



VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2020

FINLAND

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Voluntary National Review 2020 FINLAND

Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Prime Minister's Office

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1 Opening statement by the Prime Minister

Dear reader

You are holding Finland's second Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The first one was submitted to the United Nations in 2016, among the first countries. A lot has happened since then, in Finland and globally. This report aims to capture the main achievements, key changes, existing challenges and emerging issues, as well as lessons learned between 2016 and 2020 in Finland.

One of the evident lessons learned has certainly been that matters can take an unexpected turn. This report was finalized under exceptional circumstances. COVID-19 pandemic has caused upheavals around the world, including Finland, and can cause further challenges for the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. In Finland, the pandemic has required many urgent changes and measures to Government's short-term economic, health-care, education, security and mobility policies, among others. However, the sustainable development goals and long-term intergenerational thinking will remain as the basis of sustainable well-being in Finland. The aim of the current Government is to transform Finland into a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society by 2030.

The value added of the 2030 Agenda lies in its comprehensiveness and interconnectedness. Economic growth needs to benefit the people and planet. Climate action needs to improve peoples' health and wellbeing and create new economic prosperity and jobs. Wellbeing of people and societies should be created without harming the environment.

Our report focuses on progress in all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets. For us, it has been important to discover those goals and targets where we have

succeeded, but also recognize the remaining gaps that need more efforts to overcome. In the VNR 2020, we are also proud to introduce new approaches for intensified stakeholder participation. Government officials have carried out the overall responsibility for the work, but we have also invited several stakeholders to provide their own assessment on the progress. This has proven to be a very uplifting exercise, increasing trust and mutual understanding in the Finnish society.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted almost five years ago. The theme of this year's HLPF '*Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*' implies that it is a high time to boost implementation and deliver progress. Governments need to demonstrate their commitment to accelerated action and transformative change.

This report confirms that Finland is committed in accelerating action and finding transformative pathways to sustainable development signposted by Agenda 2030. Come and join us on this journey!

Sanna Marin

Prime Minister of Finland

2 Highlights

For easy reference, each chapter of the VNR report includes a summary of the key changes and lessons learned between the years 2016–2020.

Review process

The VNR of Finland builds on existing institutional, follow-up and monitoring mechanisms and relies on data, evaluations, research and reports. The VNR includes chapters written by stakeholders and institutions. The assessment of the progress in each SDG consists of two independent assessments: one by Government officials and one by civil society actors. The Governments of Mozambique and Switzerland supported Finland in the preparation of the VNR by reviewing the draft report and sharing their views.

Progress on SDGs

Finland is at the forefront of many international sustainability comparisons and studies and close to reaching many of the SDGs related to social and economic sustainability. Finland's key challenges are related to consumption and production patterns, climate action and the state of biodiversity. Obesity is an increasing problem. Gender equality challenges, such as gender-based violence and labour market disparities, including a gender pay gap, still remain. Finland bears its global responsibility by, for example, contributing to international crisis management and supporting developing countries.

Addressing interlinkages

Discussion on the importance of the interlinkages has increased in Finland. Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government programme is based on a phenomenon based strategic objectives, which supports cross-sectoral approach and aims at addressing interlinkages in an effective manner.

All line Ministries are included in the Sustainable Development Coordination Network, thus enhancing Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development through sectors. All Ministries have also submitted in four consecutive years their yearly reports to the Parliament on the policies and measures to achieve the SDGs in their respective policy branches.

Leaving No One Behind

Universal social security and service systems, as well as good educational opportunities for the entire population, have prevented exclusion. Persons belonging to visible minorities and persons with disabilities continue to experience discrimination in different areas of life. National legislation and policy actions promoting equality and preventing exclusion aim to ensure equal opportunities for all.

Finland pursues a human rights-based foreign and security policy. Finland has achieved good results in strengthening the rights of women and girls, promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, advancing the rights of persons with disabilities and enabling developing economies to offer more jobs and livelihoods. The role of civil society actors is essential in reaching vulnerable people at home and abroad.

Integration on SDGs into national processes and policies

National implementation plans are submitted to the Parliament as Government Reports. The first implementation plan was prepared in 2017. The current Government is preparing the second plan. The Government and Parliament engage in regular dialogue on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the National Audit Office has integrated the 2030 Agenda into its audit programmes.

A sustainability assessment has been integrated into annual cycle of policy planning, budgeting and reporting of the Government. Since 2018, Finland has taken notable steps in sustainable development budgeting. The integration of environmental sustainability into policy has proven easier than the integration of social sustainability. Some line ministries have adopted the 2030 Agenda as a guiding framework to their strategies. The 2030 Agenda has also been integrated into national research programmes and innovation ecosystems.

Good practices

A multi-stakeholder approach is highly valued in Finland. Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development is a practical tool for anyone in Finland to participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with concrete action. It is one of Finland's key instruments for engaging the whole of society: the public sector, businesses, civil society and private individuals.

Finland's long tradition of participatory mechanisms and shared ownership has evolved over the years. The National Commission on Sustainable Development continues to provide a platform for the Government and a broad range of stakeholders to jointly advance sustainable development in the Finnish society. The engagement of youth, the private sector and cities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has further increased. Three forerunner cities have prepared Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs). The region of Åland has integrated the SDGs into its core strategies.

The previous Government commissioned an independent evaluation of national sustainable development policy, which provided input for the current Government's programme. The next evaluation will take place in 2023.

Innovative institutional mechanisms support national implementation. The Expert Panel for Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda Youth Group have taken a prominent role. The national follow-up system includes innovative participatory elements, such as the Citizen panel.

Challenges encountered

Finland's biggest challenges in the SDG implementation are related to the need for changes in consumption and production patterns, climate action, and the conservation of biodiversity. Finland has not been able to restore its ODA to the level preceding the cuts in 2016.

Challenges remain in ensuring that all the phases of the policy cycle are interconnected in a systematic way: policy planning should guide the preparation of the budget, and reporting should clearly indicate how the Government has succeeded in the allocation of resources into policy areas that promote sustainable development in a desired manner.

Policy coherence and trade-offs pose a significant challenge, and trade-offs are often very difficult to reconcile even when identified. Spillovers would need to be better measured and understood.

3 Introduction

Finland submitted its first Voluntary National Review to the United Nations in 2016, among the first Governments. In that report, Finland presented its preparedness to take serious action to implement the 2030 Agenda by introducing the institutional mechanisms, tools and plans that were already in place or needed to be established. It also highlighted Finland's baseline in relation to the SDGs and described where the biggest strengths and weaknesses in the implementation lied. The first VNR was a useful report in compiling all the ideas and plans into one document providing a future roadmap. In addition, it served as an effective tool to communicate on the 2030 Agenda throughout society.

In 2017, the Government of Finland made the decision to report on its progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development every four year. The VNR2020 is thus providing a comprehensive overview of progress made since the first Voluntary National Review.

In this report, Finland is following the guidelines by the United Nations as regards the structure and headlines of the report. The core content of the report includes the science-based analysis on the progress on goals and targets (Chapter 6) where all the 17 SDGs and 169 targets are assessed. This assessment will give a very detailed picture of Finland's performance in the implementation: where we have succeeded and where there are gaps to overcome.

The specific flavour in Finland's VNR2020 comes from the broad engagement of key stakeholders in the preparation of the report. For over 25 years, multi-stakeholder participation has been the Finnish way to enhance sustainable development throughout society. The existing mechanisms, like the National Commission on Sustainable Development and the Finnish Development Policy Committee, have been the backbone for stakeholder engagement also in the preparation of this report.

In addition, the VNR2020 includes new approaches for intensified participation, most pertinent being the invitation by the Government to several stakeholders to provide

their own assessments on the progress made as part of the VNR report. This invitation was received by civil society, cities, business organisations and regional authorities. For example, over 50 actors of civil society, including NGOs and trade unions, have assessed Finland's performance on every SDG. VNR also includes chapters written by the Sámi people, the only indigenous peoples' group in the continental territory of the European Union. Their status as an indigenous people is enshrined in the Constitution of Finland. Also Åland, which is an autonomous, demilitarized and Swedish-speaking archipelago off the southwest coast of Finland, has contributed to the report on Åland's approach and measures to the 2030 Agenda.

Another innovation in the VNR2020 is the Peer Dialogue with Mozambique and Switzerland. Finland asked the Governments of Mozambique and Switzerland to review the draft report and the preparatory process. The Peer Dialogue followed a very light procedure, but the external view and recommendations were extremely useful for Finland in finalizing the report.

National follow-up and review system has been in place in Finland for four years now, including a set of national indicators for sustainable development that complement the global SDG indicators. This system has been the foundation of evidence-based systematic monitoring of the national policies and measures. As part of the mechanism, the first national comprehensive Sustainable Development Policy Evaluation after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda was published in February 2019. This evaluation report provided valuable input to the preparation of the Finnish VNR2020, as did several other national and international assessments, evaluations and reports.

The Finnish model for sustainable development is based on high-level political leadership, participation of stakeholders in the policy-making, decisions based on multidisciplinary science, and solutions that aim to integrate the three dimension of sustainable development in a coherent and mutually supportive manner. These cornerstones of the Finnish model are supported by the institutional structures and innovative mechanisms and tools, including the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Network, Prime Minister led National Commission on Sustainable Development, Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development and Expert Panel on Sustainable Development.

Finland has integrated the 2030 Agenda, the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the Kyoto Protocol into its development policy. Integration of climate change has been one of the cross-cutting objectives of Finland's development policy and development cooperation since 2012. Finland is also fully committed to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports its custodian, the UN office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

Finland works towards a reduction of disaster risk and losses in all its work to facilitate development.

Nationally, the 2030 Agenda is the framework for many national strategies, plans and policies in Finland, including Government's Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda. However, the Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development remains a challenge, not only regarding the policy sectors horizontally, but also when it comes to Finland's policies and measures in international and European Union cooperation.

4 Methodology and process for preparation of the review

4.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- The 2030 Agenda has become well known in Finland. This has significantly helped the preparation of this second VNR. Guidelines and support from the UN have given clear structure for the preparation, and made it possible to start the preparations in good time.
- The 2030 Agenda is at the core of the mandates of the National Commission on Sustainable Development and Finland's Development Policy Committee, so they were well prepared to contribute to the VNR.
- In four years time, many international benchmark studies and reports have been prepared and national statistical reports and evaluations have become available. National follow up and review mechanisms are in place. The availability of data, evaluations, research and reports has provided a strong evidence base for the VNR.
- Following Finland's participatory approach, civil society actors have been invited to present their independent assessment of Finland's progress in each SDG, alongside with the assessments of state authorities. Moreover, the VNR includes several CASE-chapters written by different stakeholders.
- In a country-level Peer Dialogue, the Governments of Mozambique and Switzerland commented a draft version of the VNR and gave valuable support to its finalisation.

4.2 Preparation of the VNR

The Prime Minister's Office has been responsible for the coordination and compilation of this second Voluntary National Review of Finland. The first VNR was submitted to the UN in 2016, and Finland is committed to reporting to the UN on a regular basis, every four to five years.

The Prime Minister's Office prepared an engagement plan and roadmap for the preparation of the VNR in September 2019, and preparations have followed this plan (Figure 1). All Ministries have been involved in the preparation by official requests and through Inter-Ministerial coordination Network composed of Ministries' sustainable development focal points (7, 8, 22). Also, an official editorial board was established to support the preparation (3). The VNR has been discussed in the meeting of Permanent Secretaries and approved in the meeting of the Government (20). The VNR has also been discussed in an official meeting of the Committee for the Future in the Parliament (17).

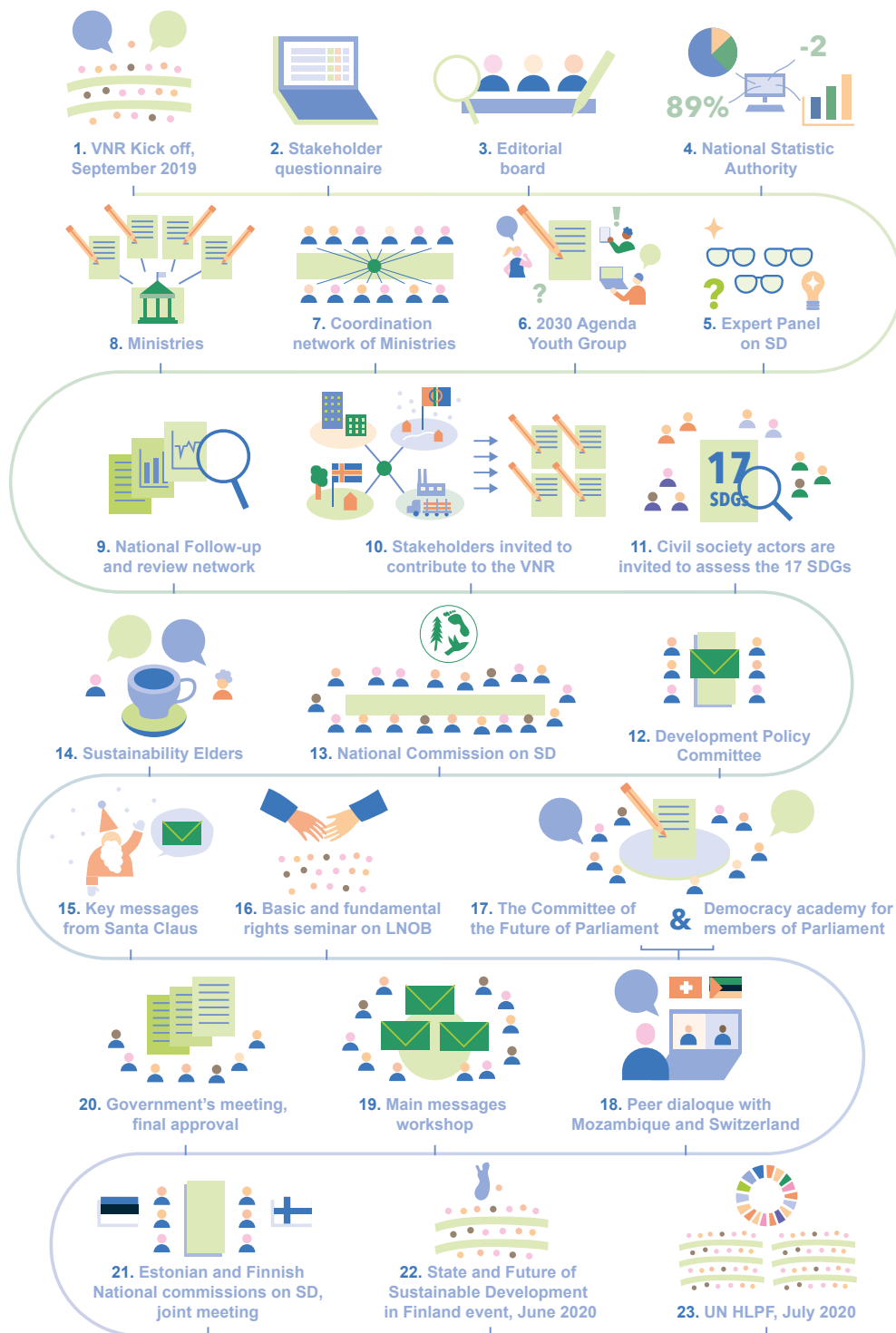
In addition, the two national Commissions that are mandated to oversee the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland – National Commission on Sustainable Development and Finland's Development Policy Committee – are in key position in channelling the views of civil society and other stakeholders to the report. The VNR 2020 process started in September 2019 by a joint meeting of these two multi-stakeholder bodies (1), followed by multiple seminars, workshops, consultations and meetings, including a 'VNR key messages' workshop (19) with different stakeholders groups (2, 12, 13, 22). Moreover, the expertise of the two key advisory bodies of the National Commission on Sustainable Development, the Expert Panel on Sustainable Development (5) and the 2030 Agenda Youth Group (6), was utilized along the process. Specific advice was asked from the group of Sustainability Elders (14) and the Santa Claus himself (15).

The Finnish VNR relies on existing data and recently published evaluations, research studies and reports, which have been made out by several independent bodies like Finnish National Audit Office, national statistical authorities and other institutions (4, 5, 9, 22). A specific seminar on basic and fundamental rights was organized to advise the Prime Minister's Office on critical issues regarding LNOB in Finland (16).

Like in 2016, Finland's VNR process 2019–2020 has been based on existing sustainable development participation mechanisms and structures. However, this time the level of participation and ownership has been taken even further: the stakeholders have not only been consulted, but invited to independently write parts of the report (10).

The essence of this VNR is the assessment of progress in each SDG. In this report, each SDG progress description consists of two independent assessments: one made by state

Figure 1. How Finland prepared the VNR
Engagement of the main stakeholders into the process



authorities and statistical office (4, 8), the other made by a group of civil society actors (11). The national development NGOs umbrella organisation Fingo was invited by the Prime Minister's Office to take the lead in bringing together the views and reflections of the civil society on the SDG progress to be incorporated into Finland's VNR2020.

All together 57 Finnish civil society actors participated in the process of estimating Finland's performance on all the 17 SDGs, from few to up to 12 actors on each goal. They represent different actors of the Finnish civil society, from small to big ones, from trade unions or national umbrella organizations of social sector to CSOs mainly working on development cooperation or smaller activist-based actors.

The aim was to give voice to the non-governmental actors in the official report, and thereby strengthen the dialogue between the Government and the civil society in Finland.

The use of participatory mechanisms is the backbone of Finland's follow-up and review functions. Finland has established an interactive and participatory national follow-up and review mechanisms (9), which enable multi-stakeholder discussions on the progress, as well as on gaps and prospects for future development. This participatory mechanism (indicators, Citizens Panel, State and Future of SD –events) is an opportunity to bring sustainable development related data, trends and challenges into wider public debate and knowledge. The data gathered from the follow-up and monitoring system was used when composing this VNR.

In order to prepare an inclusive report that contains views and feedback from peer countries, Finland invited Mozambique and Switzerland to give comments on the preparation and content of the report (18). This Peer Dialogue was an opportunity to exchange good practices as well as to provide comments and recommendations for further improvement of the report. It also reflects Finland's participatory process in preparing the VNR report. A short summary of comments and recommendations from Mozambique and Switzerland is included in the report, see chapter 4.3. In addition, a peer learning session was organized between the National Commissions on Sustainable Development of Finland and Estonia (21).

4.3 Main messages from the Peer Dialogue

A Peer Dialogue day with the Governments of Mozambique and Switzerland was held in 26 March 2020.

Switzerland's main messages from the Peer Dialogue

- We greatly appreciate Finland's initiative to conduct a peer dialogue and feel honored to have been invited to discuss and share experiences together with Mozambique. We consider that the exchange of practices and mutual learning are crucial elements to advance the 2030 Agenda and accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.
- The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland is characterized by a remarkable leadership up to the highest political level and benefits from broad public knowledge and support. The well-established institutional set-up allows for close cooperation between all relevant government units, among different levels of governance, and with non-governmental partners. There seems to be a genuine ownership and impressive commitment for sustainable development in Finland, not just for the sake of elaborating a VNR. This is very well reflected in the broad-based institutional structures, as well as in the diversity of initiatives, programmes and projects related to the SDGs.
- While the 2030 Agenda is considered a guiding framework by most line ministries and is integrated into sector strategies accordingly, dealing with trade-offs and policy incoherencies seems to remain a challenge. Attempts to address these potential dilemmas often need to be referred to the political level, despite the existence of well-established cooperation mechanisms. This indicates that policy coherence poses challenges to all countries – even to those who are best positioned, like Finland – and needs to be further addressed as a key issue for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- The approach of not only presenting the Government's assessment of the SDG performance but mirroring it with an analysis by civil society is innovative and merits special attention. It shows a high level of mutual trust and clear interest from the part of the Government to include other voices. This is something that could be replicated by other countries and become an international best practice. In this regard, the report could benefit from a more detailed description of the methodology, including on how representatives were chosen, what the assessments were based on and how trends were determined.
- The cooperation with non-state actors seems to have been developed very strongly over the years. While civil society and scientific experts seem much involved, the role of the private sector in terms of activities and financing for development could be considered and reflected more broadly.
- There is quite a strong focus on environmental aspects which might be linked to Finland's goal of carbon neutrality by 2035. While this dimension is considered a priority

and acted upon by Government and stakeholders, it risks to overshadow some social and especially economic aspects of sustainable development. Challenges remain in order to find a balance between all three dimensions of sustainable development and mainstream them throughout the implementation of all SDGs, including when it comes to budgeting and means of implementation.

- The global responsibility for implementing the SDGs is well reflected in the report, although it is usually limited to development cooperation. In the interests of broader policy coherence, it would be relevant to also examine other aspects of international cooperation (e.g. trade policy) and to focus more specifically on spillovers of domestic policies on other countries.
- The local level, in particular cities, plays a crucial role in sustainable development. Strong progress by Finnish municipalities can be observed since 2016, even if they do not always directly link their activities to the SDGs or necessarily label them as such. The ambition of (larger) cities to take a lead on sustainability aspects shows a lot of potential – at national level but also for stronger international cooperation among cities. Finland could be encouraged to promote this aspect of cooperation even more prominently at national and international level.
- Regarding the statistical annex, it would have been interesting not only to present the facts, but also to have a more in-depth analysis on the evolution of some specific indicators.

Mozambique's comments to the VNR of Finland

The first draft of the Finland VNR Report showed a broad horizontal and vertical participatory process, involving public authorities, civil society, the productive sector, academia, in addition to international partners.

- The discussion and involvement beyond the governmental are generate an engagement of different sectors and creates a favourable environment for the country to act in promoting the 2030 Agenda and in the commitment to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
- We appreciate positively the new approaches adopted by Finland to ensure intensification of participation, so that the stakeholder have not only been consulted, but also given the task of writing parts of the report:
 - The invitation by the Government to several stakeholders (NGOs, cities, business organizations, Sámi people, Åland and regional authorities) to provide their own assessments on the progress made as part of the VNR report. As result, some specific chapters of Finland VNR were written by other stakeholders and Civil Society.
 - The new approaches include the Peer Dialogue with other Member State countries (Mozambique and Switzerland), which are part of the same process of 2020 VNR, by asking their contributions to the report.

- To ensure the participatory principle that is recommended, out of the above mentioned, the Finland VNR has been discussed in the meeting of Permanent Secretaries and in the meeting of the Government. The VNR has also been discussed in an official meeting of the Committee of the Future in the Parliament, which is so positive from our point of view.
- On the other hand, we also congratulate the Government of Finland of having many international benchmark studies and indicator reports already in place and the availability of national statistical reports and evaluations (existing data, recently made evaluations, researches and reports, which have been made by several independent bodies like Finnish National Audit Office, national statistical authorities and other institutions) to be used as evidence for VNR, which makes the Finland VNR more credible.
- We kindly appreciate the Report Structure adopted, especially by incorporating Key changes / Lessons learned on it, thereby enabling everybody to share what is going on in Finland as part of implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- In understanding that the VNR document circulated for our comments is not the last version, it is important to call your attention to the need for an orthographic reduction for the last version.

Our institution congratulates the Government of Finland and all technical staff for the quality of your VNR document.

5 Policy and enabling environment

5.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- Government and all main stakeholders have included the 2030 Agenda into their work stronger, also citizens have better knowledge on the 2030 Agenda.
- The interest of private sector in the 2030 Agenda has increased significantly. This applies specifically to big companies. Most of the biggest companies have mapped and studied their actions against SDGs, and many of them have started to integrate SDGs into their strategies and daily businesses.
- In 2016, there were no established mechanisms to maintain the dialogue between the Government and the Parliament. In four years time, a strong interaction and official mechanism to enhance the dialogue between the Government and the Parliament has been built. The Committee for the Future is the Committee responsible of the 2030 Agenda issues in the Parliament.
- National Audit Office has integrated the 2030 Agenda into their audit programmes.
- The 2030 Agenda Youth Group has become an established practice; young people are represented in all main institutional setups.
- Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development has evolved, and five Green Deals have been negotiated between the Government and industry sectors.
- Keeping up the momentum is important and requires constant work. The members of the Government and the Parliament change every fourth year, so the new members have to be updated on the 2030 Agenda at regular intervals.

5.2 Creating ownership of the SDGs

5.2.1 Whole of Government Approach

(Whole of Government approach and national architecture are also dealt with in Chapters 5.6. Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and 5.9 Institutional Mechanisms.)

Government

Government has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland. The Prime Ministers of different Government Coalitions have been leading the work of the National Commission on Sustainable Development since 1993. The first national implementation plan for the 2030 Agenda was submitted to the Parliament in 2017 by the Government of the Prime Minister Juha Sipilä. The Government of the Prime Minister Sanna Marin is currently preparing the second plan. Moreover, both Governments have engaged in reporting to the United Nations in the form of the Voluntary National Review, first in 2016 and now again in 2020. Finland is committed to submit its VNR to the HLPF every four to five years.

All line Ministries are included in the Sustainable Development Coordination Network, thus enhancing Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development through sectors. All Ministries have also submitted in four consecutive years their yearly reports to the Parliament on the policies and measures to achieve the SDGs in their respective policy branches.

Parliament

The Finnish Parliament's Committee for the Future has functioned as the parliamentary committee responsible for 2030 Agenda matters. The Committee for the Future prepares parliamentary replies, also known as committee reports on the 2030 Agenda, to the Government. The Committee also monitors the implementation of the measures required by Parliament in its reports by issuing resolutions on the Government's Annual Reports and budget proposals in relation to the 2030 Agenda themes. Other parliamentary committees also issue their statements to the Committee for the Future as part of drafting Parliament's position on the Government Report on the 2030 Agenda. During the drafting process, all committees consult with experts and also arrange public consultations allowing wider participation by stakeholders. Some public consultations have been arranged as joint meetings of several committees, with a view to contributing to the policy coherence included in the 2030 Agenda.

The Committee for the Future has also commissioned background reports on various areas of sustainable development when drafting the committee report on the 2030 Agenda. The Government Reports, Annual Reports and Budgets have provided excellent tools for building an active and participatory dialogue between the Government and the Parliament and raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda among Members of Parliament. Awareness has also been raised by organising 'morning coffee meetings' for internal parliamentary stakeholders to discuss topical issues related to the 2030 Agenda as part of the Committee for the Future meetings. The Committee for the Future has also highlighted the objectives and measures specified in the Government Report on the

2030 Agenda and the parliamentary reply in its own statements to other parliamentary committees in the context of various matters, such as EU technology policy, with a view to enhancing policy coherence and effectiveness of the 2030 Agenda Action Plan in Parliament's legislative work.

CASE: Political decision-making and the 2030 Agenda **text by Demo Finland – Political Parties of Finland for Democracy**

Democracy underpins the 2030 Agenda. Democratic principles, such as accountable institutions and inclusive and representative decision-making are among the SDG targets. Furthermore, they also lay the basis for achieving all the other goals. However, despite the importance of democracy, it appears only once as a word in the vision section of the 2030 Agenda text and is not included in the actual SDGs.

The 2030 Agenda also acknowledges the crucial role of national Parliaments in promoting sustainable development through their legislative and budgetary powers and their accountability role over Governments. Political parties are key players in Parliaments, but they also play a broader societal role in improving the political participation of citizens and promoting equality and inclusion. This role played by political parties has so far received little attention in relation to the 2030 Agenda. When political parties enhance their capacity in representing citizens and engaging in multiparty dialogue for the common good, they advance better governance and sustainable development. Political parties are thus critical agents in shaping the direction of their countries and should be more active and visible in the 2030 Agenda.

With the support of the Finnish Government, Demo Finland – Political Parties of Finland for Democracy – develops the capacity of decision makers in Finland and six partner countries in Asia and Africa. The programmes of Demo Finland and its partners strengthen equal opportunities in political participation and parties, build constructive cross-party cooperation, promote pluralistic political debate and enhance politicians' ability to peacefully influence societal development.

In the partner countries Demo Finland supports schools of politics, in which politicians in developing democracies are trained extensively in essential elements of multiparty democracy. This work also builds parties' capacities to take an active role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda is one of the topics, for example, in the training organized by the Myanmar School of Politics (MySoP) for state-level politicians. In November 2019 MySoP held gender equality training for women politicians from five states. In the training the participants discussed Myanmar's commitments in the monitoring and reporting of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the correspondence between the SDGs and Myanmar's National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women. ►

Most of the participants had not been familiar with the 2030 Agenda before the training. National level goals and commitments provide a framework for policies and political initiatives as well as for monitoring the actions of national level governments at the local level.

Demo Finland also supports a school of politics also in Tunisia. In the Tunisian School of Politics, the 2030 Agenda has been included in the curriculum of youth politicians.

The programme in Finland follows a similar logic. In February 2020, Demo Finland organized a Democracy Academy for the youth and student wings of the parliamentary parties. In the Academy, participants representing the leadership of the youth and student organizations entered in multiparty dialogue on issues related to the 2030 Agenda. The topics covered included Finland's implementation model, Finland's strengths and challenges in sustainable development and how each party relates to the 2030 Agenda. In the discussions, participants from across the political party spectrum highlighted trust in democratic institutions as a clear strength of Finland, while challenges were identified in polarisation of public debate. One representative from each party also joined a study trip to Tunisia in which experiences in 2030 the implementation of the 2030 Agenda were shared with the participants and alumni of the Tunisian School of Politics. ●

National Audit Office

Audit offices are globally committed to supporting the 2030 Agenda process by producing audit information about the subject area. Within its audit mandate, the National Audit Office of Finland (NAOF) has also adopted sustainable development as a target of more long-term monitoring efforts. Indeed, Finland's first Government Action Plan for implementing the 2030 Agenda (2017) identified NAOF audits as part of the official four-year monitoring and evaluation cycle. The National Audit Office published an audit report on the national administrative model for sustainable development in 2019¹. Furthermore, it is currently developing a model for integrating the Sustainable Development Goals as part of all external auditing, which is also drawing international interest.

5.2.2 Whole of Society Approach

National Commissions for Sustainable Development

Finland has a long tradition in engaging the civil society and other stakeholders in the sustainable development work. The key mechanism has been the multi-stakeholder National Commission for Sustainable Development, which has operated continuously

1 <https://www.vtv.fi/app/uploads/2019/10/NAOF-Audit-14-2019-Promoting-sustainable-development.pdf>

for 27 years under Prime Minister's leadership. The National Commission is an influential sustainable development forum bringing together key actors in the Finnish society. It is based on a unique hybrid model, combining high-level political leadership with wide-ranging participation by civil society and other societal actors.

Minorities, for example the indigenous Sámi people and the Swedish speaking autonomous region Åland island, have been members of the National Commission from the beginning. Since 2016, the Commission has been complemented by some other groups that are at risk of being left behind in national discussions, in particular the disabled and immigrants. The 2030 Agenda Youth Group was established in 2017 to better integrate the voice of children and youth to the national implementation. Women groups have been actively involved from the original Rio Conference in 1992.

The Commission promotes cooperation in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and strives to integrate the strategic objectives of sustainable development into the national policy, administration and societal practices.

The Commission was re-appointed for a new four-year term in February 2020. Prime Minister of Finland, Ms. Sanna Marin is leading the work of the Commission and its 57 members that come from all spheres of the society.

During its new term, the Commission is tasked to speed up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, it will participate in the preparation of the National Roadmap of the 2030 Agenda, to be prepared by 2023. The Roadmap will describe the measures Finland is taking in order to meet the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and define a schedule for achieving them. The Commission will also monitor and assess the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland.

Another key task of the Commission is to promote, monitor, assess and communicate the results of the national Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development – The Finland We Want by 2050. Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development includes a shared long-term vision, policy principles and objective for the Finnish society to transform into a sustainable society by 2050.

Development Policy Committee

Another important multistakeholder body that contributes to sustainable development in Finland is the Development Policy Committee (DPC). It was appointed for the first time in 2003 as an advisory body in relation to Finland's development policies. The Government appoints a new Development Policy Committee for each government term.

The most recent term started in January 2020. The Committee's key aim is to strengthen the effectiveness of development policy and to promote discussion on development policy at national and, in particular, parliamentary levels. All parliamentary parties and key stakeholders in development policy contexts are represented in the Committee. During its term of office in 2020–2023, the Committee will focus on Finland as a partner for the 2030 Agenda and for the Paris Agreement on climate change, as well as on safeguarding continuity in development cooperation. In addition, the Committee continues to promote policy coherence that supports sustainable development.

In November 2019, the Government issued a Decree on the Development Policy Committee. The Decree lays down provisions on the purpose, duties, term of office, membership, Secretariat and decision-making of the Committee. Nowadays, the Secretariat of the Committee has a permanent status. Since 1 January 2020, it has operated in connection with the Under-Secretary of State responsible for development policy and development cooperation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The National Commission on Sustainable Development and the Development Policy Committee work tightly together in order to enhance coherence between the implementation measures nationally and in international cooperation. The two bodies organise joint meetings and workshops. The Secretaries General of both bodies are also permanent experts in each other's Commission/Committee.

Expert Panel on Sustainable Development

The first national Expert Panel on Sustainable Development was set up in December 2013 as an experiment of the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, which took the role of coordinator. Seven experts representing different fields of research and expertise were invited to build a dialogue. The panel found its place as an independent and critical scientific voice in the Finnish sustainable development policy sphere and created practices for interdisciplinary dialogue in sustainability issues. It supported the work of the National Commission on Sustainable Development and exchanged knowledge regularly with the Prime Minister's Office. The panel published blogs, discussion papers and a policy brief and conducted a benchmark study of different science-policy models in sustainability in Europe.

Once the model for science-policy interaction in sustainability issues was created, it was time to find it a new home. Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science², the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) and the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), three organisations that are all highly engaged in sustainability research and implementation

² <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/helsinki-institute-of-sustainability-science>

of SDGs, started to host the panel at the beginning of 2019. An open call for nominations was addressed to Finnish universities, research institutions and knowledge users, and ten experts were nominated. The panellists are active scientists in the Finnish society. Together they bring economic, social, technological, ecological and cultural viewpoints as well as a voice from different regions across Finland to the common pool of the panel.

In its work, the panel promotes societal change that takes into account both the environment and human wellbeing; identifies issues where contradictory goals complement and support each other; carries out foresight development and strengthens long term decision-making. Through a constructive dialogue, the panel acts by challenging both the policy making and public debate. The panel seeks collaboration with other science panels of Finland, the Climate Panel and Nature Panel, and joined the European Network of the Councils of Environmental and Sustainable Development from the start of 2020 and plans to contribute with its strong interdisciplinary capacity to related work in the European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC).

In practice, the panel may participate in debates in which sustainability is discussed: in parliament or parliamentary committees; within academia, in schools, in open seminars and workshops; in events organised by private companies and in the media. During autumn 2019 the panel analysed the future pathways of the Finnish Sustainable Development Policy using the framework of six entry points and four levers introduced by the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR2019). The work has been led by the chair of the panel, professor Eeva Furman, who was one of the authors of the GSDR.

Although the main goal of the panel is to support the sustainability transformations especially in Finland, the panel also acknowledges its global interconnections and responsibility. International collaboration in both research and policy is a necessary element, and therefore the panel is committed to acting internationally, sharing Finland's experiences and learning from others.

The 2030 Agenda Youth Group

The Agenda 2030 Youth Group was established in 2017 on the initiative of the then Vice-Chair of the National Commission on Sustainable Development. Young people's involvement in implementing sustainable development policy had been found too limited, to the extent that appointing a single youth delegate for sustainable development was not enough to address the issue.

The Youth Group has two roles:

1. To spur the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development in its work and to bring young people's voices to sustainable development policy processes and public debate;
2. To inform other young people of the Sustainable Development Goals and themes in their various networks, such as schools and leisure activities.

The Agenda 2030 Youth Group consists of 14 members aged 15 to 28, living all over the country. Group members are selected by Finnish Youth Cooperation Allianssi. The group started its third term in January 2020.

Right from the start, it has been important for the Youth Group to have sufficient autonomy on what they will do and what matters they will promote. A top-down agenda and programme will not produce the desired results. The only mandatory and regular form of activity is attending the meetings of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development. A group member will always play an official role at Commission meetings, such as acting as co-chair or a panellist or addressing the meeting. Group members have felt that this has provided a suitable formal structure to its activities, as well as an opportunity to bring important themes and messages to the attention of all the relevant parties involved in sustainable development.

In addition to the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, group members are also actively involved as speakers and participants in the central government's sustainable development policy processes. Whether it is drafting the Climate Change Act, budgeting for sustainable development, improving communications about development cooperation or acting as HLPF Youth Delegates, the Agenda 2030 Youth Group provides a suitable way to engage young people in a diverse process of drafting sustainable development policy.

The group also plays an active role as a participant in public dialogue. Chairs and members of the Youth Group participate in various stakeholder events, give interviews to the media and produce content for their social media channels. In the autumn of 2019, for example, the group created a series of three video clips, where group members interviewed Finnish Members of the European Parliament on food security, biodiversity and hate speech.

The group's major achievements lie in climate work. On 2 March 2019, the group organised Finland's first youth climate conference, the 'Our Climate 2030' event held at Finlandia Hall, drawing in 500 young Finns from across the country. At the event, the group also issued the 'Our Climate 2030' statement drawn up in cooperation with twenty civil society organizations (CSOs), which was used in the spring national and European parliamentary elections. The event itself addressed climate change as a broad theme

from the perspective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The event also attracted plenty of media attention.

The Agenda 2030 Youth Group members feel that setting up the group has improved young people's engagement in sustainable development policy. However, they point out that it is only a small group of young people and, despite their best efforts, its members have come from fairly homogeneous backgrounds. In other words, they do not feel that they represent Finnish youth as a whole. They find that the best part of the group's existence is the fact that it has brought young people at the centre of sustainable development decision-making processes, placing them on an equal footing with other parties as contributors to sustainable development. *In 2020, the 2030 Agenda Youth Group was recognized in the UN Human Rights Council's report of good practices regarding the right to a healthy environment.*

5.2.3 Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development engages the whole of society



Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development is one of Finland's key instruments for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It functions as a long-term sustainable development strategy for the Finnish society up until 2050. In addition, it provides an implementation tool³ for anyone in Finland who wants to participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with concrete action.

Work on the operational commitments is a unique way to bring together the public sector, businesses, civil society actors and private individuals.

By making operational commitments, the actors commit themselves to doing their part in attaining the set objectives. The operational commitments include concrete measures, changes in operating procedures and innovative trials that promote the shared objectives and that can be carried out in 1 to 10 years. Through these concrete commitments, operators can take part in the promotion of all or just some of the shared objectives both in Finland and globally. By making a commitment, the actors participate in the national implementation of both, the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and 'Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development – Finland We Want 2050'. All the commitments are available to the public in the Sitoumus2050.fi online platform.

Operational commitments entail few simple criteria: they should create something new, be measurable and follow the principles of sustainable development set in the Society's Commitment. After publishing the operational commitment, the organisations can invite

³ https://sitoumus2050.fi/en_US/web/sitoumus2050/home#/

other organisations to join their commitment. All organisations are also asked to report regularly on the progress of their operational commitment.

When Finland gave its first VNR in 2016, there were altogether around 300 operational commitments. Now, in 2020, over 1 000 different organizations and almost 1 500 private citizens have made their commitment to sustainable development. This includes 130 municipalities, over 400 private companies ranging from small businesses to big, even multinational companies, and 118 civil society actors. Furthermore, six industrial branches, Trade, Finance, Media, Energy, Marine and Forest industry, have made comprehensive industry wide commitments (see case examples below).

Operational Commitments (Sitoumus2050.fi) has evolved even further:

A Green Deal is a national voluntary agreement between the State and a body representing the business and industry sector or e.g. the municipal sector. The aim is to take joint action to promote the sustainable development goals. Green Deals seek solutions to matters such as climate change and promoting circular economy in Finland. The agreements may contribute to better implementation of the legislation or complement the law. For example, the objectives set in the agreements may be stricter than in the law or certain objectives may be achieved without further regulation.

The parties to the agreement make a commitment to reach ambitious and monitorable targets towards achieving environmentally and socially significant impacts. Green Deals seek outcomes that can be reached in a relatively short term, and the agreement also sets out the practices to monitor them. Green Deals are not concluded with individual companies but larger organizations, such as an industry representative. Individual companies can then join a Green Deal by making a commitment linked to it at the Sitoumus2050.fi⁴ platform.

Thus far, there are five Green Deals made;

- Plastic Bag Deal to decrease usage of plastic bags
- Automotive Deal to decrease CO₂ emissions from traffic and especially new cars
- Oil Waste Deal to increase recycling of oil waste.
- Construction Machine Deal to switch more electricity based machinery.
- Demolition Waste Deal to increase circular economy in the construction industry.

Nutrition commitment helps and encourages food business operators and stakeholders to improve the nutritional quality of the Finnish diet and to encourage nutritionally

⁴ https://sitoumus2050.fi/en_US/tietoa-green-dealista/

responsible practices. A nutrition commitment can be made in eight different content areas, such as the amount of salt or sugar, where significant changes should be achieved under the nutrition recommendations. These are all areas where major service design and reformulation work is required to improve the dietary habits of the population.

By making Nutrition commitments in the Sitoumus2050.fi⁵ platform, the actors in the food industry help realizing the nutrition recommendations set by the public administration. Over 50 different Nutrition commitments have been made, majority of them by private companies who produce food products but also restaurants and food markets have made their commitments.

How to get **citizens** on board? The **Sustainable Lifestyles -service**⁶ has been opened in the context of Sitoumus2050 –service (Sitoumus2050.fi). The Sustainable Lifestyle service enables Finns to pursue a more sustainable everyday life. Users can first calculate their personal carbon footprint and then draw up a personal plan to cut the footprint in half by choosing suitable actions from a list of smart choices. Every individual plan contributes to the national emissions reduction target and makes every action count. The service is based on a Lifestyle Test developed by the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra. After two years in operation, over 900 000 Finns have calculated their own carbon footprints. This adds up to approximately 20% of the adult population in Finland. Almost 1 500 Finns have made a personal plan in Sitoumus2050 –service to lower their carbon footprint, with an average commitment of a 22% smaller carbon footprint. All these commitments add up to a reduction of 2 000 000 CO₂e. The service is publicly accessible through an open source code. The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra and the Prime Minister's Office of Finland are willing to assist interested partners who would like to adapt the service to their national context.



5 https://sitoumus2050.fi/en_US/tietoa-ravitsemussitoumuksesta/

6 https://sitoumus2050.fi/en_US/lifestyles#/ (please, use another browser than IE)

The Sitoumus2050 tool and platform was evaluated⁷ in a Government’s assessment⁸ in 2017. The assessment stated that the Sitoumus2050 -tool is a very effective way to promote sustainable development in a society. In a survey, 97 % of those who had made an operational commitment said that the commitment furthers sustainable development in their work and 92 % said that the commitment helps to become a forerunner in sustainable development. The evaluation recommended that the platform on operational commitments needs to be further developed. In addition, the great number of success stories would deserve to be known more widely.

CASE: Media and marketing industries literacy commitment text by Media and marketing industry

The media and marketing industries have made a joint umbrella commitment entitled *We respect young readers*, using the Commitment2050 tool. Under their commitment, media companies work together to develop young people’s literacy and skills in an increasingly digital and complex world and promise to respect young readers in all their operations.

The media industry’s literacy commitment responds to the objectives of ‘a participatory society for citizens’ and ‘equal prospects for wellbeing’ included in the Finnish Society’s Commitment to Sustainable Development. It reflects concern about young Finns’ deteriorating literacy and the view of the key role of the media in supporting media and literacy skills.

The umbrella commitment was drawn up in cooperation between the Finnish Periodical Publishers’ Association, the Finnish Newspapers Association and IAB Finland. Over 20 media and marketing companies have signed up for the commitment, but some are yet to give their own commitments.

The commitment of *We respect young readers* challenges parties in the media and marketing communications industries to take young audiences into account more effectively. Its aim is to promote young people’s inclusion and literacy skills through concrete action. The commitment encourages media companies to consolidate their role as media educators and to consider whether their contents cover enough topics relevant to young people and whether the media also gives a voice to young people to a sufficient extent. Among other things, media companies are committed to take on more interns, consult with young experts, write about topics that are important to young people, and provide information about the media’s operating methods and journalistic decisions. ●

⁷ https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/current-issues/article/-/asset_publisher/10616/organisaatiot-pitavat-toimenpidesitoumusta-hyvana-tapana-edistaa-kestavaa-kehitysta

⁸ <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-287-454-2>

CASE: Marine Industry's ResponSea commitment

text by Marine Industry

The Finnish marine industry is known for its extensive delivery network, which operates as a whole to provide sustainable end products, such as cruisers. The Finnish industry association, Finnish Marine Industries, challenged the entire network of marine industries to make their operations more sustainable by creating its own ResponSea initiative, which is part of the Finnish Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, 'Commitment2050'.

The marine industry network consists of a wide variety of companies. To allow as many companies as possible to participate, the initiative includes four different priorities that companies can build on to give their own commitments to sustainable development. These themes cover the environment, personnel and subcontracting chains alike.

The themes are:

- reducing the environmental impact of marine transport;
- continuous improvement as fair employers;
- monitoring the sustainability of the delivery chain;
- enhancing the circular economy and life-cycle efficiency.

The ResponSea initiative has already been joined by 16 industry companies, which have achieved various objectives included in their own commitments. By way of example, Turku Repair Yard, which is committed to safe and sustainable ship recycling, was approved for the European Union's European list of ship recycling facilities and has avoided occupational accidents and participated in the Ship Recycling project run by Business Finland (formerly Tekes). Last year, Evac, which is committed to preventing marine pollution and eutrophication, delivered its waste and wastewater treatment systems to several types of vessels, including the Quark Expeditions cruiser, the Ngujima-Yin oil and gas production facility in Australia, and a Chilean Navy research vessel. More will follow; Meyer Turku, for example, is now actively planning the next steps for its already well-implemented sustainability projects, while also working with Finnish Marine Industries to challenge others to join. Further information about progress made towards the targets is provided as part of annual reporting. ●

CASE: Forest Industry's work with Sustainability

text by Forest Industry

The Finnish forest industry has a long history in successful sustainability work. In 2018, the sector renewed its voluntary sustainability commitments from 2013, taking the SDGs into account in the revision. The commitments and the action of the forest industry have an important role in the implementation of the SDGs in Finland. Companies in the forest industry have reviewed their sustainability targets based on the SDGs and identified the goals that are the most relevant for their businesses. Promoting sustainable development in close cooperation with different stakeholders is important for the sector. The forest industry has also actively participated in the SDG implementation in Finland as part of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development.

Advancing on all pillars of sustainability is essential for the forest industry. The forest industry is a major contributor to wellbeing in Finland. The sector accounts for over 20 per cent of Finland's export revenue and it is a major employer, especially regionally in rural areas. Together with its value chain the forest industry generates a total tax revenue of four billion euros for Finland. The sector has invested heavily in sustainable bioproduct mills and product innovations over the past years. The climate and environmentally friendly products of the forest industry contribute to replacing products from non-renewable materials, like plastic.

Combating climate change is very high on the sector's agenda. The CO₂ emissions of the industry have decreased by 64% per tonne of output since 1990. As much as two thirds of Finland's renewable energy production is tied to the forest industry. Already 86% of the fuels used in the forest industry are renewable. The Finnish forest industry has increased its energy efficiency by 1 200 GWh/year on average since 2015. The forest industry is preparing its low-carbon roadmap by the summer 2020.

The forest industry promotes forest certification, nature management in commercial forests, and voluntary forest protection. The aim of the sector is to ensure that at least 90% of the wood and fibre used by the forest industry is certified by 2025 (currently 84%). Despite the fragmented non-industrial private ownership of Finnish forests, they are the most widely certified in the world. The Finnish forest industry's forest environment programme, started in 2016, aims to further improve the sector's forest environment actions as well as to increase active and open communication.

The sector works constantly to develop occupational safety with the goal of ensuring accident-free workplaces. Since 2010 the number of occupational accidents has decreased by 70% in the forest industry in Finland. ●

CASE: Sustainable development in the financial sector

text by the Finnish Financial sector

The Finnish financial sector operates responsibly and enjoys customer trust that is high in European comparison. For us, responsibility means adhering to the UN sustainable development principles and the good practices collectively established by the sector in the fields of securities, banking and insurance. In addition to rules and regulations, sector also carefully consider its social, economic and environmental impacts. The Finnish financial sector has long adhered to good banking and insurance practice guidelines. It has now distilled these practices into a set of values shared by the entire sector: these values are called the cornerstones of responsibility.⁹ They emphasize the sector's commitment to sustainable development and climate action.

Climate change is a global issue that also affects financial stability. The financial sector makes its biggest climate impact through its funding decision and therefore has an important role in steering investments and finance towards sustainable targets. Finance Finland (FFI) has made four commitments to sustainable development with its partners. The commitments aim for wise, sustainable use of resources and smaller carbon footprints. Progress on the commitments is evaluated regularly for the next four to five years. Commitments:

1. Automation of structured data, development of e-receipt (2015–2020)
2. Combining electronic vehicle insurance and registration (2015–2018)
3. Electronic health records (2017–2020).
4. Finance Finland and its members have committed to supporting the actions to limit global warming to 1.5°C. FFI prepared together with its member companies recommendations on climate-related reporting. In 2019, 78% of the FFI member companies that responded to a survey had integrated climate considerations in their business operations (lending, funds, payments, insurance). Combined, they manage more than 1 000 billion euros' worth of assets. With the help of the indicators, the financial sector's climate actions can be evaluated as a whole. The guidelines are based on the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures, which operates under the international Financial Stability Board¹⁰.

In the context of the EU Action Plan on Sustainable Finance, FFI promotes a centralized ESG data register for the EU to facilitate better access to ESG data for all stakeholders in the society. We believe that such a register would help make more sustainable decisions both in public and private sectors. FFI has also committed to international principles on responsible financial conduct. The commitments cover responsible banking, insurance and investment. These commitments are a part of international cooperation aimed at making responsibility an integral part of the financial sector. FFI members each decide individually on their own actions. The banking, insurance and investment commitments focus on environmental and social aspects as well as good governance principles. The signatory companies commit to e.g. increasing engagement on corporate governance and transparency. In addition, the Principles for Responsible Banking include concrete sustainability targets which the signatory banks will aim for. ●

⁹ <https://www.finanssiala.fi/en/current-topics/responsibility/cornerstones-of-responsibility>

¹⁰ Financial sector increases transparency in its climate work https://www.finanssiala.fi/en/material/FFI-2018-Climate_work.pdf

5.3 Private sector's contribution to the 2030 Agenda implementation

The 2030 Agenda has provided companies with globally agreed and monitored priorities for enhancing responsible and sustainable business practices as well as offering them a crucial role in solving and innovating for global and local sustainability challenges. The SDGs provide a common language, roadmap and trend chart for companies to adapt to a world where business-as-usual is no longer an option.

An increasing number of Finnish companies are in the process of integrating SDGs into their business. After Finland's first VNR in 2016, the 2030 Agenda has done a breakthrough in the business sector in Finland. Most of the biggest companies have mapped and studied their actions against SDGs, and many of them have started to integrate SDGs into their strategies. Some of the most visionary companies have composed science-based targets in order to show how they are contributing their part to the SDGs.

If the biggest companies are already familiar with the SDGs, the medium and small-scale companies are still studying the SDGs and trying to find their own approaches. There are also numerous companies actively taking action for sustainable development, especially in the area of climate change mitigation, but without any explicit linkages to the SDGs.

According to an external evaluation (2019, only in Finnish)¹¹ on Government ownership steering, the Government resolution on ownership policy has fostered state owned companies' CSR work and reporting. According to studies, there is also some positive correlation between State ownership or association and the level of SDG alignment. The Government of Finland has been proactive and, for example, the themes of the corporate responsibility have been included in the Government resolution on ownership policy.¹²

Since the previous Finnish VNR in 2016, the number of Finnish companies joining the UN Global Compact has increased by a rough 55 percent up to 85 members by the end of 2019, and the number is still increasing. The UN Global Compact Local Network was officially established in Finland in 2020, although first Finnish companies joined this global sustainability initiative already back in 2001. Global Compact has offered Finnish companies platforms and tools to support their work for more sustainable business. There is a growing interest towards UN Principles, the network and its coming activities.

¹¹ <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-287-783-3>

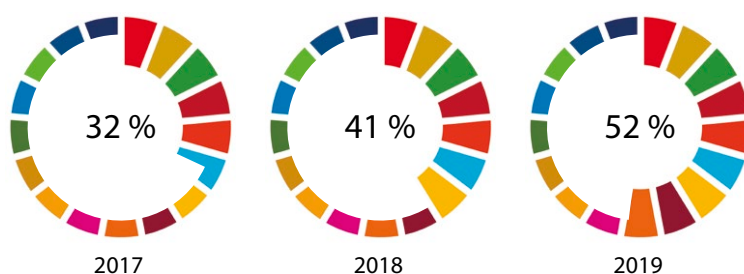
¹² https://vnk.fi/documents/10616/1221497/Periaatep_2016_korjENG.pdf/b5c9155f-c559-4c5b-b449-9eb8f5d54f30/Periaatep_2016_korjENG.pdf.pdf/Periaatep_2016_korjENG.pdf

Survey: Big companies paying increasingly more attention to SDGs

The FIBS "Sustainability in Finland 2019" survey¹³ indicates that the level of attention paid to the SDGs as part of business operations is still growing: in 2019, more than one half of large companies already reported taking the SDGs into account in their business, showing a significant increase on previous years (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Consideration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as part of Finnish business operations

Results from the questionnaire for big companies (FIBS ry).



In thematic terms, the focus area of sustainable development considered most significant is climate change. A whopping 87% of corporate executives and experts responding to the survey reported that climate change was an important or very important focus area for corporate responsibility (CR) in their organisation over the next 12 months. Climate change was considered an even more important factor than ethics (79%) and the circular economy (71%).

Conversely, another global mega-challenge, i.e. the need for biodiversity protection, is not yet recognised in companies: only 8% of respondents mentioned it as a very important focus area.

Based on the FIBS survey, companies would like to see legislators provide more back-up for advancing sustainable development. The majority of respondents (55%) considered that global challenges should primarily be solved through legislation and international treaties.

¹³ The questionnaire has been made among 1 000 largest companies in Finland, of which 188 answered. Only in Finnish <https://www.fibsry.fi/ajankohtaista/yritysvastuu-2019-tiivistelma/>

Integrating corporate responsibility into business was perceived as the greatest challenge for CR management. Measuring and monitoring the impact of corporate responsibility was considered to be almost as challenging.

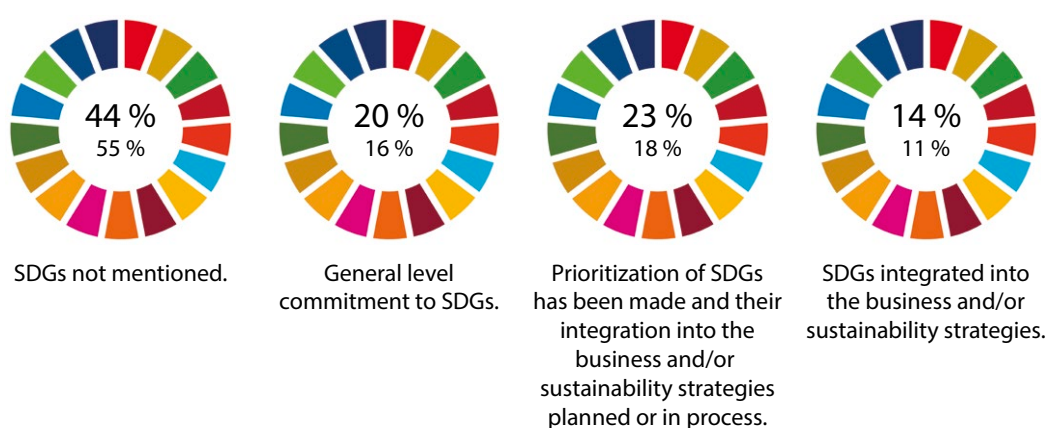
A positive development is that companies believe now, more than ever, that the importance of corporate responsibility and the resources used for that purpose will increase. Of all the respondents, 93% believe that the importance of corporate responsibility will grow while 76% think that resources will also increase.

Study on Finnish 120 largest Companies’ Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

An independent consultant conducted a follow-up assessment on how companies in Finland are making progress in the integration of SDGs into their business and sustainability strategies. The aim was to provide an overall picture of where large Finnish companies are in their SDG integration process as well as to compare the data to the findings of the previous report. Assessment was based on publicly available information, and it covered the 120 largest companies in Finland. The assessment results show some progress between 2018 and 2019 among the Finnish companies in aligning their businesses with SDGs (Figure3).

Figure 3. Finnish 120 largest companies’ alignment with the SDGs

Progress between 2018 and 2019



The assessment results indicate that the level of SDG alignment among the state owned companies is higher compared to non-state owned companies. Over one third (35%) of the 23 assessed majority-owned or state-associated companies had integrated the

SDGs into their strategies, and another 35% (8) were in the process of doing it, while the respective levels among the non-state owned companies were 8% (7) and 19% (17).

The most prioritized SDGs are SDG8 on decent work, SDG12 on sustainable consumption and production, and SDG13 on climate action. The SDG5 on gender equality, SDG10 on reduced inequalities, as well as SDG16 on peace, justice and strong institutions remained among the less prioritized SDGs, even though these SDGs would be relevant to most companies.

5.4 Work in Regions, Cities and Municipalities

5.4.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- The VNR 2016 revealed that cities knew only little about the 2030 Agenda. In 2020, cities work extensively with sustainable development, but not all cities link their work explicitly with the 2030 Agenda.
- Three forerunner cities (Helsinki, Espoo, Turku) have prepared a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) in 2019 and 2020, and many cities are planning to give their VLR in the future. Many cities and municipalities have ambitious measures for promoting SDGs and climate targets.
- Åland region has integrated the SDGs into their core strategies. Most of the regional administrations in Finland have not yet recognized the added value of the SDG framework.

5.4.2 Åland, an autonomous region of Finland

“On Åland, sustainable development is not a concept – it is our roadmap for going forward in all policy areas and for all parts of the society. The realization of the Development and Sustainability Agenda for Åland is at the same time the Åland contribution, albeit small, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We are convinced that sub-national governments have a crucial role to play in the implementation of the SDGs, through projects and programs adapted to the regions’ and its people’s reality. Åland’s autonomy devolves legislate competence and managing authority, and in our small society the step between thought and action is short. On behalf of all Ålanders, the Government of Åland is both happy and proud to contribute to Finland’s VNR and to take our responsibility in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.”

Veronica Thörnroos, chair of the development and sustainability council for the network barkraft.ax and Head of Government of Åland.



With the understanding that nature constitutes the foundation of human existence, the Parliament and the Government of Åland chose (in 2014) to adopt a goal of total sustainable development in Åland no later than 2051. A network, created for all citizens, organizations, authorities and companies, established the *Development and Sustainability Agenda for Åland*. A true bottom-up, inside out process. The agenda consists of one Vision and seven Strategic Development Goals for 2030. With purposeful action in everyone's daily life, and in the working practices of all sectors of society, Åland strive to realize the Vision of the best Åland we can imagine: *Everyone can flourish in a viable society on the Islands of Peace*.

The Network *bärkraft.ax* is the hub for the coordination of the work to realize the Agenda, and its mode of operation is transparency and people-centered¹⁴. The Development and Sustainability Council consists of leaders from various sectors and is responsible for the Network's vitality and long-term existence. A Status Report with indicators for the seven strategic development goals identifies progress, challenges and critical success factors is published annually. The status reports are presented at an annual Forum for Social Development, to which everyone is invited. Roadmaps for realizing the seven strategic development goals, containing sub-targets, prioritized measures, timeline and actors responsible for the implementation are being drafted to be published in 2020. The Government of Åland does not own this process; it is responsible for acting proactively as a catalyst and coordinator for the realization of the Agenda. The process of drafting the regional government's budget takes into account the Development and Sustainability Agenda and gives an account of measures that contribute to its realization.

Highlights

In April 2019, the European Commission awarded Åland Islands and the *Development and Sustainability Agenda for Åland* the *European Sustainability Award 2019*. The Award Ceremony was held as part of a High-Level Conference in Brussels hosted by the then First Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans, and its Second Vice-President Jyrki Katainen. The objective of the European Sustainability Award is to champion initiatives taken for the realization of the global sustainable development

¹⁴ <https://www.barkraft.ax/english>

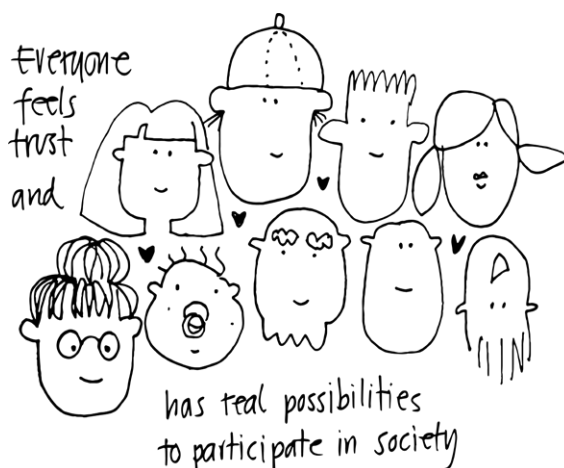
goals of the 2030 Agenda. Winners are selected in seven categories, the Åland Islands and the Agenda for Åland were the winners of the category public bodies under 100.000 individuals.

On Åland, sustainable Development is implemented through a structure facilitating work over sector boundaries. In this way, healthcare, agriculture, fishing, education, culture, industry, infrastructure and more can coordinate their efforts despite differing circumstances. For example, by becoming visible on the larger arenas, Åland can attract capital and technology. A long-term energy and climate politics is a way to attract investors in energy and climate actions, since it also provides a security for the investors. The society scale demo platform *Smart Energy Åland* is an example. Åland has been identified as an ideal place to pilot the global energy transition with good wind and solar conditions, an ambitious climate- and energy strategy as well as a population dedicated to sustainability¹⁵.

Two examples of Progress and Challenges

Strategic Development Goal 2: Everyone feels trust and has real possibilities to participate in society – contributes to SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 16.

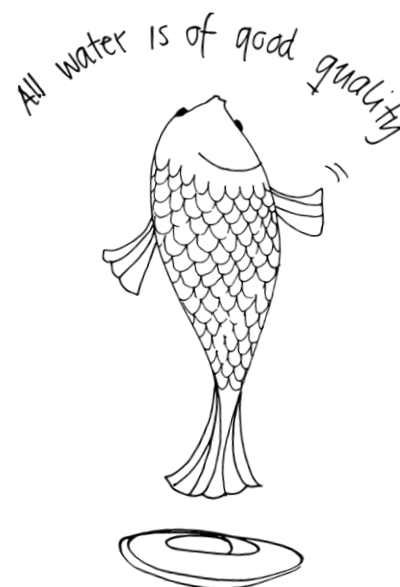
Trust is an essential element in a sustainable society. In 2018, the statistics agency of Åland was tasked to perform a study on interpersonal trust. The results showed that the share of the Åland population with high interpersonal trust is 63 per cent, and that among youth it is at a higher level compared to corresponding results in Finland and Sweden. However, if the gap between the poorest and the wealthiest in society becomes too large there is a risk that trust will be eroded. The proportion of households on Åland below relative poverty line has increased and gender equality is lagging behind. Women paid 37% and men 63% of the total amount of the taxation of earned income and capital income in 2017. The distribution has been the same since 2001. Men take between 3 and 5 percent of parental leave, which affect pay levels and pensions, but also broader levels aspects that affect both work and private life. Going forward, it is of the utmost importance that the Åland society continues to realize its second strategic development goal, a society where everyone feels trust.



¹⁵ <https://flexens.com/the-demo/>

Strategic Development Goal 3: All water is of good quality
– contributes to SDG 6 and 14.

In Åland there is a broad consensus on the importance of a good water quality; a healthy Baltic Sea, including all of its bays, deep basins and surface waters. Today, almost all coastal water is only of moderate quality, and even if all effluents were stopped immediately it would take 40–50 years before the Baltic Sea was totally restored. Reduced eutrophication, on Åland and in all countries in around the Baltic Sea, is the most important aspect to achieve a good water quality. Åland has both an obligation and right to be a voice of the Baltic Sea.



CASE: Lapland Region

text by Regional Council of Lapland

“In 2021, Lapland is Arctic, open and intelligent – We create success sustainably in the world’s cleanest region.”

Economic growth in the region of Lapland has been unprecedented. In recent years, revenues have developed positively in all sectors, the employment situation is the best in decades, industrial revenues are growing and Lapland is also attracting more and more investors. Lapland’s tourism brand is a stunning success story. At the same time, however, there are growing concerns about the demographic trend and the polarisation of wellbeing and disadvantage. Since Lapland is, by nature, a fount of wellbeing, we must make sure that this is also clearly visible in its residents’ wellbeing. Indeed, Lapland’s regional development efforts are viewed through a wide lens of all three dimensions of sustainability – from the perspective of social, ecological and economic sustainability.

The Local Government Act requires each municipality to have a municipal strategy in which the local council determines the long-term objectives for the municipality’s activities and finances. In the spring of 2019, the Regional Council of Lapland reviewed the municipal strategies of all of Lapland’s 21 municipalities, based on the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the region’s vision for sustainable regional development. The review revealed that sustainability is strongly embedded in the strategies, although the objectives identified to promote sustainable development may differ considerably. This observation provides an important premise for more visible and shared development work – the strategic intents and visions are solidified into genuinely shared action as well as into commitments to how we will sustainably create economic, ecological and social success in the world’s cleanest region. ●

5.4.3 SDGs in Finnish municipalities

text by Association of Finnish Municipalities

Municipalities play a key role in the implementation of the SDGs, as acknowledged in Finland's Voluntary National Review 2016. For example, Finnish municipalities are responsible for the provision of social welfare and health care services and have a monopoly on statutory land-use planning within their territory. They also offer and maintain the basic infrastructure (water and waste management, energy supply, streets) for their citizens and companies. Finnish municipalities have a wide range of responsibilities and thus lots of possibilities to influence sustainable development.

Sustainable development is at the core of local leadership whatever term is used as such. In Finland, most municipalities have sustainability related goals as a part of their strategic processes. SDGs are increasingly becoming a facet for many municipalities to mirror development. However, the SDGs do not form the starting point for the strategy or plans for most of the municipalities. SDGs are considered as a useful framework for communication and outreach activities. Most of the municipalities tend to align their existing activities and ambitions with the SDGs, rather than using the goals as an instrument with which to take an outside-in look at existing ambitions, priorities and solutions.

Climate action and resource-wise strategies, in particular, have ambitious target levels and a strong strategic role in many Finnish municipalities. 45% of Finns live in a municipality committed to carbon neutrality by 2030. Another important theme is demographic change. For the smaller municipalities the issues of existing population and sustainable shrinkage are important, while for the bigger cities sustainable growth is relevant. These issues include questions of job creation, transport and mobility management and bring forth the interconnectedness of diverse sustainability themes. There are also more common themes, such as inequality and social exclusion – and a sense of community as a mean to prevent social exclusion.

There is a widespread understanding that the sustainable development needs to be promoted widely but with operational focus and by supporting the linkages between themes. Development of sustainable communities – whether the focus is on ecological, social or economic – takes place on two levels simultaneously: in big solutions that change structures and through understanding the local everyday life.

Advancement in the local sustainability work can be seen in the networks and increased ambition level, for example. A cross-sectoral approach is becoming a more common way of implementing sustainable development. An indication of this is that there are not many separate strategies for sustainable development. Sustainability is integrated into everyday actions and leadership as such.

The time spans of local strategic work and the parliamentary term are often too short when it comes to addressing sustainable development. Local strategies are often set for only a few years. Tensions experienced in the long-term planning are related to the different rhythms of governing and politics and the challenge is to overcome this.

There is room for improvement in the coordination between the national level and the local level on the specific role of the municipalities in implementing the SDGs. For example, national indicators seldom serve the purposes of the monitoring of local sustainability work and there are locally developed indicators and monitoring systems. However, there are initiatives that create interaction between these governance levels. The Ministry of the Environment is running the Sustainable City Programme (2019–2023) that promotes the sustainable development of cities and municipalities through practical urban development and strategic management. The Nordic study on the forerunner municipalities implementing SDGs recommends a clearer communication of national priorities and activities within the 2030 Agenda, guidance on how to work with the SDGs, and assistance in monitoring progress. Addressing these issues would facilitate local authority efforts to achieve the SDGs.



CASE: VLR City Helsinki text by the City of Helsinki

From Agenda to Action – The Implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals in Helsinki. A significant part of the success of the 2030 Agenda is achieved on the local level. Cities play an important role in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring commitment from civil society. In the future, reaching the goals will require even stronger co-operation between nations, regional governments and cities.

In 2018, New York City became the first city in the world to report its progress on the 2030 Agenda to the UN through a Voluntary Local Review (VLR). Modelled on the national voluntary review model the review highlighted the connection between the OneNYC strategy and the SDGs.

In 2019, the capital of Finland, Helsinki, became the first city in Europe and the second city in the world to submit a VLR to the UN. Since then, the cities of New York and Helsinki have worked to secure commitments from other cities globally, and over 20 cities around the world have committed to the review by signing a Voluntary Local Review Declaration. ►

Helsinki wants to be a pioneer for local implementation of global responsibilities. The Helsinki City Strategy from 2017 illustrates many areas in which the city participates in global sustainable development. Even though its commitment to the SDGs is not written out in the strategy it has been inherently embedded in the city's strategy and actions of the city since the beginning. Helsinki's vision is to be the most functional city in the world. Functionality is based on equality, non-discrimination, strong social cohesion and open, inclusive ways of operating. Ensuring comprehensive economic, social and ecological sustainability is one of the growing city's key goals. Helsinki's VLR plays an important part in ensuring the success of these targets.

From Agenda to Action – Helsinki's VLR aimed to illustrate the success of Helsinki's strategy in relation to the SDGs; to produce understandable and open information about the city's sustainable development; and to forward dialogue within the global community. Helsinki's first report was mainly focused on the Helsinki City Strategy, on lead projects for carrying out the strategy, and on the Carbon Neutral Helsinki 2035 plan of action. Even though the approach is strategically comprehensive, it does not cover the entire field of municipal service provision. The end result of the review was that the Helsinki City Strategy and its implementation are well aligned with the SDG targets and there were no obvious gaps found.

As a result of the VLR process Helsinki aims to develop wide-reaching understanding of and commitment to the SDGs. Some related implementation projects include the Helsinki Energy Challenge – an international competition that searches for the best possible way for the city to reduce the use of coal in heat production without replacing a significant part with biomass; societal engagement through the vast library system in Helsinki; and forwarding the work already carried out in the Helsinki primary school system. Additionally, Helsinki actively advances global awareness of the sustainable development goals and the VLR. Helsinki has committed to the further advancement of the VLR model in the city and will report its second VLR in 2021 – which marks the end of the current City Council term and the half-way point of the second HLPF cycle. ●

CASE: VLR city Espoo

text by the City of Espoo

Working together for sustainable development in Espoo. A second largest city in Finland and networked city of five city centres, Espoo is a pioneer in sustainable development. The Espoo Story, the strategy of the City of Espoo, was prepared together with Espoo residents with the aim of ensuring a safe, healthy and functional daily life in a carbon-neutral city. In sustainable development work, sustainable city solutions of the future are developed, tried out and adopted together with partners and residents. The objectives of sustainable development unite the entire Corporate Group, and Espoo's partners also share the same values. Espoo's role in the global framework is to ensure that the handprint in climate work is far greater than the footprint. ►

In the international leadership programme of pioneering cities, Espoo is committed to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2025. Espoo's strategy, the Espoo Story, is used to achieve the SDGs together with businesses and other partners. The solutions serve as examples of carbon-neutral city life of the future. Key development areas include smart and clean city solutions, low-emission smart mobility, renewable energy, responsibility and local environment including water systems. The solutions will be collected into the City of Espoo's Voluntary Local Review (VLR) for summer 2020.

At the initial stage, Espoo's pioneering work focuses on three objectives: quality education (SDG 4), industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9) and climate action (SDG 13). The SDG framework is utilised more and more in the planning of the activities and finances of the city. Climate actions prepared through Covenant of Mayors activities are included in the result targets binding the city in order to achieve carbon neutrality in this decade.

Last year, Espoo was the first city to be awarded the Sustainable City prize at the Energy Globe World Award event for its successful cooperation with companies and residents. A year earlier, the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) chose Espoo as the most intelligent city community on the same grounds. Espoo also participates in building a sustainable Finland. It was the first city to join the Finnish Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, with the aim to build a Finnish society that bears global responsibility.

Education for sustainable development is extremely important for achieving the UN goals and ensuring the well-being of Espoo residents. Sustainable development and equality are a goal of education and a principle governing all operations in day care and schools in Espoo. Education supports social integration, interaction and involvement and provides skills for low-carbon and resource-wise life and for participating in democratic decision-making. Success in sustainable development work requires Espoo residents to adopt a sustainable lifestyle. Sustainable choices are practised at day care and schools with children of different ages.

The city's aim is for the energy used in Espoo to be emission-free. In addition to individual buildings, energy efficiency is promoted at the system level. The burning of coal will end in Espoo by 2025. The networked urban structure supported by public transport is developed particularly through large-scale rail investments. The use of clean energies in road traffic, such as renewable diesel, biogas and electricity, is promoted together with energy companies. The city continuously invests in pedestrian and bicycle routes and develops their maintenance.

Emissions from construction can be reduced by the electrification of machinery, clean energies and material choices. Espoo has great potential to increase wood construction. Urban food production is used to solve challenges posed by the city life of the future by increasing all-year crops and decreasing the emissions and costs of food logistics. Together with companies and residents, solutions are sought for the restoration of lakes and the collection and recycling of plastic. Procurement activities by the city support the introduction of new sustainable solutions. The development projects look for new innovations and support their introduction.

Highlight: Espoo will present its VLR in summer 2020. The review was prepared in cooperation with the entire organisation of the city and with partners. The process involved almost 1 000 people, and they brought up approximately 200 sustainable development changes, which were all assessed as part of the VLR process. ●

CASE: VLR City Turku

text the City of Turku

The south-western City of Turku is one of the pioneers creating a sustainable Finland and contributing to delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Turku's key objective is to build residents' wellbeing and business growth and competitiveness on an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable foundation.

Over the years, Turku has pioneered the deployment of municipal environmental work and sustainable development. The current 'Turku 2029' City Strategy supports achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in many respects, by means such as its ambitious objectives of becoming a carbon neutral city by 2029 and a pioneer in socially sustainable urban and regional development.

In keeping with the decision made by Turku Mayor Minna Arve in July 2019, the City of Turku drew up its Voluntary Local Review (VLR) on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. The City reviewed its operations in terms of all of the Sustainable Development Goals and the applicable targets. The first reporting exercise focused especially on the City Strategy and the spearhead projects set up to implement it, as well as key measures carried out by the City's five divisions and selected corporate entities. The overall review was carried out as a participatory process involving the managers and experts from the projects, entities and divisions being reviewed.

The Voluntary Local Review strengthens the City's internal and cross-sectoral cooperation and provides a clear communication framework for sustainable development. For Turku, participation in the review is a great leap towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and a step towards implementing the 2030 Agenda at the national level.

Cooperation and partnership play an important role on the path towards sustainable Turku and Finland. Together we will create a solid foundation for sustainable development. ●

5.5 Dissemination and communication

According to a recent poll, almost half of Finns (47%)¹⁶ know about the 2030 Agenda. From 2016 onwards, several initiatives to raise general awareness have been implemented in good cooperation between the governmental actors, civil society and the private sector. Here are few examples:

- In 2017 the national film distributor Finnkino screened a catchy short film on the subject of the SDGs in movie theatres nationwide and achieved a reach of 120 000 viewers.
- During the European Sustainable Development Week in 2017 and 2019, the Helsinki Regional Transport Authority partnered with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. During the week, an animation on the 2030 Agenda was displayed on approximately 1,000 info screens in trams and the metro.
- Public libraries and two major museums participated in the communications on the 2030 Agenda by organising exhibitions showcasing the SDGs in 2017 and 2018.
- In 2019, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs partnered with three of the top social media influencers to engage young people in the promotion of sustainable development. In total 230 000 young people were reached through Instagram. The youth statement was handed out to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade prior to the SDG Summit in 2019.



Global education has a key role in building commitment towards sustainable development. The Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister's Office together with the civil society regularly provide both training and materials suited for global education in schools. As an example, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has produced a global education website (maailma2030.fi) in both national languages (Finnish and Swedish). The site includes information, exercises and videos and is marketed to teachers at pedagogical fairs and in regular newsletters. Also SDG posters have been produced and are distributed free of charge to all the schools in Finland.

¹⁶ https://um.fi/press-releases/-/asset_publisher/ued5t2wDmr1C/content/suomalaiset-painottavat-tasa-arvoa-ja-ilmastoa-eu-n-kehityspolitiikassa

5.6 Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in national frameworks

5.6.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- The Government prepared the first national implementation plan in 2017, and the current Government is at the moment preparing the second implementation plan.
- Implementation plans are submitted to the Parliament as Government Reports. These Reports form a solid base for dialogue between the Government and the Parliament on the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Sustainable development is incorporated into all phases of the policy cycle: planning, budgeting and reporting. Challenges remain in ensuring that all the phases of the policy cycle are interconnected in a systematic way: policy planning should guide the preparation of the budget, and reporting should clearly indicate how the Government has succeeded in the allocation of resources into policy areas that promote sustainable development in a desired manner.
- The Government has integrated sustainability aspect to the preparation of state budget since 2018.
- The policy principles on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda that were adopted in 2017 are still applicable and extend over election periods.
- Some line ministries have adopted the 2030 Agenda as a guiding framework to their strategies, but most line Ministries have not yet done so.
- Environmental sustainability has been included in policy plans and state budget quite effectively, but the linkage between the 2030 Agenda and social sustainability has been more difficult to discover.
- The Parliament's motions have guided the national implementation work. The Parliament considers important that the Government takes the 2030 Agenda as a guiding document when formulating Government's programme and links the 2030 Agenda to all relevant policies and measures.
- The 2030 Agenda is the framework for many national strategies, plans and policies. However, policy coherence for sustainable development remains a challenge, not only in national context, but also in the context of international and European Union cooperation.
- Trade-offs are often very difficult to reconcile even when identified, as they entail politically sensitive issues and deep-rooted ideological differences.
- Discussion on the importance of the interlinkages has increased. Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government programme is based on a phenomenon based strategic objectives, which supports cross-sectoral approach.
- Finland highlights the role of science and science-policy interface in the sustainable development discourse. The Expert Panel on Sustainable Development was an experiment in 2016 but has now become an institutionalized part of national governance mechanism.

5.6.2 Parliament's motions guide the Government in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

In Finland, the Government is responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to the Parliament and, through the national Parliament, to the citizens. Parliament supervises and reviews the activities of the Government and the administration, thereby ensuring full accountability. In addition, participation of the Parliament and its many Committees in the discussion on the state of sustainable development and on the follow-up of the implementation measures contribute to Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development.

In the Parliamentary Committee Report (7 June 2017), the Parliament of Finland gave ten strong motions which oblige the Government to take the 2030 Agenda as a guiding document when formulating Government's program and to link the 2030 Agenda to all relevant Government policies and measures.

5.6.3 The Government programmes 2015–2019, 2019– Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's programme (2015–2019)

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda started during the Government term of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä. Prime Minister Sipilä's Government program (2015–2019) was strongly linked to the 2030 Agenda in areas such as the bio-economy, clean technology, skills and education, and health and well-being. Foreign and security policy underlined the importance of international stability, peace, democracy, human rights, rule of law and equality in a world governed by interdependencies, with a view to promoting global partnerships. From the beginning, it was clear that Finland is committed in advancing the 2030 Agenda as a whole by 2030.

The existing policy and legislative framework and the implementation of international and national agreements and strategies provided a strong basis for the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. National implementation was guided by the vision of the Government Programme by 2025, and the vision of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development by 2050.

Prime Minister Sanna Marin's programme (2019–)

The 2030 Agenda strongly influenced the present Government's programme and cuts across the whole program. The Government led by Prime Minister Sanna Marin (2019–) aims to transform Finland into a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society by 2030. The Government's Programme is called '*Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society*' and has strong emphasis and concrete measures that contribute to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Government aims also to reform political culture and decision-making by making six pledges on policy

reforms to Finnish citizens. For example, there is a Pledge for non-discrimination and Pledge for fair and equal treatment across generations.

To that end, Finland will ensure that Finland is carbon neutral by 2035 and carbon negative soon after that. Government will carry out a fair and broadly approved transition to a carbon neutral society and carry out a tax reform for sustainable development to serve Government's climate goal. Government aims to halt the decline of biodiversity and thus achieve the goals of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Government will build sustainable economic growth on a high employment rate (75%) and on strong public finances. The aim of economic policy is to increase wellbeing and prosperity.

One of the main strategic targets of the PM Sanna Marin's Government is to raise the level of education and competence among the population at all levels of education, decrease differences in learning outcomes, and increase educational equality. Government will strengthen equality, non-discrimination and equal implementation of rights, as well as democracy, participation and trust in the institutions of society and raise Finland into a leading country in gender equality with a special attention to enhancing gender equality in the working life and in families. Government will shoulder Finland's global responsibility. Finland aims at poverty eradication and reduction of inequalities. Finland will strengthen multilateral cooperation and support the UN reform process. Finland aims to direct 0.7 per cent of GNI to development cooperation and 0.2 per cent of GNI to the least developed countries.

The Government Programme will be reviewed presumably in the autumn of 2020 due to effects of the COVID-2019 pandemic.

5.6.4 Government's implementation plans are submitted to the Parliament

The Governments of Finland submit the 2030 Agenda implementation plans to the Parliament as Government Reports. Prime Minister Sipilä's Report was submitted in 2017 and Prime Minister Marin's report will be submitted in autumn 2020.

The Government Reports are essential tools for the Governments and Ministries in informing the national Parliament on the priorities, policies and measures for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They are also an indispensable instruments for creating a formal connection and systematic dialogue between the Government and the Parliament on the state and future of sustainable development in Finland.

However, according to the National Auditor’s Office report conducted in 2019¹⁷, the 2017 Report has provided only limited operational guidance for the Ministries. According to the interviews conducted in the Ministries, there are two reasons why the Government Report has played only a minor role as a steering document. Firstly, the Report does not contain any new policy measures and is largely based on the Government Programme and its key measures (which would have been carried out anyway). Secondly, there are other more effective instruments in place, in the field of climate and energy policy in particular.

Government implementation Plan 2017

The implementation plan of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä’s Government was based on the long-term vision, principles and goals set forth in the National Sustainable Development Strategy (*Society’s Commitment to Sustainable Development – The Future We Want 2050*), which extends until 2050.

The Government’s plan was submitted to the Parliament as a Government Report¹⁸ in February 2017. It consisted of a framework for implementation and the follow-up and review mechanism until 2030. The plan focused on two key areas, where specific measures were taken: 1) a carbon-neutral and resource-wise Finland; and 2) a non-discriminatory, equal and competent Finland. The implementation was based on three policy principles: long-term action and transformation; policy coherence and global partnership; and ownership and participation (Figure 4).

During Prime Minister Sipilä’s Government term, development policy included four priority areas and they were linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: 1) gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women; 2) supporting economies in developing countries in creating jobs, sources of livelihood and well-being; 3) democratic and functioning societies; better food security and access to water and energy; and 4) sustainability of natural resources¹⁹. It was moreover emphasized that development policy is an integral part of Finland’s foreign and security policy.

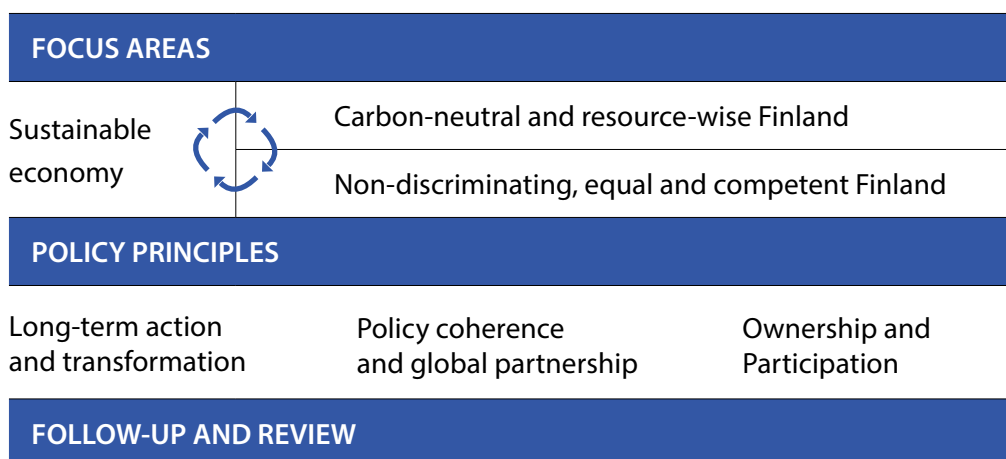
17 <https://www.vtv.fi/app/uploads/2019/10/NAOF-Audit-14-2019-Promoting-sustainable-development.pdf>

18 <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-287-392-7>

19 https://um.fi/publication/-/asset_publisher/iYk2EknllmNL/content/valtioneuvoston-selontekosuomen-kehityspolitiikka-yksi-maailma-yhteinen-tulevaisuus-kohti-kestavaa-kehitysta?p_p_auth=AoRCKOgh&curAsset=0&stId=47307

Figure 4. Government Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda

Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government's implementation plan given as a Report to Parliament. Adopted in February 2017.



Government Implementation Plan 2020

Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government was due to give the implementation plan as a Government Report to the Parliament in April 2020, but because of the COVID-2019 pandemic the plan is postponed to autumn 2020. The Implementation Plan will include Government's commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda, apply the policy principles, and reinforce the follow-up and review mechanisms, organization models and Government's actions.

The Plan will be build on Government's program '*Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society*' and on Finland's long-term tradition to involve and engage societal actors in the implementation of sustainable development. For the first time, the Report will highlight the Government's measures for each of the SDG.

Long-term planning beyond the Government terms has always been one of the strengths of the Finnish sustainable development policy-making. This will be featured also in the Report of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government. The Report will continue to implement the policy principles of the previous Government that called for long-term planning, policy coherence, transformation, global partnership, inclusiveness and participation. It also continues and strengthens the measures of the previous Government in ensuring robust follow-up and regular review of the national implementation.

In addition, Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government is committed to renew the political culture and strengthen the trust of citizens in the democratic decision-making. To that end, the Government has given six pledges to citizens on policy reforms that are very much in line with the policy principles of the Finnish sustainable development policy-making.

CASE: Recommendations from the National evaluation PATH2030

In 2018, the Finnish Government commissioned an independent and comprehensive evaluation of national sustainable development policies. The evaluation examined the state of sustainable development in light of national sustainability indicators, key sustainable development policy objectives and national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also considered the status of sustainable development in the foreign policy sector.

The Government assigned the evaluation to an interdisciplinary team with members from three Finnish organisations: Demos Helsinki, the Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science (HELSUS) and the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE). The core research team also benefited from external support from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI).

Timing was a key element in the evaluation process. The Government committed to the evaluation in its 2017 report, allowing the evaluation team to present and discuss results and recommendations with the main political parties ahead of the 2019 parliamentary elections. The Finnish Government is committed to commissioning a comprehensive evaluation on the state of the country's sustainable development every four years (in line with parliamentary elections).

The evaluation process is explained in more detail in the IIED publication "Evaluation to connect national priorities with the SDGs"²⁰.

Key recommendations from the PATH2030 evaluation²¹

1. Future Governments need to adopt the 2030 Agenda as a base for Government policy. Reaching the 2030 Agenda goals should be a baseline for the Government Programme that sets out the Government's main areas of activity – and all governmental goals should be guided by sustainable development. Finland's focus areas in sustainable development are justified, and steps towards reaching these goals should be continued. All of the Finnish Government's ministries and departments should integrate the 2030 Agenda into their strategies, actions, measures and future briefings. ►

²⁰ <https://pubs.iied.org/17739IIED/>

²¹ The evaluation report can be found from: <https://www.demoshelsinki.fi/en/julkaisut/path2030-an-evaluation-of-finlands-sustainable-development-policy/>.

2. The Government needs to create a national roadmap to 2030. The roadmap should define how Finland is to reach the 2030 Agenda goals and how the country should support the goals in the EU region and globally. Furthermore, measurable national goals should be defined and a long-term political commitment to fair structural change should be ensured. With this roadmap, Finland would be able to assume a position of global leadership in developing an economic system that takes into account planetary boundaries.
3. The Government needs to direct public funds to sustainable development in a more coherent way. The governmental budgeting process of taking into account sustainable development is to be continued and widened. There should be targets set for the budget such as phasing out support for environmentally harmful activities and increasing investments that support sustainable development in both the public and private sectors.
4. Strengthen scientific support and monitoring for the 2030 Agenda. The 2030 Agenda needs to be taken as a starting point for national sustainable development efforts. This means improving awareness of national indicators of sustainable development and their utilisation by binding them clearly on the 2030 Agenda goals. Finland needs a single, clearly visualised indicator system that functions as a comprehensive focal point of discussions. The Expert Panel on Sustainable Development needs to function as an independent high-level advocate for sustainable development. This panel should have the mandate to comment on the most crucial governmental plans that affect sustainable development.
5. Make sustainable development a permanent cross-administrative part of foreign and development policy. Finland needs to have a plausible plan to raise development aid funding to 0.7 percent of the GNI along with a broad-based commitment to reach this pledge. Finland's sustainable development policy must reduce inequality according to the "Leave No One Behind" principle and strengthen the evaluation of the human rights impact of all foreign policy. ●

5.6.5 Incorporation of the SDGs into national planning and budgeting processes

The 2030 Agenda has been incorporated into Government's planning, budgeting and reporting processes with varying degree of success.

On a yearly basis, all line ministries in Finland are required to compile their policies and measures on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda into Government's Annual Report to the Parliament. So far, the Parliament has received four such reports: in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

According to the National Audit Office report, the Government Annual Reports have provided a comprehensive summary of the yearly policies and measures for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland, compiling key areas, key actions and actors. The Annual Reports have also served as important sources of information on sustainable development achievements to interested stakeholders, media, citizens and international community. On the other hand, Annual Reports on the implementation have been rather descriptive and entailed only little quantitative measures²².

The Government Annual Reports have been valuable tools for the Government officials in mainstreaming the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ensuring political support. The Annual Reports have given support to the sustainable development coordinators of each line Ministry and legitimized their work for the 2030 Agenda. In particular, the Reports have been pivotal in facilitating the dialogue between the Government and the Parliament.

In addition to the Annual Reports, Ministries are requested to include information essential to the promotion and monitoring of sustainable development in their yearly budget planning, as well as in their follow-up indicators. Several procedures, which vary from one ministry to another, are in place for identifying trade-offs and synergies. However, it is recognized that trade-offs are often very difficult to reconcile even when identified, as they entail politically sensitive issues and deep-rooted ideological differences. Many of the conflicts are therefore addressed at the political (ministerial) level.

Incorporation of the SDGs into Government's budget proposals

In recent years, Finland has aimed to gradually improve the transparency of sustainable development in the State Budget by incorporating sustainable development as an integral part of its drafting process.

The 2018 drafting process was the first time that the budget proposal included language on sustainable development from each administrative branch. In their contributions, each administrative branch provided details about measures related to sustainable development and key changes in the relevant appropriations included in the budget proposal. These texts covered all of the key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the 2019 budget proposal, sustainable development budgeting was extended beyond the above-mentioned sectoral perspective to also include a completely new chapter entitled 'Sustainable development' in the General Strategy and Outlook section, which

22 <https://www.vtv.fi/app/uploads/2019/10/NAOF-Audit-14-2019-Promoting-sustainable-development.pdf>

took a more holistic view on sustainable development, especially from the perspective of the SDGs relevant to carbon neutrality. An equivalent analysis is also included in the 2020 budget proposal.

The budget proposal's chapter on sustainable development discusses which specific appropriations should be used to advance the carbon neutrality goals. The identified appropriations will promote aspects such as biodiversity and the wellbeing of nature and the environment, reduce emissions, advance bioeconomy solutions and develop Finland towards a low-carbon society.

The chapter also examines the types of taxes included in the budget proposal that are relevant to the carbon neutrality target. These especially include energy taxes, vehicle tax, car tax, waste tax and excise duty on certain beverage containers.

In order to provide a transparent overview of the package of measures relating to carbon neutrality, the budget proposal's General Strategy and Outlook section also discusses environmentally harmful subsidies. These refer to subsidies that result in an increase in the utilisation of natural resources and the environmental burden in the subsidised enterprise or the subsidised sector. The rationale for these harmful subsidies and their introduction is based on non-environmental considerations. In other words, environmentally harmful subsidies may have positive effects in terms of other policy objectives, such as enhancing local livelihoods and income opportunities. The environmentally harmful subsidies discussed in the chapter are based on prior studies conducted in Finland.

In its Programme, Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government is committed to developing sustainable development budgeting. This means that sustainable development budgeting will continue and its development measures are currently being considered.

From the outset, one of the principles of development was to progress gradually, increasing information step by step and partly on an experimental basis while assessing which model would work best for Finland. This gradual approach has made it possible to review the sustainable development budget with quite limited administrative resources. However, it is still too early to assess its impact. Nevertheless, it is already fair to say that the process has raised awareness about sustainable development issues, increased the transparency of budget proposals and helped outline the appropriations included in the proposals as a whole. Sustainable development budgeting has been specifically carried out under the leadership of the Ministry of Finance working in cooperation with other ministries. One of the key aspects of this work has involved cooperation between budget drafters and sustainable development experts. Parliament has also taken a favourable position on sustainable development budgeting. The early stages of the development process also involved a broader consultation with stakeholders, including civil society actors.

5.6.6 Incorporation of the SDGs into Ministries strategies and programs

The line ministries have started to integrate the SDGs into sectoral policies and strategies, as well as to their guidance and performance agreements with the governmental institutes and offices. This is in line with the Parliament's motion to incorporate the 2030 Agenda into Government's all main guiding documents.

In 2019, the National Audit Office of Finland conducted an audit²³ on the promotion of sustainable development in Finland. According to the Report, Ministries attach now greater importance to sustainable development and, in a number of ministries, sustainable development has become the basis for their strategy or a strategic objective. The SDGs are often used as a benchmark for the Ministries' own activities. The Ministries have identified and specified functions that help to implement the SDGs. They have also established or strengthened internal coordination networks for sustainable development, the task of which is to draw the attention of Ministries' departments and units to sustainable development. There are, however, substantial differences between Ministries concerning the status of the 2030 Agenda coordinators and coordination networks.

Even though sustainable development has become more prominent in the Ministries' strategies and work, the Auditors' Report underlines that the more analytical assessment on the ecological, economic or social sustainability of the policy content is still missing. Furthermore, the policy principles of sustainable development, such as global responsibility and long-term action, have not been analyzed. In fact, incorporating sustainable development into Ministries' work has mostly been a matter of adopting sustainable development objectives (usually some of the SDGs) as Ministries' own objectives. There is still no clear or coordinated connection between sustainable development and the content of policy preparation in individual Ministries.

In the 11 ministries included in the Audit, sustainable development was infrequently mentioned and only occasional references were found in performance management documents. One such reference was found in the performance agreement template of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for the period 2019–2023. It contained a separate sub-chapter, in which the units subject to steering were asked to define themselves how their activities supported Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

²³ <https://www.vtv.fi/app/uploads/2019/10/NAOF-Audit-14-2019-Promoting-sustainable-development.pdf>

5.6.7 Incorporation of the SDGs into National Strategy on Sustainable Development

The National Commission on Sustainable Development has been responsible for designing, preparing and compiling the National Strategies for Sustainable Development in Finland. First such strategy was formulated in 2006. The present strategy '*Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development – The Finland we want by 2050*' was adopted in 2014, a year before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2016 the Commission decided not to redraft the existing strategy, but to update the key objectives and principles to be in line with the 2030 Agenda (Figure 5). It collects and represents the views on key national objectives and themes for sustainable development from a broad range of Finland's societal actors. It also provides a common vision for the society: "A prosperous Finland with global responsibility for sustainability and the carrying capacity of nature".

Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development serves as a long-term target framework for the Finnish society, and a tool in promoting Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development and facilitating concrete implementation by various administrative sectors and societal actors.

Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development formed the basis for the Government's first Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda in 2017. The Government adopted the vision and principles of the Society's Commitment, which enabled building coherence and trust between the Government and the broader society on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland.

Figure 5. National Sustainable Development Strategy and the 2030 Agenda
Correspondence between national objectives and SDGs

| Objectives of the society's commitment | Sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Equal prospects for well-being | 4 QUALITY EDUCATION  | 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES  | 1 NO POVERTY  2 ZERO HUNGER  3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  5 GENDER EQUALITY  8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 2. A participatory society for all | 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  | 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES  | 4 QUALITY EDUCATION  10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 3. Work in a sustainable way | 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  | | 4 QUALITY EDUCATION  9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 4. Sustainable society and local communities | 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  | 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  | 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES  13 CLIMATE ACTION  16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 5. A carbon-neutral society | 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY  | 13 CLIMATE ACTION  | 2 ZERO HUNGER  9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  15 LIFE ON LAND  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 6. A resource-wise economy | 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  | 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  | 2 ZERO HUNGER  6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION  7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  15 LIFE ON LAND  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 7. Lifestyles respectful of the carrying capacity of nature | 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  | | 4 QUALITY EDUCATION  8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |
| 8. Decision-making respectful of nature | 15 LIFE ON LAND  | 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  | 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  14 LIFE BELOW WATER  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  |

However, the National Audit (2019)²⁴ and the independent assessment (POLKU, 2019)²⁵ on sustainable development revealed that the Society's Commitment has not sufficiently steered Ministries work. Also, many larger companies have taken the SDG framework for their compass, whereas the national strategy and its eight objectives have remained obsolete. In terms of communication, the 2030 Agenda has been more attractive than the national Society's Commitment. Having two policy frameworks for sustainable development, much as they are interlinked, has created some confusion among stakeholders. It remains to be seen what the future of the Society's Commitment will be. In any case it is likely that the National Commission on Sustainable Development will update or renew the national strategy during the Commission's new term 2020–2023.

5.6.8 Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into Research and Innovation policy

Government's roadmap for research, development and innovation (RDI) paves the way towards sustainable growth and wellbeing through high-level knowledge, research and innovation. The roadmap identifies the pivotal role of research and innovation in creating solutions to the global development challenges identified in the 2030 Agenda. The policy interventions will be focused on developing the knowledge base, increasing RDI cooperation between research organisations, businesses and third sector and innovativeness of public sector. Knowledge, research and innovation are also seen as a key in mitigating the societal effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.








Many concrete steps towards integrating SDGs in research and innovation policies, instruments and activities have been taken. Main public funding organisations for research and innovation, Business Finland and Academy of Finland, have integrated Sustainable Development Goals into their programmes to yield knowledge and solutions to the SDG challenges. Scaling up innovations for international markets will be boosted via programmes by Business Finland (Figure 6) and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd, relating to themes such as clean energy, renewable raw materials, the circular economy, health, and digitalisation. Academy of Finland enhances the achievement of SDG goals through annual open calls and by funding cutting edge research. Higher education institutions and public research institutions are increasingly regarding sustainable development as part of their strategy and focus of research. In 2018, for example, the University of Helsinki established the Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science (HELSUS), which contributes to the sustainable transformation of the society by means of inter-disciplinary and transdisciplinary research and education.

²⁴ https://www.vtv.fi/en/press_releases/sustainable-development-is-given-more-weight-in-the-ministries-activities/

²⁵ <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-287-655-3>

Figure 6. Business Finland programs 2020

The 2030 Agenda has been integrated into various programs

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| BF programs open new business opportunities and speed up solutions to the challenges of sustainable development. | 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  | 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY  | 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  | 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  | 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  |
| | Smart health and wellbeing | Smart and clean energy | Smart industry | Smart and sustainable communities | Circular economy and responsible consumption |
| SDGs indicate promising markets. | Smart Life Personalized Health | Smart Energy Batteries from Finland | Sustainable Manufacturing | Smart Mobility | Bio and Circular Food from Finland Experience Commerce |
| 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  13 CLIMATE ACTION  | Digital transformation | AI Business | | Digital Trust New Space Economy | |
| | Game changers | Entertainment Finland | | Developing Markets Platform | |
| | Attractive country brand | Talent Boost Travel | | | |

Finland promotes cooperation and coherence between research and innovation and development policies. Finnish innovation policy also supports industries, such as mining, tourism, space, industrial and health sectors, in the transition toward sustainable growth. Finland also utilizes the funding from the EU Framework Programme to finance RDI activities focusing on solving the sustainability challenges.

5.6.9 Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into Education system at all levels

Finnish education policy aims to offer equal opportunities for education for all. Publicly funded education is free of charge in Finland from early childhood education and care (ECEC) through to higher education.

Education is never isolated from the rest of society. Sustainable development is being promoted holistically in all fields of activity falling within the mandate of the Ministry of Education and Culture – education and training, culture, science, youth, and sports and physical activity – by means of information, legislative, performance and target guidance.

According to the Ministry's 2018 Futures Review, a competent Finland wants to bear its share of responsibility for solving global problems and meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Competence provides the best safeguard amidst technological and global change. Furthermore, one of the key objectives set out in the Ministry's 2019 strategy document, entitled *Championing education and culture with knowledge, skills and feeling*, is to strengthen sustainable development, sustainable growth and vitality in Finland.

In April 2020, the *Sustainable Development Policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture and its administrative branch*²⁶ was published. The policy supports the Ministry's administrative branch in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the rationale being that achieving the goals of the Agenda require strong support of education, research, cultural, youth and sport policies. Measures taken in the Ministry's administrative branch as a whole promote a cultural change, which is a prerequisite for a shift towards comprehensive sustainable development. This refers, for example, to consolidating and maintaining equal rights to cultural engagement, high standards of early childhood education and care, high level of education, up-to-date skills, continuous learning, and accessibility of information.

Finland's current Government Programme (2019–) is premised on an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable society built on competence and inclusion. Finland's prosperity is based on growth resting on education, research and innovation. People's strong basic skills and capabilities to learn new things and upgrade their competence throughout their lives and careers play a key role amidst the transformation of the world of work.

In the section of its Programme entitled 'Finland that promotes competence, education, culture and innovation', the Government has specified the following objectives:

1. the level of education and competence among the population will rise at all levels of education, differences in learning outcomes will decrease, and educational equality will increase;
2. children and young people will feel well;
3. education and training will enhance gender equality and non-discrimination in society; and
4. Finland will be an internationally attractive place to study, conduct research and invest.

Finland has developed education and training at all levels with due attention to increasing wellbeing and community spirit. Emphasis is also placed on a competence approach, such as learning and problem-solving skills, multiliteracy, and creative and critical thinking.

²⁶ <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-263-706-2>

In the future, everyone should have the capacity to engage in lifelong and continuous learning, including at the workplace. Development of continuous learning is based on working methods and conceptualisation geared towards meeting the demand from society and businesses.

In the Finnish context, the holistic approach towards sustainable development in schools and other educational institutions means that learning environments, everyday organisational culture and school management and leadership are also targets of continuous improvement alongside learning contents. Sustainable development is already effectively captured in learning contents within documents such as the National Core Curricula for early childhood education and care, basic education and vocational education and training. However, there is still work to be done to encourage more widespread adoption of a holistic organisational culture, among other things.

Through their operations, universities and universities of applied sciences promote Finnish competitiveness, wellbeing, all-round education and culture, and sustainable development. These higher education institutions are autonomous entities, which are responsible for their own administration, research and teaching. Several higher education institutions have worked systematically to integrate sustainable development into different fields of study. Many also offer transdisciplinary minor subject modules in sustainable development. The aim is to create solutions to the challenge presented by sustainable development and to provide students with the kind of competence capital required on the labour market.

Teacher education and its development form one of the key functions of higher education institutions. Teachers are highly educated and valued professionals in Finland. In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a Teacher Education Forum made up of relevant stakeholders, which has drafted national guidelines for developing teacher education. Finland places emphasis on cooperation between teachers and the continuum between teachers' pre-service education, induction training and continuing professional development. Teachers' digital skills and use of innovative teaching methods have also been consolidated through a network of teacher tutors.

In recent years, one of the priorities of education policy has focused on students' flexible learning pathways based on a 'leave no-one behind' approach. This means an education system with no progress-hindering dead ends from early childhood education and care through to higher education. Students can move from vocational programmes to higher education, and vice versa, with prior learning recognised to the fullest possible extent. At the same time, pathways to higher education are being diversified, while also improving its pass rates and developing an operating model and conceptualised provision for continuous learning.

The latest examples of developing flexible learning pathways include the reform of vocational education and training and the new Vocational Education and Training Act (531/2017), in force as of the beginning of 2018. Under the new system, it is possible to flexibly apply for vocational education and training through a rolling application procedure where necessary. Each student is provided with a personal study plan and they can complete an entire vocational qualification or individual qualification modules according to their own needs. There are also preparatory education and competence development programmes on offer. Competence is assessed against the qualification requirements for vocational skills and competencies, irrespective of how, where and when these were acquired. Competence, including sustainable development skills, is demonstrated by performing practical work tasks in real-life work situations. The reform abolished the distinction between vocational programmes intended for young people and adults.

Education is digitalising. This entails, for example, increasing the modularity of higher education, digital course provision and guidance counselling services, and modernising pedagogical methods. These reforms will serve degree education and continuous learning. The number of digital courses and fully digital degree programmes will be increased in order to improve accessibility and expand international student recruitment.

The contributions of liberal adult education – including folk high schools, adult education centres, study centres, sports institutes and summer universities – are also important in Finland. Based on the principle of lifelong learning, its purpose is to promote people's diverse personal development and wellbeing, advance sustainable development, and provide education in support of social coherence, equality and active citizenship. A number of CSOs operating in educational, cultural, youth, sports and physical activity sectors also play a significant role. They produce learning materials and provide training in sustainable development issues both within schools and liberal adult education institutions and outside as part of their core activities.

According to various reports produced in Finland in relation to the progress made in promoting sustainable development (such as the PATH2030 project in 2017–2018), challenges requiring special attention include increasing social exclusion, combating climate change, deteriorating environmental status, and unsustainable consumer habits. Meeting these challenges calls for themes relating to educational responsibility and quality improvement.

A specific concern is that young people's level of education is no longer rising. Every year, about 15% of young people are left without an upper secondary certificate. This means that, after comprehensive school, one out of nine young people lacks the capabilities required to pursue further studies and find employment. The situation increases the risk

of social exclusion, just like the growth in learning differences between both genders and regions. Moreover, even second-generation immigrants have lower learning outcomes when compared with the mainstream population. The flexibility of education and training is placed at the centre of measures, as are the efforts to increase wellbeing and community spirit. Education and training providers also receive discretionary government grants, which were extended in 2019 to cover early childhood education and care. The grants can be used to hire more teachers and classroom assistants in order to reduce teaching group sizes in schools that require additional support. Furthermore, special efforts are made to encourage boys to take up reading for pleasure.

In 2018, 41% of the 25–34 age group had completed a higher education degree. By international standards, this figure places Finland around the EU average and below the OECD average. Consequently, the Government Programme and the Vision for Higher Education and Research in 2030 have set a target for 50% of the 25–34 age group to complete a higher education degree by 2030.

Participation in adult education in Finland is at a high level by international standards, standing at over one half of adults. However, the problem is that participation is unevenly distributed. The better the educational attainment level, labour-market position or socio-economic status that an individual has, the likelier it is for them to participate in adult education.

Prevention of bullying, harassment and hate speech has been addressed in education and training in many different ways, such as inter-sectoral cooperation, including non-formal learning contexts. The same goes for young people's social exclusion. The number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) has decreased in recent years, but it is still over 10% of the age cohort. Attention should be paid to the diversification of society, and the need to prevent the polarisation trend should be met by means of education and research.

Stepping up efforts to combat climate change is quite a topical theme in education, training and research as well. In 2019, the Finnish National Agency for Education launched an awareness-raising programme entitled 'Climate Responsibility in Education' to strengthen the means to support learning about climate responsibility. Several higher education institutions participate in the Times Higher Education SDG ranking, which measures their success in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals. Finnish CSOs also provide global education that increasingly focuses on climate change and on enhancing the opportunities of civil society to exercise influence.

5.6.10 Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into Development, Foreign and Security and Trade policy

The four priority areas in Finland's development policy are: 1. Women and Girls; 2. Sustainable Economies and Decent jobs; 3. Education and Democratic Societies; and 4. Climate Resilience and Natural Resources. The policy priorities are defined in terms of their contribution to the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Since 2016, several steps have been taken to deepen and clarify the integration of the 2030 Agenda in Finland's development cooperation. The Government Programme 2019 is a landmark document in this regard. Finland presented its first comprehensive results report to the Parliament in 2018, which showed that through its development policy and development cooperation, Finland has contributed to addressing the most serious development challenges in its priority areas. In 2022 the Government will present a second comprehensive results report on Finland's Development Policy to the Parliament. The new monitoring tools in place for tracking implementation will allow Finland to show more clearly how its development cooperation supports the 2030 Agenda. All programmes and projects that Finland supports are encouraged to consider the use of SDG indicators for their monitoring.

Finland has actively promoted international policy discussions on the integration of the 2030 Agenda to results based management of development cooperation. One highlight was the adoption of the Guiding Principles on Management for Sustainable Development Results by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2019. Finland has integrated the 2030 Agenda into its guidelines for civil society in development policy (2017) and its funding instruments for civil society, including application criteria and reporting requirements.

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are integrated in the European Consensus on Development (2017). The 2030 Agenda is the overall and leading policy framework for the main EU development policy processes such as external financing in the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework, EU development policy programming and the negotiations for the new Partnership between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries after 2020.

Finland has promoted the 2030 Agenda as the overall framework in the ongoing negotiations on the EU's future financing of external relations, the Regulation Establishing the EU Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI). Finland has, in particular, promoted the mainstreaming of SDG 5 (Gender equality) and 13 (Climate action) in the regulation. In addition, Finland has emphasised mainstreaming of the aforementioned SDGs when programming the next financial period (2021–2027).

The promotion of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, peace, freedom, and equality in all international activities forms the central element of the value base on which Finland's foreign and security policy rests. It is based on good bilateral relations, an active role within the European Union, and effective multilateral cooperation and promotion of rules-based international system. Finland continues to work actively towards strengthening the UN and its ability to operate effectively towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda while taking into account international law, democracy and human rights.

Finland promotes the functioning and independence of the UN Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the human rights monitoring mechanisms as well as contributes to the resources. The rights of women and girls, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities are among the key thematic priorities of Finland's international human rights policy. Finland is a candidate to the UN Human Rights Council for the term 2022–2024. The Human Rights Council is one of the cornerstones of the multilateral system.

Finland's foreign and security policy emphasises strengthening gender equality and the rights of women and girls, reducing inequalities, tackling climate change and its impacts, promoting peaceful societies, guaranteeing legal services for all, and effective and responsible institutions. During Finland's Presidency of the European Union (2019), Finland actively promoted the mainstreaming of human rights defenders, women and girls and LHBTI rights in various sectors of the EU's foreign and security policy. As President of the Council of Europe (2019) Finland took initiatives to increase the institution's effectiveness and promotion of the rule of law, and promoted action on human rights-centred artificial intelligence.

International crisis management is an integral part of Finland's foreign, security and defence policy. Finland strongly promotes and contributes with a wide variety of tools to international peace and stability. Finland's foreign and security policy objectives and related activities are strongly in line with the attainment of the universal goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Finland's participation in international crisis management is based on the national foreign and security policy priorities. By participating in international crisis management Finland promotes democracy, good governance and human rights, including protection of civilians, preventing sexual violence in conflicts as well as the rights of women and children. Mitigating climate change is an overarching principle that is taken into account in all policies and activities. Finland is a strong proponent of a comprehensive approach in crisis management. Enhancing security and stability as well as strengthening capabilities and capacity of conflict driven countries is essential. Participation of women and youth in peace processes, including in crisis management activities, is a priority for Finland.

Finland is a strong supporter of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the implementation of which contributes to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. The key in our third National 1325 Action Plan (2018–2021) is to ensure women's meaningful participation and mainstream the gender perspective better in all sectors. Participation of the civil society at all stages is essential.

Finland will prepare, as the first country in the world, a National Action Plan (NAP) on the implementation of the UN Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

The 2030 Agenda and especially target 16.4, explicitly reflects upon the importance of arms control in promoting peace, security and sustainable development. Finland actively supports this work especially through humanitarian mine action, control of illicit small arms and light weapons and regulating the international arms trade.

The 2030 Agenda objectives have been integrated into the EU's and Finland's trade policy. As a member of the EU, Finland exercises its trade policy through the EU. The 2030 Agenda recognises that international trade is a driver for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development. It also highlights the importance of continuing to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO, as well as meaningful trade liberalisation. These objectives are fully in line with Finland's trade policy.

The EU has already for a number of years provided duty-free and quota-free market access to imports from the least developed countries, LDCs (SDG targets 10.A.1 and 17.12.1.). Finland has supported this provision of duty-free and quota-free market access for the LDCs. Finland also supports the target of significantly increasing the exports of developing countries, in particular those of the LDCs (target 17.11.).

In accessing EU markets, the challenge of LDCs is not that of lack of market access, but lack of trade capacity. Therefore, Finland has been a strong supporter of the international Aid for Trade initiative since 2005, which aims at providing more trade-related development assistance to developing countries.

With regard to SDG target 14.6 on fisheries subsidies and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the EU has actively taken part in the WTO negotiations on fisheries subsidies reform and Finland has supported the work as part of the EU.

According to PATH2030 evaluation, opportunities to promote the sustainable development work of all administrative branches in foreign policy are exceptionally good in Finland. In practice, the mainstreaming of the human rights based approach

and broad-based foreign policy in sustainable development still needs a great deal of work and the resources required to carry out this work. Evaluation underlines the need for a credible plan and broad-based commitment to increase development cooperation appropriations to 0.7 per cent of the GNP. The Finnish model includes strong support for a rules-based system, which should also, in practice, be seen as strong support for UN organisations and high-profile work within the UN.²⁷

CASE: Government initiative to declare 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health of the UN

Governments do not only take the overall responsibility for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on their national level, but also may take responsibilities to promote and support the 2030 Agenda and its international implementation on a global level. International policy initiatives and their advancements depend largely on the leadership of individual countries and their Governments in international organizations.

In 2015, the Finnish Government launched in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) the proposal to declare the year 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH 2020). Healthy plants constitute the foundation for all life on Earth, as well as ecosystem functions and food security, and are key to sustaining life on Earth. Plant health is key to protect the environment, forests and biodiversity from plant pests, addresses the effects of climate change, and supports efforts to end hunger, malnutrition and poverty and boosts economic development. In particular, the protection of plant health from pests is a key factor in strategies to eliminate hunger and rural poverty. The IYPH 2020 addresses the urgent need to raise awareness of and to promote and facilitate actions towards the management of plant health in order to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The governing bodies of the IPPC and FAO welcomed the Finnish initiative and leadership and unanimously agreed to the proposal in 2016 and 2017, respectively. The Government of Finland and 94 cosponsors proposed a UN resolution to this effect, which was agreed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018. ●

²⁷ The evaluation report can be found from <https://www.demoshelsinki.fi/en/julkaisut/path2030-an-evaluation-of-finlands-sustainable-development-policy/>.

5.6.11 Linkages to the work of the European Union and the Nordic Council of Ministers

Finland is a member of the European Union. Since all EU member states have delegated competencies in some policy areas from member states to the Union, and since common EU legislation and policies have a significant impact on national decision making and legislation, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDG's at country level depend significantly on the decisions made at the EU level.

Finland has urged the Union to ambitiously promote the 2030 Agenda. In 2017, the Council established a working party on the 2030 Agenda, whose mandate is to assist the Council to regularly follow up, monitor and review the EU internal and external implementation of the 2030 Agenda across policy sectors at the EU level, and to ensure that follow-up, monitoring and review is done in a systematic, effective, participatory transparent and integrated manner; address overarching cross-cutting issues related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and take stock of progress made at EU level; and play a leading role in the coordination and preparation of common EU approaches and positions in view of relevant international dialogues, processes and fora on sustainable development.

In 2019 the Council concluded that the main policy foundations for a sustainable future in Europe include a decisive transition towards a circular economy, including non-toxic material cycles; striving for climate neutrality and tackling climate change in line with the Paris Agreement; protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems; the sustainability of the agriculture and food systems; as well as safe and sustainable low carbon energy, buildings and mobility sectors; whilst fostering European cohesion. The Council underlined the need to strengthen the social dimension to promote inclusion; equality in all its forms, notably gender equality; high-quality and inclusive education; and a socially fair transition, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, while ensuring that the EU's common values, including democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights are safeguarded.

In 2019 the Council also agreed on the EU's Strategic Agenda for 2019–2024. It is intended to guide the work of the Institutions in the next five years. It focuses on four main priorities: 1) protecting citizens and freedoms; 2) developing a strong and vibrant economic base; 3) building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe; and 4) promoting European interests and values on the global stage.

The strategic agenda of the Council guided the President of the new Commission in the preparation of Commission's Political Guidelines. The Political Guidelines focus on six headline ambitions for Europe over the next five years and well beyond: A European Green Deal; An economy that works for people; A Europe fit for the digital age; Promoting

our European way of life; A stronger Europe in the world; A new push for European democracy. These headline ambitions are well in line with the Finnish priorities and the 2030 Agenda.

Furthermore, in 2019, a Resolution of the Council on the Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development was prepared. The resolution emphasizes the responsibility of all policy areas, including culture, in achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The resolution asks the Commission to prepare, together with the Member States, an EU Action Plan on the cultural dimension of sustainable development and integrate the action plan in the EU's implementation strategy for the 2030 Agenda. Finland supports consistently the strengthening of the cultural dimension of sustainable development in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Nordic Countries are a central reference group for Finland, and sustainability work done in the framework of Nordic Council of Ministers complements the national sustainability work of Finland. Since 2017, the framework for joint Nordic work around the 2030 Agenda has been Generation 2030 -programme. It has three main objectives: 1) ensure that the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by way of political focus and relevant projects; 2) contribute to involvement in and knowledge sharing related to the 2030 Agenda in the Nordic Region; and 3) improve the visibility of the Nordic Council of Ministers' work in the Nordic Region and internationally.

In August 2019 the Nordic Prime Ministers adopted a new Nordic vision for 2030. The vision aims at making the Nordic region the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030. The vision consists of three strategic priorities: a green Nordic region; a competitive Nordic region, and a socially sustainable Nordic Region. These priorities will guide the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers up to 2024.

5.7 Integration of the three dimensions

Sustainable development seeks to combine greater economic prosperity and social justice with a healthy environment, in order to improve the overall wellbeing and stability of society. The challenge has been the ambiguity of the concept 'sustainable development', being sometimes too vague and abstract, sometimes too "development" or too "environment", many times "everything but nothing".

That is why it has been important in Finland to concretize, visualize and operationalize sustainable development and its three dimensions by developing related concepts, tools

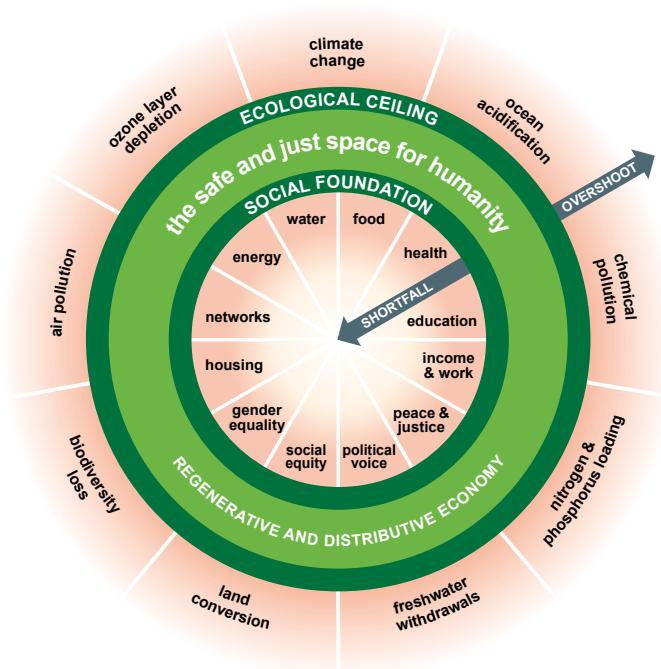
and indicators, sustainable development strategies and multi-stakeholder forums, as well as public-private partnerships and networks.

The most recent academic tool to help grasp the multidimensional and interlinked nature of sustainable development has been the “sustainable development doughnut” designed by Kate Raworth, based on and extended from the work of eminent researches of the Stockholm Resilient Centre. The doughnut has been helpful in Finland to visualize the dual challenge of reaching the social foundation (social and societal goals) but at the same time ensuring that the environmental ceiling (planetary boundaries) is not exceeded. In that safe and just space for humanity (doughnut) can economic development be inclusive and sustainable. The doughnut not only describes the three dimensions of sustainable development, but also highlights the global nature of our common efforts. This is sometimes forgotten in national deliberations.

The ‘Doughnut economy’ (Figure 7) has inspired Finland’s strategic thinking to the extent that it was taken as the basis for Finland’s national strategy for sustainable development ‘Society’s Commitment on Sustainable Development – the Finland we want 2050’. The vision of the Society’s Commitment recognizes the planetary boundaries and our global responsibility while at the same time ensuring further development of the Nordic welfare society and wellbeing of Finnish citizens.

Figure 7. The Doughnut Economy

by Kate Raworth



CASE: Nexus (water–food–forest– energy)

Nexus is derived from the Latin verb *nexere*, which means ‘to bind or tie together’. In the context of natural resources, the Nexus Approach refers to taking the interconnections of different natural resources sectors into consideration when examining these sectors.

Water is linked either directly or indirectly to forest, food and energy. Good governance of water resources has an important role in solving global challenges such as hunger, depletion of natural resources and climate change. Also food and energy production are more and more strongly linked to each other and dependent on same limited resources. Sustainable forest management is linked to many other sustainable development goals such as those for land ecosystems, energy and climate.

Promotion of sustainable development goals, particularly those for food (SDG2), water (SDG6), climate (SDG13) and forests (SDG15) and also the interlinkages between them are in the core of all activities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Ministry’s new strategy for 2030 emphasizes sustainable use of natural resources and circular economy.

In Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry’s daily work, promotion of nexus approach is important in both national and international level. In international level, Ministry leads the large nexus assessment as a part of the present Work Programme of the UNECE Water Convention. This assessment is based on case studies e.g. in Central Asia, Caucasus, the Balkans and Northern Africa. Findings from these exercises will produce recommendation how to take nexus linkages into account in transboundary connections.

Ministry has also promoted nexus approach in many other international connections, such as FAO, High Level Political Forum, and China Europe Water Platform, where we have worked on nexus together with our Chinese counterpart, Ministry of Water Resources, but also with FAO.

The Finnish joint cross-sectoral network of international policy on natural resources has organized two events on nexus approach, and how to promote it in our work in various international processes. The network is consisting not only of public sector organizations, but also civil society actors and private businesses.

Nationally, non-point sources of nutrients from agriculture and forestry comprise the largest share of nutrient loading to our fresh and marine waters, and often also a threat to ground waters. The aim is to minimize these loadings and keep Finland’s water in good condition and improve the water quality in water bodies that has not reached the good status. The national forest strategy, published in 2019 includes many strategic goals to diminish loadings, improve also the biodiversity of forest areas.

Agri-environmental measures, connected to EU’s Common Agricultural Policy, are the main policy measures to improve water protection, enhance biodiversity and reduce CO₂ emissions from agriculture. This support programme consists of numerous various measures which aim at improvement of environment.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry funds several research projects and experiments that will produce new knowledge on how to use sustainably our natural resources and mitigate climate change and adapt to it. ●

The theme of HLPF 2020 'Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development' implies that after almost 5 years of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda we need to be able to deliver results and progress. We need to demonstrate our commitment to accelerated action and transformative change. Transformative change does not happen by business-as-usual methods and tools.

The value added of the 2030 Agenda lies in its comprehensiveness and interconnectedness. For example, economic growth needs to benefit the people and planet. Environment policies and climate action need to improve peoples' health and wellbeing and create new prosperity and jobs. Poverty eradication and wellbeing of people need to be created without harming the environment and economic development.

5.8 Leaving no one behind

5.8.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- Universal social security and service systems, as well as good educational opportunities for the entire population, have prevented exclusion.
- Guaranteeing employment for as many as possible has been challenging, long-term unemployment is a problem.
- Finland finds it important to take care of all the population groups and the cohesiveness of society. Individual approach has been successful in meeting people's needs.
- Persons belonging to visible minorities and persons with disabilities continue to experience discrimination in different areas of life. National legislation and policy actions promoting equality and preventing exclusion aim to ensure equal opportunities for all.
- It is important to increase the disaggregation of information by disability, age and origin
- In the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda Finland focuses on four priority areas: 1. Women and Girls, 2. Sustainable Economies and Decent jobs, 3. Education and Democratic Societies, and 4. Climate Resilience and Natural Resources. Gender equality, non-discrimination, climate resilience and low-emission development are cross-cutting objectives for all activities. The geographical priority is Africa. The civil society has a significant role in putting into practice the objective of leaving no-one behind.
- Finland has achieved good results in strengthening women's and girls' rights and status and in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and in enabling developing economies to offer more jobs, livelihoods and well-being. Tangible results have also been achieved in regard to improving access to equal education and open governance in peaceful and democratic societies. Finland is also working to promote climate resilience and reduce emissions by sustainable use of natural resources.

- Finland pursues a human rights-based foreign and security policy. The Government aims for systematic promotion of human rights through coherent policy actions across Government departments and agencies. The central aim of the Government policy is to systematically promote gender equality and the full materialisation of girls' and women's rights. Protection of rights of those in the most vulnerable position, including human rights defenders, is also central to the Government's policy.

5.8.2 Promotion of the LNOB principle in national context

The 2030 Agenda has been a key tool in making more coherent linkages between sustainable development policies and the LNOB principle. In earlier years, the LNOB was typically addressed in the context of Finland's development cooperation by focusing on least developed countries, or as part of the social and employment policies in the national context. These important policy areas remain crucial, but are complemented by considerations on equality and human rights, both home and abroad.

To reduce inequality and poverty, attention should be paid to safeguarding a sufficient income and equal health care, social welfare, education and employment services for everyone. Looking after the welfare of the population, providing employment and training, and building skills and competences in all sectors and at all levels, will help in achieving an open, equal, participatory and non-discriminating society.

The Nordic welfare model has been effective in preventing inequality among different population groups within societies. The common basis for the Nordic welfare model includes a wide range of public welfare services and tax-funded services, close tripartite cooperation between social partners and the state, the considerable role of self-governing municipalities in providing services, the promotion of gender equality and an active civil society. There is a strong consensus concerning these fundamental principles across party lines. There is also a broad understanding of the need to prevent social exclusion and reduce income inequalities, and on the importance of social inclusion. This has led to public trust that the institutions of society will work in everyone's best interest.

The tried and tested basic principles and values of the Nordic welfare model should be highlighted constantly. They will automatically be passed down to future generations. Social services and benefit systems are part of a broader welfare policy that also takes into account the root causes of social problems and aims to prevent them from emerging. When individual target groups are dealt with separately, it is easy to forget the holistic view, meaning that measures may not lead to sustainable and permanent results.

The most effective way to reduce inequality is to change the structures of society. There is solid evidence of the links between structural factors in society, such as poverty and poor

living conditions, low education and unemployment, and the poor health and wellbeing of individuals and, in turn, the national economy. In Finland, reducing socio-economic inequalities in wellbeing and health has been a policy objective for a long time, but there are still many challenges when it comes to addressing the causes of increased inequality.

Inequality can be reduced by making "Well-being in all policies" a conscious goal at all levels of government. Reducing unemployment, improving basic security and services, strengthening inclusion and communality, and taking into account the needs of vulnerable groups all play a key role. A healthy, capable and competent population is also the foundation for a sustainable economy.

Finnish labour legislation promotes equal treatment of employees and equal competition between companies. The legislation is very gender-neutral and inclusive. The same is true of social welfare legislation. According to the 2017 statistics, poverty among those in employment in Finland is the lowest in the EU (less than three per cent).

Social dialogue, a well-functioning negotiation system and cooperation between organisations and the Government on issues related to the development of working life and the promotion of employment are central to finding solutions to common challenges. The protection provided by the social security system is an essential means of preventing poverty and protecting individuals from various risks. Exclusion is also tackled through extensive activities of civil society organisations, which receive assistance from public authorities.

The quality of life of Finns over the age of 20 has improved continuously. Women and men rate their quality of life as equally good. There has been a slow change in attitudes towards equality over the last 20 years. Women and men are estimated to be slightly more equal than before. However, the experience of the realization of equality is still considered as worse by women than by men. Experienced wellbeing is linked to social and economic standing in that the better-off experience a better quality of life. In general, the health of Finns has improved starting from the 1990s. That said, the great health inequalities between different population groups in Finland remain a major concern. People living in South and West Finland are healthier than those living in East and North Finland.

There are also differences in access to health services depending on the population group and region. Long waiting times hamper access to public primary health care. The prevalence of mental health problems is a problem that easily leads to dropping out of school, unemployment, inactivity and exclusion. Intimate partner violence poses a particular threat to women; Finland is the second most violent country for women in the EU.

An increasing number of young people aged between 15 and 24 are in education or employment. The proportion of young adults outside employment and education has

decreased considerably in recent years. Loneliness has also decreased among young people, especially boys.

The general level of education in the population has continuously increased, and in recent decades, the growth has been steady. It is worrying, however, that the literacy skills of Finnish youth are declining, and the differences in learning between girls and boys are among the greatest in the OECD countries. According to the 2018 PISA survey, there were clearly more low-performing readers among pupils with immigrant backgrounds than among the native-born population.

Inequalities between areas of residence have increased. In the largest cities in Finland, the poor and the rich are concentrated to different neighbourhoods, as are people of Finnish and foreign origin. In smaller cities and rural areas, access to services is becoming increasingly difficult.

The number of low income earners at risk of poverty has remained at roughly the same level, reaching 11.5 per cent in 2017 (Eurostat, OECD). Developing a social security system that equalises income distribution can effectively reduce poverty in Finland. In 2018, income transfers reduced the number of people at risk of low income and narrowed the poverty gap considerably more than the EU average. The increase in income inequality and in the number of low income earners seems to have stalled. That being said, income differences remain significant, even though they are lower than the EU average. Poverty affects some groups of population, such as people with disabilities, more than others. Family carers are also excluded from the benefits of paid labour, and are at risk of poverty. According to the assessment report on the sufficiency of basic social security (THL 2019), basic social security does not often cover the level of minimum consumption considered reasonable. The level of basic social security also stays below the relative level of poverty risk.

According to European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the proportion of children at risk of poverty and exclusion was 15 per cent in Finland in 2018, which is clearly below the EU average of 24,9 per cent. 23 per cent of children of non-Finnish citizens were at risk of poverty. Among the total population, the proportion was 9 per cent.

The employment rate has improved, and fewer people in employment are low income earners. The gender pay gap is higher in Finland than the EU average. According to the equality index of European Institute for Gender Equality, Finland fell from third place to fourth on the scale due to slow development.

The goal of health and social policy is to build a cohesive society and sustainable wellbeing. The objectives of the Government's key projects for wellbeing and health

in 2015–2019 included promoting wellbeing, reducing inequality, improving the employment of people with partial work ability and reforming services for families with children and older people in order to meet the needs of clients.

Realisation of equality between population groups

Employment, education and welfare policy measures for the entire population may not be sufficient to ensure the inclusion of all population groups. Support measures are needed alongside them to balance the different starting points arising from different backgrounds. The purpose of the Non-Discrimination Act is to promote equal opportunities for persons belonging to different population groups in society. It is the duty of all authorities, education providers and employers to promote equality between different population groups in their activities. The purpose of Equality Act is to promote gender equality and to prevent gender-based discrimination.

Studies show that persons with a minority background, especially those belonging to visible minorities and those belonging to several minorities at once, are significantly more vulnerable to discrimination than the rest of the population.

According to the Eurobarometer survey on discrimination produced by the EU, attitudes towards equality in Finland seem to have become more positive, and attitudes towards sexual and gender minorities, for instance, have become more tolerant. However, attitudes towards the Roma remain very negative, and attitudes towards people with disabilities have not significantly improved.

In the labour market, poor health, disabilities, gender and age are key causes of discrimination, and the way people with disabilities experience their position in Finland points to significant problems both in working life and in other areas of life. There is strong evidence of discrimination against the Roma and many other ethnic minorities in working life. Unemployment was clearly more prevalent among people with foreign backgrounds than among the overall population, even after several years of living in Finland.

Hate speech and harassment have increased in Finland as the use of social media has become more common. This has serious repercussions on the activities and participation of people facing harassment, leading them to avoid certain places or topics of discussion, for example.

In particular, persons belonging to visible minorities also have a particularly high risk of facing discrimination on multiple grounds. Gender is also often a factor in multiple discrimination. According to a study produced by the Ministry of Justice, discrimination against people who belong to more than one minority at once is even more frequent and more likely to occur. It is also more likely to be continuous and all-encompassing.

Policy measures to combat discrimination and promote equality and women's rights

A reform of the legislation on Non-Discrimination Act was carried out in Finland in 2015, considerably improving the legal protection of victims of discrimination and strengthening the obligation to promote equality. All authorities have an obligation to assess the realisation of equality in their activities and to draw up a plan to promote equality. The same obligation also applies to educational institutions and employers that regularly employ more than 30 persons. The Equality Act obligates authorities, providers of education and employers to promote gender equality.

Non-Discrimination Act applies to discrimination on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, conviction, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relations, health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal reason. Equality act prohibits discrimination based on gender, gender identity or gender expression.

One of the main focus areas of the National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights for 2017–2019 was equality. The projects in the Action Plan increased awareness about equality, influenced attitudes and the culture of dialogue, promoted good relations between population groups, supported municipal equality planning and increased the Government's capacity to assess the realisation of equality, identify and intervene in discrimination and promote equality.

The current Government Programme includes a variety of measures related to the promotion of equality, such as national action plans for combating racism and discrimination and promoting good relations between population groups, a partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act, a working life diversity programme and a suburban development programme. The Government Programme also includes action plan to prevent violence against women, action plan for gender equality, equal pay programme, the parental leave reform and strengthening of wage transparency. According to the Government Programme, the legislation on confirmation of gender will be reformed to respect self-determination.

5.8.3 Promotion of the LNOB principle in external policies

Finland's human rights -based development policy aims at eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities and implementing sustainable development goals in the least developed countries. In order to leave no-one behind, Finland focuses its global 2030 Agenda implementation on four priority areas: 1. Women and Girls, 2. Sustainable Economies and Decent jobs, 3. Education and Democratic Societies, and 4. Climate Resilience and Natural Resources. Gender equality, non-discrimination, climate resilience and low-emission development are cross-cutting objectives for all activities. The geographical priority is Africa.

The civil society has a significant role in putting into practice the objective of leaving no-one behind. Civil society has proven to reach target groups that would be difficult to reach through other channels. Finland's guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy from 2017, which are anchored in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, have as their basic premise that independent, vibrant, pluralistic and polyphonic civil societies create the prerequisites for the peaceful participation of citizens in society and for the realisation of human rights. Finland places particular focus on the normative aspects of the 2030 Agenda, in aiming to support the most vulnerable and marginalised groups and human rights defenders. The human rights based approach has been significantly strengthened since 2015 in Finland's development policy through the launch of guidelines. The society's commitment to sustainable development emphasises the central importance of the human rights based approach, to promote peace, equality, non-discrimination and justice both nationally and internationally. Finland has supported international initiatives on human rights, equality and democracy through both political and economic support. There was close cooperation with civil society on these themes. A particular focus has been on organisations working with the most vulnerable groups on the ground, such as international human rights organizations

What is Finland doing to strengthen the rights and status of women and girls? SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5 and 10

Finland applies a twin-track approach for gender equality. This includes both systematic mainstreaming across all policy priorities and implementation through targeted interventions. The targeted interventions focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as reducing violence and abuse against all women and girls. Gender equality is seen as an intrinsic value and we consider it as an essential means to achieve economic development, also to reduce poverty and to achieve climate targets. Finland has a strong focus on eliminating multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination with special focus on ensuring that all our gender equality priorities also include women and girls with disabilities.

Non-discrimination is our second cross-cutting objective under which we concentrate on eliminating discrimination against persons with disabilities. This objective is also implemented by mainstreaming and by targeted interventions. Finland's priorities are to strengthen the global disability movement and the capacity of persons with disabilities as rights holders and the capacity of duty bearers to implement their mandates in respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights.

Examples of results in 2016–2020

1. With Finnish Support of 3,7 million euros to the UNFPA Women and Girls First (WGF) -project in 2016–2019, UNFPA worked on data, research, coordination mechanisms and organised various events. A particular success was awareness-raising and community participation including men and boys. Another was the nexus approach of the project, crossing over development and humanitarian assistance. The second phase of the project in 2020–2022 in the conflict zones of Myanmar will offer support services for victims of gender-based violence. Finland is providing EUR 4 million for this.
2. Finland is supporting UN Women in Afghanistan with EUR 6 million in 2020–2022 in the area of women, peace and security, including implementation of the national 1325 action plan. Finland also advocates for the rights of disabled women and girls. In Kenya, Finland is deepening its strategic cooperation with UN Women and joint advocacy efforts. Finland renews its support to UN Women Kenya in 2020–2023 (EUR 4,9 million) with an integrated focus on women's political participation, women's role in conflict prevention and support to the implementation of Kenyan policies and laws on prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV). With previous Finnish (EUR 4 million 2016–2019), Swedish and Japanese support, Kenya implemented its first 1325 National Action Plan and is developing its second plan in 2020. Finland also supports the Kenyan State Department for Gender in strengthening capacity to prevent GBV and to support more efficient chains for multi-sectoral service delivery for survivors of GBV in three focus counties. The bilateral programme is EUR 5 million 2020–2022.
3. In Targeted interventions towards promoting the rights of persons with disabilities: Finland invests around EUR 10 million annually towards disability inclusion and rights. 70 per cent of this funding goes through Finnish organisations of persons with disabilities to their partners in developing countries. Finland is the biggest donor of the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD), which supports the full implementation of the disability convention through facilitating coalition-building and capacity development at the global, regional and country level. Since 2013, Finland has supported the disability mainstreaming capacity of departments, Member States and Regional Economic Communities of the African Union.
4. Finland does most of its work related to sexual and reproductive health through the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other international organizations. Bilaterally, Finland carries out work in support of women's and girls' rights, especially in Somalia, Kenya, Afghanistan, Nepal, Myanmar and Tanzania. The social and economic rights of girls and women are promoted, for example, through programs and projects in the fields of education, agriculture and water supply. The most significant SRHR projects are located in Somalia and Afghanistan; In Afghanistan, Finland supported SRHR rights through Marie Stopes International (MSI) with EUR 2.5 million in 2015–2017. In advocacy work, Finland promotes the SRHR mainly in co-operation with like-minded countries (the Nordic countries, most EU countries and some Latin American and African countries).

What is Finland doing to enable developing economies to offer more jobs, livelihoods and well-being? SDGs 1, 8, 9 and 12

Finland focuses on four result objectives: 1) A higher number of people, especially women, young people and those in vulnerable positions and situations, have their right to decent work, livelihoods and income fulfilled, 2) The private sector is growing, is responsible and supports sustainable development, 3) Developing country Governments promote responsible business and a solid business environment for innovations, and 4) The international community promotes responsible business and innovations to benefit poor people, especially young people and women.

Examples of results in 2016–2020

1. Finland supported 106 trade unions and initiated programmes to advance the rights to sustainable livelihoods of 560 000 workers and small farmers.
2. Finnpartnership and Finnfund helped to employ over 105 000 persons and enhanced local economies by EUR 125 million in salaries, corporate responsibility programmes and local taxes, and by purchasing locally produced goods and services.
3. During Finland's presidency of the Council of the European Union, the ministries of foreign affairs and economy organised a successful event "Business and Human Rights" to enhance the EU action on the role of the private sector in advancing human rights.
4. Finland has supported UNICEF's innovation and venture fund since 2015. The fund invests in early stage open-source, emerging technology digital public goods with the potential to impact children on a global scale. Some key results in 2018–2019 were achieved by the Drones for Social Good -programme. This explores drone technologies to better serve the world's children and strengthen the sector-wide humanitarian supply chain, emergencies and disaster risk reduction initiatives. Globally, 16 companies, universities and research centres have tested the drone technology and services to help identify infrastructure (e.g. schools, clinics, water sources), prevent natural disasters (floods and mudslides) and diseases (malaria and cholera), improve crop yield and water management for farmers. The first drone academy was established in Africa.

What is Finland doing to improve access to equal education and open governance in peaceful and democratic societies? SDGs 1, 4, 16 and 17

Finland has a broad and consistent approach to enhancing democracy and the status of civil society. We invest in solving the global learning crisis, as the key for the whole 2030 Agenda. We support enhancing democracy and the rule of law as well as a more effective tax capacity for developing countries.

Example of results in 2016–2020

Finland has enabled tens of thousands of children and young people to learn by supporting development of education systems and curricula in several African and Asian countries. In Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan this support has been particularly significant. Opportunities for learning have also been enhanced in other fragile states and conflict areas.

What is Finland doing to promote climate resilience and reduce emissions by sustainable use of natural resources? SDGs 1, 2, 6, 7, 13 and 15

Finland increases action to mitigate climate change and adapt to it and balances the financing accordingly. We focus on forests and biodiversity, energy, meteorology and disaster risk management, food and nutrition security and water. Finland emphasises climate change adaptation (food security and water) as the combining factor in this priority, with growing resources.

Examples of results in 2016–2020

1. Food security. In 2016–2019, Finland's actions improved the food security of over 4 million people, through bilateral and CSO projects with over 900 000 food producers. In *Ethiopia*, the Finnish method for registering land was approved as the official method in rural areas. It has helped register over 14 million lots so far. Of the lots registered with Finland's support, in 19 % the owner is a woman, in 12 % a man, and in 64% a man and a woman together. The project has also developed Ethiopia's first accredited Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) degree on Rural Cadastre and Land Registration as well as MSc programme on land survey for civil servants. The project has also contributed to new regulation in this field.
2. Energy. Since 2010, Finland, Austria and the Nordic Development Fund have financed the Energy and Environment Partnership operating in 15 Southern and East-African countries. The goal is to increase access to energy for the most vulnerable populations. The total financing so far mounts up to over EUR 70 million, for 250 projects led by companies. As a result, over 5 million people now have access to cleaner energy, 10 000 jobs have been created and climate change mitigated by reducing 1,6 million tons of carbon emissions. The most recent, 15th call for proposals emphasised promotion of women entrepreneurs and economic empowerment of women as the priority financing criteria.

What is Finland doing to promote peace, justice, and strong institutions

Finland's foreign and security policy is based on the universality, interdependence and indivisibility of human rights, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All rights – civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural – are equally important. Enhancing human rights support all the SDG's.

Human rights are about freedom, justice, equality and dignity. They are about accessing quality education, technology and clean water, and participation in democratic decision-making and promoting rights of indigenous peoples.

The connections between human rights, peace and security, sustainable development and climate change are now more relevant than ever. Respect for human rights can prevent conflicts from emerging and can build a firm foundation for justice, peace and development, and thus supports SDG16.

Finland empowers civil society and encourages the private sector to partner with us for the realisation of human rights, peace and security.

The Human Rights Council is a cornerstone of the multilateral system, and Finland is seeking for a seat in the Council for its term 2022–2024. Finland supports the independence of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and aims to reinforce the Special Procedures and other human rights mechanisms. We remain strongly committed to the Universal Periodic Review. As a member of the Council Finland would commit to the objective of further strengthening the Council's relevance and efficiency. The main priorities of Finland's candidacy in the Human Rights Council are: human rights and technology; human rights and sustainable development; and gender equality and the rights women and girls.

Example

Promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples are longstanding priorities for Finland's foreign and security and international human rights policy. The General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions on environmental human rights defenders have been a positive step forward in protecting defenders, many of whom are indigenous. These resolutions call for empowerment and capacity building of indigenous peoples, including their full and effective participation in decision-making processes.

Enhancing participation of indigenous peoples at the UN has been at the centre of Finland's foreign policy and international human rights policy. Greater involvement of indigenous peoples from all regions of the world, including through national and regional consultations, will be important to advance the common 2030 Agenda. Unified, coordinated voice from indigenous peoples from different regions cannot be unheard at the UN. Therefore, Finland is having the issue on the agenda in various fora with the Secretary General, President of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the members of the UN. The United Nations Climate Change Process that has set an example in establishing a platform for indigenous peoples to participate called Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP). Another positive development is the Expert Mechanism (EMRIP) meeting in Geneva in Summer 2020 where indigenous peoples representatives have been invited directly and not as CSOs.

Finland hosted the Presession of the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples in Inari, Sámi Homeland (Finland) in 2020, the topic being SDG16. Anne Nuorgam, Sámi from Finland, holds the Presidency of the Permanent Forum since 2019. As a result peace and security, and reconciliation will be on the agenda of the forthcoming Permanent Forum.

To support SDG16 in its foreign and security policy Finland has contributed some 400–600 soldiers to international crisis management operations annually. The participation of women is encouraged. With some 120 civilian crisis management experts deployed worldwide, Finland is one of the biggest contributors in relation to the size of its population. The aim is to increase participation to up to 150 experts per year. Almost 40 per cent of Finnish civilian crisis management experts are women.

Finland has supported the training of female military officers also internationally, especially through UN Women. In 2019, Finland joined the Elsie Initiative Fund that promotes participation of women in peacekeeping operations. Finland has also contributed to UNITAR training courses for peacekeepers. International Training Centre of the Finnish Defence Forces, FINCENT, organises courses on international crisis management both nationally and internationally.

Civil military cooperation projects implemented by military contingents in the field has proven to be an effective way to build trust but also to contribute to sustainable development. Projects are implemented in cooperation with local communities. In UNIFIL, for example, Finnish contingents have carried out projects related to empowerment of women and girls, support to local schools as well as environmental protection.

In crisis management, Finland has joined the A4P initiative by the UN Secretary General, the Vancouver and Kigali principles, and strongly supports international peacekeeping as a means towards sustainable development. Finland aims to increase its participation with the emphasis on UN operations.

At the international level, Finland continues to engage actively to promote the 1325-agenda and to encourage the development and implementation of National Action Plans, including by providing funding either bilaterally or through multilateral organisations such as UN Women.

In its peace facilitation activities Finland strongly emphasises an inclusive approach.

Finland's support to humanitarian mine action and combatting the spread of illicit small arms and light weapons promotes post-conflict reconstruction and development by, among other things, facilitating the repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons, recovery of arable land and lowering tensions.

Poorer developing countries have not yet been able to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by international trade for boosting their own development. By supporting developing countries' capacity to participate in international trade negotiations, Finland supports reforms of global business environment in a manner that strengthens the least developed countries' possibilities to benefit more from trade. Finland's trade-related capacity building (Aid for Trade), which is channelled through multilateral intergovernmental trade and development organisations supports developing countries' integration to the international trading system and global value chains. It also supports their entrepreneurship and sustainable industrialisation as well as their capacity to regulate and liberalise trade in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. One of Finland's main priorities in Aid for Trade is supporting women entrepreneurship and their linkage to value chains. Finland has also supported the development of tools for gender-based analysis of trade policy.

Finland's cooperation with developing countries through multilateral trade and development organisations directly supports the SDG targets 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 8.A, 17.5 and 17.11.

Indigenous peoples

text by Sámi Parliament

The Sámi are the only indigenous people in the continental territory of the European Union. Their status as an indigenous people is enshrined in the Constitution of Finland. As an indigenous people, the Sámi have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture, as well as their traditional livelihoods as part of their culture. Provisions on the right of the Sámi to use the Sámi language before the authorities are laid down in a specific Act. Since 1996, the Sámi living in the Sámi homeland have had autonomy with regard to their language and culture under the Finnish Constitution. The duties falling within the Sámi people's cultural autonomy are discharged by the Sámi Parliament, elected by public ballot.

Finland is home to about 10 000 Sámi people. The total number of Sámi people living in their traditional settlement areas in Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia amounts to 75 000–100 000. The Sámi people's traditional livelihoods include fishing, hunting, gathering, crafts and reindeer herding, as well as their modern applications. These still hold considerable communal and cultural significance for the Sámi people. The traditional livelihoods reflect the relationship between nature and culture as well as the Sámi way of life. It is fair to say that these livelihoods uphold the Sámi languages and culture, which is why they are considered to form an important part of the Sámi culture.

Over the period from 2016 to 2020, plenty of developments have taken place in Sámi affairs. Despite some positive central government measures, Finland has failed to

sufficiently promote and protect the Sámi people's rights as an indigenous people to guarantee that the Sámi could freely own, use and control their lands, areas and natural resources. To some extent, their rights have even been undermined by some legislative developments, such as the Fishing Act (379/2015) and Act 1166/2018 amending the Environmental Protection Act (527/2014, chapter 10a). At the same time, no significant legislative reform projects – such as the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament (974/1995) – have been successfully completed for reasons such as what the Sámi Parliament considers poorly managed negotiations under section 9 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament.

The Sámi Parliament aimed to promote the Sámi people's rights and status as an indigenous people while also developing its own administration. In general terms, plenty of developments took place in the economic, justice and environmental sectors. Significant progress was made in the sectors of early childhood education and care, language nest activities, education and training and the Sámi languages. However, the same cannot be said for the healthcare and social welfare sectors, for example. A brief compilation of the most important Sámi issues is provided below.

The truth and reconciliation process

The truth and reconciliation process was included as part of the Sámi Parliament's Action Plan for the 2016–2019 electoral term. Process preparations started in 2017. Activities carried out during the preparatory phase included an expert seminar on international experiences, consultations with Sámi people, and actual negotiations. The Finnish Government, the Skolt Village Assembly and the Sámi Parliament's Plenum adopted a proposal for establishing a truth and reconciliation commission concerning the Sámi people at the turn of November and December 2019. The adopted proposal states as follows: "The purpose of the truth and reconciliation process is to identify and assess historical and current discrimination, including the assimilation policy of the state and violations of rights, to find out how they affect the Sámi and their communities in the current situation, and to propose ways to promote links between the Sámi and the state of Finland and among the Sámi people. The truth and reconciliation process aims to raise awareness about the Sámi as the indigenous people of Finland. A further aim is to ensure that, as a result of the truth and reconciliation process, the state of Finland will bear responsibility for its actions and, together with the Sámi Parliament, the Skolt Village Assembly and other Sámi operators, will work to strengthen the realisation of the rights of the Sámi people in Finland."

The Nordic Sámi Convention

A new milestone was achieved with regard to the Nordic Sámi Convention, as the negotiations started in 2011 were concluded and the Convention was initialled in January 2017. The Convention subsequently proceeded for consideration by the Sámi Parliaments of Finland, Norway and Sweden. The Convention was considered in a coordinated manner through the Sámi Parliamentary Council. As a result of the joint consideration process, the Council decided to propose further negotiations on a few proposed amendments. The national Governments have not issued their positions on entering into further negotiations.

Drafting an amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament

From the Sámi perspective, the most significant of the legislative reform projects initiated during the 2016–2019 electoral term was the project to amend the Act on the Sámi Parliament. The preparatory committee for the amendment project submitted its report on a proposal to the Finnish Government for amending the Act on the Sámi Parliament in August 2018. However, the Sámi Parliament's Plenum rejected the proposal because it did not meet the Sámi Parliament's expectation of improving the Sámi people's autonomy.

Teaching of and in the Sámi languages

Progress was made in the teaching of and in the Sámi languages over the period from 2016 to 2020. A special source of joy is the fact that it is possible to study all three Sámi languages spoken in Finland as a university major subject. Funding was provided for educating Sámi-speaking subject teachers. Furthermore, a distance learning project was launched for teaching of and in the Sámi languages outside the Sámi homeland. Negotiations conducted over the 2016–2020 period succeeded in securing substantial additional resources for Sámi-language early childhood education and care, i.e. 'native-language daycare', and Sámi language and culture nest activities.

Hate speech and hate crime

Hate speech against the Sámi and the increasing prevalence of deliberate misunderstandings, especially in social media, constitute a broad societal problem. Hate speech can even meet the constituent elements of hate crime. In addition to Finland, the same phenomenon is also present in Norway and Sweden. There were particularly discernible spikes in hate speech in connection with the process of drafting an amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament and with the Sámi Parliament election.

Implementing the UN Indigenous Peoples Declaration

One of the key objectives of the Sámi Parliament's 2016–2019 Action Plan was to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) at national and international levels. The Sámi Parliament's Executive Board discussed the matter and adopted an implementation plan, but the matter has not progressed according to its wishes. The process of drafting an amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament contributed to the implementation of the UNDRIP aims. Nevertheless, since the Act on the Sámi Parliament does not cover all of its areas, it is still necessary to draw up a national action plan to implement its aims together with the Finnish Government. The Declaration must be implemented in keeping with the Sámi Parliament's views.

5.8.4 LNOB in national follow-up and disaggregation of data

The LNOB principle is taken into account in national indicators and follow-up in three ways. Firstly, part of national sustainable development indicators focus directly on issues that are linked to leaving no-one behind principle. Examples of such indicators are the number of recipients of basic social assistance, which is the last-resort form of financial assistance, or the number of young people not in employment, education or training. Secondly, in part of indicators the data is disaggregated by a certain quality of basic population. For example, in an indicator measuring the number of households spending more than 40 percent of income in housing, the data is disaggregated by the level of income and by the type of housing (rental vs. owner-occupied); another example is morbidity index, which is disaggregated by regions. Thirdly, different aspects of the risk of being left behind are touched upon in the analyses produced by experts. These analyses, published in the national follow-up webpage, can bring attention to issues that are relevant from the LNOB-perspective, but not visible in the data.

National follow-up system include indicators focusing on Finland's global responsibility. Some of these indicators reflect LNOB principle in global context. Examples of such indicators are the number of annual quota refugees, or official development aid to least developed countries.

Disaggregation of data in SDG indicators

The disaggregation of SDG indicators is important for tracking progress in implementing and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. There are currently over 40 SDG indicators that require in-detail disaggregation by different grounds. Disaggregated statistical data are mostly available because statistics production widely utilizes administrative data sources and registers, which provide extensive data on population and allow a variety of disaggregation possibilities.

Currently, population and social statistics are mostly disaggregated on the basis of age, gender, place of residence, income, education and language spoken and foreign origin, for example. Data that cannot be obtained from administrative databases or registers, are collected from non-statistical data suppliers and also by surveys and studies on specific interest groups.

Finnish statistical data do not necessarily allow the in-depth disaggregation required and emphasized in certain SDG indicators. For example, disaggregation on the grounds of vulnerable group status is seldom possible in statistics. Disaggregation on the grounds of race, ethnic minority grouping, indigenous status and disabilities is currently void from official statistics for ethical reasons. It has been considered inappropriate to pinpoint minority groups in statistics compiled for the needs of an equal and democratic society.

The SDG indicator set's disaggregation needs seem to increase over time. Finland has extensive register-based statistics that provide an exquisite starting point for compiling disaggregated statistics. The development of data orient towards indicators missing data and indicators that need methodological development. In some cases, it will be possible to calculate and disaggregate indicator data from existing register databases and by using new data sources, with additional resources. Further enlargement of SDG data ecosystem towards non-traditional data producers is also required. Deepening of data systems integration, as well as conceptual, classificational and methodological issues need to be reconsidered.

5.9 Institutional mechanisms

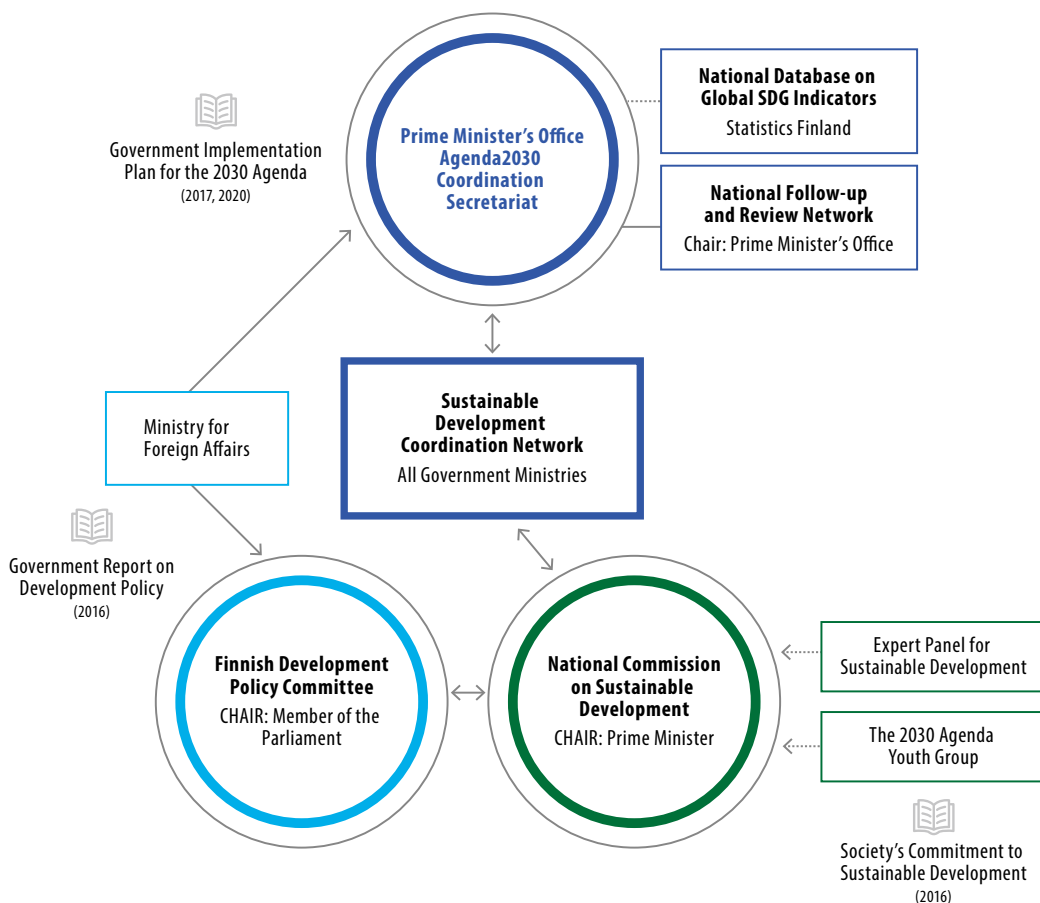
5.9.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- The coordination of national 2030 Agenda implementation was moved to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in 2016. Since then, the importance of sustainable development policy has increased and cross-sectoral practices have been improved.
- Finland's strategy in the 2030 Agenda implementation is two-fold: first, to show Government's political leadership and commitment, and secondly, to engage the whole society and stakeholders in the implementation by participatory partnerships.
- In the Parliament, the Committee for the Future is leading the follow-up of Government's work on the 2030 Agenda implementation. There is a continuous dialogue between the Committee for the Future and the Prime Minister's Office.
- The National Commission on Sustainable Development and the Development Policy Committee continue their work. The decree on the Development Policy Committee (2019) lays down a permanent framework for the Committee's activities and gives it five long-term main tasks.

- Statistics Finland has established an Inter-Agency Network for the collection of national data on global SDG indicators, and has also established a public platform for the dissemination of data.
- The PMO and National Commission on Sustainable Development have established a multi-stakeholder Network for National Follow-up and Review, and this Network has developed a set of national sustainable development indicators. Experts of different fields write interpretative analyses based on indicators each year, thus explaining the meaning of changes in indicator values. These analyses are published with a possibility for public commenting.
- The PMO has established a Citizen Panel, which annually assesses the state of sustainable development in Finland and thereby provides policy-makers information on how sustainability issues are seen among the Finns.
- The PMO commissioned an independent evaluation on national sustainable development policy in 2019. The results and recommendations of the evaluation have provided input to the work of the new Government.

5.9.2 Governmental mechanism

Figure 8. National 2030 Agenda architecture



The national 2030 Agenda **Coordination Secretariat** is located within the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The secretariat consists of three officials and supporting assistants. The Secretary General of the National Commission on Sustainable Development, based in the Ministry of the Environment, participates in the coordination function of the Prime Minister's Office.

For administration, the key policy documents to steer the work for sustainable development are the Government Programme and its Implementation Plan, as well as the Government Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The key fora to discuss sustainable development related issues are meetings of the Ministries' Permanent Secretaries, the Cabinet Network, Inter-Ministerial Sustainable Development Coordination Network, and the National Sustainable Development Follow-up and Review Network. All Ministries are included in these networks enhancing broad involvement, policy coherence and effective implementation.

The **Finnish Government** deals with the Government plans and measures for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through ordinary management system.

The Government convenes regularly in Cabinet evening sessions, where the members of the Government create joint understanding on the issues at stake, including those related to sustainable development. The Finnish Government has four statutory ministerial committees, on foreign and security policy, EU affairs, finance and economy. In addition, the Government established six other ministerial committees in July 2019 to deal with employment, climate and energy policy, social and health services, knowledge and education and innovation, and Rule of Law and internal security. These Committees apply an inter-ministerial approach in order to overcome the silos and enhance policy coherence.

The **Inter-Ministerial Coordination Network**, led by the PMO and consisting of sustainable development Focal Points from all line Ministries, is the key supporting body for the Prime Minister's Office coordination secretariat. The Coordination Network is mandated to mainstream the 2030 Agenda into all sectors and aims at ensuring and improving balance between the economic, social and environmental sustainability and enhancing Policy Coherence on Sustainable Development in the policy planning. Coordination Network works beyond the Government terms, thus building institutional memory and ensuring continuity of the policies and measures.

Another important comprehensive forum for sustainable development is the **National Follow-up Network**. It is chaired by the Prime Minister's Office, and includes representatives from ministries, Statistics Finland, research institutions and various stakeholder groups. It meets 4–6 times per year and is in charge of the development, maintenance and revision of national monitoring framework and sustainability indicators.

Many Ministries have taken the 2030 Agenda as the basis of their own sectoral strategies and plans. Concrete measures in the line Ministries are operationalized in the form of performance planning, guidance and budgeting. Some Ministries have established their own sustainable development networks or teams that enhance integration of sustainable development in key sectoral administrative and policy documents.

The role of the **National Parliament** in ensuring effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda has strengthened year by year. In 2017, the parliamentary Committee for the Future was mandated to take the overall responsibility for the 2030 Agenda issues. It deals with the Government Reports (2030 Agenda Implementation Plans), Government's Annual Reports and State Budget proposals related to the 2030 Agenda. On the bases of the statements drafted by the Committee for the Future and amended by other relevant and interested Parliamentary Committees, the Parliament forms a joint position to Government Reports.

In addition to formal meetings, the Committee for the Future has organized several open hearings on the 2030 Agenda. The dialogue between the Government and the Parliament has proved to be very fruitful, improving understanding of sustainable development in all political parties and thereby contributing to long-term planning and Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development.

The **National Audit Office** expressed its interest in assessing Finland's implementation and governance for the 2030 Agenda already in 2016. Since then there has been a regular dialogue between the auditors and sustainable development officials in different Ministries, which has kept the Ministries active in providing up-to-date information on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to the auditors. The first Auditors' Report was published in 2019. The Report underlines that the importance of sustainable development in all line Ministries has increased, but coordination and connection between the sectoral policy planning and the 2030 Agenda is still rather weak. The Auditor's Office recommends that the Ministries need to analyze the sustainability of their policies and measures in a more systematic way.

In addition to National Auditors' Office, there are several other national and international studies and assessments conducted on the implementation and governance of the 2030 Agenda in Finland. For instance, according to OECD study²⁸ Finland has all the assets to implement the 2030 Agenda in a coherent manner: strong and high-level political commitment, strategic frameworks for government and society, whole-of-government coordination and systematic and participatory follow-up and review mechanism.

28 2018 PCSD Flagship publication <https://www.oecd.org/governance/pcsd/Country%20profiles.pdf>

The national comprehensive external assessment from February 2019 summarized that Finland's model for sustainable development governance is diverse and participatory. At the same time, sustainable development is not sufficiently resourced, nor well enough integrated into policies, measures and management systems.

5.9.3 Societal mechanisms

Finland has a long tradition in engaging the civil society and other stakeholders in the sustainable development work. The key mechanism has been the multi-stakeholder **National Commission for Sustainable Development**, which has operated continuously since 1993 under Prime Ministers' leadership. Throughout these years, over ten Government coalitions have prioritized sustainable development and engaged in multi-stakeholder cooperation.

The National Commission was mandated for a new term on 1 February 2020. The term extends until the end of 2023, beyond the current Government term. Prime Minister Sanna Marin leads the work, together with vice-chairs, Minister of the Environment and Climate, Krista Mikkonen, and Minister of Finance, Katri Kulmuni. The Commission includes 57 members and 57 deputy members from all spheres of the society: Government, state administration, Parliamentary Committees, business and industry, trade unions, regions and local authorities, civil society organizations, church, and academia. The main task of the newly appointed Commission is to accelerate the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as well as to monitor and assess the progress made.

There are two eminent advisory bodies established to support and challenge the work of the Commission and to enhance action throughout the Government and the society. A multi-disciplinary Expert Panel for Sustainable Development, consisting of ten academics, and a 2030 Agenda Youth Group of 20 young sustainable development "ambassadors" have both been re-nominated in 2019.

In addition to the National Commission on Sustainable Development, there are several other important multistakeholder fora to tackle the sustainable development challenges and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Development Policy Committee is an advisory body representing the parliamentary parties and society at large. It aims to strengthen the effectiveness of development policy and to promote relevant dialogue. Development policy refers to consistent activities in all the areas of international cooperation and national policy that influence the position of developing countries. It contributes to the promotion of sustainable development and plays a part in the sharing of global responsibility and in related exercise of influence. The Committee is located at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but it is responsible for its own

data production and other activities. That is, the Committee works independent of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, other central government or the Government.

The Decree on the Development Policy Committee (2019) lays down a permanent framework for the Committee's activities and gives it five long-term main tasks. The Committee is to:

1. formulate a common view between parties and stakeholders on topical development policy issues
2. monitor and analyze the implementation of Finland's development policy guidelines and Finland's international commitments
3. promote decision-making in support of sustainable development in policy areas affecting the situation in developing countries
4. make recommendations to the Government on the planning and implementation of development policy
5. raise awareness of topical development policy issues.

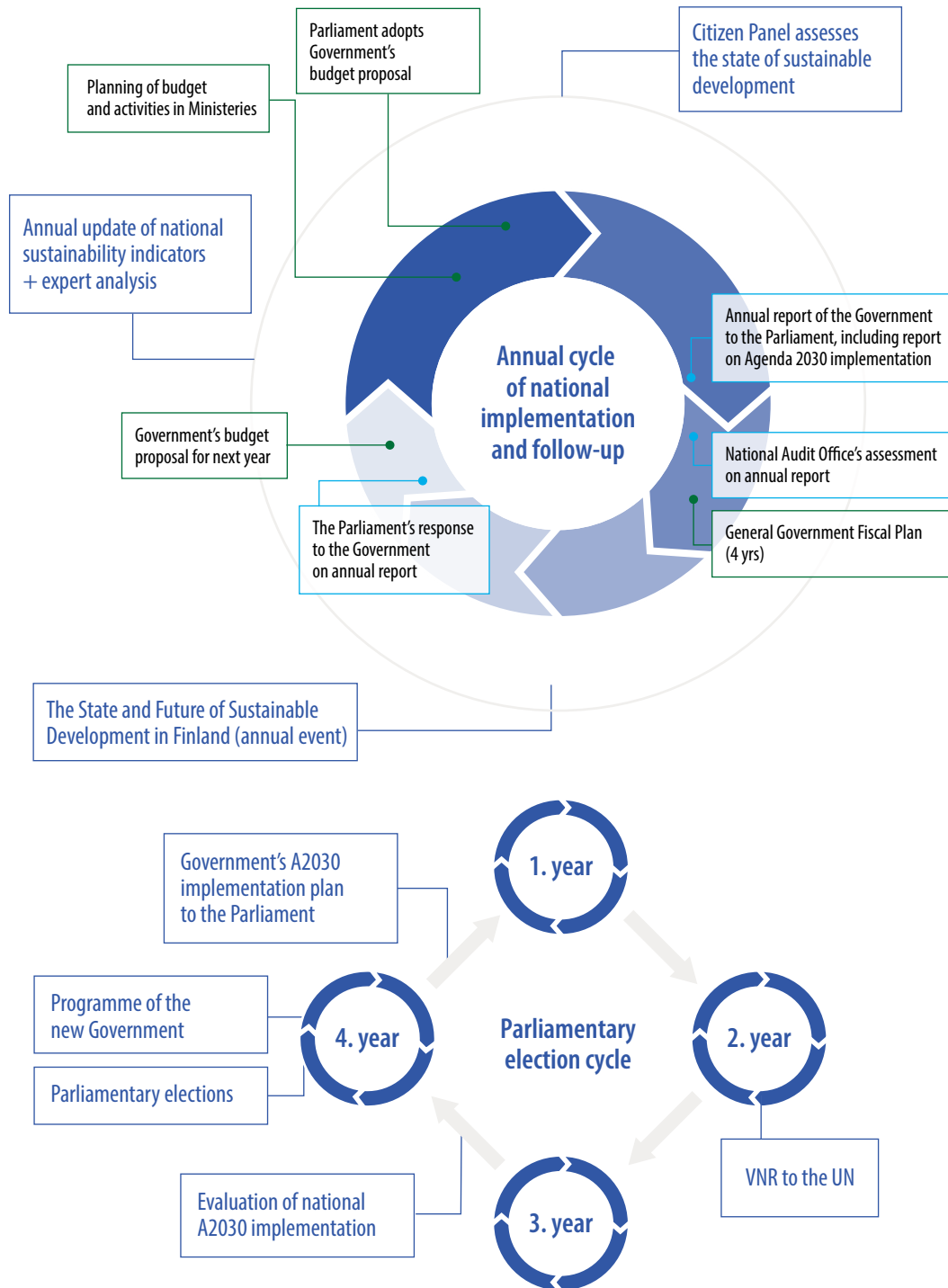
A central part of the Committee's work is to monitor the global dimension of the national implementation of sustainable development in close cooperation with the National Commission on Sustainable Development.

A Climate Policy Round Table is a new platform, established by Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, aiming at creating a common understanding of how Finland can make a just transition to a carbon neutral society within an accelerated timeframe. There are 20 representatives in the Round Table from various sectors of society.

One of the most important tools in Finland to boost participation, concrete action and innovations for sustainable development is called '**Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, Commitment2050**' (Sitoumus2050 in Finnish). It provides an implementation tool for anyone in Finland who wants to participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with concrete action. By March 2020, there are over 2000 operational commitments from all spheres of the society. Private companies, schools and individual citizens have been the most active partners. As part of the Commitment2050 tool, a **Sustainable Lifestyle -service** for citizens enables Finns to pursue a more sustainable everyday life. With the renewed service, users can first calculate their personal carbon footprint and then draw up a personal plan to reduce the footprint by choosing suitable actions from a recommended selection of smart choices. Every individual plan contributes to the national emissions reduction target.

5.9.4 Monitoring and review mechanisms

Figure 9. Annual and quadrennial cycle of national 2030 Agenda Implementation, follow-up and review



The Finnish Government is responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland, as well as for national follow-up and review. The Parliament has a key role in ensuring accountability of the work of the Government. In addition to the Parliament, key forums for monitoring and review of the Government’s work on the 2030 Agenda implementation are the National Commission for Sustainable Development and the National Development Policy Committee.

Monitoring of the State of Sustainable Development in Finland



Finland’s **national follow-up system** was renewed in 2017. It consists of around 45 indicators that are grouped in ten baskets with specific themes, such as “Resource-wise economy and carbon-neutral society”, “Housing and communities”, “Social inequality” and “Global responsibility and policy coherence”. Around 1/3 of national indicators are from the global SDG indicator set, 2/3 are country specific.

National indicators were chosen in 2017 by national follow-up network that is chaired by the Prime Minister’s Office, and includes representatives from ministries, Statistics Finland, research institutions and various stakeholder groups. The national follow-up network meets 4–6 times per year.

National indicators are updated once a year, during the second and third quarter. Annual update of data is accompanied with the preparation of **interpretative text** for each of the ten baskets. Interpretative texts are prepared by experts of different ministries and research institutions. The purpose of interpretative texts is to describe the current state and recent development in Finland, compared to target levels (where they exist) and peer countries.

Indicators and interpretative texts are published at a website hosted by the National Commission on Sustainable Development and the Prime Minister’s Office. The Finnish website includes a possibility to openly comment indicators and interpretative texts. The address of the English version of the website is kestavakehitys.fi/en/monitoring

The national follow-up system includes a **Citizen Panel**, composed annually, where around 500 volunteers assess the state of sustainable development on the grounds of national indicators and interpretative texts.

The panel functions in a following way: the task of panelists is to assess the current state and recent development in Finland in the topics measured by national indicators, based on data from national follow-up system. Each member of the panel study the indicators

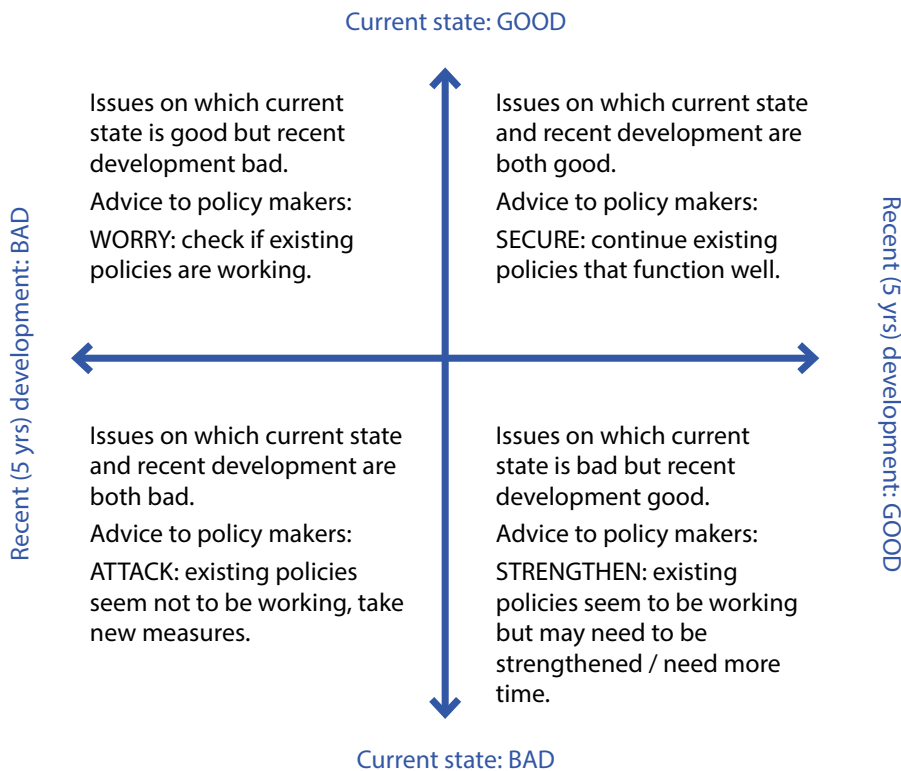
and interpretative texts, and based on that information, position the topics measured by national indicators in a fourfold table. The panelists use an online assessment tool for making the assessment. In the fourfold table, the lateral dimension indicates recent (5 years) development in a scale from bad to good, and vertical dimension indicates current state in a scale from bad to good.

The end result shows the location of all indicator-issues in a fourfold table. The location of each indicator-issue in the fourfold table is the average of the assessments of all members of the panel.

The value of the fourfold table for decision-making is that different kinds of sustainability issues are located in different segments of the table. Each segment thereby includes different advice to policy-making (see Figure 10). Results of 2020 panel are described in Chapter 6.6.

Figure 10. Advice to policy-makers

Illustration of the fourfold table



The National Commission on Sustainable Development organises annually an event called **“The State and Future of Sustainable Development”**. This event is organised during the second quarter of the year. It aims at strengthening knowledge-based discussion on the state of sustainable development in Finland, and on Finnish society’s efforts for promoting sustainability and the 2030 Agenda implementation. It also aims at linking national and global follow-up activities. The event has been organised since 2017 and the theme and topics have each year followed the theme and SDG-focus areas of the HLPF.

Collection of national data on global SDG indicators

In 2018, Statistics Finland started a project to establish a national reporting platform for global SDG indicators. The platform was published in February 2019, and is currently publicly available at the webpage of Statistics Finland. In February 2020, the database contained national data for 158 global indicators of the total of 244 indicators, i.e. the coverage was 65 per cent of global SDG indicators.

In order to extend and update the SDG indicator data in the national reporting platform, Statistics Finland has set up a cooperation network. This group consists of the representatives of the main data producing bodies such as the National Institute for Health and Welfare, the Finnish Environment Institute, the Natural Resources Institute Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as the Prime Ministers’ Office. The group ensures and coordinates continued development efforts of the database.

In total, there is a network of some 23 institutions and organisations in Finland that provide data for the national reporting platform database. At the moment, data for 47 additional indicators are under development²⁹. The SDG indicator set is currently available in Finnish, Swedish and English.

Monitoring of Government’s progress

Monitoring the state of sustainable development in Finland gives important information on current state and recent developments. However, it does not provide information on the ongoing efforts of the Government, or on the impacts of those efforts. Therefore, it is necessary to have additional mechanisms for monitoring the Government’s efforts in the 2030 Agenda implementation.

The work of the Government is based on the national Implementation Plans that are submitted to the Parliament as Government Reports. First such Report was submitted

²⁹ http://www.stat.fi/tup/kestavan-kehityksen-yk-indikaattorit-agenda2030_en.html

in January 2017 and it described then Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government's efforts to promote sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda. The Parliament discussed the implementation Plan extensively in plenary meetings and in Committees in the spring 2017, and gave the Government recommendations for future work. The role of the Government Implementation Plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is described in detail in chapter 5.5.

Since 2018, the Government has annually reported to the Parliament on its activities to promote sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda. This is done as part of Government's Annual Report. The Parliament and Parliamentary Committees discuss the report, and National Audit Office gives the Parliament its assessment of Government's report. Based on this, the Parliament annually gives feedback and recommendations to the Government.

Submitting Government's Implementation Plan to the Parliament as Government Report enabled a structured dialogue on the 2030 Agenda between the Parliament and the Government. This has had a major impact on national work around the 2030 Agenda. Current Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government has updated the Implementation Plan and will submit it to the Parliament in autumn 2020. The dialogue between the Parliament and the Government can continue on that basis.

Finland will report on national progress to the HLPF next time in 2025.

Evaluation of national implementation

Effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national level requires well established follow-up structures, but also regular and independent evaluation of sustainability policies.

The Government of Finland is committed to commission an independent evaluation of national implementation of the 2030 Agenda every four years. The purpose of independent evaluation, organized towards the end of the electoral period, is to produce fact-based content on sustainability issues and Government's progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The first national evaluation report was published in spring 2019. Its findings and recommendations were brought into pre-electoral debate and they supported the new Government in the preparation of Government programme and in the update

of Government's implementation plan. More information on the evaluation from the publication: PATH2030 – An Evaluation of Finland's Sustainable Development Policy³⁰.

The current Government has committed to commission an independent external evaluation on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in winter 2022–2023.

In 2019, the National Audit Office conducted a performance audit on the promotion of sustainable development in Finland³¹. Since then, the National Audit Office has allocated more resources on performance audit work around sustainability and the 2030 Agenda.

5.10 Structural issues

Finland's experience in sustainable development demonstrates that in order to be able to deliver results, a solid governance for sustainable development needs to be in place. Accelerated action, transformative solutions and long-term impact are not possible to achieve by silo approach, by top-down short-term implementation or without political leadership. There has to be a shared understanding on the roles and responsibilities of different actors in the society. There has to be a mechanism or mechanisms to ensure high-level political leadership and participation of relevant societal actors.

Finland's experience also argues that political leadership is crucial but sustainable development should not be politicized. The 2030 Agenda needs to be everybody's agenda, not just for some political movement or party. This has been a very important take away from the Finnish society. In Finland, over 10 different Government coalitions, from left to right and in between, have taken the lead in the work of the National Commission on Sustainable Development. Every Government has had its own priorities but the vision, policy principles and the overarching orientation have been transferred from one Coalition to another. There has been a general will to treasure the good legacy of long-term sustainable development policy tradition from previous Commissions and Governments. The best practices have been preserved and enhanced.

All sectors of the society need to feel ownership of the 2030 Agenda. Sustainable development has often been too "environment" or too "development". In previous years, it has also been rather difficult to attract the private sector actors to contribute to sustainable development in a meaningful way. Both national and international

30 <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-287-655-3>

31 <https://www.vtv.fi/app/uploads/2019/10/NAOF-Audit-14-2019-Promoting-sustainable-development.pdf>

commitments to sustainable development have appeared too stilted to provide value added to companies' strategies and operations. SDGs, however, have been successful in inspiring the companies become part of the global movement: "implementation is not possible by Governments alone". Public-private partnerships for sustainable development have increased significantly in Finland since 2015.

One success story in overcoming the structural barriers is the commitment of the Minister of Finance of Finland to start systematic integration of sustainable development in the state budget in 2018. The boldness of the then Finance Minister and the willingness of the Finance Ministry to depart from normal budgetary procedure proved to be a very successful decision. Accelerating action for sustainable development is not possible if the state finances are not supporting the objectives. In addition, the process has increased awareness of the budget managers of each line Ministry on the importance of linking finance policy with sustainable development. It is not only good for the people and planet, but also smart for the state economy.

6 Progress on Goals and targets

6.1 Overview – current state & key changes 2016–2020

Finland is at the forefront of international sustainability comparisons, along with other Nordic countries. In the annual SDG Index report, Finland has been ranked in the top three after Denmark and Sweden for several years. According to the SDG Index report 2019, Finland has achieved, or is about to achieve, the SDGs related to poverty eradication, health and well-being, quality education, clean water, energy, decent work and economic growth, industry and innovation, reduction of inequalities, and the functioning of institutions and the judicial system. Finland's biggest challenges, in turn, are related to the need for changes in consumption and production patterns, climate action, conservation of biodiversity, the state of the seas and waters, and supporting other countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda (in particular the low level of development aid). These findings are in line with the Eurostat Annual Indicator Report and the OECD Report.

Compared to other Nordic countries, Finland performs worse than Sweden and Denmark e.g. in issues such as gender pay gap, carbon dioxide emissions per capita, the number of young people not in education, employment or training, and development finance. Addressing climate change, bearing global responsibility and changing consumption and production patterns are common challenges for all Nordic countries.

The evaluation of national sustainable development policy, Polku2030, identified knowledge, skills and the stability of society as Finland's sustainability assets. According

to the evaluation, Finland should strengthen its ongoing work on the sustainability of energy system, the sustainable use of forests, the sustainability of the aquatic ecosystem, the sustainable food system and in strengthening social inclusion and equity. The global footprint of Finnish consumption was identified as a topic that requires comprehensive new policy measures.

Chapter 6.2 presents Finland's progress and current situation in each SDG. For each SDG the chapter presents first the Government's assessment of situation, based on statistics, and then the assessment of various Finnish civil society actors, including CSOs and trade unions that are working with the SDG in question. All together 57 Finnish civil society actors participated in the process of estimating Finland's performance on all the 17 SDGs, from few to up to 12 actors on each goal. They represent different actors of Finnish civil society, from small to big ones, from trade unions or national umbrella organizations of social sector to CSOs mainly working on development cooperation or smaller activist-based actors. Fingo as the coordinating organization sent out invitations to CSOs and trade unions to participate in the process. Invitations were sent widely to all Fingo members (287 CSOs), to Fingo email lists (more than 1 600 members), and through fellow umbrella organizations. All interested organizations willing to commit to the intensive process were welcomed to join. The assessments were conducted in thematic working groups on each goal coordinated by Fingo and they were based on published reports and other relevant available material. As a final step of the assessment, the groups defined overall trends for each goal based on the findings of the assessment, and listed recommendations for the Finnish Government. The names of the participated organizations are listed at the beginning of the assessment. The common ground for the assessment was mainly easily found, but on some goals, it required more effort to build up a common understanding about the state of Finnish progress.







In some SDGs, the assessments of the Government and the civil society actors are well in line, whereas in some other SDGs there are differences in assessments. The civil society assessments are attached to the national VNR report in their original form and language.

Chapter 6.3 presents an analysis of Finland's key changes between 2016 and 2020. This analysis is based on SDG Index indicators that have remained same between 2016 and 2020. According to the analysis, the most distinctive positive features over the four years period include the high level of self-reported subjective well-being (SDG3), excellent outdoor air quality as measured by particle concentration (PM_{2,5}), indicating high standards of infrastructures (SDG9) and good management and overall quality of urban environments (SDG11). The indicators with the most notable negative trend include obesity of adult population (SDG2), life below water (SDG14), and low level of international concessional public finance, including official development assistance (SDG17).




Chapter 6.4 tackles externalities and spillovers and chapter 6.5. gives an overview to the state of sustainable development in Finland, in the light of national sustainability indicators. Chapter 6.6 describes how Finnish citizens view the state of sustainable development. This data is based on the outcomes of a citizens panel, composed of around 500 Finns interested in sustainability issues.

6.2 Progress on SDGs – Assessment by the Government and civil society actors

In the government assessment, the state of and progress towards each SDG target is visualised using the following signs:

-  Finland has achieved the target
-  Finland has not achieved but is close to achieving the target.
-  Finland has not achieved the target
-  Finland has made good progress towards the target
-  Finland's progress towards the target is stable or has stagnated
-  Finland has moved away from the target

In the civil society assessment, the progress towards each SDG is visualised using the following signs:

-  Finland has actively promoted achievement of this goal
-  No significant changes in actions in Finland towards achieving the goal
-  Finland's actions towards achieving this goal have slowed down



End poverty in all its forms in everywhere

Government's assessment

- 1.1 Due to comprehensive universal social security system, no-one in Finland is living in extreme poverty. 😊➡
- 1.2 No significant changes have taken place in the at-risk-of-poverty rate. The proportion of low-income earners has gradually declined in the oldest age groups. 😊➡
- 1.3 Finland provides comprehensive social security covering the whole population. The level of benefits has been raised to some extent for people living on basic social security. 😊➡
- 1.4 The entire population has access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property. Everyone has access to new technology, also as part of public services. The number of people in default has been growing. There are more men than women with payment defaults. 😊➡
- 1.5 The situation of different population groups is taken into account when improving society's disaster resilience and preparing for climate change. 😊➡

exacerbates the consequences of poverty. Persistent at-risk-of poverty rates remained unchanged; the oldest age groups have seen a slight decline. Persistent risk of poverty especially affects student-age young adults and elderly people aged over 80. Persistent risk of poverty is more prevalent among men; however, in the oldest age groups, it affects women in particular.

Finland's challenge is to maintain a relatively equal distribution of income and prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Continued special attention should be paid to the situation of single-parent families. Many immigrant groups are also at higher risk of poverty when compared with the general population. Poverty is somewhat deeper among low-income men than women.

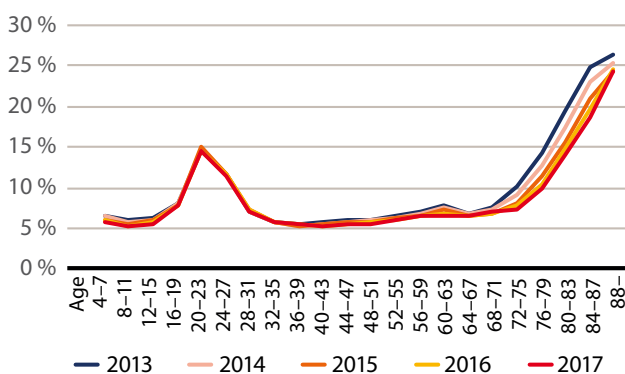
Finland has succeeded in avoiding growth in income disparities over the 2010s. Pensioners have also seen positive developments in their income levels.

As for the global responsibility, the purpose of Finland's development policy and cooperation is eradication of extreme poverty, reduction of inequalities and sustainable development. In all activities, the cross-cutting objectives are gender equality, non-discrimination and climate sustainability. The geographical focus is Africa and particularly fragile states.

Through the UN and other international organisations and partnerships, Finland supports and promotes universal social protection model, in which actions and systems cover the entire population. In 2015–2019, Finland supported the construction of social security systems in Africa and Asia, with particular emphasis on women, girls, people with disabilities and the objectives of decent work.

IN FINLAND, inequalities in income and wealth are low by international standards. Relative income disparities and relative poverty have remained at more or less the same level over the last 15 to 20 years. In percentage terms, income levels have increased at the same rate in all income brackets, which means that absolute poverty has declined, but absolute income disparities have grown. Persistent low-income earning

Persistent low-income earning by age, by Year (%) and Age Persistent risk of poverty in household-dwelling population



Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- To adjust general government finances, the National Pension Index was frozen for the 2017–2018 period. The basic component of social assistance was raised.
- General increases have been made to the levels of benefits such as guarantee pensions and minimum daily sickness allowances. The levels of basic social security benefits were also raised.
- Tax-funded pensions were raised for people on small pensions. The general and index increases made to national and guarantee pensions aim to safeguard the livelihoods of pensioners while reducing poverty and deprivation.
- Child benefits were raised for families considered to be at the highest risk of poverty (families with multiple children, single-parent families), while also increasing the amount of the basic component of social assistance for single parents.



End poverty in all its forms in everywhere

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE ↓

FINLAND WILL NOT REACH THE TARGET OF REDUCING the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion. In its EU 2020 strategy, Finland committed to having 770 000 people at risk in 2020. In 2018 the number was 856 000 (15.8 per cent of the population).

The index cuts and freezes adopted in 2016–2019 had a significant effect on basic social security. The reductions in social security benefits caused more people to become dependent on social assistance. In 2018 it was paid to one household in ten, a total of 470 000 people. Poverty was also increased by the high cost of rental housing as well as increases in health care client fees and the deductible on travel and medicine costs. Based on a statutory evaluation of adequacy of basic social security, the income levels of those receiving unemployment benefit, home care allowance, minimum sick leave allowance or parental daily allowance are not sufficient to cover the reasonable minimum consumption budget. Student social security covers the reasonable minimum consumption budget only if supplemented by a student loan. Basic pension security, on the other hand, is sufficient to meet this minimum consumption target, but the assessment does not include cost of illness.

Around 120 000 children are affected by poverty, and its impact on opportunities available in life already affects children under 2 years. Poverty makes attending school more difficult, it reduces leisure time options and it increases the risk of marginalisation. The rate of children living in low-income households has increased from 10.2 per cent (2016) to 10.5 per cent (2018). The Government has not tied child benefits to an index, although they would need to increase between 47 and 68 per cent if the aim was to match in real terms the level paid at the launch of the current system (in 1994). Other groups at risk of poverty include those living alone, the underemployed, single parents, immigrants, people with disabilities, people with long-term illnesses and imprisoned inmates. Around seven per cent of entrepreneurs are living under the poverty line, with poverty affecting the self-employed in particular.

Finland is not meeting its obligations regarding the global reduction of poverty. From 2015 to 2019, Finland cut approximately 40 per cent of its development assistance – even from CSOs, even though they reach the people in the most vulnerable position. Finland is not complying with the payment of 0.2 of GNI to the least developed countries (the figure in 2019 was 0.15), and its humanitarian aid payments have decreased 30 per cent from 2014.

Finland has taken some action to reduce poverty.

Although basic social security was mostly subject to index freezes and cuts, individual benefits were also increased in 2016–2019, including guarantee pension and the minimum sickness and parental allowances. Normal index increases were re-introduced from the beginning of 2020, and the smallest pensions, minimum daily allowances (incl. unemployment and sickness allowances), child maintenance allowance and single-parent supplement to the child benefit and child benefit for the 4th and 5th child were increased. The trend is going in the right direction, but the increases do not cancel out the previous cuts.

An improved employment rate has benefited the unemployed who are now employed, and the number of people who have been unemployed for over a year almost halved in 2015–2019 (from 122 000 to 63 000). Positive aspects include the reforms taking effect in 2020: restoring the subjective right to day care for all children, dismantling the activation model and re-linking the study grant to the national pension index.

Finland must

- continue increasing the level of basic social security and create an accessible and flexible social security system
- increase the production of affordable rental housing
- make the decision to provide free upper secondary education and support the equal opportunities of children and young people to leisure time activities
- update employment services so they provide more personalised support
- assess not just the number of vacancies but also their decency
- support those in the most vulnerable situations through development cooperation; direct at least 0.2 of GNI to the poorest development countries
- increase the amount of humanitarian assistance.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac Finland, Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK, Fida International, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, Finnish Foundation for Supporting Ex-Offenders, Save the Children Finland, Finnish National Organisation of the Unemployed, SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health.



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Government's assessment

- 2.1 Finland has ensured that everyone has access to safe and nutritious food all year round. 😊➡
- 2.2 No significant malnutrition exists in Finland; conversely, the proportion of overweight people is growing. 😊➡
- 2.3 Finland has ensured everyone's right to land and other productive resources and inputs. Everyone in Finland has freedom to engage in commercial activity. 😊➡
- 2.4 Finland aims to develop a sustainable food system, which is pursued through the European Union's common agricultural policy and a national toolkit. 😊➡
- 2.5 Finland has safeguarded the genetic diversity of agricultural production inputs and farmed animals as part of EU law and national legislation in keeping with international treaties. 😊➡

IN FINLAND, there is little malnutrition, whereas obesity is prevalent. National challenges are related to dietary quality. People in general consume too much energy, salt and saturated fat and not enough fruits, vegetables or wholegrain cereals, while men in particular eat too much red meat and meat products. Sustainability has been included in Finnish nutrition recommendations since 2014. In recent years, the recommendations have been updated and healthy nutrition has been promoted by influencing mass catering.

Specific challenges for Finland include obesity and dietary quality. In 2017, the majority of adults were at least slightly overweight while 26.1% of men and 27.5% of women aged over 30 were obese (with body mass index of 30 kg/m² or over). Almost one in two adults (46%) is also abdominally obese. The problem is already evident in children: in 2018, 4% of girls and 8% of boys aged 2–16 were obese. There is room for

improvement in the quality of nutrition. In 2017, only 14% of men and 22% of women consumed at least the recommended half a kilogram of fruits, berries and vegetables per day. The recommended intake of salt and saturated fat was exceeded by nine out of ten adults.

Finland has succeeded in ensuring food security, while malnutrition is not an issue. Free school meals and other subsidised mass catering secure nutrition and even out socio-economic disparities. The comprehensive health clinic system makes it possible to address problems at an early stage.

Key measures to improve environmental sustainability in **agricultural production** are included in the EU common agricultural policy. The measures have aimed to reduce environmental nutrient pollution; maintain biodiversity; improve air quality; mitigate and promote adaptation to climate change; and maintain good soil condition. A major challenge relating to the sustainability of agriculture is low profitability, which has been tackled by seeking appropriate measures. A more permanent solution can only be found through agricultural productivity improvements, increasing market prices and moderate cost developments.

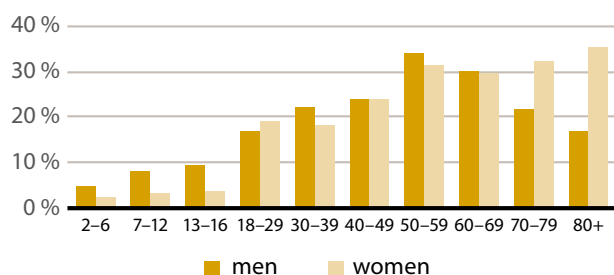
As for global responsibility, promotion of food security is part of development policy. Finland supports the development of sustainable agricultural production and food value chains, land management and organisation of small-scale farmers, in particular. During the previous government term, Finland supported about 900 000 food producers through bilateral and CSO projects, improving food security for over four million people.

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

In 2017, the Government published its report on food policy, entitled *Food2030*, and launched its measures. The meal recommendations for early childhood education and care (2018), schools (2017) and the upper secondary level (2019) have strengthened the opportunities of children and young people for healthy nutrition. Nutrition recommendations for the elderly are to be completed in 2020. Sustainability is part of all recommendations. Healthy nutrition has also been supported through key government projects and project funding. Some schools launched a system to distribute fruits and vegetables in 2017. As a result of the 2019 Government Programme, the excise duty on sugary soft drinks was increased, a 'climate food' programme is getting started, and the knowledge base on children's and young people's nutrition will be improved.

The EU common agricultural policy for 2014–2020 includes many measures to promote the overall sustainability of agriculture and rural areas.

Percentage of obese persons (BMI over 30), %





End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE is the deprivation of some people, which also involves hunger or food shortages, but there is very little data or statistics on the need for support.

According to Eurostat, in 2018 the price of food in Finland was almost 20 per cent higher than in other EU countries. Despite this, Finland has not used tax policy to support access to food. It would be possible to influence the price structure of food in such a way that would allow producers to gain a sufficient livelihood from sales while consumers could afford to buy nutritious and healthy food.

Food security could be promoted both nationally and globally to ensure an even-handed improvement in general wellbeing while also ensuring natural biodiversity and climate sustainability. Globally, malnutrition and hunger particularly affect food producers and agricultural workers. It would be possible for Finland to better promote global food security by investing in the development of food systems in its development policy. In 2016–2019, however, Finland cut its development cooperation and research finance, and the finance of themes affecting food security has received little attention.

There has not been much fluctuation in agricultural greenhouse gas emissions from one year to another; in 2018 they made up 11 per cent of Finland's overall emissions. Methane emissions from dairy production, for example, have been reduced in the past 50 years. Yet, much remains to be done in terms of reducing overall food production emissions if Finland is to achieve carbon neutrality in 2035.

On arable sector the yield levels of cereal crops have not increased in the 2000s. Reasons for this include the poor profitability of food production, the fact that a large share of the total cultivated area is leased land where the duration of leases is short. Thus, it has not been possible to properly care and conserve soil fertility. A positive aspect is that the use of industrial commercial fertilisers has decreased, and efforts have been made in the recycling of nutrients and the purity of recycled nutrients. The decrease in nutrient volumes can be seen as a decline of nitrogen and phosphorus in nutrient balances over the past 30 years.

Finland has succeeded at national level in diversifying food assistance and making it more humane while also improving access to it. There has also been a shift in attitudes, so that those receiving food assistance feel less stigmatised.

Food assistance structures have been clarified and there is now better awareness of how to administer food assistance. The circular economy aspect and acceptance of reducing food waste have had a positive impact on food assistance. Food assistance is provided through a chain with a growing number of actors. Municipalities, civil society organizations, churches and grocery stores are often involved.

Since 2016, Parliament has granted government subsidies to third sector operators providing food assistance. In 2019 subsidies were also granted for developing long-lasting food assistance solutions in addition to urgent food assistance.

Finland must

- acquire research data on how many Finns need food assistance and how the assistance is best provided to avoid emergency relief from becoming a permanent fixture
- develop structural solutions, such as reforming basic social protection and restraining living costs, to reduce poverty as a whole
- grant public funding for continuing and developing food assistance measures
- ensure through tax policy measures that the food price structure guarantees producers a sufficient livelihood while making sure consumers can afford to buy nutritious and healthy food
- enact a law that would help reduce food waste throughout the food chain
- increase development finance focusing on food security and support cross-sector and multi-actor cooperation
- contribute to making CAP 2021–27 supportive of climate-resilient agriculture that boosts biodiversity and also takes into account water protection goals.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Fida International, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, Food and Forest Development Finland (FFD), Church Resources Agency, Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK), the Finnish Blue Ribbon, International Solidarity Foundation, the Finnish National Organisation of the Unemployed, ViaDia



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Government's assessment

- 3.1 Finland's maternal mortality ratio is below the target set. 😊➡
- 3.2 In Finland, mortality among newborns and children under 5 years of age is at a very low level and declining. 😊➡
- 3.3 No epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria exist in Finland and the spread of hepatitis, communicable diseases has been prevented. 😊➡
- 3.4 Finland has succeeded in reducing premature mortality from non-communicable diseases while also promoting mental health and wellbeing. 😊⬇
- 3.5 Alcohol use has particularly declined among young people in Finland. The number of drug-related deaths has increased. 😊➡
- 3.6 The number of deaths from road traffic accidents has declined, but not halved yet. The numbers of injuries reported to the police have decreased. 😊⬇
- 3.7 Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services by 2030 is not yet reached, but the situation is reasonable. An ongoing pilot project of provides contraception free of charge for people under the age of 25. 😊➡
- 3.8 Finland provides health and social services and social security with universal coverage. The reform aims to improve the quality and availability of primary services. Access to medicines and vaccines is ensured for the whole population. 😊⬆
- 3.9 There are very few deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals or air, water and soil pollution or contamination in Finland. 😊➡

FINLAND HAS SUCCEEDED in guaranteeing high-quality public health care for the entire population. Access to primary health care and specialized medical care is guaranteed regardless of the patient's or client's ability to pay. Finland has managed to reduce significantly pre-mortem deaths caused by non-communicable diseases through efficient prevention and treatment.

Finland has successfully increased awareness of mental health promotion and mental disorders and reached a broad consensus on the measures to launch, while also preparing a National Mental Health Strategy for 2020–2030. Suicide mortality is declining in Finland. Finland has successfully reduced smoking, especially among younger age groups.

A specific challenge for Finland is to bring down the numbers of other causes of premature mortality, including accidental and violent causes of death, alcohol-related

mortality, and suicides. Mental health problems are a growing public health challenge. Obesity became a key public health challenge among both men and women between 2012 and 2017.

Finland's challenge is that problems with health, safety and wellbeing only tend to accumulate for some individuals. Bringing down the overall burden of premature mortality would require the capacity to also influence other causes of death (external causes, alcohol-related mortality, and suicides). Special attention should be paid to narrowing the differences in mortality between socio-economic groups.

In addition, Finland has challenges with access to services, which is manifested in terms such as regional differences in availability and waiting times. The reforms of health and social services and social security are among the key national policy initiatives, which are being prepared and implemented in different areas and at different levels.

Global responsibility. Finland is very active in operations under the World Health Organisation (WHO) and supports strengthening the European Union's role in the field of global health. Among other things, Finland supports the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries as required.

Finland supports the research and development of vaccines and medicines for communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries. We also endorse the Doha Declaration on the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). The agreement guarantees access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines and affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the flexibilities included in trade agreements on intellectual property rights. Finland works actively to ensure that all countries have the capacity for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

Key national policy initiatives

Over the 2017–2018 period, Finland implemented a package of key government projects, including the key projects to promote career opportunities for people with partial work ability and to foster health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities, the reform of home care and informal care, and the programme to address reform in child and family services. The previous Government prepared an administrative reform of health and social services, which is still ongoing. The reforms address the shortcomings and new challenges identified in the benefit and service systems.



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE (↓)

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that funding for global health efforts has decreased in the past few years although health has traditionally been a key focus for Finland. It is particularly alarming that Finland no longer funds the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS. Finland has special expertise in health-care development, and development cooperation in the health sector is proven to have an impact. Global health competence is also a safeguard as Finland prepares for global health threats.

Finland's health service system is among the least equitable in Europe. There are significant inequalities in health and well-being. The uneven geographical distribution of health care resources reinforces inequality in access to care. There have been attempts to reform the service structures during several government terms but these attempts have been unsuccessful.

The number of elderly people in Finland continues to increase, with the number set to reach 1.5 million in 2030. There are not enough measures promoting health and well-being targeted at older persons.

The investment in sexual health in Finland decreased. The only government authority that coordinated the promotion of sexual and reproductive health, the Seli unit of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), was abolished.

The Finnish Medical Society Duodecim and medical specialist societies produce evidence-based current care guidelines on significant diseases with an impact on national health and on their prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. Due to declining funding, they can no longer produce new guidelines or maintain all current ones.

The Alcohol Act of 2017 increased the availability of alcohol. Alcohol-related causes explain one fifth of differences in mortality by social group among Finnish men and one sixth among Finnish women. Medicine shortages have drastically increased over the past ten years and they have partially led to extended supply shortages of some vitally important medicines. Households' share of health-care expenses is greater in Finland than in other Nordic countries or in the EU on average. In Finland, psychotherapies and other psycho-social treatment methods are part of the public sector health services, but their availability is poor.

Finland has succeeded in highlighting sexual and reproductive health in its development policy and in actively defending them and the associated rights in the EU. Finland has

highlighted the rights of the disabled as an overarching theme of development policy and finances the UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is mainly executed by non-governmental organisations, particularly disabled people's organisations.

The Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government highlights the narrowing of health and well-being gaps through high-quality health and social services as one of its goals, while highlighting preventive health policy and health-promoting taxation. The Programme pledges to secure necessary care and treatment also for all undocumented migrants. If enacted in law, this would be a significant step in realising a fundamental human right.

The Programme also proposes to trial free contraception for everyone under the age of 25, which is significant for the sexual health and equality of young people. The Tobacco Act has reinforced the policy on tobacco and created nicotine-free living environments. Smoking has decreased throughout the population, especially among young people. Finland has published a national mental health strategy and suicide prevention programme for 2020–2030 and launched the preparation of a child strategy that will extend beyond one government term of office.

Finland must

- invest in implementing the Government Programme so that it can secure equal health and social services for everyone
- make global health a development policy priority and restore the level of funding to what it was before the spending cuts
- promote access to health services especially among those in vulnerable situations both in Finland and globally.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, EHYT Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention, the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, Physicians for Social Responsibility – Finland, MIELI – Mental Health Finland, SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health and the Family Federation of Finland.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Government's assessment

- 4.1 Finland has achieved the targets for completion of primary and secondary education. 😊⬆️
- 4.2 The right to early childhood education and care will be extended to cover all children equally. 😊⬆️
- 4.3 The reform of vocational education and training has increased flexibility in terms of access and completion. 😊↔️
- 4.4 Increasing attention is being paid to continuing learning. 😊↔️
- 4.5 Gender disparities in learning outcomes are still considerable in Finland. 😊↔️
- 4.6 Literacy is world-class, but the level of skills has declined in both numeracy and literacy. 😊⬇️
- 4.7 Sustainable development permeates all levels of education from early childhood education and care through the secondary level (including vocational education and training) and it is also included in the agreement negotiations between the Government and higher education institutions. 😊↔️

differences between pupils have increased. The impact of socio-economic background on an individual's learning outcomes has grown.

Finland has succeeded in increasing the proportion of people aged 25 to 64 who have completed at least basic (primary and lower secondary) education by two percentage points to 82.5% during the 2010s. The proportion of those who have completed at least a vocational qualification increased by about four percentage points to 78.8% while the increase for those with higher education degrees was about 6.5 points, reaching 28%. Participation in adult education is at a high level: about 50% of people aged 25 to 65 take part in education in Finland. Adult education participation rates have decreased slightly from the peak year of 2012.

As for global responsibility, Finland has contributed to helping thousands of children and young people to learn by supporting the development of education systems in several African and Asian countries. Learning opportunities have also been supported in fragile states and conflict areas.

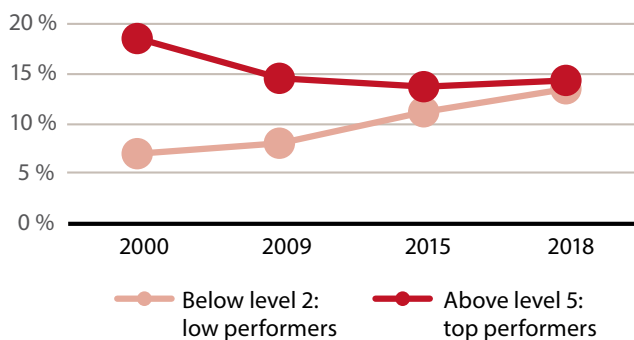
THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION in Finland is high. Over the 2010s and the last few years, however, the level of educational attainment among younger age groups has not continued to rise. Finland guarantees all citizens high-quality education free of charge from pre-primary to higher education.

Finland's challenge is the recent decline in the traditionally strong reading literacy. In Finland, the skills gap between girls and boys is the largest of all OECD countries. While differences between schools have traditionally been small in Finland,

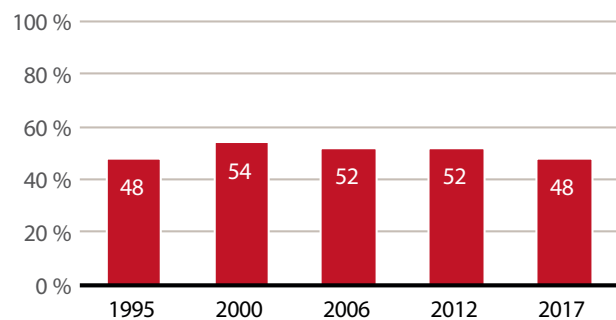
Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- The new National Core Curricula and their deployment have resulted in building up a phenomenon-based approach in all subjects.
- A vocational education and training forum has increased student orientation, workplace relevance and flexibility.
- The revised Act on Early Childhood Education and Care restores the equal right to early childhood education and care to all children.

PISA literacy 2000–2018



Participation in adult education, %





Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Civil society's assessment

TREND: POSITIVE 

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that despite emphasis on education in development cooperation, the multi-stakeholder cooperation is not working well enough and despite dialogue, the various parties are operating in silos. Finland is eagerly exporting its expertise and wishes to strengthen the relationship between education export and development cooperation. This relationship is not clear, though, and its priorities and premises should be clarified. Ethical ground rules should be put in place in the discussion on export of education.

The elegant phrases on sustainable development in the new early childhood education and national core curricula are put at risk as the workload of teaching staff and expectations increase. Attaining the education target both in Finland and globally requires a high level of education among teachers, safe and sound working conditions and appropriate pay. This has not been taken into account sufficiently in development cooperation.

In Finland a key issue requiring improvement is equality in education. Parental education level and socio-economic status are strongly associated with children's school achievement and continued interest in studying. In educational achievement between genders, girls have a clear advantage, and young people with disabilities experience discrimination and inequality. Regional equality has also been endangered as education is increasingly concentrated in larger units and population centres.

There is fairly limited selection of adult-education opportunities promoting competencies for sustainable development and global civic skills, although these competencies are sorely needed amidst the structural changes in society. Opportunities for continuous learning should be developed both in Finland and globally.

Finland has succeeded in responding to the globally acknowledged crisis of learning and has actively striven to have an outsized role in finding solutions. Education is one of the priorities in Finland's development cooperation. Equal, high-quality education is actively addressed in bilateral and in multilateral development cooperation as well as in CSO work.

In Finland, sustainable development and global civic skills feature prominently in the national curricula and in qualifications from early childhood education to primary and secondary education. Transversal competences support

active global citizenship, and value systems feature values that promote a sustainable future. In the public funding for the continuing professional development of teachers, the sustainable development perspective has been emphasised. The premises of the new Youth Act also include principles that point the way to active global citizenship.

The objectives of free upper secondary education and raising the compulsory school age stated in the Government Programme promote equal opportunity to attain at least an upper secondary level qualification and provide students with sufficient educational skills for higher education. The changes enable an increase in educational level and employment. Alongside these, it is important to maintain existing success factors, such as sufficient student counselling and opportunity for flexible study paths and continuous learning.

Finland must

- in all the educational cooperation that it finances, require the improvement of educational opportunities of those in a disadvantaged situation and enhancement of the quality of teaching
- systematically work to promote equality in education in Finland and globally
- bring into focus global civic skills and competencies for sustainable development also in adult education, and reinforce non-formal and informal learning opportunities side by side with formal training
- pay attention to regional differences, teacher resources and support for pupils to secure access to high-quality education throughout the country.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners MTK, Open Knowledge Finland, National Union of University Students in Finland, Plan International Finland, SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health, The Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ, Felm, Finnish Committee for UNICEF.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Government's assessment

- 5.1 The gender equality situation is good in Finland, but there are still some challenges. 😊⬆️
- 5.2 Finland is the second most violent EU country for women, but there are plenty of ongoing measures focused on prevention and service improvement. 😊⬆️
- 5.3 While legislation relevant to harmful practices has been developed, plenty of challenges still remain. 😊⬆️
- 5.4 The equality-oriented family leave reform is making progress and the social security reform is expected to incorporate a gender perspective. 😊⬆️
- 5.5 While gender equality is effective in political participation, there are challenges with economic decision-making. 😊➡️
- 5.6 Services relevant to sexual and reproductive rights and health are at a good level. There are ongoing measures to develop these further as well as to increase sexual education with focus on autonomy. 😊⬆️

shrinking slowly, currently standing at 16%. The labour market is highly segregated and fathers only take about 10% of family leave time.

Finland has succeeded in increasing services intended for victims of violence against women and domestic violence. Other positive developments include growing skills in gender equality promotion and the stronger role of equality promotion in some branches of government. Government Proposals incorporated a slightly higher number of gender impact assessments when compared with previous years. Gender-aware budgeting was developed in a project led by the Ministry of Finance.

Implementing global responsibility: Finland's foreign and security policy is based on human rights. Its key objective is to systematically promote gender equality and full realisation of the human rights of girls and women. Finland places particular emphasis on sexual and reproductive health and rights, which are currently being challenged on a global scale, including within the European Union. Likewise, strengthening the role of women in mediation processes as part of the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is among Finland's long-standing priorities. Finland is also paying attention to emerging themes, such as the equality impacts of new technologies and innovations.

FINLAND'S GENDER EQUALITY situation is good. General progress in equality can be examined in a longer perspective by means of various international gender equality rankings. The most recent rankings include the Gender Equality Index of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum. In the EIGE Gender Equality Index of 2019, Finland received the fourth highest score within the European Union. The score remained more or less the same when compared with 2017. While the World Economic Forum's 2018 ranking still places Finland among the top countries, it slipped from third to fourth place from 2006. This was due to reasons such as the faster gender equality progress made in other top-ranking countries.

Finland's challenges include violence against women and domestic violence, as well as gender equality issues in the world of work. Finland is the second most violent country for women within the European Union. The gender pay gap is

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- Funding for shelters for domestic violence victims was raised considerably, by a total of 70% over the period from 2016 to 2019.
- A 24/7 helpline was opened for victims of violence and their loved ones.
- A low-threshold service was opened for sexual assault victims.
- A prohibition on discrimination based on gender identity and expression was included in the Act on Equality between Women and Men.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that the drastic cuts to development cooperation funding brought a 40 per cent reduction to funding directed at the priority focussing on women's and girls' rights. The goals and impact of this priority have remained unclear, and gender equality has not received the promised cross-cutting attention in development policy.

The implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is hampered by insufficient human resources both in the public sector and in CSOs, and the mainstreaming of implementation is not sufficiently realised.

As many as 47 per cent of Finnish women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, and disabled women and immigrant women experience violence 2 to 3 times as frequently as other women.

The revision of the Act on Legal Recognition of the Gender of Transsexuals to comply with fundamental human rights is in the making. The financing of women's shelters and the number of places in them is insufficient considering the need and recommendations. Human trafficking related to sexual exploitation is poorly recognised in Finland. Sufficient resources have not been secured to implement the programme against female genital mutilation, the criminalisation of forced marriage cannot be enforced, and child marriages contracted abroad have not been criminalised.

Educational and professional fields are largely segregated by gender, and the gender pay gap has narrowed slowly. A woman's euro is 84 cents – and an immigrant woman's 62 cents. Women's employment rate is lower than that of men, and they work part-time and under fixed-term contracts more often than men. Unpaid care is unequally divided between the genders. Mothers with low education level and no job to return to stay longest on child home care allowance. In 2015–2019 the focus in elderly care was shifted from institutional care to care at home with family members as caregivers. Two out of three full-time family caregivers are women.

Finland successfully made the rights and status of women and girls a development policy priority in 2016, and views sexual and reproductive health and rights as important themes. Finland has actively defended these rights internationally and included promoting SRHR as one of the key themes of the new guidelines on humanitarian assistance in 2019.

Finland prepared its third national action plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 in 2018–2021. Following the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2015, services available for victims of violence have been increased. In 2019, the Act on Child Custody and Right of Access took effect, all underage marriages were banned and the penal scale for sexual offenders violating children was adjusted to make punishments more severe. The references to "man" and "woman" were removed from the Marriage Act.

The political participation of women has increased. In the 2019 Parliamentary election, a record number of women were elected as Members of Parliament, 46 per cent of all MPs. The Government has a female majority, and Finland has its first female European Commissioner.

Finland must

- prepare a gender equality strategy for foreign policy that covers the entire state administration and allocate relevant resources for it
- increase development cooperation funds so that women's rights can be sufficiently promoted globally and ensure that 85 per cent of new projects promote gender equality as the primary target or as a significant secondary target
- address structural intersectional discrimination, safeguard the rights of women in a precarious situation
- promote equality at work through pay transparency and equal pay, and with regard to pregnancy discrimination and family leaves
- introduce gender impact assessment and gender-aware budgeting as permanent features of state and municipal administration
- implement the Istanbul Convention in full; violence against women is Finland's most extensive human rights issue

Organisations participating in this assessment: National Council of Women of Finland, Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS, Plan International Finland, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK, Felm, UN Women Finland, the Family Federation of Finland.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Government's assessment

- 6.1–6.2** Finland has reached the targets for achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all and access to adequate and equitable sanitation for all. 😊➡
- 6.3** Progress has been made with regard to improving water quality by reducing pollution, but some of the water bodies and groundwaters are yet to achieve good ecological status. 😊⬆
- 6.4** While slight positive progress has occurred in terms of water-use efficiency, water recycling still leaves room for improvement. 😊➡
- 6.5** With regard to integrated water resources management, good progress has been made in the water management plans and in implementing measures included in the plans. Cooperation with neighbouring countries in transboundary waters is exemplary. 😊⬆
- 6.6** While progress has been made in protecting water-related ecosystems, some additional effort is still required, depending on areas. 😊⬆
- 6.a** In terms of international cooperation, Finland has been punching above its weight in both international organisations and developing countries. 😊⬆
- 6.b** Progress has also been made in engaging local communities in the activities through extensive development cooperation projects in Ethiopia and Nepal, for example. 😊⬆

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT and water protection are at a high level in Finland. Water has also played a key role in Finland's development cooperation and participation in the

operations of international organisations.

Finland's challenges include achieving the targets set for the status of seas and waters and adequately reducing water pollution from certain industries, such as agriculture and forestry. This is reflected in the poor status of several water bodies in Western and Southern Finland and Baltic Sea coasts.

Conversely, Finland has succeeded in water protection, albeit most developments have already been in place for some time. A holistic approach to water resources management and water protection has long provided the foundation for operations and has further improved with new legislation. While Finland's water supply and tap water quality are at world-class level, investments must be made in the management of risks, water supply infrastructure and stormwater runoff in order to secure reliability and quality for years to come.

As for global responsibility, Finland is especially renowned for advancing cooperation in transboundary waters and water diplomacy and as a promoter of drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene in several developing countries, including Ethiopia and Nepal. In Finland, about half of water footprint of consumption comes from abroad and part of Finnish companies operate in the regions that may suffer from scarcity of water resources. These risks have to be considered.

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- New water, marine and flood risk management plans, their objectives and measures as well as their implementation.
- The International Water Strategy of Finland for 2018–2030 striving towards responsible and equitable water security and its yearly updated Action Plan including concrete policies and actions.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Civil society's assessment

TREND: POSITIVE 

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS the ageing of the water and sewage networks. It has been estimated that EUR 200 to 300 million per year should be invested in their renovation rather than the current EUR 100 million.

In some groundwater areas, concentrations of harmful substances have been detected, and water quality may deteriorate without protection measures. In Finland, recipient bodies of water receive untreated wastewater under exceptional circumstances, even though the law states that treatment stations must comply with their treatment obligations even in these circumstances. In some areas, insufficient domestic wastewater treatment may cause risks to drinking water.

It is a concern that Finland's development policy prioritisation of water and sanitation is not evident in practice. Development cooperation allocations for these purposes have fallen from USD 33 million (2013) to around USD 4.5 million (2017), and payments from EUR 130 million (2016) to just over 2 million (2018).

Finland has succeeded in making water supply and sewerage systems available to nearly 100 per cent of the population. Around 90 per cent of households get their domestic water from a centralised water supply system and around 85 per cent of the population is covered by municipal sewerage and centralised wastewater treatment. The quality of domestic water provided by the centralised water supply system is very good. Approximately 65 per cent of domestic water is groundwater. Finland has around 3 900 groundwater areas that are significant for water supply, and most of these are in a good condition.

In recent years, Finland has further increased the safety of water use. As an example, in 2017 plants supplying domestic water were obligated to conduct a risk assessment, the Environmental Protection Act was amended and a Government Decree on Treating Domestic Wastewater in Areas Outside Sewer Networks (rural areas wastewater decree) and a new construction decree including provisions on the accessibility of toilet and washing facilities were issued. The transition period of the rural areas wastewater decree expired in 2019. Guidance and counselling increased general awareness of the importance of appropriate wastewater treatment. Guidance was also beneficial to owners of holiday cabins and cottages.

Five ministries (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) in 2018 prepared a joint international water strategy, the implementation of which will be planned and reported on an annual basis. In 2019, Finland updated the national goals for the Protocol on Water and Health up to 2030. The goals must be achieved or maintained to prevent illnesses caused by water.

The water protection enhancement programme 2019–2023 launched by the Ministry of the Environment strives to make Finland the leading water conservation nation in the world, by reducing nutrients and harmful emissions, by rehabilitating watercourses and by increasing research and development efforts.

Since 2016, water and sanitation have been included in one of Finland's development policy priorities (food security, access to natural resources and energy). Another priority, the strengthening of women's and girls' rights, is also evident in many water, sanitation and hygiene sector projects. Finland has understood the significance of water and sanitation in attaining sustainable development goals in other sectors as well.

An innovative operating model has been developed in the water development cooperation projects funded by Finland in the 2000s, and this model has yielded good results. In the model, local communities, schools and health-care centres apply for funding to build their own water point or toilet, and take charge of the construction, acquisitions for and administration of their own water supply.

Finland should

- reduce agricultural nutrient releases
- consider water and sanitation issues in climate change preparations
- consider climate change impacts in water supply-related development cooperation
- be more active in sharing its experiences and competence globally on water supply and sanitation legislation and practice.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, Global Dry Toilet Association of Finland, WaterAid



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Government's assessment

- 7.1 Finland has achieved the target of ensuring universal access to energy. 😊➡
- 7.2 Finland has succeeded in increasing the share of renewable energy. 😊➡
- 7.3 Finland has reached the energy efficiency target. 😊➡

FINLAND ENSURES universal access to affordable and clean energy. About four fifths of Finland's renewable energy is bioenergy, most of which is based on side streams from the forestry industry and forest management. Hydropower accounts for 10% of all renewable energy. During recent years, there has been growth in the use of energy generated by wind power and heat pumps as well as transport biofuels, in particular.

Finland has succeeded: In increasing the share of renewable energy, which already accounted for 41% of final consumption in 2018. Finland's target for renewable energy (7.2) is to account for at least 51% of final energy consumption by 2030. Wood fuels are Finland's most significant sources of energy.

In ensuring universal access to affordable and clean energy (7.1) through a well-functioning energy market and regulation to safeguard the position of consumers. Electricity prices in Finland are relatively low by European standards. According to Eurostatistics, Industrial electricity prices are among the

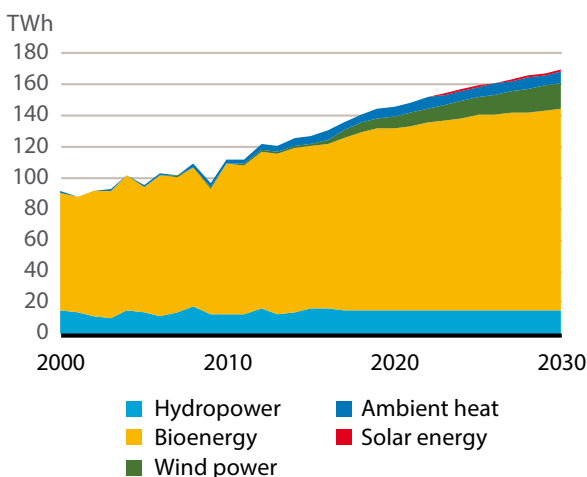
lowest in Europe, while consumer prices are clearly below the European average.

In energy savings: Finland's overall target for energy savings during the 2014–2020 period was 49 TWhcum, calculated in terms of cumulative energy savings according to Article 7 of the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU). Finland already **reached** this target via the measures carried out between 2014 and 2016. As a measure affecting all sectors, energy efficiency (7.3) plays a significant role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions while also forming an essential part of resource efficiency.

Key policy initiatives

- Key measures to promote renewable energy (7.2): feed-in tariff scheme; production aid scheme for forest chips; investment subsidy for energy production; quota obligation for biofuels; ban on the use of black coal for energy, effective as of 1 May 2029; and raising the biofuel quota obligation in road transport to 30% in 2030.
- Energy efficiency (7.3) is promoted by means of energy efficiency agreements and energy audits covering all energy-consuming sectors, regulations for construction sector, and EU-wide eco-design and energy label legislation.
- Finland also supports and encourages households to invest in renewable energy sources and improve energy efficiency (7.3).

Historical trends in renewable energy in 2000–2017 and estimated trends until 2030



Global responsibility

Through scaling up new technologies and innovations, Finland contributes to promoting a global change required to transition into a clean and affordable energy and energy system. The development and export of new technologies are supported by Business Finland and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland (7.a). As for global responsibility, Finland especially supports increasing basic access to energy for the poorest households and a low-carbon and climate-resilient transition in developing countries and emerging economies through its development policy and cooperation (7.b). Since 2010, Finland, Austria and the Nordic Development Fund have financed the Energy and Environment Partnership operating in 15 Southern and East-African countries. The goal is to increase access to energy for the most vulnerable populations. As a result, over 5 million people now have access to cleaner energy, 10 000 jobs have been created and climate change mitigated by reducing 1,6 million tons of carbon emissions.



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE ⬇️

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that our per capita energy consumption is among the highest in the world. This cannot be deemed sustainable. Total energy consumption in Finland was 1.38 million terajoules in 2018, and this still consists 40 per cent of fossil fuels.

The transition to sustainable energy use is being hampered by the fact that renewable energy subsidies are not allocated on the basis of greenhouse gas impacts. Biofuels are disproportionately subsidised, especially considering that wood-based fuels are not carbon neutral. At the same time, fossil fuels receive higher subsidies than renewable energy, around EUR 1 billion a year. In addition, Finland's energy subsidies have fluctuated due to policy changes as Governments have changed, which interferes with consistent renewable energy development.

In Finland, wood-based fuels are the most significant renewable energy source, with a 27 per cent share of total energy consumption. Increased bioenergy consumption is one reason why the felling of forests has increased over the past few years – thus reducing Finland's carbon sinks and affecting the biodiversity of forest habitats.

From a sustainability perspective it is problematic that 17 per cent of Finland's total energy consumption is covered by nuclear power. The total emissions of the production chain of nuclear power are not low, and it is not a risk-free and environmentally sound form of energy.

Around 6 per cent of Finland's energy is produced with peat, but it accounts for some 12 per cent of Finland's global-warming emissions.

From a sustainable development perspective it is important that Finland promotes a sustainable and responsible energy policy also internationally and at the EU level. In development cooperation it is important to ensure that aid is not directed at unsustainable energy projects.

Finland has succeeded in increasing its renewable energy production significantly over the past few decades. Both technological advancement and policy measures have contributed to this. In 2018, renewable energy sources covered nearly 37 per cent of total energy consumption and 41 per cent of end use in Finland.

In addition, Finland has outlined policies and implemented political measures to promote the use of renewable energy. For example, an act prohibiting the use of coal for energy in 2029 entered into force in spring 2019.

There is practically no energy poverty in Finland.

Finland must

- considerably reduce its overall energy consumption: this requires economic steering, abolishment of subsidies for fossil energy sources and increases in taxation, as well as incentives for improving energy efficiency and energy saving
- stop the use of all fossil fuels in energy production as soon as possible, including peat
- reform its energy subsidies based on research and in a way that is consistent with climate policy
- set sustainability criteria for renewable energy that ensure climate benefit and avoidance of other environmental damage
- ensure that investment in bioenergy production does not risk carbon sinks or the biodiversity of forests
- ensure that no fossil energy projects are funded with development cooperation funds.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac Finland, the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, The Siemenpuu Foundation, Technology for Life



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Government's assessment

- 8.1** Finland's economic growth is at a moderate level of about 1.1%. 😊📉
- 8.2** Productivity development has declined but remains stable. 😊➡️
- 8.3** Finland promotes entrepreneurship and sustainable business growth. 😊😊
- 8.4** Finland promotes resource efficiency by means of the circular economy. 😊🔄
- 8.5** The Finnish Government aims to raise the employment rate to 75%. 😊📉
- 8.6** Finland has successfully reduced the number of NEETs. 😊📈
- 8.7–8.8** Finland implements ILO provisions in its employment legislation, which applies equally to all workers. 😊📈
- 8.9** Finland has succeeded in promoting sustainable tourism. 😊📈

Finland has succeeded in reducing the number of those not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and creating a network of services providing low-threshold services. Finland was the fourth country in the world to publish its National Action Plan on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Many Finnish businesses are pioneers in human rights issues, placing well in international sustainability rankings. Finland has successfully implemented the UNGPs in an inclusive manner that has moved practical activities forward at national, EU and international levels.

As for global responsibility, Finland is actively involved in promoting the European Youth Guarantee and sharing experiences on how to deal with youth unemployment. Finland plays an active role in international efforts to promote RBC. Its advocacy efforts culminated in the Business and Human Rights Conference it organised during the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The conference aimed to strengthen the EU's efforts in RBC by means such as proposing an EU Agenda for Action on Business and Human Rights.

FINLAND HAS a Youth Guarantee in place. All young people aged under 25 and all graduates under 30 years of age will be guaranteed a job or work trial, traineeship, workshop, apprenticeship or rehabilitation placement no later than three months into the period of unemployment. (8.5, 8.6)

With regard to responsible business conduct (RBC), Finland has a strong expectation that enterprises operate responsibly and provide decent work. (8.5, 8.7, 8.8)

Finland's challenge is that, while young people's employment rate has increased as a result of economic growth, the growth is not fully reflected in youth employment. The challenge for RBC has been to monitor the performance of Finnish enterprises reliably, especially the global impacts of enterprises. The Finnish labor market is segmented into women's and men's occupations, which contributes to women earning less than men.

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is continuing to build up and develop the One-Stop Guidance Centres for young people in cooperation with local authorities.
- Finland is commissioning a study on mandatory due diligence and the options for its implementation and a study on the human rights impacts of enterprises and on their management by means of the Corporate Human Rights Benchmark methodology during 2020.
- Finland is likewise continuing human rights training courses for enterprises and supporting the implementation of a human rights-based approach in public funding instruments.
- A key government project 'Career opportunities for people with partial work ability' was carried out from 2015 to 2019.



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that the skills-based polarisation of the labour market has deepened and the significance of education for finding work and staying employed has increased. Alas, some groups have increasing difficulties to become employed, e.g. young people with only a basic qualification, immigrants and people with disabilities.

The share of the underemployed in the workforce has clearly increased since the early 2000s due to the rise of part-time employment. Also, the number of temporary and other atypical forms of employment is increasing. Among people employed in platform economy, for example, pay is low and unstable and job security is non-existent.

The social security system has not been able to keep up with the transformation of working life. This makes it difficult for the self-employed and other casual workers in particular to earn a living. The system is considered overtly bureaucratic, its services are fragmented and individuals have limited opportunities to influence. Personal services have been reduced and furthermore, training and coaching have been outsourced. From the perspective of labour market sustainability, it is alarming that competence development is concentrated on those who already have good skills and opportunities.

The pay gaps between men and women have narrowed slowly. The uneven division of care responsibilities and absences from work still affect women's career development and pay differentials.

Finland has not succeeded in decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, as its GDP continues to be closely linked to the consumption of raw materials and energy. In other words, as GDP grows, emissions and the consumption of natural resources increase as well.

Finland should adopt a more ambitious role in promoting human rights and fundamental rights in the labour market globally as well. In particular, the human rights impacts of business activities supported by development cooperation and the decency of the jobs created in these activities should be evaluated with clear-cut criteria.

Finland has succeeded in increasing employment since 2016, largely due to international economic development. At the end of 2019, the employment rate was 73.0 per cent, and the unemployment rate among women and young people had decreased.

Working life issues and the significance of work in poverty alleviation now feature prominently in political debate. The employment of people with disabilities and people with partial work ability has also gained new prominence in labour market policy.

In promoting decent work, the Government programme's promise to carry a study as preparation for a binding regulatory framework on corporate responsibility is an important step forward. At the core of this initiative is a human rights due diligence requirements that all Finnish companies should meet throughout their value chains.

Finland must

- increase resources for employment services and invest in personal services and special groups
- reform the Employment Contracts Act so that the concepts of contract and employer are re-defined for platform economy purposes
- immediately start tripartite preparations of legal amendments under the Equal Pay Programme and reserve sufficient resources for the programme
- enact an ambitious corporate responsibility legislation with mandatory human rights due diligence, develop an indicator for corporate responsibility for monitoring sustainable development and promote a binding corporate social responsibility regulation also at the EU and UN
- impose human rights and fundamental labour market rights as a starting point of its development policy, and promote the freedom of association, collective negotiations and living wage in its development and trade policy
- consistently use well-being and sustainability indicators in support of decision-making and ensure the ecological and social sustainability of economic development.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac, Changemaker, Felm, Pro Ethical Trade Finland, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, The Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, The Martha Organization, Fairtrade Finland, International Solidarity Foundation, Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK, The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK, The Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland SASK



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Government's assessment

- 9.1 Finland's innovation funding has been on a downward trend in recent years. The current objective is to significantly increase investments in research, development and innovation activities. 😊⬆️
- 9.2–9.3 Innovation funding is channelled into upgrading industrial sectors. 😊⬆️
- 9.4 Finland aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. 😊⬆️

FINLAND'S SUCCESS and international growth is based on education and training, research and development (R&D), technological know-how and innovations. This combined with well-functioning basic infrastructure has created prosperity and the conditions for socially and environmentally sustainable growth (9.1, 9.5). Use of more digitalised solutions would improve efficiency and benefit sustainability in production. Finland has a good foundation to enhance the level of digitalisation in industrial sectors but more companies should realise the potential, acquire the skills, and implement the digital solutions. (9.4).

Finland's challenges: Finland has seen a decline in its position at the vanguard of research and innovation activities. The levels of funding invested in R&D, both public and especially private, decreased considerably between 2008 and 2018.

The strengths of Finland's innovation system include a high level of public investment in innovation (compared internationally), public–private innovation partnerships and a strong start-up culture. The aim is to create environmentally, socially and economically sustainable business and growth for Finnish enterprises. Finland's strengths include a solid know-how in the utilisation of bio-based raw materials. The bio-based materials could benefit the development of sustainability in several global value chains.

Global responsibility: Finland supports industrial sectors to improve their sustainability and reduce their climate impacts. Finland promotes international scaling of sustainable solutions and innovations. Finland supports the development of sustainable infrastructure, business and technology, as well as inclusive and sustainable industrial development in developing countries through development cooperation.

Key national policy initiatives

- The Finnish Government has adopted a target of raising R&D investments from the current level of 2.7% to 4% of GDP by 2030. For this purpose, a roadmap is being constructed and will be completed in the spring of 2020. (9.5) Achieving the target requires approximately doubling the public and private R&D investments to EUR 11 billion.
- The Government will cooperate with industrial sectors to construct roadmaps to identify development paths to reduce the climate emissions of different sectors and enterprises. (9.4)
- Governmental innovation programmes run by Business Finland and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, sustainable solutions are developed concerning e.g. clean energy (SDG7), circular economy (SDG8, SDG12), smart industry (SDG9), health and well-being (SDG3), clean technologies and low-carbon solutions (SDG13), sustainable urbanization (SDG11), and digital solutions. Via the aforementioned programs, innovation support is channelled to the development of sustainable production processes, business models, and more climate-friendly products. 40% of innovation funding is channelled to promoting climate and low-carbon targets. (9.2, 9.4, 9.5)
- With an active and progressive spectrum policy, Finland is among the world leaders in the development and use of next-generation mobile networks.



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

THE CHALLENGE FOR FINLAND IS that we are a resource-intensive economy that consumes a lot of raw materials. In Finland natural resources generate on average one euro of economic value per kilogram, whereas the EU average is two euros. However, Finland does use particularly its renewable resources, such as forest, in a sustainable way.

In order to succeed in transitioning to a low-emission society, we will need significant changes both in processes as well as material and energy consumption also within trade and industry. Currently too many innovations are improvements within production sectors; resource efficiency is improving and emissions decreasing, but the industries are too slow to reform in terms of consuming operations and value chains.

The transition will require investments in research, development and innovation policy worth billions of euros, as well as cooperation between corporations, public administration, researchers and the civic society. In the early 2000s Finland's RDI policy (research, development and innovation) was world class, but the situation has deteriorated at an alarming rate: the level of public RDI funding has dropped from 3.8 per cent of GDP in 2008 to just 2.71 per cent in 2019.

Industrial sectors and consumer businesses lack consistent indicators and impact assessment. Funding instruments may emphasize just one sustainability area and ignore the rest. Finland is known as a model country of digital development, but we are among the worst in Europe regarding the availability of high-speed fixed internet networks. This is threatening the equality of people and regions and increasing digital inequality.

In development cooperation, Finland is trying to balance between promoting its own exports and the development goals. Only a fraction of global economic growth benefits the poorest people and nations. The use of development funds to support Finnish companies may not be the most efficient way of supporting the infrastructure, innovation and industrialisation of developing countries.

Finland succeeded in creating the world's first roadmap to a circular economy in 2016. The objective now is to bring the circular economy to the core of competitiveness and economic growth strategy, transition to low-carbon energy, start considering natural resources as a scarcity and promote the shift to a sustainable lifestyle.

The significance of innovation ecosystems in promoting circular economy and resource-wise solutions has been understood, and Finland already has several functioning circular economy ecosystems. Industrial material flows are at the heart of a circular economy, but circular economy has also started to be featured in consumer business and in urban centres. Urban-rural cooperation also has great significance, for example in the use and production of biogas.

The maintenance backlog of transport infrastructure assets has been significantly cleared over the past few years. The backlog has been reduced throughout the country: this improves accessibility, transport of people and economic development.

Finland has supported infrastructures, sustainable industry and innovation in developing countries, for example using programme funding and investments via Finnfund, BEAM-Business with impact, and Finnpartnership. Through bilateral SAIS 1–2 programmes Finland has specifically funded the innovation ecosystem, training and entrepreneurship in Southern Africa.

Finland must

- link sustainable development impact assessment to the criteria of public innovation funding and to public procurement
- reform the Mining Act so that it is sustainable both in terms of the environment and social impacts
- hold on to its target of raising public RDI funding to 4 per cent of GDP by 2030
- provide increasingly solid support for innovation activities and the industrial structure in developing countries as part of the development and trade policy
- ensure access to functional transport and network connections throughout the country.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Dodo, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK), The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and Technology for Life



Reduce inequality within and among countries

Government's assessment

- 10.1 In Finland, income trends among the bottom 40% have kept abreast with the rest of the population, but the number of people on basic social assistance has grown substantially in recent years. 😊➡
- 10.2 Finland's universal welfare model has aimed to promote everyone's social, economic and political inclusion. 😊➡
- 10.3 Legislation has been developed in a direction that emphasises equality and prevents discrimination. 😊⬆️
- 10.4 Equality promotion has long been one of the objectives of fiscal policy, wage agreements and social security development efforts. 😊➡
- 10.5 Finland has contributed to enhancing the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions. 😊➡
- 10.6 Finland has supported enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions. 😊➡
- 10.7 Finland has supported a rules-based and responsible migration policy and developed its preparedness for a mass influx of migrants, and it is also systematically improving the quality of the asylum process and legal safeguards for asylum seekers. 😊➡

Finland has succeeded in developing legislation and practices in a direction that emphasises equality and prevents discrimination. All public authorities are obliged to assess their operations in terms of realisation of equality and to draw up a plan to promote equality. The same obligation also applies to educational institutions and employers that regularly employ over 30 people. The number of homeless people has declined as a result of extensive programmes implemented in Finland to reduce homelessness. Voter turnout in the 2019 Parliamentary election rose to 72%, which was the highest level since the Parliamentary election of 1991. Citizens' initiatives and other forms of participatory democracy have improved democracy and increased participation in society.

Global responsibility

Finland supports several international NGOs involved in advocacy efforts in the field of non-discrimination at global, national and regional levels, including the Minority Rights Group (MRG) and the Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESR). Finnish disability organisations involved in development cooperation and their partners in developing countries are important allies for Finland, especially including the Abilis Foundation and Disability Partnership Finland. Finland has supported the work of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights from 2015 to 2020.

PEOPLE'S POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RIGHTS are realised particularly effectively in Finland and other Nordic countries. Respect for democracy, rule of law and fundamental and human rights create a solid foundation for the welfare approach. However, the differentiation of participation and political influence reflects the widening social gaps in broader terms.

Finland's challenges: Increasing inequalities and social exclusion seem to accumulate and extend across generations. Although experiences of discrimination in Finland have declined slightly at the level of the whole population since 2015 (18% > 16%), research shows that individuals from minority backgrounds have a higher risk of facing discrimination than the rest of the population. Young people's life satisfaction has taken a downward turn, although the majority (85%) are still satisfied with their lives. The average time to process asylum applications has dropped from 350 to 244 days since 2016. There are still challenges with implementation of removal orders.

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- Finland's non-discrimination legislation was reformed in 2015, resulting in considerable improvements in legal safeguards available for victims of discrimination while reinforcing the obligation to promote equality.
- Democracy and fundamental and human rights were promoted through two government-level action plans running from 2017 to 2019, in order to encourage equal participation and develop monitoring of discrimination, etc.
- A key government project disseminated evidence-based good operating models to promote health and wellbeing and to reduce inequalities (incl. vulnerable groups).
- Finland's 2018 migration policy guidelines especially promote labour migration, integration to support this, and good relations between people from different groups.



Reduce inequality within and among countries

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE ⬇️

SOME PEOPLE EXPERIENCE INCREASED INEQUALITY IN FINLAND. The disparities in income and wealth ceased growing in the 2000s, but from 2015 to 2019 changes in current income redistribution and taxation have favoured those in higher income brackets. The development will turn around in 2020, but this will only partially cancel out previous cuts. Index cuts and freezes of benefits, higher tax rates on benefits, reducing the share of rent covered by housing allowance and the “activation model” have contributed to inequality among the unemployed, families with children and students in particular. In addition, health care client fees rose by 40 per cent in 2015–2016, which increased recovery proceedings arising from these fees by 50 per cent; in 2019 more than 457 000 payments were subject to debt recovery. The new Alcohol Act (2017) increased the availability of alcohol, and the negative repercussions are felt especially in the low-income bracket, among the poorly qualified and long-term unemployed.

The availability of some health and social services has improved, but there are major differences between services and regions. There are issues particularly in the services for people in vulnerable situations, including child protection, mental health services and alcohol and drug rehabilitation. The burdens on families with children (economic, mental health, substance abuse) tend to accumulate. In addition, significant population groups miss out on digital services; there is inequality between employed and unemployed people regarding health care services, and there are gaps in the labour market and employment services.

Gender inequality is evident in the lower income level among women (with women with disabilities earning the least), the proportional increase of homelessness among women, gaps in the rights of female inmates and the difficulty in reducing violence against women. Groups which deviate in any way from the mainstream population experience inequality. The employment rate of immigrants is lower than of others, with discrimination and hate speech also making life more difficult. People's finances and background influence their social inclusion. Voter turnout among the highly educated is higher than among those with a basic level of education, and immigration background reduces the likelihood of political participation.

The Government Programme recognises the inequality of the international system, the need to reinforce the position of developing countries and the significance of taxation in funding

sustainable development. However, the Programme does not clearly state that Finland should actively strive to strengthen the role of UN in particular in reaching an agreement on international taxation and preventing tax avoidance.

Finland has shortened waiting lists for specialised medical care, combatted homelessness and raised the age limit of aftercare services in child protection to 25 years. Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government has made or is about to make positive national changes in areas, including: children's subjective right to daycare, removal of the “activity model” for the unemployed, raising of benefits, introduction of a minimum required carer per client rate for care homes, mental health strategy, substance abuse and addiction strategy, family leave practices, a democracy programme, prevention of violence against women, transgender legislation, health and social services and social security services, gender budgeting, digital skills support, increase in the compulsory school age and free upper secondary education. In taxation, Finland used its presidency of the Council of the EU to promote public country-by-country reporting (CBCR) in the EU and prepared a new national action plan on taxation and development.

Finland must

- continue increasing the level of basic social security and create an accessible and flexible social security system
- reinforce cooperation between authorities and with CSOs to comprehensively take into account the needs of the marginalised and special groups, including children
- develop health and social services and employment services with focus on the customer
- strengthen gender awareness, e.g. in budgeting and employment support measures
- use trade, tax and development policy to reinforce the fairness of multilateral systems.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac Finland, Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK, EHYT, Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention, Felm, Finnish association of people with physical disabilities, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, Finnish Foundation for Supporting Ex-Offenders, Finnish National Organisation of the Unemployed, SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Government's assessment

- 11.1 Practically all housing in urban areas is adequate and the number of homeless persons has decreased. 😊📈
- 11.2 94% of the urban population lives within the range of convenient access to public transport. 😊🔄
- 11.3.1 Land consumption related to population growth has been high, but density has increased over the past ten years. 😊📈
- 11.3.2 The Land Use and Building Act ensures everyone's right to participate in land use planning. 😊📈
- 11.4.1 There is well-functioning legislation on cultural and natural heritage. 😊🔄
- 11.5 Disasters seldom happen in Finland and are usually without injuries or substantial economic losses. 😊🔄
- 11.6 The adverse per capita environmental impact of cities is at a low level. 😊🔄
- 11.7.1–11.7.2 The share of open space for public use for all is relatively high. Open spaces are safe for all. 😊🔄
- 11.a National and regional development planning is well established. 😊🔄
- 11.b Risk reduction strategies are implemented by cities and municipalities. 😊🔄
- 11.c Financial support to the least developed countries for the construction and retrofitting of buildings is low. 😊🔄

FINLAND AIMS to ensure sustainable urban development through legislative, policy and practical measures especially in the fields of housing, land use, construction and transport. Finland's national strategy aims to reduce the building stock's emissions by 90 per cent by 2050

Challenges for Finland include achieving a comprehensive broadly supported approach to sustainable cities and human settlements. Finland is striving towards a polycentric regional policy and structure, which utilises the strengths and resources of different parts of the country. At the core of this policy are 1) increasing density in growing urban areas and, 2) developing peri-urban and rural areas according to their needs.

Finland has succeeded in strengthening an approach to policy and planning in which key sectors, such as land use, housing and transportation are planned in a holistic manner in order to ensure sufficient density, energy efficiency, affordability, accessibility and sustainability of the built environment. National, and especially regional, development planning is well established in Finland, covering both urban and rural areas.

For over a decade, Finland has implemented a national strategy to reduce homelessness, and the number of homeless persons has continuously decreased over the last five years. Practically all housing in urban areas in Finland is adequate but, due to price levels, affordability has not always been sufficient in the largest city regions.

Finland is a member of the United Nations Habitat Assembly and active participant at the World Urban Forum. Finnish Government leads Sustainable Buildings and Construction (SBC) programme under UN Environment 10 Year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production.

Main policy initiatives in 2016–2020

- Following Habitat III, as part of our 2030 Agenda Implementation Plan, Finland has put in place a National Action Plan for Sustainable Urban Development.
- The goals of the National Cultural Environment Strategy (2014–2020) have been achieved.
- Finland supports integrated planning through "Agreements of Intent" between the Government and major cities. In these metropolitan areas agree to increase the density of cities and construct more public housing. In turn, the state allocates investments to public transport infrastructure.
- Finland has launched a roadmap in 2017 for establishing low carbon building legislation by 2025, based on limit values for life cycle carbon footprints of different building types in new building.
- The Wood Building Program promotes the use of wood in urban development as an effective way to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction industry.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that its population is predicted to concentrate around three urban centres – Helsinki, Tampere and Turku. Remote areas are threatened by weakening public services and transport connections. In a large part of the country, the value of real estate is in decline and construction debt is on the rise, while other areas suffer from a housing shortage. The current situation is unsustainable.

The population is ageing, and the target is to enable 92 per cent of over 75-year-olds to continue living at home. Up to a million homes need to be refurbished to meet the needs of ageing occupants, and accessibility must be increased both in new construction and renovations. Standards of construction have been updated and the state grants assistance for reconstruction and housing for special needs groups, but it remains to be seen if these measures are sufficient.

Systemic fragility has increased in Finland. Climate change increases the need to prepare for direct risks, such as flooding and storms. Global catastrophes cause indirect risks, such as changes in food and energy security. Until now these risks have not been anticipated and prevented by sufficiently concrete measures to guarantee society's equilibrium and security of supply in exceptional circumstances. Internationally Finland needs to prevent the eruption of crises by supporting the resilience of local societies and by promoting sustainable construction in developing countries, including through development cooperation.

Finland has succeeded in paying more attention to the circular economy and carbon neutrality in construction, urban planning and waste processing. The increase in municipal waste recycling has come to a halt, though, and requires additional measures. The attainment of circular economy targets in the built environment is hampered by the slowness of change in the sector. Finland is aiming to close nutrient cycles, i.e. to recycle organic waste as fertiliser. Practical measures have been taken in the cooperation networks of agricultural and other operators and in new residential areas, but the implementation is still in its infancy.

Investments have been made in the increase of rail transport and bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and the number of journeys made by rail transport increased by 13 per cent in 2015–2018. The Helsinki metro expanded westwards, slightly reducing vehicle traffic into the city. Other rail projects are currently

underway, including the Tampere tramway. To support bicycle and pedestrian traffic, many cities have introduced bikeshare schemes. The investment in other public transport and energy-efficient solutions, such as biogas buses, has been insufficient. The development in accessibility is positive: fleets, platforms and ticket pricing have been updated with attention to special groups.

Municipal participation opportunities for local residents have improved. Attention has been paid to equality of participation, but there is still room for improvement. Urban district and village activities have gained in popularity in the 2000s, which has promoted a sense of belonging, alongside urban activism.

Finland must

- utilise the digital transformation to increase work opportunities which are not tied to a location in various regions of the country
- carry out the traffic fuel reform in a sustainable and diverse way by promoting the use of electricity and biogas in public transportation and passenger traffic
- ensure availability of participation and services, accessibility and age-friendliness of the built environment to secure equality
- set the closing of nutrient cycles as a target in industries, housing, agriculture and waste management
- promote resource wisdom and sustainability of communities in crisis situations by expanding the models of sharing economy
- ensure that urban planning secures balanced infill development, land use revisions and accessibility of green areas
- anticipate risks by investing in climate change mitigation, tying up carbon dioxide emissions, taking responsibility for outsourced emissions, transferring assets to carbon-free investments and supporting fragile communities and communities affected by the climate change.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Dodo, the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, the Finnish Village Movement Association, Ukumbi



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Government's assessment

- 12.1 Finland has a national strategy on sustainable consumption and production and is co-leading the global One Planet Programme on Sustainable Buildings and Construction. 😊☹️
- 12.2 Resource-efficiency has increased, but the consumption of raw materials is high and material footprint per capita is around 29 tons. 😊⬆️
- 12.3 Finland is preparing a methodology on calculating food waste and a roadmap with goals and measures for reducing food losses. 😊☹️
- 12.4 Finland is (an active participant in a multilateral strategic approach to international chemical management. Finland has a national chemical action plan. 😊☹️)
- 12.5 Per-capita amount of municipal waste generated in Finland has stayed below the EU average, but grew in 2018. 😊⬇️
- 12.6 An Accounting Act requires public-interest entities, i.e. listed companies, banks and insurance companies to report on their corporate social responsibility (CSR). 😊⬆️
- 12.7 Finland is scoring well in European Benchmarking Studies comparing strategic use of Public Procurement for Innovation. 😊⬆️
- 12.8 Sustainable development is integrated into all levels of education. 😊☹️
- 12.a Finland supports countries in actions on greening economy. 😊☹️
- 12.b Sustainable Travel Finland -programme for tourism companies and destinations help the tourism industry in Finland to adopt sustainable practices. 😊☹️
- 12.c Finland has globally championed to phase-out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, but there is no plan to phase-out fossil fuel subsidies. 😊☹️

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT OF FINLAND is more than three times larger than the global average and our consumption has negative effects abroad. However, Finland has been one of the pioneers in the field of sustainable consumption and production and has adopted SCP strategies and action plans since 2005.

Challenges for Finland are a high raw material footprint and difficulties in reaching targets set for recycling of waste. In Finland, the consumption of raw materials is notably high both in relation to gross domestic product and per capita. Finland is an energy- and material-intensive country due to its climate, geography and large-scale intensive exporting metal and forest industries.

Finland has **succeeded** in both reducing emissions and catalyzing innovations especially by combining economic incentives and legislation as well as promoting circular economy. Public procurement system is being actively developed to promote strategic goals in environmental policy and innovation. Finnish companies have been active in developing tools to improve their responsibility and sustainability. The State and the business sector have also negotiated voluntary agreements (Green deals) to take joint action by seeking solutions to mitigate climate change and promote a circular economy.

Finland has taken **global responsibility** by co-leading the One Planet Network Programme on Sustainable Buildings and Construction Programme (SBC). Finland has also been active in the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) UN-led network to assist countries in actions on green economy.

Main policy initiatives in 2016–2020

- Finland wants to be carbon neutral by 2035 and carbon negative soon after that. The goal is to reduce the carbon footprint of consumption by an average of 50% by the year 2030 according to the Medium-term Climate Change Policy Plan for 2030.
- Establishment of a network-based centre of excellence on public procurement (KEINO). The purpose of the hub is to increase ambition and expertise as well as to improve sustainability and innovation in public procurement.
- The material-efficiency programme focuses on creating industrial symbiosis to build partnerships and new business opportunities. The Government has made a materials efficiency agreement with the Finnish food industry, and trade and packaging sectors to reduce the environmental impacts of food production, distribution and consumption in 2019–2021
- National plastic roadmap presents a set of key actions to find solutions to reduce, refuse, recycle and replace plastics.



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE 

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that our consumption of natural resources per capita is among the highest globally. Finland's economy is closely tied in with the consumption of raw materials and energy. The economy produced 0.21 kg of carbon dioxide per EUR 1 of GDP, more than double that of Sweden or Switzerland.

The average material footprint among Finns is over 40 000 kg per person a year, and the trend is rising. A sustainable, globally just level would be around one fifth of current footprint. The amount of municipal waste generated by Finns also increased in 2018 by about 8 per cent on the year before. Finns generated on average 550 kg of waste per person.

Finland has promised to halve its food waste by 2030. This is a welcome policy, since Finns waste 400 million kilograms of edible food a year.

The enormous consumption of natural resources and the amount of waste generated are at odds with the ambitious circular economy targets. Finland lacks a comprehensive plan on how to achieve sustainable level of material use. Finland does not, for example, monitor the key figures indicating the material efficiency of its economy other than the aggregating DMC indicator, and only fragmented data is available on the global environmental impact of Finnish consumption.

Finland has not phased out subsidies for fossil fuels or to environmentally harmful business operations.

Finland's total public procurement amounts to around EUR 35 billion a year, and an increasing share of municipal budgets is spent on procurement. However, very few municipalities manage procurement in a way that would promote the municipality's sustainable development goals.

Finland has succeeded in its target of drafting a roadmap for a circular economy in 2016 and a complementary circular economy action plan. The roadmap sets the target of Finland being a leading nation in circular economy by 2025.

From a sustainable production and consumption perspective it is also promising that Finland is currently preparing corporate responsibility legislation that would include human rights due diligence obligations.

Finland must

- prepare a concrete plan of action on how we are to transition to a carbon-neutral circular economy
- monitor and reduce emissions resulting from Finnish consumption and other cross-border environmental impacts from consumption
- carry out public procurement processes applying the guiding principle of impact on society, sustainable development and human rights compliance, including accessibility of products and services to people with disabilities.
- encourage people to eat climate-friendly and ecological food and pay attention to the entire production chain in the assessment of the environmental impacts of food
- find concrete measures in the food waste roadmap, prepared under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, to get all operators in the food system to reduce waste
- phase out all subsidies to fossil fuels and environmentally harmful operations.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac, Changemaker, *Pro Ethical Trade Finland*, Felm, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, The Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, The Consumers' Union of Finland, The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners, The Martha Organization, Fairtrade Finland, International Solidarity Foundation, Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK, The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Government's assessment

- 13.1** Awareness of the need for adaptation to climate change has increased. Implementation of national adaptation policies has contributed to increased climate resilience in many sectors, but variation across sectors remains. 😊📈
- 13.2** Climate Change Act defines a planning system to ensure a coherent, long-term approach to climate policy. The Government's new budget proposal aligns the economic policy with a target of carbon neutrality by 2035. 😊📈
- 13.3** Concept of 'eco-social education' has been introduced in the National Core Curricula for basic education and upper secondary schools. 😊📈
- 13.a** Finland is committed to mobilizing USD 100 billion annually by 2020 jointly with other developed countries. 😊📈
- 13.b** Most of the Finnish climate-related bilateral development projects include a capacity-building component. Finland is one of the world leaders in supporting the capacity building of developing countries' hydro-meteorological services. 😊📈

FINLAND AIMS to be climate neutral by 2035. The Government is updating national climate legislation and the national 2050 target, which is currently an 80 % reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions compared to the 1990 level, to reflect the climate-neutrality target. Total GHG emissions in 2018 were 21% lower than in 1990.

The biggest challenge for Finland is to achieve a rapid reduction of GHG emissions. According to Statistics Finland's preliminary data, the total GHG emissions in 2018 (56.4 million t CO₂ eq.) declined 3% compared to 2016. However, compared to 2017 the emissions in 2018 grew by 2%, mostly due to increased consumption of natural gas and peat. The net sink of the LULUCF sector varies on an annual basis due to fellings and it has been between 9.8–21.3 million tons CO₂ between 2014–2018. In 2018 the net sink was 43 % lower than in 2017. According to the 2019 interim review of the implementation of the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, climate-related risk management is still partly lacking as some sectors are only beginning to plan adaptation actions and capacities to address climate-related risks vary significantly across sectors and levels of implementation.

Finland has succeeded in increasing the use of renewable energy throughout the 2010s, and had the second-highest share of renewable energy in Europe in 2017 and in 2018. 41 % of final energy consumption was covered with renewables in 2018. The use of coal for energy will be phased out by May 2029.

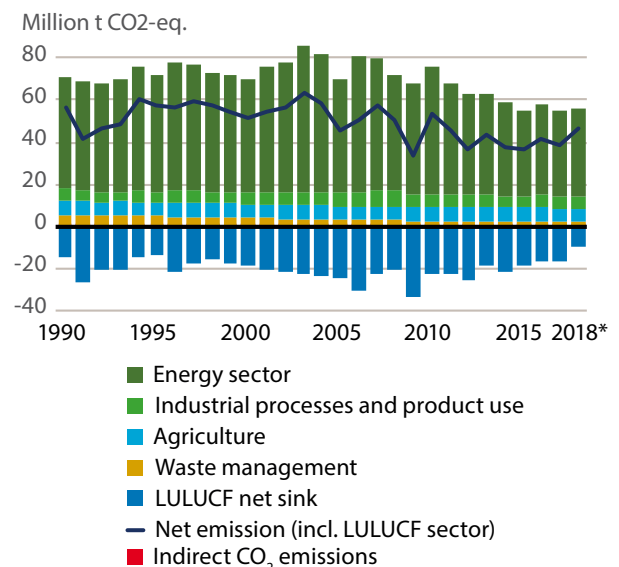
As for Finland's global responsibility, Finland supports developing countries' climate measures as part of its development cooperation. In this context, Finland provided EUR 46,6 million of climate finance to developing countries in 2018. To catalyse investments for climate-smart projects in developing countries, Finland decided in 2017 to channel EUR 114 million into the Finland–International Finance Corporation Climate Change Programme. Finland aims to support the Green Climate Fund with EUR 100 million in 2020–2023.

However, regarding the Finnish footprint, consumption-based GHG emissions have not declined in 2000s. The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra estimates that Finns need to halve their carbon footprint to avoid over-consumption of natural resources.

Main policy initiatives in 2016–2020

- adoption of the target to achieve climate-neutrality by 2035;
- aligning the Government budget with the 2035 net zero target; putting in place the legislation to phase out the use of coal in energy production by May 2029;
- having a quota obligation for the use of biofuels set to 30 % by 2030.

Finland's greenhouse gas emissions and removals by sector in 1990 to 2018 *Preliminary data.





Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE ⬇️

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that our emissions are far from a sustainable and globally justified level, and the direction is alarming: in 2018, the total greenhouse gas emissions increased by two per cent on the previous year.

Finnish accounting of greenhouse gas emissions do not consider the impact of Finnish consumption beyond its national borders. In 2015, these consumption-based emissions were one third higher than those emitted from Finland. In 2018, Finland's carbon sink fell more than 40 per cent from the previous year due to record levels of felling.

Finland has much to improve in regard its climate finance. The allocation of finance lacks clear criteria and openness. Finland's fair share of the USD 100 billion commitment to climate finance agreed in the Paris Agreement would be at least USD 200 million a year, but the mobilized finance has been less than half of this in the past few years.

Predictable public grant-based finance must form the foundation for Finland's climate finance; currently the focus is on the private sector and on market-based instruments. The finances cannot be regarded as "new or additional", since climate finance is reported under development finance.

Finance for purposes that are harmful for the climate has not been phased out, and Finland continues to fund fossil energy sources from its development finance. Finance is also not being targeted equally at mitigation and adaptation.

Climate policy generates well-being, livelihoods and decent work only if the transition to a climate resilient society can be executed fairly, without leaving any groups behind and while paying special attention to vulnerable groups. Climate change will particularly affect the lives of children and young people, but they have not been proactively listened to or taken into account as a particularly vulnerable target group.

Climate change mitigation, impacts and adaptation should be included in school curricula and basic foundations at all levels of education.

Finland has succeeded in climate action most notably by enacting an act that bans the use of coal by 2029. The emissions have declined over the long term, however, in 2016–2018 emissions have increased.

Climate activism (Climate Move) had an impact on the programmes and outcome of the 2019 Parliamentary elections and through this on the Government Programme. However, only the implementation of the Programme will show whether Finland is able to succeed in its carbon neutrality target by 2035.

Finland must

- limit its emissions in line with the more ambitious target of 1.5°C and set targets for its carbon sinks that would allow it to achieve carbon neutrality before 2035
- phase out all subsidies for fossil fuels and activities that are harmful for the climate, and raise taxation of peat to match that of other fossil fuels
- address the carbon footprint of consumption by providing informative guidance, financial incentives and legislative and taxation-based steering
- oblige Government-owned companies to align their operations with the 1.5°C target
- incorporate the principles of a just transition into legislation and into national, regional and sector-specific climate and energy strategies
- mobilize at least EUR 200 million a year to global climate finance and distribute this evenly between adaptation and mitigation.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac Finland, Felm, the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, Finnish Committee for UNICEF, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, Plan International Finland, the Siemenpuu Foundation, Technology for Life



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Government's assessment

- 14.1 Although long-term trends of marine pollution are declining, Finland has been unable to significantly reduce marine pollution in the last few years. 😊⬆️
- 14.2 In 2018, five of 42 assessed marine underwater habitats were assessed as endangered and five vulnerable. Since 2008, 24 % of habitat types had declined. 😞⬇️
- 14.3 Finland takes part in regional Baltic Sea cooperation in HELCOM to increase scientific understanding and to address the impacts of ocean acidification. 😊➡️
- 14.4 EU Common Fisheries policy and the national Fisheries Act of Finland are based on sustainable use of resources in line with the best scientific information available. 😊➡️
- 14.5 In 2018, Finland achieved the target of 10 % coverage of the marine protected area of Finland's total marine area. 😊⬆️
- 14.6 Support for the fisheries sector is in line with the EU's state aid guidelines. Furthermore, support for fisheries through the EU funds does not permit to support measures leading to IUU fishing, overcapacity or overfishing. 😊➡️
- 14.a Since 2016 Finnish Marine Research Infrastructure (FINMARI) has combined all major actors of the Finnish marine research community. 😊⬆️
- 14.b In accordance with Finnish legislation, small scale artisanal fisheries have access to marine resources and markets. 😊⬆️
- 14.c In 2019, Finland's Government adopted the Resolution on Finland's maritime policy guidelines. Finland has actively contributed to healthy oceans and seas related work under UNCLOS and UNEP/UNEA. 😊⬆️

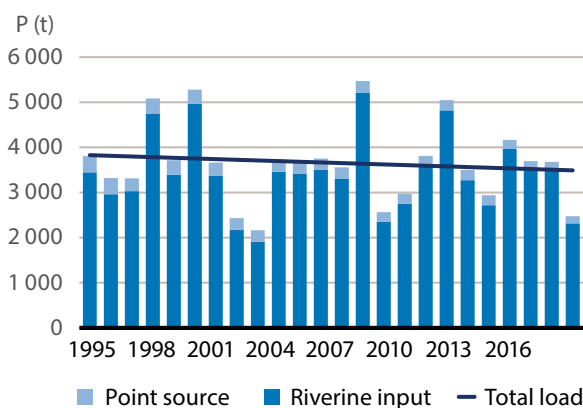
FINLAND WORKS actively both nationally and internationally to achieve a clean and healthy Baltic Sea and to improve protection of ocean ecosystems globally. Although progress has been made goals have not been fully achieved yet.

For Finland a **continuing challenge** is excess loading of phosphorus, nitrogen and organic matter from land-based sources. This has resulted in large-scale eutrophication. Since the 1970s, Finland has been able to significantly cut the loads of nutrients from urban and industrial point sources but diffuse loading, especially from agriculture, remains a great challenge. Even though marine protected areas, provide protection for a limited number of species and habitats, many previously common habitats have become endangered and most protected areas lack a management plan.

Finland **has succeeded** in finding new methods to tackle marine pollution. The Government has during the recent years provided extra funding for development and piloting of innovative methods to reduce nutrient loading and to protect the marine environment. New methods, such as the spreading of gypsum on farmland to bind phosphorus in the soil, have been successful for quick reduction of losses of phosphorus. The coverage of marine protected areas in the Finnish marine areas has increased from 9.9 % in 2016 to 11.1 % in 2019 and Finland has achieved the 10 % target. Finland has a national marine strategy with a programme of measures for protection of the marine environment.

In terms of **global responsibility** Finland cooperates on marine protection with other Baltic Sea coastal countries and the EU under the umbrella of HELCOM and is active in global cooperation for the health of oceans. Finland advocates stricter IMO regulation of emissions from shipping to air and water and is taking measures to improve the waste management of ships.

Total phosphorus (PTOT) pollution from Finland to the Baltic Sea in 1995–2018



Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- Maximum levels for annual land-based loading have been set as part of Finland's marine strategy. In 2016–2019, the Government invested approximately EUR 40 million of extra funding to improve the status of the marine and fresh waters. In 2020–2023, investments are planned to continue and be total EUR 69 million.
- Plastics Roadmap for Finland was launched in 2018 to reduce losses of plastics to the environment.
- To implement the national maritime policy guidelines, Finland has in 2016–2019 actively contributed to global level work for improving the status of oceans and seas, e.g. in processes under the UNCLOS, UN Regional Seas Programme *inter alia* during Finland's EU Presidency and the UNEP/UNEA.

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that eutrophication is alarmingly high in many areas of the Baltic Sea, and the state of coastal waters is only moderate or bad. The target of healthy oceans will not be achieved by 2020, and it is being issued a new deadline of 2027.

The nutrient load from agriculture is still high. In addition, the State continues to subsidise peat production even though peat harvesting and the associated particle loads on watercourses accelerate eutrophication of watercourses, increase turbidity of the water, accelerate the growth of aquatic plants and algae, cause siltation and increase the dominance of fish in the carp family in the fish stock.

Clear cutting of forests has increased, and associated tilling of soil increases the amount of nutrients and solids ending up in watercourses with runoff. Clear cutting contributes to eutrophication of watercourses, turbidity of waters, oxygen depletion in waters and leaching of mercury, which is toxic for aquatic organisms, into watercourses.

Among Finland's 75 fish species, 12 are endangered, many of these marine species. In addition, data of seven species is deficient. Invasive alien species have reproduced in the Baltic Sea, and they are displacing endemic species.

Fishing quotas are too high at the EU level with regard to several species. Although Finland has called for scientifically based quotas, the quotas have not been adjusted accordingly. Earlier start of commercial salmon fishing in the Gulf of Bothnia also threatens Finland's salmon stocks.

Microplastics and their accumulation in organisms is recognised as a new threat.

Finland has succeeded in its target, for example by complementing the Natura 2000 network in 2018 with three valuable marine ecosystem regions. In a three-year spearhead project, Regeneration of migratory and endangered fish stocks, fish stocks were regenerated in collaboration with local parties, and the decision was made to earmark a larger sum to improving the living conditions of migratory fish species in 2019.

A significant penalty is now imposed on anyone caught illegally fishing declining or endangered fish species, and at the EU level Finland has promoted scientifically sustainable regulation of fishing.

The Ministry of the Environment has funded projects that implement and support the Marine protection programmes with approximately EUR 8 million. The target of several projects was to reduce the nutrient loads leaching from land to watercourses. In terms of eutrophication, the state of the Gulf of Finland has improved due to reduced point source loading.

The water protection promotion programme was launched in 2019, and the Government assigned EUR 69 million of funding to it in 2019–2023. To support marine spatial planning, data has been gathered on local conservation values and statuses. The findings of the Finnish Inventory Programme for the Underwater Marine Environment, VELMU, are utilised as basis for planning work, for example in the "Meriavain" project that aims to generate data on the location, number and quality of key marine habitats.

Finland has a successful bottle deposit and return system that helps to reduce the amount of plastic waste in the sea. Plastic recycling has also been improved.

Finland must

- update its Water and Environmental Protection Acts so that they meet the Water Framework Directive requirements in compliance with the polluter pays principle
- cease clear cutting in state-owned lands
- target agricultural subsidies more effectively to activities that prevent eutrophication of watercourses
- steer eating habits more strongly towards vegetarian food and support the use of sustainable Baltic Sea fish as food
- ban smoking on beaches, as cigarette butts are the most prevalent type of waste in seas and on beaches
- continue restoring fishways and expand fishway obligations in licences.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, The Finnish Nature League, The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Government's assessment

- 15.1 Sustainable use has been integrated into legislation and various plans but additional investments are required to achieve its objectives. 😊⬆️
- 15.2 There are guidelines for sustainable forest management. Opportunities to reduce deforestation have been explored. 😊⬆️
- 15.5 Action is being taken to halt biodiversity loss, but it is necessary to step up the efforts. Additional investments are required. 😊⬇️
- 15.6 The Finnish National Genetic Resources Programme for Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery was updated in 2018. 😊⬆️
- 15.7 National, EU and international law is implemented, e.g. in keeping with the CITES, population management plans for different species. 😊😊
- 15.8 Legislation on invasive alien species are implemented including the list of invasive alien species and separate management plans. 😊⬆️
- 15.9 The economic values of different species have been introduced into planning processes, but the work is still ongoing. 😊⬆️

of forests at the level of legislation, strategies and recommendations. Finland's strengths include a good knowledge base on forests and nature and distribution of this information as well as cooperation between administrative branches, researchers and practitioners.

The measures included in the Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland 2014–2020 have promoted the management of endangered traditional rural biotopes, maintained wetlands established in agricultural areas, established various grasslands to support biodiversity, and protected the genetic resources of farmed animals and crop varieties.

Global responsibility

Finland finances through ODA several international organization's such as FAO, GEF, UNEP and IUCN and projects in the field of protection of biodiversity and sustainable natural resources and forest management actively participates in international conventions such as CBD, CCD and UNFF. The use of imported fossil resources contribute to the climate change and the global destruction of habitats

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE is to halt the loss of biodiversity. Based on the Red List Index, the species that are becoming threatened at the fastest rate include those found in alpine, mire and aquatic habitats. The change has been lowest in traditional rural biotopes and other cultural habitats and in forests. At the same time, however, most threatened species live in forests and traditional rural biotopes. Halting the loss requires increasing awareness and know-how of the means to protect biodiversity among forest owners and professionals and targeting the relevant measures cost-effectively as well as additional resources.

Finland has succeeded in mainstreaming biodiversity protection as part of the sustainable use and management

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- The National Forest Strategy and METSO programme have contributed to safeguarding biodiversity measures into practice and developing awareness and know-how.
- The Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland 2014–2020 and greening measures under the EU common agricultural policy have contributed to safeguarding agricultural biodiversity.
- Finland has been active in the implementation The Finnish National Biodiversity Strategy and National Action Plan (NBSAP) including protection, sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits of genetic resources.



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE (↓)

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS the persistent loss of biodiversity. The 2020 target to halt the loss of biodiversity will not be attained in Finland, as is also the case elsewhere.

It has been estimated that around 48 per cent of Finland's 400 habitat types are threatened. The most threatened habitat types are traditional semi-natural grasslands (100%) and forest biotopes (76%). Factors threatening them include forestry, drainage, clearing of land for arable land, construction, eutrophication of watercourses and climate change.

The area of protected forest land and poorly productive forest is 13 per cent in the whole of Finland, but only 5 per cent in Southern Finland. The Forest Act was updated in 2014, which according to the Natural Resources Institute Finland, led to a reduction in surface area of the habitats of special importance as defined in the Act by 27 000 hectares. This has a direct negative impact on biodiversity, but the actual impacts of the changes on the forest nature require more detailed study. Average annual felling volume increased in 2016–2019, and 2018 was a record year. A Government report found that water pollution due to forestry was significantly higher than previously expected.

In the Land Use and Building Act, the option to impose a requirement for a landscape work permit for forestry lands within new local master plans was removed. The option had been used, for example, to secure valuable biotopes or valuable landscapes, which is why environmental organisations consider this change in the Act a loss. An amendment was made to the Mining Act in 2019 that allows environmental impact assessments to be carried out later than before in some cases. Under the 2019 Government Programme one of the premises in the Mining Act reform is to improve the level of environmental protection.

The distribution of invasive alien species has increased. The prevention of invasive alien species has largely been managed by the initiatives of environmental organizations and volunteers.

Finland has succeeded in making biodiversity a topic of public debate. Funding cuts, however, impaired nature conservation work. The 2019 Government Programme pledges a change for the better. Biodiversity has also been promoted through EU Life funding.

The *Luontolahjani satavuotiaalle* campaign marking the centenary of Finland's independence amassed more

than 8 000 hectares of new conservation areas from private landowners, municipalities and the state. A new national park was established in Hossa to protect old-growth forests. A complementary programme for protection of mires was implemented in state-owned lands.

The implementation of the Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland (2014–2025) continued. The programme is based on voluntary forest conservation and nature management by landowners. Consideration of biodiversity of managed forests has also been promoted through the Monimetsä project, through forest certification and by updating forest management guidelines.

The Endangered Species Protection Programme was completed in 2017. Yet, shortage of funding has restricted its implementation, and species' endangerment has continued. There was an experiment of licensed wolf hunting, but this was terminated in 2016 after the stock declined. The protection of the Saimaa ringed seal stands as a positive example.

Finland must

- fund and promote research to support legislation and sustainable land use
- maintain and increase funding for nature conservation
- ensure that authorities have sufficient resources and promote the cooperation of licensing, monitoring and advisory services
- promote active nature management and restoration
- take biodiversity and environmental protection into account, in compliance with the Government Programme, in legislative reforms
- work towards having EU funds take into account EU protection targets and the European Green Deal and support the sustainable use of natural resources and nature conservation
- maintain the purity of arable land and forest land at its current good level.

Organisations participating in this assessment: The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners MTK, the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, WWF Finland



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Government's assessment

- 16.1 The long-term downward trend in homicide rates bottomed out in 2018. 😊📉
- 16.2 There has also been an increase in the number of sexual assaults against children reported to the police. 😊📉
- 16.3 According to international studies, the Finnish judicial system is the most independent in the world. 😊➡️
- 16.4 Over the 2010s, new foreign organised crime groups have emerged in Finland and the number of gang chapters has almost doubled. 😊📉
- 16.5 Finland is internationally considered a country of low corruption and bribery offences are rare. 😊➡️
- 16.6 The Legatum Prosperity Index ranks Finland's governance as the most effective in the world. 😊➡️
- 16.7 People's political and social rights are effectively realised in Finland. 😊➡️

A STABLE AND EFFECTIVE SOCIETY creates a good foundation for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in Finland. Finland is one of the safest countries in the world. We also excel at international rankings measuring the level of corruption, freedom of the press, or trust in authorities and the legal system.

Finland's challenge is the fact that although most people are faring well and feel safe and able to participate in society, insecurity and deprivation accumulate for certain population groups. By way of example, violent crime and its gross forms, in particular, concentrate in a relatively small group of socially excluded substance abusers, who also run a manifold risk of becoming victims of violence when compared with the mainstream of the population. Violence perpetration and victimisation are most prevalent among younger age groups. The numbers of assault offences recorded by the police have remained stable in recent years. Physical violence, including at least a slap, had been experienced by six per cent of people aged 15 to 74. An almost uninterrupted 20-year period of declining homicide rates came to an end as the number of homicides increased by 28% on the previous year.

The sectors at risk of corruption in Finland include public procurement, construction and urban planning, as well as political decision-making and financing. The forms of structural corruption are not reflected in international statistics, such as the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, which ranks Finland high (third place in 2019).

Finland has succeeded in improving services for crime victims by means such as establishing Seri Support Centres for

sexual assault victims and shelter places for domestic violence victims. Furthermore, various multidisciplinary operating models (such as MARAC and Anchor) have been developed and disseminated to help domestic violence victims and break juvenile offenders' downward spiral of crime.

In recent years, Finland has successfully advanced anti-corruption measures, such as increasing awareness at the national level, and leading an anti-corruption campaign.

Finland has succeeded in halting the decline in voter turnout. Voter turnout in the 2019 parliamentary election rose to 72%, which was the highest level since the parliamentary election of 1991. Citizens' initiatives and other forms of participatory democracy have improved democracy and increased participation in society.

As for global responsibility, one of the four priorities of Finland's development policy comprises peace-building and reinforcing effective and democratic societies. The work to develop effective societies is based on a broad democracy concept, where promoting human rights, rule of law, good governance and freedom of speech, eradicating corruption and empowering citizens' participation are considered key to reinforce democracy.

Furthermore, Finland has supported the development of legal systems in weak states by means such as training police officers and judges in civilian crisis management operations. The number of participants Finland sends to civilian crisis management operations is the highest of all EU countries relative to its population size.

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- The Finnish Government published a Report on Internal Security in 2016 and an Internal Security Strategy in October 2017.
- A new Action Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Children, entitled Non-Violent Childhoods, was published in November 2019.
- Based on the Government Programme, Finland is carrying out a comprehensive reform of legislation governing sexual offences, where one of the tasks is to review the provisions on and scales of penalties for sexual offences, thus reinforcing children's criminal-law protection against sexual abuse and other sexual offences.
- Finland's non-discrimination legislation was reformed in 2015. The realisation of fundamental and human rights was promoted through the National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2017–2019.

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEGATIVE 

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that social polarisation has increased, and there is an increase in hate speech particularly targeting asylum seekers and Muslims. There is also an increase in online bullying, hate speech and sexual grooming by strangers targeting children. Among 9th graders, 10 per cent have experienced violent threats.

To implement the Istanbul Convention, Finland has been urged to promptly implement clear procedures and guidelines for the protection of women and girls.

Privacy protection for citizens was narrowed down through new civilian intelligence legislation which took effect in 2019, as it is possible that screening could leave large amounts of the communications of individual citizens in the possession of the authorities.

Finnish companies exported weapons to countries which participate in wars or which violate human rights according to international reports.

The UN Human Rights Committee and Human Rights Council have repeatedly paid attention to the position of total objectors who refuse all military service in Finland, and the Human Rights Council has urged Finland to ensure that the alternative civilian service option is strictly managed by civilians.

Finland has actively promoted the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 – Women, peace and security – in international arenas, and is among the first countries to start preparing a national implementation plan regarding resolution 2250 – Youth, peace and security. Young people and youth CSOs have taken ownership of the process.

In its foreign policy, Finland has emphasised conflict prevention, mediation, dialogue processes and addressing the root causes of conflicts. These targets have been partially implemented. In the Defence Report, Finland sets the development of national defence capability as the objective of its participation in crisis management operations. The proposed increase of the appropriation for peace mediation work in 2019 was a long overdue step in the right direction. Finland consistently highlighted the rule of law in dialogue during its EU Presidency in the second half of 2019.

In fragile states Finnish actors have supported the rights and participation of women, children, young people and people with disabilities, as well as gender equality.

The Parliament approved the amendment of the Non-Military Service Act on 1 March 2019. In future, all reservist objectors who had been approved for supplementary service are automatically exempted from military service.

Finland must

- prepare a peace policy programme to lessen hate speech and to transform a culture of violence into a culture of peace
- prepare an implementation plan for the Lanzarote Convention that will cover the convention's entire content
- better protect undocumented children and ensure that they receive the educational and health care services they are entitled to
- end the export of weapons and military equipment to countries at war
- cut military expenses to mitigate for and adapt to the climate change and direct the funds nationally and internationally to the most impoverished individuals and to the poorest countries
- support the creation of new peace mediation models by bringing together multilateral, private sector and CSO actors and by promoting multi-actor projects and programmes
- stop penalising total objectors and ensure that the civilian service is not longer than the shortest military service
- tighten arms legislation and monitor compliance more effectively than is currently the case.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Peace Union of Finland, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom WILPF, Committee of 100 in Finland, Felm, The Union of Conscientious Objectors AKL, Save the Children Finland, UN Association of Finland, Finnish Development NGOs Fingo



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Government's assessment

- 17.1** Finland is going to achieve the goal of doubling official development assistance (ODA) to support domestic resource mobilisation in low-income countries in 2021. 😊⬆️
- 17.2–17.5** Finland falls short of the 0.7% GNI target in development funding, but the new Government has decided to increase the disbursements and to formulate a roadmap to reach the 0.7 % GNI target. 😊⬆️
- 17.6–17.8** Finland has strengthened its support to UN innovation and technology activities. 😊⬆️
- 17.9** Providing capacity building for the implementation of the SDGs in developing countries has been incorporated in projects and programmes in a cross-cutting manner. 😊⬆️
- 17.10–17.12** Developing countries are effectively taken into consideration in Finland's trade policy. 😊⬆️
- 17.13–17.17** Political commitment, a whole-of-government approach and multi-stakeholder engagement are in place to foster policy coherence on sustainable development. 😊⬆️
- 17.18–17.19** Statistical capacity-building and support to develop measurements and disaggregated data is incorporated in development cooperation projects as appropriate. 😊⬆️

Youth Agenda 2030 Group have been established to challenge and support the Commission. Finland also has a long-term commitment to support multi-stakeholder partnerships in science, technology and innovations for development. Finland is currently spearheading innovation and digital development particularly through the innovation activities of the UN.

Our human rights-based development policy aims at eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities and implementing SDGs in LDCs. In order to leave no one behind, Finland has been focusing its global implementation of the 2030 Agenda on four priority areas: 1) Women and Girls, 2) Sustainable Economies and Decent jobs, 3) Education and Democratic Societies, and 4) Climate Change and Natural Resources. Finland's trade policy is fully in line with the objectives to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO, as well as meaningful trade liberalisation. Finland has also joined the Addis Tax Initiative in 2015 to strengthen developing countries' domestic resource mobilisation, and will achieve the goal of doubling ODA to support domestic resource mobilisation in low-income countries in 2021. In its development financing, Finland has devised several instruments to target the financing gap in SDG investment needs.

FINLAND IS a proactive member of the global community and defends the multilateral cooperation actively. The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement lay the foundation for Finland's international cooperation.

Finland's challenges: Finland's development funding was reduced significantly between 2016 and 2019. In 2018, Finland used 833 MEUR (0.36% of its GNI, target: 0.7%) on development cooperation. Aid to the least developed countries (LDCs) was 0.11% of the GNI (target: 0.15–0.2 %). The Government aims to direct 0.7 % of GNI to development cooperation and 0.2 % of GNI to the LDCs. A road map is to be drawn up for this purpose.

Finland has succeeded in: To enhance policy coherence, Finland has a long tradition of inter-ministerial coordination and engagement of civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders in sustainable development work. A multi-stakeholder National Commission for Sustainable Development has operated since 1993 under the Prime Minister's leadership. Also, an Expert Panel of Professors and a

Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020

- Finland's new Government programme (2019): the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement provide the foundation for international cooperation in the coming years
- An independent evaluation of Finland's sustainable development policy conducted in 2019, including formulated concrete recommendations for the future.
- Establishment of the Agenda 2030 Youth Group to engage youth in sustainable development work and to challenge and to support current policies and practices.
- Strengthened support for UN agencies: The United Nations Technology Innovation Lab (UNTIL) was established in Finland in 2018 and the Global Innovation Program of UNOPS in 2019.
- A returnable capital investment programme to address the SDG investment needs in developing countries. In 2016–2019, EUR 530 million was channeled into loans and capital investment.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Civil society's assessment

TREND: NEUTRAL →

FINLAND'S CHALLENGE IS that we committed to channelling 0.7 per cent of GNI to development aid 50 years ago, but this target has only been achieved once. In addition, those living in the margins remain too excluded both in Finland and in developing countries. Meaningful participation of people with disabilities in the labour market and in societal decision-making is still an exception. Sexual minorities and the unemployed also have not been actively included to advance sustainable development.

Following the cuts in development financing, the number of Finland's global partnerships has decreased, civil society partnerships have been lost and national volunteering in particular has suffered.

There has been a strong emphasis on private sector cooperation. Private sector development actors, as any other actor using public development funds, must provide adequate qualitative and quantitative reporting and compliance with common sustainable development principles. The growing application of market terms in the promotion of sustainable development risks leaving behind the most vulnerable.

The input of the private sector is needed to achieve sustainable development, but no individual party will be able to achieve the targets on their own. More can be achieved with less input by directing the sustainable development funding more strategically and by utilising existing evaluation and research data.

Finland has succeeded in making a systematic long-term commitment to its development partner countries. Finland has also made a strong commitment to rules-based operations and has invested internationally particularly in the development of tax systems.

In Finland, organisations are working in particular to raise awareness of sustainable development and globally to increase the administrative competence of partner organisations. Reinforcing the planning and reporting capacity of partners has also increased the capabilities to recognise the linking of our own work to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Besides professional development organizations, CSOs based on voluntarism have the opportunity to receive support for development cooperation, but the number of organisations to be supported has fallen drastically.

The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development promoted the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the linking of it to the national sustainable development work in the 2016–2019 programme period. The Commission includes representatives from ministries, political parties, trade and industries, municipalities and a broad selection of representatives from civil society. There is also a panel of scientific experts as well as youth delegates, who challenged and assessed the work of the National Commission on Sustainable Development and the progress of the Society's Commitment document. In future, the voice of young people who are unemployed or have disabilities must be heard.

Finland must

- keep its promise of increased funding for development cooperation and sustainable development
- ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation, monitoring and reporting of value-based partnership in private sector collaboration
- demand for sustainable development value system and human rights-based approach as prerequisites for all projects and funding
- further emphasize diversity and broad participation in the implementation and monitoring the progress of Sustainable Development Goals
- in Government budget proposals, specify which documents the allocation of appropriations are based on, and in the spirit of transparency, make these documents public.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, the Finnish Central Organisation of Trade Unions SAK, UN Association of Finland, Felm

6.3 Finland's performance 2016–2019 according to the SDG Index and Dashboard

Text and study by Finnish Environment Institute

Finland has been one of the top performers of sustainability according to the SDG Index and Dashboard presented in the Sustainable Development Reports published by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network³². Finland was placed fourth in the 2016 report and the country climbed to number three in 2017–2019 reports.

Despite the good overall performance, the SDG Index and Dashboard suggest that further action is needed related to several SDGs. According to the 2019 report, SDG2, SDG12, SDG14 and SDG17 are the ones where greatest improvement is needed in Finland. On the other hand, Finland is leading the implementation of SDG5 even though the goal is still to be reached. Maintaining good performance and addressing vulnerable groups remain permanent challenges also in cases where global goals are already reached. There appear to be opportunities for Finland to learn from the experiences of several other countries, as shown by the variety of countries leading the implementation of individual SDGs.

Key messages: positive overall progress, challenges related to environmental effects of high overall consumption and production levels³³

Between 2016 and 2019 reporting, 50 indicators provide a solid basis for comparison (Figure 11).³⁴ Of these indicators 54% show an improving trend, 12% are on the target without a noticeable change, while 34% show a decreasing trend. Overall, most of the indicators show a good performance related to social and economic challenges while greatest long-term challenges arise from high levels of consumption of materials and energy.

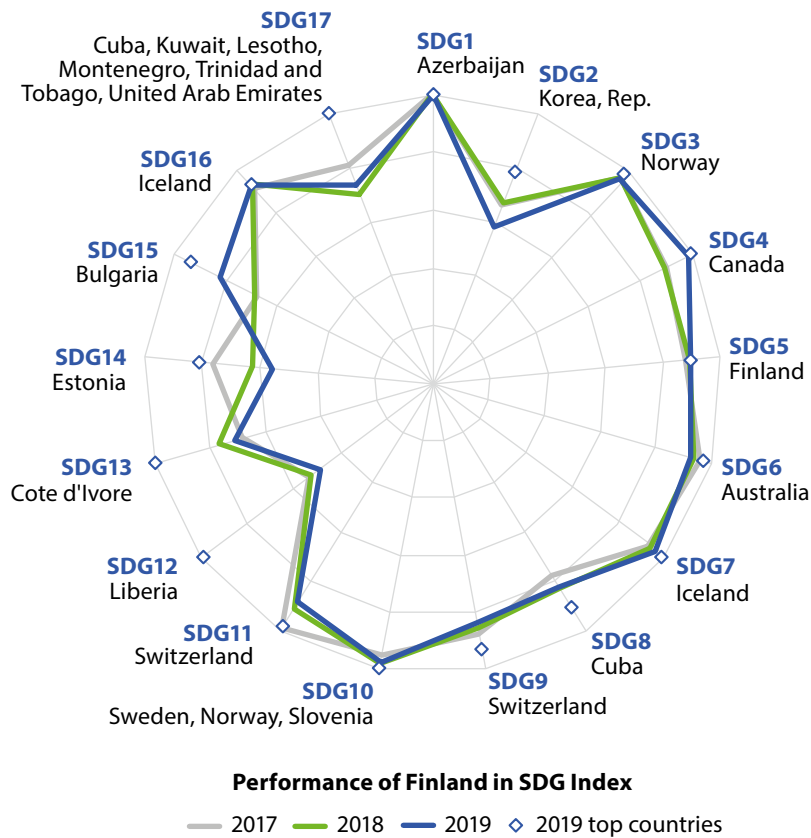
32 <https://www.sdgindex.org/>

33 The full analysis of Finland's performance according to the SDG Index and Dashboard 2016–2019 can be read from https://kestavakehitys.fi/documents/2167391/2186383/SDG+Index_6_3_2020+%28002%29.pdf/26dee937-b0f4-367a-0856-79ab04c27ee5/SDG+Index_6_3_2020+%28002%29.pdf

34 In addition, ten indicators allow comparison either between 2016 and 2018 or between 2017 and 2019. 14 indicators have insufficient data for meaningful interpretation over time.

Figure 11. The overall performance of Finland 2017–2019

Comparison with leading performers in each SDG according 2019 reporting. The figure shows the regional average score scaled between 0 and 100. Outer ring of the figure indicates that the SDG is reached.



The most distinctive **positive changes** during the four years period include the following:

- Self-reported subjective well-being (SDG3) of Finns has remained at a very high level as is shown also by the top position in the World Happiness Report.
- Finns can enjoy excellent outdoor air quality as measured by particle concentration (PM_{2,5}). More widely, this indicates high standards of infrastructures (SDG9) and good management and overall quality of urban environments (SDG11).

The indicators with the most notable **negative trend** include:

- Obesity of adult population (SDG2) is a serious and increasing problem related both to nutrition and insufficient physical activity.
- Ocean Health Index and fish caught by trawling indicate the multiple challenges facing life below water (SDG14).
- Low level of international concessional public finance, including official development assistance, shows the difficulties to secure adequate long-term investments for effective implementation of international partnerships (SDG17).

The results highlight that changes in social, ecological and economic trends are typically slow ones. Caution is needed when changes over time are looked through the lenses of indicators since in many cases what seems as a radical or rapid change is caused by alterations in indicator composition or data coverage rather than actual changes in the country's performance.

6.4 Externalities and spillovers

International externalities or spillovers refer to costs (or benefits) that are generated by one country's actions to another country, and which are not reflected in market prices and thus not internalised. In the context of SDGs, spillovers can generally be seen as positive or negative effects of country's actions to other countries' ability to reach the SDGs. According to SDSN's report³⁵ on international spillovers and the SDGs, negative effects tend to flow from rich to poor countries, including through transnational companies that control international supply chains. Therefore, as part of global efforts to achieve the SDGs, rich countries bear a special responsibility to identify and tackle international spillover effects.

In case of Finland, comprehensive assessment of spillovers is not possible due to lack of adequate data. In general, the assessment of spillovers is most advanced in the field of international trade. The SDG Index Report 2019 has analysed spillovers caused by international trade to environment, security, economy, finance and governance. In this analysis, Finland scores 67,1, which is an average result for a high-income country.

Finland's national sustainability monitoring system³⁶ include an indicator basket that focuses on global responsibility and policy coherence. This basket includes indicators such

³⁵ <https://resources.unsdsn.org/sdsn-policy-brief-international-spillovers-and-the-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-measuring-how-a-countrys-progress-towards-the-sdgs-is-affected-by-actions-in-other-countries>.

³⁶ <https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/monitoring>

as ODA, Finnish contribution in international crisis management, Finland's performance in Commitment to Development Index, and export and import of raw materials. Other indicator baskets include additional indicators that relate to global responsibility, such as carbon footprint of private consumption and number of quota refugees. A challenge of most of these indicators is that there are no politically agreed target levels. More and better indicators for annual monitoring of Finland's spillovers would be needed.

The European Union has a significant role as a producer of global positive and negative spillovers. The EU could also be in frontline in developing indicators for monitoring spillovers. During the Finnish EU Presidency in 2019, the EU Member States noted that the EU information concerning the spillovers generated by the EU's policies around the world needs to be improved, and acknowledged the critical role the Eurostat could play in developing ways to measure the global footprint (negative impact) and global handprint (positive impact) of EU policies.

6.5. State of Sustainable Development in the light of national indicators

The national state of sustainable development is followed up with 10 indicator baskets and approximately 45 indicators. According to those, the state of Finland's sustainable development is as follows:

1. State of nature and the environment

The state of the environment has been improving as a result of successful efforts to cut down emissions from major individual sources of pollution. Air quality in Finland is good by international standards. However, the loss of biodiversity continues and in the latest assessment of threatened species in Finland (2019) 11.9% of all species were classified as threatened, compared to 10.5% in the previous assessment. While emissions into waters have decreased, the Baltic Sea is still suffering from eutrophication.

2 Resource-wise economy and carbon-neutral society

Finland is among the top countries in the European Union in the use of renewable energy. Finland's greenhouse gas emissions have taken a downward turn in the long term, but in 2018 the total emissions rose 2 per cents. Most of Finland's greenhouse gas emissions originate from the energy sector and traffic. Forests form Finland's most important carbon sinks.

3 Public procurement and consumption

An average Finn's carbon footprint is about 10.3 tonnes per year. The carbon footprint of housing and driving has decreased while the footprint of food products has remained unchanged. Between EUR 30 and 35 billion is spent on public procurement every year, but there is no quantitative follow-up data on the impacts of procurement.

4 Housing and communities

Housing and communities are changing as a result of the ageing population, urbanisation and climate change. Most construction activities in Finland are focused on larger cities, which means that their population density is increasing. This will further improve the conditions for well-functioning public transport. Conversely, access to services is declining in smaller urban centres and rural areas. An increasing proportion of elderly people live in their own homes, over 90 per cent of people over 75 live at home.

5 Prerequisites for health

Finns' perceived quality of life has improved. Perceived wellbeing is linked to socio-economic status so that those who are better off also tend to enjoy a higher quality of life. Finns living in the south and west are healthier than their peers in the east and north. Intimate partner violence is a threat to women in particular. Finland is the second most violent country for women within the European Union.

6 Social inequality

The standard of living and quality of life have improved for a large proportion of Finns over the last few decades. The growth in income disparities and low income rates seems to have come to a halt, but the differences are still high. Nevertheless, income disparities in Finland are among the lowest in the European Union with GINI index being 27.7 in 2017. The number of recipients of basic social assistance has grown.

7 Social exclusion and inclusivity

The number of young people not in employment, education or training has decreased slightly in Finland in recent years. Likewise, experience of loneliness among teenage boys has declined, although boys experience more loneliness than girls. Finland is performing well in rankings on corruption and press freedom. Voting activity increased by 2 per cent in the 2019 parliamentary elections compared to elections in 2015.

8 Working life, quality and change

The working life is changing rapidly. The employment rate has improved and fewer and fewer working people earn a low income. In 2019 the number of employed people rose with over 17 000 persons and the employment rate rose to 72,6 per cent. Although by international standards there is a sustainable basis to many aspects of the Finnish working life, inequalities between women and men are large. The pay gap is not shrinking at the desired rate and women have less autonomy at work than men. The pay gap between women and men is above the EU average.

9 Education and development of competence

Finland is known as a leading country in education and training. Its library utilization rate is also at world-class level. Research and development expenditure has picked up after a hiatus, while sustainable development is being taken more and more effectively into account at schools and nursery schools. However, while reading literacy has traditionally been strong among young Finns, it is now declining. Learning differences between girls and boys are among the largest of all OECD countries. Men also acquire less education than women.

10 Global responsibility and policy coherence

Finland's level of commitment to improving lives in the poorest countries is good by international standards. Relative to its population size, Finland plays an active role in civilian crisis management operations. However, Finland falls short of the other Nordic countries in terms of the level of development cooperation funding. The level of ODA dropped in 2016 and has stayed significantly lower than the 0,7 per cent goal. In 2019 the amount of ODA increased by EUR 90 milj. and it is now 0,41 per cent of Finland's GDP. Very little is known about the global impacts of Finnish consumption.

6.6 Citizen panel's message to the Government

A national citizen panel on sustainable development consists of around 500 Finns. It assesses annually the current state and recent changes in sustainability issues in Finland, based on national indicators.

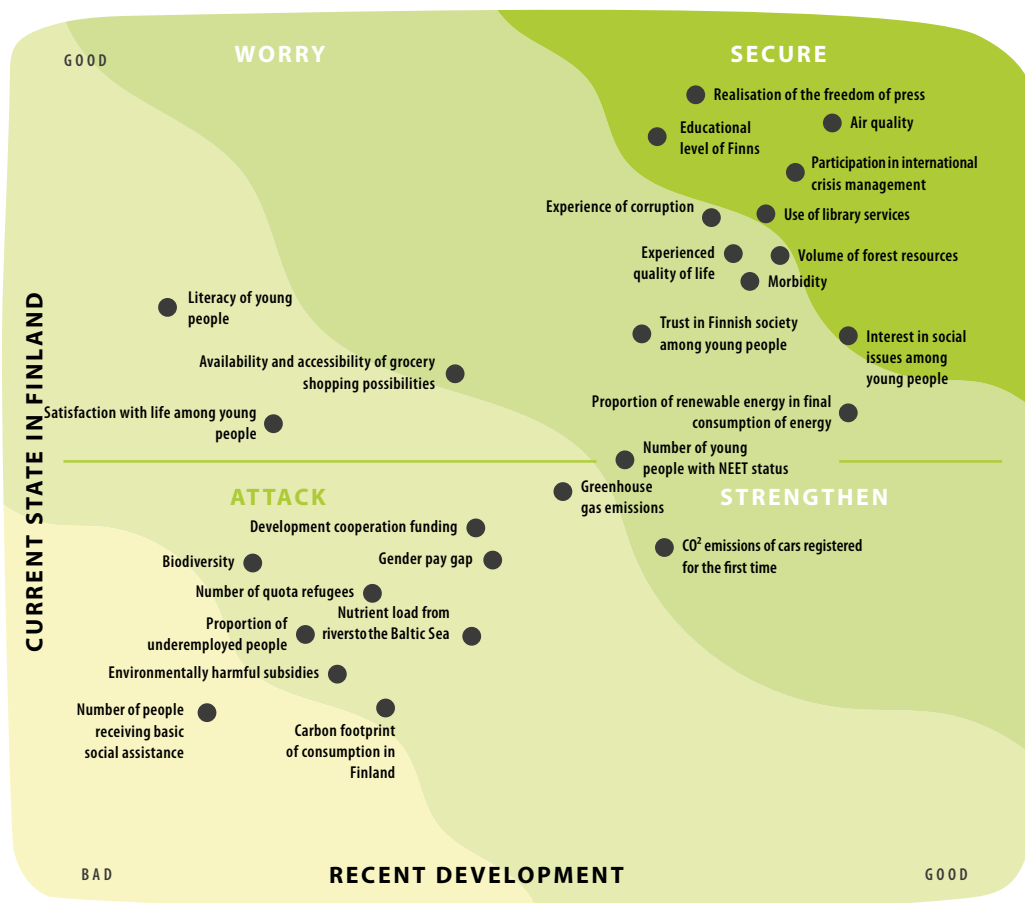
The panel functions in a following way: the task of panelists is to assess the current state and recent development in Finland in the topics measured by national indicators, based on data from national follow-up system. Each member of the panel study the indicators and interpretative texts, and based on that information, position the topics measured

by national indicators in a fourfold table. The panelists use an online assessment tool for making the assessment. In the fourfold table, the lateral dimension indicates recent (5 years) development in a scale from bad to good, and vertical dimension indicates current state in a scale from bad to good.

The end result shows the location of all indicator-issues in a fourfold table. The location of each indicator-issue in the fourfold table is the average of the assessments of all members of the panel.

Figure 12. The value of the fourfold table for decision-making

Different kinds of sustainability issues are located in different segments of the table.



Each segment includes different advice to policy-making: Top Right: Secure – continue existing policies that function well. Top left: Worry – check if existing policies are working. Bottom right: Strengthen – existing policies seem to be working but may need to be strengthened. Bottom left: Attack – existing policies seem not to be working, take new measures

The 2020 panel's message to the Government is the following:

Worry: Literacy of young people continues to decline. Like last year, the issue the panel was most concerned about was the future of young people. The panel members were especially worried about the declining literacy among young people over the past few years. According to the panel, young adults are still satisfied with their lives, but recent developments give cause for concern about the future. In the other areas, the panel members were particularly concerned about the availability and accessibility of grocery shopping possibilities.

Secure: We must hold on to the good quality of life. The panel stated that the current state of many issues and the recent developments in Finland are good. The panel members were particularly satisfied with the quality of life, the good level of education and low morbidity in Finland. The panel considered young people's trust in Finnish society and their interest in societal matters to be at a good level. With regard to environmental matters, good air quality and the increasing proportion of renewable energy in the final use of energy must be ensured in the future.

Strengthen: Promotion of low-emission mobility. The panel was concerned about Finland's greenhouse gas emissions. However, based on recent developments, they hoped it will be possible to control them even better in the future. The panel members were of the opinion that the CO₂ emissions from cars registered for the first time were still too high, but recent developments in this area also give cause for optimism. The panel also believed that the efforts to reduce the number of young people not in employment or education from last year have been successful and that this work must continue.

Attack: Mitigation of biodiversity loss. The environmental issues most concerning the panel members were the current state of biodiversity, the amount of environmentally harmful subsidies, the carbon footprint of consumption in Finland and the nutrient load from rivers to the Baltic Sea. Decision-makers should assess whether the current policy in these issues is functioning sufficiently well. The panel members were of the opinion that the number of people receiving basic social assistance or working part-time involuntarily is still large and the current development does not look promising. The panel members also found the gender pay gap considerable, and the situation does not seem to be improving.

CASE: Measuring progress in cities and municipalities

Cities and municipalities use indicators to measure the impact of their actions, to take knowledge-based decisions and to understand their similarities and differences compared with other municipalities, in order to promote knowledge sharing and learning from best practices.

The local use of SDGs varies significantly between cities and municipalities in Finland. The forerunner cities, such as Helsinki, Espoo and Turku are progressing in the integration of SDGs into their decision-making processes, core strategies and policies. Some municipalities are still at the very beginning of understanding the role of SDGs in their local context, but even in these cases, SDG indicators have proven to be a useful means to facilitate understanding of the relation between the municipalities' core functions and the global SDGs. In fact, the competences of the municipalities in Finland spread through most SDGs.

The Government of Finland promotes knowledge-based decision-making and awareness of SDGs in cities and municipalities by offering MayorsIndicators tool³⁷ for the use of public servants in the municipalities. It is targeted to those municipalities that have made their operational commitment as part of the Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, or participate in programs or projects promoting sustainability at local level. The tool allows local authorities to measure their progress with about 140 SDG indicators from 2010 onwards and compare it with other local authorities in Finland, Sweden and the UK. The indicators have been chosen based on the UN SDG indicators, data availability permitting, localized to the context of local authorities in Finland. Further indicators are identified using the same indicators as used in this report at the national level and developed together with the local authority representatives.

Examples of indicators across SDGs

The graphs below show examples of indicators used at a local level. Comparison is made across the six largest cities in Finland, and for each of the indicators, examples of smaller municipalities, representing particularly low or high values, are also presented.

The indicator Young people outside the education system represents the share of 17–24-year-olds outside the education system in comparison to all inhabitants in the same age group. An individual outside the education system is defined as a person, whom is neither a student, nor a graduate. In general, the share of young people outside the education system is decreasing in Finland, but the differences between municipalities are large. Of the largest cities, Vantaa has the highest share of young people outside the education system in 2018 (12%), while the share in Tampere is the lowest (6%). Small municipalities show rather large variations in the time-series, such as that in Salla (a municipality of 3 500 inhabitants in Northern Finland), a decrease from 12 to 1% in 2010–2018). ▶

37 <https://www.mayorsindicators.com/>

Figure 13. Young people outside the education system, percentage

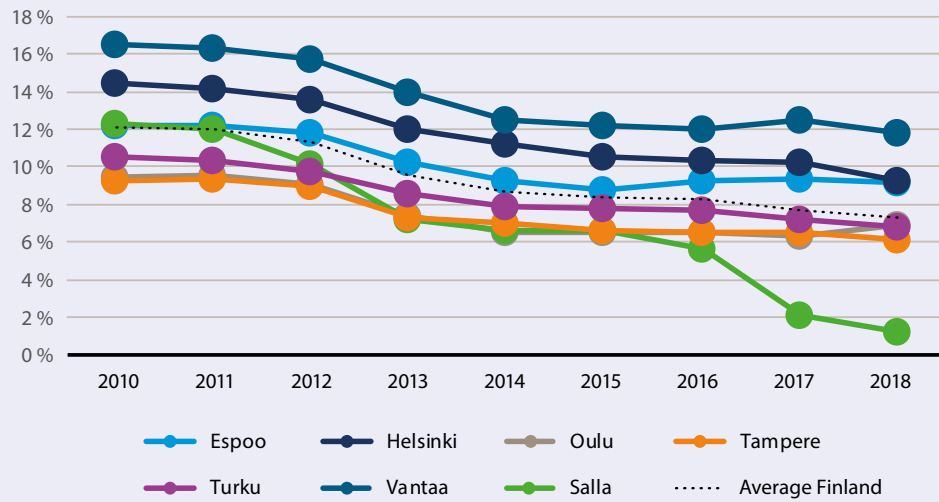
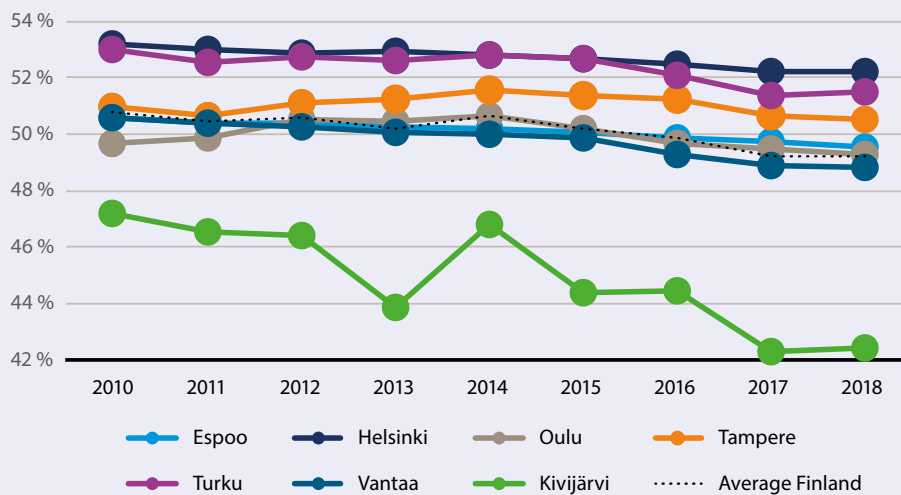


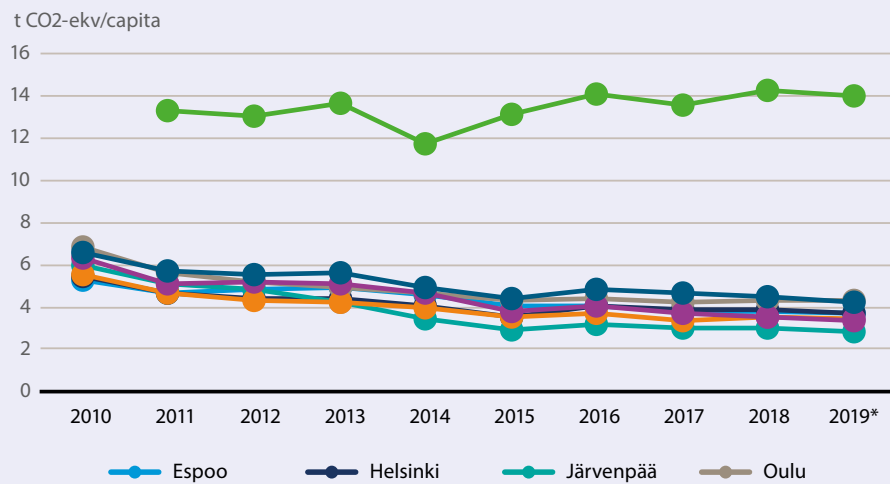
Figure 14. Gender balance in labor market, percentage



Indicator Gender balance in labor market shows the share of employed women in comparison to the aggregate number of employed inhabitants. The balance for the large cities in and in Finland in average is good in 2018, with 48–52% of employed people being women. In the municipality of Kivijärvi (1100 inhabitants in Central Finland) only 42% of the employed were women.

The indicator greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per capita measures the GHG emissions occurring within the territory of each local authority, excluding emissions from industry. The GHG emissions have generally a decreasing trend in large cities, and amount to between 3.5 and 4.5 t CO₂-equivalent per capita in 2018. In the town of Järvenpää, with 43 000 inhabitants and located quite close to Helsinki region, the emissions have halved since 2010. Large per capita emissions occur for example in small municipalities with significant agricultural production, such as Punkalaidun (a municipality of 2 900 inhabitants in South-western Finland). ●

Figure 15. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per capita
t CO₂-ekv/capita



7 Means of implementation

7.1 Key changes / lessons learned

- Sustainable development has been taken into account in State budget by focusing on appropriations promoting carbon neutrality. Generally, it is important that spending is linked with national 2030 Agenda priorities. On revenue side, taxes can be used effectively to promote sustainability, and subsidies need careful consideration.
- Taxation is key for effective domestic resource mobilisation (DMR). Finland is supporting taxation capacity building in Africa, corporate fiscal responsibility and voices of developing countries in global tax policy.
- Innovations and new technologies can make a great contribution to the 2030 Agenda. The UN has become a key innovation partner for Finland. National innovation ecosystem generates solutions for meeting the SDG's, by the support of Business Finland and Technical Research Agency VTT. Both organisations have included the 2030 Agenda in their strategy.
- Finland supports local innovation ecosystem development through multi-year bilateral and regional programmes in developing countries.
- Finland's development aid fell significantly in 2016. Among the sectors that suffered most from the cuts was environment and biodiversity. The current Government is preparing a long-term National Road Map for increasing Finland's ODA to 0,7% of GNI.

National Strategic Research Council uses the 2030 Agenda as a guiding tool in the preparation of annual thematic research proposal for the Government.

Successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires strong political will and ambitious targets and plans. However, the targets and plans cannot be operationalized without appropriate tools and measures and sufficient resources. The measures, tools and resources should enable accelerated action and transformative pathways to Governments and all actors to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Domestic resources and financing in the form of state and municipal budgets and other economic instruments enable the public finances to focus on the key national challenges. International development assistance remains one of the key catalytic sources of financing for those developing countries most in need. Other sources and mechanisms of international financing, trade and partnerships can be effective means of implementation for developing and developed countries alike.

Furthermore, better access to and use of sustainable development technologies and innovations and sharing best practices works for the benefit of all nations. Finland is committed to promoting innovations and partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development worldwide. Science is the cornerstone of the Finnish Government and society to provide knowledge, solutions and innovations for sustainable development home and abroad.

7.2 Sustainable development in State Budget

Sustainable development in budget proposals

The 2020 budget proposal promotes goals relating to carbon neutrality by a total of about EUR 2.0 billion. This is approximately EUR 347 million more than the amount allocated to equivalent measures in the 2019 Budget. The growth can be attributed to the increases in appropriations agreed by the new Government as part of its Programme. The total 2020 Budget amounts to about EUR 57.7 billion. The breakdown in the table below is based on the Government Programme.

Carbon neutral Finland

Key appropriations

| EUR million | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Carbon neutral Finland that protects biodiversity | 533 | 395 | 523 |
| Globally influential Finland | 229 | 245 | 271 |
| Dynamic and thriving Finland | 253 | 205 | 229 |
| Developing and maintaining the transport network | 155 | 132 | 291 |
| Agriculture | 655 | 658 | 667 |
| TOTAL | 1 814 | 1 634 | 1 981 |

Taxes

As a general rule, energy taxes, vehicle tax, car tax, waste tax and excise duty on certain beverage containers, in particular, are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, although they may include both SDG-compliant and non-compliant individual tax structures.

Finland is currently preparing a tax reform for sustainable development with a view to promoting the shift towards carbon neutrality. The tax reform for sustainable development will consist of a reform of energy taxation, a reform of transport taxation, promotion of the circular economy, and a study of emissions-based consumption taxation.

The Government of Finland has decided that a sustainable taxation roadmap will be drawn up to serve the Government's climate goal. The first stage of this roadmap will be completed in the spring of 2020. The preparations will seek solutions that promote the Government's climate objectives in the most economically effective way, accelerating the shift away from fossil fuels while meeting the requirements of social justice. The package will include a reform of energy taxation, a reform of transport taxation, promotion of the circular economy, and a study of emissions-based consumption taxation.

Environmentally harmful subsidies

Environmentally harmful subsidies refer to subsidies that result in an increase in the utilisation of natural resources and the environmental burden in the subsidised enterprise or the subsidised sector. According to the OECD definition, a subsidy is classified as harmful to the environment if it causes more environmental harm than would be the case without it. Environmentally harmful subsidies and their implementation is justified for reasons other than environmental ones. Environmentally harmful subsidies can have a positive impact on other policy objectives for example food security.

Environmentally harmful subsidies are especially included in the tax system, but they can also be found among budget appropriations. Based on previous studies, the current estimate of environmentally harmful subsidies stands at about EUR 3.6 billion, including both appropriations and, in particular, tax subsidies. Environmentally harmful subsidies are mainly directed at three sectors: energy, transport and agriculture. No particular progress has been achieved in this area.

CASE: Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action

At the 2018 Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund in Bali, Indonesia, governments from 39 countries came together to boost their collective engagement on climate action. Finnish Finance Minister Petteri Orpo proposed to form a Coalition of Finance Ministers, which would promote cohesion between domestic and global action on climate change, boost ambitions, reaffirm commitments, and accelerate actions to implement the Paris Agreement.

In December 2018, the Finance Ministers of Finland and Chile, supported by the World Bank, agreed to co-lead the Coalition and invited other governments to Helsinki to discuss its structure, focus, and goals for the coming 2 years. Thus the Helsinki Principles were born. The Coalition was officially launched in April 2019.

The Coalition will help countries mobilize and align the finance needed to implement their national climate action plans; establish best practices such as climate budgeting and strategies for green investment and procurement; and factor climate risks and vulnerabilities into members' economic planning.

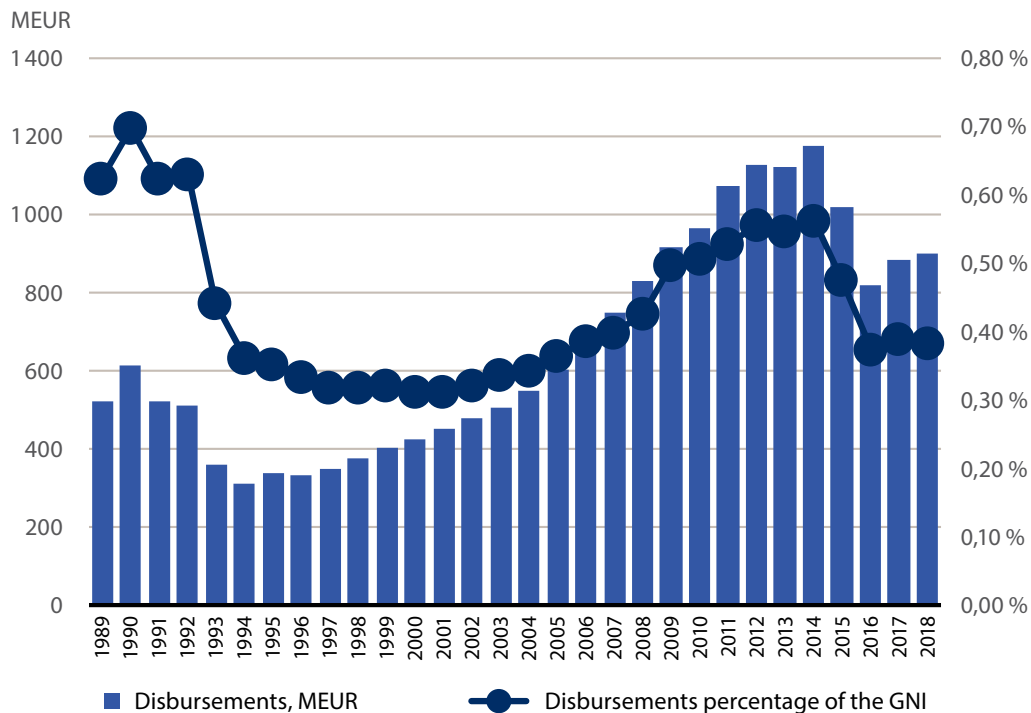
Since its launch, finance ministers from fifty-three countries have signed on to the Helsinki Principles, a set of six aspirational principles that promote national, regional and global climate action. In COP25 Coalition members launched the Santiago Action Plan, which details ways the Coalition, alongside its Institutional Partners, will seek to make progress on the Helsinki Principles. The Santiago Action Plan recognizes that a fundamental change is required to bring considerations of climate change into decision-making about economic and financial policies, and reflects Members' engagement to work actively towards common goals of mainstreaming climate change actions. ●

7.3 Finland's official development funding

The Government aims to direct 0.7 % of GNI to development cooperation over the long term. Achieving the Government's ODA targets –0,7 % to development cooperation and 0.2 % to LDCs – will require commitments that exceed parliamentary terms.

The target was close in 2014, when the figure was 0.59 %. Cuts in 2016 as part of the balancing of government finances changed the situation significantly. In 2018, Finland used EUR 833 million (0.36% of its GNI) on development cooperation and was the ninth largest development funder of the EU Member States. Finland's development cooperation expenditure fell in real terms by 14.6 % in 2018 from the previous year.

Figure 16. Finland’s official development funding
percentage of the GNI between 1989–2018



Finland continued to support UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, Unicef and UNEP with core funding in 2016–2020. Cuts in 2016 decreased the core funding significantly in these UN organisations. Finland had to also prioritise organisations heavily and in some UN organisations, e.g. UNAIDS, core funding was cut completely. UN Women and UNFPA were chosen as priority organizations as their work is fully aligned with one of the priority areas of Finland’s development policy, namely the rights of women and girls, which is also the priority of Finland’s foreign policy as a whole.

The core contribution to UN Women was EUR 10 million annually in 2016–2019 and EUR 19 million in 2020 compared to EUR 20 million in 2014. The core contribution to UNFPA was USD 20 million annually in 2016–2018, EUR 20 million in 2019 and EUR 33 million in 2020 compared to EUR 45 million in 2014. UNDP’s core contribution was cut significantly and it was EUR one million annually in 2016–2019 and EUR 2 million in 2020 compared to EUR 22 million in 2014. As regards to Unicef, core contribution was EUR 5,5 million annually in 2016–2020 compared to EUR 19,2 million in 2014. In addition, Finland supported Unicef’s innovation work with EUR 1,5 million per year in 2016–2019.

Finland has integrated the goals and objectives of the Climate Convention into its development policy and is committed to support developing countries, especially LDCs and SIDS, in their efforts related to climate change. Over the 21st century the Finnish climate support has generally had an upward trend. However, as part of the general Government adjustment measures the Government decided in 2015 on substantial cuts on the appropriations for development cooperation starting from 2016. This has also had some implications to the climate related support provided to developing countries. At the same time, the Government also decided to allocate resources through investment funding of which substantial part has and will be allocated to climate action. Therefore, the total annual amount of climate funding has varied substantially ranging from 43 million euros in 2016 to 119 million euros in 2017. According to the Government Programme (2019) Finland will scale up climate finance as a part of its development finance, taking due account of its contribution based on the Paris Agreement.

However, the OECD DAC evaluation on Finland's development policy pointed already in 2017 out the low levels of ODA for environment when compared to other DAC countries (17% in Finland compared to average 27% in other DAC countries). The evaluation was based on 2015 ODA, which was even further reduced after significant budget cuts in 2016, including to GEF and UNEP. While increases have been provided for climate, the funding for environment and biodiversity has remained at much lower level since 2016.

The significant cuts to humanitarian budget in 2014–2016 decreased Finland's total humanitarian funding to UN organizations from EUR 73,2 million in 2015 to EUR 53,7 million in 2019. Earmarked funding to FAO, WHO and UNICEF was cut out. However, Finland was able to continue multiyear unearmarked core funding with only minor changes. Finland continued to support OCHA, WFP, UNHCR, UNRWA and UNDRR (UNISDR) with core and earmarked funding in 2016–2020, and started earmarked funding to UNFPA in 2017.

The core humanitarian budget contributions have been as follows: UNHCR EUR 7 million annually in 2016–2020, UNDRR EUR 1 million annually in 2016–2020, OCHA EUR 3,5 million annually in 2016–2018 and EUR 2,5 million annually in 2019–2020, UNRWA EUR 4,5 million annually in 2016–2018 and EUR 5 million annually in 2019–2020, and WFP EUR 8 million annually from 2018–2020. In addition, Finland allocated to UN Central Emergency Response Fund CERF EUR 7 million euros annually in 2016–2018 and EUR 8 million annually in 2019–2020. The earmarked humanitarian funding to UNHCR was EUR 17 million in 2016 and EUR 13 million annually in 2017–2019. Earmarked funding to WFP decreased from EUR 20,5 million in 2016 to EUR 12,8 million in 2017. In addition to the new core funding, earmarked funding to WFP was EUR 5 million in 2018 and EUR 5,7 million in 2019. Earmarked funding to UNFPA was EUR 2,5 million in 2017, EUR 2 million

in 2018 and EUR 3,5 million in 2019. Earmarked funding to UNICEF was EUR 3,5 million in 2016 and EUR 178 000 in 2017.

According to the OECD DAC definition for multilateral and bilateral aid, the share of multilateral aid (core support to multilateral organisations) has taken up around 40–50 percent of Finland's ODA disbursements in 2016–2019, dropping to 39 percent in 2016 (EUR 377 million) and peaking at 52 percent in 2018 (EUR 431 million). (Share of bilateral aid accounts for the remaining 50–60 percent by definition.) If the earmarked funding to multilateral organisations (multi-bi) is included, the share is somewhat higher, reaching 65 percent in 2018 (EUR 536 million).

7.4 Tax Initiative and Taxation capacity building

Finland joined the Addis Tax Initiative 2015 and committed to doubling ODA to support domestic resource mobilisation in low-income countries by 2020. Finland is going to achieve this goal, but only in 2022. Finland drafted and implemented a multi-pillar Action Programme 2016–2019 on Tax for Development (T4D). For the years 2020–2023 a new Action programme has been drafted, with three main pillars: 1) taxation capacity in Africa, 2) corporate fiscal responsibility, and 3) voice of developing countries in global tax policy making. Some of the key partners are the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF), Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB/OECD-UNDP), Tax Justice Network Africa (TJNA), UNU-WIDER research on Taxation and Social Protection, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and Publish What You Pay (PWYP) work in Tanzania, Uganda and Mozambique.

Finland's strong focus on Africa is going to be further strengthened in line with the overall development policies of Finland and the EU. Finland is committed to ensuring that all companies benefiting from Finnish ODA fulfil their fiscal responsibilities in full.

7.5 Investments on Innovations and technologies enhancing SDGs

Finland is committed to promoting innovations and partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and is recognized as a global forerunner in this area. Finland supports the innovation efforts of UN organizations and contributes to the UNICEF and UNFPA Innovation Funds, which aim to develop innovations for realizing the rights of children as well as girls and women. Finland's annual support to the UNICEF Innovation

Fund is 1,5 million euros over several years, contributions to UNFPA Innovation Fund being 2 million euros since 2017.

Finland hosts important innovation operations of the UN. The UN Technology and Innovation Lab (UNTIL) in Espoo has become a leading hub in testing and scaling digital innovations for achieving the SDG's. Finland funds UNTIL by 2,5 million euros per year from 2018 to 2020 with a possibility to further continue financial support. The UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has established a Social Impact Investing Initiative (S3I) office in Helsinki, which will also accommodate the UNOPS Innovation Programme. Through the S3I, the UNOPS channels private capital into significant infrastructure projects supporting sustainable development in developing countries. Finland contributes a total of 20 million euros to the UNOPS Helsinki Office in 2020–2023. The setting up of these operations are positive signals of the growing attractiveness and potential of the Finnish innovation ecosystem in generating solutions for meeting the SDG's.

Finland promotes cooperation and coherence between innovation and development policies. The Business with Impact programme provides innovation funding for businesses and other parties heading for developing markets and builds companies' SDG competence in cooperation with CSOs. Implemented by Business Finland, the programme's budget was 57 million euros (50 % government funding and 50 % private funding) in 2015–2019 with 151 projects implemented. Funding will continue in 2020–2023 with 22 million euros. With funds from the EU Commission, Finland has also launched a project to develop sustainable financing ecosystems and SDG-related business.

Furthermore, Finland supports innovation ecosystem development in developing countries through multi-year bilateral and regional programmes, namely the Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme SAIS 2 (2017–2021, 9 million euros) and Accelerated Growth Zambia AGS (2020–2024, 8 million euros). These remain important interventions for maintaining and developing Finland's direct innovation support activity in developing countries and also provide essential connections to the markets in which they operate.

Finland is a leading subject-matter expert on artificial intelligence (AI) and digital public goods in the follow-up process of the report of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation; through this work, Finland supports international digital cooperation by strengthening rules-based governance and sustainable development. Finland contributes to the Unit established at the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, with the task of coordinating the follow-up to the report of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, by 400 000 euros and one JPO. Furthermore, Finland supports the UNICEF's AI and Child Rights Policy Project, aiming to develop guidance sensitive to children's rights for companies and governments utilizing AI. The project is funded by 859 000 euros.

By means of innovation programs, implemented by Business Finland and VTT, Finland supports the invention of innovations concerning sustainable development, as well as the scaling of innovations internationally. Via the aforementioned programs, sustainable solutions are developed concerning e.g. clean energy (SDG7), circular economy (SDG8, SDG12), smart industry (SDG9), health and well-being (SDG3), clean technologies and low-carbon solutions (SDG13), urbanization (SDG11), and digital solutions.

Finland also promotes the 2030 Agenda Goals as part of its national space strategy. VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland develops space technologies and competence, such as image analysis technologies based on artificial intelligence and other analysis methodologies. These enable the use of satellite and drone images for purposes such as performing forest inventories, analyzing plantations and monitoring the environmental status of water bodies.

Finland aims to promote AI competence widely to ensure that no-one is left behind in its development. A good example is the web-based Elements of AI course open to everyone free of charge. The course, developed as a joint project between the University of Helsinki and technology company Reaktor, offers a low-threshold opportunity to acquire basic AI skills. Over 270 000 students from more than 170 countries have signed up for the course.

Finland seeks new, fast-acting measures and initiatives to combat climate change and implement its ambitious national climate targets. A good example is cooperation between the Government and industrial sectors to draw up roadmaps in identifying development paths for different sectors and businesses to reduce their own climate emissions. In addition to the major GHG-emitting industrial sectors (energy, forestry, technology, and chemistry), the work is also being carried out in ten other sectors.

CASE: The role of technology in sustainable development and green transition

Text by Committee of the Future of the National Parliament

When computers were huge machines taking up several rooms and popping a vacuum tube every now and then, no one thought that one day every desk worker would have a personal computer on their desktop – or on their lap. The idea of teenagers carrying around multi-purpose devices with phone, radio, Walkman, computer, TV, movies, games, books, access to friends and shopping was downright inconceivable. The human mind tends to expect that everyday life will just continue along familiar lines, yet surprisingly easily accepts changed reality as part of new everyday life.

The same thing is now happening in the energy sector. Fifteen years ago, the cost of solar energy was twenty times that of coal energy. Ineffective and expensive solar panels were next to a joke in the energy industry. At the moment, solar power is the most affordable form of energy. While the extant fossil energy continues to power everyday lives in most parts of the world, the world is changing rapidly. Fifteen years from now, our everyday life will feature a very much changed energy infrastructure.

Yet, to realize not only a carbon-neutral but also a genuinely ecologically, socially and economically sustainable future, we have a lot of work to do.

One of the founding missions of the Committee for the Future in the Parliament of Finland is to assess the impacts of technological development. During the past seven years, this work has focused on the impacts and on the advancement of radical, potentially world-changing technologies. From this work, it has clearly emerged that any specific technology will not change the world. Not alone. Instead, we identify the technologies that are emerging as the most broadly influential. Then we must look at their cross-impacts.

For instance, solar power needs advances in batteries to become useful. Innovation in markets and in the energy grid will allow solar panel owners to become energy producers and electric car owners to provide temporary energy storage. Combine this with advances in geothermal heat, small-scale nuclear power plants, digital solutions enabling smart use and distribution, and you begin to see how new technology is changing the existing business.

In the electoral period 2015–2018, the Committee for the Future was assigned with a new task: coordinating Parliament's response to the Government's plans of national implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda goals. From the beginning, the Committee has emphasized that the 2030 Agenda cannot be a parallel task on the normal business of running the state. Sustainable development needs to guide decision-making at every level, in all activities. For instance, in this electoral period, the Committee seeks to understand the role of technology in sustainable development and green transition.

In exploring the possibilities of new technologies, the Committee cannot turn a blind eye to five critical issues. ►

First technology is a double-edged sword. How can we expect technology to take us out of the environmental mess that we have created by using technology? Isn't the evolution of technology a story about unsustainable development? We need to design policies that enable technologies to help us – for the first time in the history of man – in reducing rather than increasing environmental burden.

Almost all new technology involves some type of ethical issue. Different goals and values in the implementation of technologies lead to very different societies. We can, for example, utilize face-recognition or gene technologies in sustainability-enhancing or sustainability-decreasing manner. A further devil is in the details. Some specific features of technologies, such as unsustainable materials or the algorithms of the operating system, may cause harm, often unintentionally. It is not then a question of broad categories of technologies being sustainable, but sustainable goals, design principles and uses.

This is why an ethical evaluation should always be included in the development and implementation of technology. The objectives of the 2030 Agenda must guide technology policy as well. Sustainable development and people's well-being must more strongly provide the direction to the development of technology. This calls for a new mind-set and culture among technology professionals, business actors and decision-makers.

Second, we need to remember to invest in new innovative and radical technologies without forgetting to take into use the old "boring" everyday solutions we already have: a sail may sometimes beat an engine. Correspondingly, a mix of old and new techniques may sometimes be the most sustainable way forward. A good example is optimally designed new cooking stoves that halve the need for firewood and thus help to fight both poverty and deforestation. Respectively, returning carbon to soil actually increases yields as well as biodiversity. We need both high tech, low tech and social innovations.

Third, sometimes social innovations may be the most important: in Finland, for example, women receive a valuable maternity package of childcare products if they attend free regular medical examinations in maternity clinics while they are pregnant. This practice has been pivotal in reducing infant mortality in Finland and increasing the economic equality of families. The package is a cardboard box, which includes among many other things also a little mattress and sleeping bag, meaning that the box can be used as a safe sleeping place during the baby's first months. In 2017, 37% of respondents had used the package for this purpose. Sudden incidents, like the corona virus outbreak, bring the need for social innovations all the more visible. We can enable new operating models, like distant working and distant learning, even very quickly, if we have to. The corona virus indicated also the fragility of our global supply chains and the respective importance of emergency supplies. Refined practices and processes of circular economy could have an important role to secure the availability of many critical resources, such as food, water, health care products, spare parts or rare metals, during future emergencies. ▶

Fourth, new technology cannot be used in an old world. As new technologies are taken into use, related social structures, consumer cultures and business logics also change. For example, food production used to take place on small farms. With the advance of technologies favoring economies of scale, farming has been centralizing to larger and larger units. Recently, however, advances in LED lighting and robotization have begun to increase the cost-effectiveness of new kinds of local, urban and “farmfree” food production, with potentially enormous eventual implications for ecological sustainability in the long run. As an extreme example, even the production of protein directly “from thin air” utilizing bacteria, solar energy and atmosphere’s nitrogen is being scaled up as we speak.

Finally, engaging the civil society and citizens is important as well. People need to see paths to the sustainable future. They need to know how taking such a path will benefit them, or they will take a road elsewhere. There should be understandable guideposts and milestones. The weakest must be able to expect help. Further, it is very important not to decide beforehand where are the villains creating problems and who will be the heroes creating solutions. For example, setting cities and rural areas against each other will help no one. Sustainability solutions emerge and need recognition in both places.

This brings us to the matter that relates to technology, yet is more fundamental: innovation. The crux of reaching sustainability in the coming decades will be people’s capacity and willingness to develop and combine all kinds of technologies and practices in novel, more sustainable and even surprising ways. This requires seeing everyone – farmer and city-dweller, student and elderly, entrepreneur and worker – from a changed perspective: people are not problems; they are potential problem-solvers. Give them encouragement and possibilities to learn and to try new things, and they can begin making a difference. If we do this, taking a path to sustainability will not only be a hard challenge. It will become a hero’s journey, for us all. ●

7.6 Allocation of funding from two central research funding instruments

Strategic Research Council

Strategic research programs cover the 2030 Agenda aims well. None of the programs target a specific SDG or its aims, but all of them work on multiple issues identified in the 2030 Agenda.

The preparation for themes of strategic research programs are based on the law on Academy of Finland, a transparent thematic preparation, an annual strategic research thematic decision by the Government of Finland, Strategic Research Council’s (SRC) decisions on program calls (based on the Government’s thematic decision) and SRC funding decisions.

The strategic research programs cover all SDGs (see the chart below, linking each SRC program to the SDGs). Each program link multiple SDGs to each other. All programs tackle the 2030 Agenda issues in a multidisciplinary way.

Strategic research programs concentrate especially on the following SDGs:

- 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

SRC uses the 2030 Agenda extensively each year as the Council prepares an annual thematic proposal for the Government.

Government's analysis, assessment and research activities

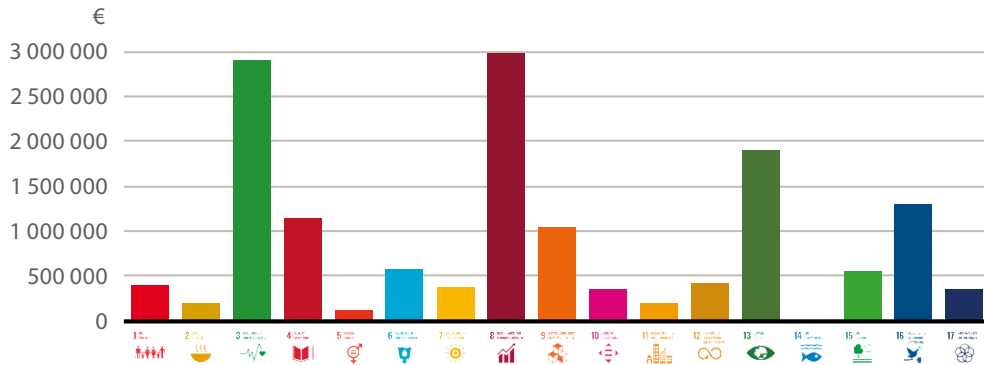
Government's analysis, assessment and research activity (VN TEAS) is a cross-governmental research funding instrument with a yearly budget of around EUR 10 million through which the Finnish Government and ministries commission various types of studies, analyses and assessments to support policy preparation and decision-making.³⁸ The Government adopts annually a plan for analysis, assessment and research that steers research activities towards specific priority areas selected by the Government.

Within Government's analysis, assessment and research activity, the Finnish Government has taken into account the research needs that arise from the 2030 Agenda. Between 2017–2019, 187 research and analysis projects with a combined budget of EUR 28,4 million were carried out. Around half of these projects (92 projects with joint budget of EUR 14,8 million) were closely linked to sustainable development goal and sub-goals of the 2030 Agenda. Research and analysis projects were carried out related to each of the 17 2030 Agenda goals except for the goal 14 (Life below water) (Figure 17). Furthermore, it is worth to note that the linkages between the projects and particular 2030 Agenda sub-goals are in many cases relatively direct: 2/3 of the above mentioned projects link well or very well to concrete sub-goals of the 2030 Agenda.

³⁸ For further information on Government's analysis, assessment and research activity, see <https://tietokayttoon.fi/en/frontpage>

Figure 17. Research funding directed at the goals of the 2030 Agenda under Government's analysis, assessment and research activity (VN TEAS) between 2017–2019 (€).

The whole budget of the activity during this period was EUR 28,4 million.



Also the Government's analysis, assessment and research plan for 2020 which was adopted by the Government in December 2019 strongly embraces the perspective of sustainable development. The plan supports the implementation of the Government Programme of Prime Minister Marin, which is based on the objectives of social, economic and ecological sustainability. For instance, research needs related to carbon neutrality and securing biodiversity are strongly present in the plan: there are over 10 research needs related to these topics the joint budget of which are over two million euros.

8 Conclusions and next steps

This Voluntary National Review has described the work done and progress achieved in Finland during the last four years in the implementation on the 2030 Agenda. Key changes and lessons learned have been addressed in the beginning of each chapter, giving the reader an overview of most significant issues.

The preparation of this VNR is one milestone in the journey towards the year 2030 and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. Finland is committed to reaching the SDGs by 2030, and continues towards that aim, with coherent and inclusive approach.

Finland will report on national progress to the HLPF next time in 2025. Between 2020 and 2025, Finland will continue ambitious implementation of the 2030 Agenda, on the basis of the Government programme and the second national implementation plan that will be submitted to the Parliament later in 2020.

The Finnish Government will work on all SDG's, giving special attention to SDG's with specific national challenges. Finland will strive for carbon neutrality by 2035. This is an ambitious goal and requires significant transitions in the society that need to be achieved in a socially just manner.

The Government is planning to prepare a national roadmap of the 2030 Agenda that would extend over electoral periods up until 2030. This roadmap will support long-term planning and coherent policy making. At the moment, different ways of producing the roadmap are under consideration.

The Government continues focusing on achieving sustainable results in all its development policy priorities, and through all development cooperation modalities in 2020 and beyond. This includes continued support to the reform of the UN system for effective delivery of the 2030 Agenda. The Government is preparing a long-term national roadmap for increasing Finland's Official Development Aid to 0,7% of GNI.

In its efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and reach all SDGs, Finland will consider the levers and entry points of the Global Sustainable Development Report, as well as calls to action presented in the GSDR. The Finnish Expert Panel for Sustainable Development has prepared a national toolkit to promote a systemic transformation towards sustainable development in Finland. The Government will take advantage of the analysis of the Expert Panel in the future development of national sustainability policies.

This report was finalized under exceptional circumstances. Corona pandemic has caused upheavals around the world. Finland, among others, has faced enormous challenges and the need for change of practices in the society. The corona pandemic has required changes to the short-term economic policy agenda of the Government, but the long-term challenges of the economy have not significantly changed. In this current situation, it is even more important to invest in employment actions, to promote the circular economy, to perform social- and healthcare reformation, to increase productivity and to limit expenditure growth. This should all happen as soon as possible after the acute crisis has subsided. Climate change continues, regardless of the current circumstances, and requires even more vigorous actions. At the same time, it is important to safeguard democracy, functioning of the rule of law and realization of human rights. The objectives of sustainable development, as well as long-term intergenerational thinking over parliamentary terms, will remain as the basis of Finnish sustainable well-being and at the heart of Finnish governmental work. Finland will keep carrying its global responsibility also during the times of crisis and supports long-term multilateral cooperation, fragile countries and vulnerable groups of people.

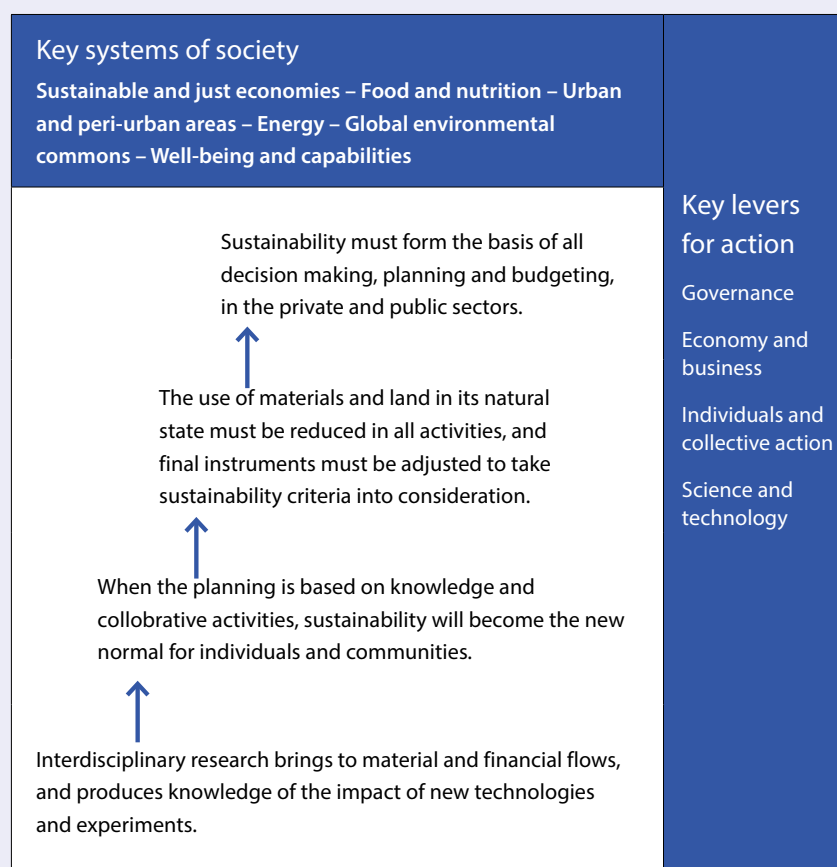
CASE: Six paths towards sustainability

text by Finnish Expert panel for Sustainable Development

The Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR 2019) shows that progress towards the goals of the 2030 Agenda is too slow. Development is usually steered by setting different goals. However, the world evolves through interconnected systems, human activities, and creative solutions. This is why finding interlinkages is the key instrument in the transformations. Following the GSDR 2019 the Finnish Expert Panel for Sustainable Development contends that the path towards sustainable development requires transformation in six systems and actions in four levers³⁹. ▶

Figure 18. Path towards sustainable development

Transformations needed in six systems and actions in four levers



39 For further reading: Six paths towards sustainability: a toolkit to promote a systemic transformation towards sustainable development in Finland. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-326-921-7>

Action points for key systems of society

Sustainable and just economies:

- lower taxes and subsidies for circulating and repairing services
- new indicators for measuring well-being
- sustainability criteria, new business models
- decreasing material intensive consumption; research for transparency of cash flows.

Food and nutrition

- refocusing public procurement, agricultural subsidies and taxation
- vegetarian-based business models; health as marketing aspect
- promotion of everyday food culture and seasonal diets; decreasing food waste
- research on multiple impacts of food production; food consumption behaviour and culture

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Energy

- subsidies for sustainable energy solutions and removal of barriers
- pricing of the energy services
- decreasing the carbon footprint of the individuals (consumption, and transport)
- technologies for carbon storage; promotion of wood construction

Urban and peri-urban areas

- sustainable use of the urban space and activities through Land-use and Building Act
- multi-purpose use of the existing resources; sharing economy and circular economy
- solutions for community-based living, transportation and spare-time
- knowledge-based urban planning and land-use

Global environmental commons

- land-use planning and governance safeguarding nature areas; compensation mechanisms
- inclusion of externalities to market prices
- landowners providing compensation services
- regional analysis of land-use changes

Well-being and capabilities

- systemic thinking and imaginary skills; co-creation forums
- innovative and engaging economy; media supporting well-being
- co-creating nature connections; trust building through community-based activities
- interdisciplinary research to support ●

9 Annexes

Statistical Annex, Voluntary National Review of Finland on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

State of the Sustainable Development in Finland (based on national indicators)



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