

ESDNewsletter January 2019

This ESDNewsletter informs about the following topics and activities on sustainable development in Europe:

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- 16th ESDN Workshop, "Communication of Sustainable Development and the SDGs: Strategies and Good Practices" (Berlin, 19-20 November 2018)
 Workshop Report now available
- 4th ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit, 6-7 March 2019, Copenhagen Denmark "Budgeting for the SDGs"
- 17th ESDN Workshop, 23-24 May 2019, Berlin Germany "Populism and Sustainability Policy"
- European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) 2019, May 30th June 5th
- ESDN Annual Conference 2019, 30-31 October 2019, Helsinki Finland "Sustainable Europe Beyond 2020"
- News on the governance of sustainable development from European countries and the EU:
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 - Spain: Basque Country and Catalonia updates



- Basque Country Contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Parliament of Catalonia passes a motion to integrate the SDGs into its legislative actions

Other news:

- German Environment Agency (UBA) International UBA Conference "Raw materials & Environment 2019"
- Nordic Council of Ministers' New publication: Programme for Nordic Cooperation on the Environment and Climate 2019–2024
- Spring Campus Conference of the "University Alliance for Sustainability"
- UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development: 21-22 March 2019
- The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the UNFCCC: first global conference on synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change

New ESDN Quarterly Report on "Communicating Sustainable Development and the SDGs in Europe: Good practice examples from policy, academia, NGOs, and media"

The topic of this European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN) Quarterly Report (QR) is communication for sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It provides an overview of communication for sustainable development and how to focus communication campaigns to better and more effectively communicate sustainable development and the SDGs, as well as provides an overview of some good practice cases from the European national level in a few select European countries. This Report will also feature what other stakeholder groups, such as NGOs and journalists, are doing to also communicate sustainable development and the SDGs and what some important requirements are in being able to more compellingly communicate sustainable development and the SDGs to a myriad of stakeholder groups. This Quarterly Report also serves as a continuation of the ESDN's work on the topic of communication, which was started in the ESDN's Quarterly Report 44, published in April 2017.

The topic of communication for sustainable development and the SDGs was also the theme of the 16th ESDN Workshop, which took place in November 2018 and focused on communication and how to more effectively communicate the complex topic of sustainable development and the SDGs. The findings from the Workshop, which brought together 70 stakeholders and policymakers from 17 countries for 2 half-days of exchange and learning will, therefore, be addressed in this Report, as the many insights and good practice examples of communication for sustainable development and the SDGs that were gathered from these different stakeholder groups are very valuable.



Please find the new ESDN Quarterly Report here.

16th ESDN Workshop, "Communication of Sustainable Development and the SDGs: Strategies and Good Practices" (Berlin, 19-20 November 2018) – Workshop Report now available

This ESDN Workshop Report provides information and documentation of the inputs, discussions, and outcomes of the 16th ESDN Workshop, entitled "Communication of Sustainable Development and the SDGs: Strategies and Good Practices", which took place in Berlin on 19-20 November 2018, in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety.

The main goal of this Workshop was to learn about, and share the experiences, of different stakeholders regarding the role of communication in the implementation of sustainable development, in general, and the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, in particular. The topic of communication with regard to sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs is important, because sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda need to be embraced not only by policymakers and experts in the field, but also by all the different stakeholder groups within society, in order to achieve the objectives of the SDGs in practice. However, the 17 SDGs and their specific targets are still mostly known by only relatively small groups of people. Therefore, the Workshop looked into the needs for successfully communicating sustainable development and the SDGs by highlighting good practice examples of communication strategies and reflecting upon the future needs of being able to better communicate sustainable development and the SDGs.

The experience sharing and learning from this Workshop was done through a mixture of keynote speakers, who delivered presentations of practical examples from academia, national policymakers, NGOs and journalists about their communication efforts regarding the SDGs, as well as through interactive group sessions, which brought together these diverse societal actors.

Please find the full report here.

4th ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit, 6-7 March 2019, Copenhagen Denmark - "Budgeting for the SDGs"

The 4th ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit, in cooperation with the Nordic Council of Ministers, will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark on 6-7 March 2019. The topic of this year's Peer Learning Platform and Visit is: *Budgeting for the SDGs*.

Some of the main subtopics that will be addressed during the Platform and Visit are:

 How to foster interministerial collaboration in the budgeting process (budgeting for the SDGs as an instrument for policy coherence);



- Budgeting for the SDGs as an ex-ante instrument for National Parliaments to assess the budget proposal;
- How to avoid "SDG washing" by putting the SDG logo on budget proposals, or by only generally referring to the SDGs; and
- Budgeting for the SDGs: Developing impact assessments as a planning and monitoring tool for budgeting/investing/spending/financing/regulation.

The Platform and Visit will bring together about 40-50 policymakers from across Europe to exchange good practice cases and experiences with budgeting for the SDGs.

<u>17th ESDN Workshop, 23-24 May 2019, Berlin Germany – "Populism and Sustainability Policy"</u>

The 17th ESDN Workshop will focus on the topic of *Populism and Sustainability Policy*, and how the rise of right-wing populism impacts policies that support sustainability. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) 2019, May 30th – June 5th

The ESDW will be organized for the fifth time this year! The ESDW 2019 will take place from May 30th to June 5th 2019. The launch of the ESDW website for event registrations will be in early March 2019! Everyone is encouraged to develop and register events that pertain to the SDGs! More information will follow soon! In the meantime, please visit the ESDW website at https://www.esdw.eu/ to browse activities that took place last year or access the archive for activities from previous years.

<u>ESDN Annual Conference 2019, 30-31 October 2019, Helsinki Finland – "Sustainable Europe Beyond 2020"</u>

The ESDN Annual Conference 2019, "Sustainable Europe Beyond 2020", will take place on October 30-31, 2019 in Helsinki and will be an official event of the incoming Finnish EU Presidency! More in-depth topics and a draft agenda will be announced in the coming weeks.

News on the governance of sustainable development from various European countries and the EU:

Belgium: The Federal Institute for Sustainable Development (FIDO/IFDD) launches their Toolbox Human Rights

This toolbox bundles the most important human rights conventions and regulations into one comprehensive website. This website aims to help companies, organisations and their stakeholders to easily align their policies/practices in order to prevent the violation of human rights and promote respect for human rights in all their activities. The website offers hands-



on online tools for companies to help them comply with their human rights obligations. The website is easily accessible for everyone.

Belgium places great importance on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That is why Belgium wants to help its organisations - both public institutions and private companies - to embed these international agreements in their activities – in-land and abroad.

This project is part of the National Action Plan 'Business and Human Rights' that was approved by the government in July 2017. This toolbox is a collaboration between experts from the University of Antwerp and IPIS research with valuable contributions from Belgian stakeholders.

Finland: Launch of the Commitment2050 Service and the Sitra Lifestyle Test

The national launch campaign for the Commitment2050 service was occurred on December 2018, and it was visible to citizens via digital channels and social media, as well as in street advertising. In addition to the citizens' campaign, companies, cities and other organizations are also encouraged to participate in making a personal commitment.

In an effort to more actively engage with Finnish citizens, The Prime Minister's Office announced the release of the Commitment2050 service for citizens at the Prime Minister's "Finnish Climate Actions" discussion. Using the service, anyone who wishes can draw up a personal plan and commit to reducing their carbon footprint. In the background of the unique new service is the online Sitra Lifestyle Test, which has already been completed more than half a million times. The Service is also available in English.

The Commitment2050 service and the Lifestyle Test calculates a user's carbon footprint and points them towards everyday actions that are specifically tailored to their needs. The 100 different actions in the service help users to reduce their carbon footprint one step at a time. Users can select the actions they are prepared to commit to. A similar service offering people tailored advice on halving their carbon footprints is not yet available in other countries.

Users can find inspiration for a more sustainable everyday life by looking at other Finns' plans. Users can also post their commitment on the service, share it on social media, and inspire others to get involved. Commitments can also always be updated, and the service can be set to remind users about the progress of their actions. For those users worried about anonymity, the service allows users to make commitments using a pseudonym.

France: Elaboration of the French SDG roadmap and new SD indicators

The elaboration of the French SDG roadmap has come to a first step, with a draft roadmap that has been discussed at the high-level steering committee on the 11th of January 2019.

More than 300 people from the civil society have participated in more than 20 working groups, some of them meeting several times since September 2018, with discussions covering the



2030 vision, priorities for each SDG, stakeholders involvement and implementation leverages and follow up; the works will continue according to the direction given by the high-level steering committee, with a broad concertation workshop at the beginning of April 2019 and a citizen consultation in the follow up. The ambition is to adopt the SDGs roadmap for the chiefs of State High Level Political Forum of September 2019.

Additionally in France, the set of the 98 French SDGs indicators has been officially published by the National council for statistical information (CNIS) and can be accessed on the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE).

Germany: Update of the German Strategy for Sustainable Development and the 2018 Indicator Report

On 7 November 2018, the Federal Cabinet has adopted an Update of the German Strategy for Sustainable Development (currently only available in German). As part of the update, new indicators have been introduced. For example, private and public spending on research and development is to rise to a minimum of 3.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2025. Two new indicators have been set to ensure that sustainability is a criterion being taken into account in public procurement. The percentage of total paper consumption of the federal administration accounted for by paper bearing the "blue angel" quality seal is to rise to 95% by 2020, and CO2 emissions generated by customary vehicles belonging to the public sector are to be reduced significantly.

The strategy also lays out newly worded principles for sustainable development, which replace the management regulations formerly in place. The six principles can be summed up as follows:

- 1. Adopt sustainable development as a guiding principle at all times and in all areas
- 2. Accept global responsibility
- 3. Strengthen the natural resource base on which life depends
- 4. Strengthen sustainable economic activity
- 5. Preserve and enhance social cohesion in an open society
- 6. Use education, science and research, and innovation as drivers of sustainable development.

In addition, a new mechanism has been introduced to address off-track-indicators. Based on the most recent indicator report (published on 6 December 2018 and currently only available in German), new measures are to be developed addressing those targets, which are likely to be missed.

All federal ministries were involved in elaborating the updated strategy within the framework of the State Secretaries' Committee for Sustainable Development, chaired by the Head of the Federal Chancellery. Comments submitted by members of the general public during an online consultation process in June 2018 were also incorporated, as were comments emerging from



the annual Sustainability Forum held in June 2018. Every year the Federal Chancellery hosts this forum, which is attended by major stakeholders in the sustainability sector.

The next complete revision of the Strategy is scheduled for 2020.

Germany: "Sustainability policy is a form of modernisation policy" report published by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy

This is a report (available in English) published by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy in October 2018. It is accounting for its implementation of the German Sustainable Development Strategy. The report is a very interesting example about how a sectoral government ministry contributed to the implementation of the national SD strategy and the great variety of action and activities this involves.

Greece: Planned activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD and the SDGs

Greece places particular emphasis on achieving sustainable development and is strongly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, as they provide an ambitious, visionary and transformative framework for a new, equitable and sustainable development path. Ensuring that "no one is left behind", including in education, is a high political priority for Greece, as the country is now exiting a period of prolonged economic crisis (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/greece).

The <u>National Growth Strategy of Greece</u>, which was adopted in May 2018, is in line with the overall themes and provisions of the SDGs.

In July 2018, Greece presented its first <u>Voluntary National Review</u> (VNR) at the 2018 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable development (HLPF). This VNR report covers all 17 SDGs through eight National Priorities for adapting the SDGs to national needs and circumstances, also in line with the above-mentioned National Growth Strategy. These eight overarching National Priorities have been defined, through an open dialogue within all government units and with a wide array of stakeholders, and by an in-depth mapping exercise carried out in 2017.

Apart from the full VNR report, additional information on the Greek presentation at the HLPF is available here.

Following the compilation of the VNR comprehensive report, a process that will lead to the elaboration of a National Implementation Plan for the SDGs, in 2019, is currently being launched. This National Implementation Plan is expected to be aligned with the provisions of the National Growth Strategy and will aim to promote cross-sectoral approaches and actions among line Ministries.



Moreover, in 2019, emphasis will also be given to strengthening the involvement of the Hellenic Parliament in terms of follow up of the implementation of the SDGs in Greece, by providing reviews and political guidance with the overall aim to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development and integrate the SDGs further in legislative work.

<u>Malta</u>: "Sustainable Development Vision for 2050" and the "Sustainable Development Annual Report 2017"

Malta's <u>Sustainable Development Vision for 2050</u> is ambitious in both scope and intent. It sets out a long-term framework for advancing sustainable development in Malta whilst taking into consideration past shortcomings and achievements. The focus is on identifying existing gaps where further development is required and setting out realistic goals to address these challenges. It also takes into account developments at international and EU level.

Sustainable Development Annual Report 2017, published in June 2018 and only recently tabled by Parliament, provides insights into the range of policy measures and actions taken by the Government in 2017 to roll-out and implement EU and internationally agreed commitments for Sustainable Development at the national level. It takes into account all three dimensions of sustainable development, including the growth strategy, social agenda, Malta's energy and climate goals, environmental ambitions, as well as the country's research and innovation initiatives.

<u>Slovakia</u>: Drafting the "Vision and National Development Strategy of Slovakia until 2030"

<u>National priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda</u>, which was adopted in June 2018, defined six national priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in a broad stakeholder participation process in Slovakia.

Slovakia presented its first <u>Voluntary National Review</u> (VNR) at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2018 on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Currently, the Government is in the process of drafting the *Vision and National Development Strategy of Slovakia until 2030*, which is due to be prepared by April 2019. The major development strategy aims to define development priorities, goals and necessary action until 2030, in line with the 2030 Agenda. The next step will be to update sectoral strategies and Slovakia's National Investment Plan accordingly.

Additionally, a micro grant scheme is being developed, which should promote the SDGs by raising awareness and supporting individual action and engagement.

Spain: Basque Country and Catalonia updates

Basque Country Contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



The Basque Country has published an informative <u>brochure</u> of the Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030.

There has been a contribution by the <u>Basque Network of Municipalities for Sustainability</u> to the Sustainable Development Goals. On the basis of the framework agreements which the Basque Declaration considers as references, 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, this report presents and analyses the contribution by Basque municipalities to each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in order to identify the new challenges posed by 2030 Agenda through its Goals and Targets for the sustainability policies of Basque municipalities.

The first Monitoring Report of the Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030 is currently near completion. This document will be available in the near future.

The Basque Country is also continuing its pursuit of training on sustainable development. They have launched the second edition of the online training program, entitled "Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations: how to implement them in public policies", for the officers of the Basque public administrations consisting of 3 training modules, through the Basque Institute of Public Administration. The goal is to provide them with the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to include the perspective of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the public policies of the Basque Country.

Within the framework of the summer courses that are organized annually at the University of the Basque Country, a proposal has been launched to create a Summer School with the title "2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Making our public policies more efficient" targeted to people from public administrations and key agents in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, giving more thought to the challenges that this poses for the design and execution of public policies. The course will last one day and a half.

The Basque Country is working on the possibility of training senior officials of the Basque Government in the Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030 and on the new challenges it poses in the design and execution of public policies in order to include the perspective of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and for its correct dissemination and "appropriation", as an instrument of improvement public policies.

Other examples of what the Basque Country is undertaking to support the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are as follows:

- In May 2018, a Basque institution launched the first issuance of this type of bonds. The
 Sustainable bonds are used to finance programs that address the social and
 environmental challenges of Euskadi Basque Country. In addition, it validates that the
 eligible categories and target populations are aligned with the principles of green and
 social bonds.
- The 2050 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY (SDG 13) is a planning instrument that will lead the actions of Euskadi Basque Country up to the 2050 horizon, with intermediate objectives for 2020 and 2030, both to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



- The EUSKADI PLATFORM AGAINST FOOD WASTE is intended to be a forum for the exchange of opinions in which institutions, organizations, associations, entities, etc. will participate voluntarily and collaboratively, will join this initiative which aims to reduce the more than 350,000 tons of wasted food per year by half for the year 2030 and who have the capability (structural and/or functional) to intervene in the design and implementation of the actions that are proposed in the future Action Plan.
- BASQUE URBAN AGENDA (SDG 11): this is the roadmap to achieve inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and towns, where no one will be left behind. Shortcomings will be detected and proposals will be made to improve in fields such as housing, health, employment, energy or the necessary measures to reduce the risks derived from the effects of climate change or air quality.
- EUSKADI OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP (SDG 16): The "Open Government Partnership OGP" Network, an international reference whose purpose is to evaluate and develop mechanisms to encourage "more open, responsible and citizen-sensitive" governments, has selected Euskadi Basque Country as one of the 20 regions around the world that will participate in its Program for Local Governments. The candidature has been presented jointly by the Basque Government, the Provincial Governments of Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, and the City Councils of Vitoria-Gasteiz, Donostia-San Sebastián and Bilbao, and supported by Innobasque Basque Innovation Agency; Matia Fundazioa; Youth Council of Euskadi Basque Country EGK; and the Basque Association of Collaborative Law.
- Currently, the Basque Country is in the process of studying the viability of having a
 digital platform that would collect the process, work, actions and progress in achieving
 the SDGs in the Basque Country the Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030 to help
 store and manage the contents and actions of the Agenda Euskadi Basque Country
 2030 and the data associated with it. All of this is being done with the purpose of
 creating an agile space of synergies between all the agents: Public Administrations,
 University, Company and Citizenship in a personal way, or through associations,
 foundations, federations, etc.

Parliament of Catalonia passes a motion to integrate the SDGs into its legislative actions

The Parliament of Catalonia has passed a motion, in which it commits itself to integrating the 17 SDGs and the 169 corresponding targets from the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda into its legislative action. The Parliament will also create a working group within the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Institutional Relations and Transparency to study how the SDGs can be integrated and implemented in all parliamentary activities and to write a report on the conclusions to be monitored. Parliament will also ensure the promotion of the 2030 Agenda in all the international and European associations and working groups to which it belongs.

The motion also asks the Government to prioritise the 2030 Agenda in the development of all its policies and continue with the work of developing a plan for the 2030 Agenda while ensuring the transversal integration, development and defence of the rights of women and sexual and gender diversity, with the corresponding timetable, and to present a written report



to the Parliament during the second half of 2019 on the degree of fulfilment of the SDGs by means of the public policies of the Catalan Government (health, education and territory and environment, among others).

The motion also wants to see the development of a baseline document of a national agreement for the 2030 Agenda in Catalonia. Additionally, it should promote an alliance of public and private actors, which, after having adhered to the national agreement for the 2030 Agenda in Catalonia, contribute to bringing the SDGs to Catalonia through specific commitments. The Sustainable Development Advisory Council should also appear twice yearly in the Parliament to explain the attainment of the SDGs for the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, the motion should ensure periodic appearances by each of the regional ministers in each of the committees related to the SDGs (Institutional Affairs Committee; Economy and Finance Committee; Committee on Foreign Affairs, Institutional Relations and Transparency; Education Committee; Territory Committee; Environment and Sustainability Committee; Health Committee; Justice Committee; Knowledge and Enterprises Committee; and Employment, Social Affairs and Families Committee), in which stock is taken of the degree of attainment of the objectives that are relevant to them.

ESDN Country Profile information and updates

Please regularly check the Country Profiles on the ESDN homepage for information on national SD strategy and policy activities and regular updates!

Other news:

German Environment Agency (UBA) International UBA Conference "Raw materials & Environment 2019"

The German Environment Agency's International Conference "Raw Materials and Environment 2019" will take place on 19-20 February 2019 in Berlin.

Nordic Council of Ministers' new publication: Programme for Nordic Cooperation on the Environment and Climate 2019–2024

For many years, the Nordic countries have worked together successfully on the environment and climate, which has contributed to significant progress both in the Nordic Region and internationally. However, in recent years, the challenges we face have grown in size and quantity, making co-operation increasingly important.

Between 2019 and 2024, the Nordic countries will work together to bring about sustainable development in the Nordic Region, the EU, and internationally. Together, the countries will pursue the ambitious implementation of international agreements on the environment and climate - in particular the Paris Agreement - and work together to strengthen the EU's regulatory framework regarding the environment and climate.



The Nordic countries will continue to be front-runners in terms of bringing about change. Nordic co-operation on the environment and climate seeks to halt the loss of biodiversity and bring about the sustainable use of natural resources.

Download the report here.

Spring Campus Conference of the "University Alliance for Sustainability"

The Spring Campus Conference of the University Alliance for Sustainability will take place from **April 1-5, 2019** at Freie Universität Berlin. The conference will be on the topic: **Re:search. Re:act. Re:design. 'The Future is Now: Driving Sustainable Development'**. The Conference will focus on three key topics: **Energy, Food and Mobility**.

During the conference, innovative sustainability research and ESD teaching formats from various disciplines, facilitate interdisciplinary- and transdisciplinary exchange, and foster dialogue with representatives from politics and business will be presented. In this way, the Alliance hopes to contribute to spreading innovative ideas, interesting research, and sustainable campus solutions worldwide. Further information and a preliminary program of the Spring Campus Conference 2019 are available here.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the UNFCCC: first global conference on synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change

The conference will be one of several events on climate and sustainable development taking place in 2019. DESA announced the 2019 multi-stakeholder conference at the 24th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 24) to the UNFCCC, which is underway in Katowice, Poland, from 2-14 December 2018. The conference will aim to deliver a set of concrete recommendations for strengthening the interlinkages between the SDGs and climate action, and focus on promoting action around both agendas.

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa reflected, "Climate change and the SDGs are really one integral agenda." By working together, she said, DESA and the UNFCCC "are setting an example of the way the different entities can join forces.

The synergies conference will convene in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 4-6 March 2019. It will serve as the expert group meeting (EGM) on SDG 13 (climate action) ahead of that Goal's indepth review at the July 2019 session of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development: 21-22 March 2019

The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE region is taking place on 21-22 March 2019 at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG). Participation is open to government representatives and all relevant stakeholders.



The preliminary program is now available in English, French and Russian. Please register online. For more information, please visit the UNECE website.