolitical and trade-policy uncertainties, rising energy prices, the unsettled relationship between the EU and Switzerland, the shortage of skilled workers, cuts to innovation programmes and unresolved regulatory issues make long-term planning and investment in sustainable business practices more difficult.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland has made progress in strengthening the conditions for sustainable economic activity. The VNR reports that labour productivity reached 146.1 index points in 2024, up 28.3% since 2000. It also identifies progress in the circular economy, with the Federal Assembly adopting parliamentary initiative 20.433 on strengthening the Swiss circular economy in 2024. - The business sector contributes through greenhouse gas reductions in industry, investments in decarbonisation, circular-economy business models, cooperation along supply chains, sustainability training and engagement in political processes. The VNR also reports that the Business Cost Relief Act (BCRA) introduces new instruments, including sectoral studies to identify options for reducing the administrative burden on companies. - Internationally, Switzerland supports responsible business conduct and ILO programmes aimed at better working conditions, higher productivity and fairer wages. Through Swiss-funded projects, 800 SMEs in Ghana, South Africa and Vietnam increased their productivity between 2022 and the beginning of 2025, while 45,000 employees benefited from better working conditions.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The main unresolved challenge is achieving sustainable economic growth while substantially reducing resource consumption. Although the material footprint per capita fell by 26% from 20 tonnes to 15 tonnes between 2000 and 2023, the VNR states that this reduction is not sufficient to achieve the target. The VNR's assessment of target 8.4 is divided, while the 2024 circular-economy status report considers it unrealistic that the full potential for improvement can be realised by 2030. - Further challenges include the shortage of skilled workers, uncertain regulatory conditions, rising energy prices and the fragmented nature of business sustainability initiatives. SMEs in particular can be overwhelmed by unclear standards, reporting obligations and a lack of resources.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Score: 4

<i>Justification</i>	- SDG 9 is particularly relevant to Switzerland because innovation, research, digitalisation, infrastructure and resource efficiency are important drivers of its economy and sustainable development. The VNR identifies technological innovation, process digitalisation and increasing resource efficiency as areas in which the private sector has substantial potential to contribute further to the SDGs. - Swiss companies also have strong international positions in areas such as sustainable technologies, long-life-cycle industrial and construction products, and innovative services that reduce energy and material use. - Education, research and innovation are likewise identified as important drivers of sustainable development. Universities and research institutions have launched sustainability-related courses and projects, while innovation funding has focused on areas including the circular economy, mobility, food and defossilisation.
<i>Challenges</i>	- A key challenge is translating Switzerland's strong innovation capacity into sufficiently broad and coordinated implementation. The VNR states that business sustainability activities remain fragmented overall, with a lack of general overview and high-level coordination. SMEs can be particularly affected by unclear standards, reporting obligations and limited resources.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland has continued to promote technological innovation, digitalisation and resource efficiency. The VNR identifies the circular economy, sustainable technologies and innovative services as important areas of potential, particularly in sectors where Swiss companies have international expertise. Better networking between existing initiatives, consolidated industry solutions and a joint platform for enterprise support programmes, particularly for SMEs, are identified as further opportunities. - The BCRA has introduced new instruments, including sectoral studies to identify opportunities for reducing administrative burdens on companies. The VNR also identifies a reliable and affordable electricity supply, access to skilled foreign workers and stable funding as important conditions for economic development. - The education, research and innovation sector contributes through sustainability-related teaching and research, innovation-oriented start-ups, funding programmes and international cooperation, including participation in Horizon Europe. The VNR emphasises that stronger dialogue between researchers and policymakers could increase the impact of research and innovation.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The principal unresolved challenge is ensuring that innovation and infrastructure development are sufficiently coordinated, adequately funded and translated into widespread sustainable applications. The VNR identifies a continuing lack of coordination across business initiatives and limited integration of SMEs into sustainability processes. - Funding constraints are an additional unresolved issue. The VNR states that the 2027 budget relief programme jeopardises the continuity and necessary expansion of education and research projects. It therefore calls for improved financial and structural frameworks, stronger support for interdisciplinary and practice-based research and teaching, and greater dialogue between researchers and policymakers. - More broadly, the VNR concludes that technological change will require adjustments in infrastructure, the labour market, education and governance, while cooperation between the Confederation, cantons and communes and the consistent integration of sustainability goals into planning, budgeting and steering processes remain essential.

Score: 4		10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 
<i>Justification</i>	- Reducing inequalities is a significant priority in Switzerland's 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy, particularly through equal opportunities, social cohesion, participation and the integration of disadvantaged groups. The VNR reports that 26.5% of the population felt discriminated against in 2024, representing an increase of 23.2% since 2016, with a negative trend. Participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market was 37.1% in 2024, with no statistically significant change since 2010. - Differences also remain between people with and without a migration background. In 2023, the poverty rate was 9.1% for people with a migration background compared with 7.8% for people without a migration background, with no statistically significant change in the gap since 2014. In 2024, unemployment was 6.6% among people with a migration background compared with 2.6% among people without one.	

Challenges	- The VNR identifies discrimination as a continuing challenge despite legal protection. There are indications of structural discrimination in employment, housing, dealings with the authorities and naturalisation procedures, as well as in some areas of social security, policing and the justice system. Implementing anti-discrimination legislation remains difficult because of high procedural costs and a lack of instruments for recording multiple discrimination. - The integration of people with disabilities also remains challenging. Although participation in the Swiss labour market is high by international standards, the VNR reports no significant progress in the proportion in gainful employment despite numerous programmes and changes to legislation. The funding and permanent integration of low-skilled individuals also remain challenges under the Integration Agenda Switzerland (IAS).
Progress/ Solutions	- Switzerland has strengthened its institutional and policy response to inequality. The Confederation is implementing its Strategy against Racism and Anti-Semitism and an Action Plan to Combat Hate Crimes Against LGBTIQ Persons. Monitoring and baseline studies are being used to increase visibility of discrimination and identify possible approaches. - Switzerland has strengthened its institutional and policy response to inequality. The Confederation is implementing its Strategy against Racism and Anti-Semitism and an Action Plan to Combat Hate Crimes Against LGBTIQ Persons. Monitoring and baseline studies are being used to increase visibility of discrimination and identify possible approaches. - For persons with disabilities, the Confederation is implementing the 2023–26 Disability Policy and the partial revision of the Federal Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against People with Disabilities (DDA). The planned Federal Act on promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities is intended to support greater self-representation and participation. - The (IAS) remains the principal instrument for supporting refugees and provisionally admitted persons, with measures covering language, education and labour-market integration. It is implemented through cantonal integration programmes providing targeted integration support.
Unsolved Challenges	- The principal unresolved challenge is that inequality and discrimination remain widespread despite existing legislation and programmes. The proportion of people reporting discrimination increased to 26.5% in 2024, 23.2% higher than in 2016, while the participation rate of persons with disabilities in employment remained at 37.1% in 2024, with no statistically significant change since 2010. - The VNR also identifies persistent disparities associated with migration background. In 2023, the poverty rate was 9.1% for people with a migration background and 7.8% for those without one, with no statistically significant change in the gap since 2014. The VNR therefore indicates that stronger and more effective implementation is still required to achieve greater equality and inclusion.



Score: 4

Justification	- SDG 11 is particularly important for Switzerland because three quarters (75%) of the Swiss population live in urban areas. Cities therefore play a key role in implementing sustainable development, while the Confederation, cantons, cities and communes increasingly cooperate to integrate the SDGs into local development strategies and projects. - Affordable and suitable housing is a central concern. The VNR reports that housing costs accounted for 32.2% of the budget of the lowest-income 20% of households, compared with 8.8% for the highest-income 20% of households, for the period 2020-2021. There was no statistically significant change since 2015-2017.
Challenges	- The principal challenge is the increasing shortage of affordable housing. The VNR states that affordable housing is in increasingly short supply in urban centres and tourist regions. The rising number of households combined with only a slight increase in housing supply is worsening the situation. In mountain tourist regions, the housing shortage also creates an economic problem because workers can no longer settle in these areas, thereby exacerbating local labour shortages. - Housing inequalities also affect specific groups. Structural discrimination makes access to housing more difficult for people affected by racism. People with disabilities face limited freedom of choice because of the lack of affordable, barrier-free housing and often lower incomes. For people with a travelling lifestyle, available transit sites cover only half of the demand.
Progress/Solutions	- Under Measure 16 of the 2030 SDS Action Plan, all levels of government worked together to develop an Action Plan to Combat the Housing Shortage. The action plan seeks to respond to the worsening housing shortage and promote more affordable, needs-based housing. A 2024 round table involving all levels of government, the construction and real estate sector and civil society agreed on the action plan. - Switzerland has also strengthened cooperation between the Confederation, cantons, cities and communes. The Tripartite Conference, comprising the Confederation, the Conference of Cantonal Governments, the Swiss Union of Cities and the Association of Swiss Communes, adopted the 2030 Agenda as a focus topic for 2022–26. In 2022, the Cantonal Sustainable Development Network (CSDN) was established, comprising 22 of the 26 cantons, to promote cooperation and reciprocal learning.
Unsolved Challenges	- The most significant unresolved challenge is affordable housing. The VNR reports that housing costs remain disproportionately high for lower-income households, at 32.2% of the budget for the lowest-income 20%, compared with 8.8% for the highest-income 20% during 2020-21, with no statistically significant change since 2015- 2017. - The SDGital 2030 assessment is particularly concerning: federal agencies consider it ‘very unrealistic’ that target 11.1 on access to affordable housing will be achieved, and they are more pessimistic than in 2022. Although the Action Plan to Combat the Housing Shortage has been developed, the VNR states that its impact will only become apparent in the coming years.

Score: 3	
Justification	- SDG 12 is a major priority of Switzerland's 2030 SDS, which places sustainable consumption and sustainable production among its three priority themes. The VNR reports that the per-capita material footprint fell by 26%, from 20 tonnes to 15 tonnes between 2000 and 2023. Although the trend is moving in the right direction, the VNR states that the reduction at the current scale is insufficient to achieve the target. - The VNR also reports that 70.4% of consumers were aware of the environmental impact when buying small electrical devices and 43.6% when buying food in 2023. However, the time series is too short to assess the trend. In 2024, 3.9% of net revenue from mineral oil tax was refunded to companies, representing an increase of 52.7% since 2002 and a negative trend.
Challenges	- The VNR identifies the continuing high use of natural resources and the limited availability of environmentally friendly products and services as major challenges. Although companies are working to improve resource efficiency, the transition from analysis to implementation remains particularly important in value chains with heavy environmental impacts. - SMEs are not sufficiently integrated into these processes and there is still a major lack of basic knowledge. - The circular economy also faces significant limitations. Secondary raw materials accounted for only approximately 15% of material consumption in 2023. At the same time, although Switzerland has achieved high recycling rates for several types of waste, the volume of waste per capita has increased. The recycling rate for plastics was only 10%.
Progress/ Solutions	- The Federal Assembly adopted parliamentary initiative 20.433 on strengthening the Swiss circular economy in 2024. Revisions to the Federal Act on the Protection of the Environment, the Energy Act and the Federal Act on Public Procurement have strengthened the legal framework for the transition towards a resource-friendly, regenerative economy. - Cantons and communes are increasingly developing strategies, funding programmes and platforms to promote the circular economy, while many communes are introducing more sustainable waste-management systems. - Switzerland has also taken measures to promote sustainable consumption through environmental assessment data, awareness-raising and responsible procurement. The Confederation and cantons support public and private organisations in introducing responsible procurement processes.

Unsolved Challenges	- The 2023–2027 Strategy for Chemical Safety strengthens inter-institutional coordination and the alignment of legal provisions with scientific findings. The VNR also identifies the CIA and the revision of the CO₂ Act as additional instruments supporting the transition towards a net-zero economy. - The main unresolved challenge is reducing resource consumption at a sufficiently rapid rate. Although the per-capita material footprint decreased by 26%, from 20 tonnes to 15 tonnes between 2000 and 2023, the VNR considers this reduction insufficient to achieve the target. Consequently, federal agencies and the majority of external actors consider achievement of the target on the sustainable use of natural resources somewhat unrealistic by 2030. - The circular economy also remains incomplete. Secondary raw materials accounted for only approximately 15% of material consumption in 2023, plastics recycling was 10%, just over 10% of companies had adopted comprehensive circular practices, and around 27% had closely integrated the circular economy into their strategy. The VNR further reports that, according to the 2024 status report on the circular economy in Switzerland, it is unrealistic to assume that the full potential for improvement can be realised by 2030. - A further unresolved issue concerns fossil-fuel incentive. In 2024, 3.9% of net revenue from mineral oil tax was refunded to companies, an increase of 52.7% since 2002. Although Switzerland has taken steps to reduce such subsidies, the VNR notes that their continued existence has negative environmental impacts.
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13 CLIMATE ACTION



Score: 3	
Justification	- Climate action is one of the three priority themes of Switzerland's 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy, alongside sustainable consumption and production and equal opportunities and social cohesion. The VNR reports that Switzerland's greenhouse gas emissions were 41.3 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent in 2024. This represented 61.8% adequacy with the theoretical path towards the target of reducing emissions by 50% compared with the 1990 level by 2030, with the trend assessed as unchanged. - Climate-related risks are also increasingly relevant to Switzerland. In 2024, damage caused by natural disasters amounted to CHF 905.1 million. The VNR also reports that 85.6% of the population in 2023 had an assessment of the dangers associated with climate change; however, no assessment of the trend is possible because of a break in the time series.
Challenges	- The principal challenge is reducing greenhouse gas emissions sufficiently rapidly to meet Switzerland's climate objectives. The VNR states that Switzerland must reduce emissions to net zero by 2050, while also adapting to the effects of climate change. The transition requires action across climate, energy, agriculture and food, negative emission technologies, tourism, soil and forest management. - Climate adaptation is also challenging because climate-related impacts affect different sectors and regions. The VNR identifies the need for improved climate protection and adaptation measures, while new climate scenarios are required to support evidence-based planning. The 2025 Climate CH2025 scenarios provide a basis for climate adaptation and climate protection and are to be regularly updated.

Progress/ Solutions	- Switzerland has established a comprehensive policy framework for climate mitigation and adaptation. The CIA, adopted in 2023, enshrines the objective of reducing Switzerland's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. The CO₂ Act provides specific measures, including the CO₂ levy on fossil fuels, the buildings programme, emissions regulations for vehicles and offsetting obligations for importers of fossil fuels. - The Adapt+ funding programme, launched in 2025, supports the co-financing of climate-adaptation projects. The national Climate Programme also promotes skills-building among specialist staff and managers and provides cities and communes with information and advice on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. - At the international level, Switzerland presented its second nationally determined contribution in January 2025, committing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 65% by 2035 compared with 1990 levels. Between 2022 and 2024, Switzerland contributed an average of CHF 772 million per year to climate financing from public and mobilised private sources. It is also providing CHF 15 million per year between 2025 and 2028 to the Paris Agreement Adaptation Fund.
Unsolved Challenges	- The principal unresolved challenge is that emissions reductions are not yet progressing sufficiently quickly. With 41.3 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent in 2024, the indicator was only 61.8% in adequacy with the theoretical path towards the 2030 target, and the trend was assessed as unchanged. - The VNR therefore indicates that significantly stronger action is required to achieve the climate targets. The need to combine emissions reduction with adaptation, while addressing climate impacts across energy, agriculture, transport, buildings, tourism, soil and forests, remains a substantial challenge. The VNR's overall assessment is that progress on climate action is still insufficient to achieve the ambitious SDG targets by 2030.



Score: 4	
Justification	- For Switzerland, SDG 14 is addressed principally through its contribution to international marine biodiversity governance and the protection of water-related ecosystems, rather than through a domestic marine environment. The VNR records Switzerland's active participation in negotiations concerning the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), which was adopted under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 2023. Switzerland also supports the global 30by30 target, which aims to secure at least 30% of land and marine areas worldwide for biodiversity by 2030. - The VNR also recognises that Switzerland's environmental impacts extend beyond its borders through international supply chains and consumption patterns. The report treats such cross-border environmental impacts as spillover effects, which are an important component of policy coherence for sustainable development.

Challenges	- A major challenge identified by the VNR is the limited progress towards stronger international measures for protecting marine biodiversity and reducing pollution. In the ongoing UN process concerning an agreement on plastic pollution, the VNR notes that oil states and the USA have rejected global measures regulating plastic products and potentially hazardous chemicals. The VNR also reports that discussions at UNEA-7 showed a somewhat modest level of ambition. - The VNR further identifies geopolitical tensions and disagreements over scientific evidence as factors hampering environmental progress. Scientific findings are increasingly being questioned as a basis for political decision-making when they do not correspond to particular political orientations.
Progress/ Solutions	- Switzerland supported the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) to counter biodiversity loss and actively participated in negotiations on the BBNJ Agreement, adopted in 2023. These actions demonstrate Switzerland's contribution to international frameworks for protecting biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. - Switzerland also helped ensure that follow-up work on chemicals was agreed upon and that new scientific findings were taken into consideration. In 2025, Switzerland's initiative and support contributed to the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP). The panel is intended to facilitate informed, science-based decisions and strengthen instruments for the sustainable management of chemicals and waste.
Unsolved Challenges	- The main unresolved challenge is the limited level of international ambition and the difficulty of achieving agreement on stronger global measures to protect marine biodiversity and address plastic and chemical pollution. The VNR notes that geopolitical circumstances are hampering environmental progress and that the level of ambition demonstrated at UNEA-7 was somewhat modest. - The VNR does not provide a separate domestic quantitative indicator or numerical target for SDG 14. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to attribute a specific Swiss marine-area percentage, pollution level or marine trend to the VNR beyond the 30by30 global target explicitly cited in the report. Switzerland's remaining challenge is consequently centred on strengthening international cooperation and science-based governance for marine biodiversity and pollution.

15 LIFE ON LAND



Score: 4

Justification	- Biodiversity is one of the principal environmental priorities of Switzerland's 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy. The VNR reports mixed developments in the conservation of native species and ecosystems. For meadow and pasture biocoenosis diversity, the index for 2019-2023 was 59.9 for plants, 59.9 for mosses and 46.7 for molluscs, with a negative overall evolution of all three indexes since 2000. At the same time, populations of breeding birds reached 109.4 index points (1990=100) in 2025, representing an increase of 6.4% since 1990 and a positive trend. - The VNR also reports that 6.7% of Swiss territory was protected at Federal level in 2024, an increase of 25.5% since 2000. Biodiversity-related expenditure reached CHF 614 million in 2024, an increase of 101.6% since 2011.
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Challenges	- The condition of biodiversity remains unsatisfactory, particularly in areas where land use is intensive. The VNR reports that pressures from agriculture, infrastructure, energy production, invasive species and climate change continue to grow or remain high. The situation is described as particularly critical in bogs and wetlands. - Invasive alien species are another major challenge. The VNR records 174 invasive alien species in 2020, representing an increase of 33.4% since 2000 and a negative trend. Several cantons and communes identify combating invasive species as a major challenge. - Land consumption and soil sealing also continue to place pressure on ecosystems. Soil sealing affected 5.0% of Swiss territory in 2018, representing an increase of 39.9% since 1985, with a negative trend.
Progress/ Solutions	- Switzerland has established the Swiss Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with a first phase covering 2017–24 and a second phase covering 2025–30. The second phase contains new measures to integrate biodiversity targets into spatial planning, agriculture and transport policy. - Additional funding for nature and biodiversity in forests has been included in programme agreements between the Confederation and the cantons. The legal basis for dealing with invasive alien species has also been strengthened. Biodiversity-related expenditure reached CHF 614 million in 2024, showing a 101.6% increase since 2011. - Switzerland has also expanded protected areas. In 2024, 6.7% of Swiss territory was protected at Federal level, an increase of 25.5% since 2000. For water-related ecosystems, just under 20 km of waters were revitalised annually between 2012 and 2024.
Unsolved Challenges	- The most significant unresolved challenge is the continuing deterioration of biodiversity despite increased expenditure, protected areas and strengthened legal and policy instruments. The VNR states that action taken to date is not enough, particularly for bogs and wetlands, while pressures from agriculture, infrastructure, energy production, invasive species and climate change remain high. - The SDGital2030 assessment considers the target of conserving native species (15.5) somewhat unrealistic for both federal agencies and external actors. The target relating to biodiversity, ecosystem services and invasive species (15.8) is also viewed more pessimistically by federal agencies than in 2022, because established invasive species are almost impossible to eradicate despite strategies and legal changes. - Land-use pressure remains unresolved as well. Soil sealing reached 5.0% of Swiss territory in 2018, up 39.9% since 1985, and continues unabated. Federal agencies consider the target on reducing land use (15.3) somewhat unrealistic, while impairments to soil quality remain almost impossible to gauge. - Finally, the VNR notes that several cantons and external actors criticise the slow implementation of biodiversity measures and the lack of adequate political frameworks. Although legal foundations exist, they are not sufficiently implementable, while human and financial resources are in short supply at all levels.

Score: 4

Justification	- SDG 16 is important within Switzerland's sustainable development approach because the VNR identifies peace, security, democracy and good governance as fundamental conditions for sustainable development. The international environment has become more challenging: according to the V-Dem Democracy Report, in 2024, 72% of the world's population lived under autocracies, the highest figure since 1978, covering 26 of the priority countries for Switzerland's international cooperation. The VNR also reports that the Global Peace Index fell for the tenth consecutive year in 2024, while around one quarter of the world's population lives in conflict-affected areas. - For Switzerland, peacebuilding, mediation, democratic governance and the integrity of institutions are therefore important elements of its contribution to sustainable development. Switzerland's role as a host state and mediator provides an important platform for international cooperation and conflict resolution.
Challenges	- The principal challenge identified by the VNR is the weakening of democratic principles and good governance in an international environment in which institutions are under pressure and authoritarianism is gaining ground. The 72% share of the world's population living under autocracies in 2024, together with the decline in the Global Peace Index for the tenth consecutive year, demonstrates the increasingly difficult environment in which Switzerland is seeking to promote peace and democracy. - Switzerland also faces challenges associated with its position as a major international financial centre. The VNR identifies exposure to illicit financial flows linked to money laundering, corruption, fraud and tax evasion. Because of the strong international integration of the Swiss financial centre, there is a particular risk of it being used for money laundering associated with predicate offences committed abroad. - The VNR also highlights the wider challenge of maintaining effective multilateral cooperation amid geopolitical tensions and increasing restrictions on financial and political room for manoeuvre.
Progress/ Solutions	- Switzerland continues to use mediation, humanitarian aid and the deployment of civilian and military experts as instruments for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Its international cooperation also addresses structural causes of conflict by promoting equitable access to basic services and better prospects for populations affected by instability. - The Bürgenstock Summit on Peace in Ukraine in 2024 brought together nearly 100 high-ranking delegations and was the largest peace conference Switzerland had ever organised. The VNR also reports continued demand for Swiss mediation services, including new and sometimes confidential mandates relating to domestic conflicts. - Switzerland used its seat on the UN Security Council in 2023–24 to promote comprehensive peace and security. Climate security was one of its four priorities, and Switzerland successfully advocated for climate risks to be considered more systematically in peace and security issues. Their integration into seven recent resolutions enabled climate risks to human security to be anticipated more fully, including in West Africa and the Sahel. - Switzerland also published the Guidelines on Democracy 2025–28 in 2025, defining objectives for its democracy-promotion work and foreign-policy instruments. The Guidelines seek to strengthen democratic institutions and processes, particularly in countries where democracy is still developing or facing challenges.

<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The principal unresolved challenge is the deterioration of the international peace and governance environment. The VNR records that 72% of the world's population lived under autocracies in 2024, while the Global Peace Index declined for the tenth consecutive year and around one quarter of the world's population lived in conflict-affected areas. These conditions make progress towards sustainable peace, effective institutions and democratic governance increasingly difficult. - Illicit financial flows also remain an unresolved concern. Although Switzerland implements international standards and measures covering the exchange of information in tax matters and administrative and legal assistance, its position as a highly integrated financial centre creates continuing exposure to money laundering associated with offences committed abroad. - The VNR therefore emphasises the continuing importance of mediation, international cooperation, democratic institutions and stronger multilateral approaches rather than suggesting that these challenges have been resolved.
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17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Score: 4	
<i>Justification</i>	- SDG 17 is particularly important for Switzerland because the country is highly integrated into the international economy and international institutional system. As a medium-sized economy with limited natural resources and a small domestic market, Switzerland is dependent on international trade and therefore places strong emphasis on sustainable trade, responsible business conduct and partnerships with developing and newly industrialising countries. - International cooperation is one of Switzerland's principal foreign-policy instruments for addressing global challenges including poverty and social inequality, climate change, pandemics, migration and conflict prevention. Under the International Cooperation Strategy 2025–28, Switzerland supports partner countries in advancing sustainable development across the economic, environmental and social dimensions. - International Geneva is another major partnership platform. It hosts 46 international organisations, representations from 185 UN member and observer states and around 460 NGOs, creating an ecosystem for international standards, dialogue and innovative solutions.
<i>Challenges</i>	- The main challenge for SDG 17 is the weakening international environment in which partnerships must operate. The VNR identifies geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, protectionism and industrial-policy interventions as factors that increasingly work against multilateralism and open markets. Switzerland nevertheless continues to advocate clear rules and close cooperation within the multilateral trading system. - A significant challenge is also the reduction in resources available for international cooperation. As part of measures to stabilise the federal budget in the longer term, funding commitments for international cooperation were cut by CHF 150 million in 2024, while further reductions of over CHF 400 million are planned between 2025 and 2028. - The VNR also identifies difficulties in maintaining the capacity of International Geneva amid UN reforms. At the same time, sustainable development requires stronger cooperation across governments, international organisations, civil society, business, finance and academia.

<i>Progress/ Solutions</i>	- Switzerland continues to participate actively in multilateral negotiations, international conferences, UN organisations and development banks through seats on steering committees and financial contributions. - In 2024, Switzerland, Costa Rica, Iceland and New Zealand signed the Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability (ACCTS). The agreement provides for liberalisation of trade in environmental goods and services, restrictions on fossil-fuel subsidies and higher-quality environmental labels. It establishes high and binding standards linking trade and environmental policies and is expected to expand through the accession of further WTO members. - Switzerland also promotes public-private partnerships for sustainable economic development. For example, the SDG Impact Finance Initiative (SIFI) aims to mobilise CHF 1 billion in private funding by 2030. In 2024, CHF 15.7 billion flowed from Switzerland to middle-income countries and CHF 0.09 billion to least developed countries as capital outflows. Between 2004 and 2024, Swiss direct investment abroad averaged CHF 29.5 billion per year, of which CHF 7.9 billion was invested in developing countries. - International cooperation also supports practical partnerships. Swiss-funded projects enabled 800 SMEs in Ghana, South Africa and Vietnam to increase their productivity between 2022 and the beginning of 2025, while 45,000 employees benefited from better working conditions. - Switzerland is also strengthening International Geneva. The Federal Council is providing an additional CHF 269 million for the 2026–29 period to support International Geneva.
<i>Unsolved Challenges</i>	- The central unresolved challenge is maintaining strong international partnerships while financial resources and geopolitical space for cooperation are becoming more constrained. The reduction of international-cooperation funding by CHF 150 million in 2024, followed by planned reductions of over CHF 400 million between 2025 and 2028, creates additional pressure on Switzerland's capacity to support global implementation of the 2030 Agenda. - The VNR also identifies wider systemic challenges to partnerships, including geopolitical tensions, protectionism and weakening multilateralism. These conditions make international cooperation more difficult precisely when global challenges require stronger collective action. - A further unresolved issue is ensuring that financial flows consistently support sustainable development. Although Switzerland aims to consolidate its position as a leading centre for sustainable finance and has set the CHF 1 billion private-funding mobilisation target by 2030 through SIFI, the VNR notes that the financial sector remains exposed to fossil-fuel-related risks. The 2024 PACTA test showed that the financial sector remained exposed to companies operating in the fossil-fuel sector despite encouraging progress.

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

Major Challenges

- **Uneven progress towards the 2030 Agenda:** Switzerland has made progress in several areas, but the VNR identifies important gaps and states that action needs to be accelerated to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

- **Climate change and emissions reduction:** Greenhouse gas emissions were **41.3 million tonnes** CO₂ equivalent in 2024, corresponding to only **61.8%** adequacy with the theoretical path towards the 2030 target. Achieving net zero by 2050 therefore requires substantially stronger action.
- **Biodiversity loss:** In 2019/2023, the meadow and pasture biocoenosis diversity indexes were **59.9** for plants, **59.9** for mosses and **46.7** for molluscs, with a negative evolution since 2000. The VNR considers achieving the target on conserving native species by 2030 somewhat unrealistic.
- **Affordable housing:** Housing costs represented **32.2%** of the budget of the lowest-income **20%** of households, compared with **8.8%** for the highest-income **20%** in 2020/21. The VNR reports that the target on access to affordable housing is considered ‘very unrealistic’ by federal agencies.
- **Inequality and discrimination:** **26.5%** of the population reported discrimination in 2024, an increase of **23.2%** since 2016. Participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market was **37.1%** in 2024, with no statistically significant change since 2010.
- **Resource consumption:** Switzerland’s per-capita material footprint declined by **26%**, from **20** tonnes to **15** tonnes between 2000 and 2023, but the VNR considers the reduction insufficient to achieve the relevant target.
- **Circular economy:** Secondary raw materials represented only approximately **15%** of material consumption in 2023, while the recycling rate for plastics was **10%**.
- **International cooperation and financing:** International cooperation faces financial pressure, including a reduction of CHF **150 million** in 2024 and planned further reductions of over CHF **400 million** between 2025 and 2028.
- **Multilateralism and geopolitical uncertainty:** Geopolitical tensions, protectionism, economic uncertainty and increasing international fragmentation are making collective action and implementation of the **2030 Agenda** more difficult.

Key Lessons Learned

- **Localise the SDGs:** Switzerland demonstrates the value of involving cantons, cities and communes in implementing the **2030 Agenda** rather than relying exclusively on national government action.
- **Use multi-level governance:** Cooperation between the Confederation, cantons and communes can help translate national sustainability objectives into local implementation.
- **Integrate sustainability into existing policies:** The Swiss experience shows the importance of embedding SDGs into national strategies, legislation, budgeting and sectoral policies rather than treating them as a separate policy agenda.
- **Use evidence and indicators:** Switzerland’s use of MONET 2030 and the SDGital2030 assessment provide a structured basis for identifying progress, stagnation and areas where targets are unlikely to be achieved.
- **Be transparent about gaps:** A key lesson is the value of acknowledging areas where progress is insufficient. The VNR does not present the SDGs only as achievements but identifies targets that are considered ‘somewhat unrealistic’ or ‘very unrealistic’.
- **Strengthen partnerships:** Switzerland demonstrates the importance of bringing together government, business, academia, civil society and international organisations in implementing sustainable development.

- **Combine domestic action with international engagement:** Switzerland links its national sustainability policies with international cooperation, mediation, climate finance, sustainable finance and multilateral diplomacy.
- **Use financial instruments to support transformation:** Initiatives such as SIFI demonstrate how public and private finance can be connected to sustainable development objectives.
- **Build institutional continuity:** The establishment of structures such as the CSDN in 2022, involving **22** of the **26** cantons, illustrates how institutional networks can support knowledge-sharing and implementation.
- **Focus on impact rather than reporting alone:** Switzerland's experience supports moving from formal SDG reporting towards identifying high-impact levers, strengthening local implementation and ensuring that policies produce measurable outcomes. This emphasis was also highlighted by Switzerland at the 2026 HLPF.

Notable Contribution

- **Climate policy – 2023–25:** The CIA, adopted in 2023, established the objective of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Switzerland submitted its second nationally determined contribution in January 2025, committing to reduce emissions by at least **65%** by 2035 compared with 1990.
- **Renewable energy – 2024:** Renewable energy accounted for **29.9%** of energy consumption in 2024, representing an increase of **61.1%** since 2000.
- **Energy efficiency – 2024:** Final energy consumption was **77.8** GJ per capita in 2024, with the indicator at 97.3% adequacy with the theoretical path towards the 2035 target.
- **Biodiversity financing – 2024:** Biodiversity-related expenditure reached CHF **614 million** in 2024, an increase of **101.6%** since 2011.
- **Protected areas – 2024:** 6.7% of Swiss territory was protected at Federal level in 2024, representing an increase of **25.5%** since 2000.
- **Water revitalisation – 2012–24:** Switzerland revitalised just under **20 km** of waters annually between 2012 and 2024.
- **Circular economy – 2024:** The Federal Assembly adopted parliamentary initiative 20.433 on strengthening the Swiss circular economy in 2024, strengthening the legal basis for a more resource-efficient economy.
- **Peacebuilding – 2024:** The Bürgenstock Summit on Peace in Ukraine in 2024 brought together nearly **100** high-ranking delegations and represented the largest peace conference organised by Switzerland.
- **International development – 2022–25:** Swiss-funded projects supported **800 SMEs** in Ghana, South Africa and Vietnam to increase their productivity between 2022 and the beginning of 2025, while **45,000** employees benefited from improved working conditions.
- **International Geneva – 2026–29:** The Federal Council is providing an additional CHF **269 million** for 2026–29 to support International Geneva.
- **Sustainable finance:** The SDG SIFI aims to mobilise CHF 1 billion in private funding by 2030 for sustainable development.

Recommendations

- Accelerate implementation towards 2030, particularly in areas where the VNR identifies unchanged or negative trends.
- Prioritise high-impact interventions in climate action, biodiversity, affordable housing, inequality, resource consumption and circular economy.
- Strengthen local implementation by giving cantons, cities and communes adequate resources, data and institutional capacity to implement the SDGs.
- Increase coordination across policy areas because climate, biodiversity, energy, food, housing, consumption and social inequality are interconnected.
- Protect long-term sustainability financing, particularly where budget reductions could affect international cooperation, research, education, biodiversity and civil-society activities.
- Scale up the circular economy by increasing the use of secondary raw materials, reducing material consumption and improving plastic recycling beyond the 10% recorded in 2023.
- Accelerate biodiversity protection, particularly for ecosystems experiencing continuing pressure from agriculture, infrastructure, energy production, invasive species and climate change.
- Increase affordable housing supply and strengthen measures addressing the disproportionate housing burden on lower-income households.
- Strengthen inclusion and equality, with particular attention to persons with disabilities, people with a migration background and groups experiencing discrimination.
- Maintain and strengthen multilateral partnerships despite geopolitical tensions, protectionism and reductions in international-cooperation resources.
- Mobilise more private finance for sustainable development, building on the SIFI objective of mobilising CHF 1 billion by 2030.
- Strengthen science, innovation and emerging technologies as tools for sustainable development, while ensuring appropriate governance, trust and ethical safeguards.
- Improve policy coherence by systematically considering domestic and cross-border impacts of Swiss consumption, production, trade and financial activities.
- Continue transparent VNR reporting by distinguishing clearly between achievements, areas of limited progress and targets that are unlikely to be achieved by 2030. This provides other countries with a more realistic basis for accelerating SDG implementation.

Conclusion

Switzerland's 2026 VNR demonstrates that the country has established strong institutional, policy and financial foundations for sustainable development, but that progress remains uneven across the SDGs. Positive developments include the increase in renewable energy to **29.9%** of energy consumption in 2024, CHF **614 million** in biodiversity-related expenditure in 2024, and the protection of **6.7%** of Swiss territory at Federal level in 2024. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions from **41.3 million** tonnes CO₂ equivalent in 2024, addressing the affordability of housing, reducing inequality and discrimination, accelerating biodiversity protection and achieving more sustainable resource consumption. The VNR also highlights growing geopolitical and financial pressures on international cooperation, including planned reductions of

over CHF 400 million between 2025 and 2028. Overall, Switzerland's experience demonstrates the importance of evidence-based monitoring, multi-level governance, international partnerships and sustained financing, while emphasising that stronger and faster implementation is required to ensure that progress is sufficient to achieve the **2030 Agenda**.

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Report Team

- Professor Allam Ahmed (**Leader**)
- Professor Arshi Naim (**Senior Researcher**)
- Nada Yousry (**Graphic Design**)
- Kumar Kaurav (**Web Master**)

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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