

21st ESDN Workshop

Halfway to 2030, the EU VR 2023 & CSOs' engagement

Bernhard Zlanabitnig

REAL DEAL

RESHAPING CITIZENS'
DELIBERATION FOR THE
EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL



EEB

European
Environmental
Bureau



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101037071

THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU

A better future where people and nature thrive together

- Europe's largest network of environmental citizens' organisations
- 180+ civil society organisations...** including a growing number of **European networks**
- from **38+ European countries**



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SDG Watch Europe is an EU-level, **cross-sectoral CSO alliance** of NGOs from development, environment, social, human rights and other sectors.

Its goal is to **hold governments to account** for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs).



<https://www.sdgwatcheurope.org/>

Some demands



- Implement the '**whole of government**' approach to the SDGs
- **Mainstream** Sustainable Development at every stage of the policy development process
- The EU VR - an **opportunity** for meaningful monitoring and review of progress incl **stakeholder** engagement
- Pursue a beyond GDP Strategy and a wellbeing economy

Snapshot of some activities

- Reaction to the EC Staff Working Document on implementation of the SDGs
- Conference on the Future of Europe
- EP- SDG Alliance
- EP Reports



What is REAL DEAL?

- Real Deal is a Horizon 2020 project focused on **citizens participation and deliberative democracy around the EGD**

Consortium:



- **Researchers and practitioners of deliberative democracy:** transdisciplinary sustainability studies, participatory democracy, environmental laws, gender studies and ecofeminism, ethics and responsible innovation, urban planning and geography.



- Some of the **EU largest civil society networks** advocating on environment, climate, sustainable development, local democracy and European movement.



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REAL DEAL in a nutshell

Develop, test and validate innovative formats and tools to propel deliberative democracy to the next level...

... in **13 countries** through **in-person processes**, **3 pan-European formats** as well as **digital deliberation** open to all across the region through the online platform www.realdeal.eu.

Joint ownership over the crucial transformation to a carbon-neutral society by a wide range of stakeholders and citizens.



REAL DEAL Community: CSOs forum

1. Civil Society Forum for Sustainability: Shaping the European Green Deal

to deliberate about how different groups with different interests and concerns can collaborate to achieve the goals of the EGD and produce relevant outputs on the topics



2. Build a **network of policymakers** in support of deliberative and participatory democracy

3. Initiate a Citizen Deliberation **Academy** for mutual learning and training

4. A massive **outreach campaign** across the EU designed to reach millions of citizens

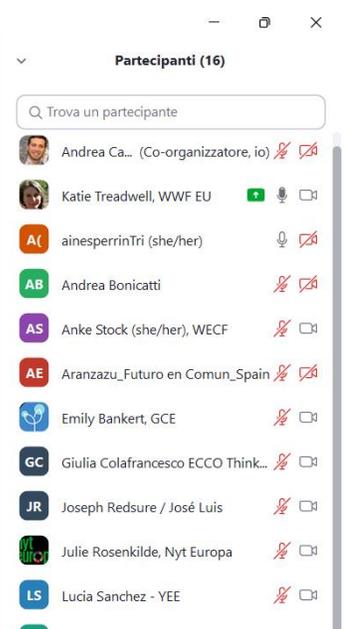
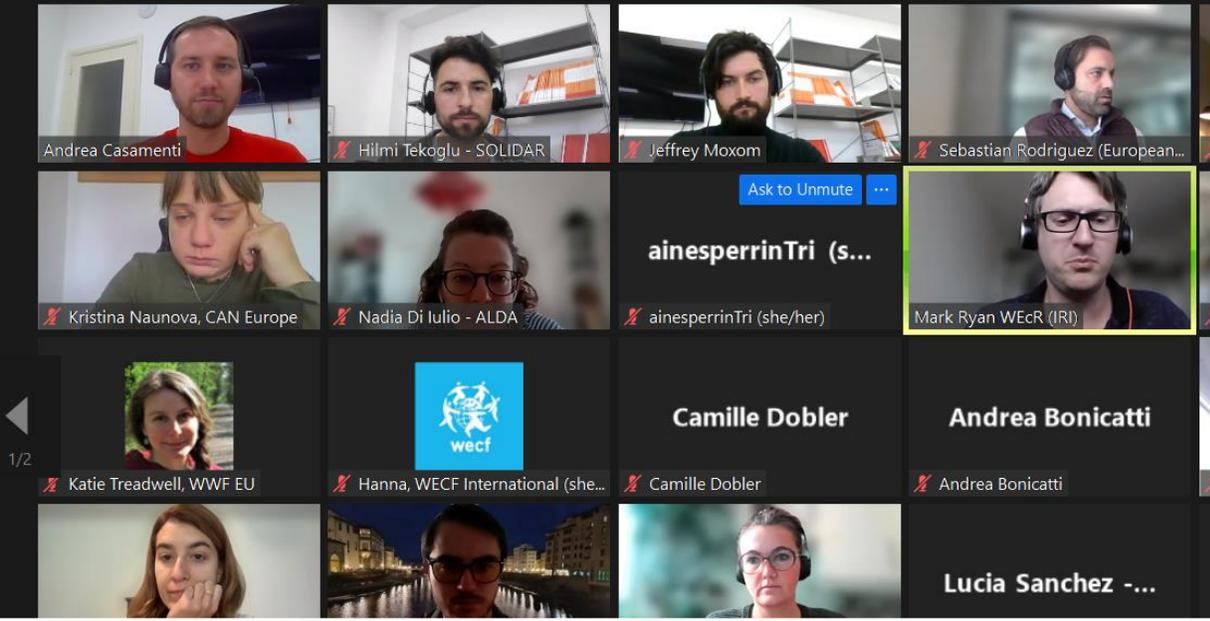


What challenges?

- Present low levels of trust in institutions and policymakers
- Inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised categories of the population
- Inclusion of future generations?
- What about the impacts on other countries beyond Europe?
- Going beyond a tick box exercise – ensuring participation that is truly meaningful

>>>> EU – Voluntary Review





Transition Platform



The Just Transition Platform assists EU countries and regions with the just transition. It consists of a single access point and helpdesk. It provides comprehensive technical and advisory support. Authorities and beneficiaries can access it to find all they need to know about the funds,

From Jeffrey Moxom to everyone: Dear participants, the breakout rooms will be open until 11h10, when we will return to plenary, thank you!

2nd CSO Form for Sustainability All changes saved!

European Climate Pact - Group 2 - Facilitator: Nadia

What is one positive thing that you would highlight from the process? Add your sticky notes! :)

Did you find an idea that you are really fond of? Then give it a star! The top 3 ideas will be shared in plenary!

Participation evaluation wheel

Fairness

Accountability

Nadia - ALDA (Visiting Ram)

REAL DEAL





Constantinos Machairas, European Climate Pact Country Coordinator for Greece, Jutta Urpilainen and Bernhard Zlanabitnig, Vice-President of the European Environmental Bureau (from left to right)

PRESS RELEASE



SDGs: EU Voluntary Review does not support rhetoric of transformative and participatory change

🕒 15 May 2023

CSO Forum and EU VR 2023

- Serving as the first ever Europe-wide Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the **European Voluntary Review** (EU VR) would have the potential to spark a bold political reset of the SDG Agenda. However, the report published last week by the European Commission does not go far enough in its content or process, with **civil society organisations and citizens left out in the cold** as the report was drafted.
- Implementation of the SDGs has been lagging behind, and in key areas such as reducing poverty, tackling inequalities, and addressing the triple crises of **climate, biodiversity and pollution, progress is going backwards**. The Voluntary Review, which merely assesses what the EU has done so far and promotes its flagship policies, **lacks any real vision** for structural changes, nor does it provide an action plan at EU level to address gaps and challenges identified by civil society organisations on SDG implementation.



CSO Forum and EU VR 2023

- The EU VR process should be an **honest and forward-looking stock taking**, as well as a steppingstone to an **overarching strategy** on the SDGs, complete with a fully **financed action plan**. As of now, it is not clear how Europe intends to make structural changes in areas where the data shows regression, and particularly where we see negative external impacts of Europe's policies on the rest of the world.
- Deficiencies in implementing the SDGs are **structural** in nature, and the EU must assume a leadership role in tackling **root causes** and transforming the current **economic system**.
- The only way to achieve the SDGs is by pursuing systemic and coherent change towards a post-growth future that values **biocapacity, equality, and the well-being** of both people and the planet while creating a thriving and peaceful future that operates within the limits of our planet's resources.



CSO Forum and EU VR 2023

- A key demand of civil society organisations was that the European Voluntary Review be an **inclusive** best practice in participatory governance which promotes and secures the genuine involvement of citizens and civil society, as many EU Member States had successfully done when conducting their own Voluntary Reviews. Despite a commendable effort from the European Economic and Social Committee to lead a [stakeholder consultation](#), the EU did **not succeed in properly consulting** citizens during the first ever European wide review of the SDGs. Nor did it reach out to NGOs beyond Europe to hear how the EU's policies are affecting them.



CSO Forum and EU VR 2023

- With only **seven years left** to achieve the SDGs, the role of the incoming **European Commission in 2024** will be instrumental in the success of Agenda 2030.
- **Stagnation in the face of multiple** crisis (triple planetary crisis-Covid-war/energy/inflation-data-future ones)
- The lack of consultation with civil society in the preparation of the EU Voluntary Review is **deeply disappointing**. Article 11 TEU places an obligation on EU institutions to consult with CSOs to ensure open, participatory, and inclusive multi-stakeholder approaches, and the SDG agenda itself contains strong commitments to involving civil society and other key stakeholders in its implementation.
- Missing **data availability**

>>>> Reaction of EC's SecGen



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**The SDG Watch Europe
Spotlight Report aligned with
the five Ps of the preamble
of the 2030 Agenda (not out
yet!)**



**People-
to end poverty and
hunger, in all their
forms and dimensions,
and to ensure that all
human beings can
fulfil their potential in
dignity and equality
and in a healthy
environment.**

Create an **overarching EU strategy** with targets set to reach the SDGs in the EU and MS, with a holistic approach that brings together the **European pillar of social rights and the European Green Deal** and where all policies take into consideration the social and the climate impacts, including their gendered dimension.

Increase the **cooperation and coordination** among EU countries on **social policies** as well as meaningful participation and active engagement of civil society at European and national level.

Put in place targeted policies and initiatives to **address poverty inequalities with a specific focus on people in vulnerable situations, in particular women, children and young people**, investing in formal and non-formal **education and healthcare**, and addressing the root causes of poverty such as the inequitable distribution of **unpaid care work**, inequalities and discrimination.

Collect **intersectional gender disaggregated data** and implement **gender mainstreaming** in EU policies to move away from siloed approaches.

**Prosperity-
to ensure that all
human beings can
enjoy prosperous and
fulfilling lives and that
economic, social and
technological
progress occurs in
harmony with nature.**

Wellbeing indicators developed to guide EU decision-making and track Member States' performance. EU governance and accountability should be improved to foster a sustainable transition towards a **Wellbeing Economy**.

Furthermore, legislation that enshrines the **rights of future generations** should be adopted.

Reform the EU economic system to go **beyond GDP**, replace the Stability and Growth Pact with a **Sustainability and Wellbeing Pact**.

<https://www.beyond-growth-2023.eu/>

<https://eeb.org/library/imagining-europe-beyond-growth-magazine/>

Care work disproportionately affects women and girls in all their diversity and make steps to alleviate this burden including **gender budgeting** and increased investment in social security.

Create fiscal space for **investing** in the **SDGs implementation** in particular strengthening social protection systems and the provision of essential infrastructure and social services. This should include an "*Excessive Emissions Procedure*", for member states that diverge from their NDC paths and a similar procedure for countries unable to meet *wellbeing targets*.

**Planet-
to protect the planet
from degradation,
including through
sustainable
consumption and
production,
sustainably
managing its natural
resources and
taking urgent action
on climate change,
so that it can
support the needs of
the present and
future generations.**

Change in course on climate change, biodiversity and the **EU's footprint** on the rest of the world.

Commit to reducing its **material consumption** by introducing a target for reduced material use of 70% across the whole of the EU by 2050.

Ensure a comprehensive response to the interlinked global crises that the EU faces today by renewing the commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation and achieving the European Green Deal to transition to a socially and environmentally just economy *that leaves no one behind*.

The EU should set up mechanisms to ensure it is a **global leader on sustainability** and to reduce its impacts on other countries through reducing consumption internally as well as stepping up to its **historic responsibility** and aid just **energy transition, climate mitigation and adaptation** both in its closest neighbourhood as well as the Global South.

**Peace-
to foster peaceful,
just and inclusive
societies which are
free from fear and
violence. There can
be no sustainable
development
without peace and
no peace without
sustainable
development.**

Overhaul of the global financial architecture, progressive reforms of multilateral development banks in order to adjust financial institutions' visions and operating models with a focus on strengthening the fight against poverty and rising inequality and promoting a green and just transition, including debt free monetary support, debt cancellation for low-income countries and long-term financial strategies.

We support proposals for redistribution and management of existing resources via a **global commons for all citizens**, favoring the reduction of the ecological footprint of the richest people in line with global environmental goals. Fiscal policies can be a powerful instrument to reduce social inequalities, eliminate discrimination and promote the transition to sustainable production and consumption patterns and should be leveraged as such.

Global feminist wellbeing economy, that places people over profit, prioritises an economy of care, and respects planetary boundaries. Governments should prioritize investments in health, social care, universal public services and housing, ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development that is aligned with our sustainability commitments under the SDGs, the European Green Deal, and the Paris Agreement.

**Partnership-
to mobilize the
means required to
implement this
Agenda through a
revitalised Global
Partnership for
Sustainable
Development, based
on a spirit of
strengthened global
solidarity, focussed
in particular on the
needs of the poorest
and most vulnerable
and with the
participation of all
countries, all
stakeholders and all
people.**

Promote the active **participation** of all parts of society and social partners -enterprises, workers, researchers, consumers, communities and citizens and their organisations – in the green and just transition to ensure that no one is left behind; in particular, foster a more structured engagement of young people and youth organisations.

Promote **policy coherence** through an overarching strategy and a governance structure to enhance the implementation of agenda 2030.

Foster more structured engagement of civil society, e.g. via a forum or a revived multi stakeholder platform/**MSP**; ensure a more inclusive approach to partnerships including representation of the most deprived communities.

MSP chaired by the European Commission to ensure accountability and meaningful engagement of different stakeholders, in and outside the EU.

**#CLIMATE
OF CHANGE**

**Thank you for
your attention!**



EEB
European
Environmental
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 **DEAR**
DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION
AND AWARENESS RAISING
supporting global change



Co-funded by
the European Union

Vienna, 23. May 2023