





EUROPEAN UNION NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE **DEVELOPMENT GOALS:** Lessons learned for the Verkhovna Rada

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Since the legislative elections, the implementation of Agenda 2030 has gained political attention in Ukraine. On September 30th, 2019 the President of Ukraine issued the Decree # 722/2019 on Sustainable Development Goals for Ukraine until 2030. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) has shown some commitment to Agenda 2030 by organising a roundtable in May 2019 on its role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is in this context and in the framework of the EU-UNDP Parliamentary Reform Project (PRP) that the consultant, was tasked to conduct a study on the role and practice of the European Union (EU) national parliaments in implementation of Agenda 2030 and achieving SDGs. The overall objective of the assignment is to draft recommendations on strengthening the VRU's legislative and oversight capacity and role in implementation of Sustainable Development Goals for Ukraine using some lessons learned from EU national parliaments.

The EU-UNDP Parliamentary Reform Project (PRP) is aimed at strengthening the functioning of the Ukrainian Parliament, the VRU, its working bodies, MPs and Secretariat, to become a progressively more effective, accountable and transparent institution in carrying out its constitutional responsibilities of legislation, oversight, and representation with positive influence on the overall process of EU-Ukraine Association Agreement implementation.

The first part of the study provides a brief background of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs globally and within the EU. The second part of the study discusses the institutional architecture established by EU national parliaments to play an active role in the delivery of the SDGs. Based on the review of the constitutional functions of parliament (law making, oversight, budget and representation), the study considers what approaches EU national parliaments have taken to mainstream Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Finally, the study provides an overview of the national context related to the SDGs in Ukraine, as well as some recommendations on the way forward for the VRU.



1. AGENDA 2030 AND THE SUSTAINABLE **DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly and binding for all 193 United Nations Member States in 2015, calls on all countries to transform our world and to 'achieve a better and more sustainable future for all' by 20301. It provides a common pathway for peace and prosperity for the people and the planet. This universal framework commits countries to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and 169 specific targets, for which the UN Statistical Commission later defined 230 indicators. These goals recognise the need for all countries- developing and developed- to come together in a global partnership to fight poverty, reduce inequalities and encourage social development and economic growth whilst protecting the environment and leaving no one behind.

EU AND THE SDGs

The SDGs have been considered by the European Union (EU) as more than just goals to aspire to but part of the core values that constitutes the EU. However, despite representing a corner stone of its union, some research suggests that the EU has not adequately played the leadership role, many UN member states were expecting from the EU, especially in the areas of external action and development cooperation². In an increasingly multipolar world, where multilateralism is threatened, European diplomacy and soft power³ are vital to uphold the values incorporated in the SDGs⁴.

¹ UN Resolution 70/1 adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

² SDSN and IEEP, 2019 Europe Sustainable Development Report: Towards a strategy for achieving the SDGs in the EU, Nov 2019.

³ Leonard M. and Shapiro, J., 'Empowering EU member states with strategic sovereignty', European Council on Foreign Relations.

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Eurostat⁵, the statistical office of the European Union, has been regularly monitoring the progress of EU countries towards the SDGs by developing a set of EU SDG indicators, following the implementation of this set of 100 indicators and reporting annually on its progress⁶. Eurostat has developed a series of tools, such as an online visualization tool to explore and evaluate SDG implementation in individual EU member states⁷, annual EU Commission country reports⁸ and graphs to compare individual countries⁹.

The EU's progress to achieving the SDGs is commendable in the fact that ten countries closest to achieving the SDGs are in the EU, as are sixteen of the top twenty countries. The EU member states obtain their best results on SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The EU is among the regions in the world where poverty and inequalities are the lowest. By contrast, the EU member states obtain their worst results on SDG 2 (No hunger and sustainable agriculture) and SDGs 12-15 related to responsible consumption and production, climate and biodiversity¹⁰.

However, to date none of the EU have achieved an index score of 100%¹¹. As noted by the authors of the *2019 Europe Sustainable Development Report*, achieving the SDGs in the EU will require deep transformations that will not be achieved through normal policymaking, but will require, at a minimum, a green deal for sustainable energy, circularity and land use, a sustainable investment plan and an investment in skills and innovation¹². This will require bold reforms at national and EU levels that systematically align the national member state and EU budgets with the SDGs, engage to adjust SDG policies at all levels, identify implementation challenges, and address bottlenecks and track progress consistently across all policy priorities¹³. This cannot and will not be achieved without the support from the European Parliament and all national parliaments in the EU. To date, the European Parliament has not been playing a lead role in mainstreaming the SDGs. Its response has been limited to passing resolutions in plenary in May 2016 and July 2017 and MEP attending the HLPF in 2017 and 2018. There have been attempts to mainstream the SDGs in its internal structures, including through establishing a system of focal point in each committee, but this has not materialized to date¹⁴.

⁵ For more information: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi

⁶ Eurostat, 'Sustainable development in the EU- Monitoring Report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context- 2019 edition': https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-statistical-books/-/KS-02-19-165

⁷ Eurostat, SDGs and Me: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/sdgs/

⁸ European Semester Country Reports, https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2020-european-semester-country-reports_en

⁹ Eurostat, SDG indicators goal by goal: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators

¹⁰ SDSN and IEEP, 2019 Europe Sustainable Development Report: Towards a strategy for achieving the SDGs in the EU, Nov 2019

¹¹ IBIDEM

¹² IBIDEM

¹³ IBIDEM

¹⁴ European Parliament, 'Europe's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: good practices and the way forward', February 2019

2. THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN MAINSTREAMING THE SDGs

The implementation of the SDGs is foremost the responsibility of the governments but, in order to be achieved by 2030, it requires the involvement of a range of stakeholders, including parliaments. Parliaments' are key actors and are in the unique position of representing various geographical areas, different social or ethnic groups, and diverse political viewpoints and traditions. Each of parliaments' core functions: representation, legislative, budgetary and oversight can be harnessed effectively towards supporting the implementation and realization of the SDGs. And the Agenda 2030 specifically acknowledge the role parliaments in the adoption and achievement of this global agenda:

'WE ACKNOWLEDGE ALSO THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS THROUGH THEIR ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION AND ADOPTION OF BUDGETS AND THEIR ROLE IN ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR COMMITMENTS'15.

Since the adoption of the Agenda 2030, some parliaments have made significant progress in mainstreaming the SDGs in their legislative, oversight and budgetary processes. Recognizing the valuable contribution, they have made to date in achieving the SDGs, EU member state parliaments have inspired other parliaments around the world.

The SDGs are a global agenda that require transposition into the national context. The SDGs, which recognise the responsibility of parliaments to monitor the fulfilment of the government's commitments to achieve the SDGs, have provided an opportunity for parliaments and members of parliament (MPs) to step up their commitment on issues that are crucial to sustainable development. Parliaments in the EU have started to make some progress, including organising debates on the 2030 Agenda, dealing with the 2030 Agenda in the work of existing committees or setting up new cross-sectoral committees focusing on SDGs¹⁶.

All SDGs are of importance to parliaments as they pass and amend legislation, approve budgets, and oversee the government in the implementation of laws and policies but two SDGs and three targets directly relate to parliament.

¹⁵ UN Resolution 70/1 adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

¹⁶ De Temmerman J., Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities, March 2019: http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-en.asp?FileID=27485&lang=en

Under SDG5 'Gender Equality', SDG target 5.5 aims to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life and indicator 5.5.1. assesses the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.

Goal 16 of the SDGs is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels. It is of cross-cutting nature as it is essential for achieving all other SDGs. Two targets of this Goal are directly linked to the level of openness, representativeness and responsiveness of Parliaments. SDG target 16.6 to 'develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels and SDG target 16.7 to 'ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels' and their indicators are of importance for parliaments. To achieve these targets, members of parliament will need to change the way the work, including through infusing a culture of openness in parliament and engagement with civil society and citizens at large. It also requires parliaments to improve the position and representation of women and marginalized groups in parliament.



About half of the EU parliaments have put specific institutional measures in place to effectively implement the SDGs. While some parliaments have taken institutional commitments to the SDGs that will facilitate the implementation of the SDGs, others have not taken any measures at all.

1. AWARENESS RAISING

Effective implementation of the SDGs requires the strengthening of capacities of all stakeholders in parliament, from the parliamentary leadership to staff, to ensure that there is a common understanding on the collective responsibility towards the 2030 Agenda.

Therefore, awareness and access to information are a first and essential step to ensuring parliamentary engagement with the SDGs. Awareness raising can be organised by the parliament through a multitude of ways, such as for instance the development of knowledge products and guides, the organisation of seminars, workshops and trainings, inviting experts and civil society organisations.



SWEDEN: RIKSDAG RAISING AWARENESS ON THE SDGs¹⁷

In Sweden, a seminar was arranged at the Riksdag to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda. The seminar was open both to politicians and to Riksdag staff. This is a simple yet effective way to inform parliamentary staff and parliamentarians about the SDGs.

¹⁷ IPU, Institutionalization of the Sustainable Development Goals in the work of parliaments, 2019

HUNGARY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S REGIONAL AWARENESS RAISING EVENT

In February 2017, the Hungarian National Assembly and the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) organized a regional seminar for the parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which discussed what parliaments can do to facilitate the national achievement of the SDGs. The event was attended by members of parliament from most countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

A very practical approach to raising awareness in parliament could be to identify how the SDGs can be mainstreamed in the operation of its facilities. By identifying the necessary steps required for compliance, it allows for parliamentarians and staff to raise awareness of the SDGs in a very concrete and practical manner.

SPAIN: MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE OPERATIONS OF ITS FACILITIES

Since 2015, the Congress of Deputies has been maintaining a firm commitment to improving savings, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability in the operation of its facilities thereby concretely contributing to SDG 7¹⁸.

2. ADOPTION OF POLITICAL DECLARATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

By adopting declarations and resolutions, parliaments have the ability to commit themselves to taking the necessary action to ensure the achievement of the SDGs in their countries¹⁹. These declarations and resolutions are important to highlight the political will behind the SDGs as it shows that the SDGs are considered a cross-party political priority for the parliament.

SPAIN: ADOPTION OF A MOTION TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL SDG STRATEGY20

On December 12th, 2017 the Congress of Deputies approved a non-legislative motion 161/001253 for political guidance from the Government in defining the national strategy to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. This motion provided guidance to the Spanish government on three particular aspects: 1) the institutional structure and parliamentary position required in Spain to achieve the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development; 2) the priorities regarding the SDGs and their different targets to achieve the 2030 Agenda; 3) material, financial, and human resources required to implement the 2030 Agenda.

3. ADOPTING A CROSS-SECTORAL APPROACH TO THE SDGS

Like governments, parliaments tend to operate in a compartmentalised manner²¹. For instance matters related to education (or SDG 4 related to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all) will be dealt with by an education committee, whilst issues related to climate change (or SDG 13 urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts) will be dealt with by the committee in charge of the environment. However, the SDGs require a cross-sectoral approach, in which the SDGs cannot be treated in individual silos but are interconnected and need to be considered in a holistic manner. As stated in Agenda 2030 'the 17 SDGs are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental"²². For example, environmental issues have no fewer than six goals, which primarily focus on environmental sustainability and are interconnected with to other SDGs.

¹⁹ The EU Commission has communicated its priorities regarding the SDGs in all EU languages:
https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/international-strategies/sustainable-development-goals_en but there is no repository of the SDGs in all EU languages.

²⁰ Spain, 2018, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/203295182018 VNR Report Spain EN ddghpbrgsp.pdf

²¹ De Temmerman J., Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities, March 2019

²² UN Resolution 70/1 adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Taken together, they can incite consideration as to how, between goals, environmental dimensions interact with each other, and with social and economic dimensions and governance aspects²³. This is the reason why one SDG might need to be dealt with by several committees rather than in isolation. The so-called concept of SDG 16 plus²⁴ is of particular importance in this regard. This concept stresses the role of SDG16 in enabling the entire 2030 Agenda and the key importance of partnerships for the achievement of the goals.

Coordination between different committees and coherence in addressing the overarching issues of the SDGs are a real challenge for parliaments, especially when one SDG is being reviewed by several different committees simultaneously. This can also be a challenge at political party level, where issues also tend to be compartmentalised. Hence, there is a need to find within parliament, the appropriate formal or informal structure that allows for a holistic cross-sectoral approach. If well-coordinated, this structure offers opportunities for synergies and complementarity between the work of different committees and allows for all SDGs to be considered with equal importance.

4. INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH

Identifying the appropriate institutional architecture to approach SDGs systematically throughout the parliamentary processes whilst quaranteeing coherence and continuity, is one of the initial steps required by parliament to mainstream the SDGs.

There are three main approaches that parliaments have taken in the European Union to institutionalise the implementation of SDGs in its processes.

CREATING NEW COMMITTEES OR EXPANDING THE MANDATE OF EXISTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

Some parliaments in the EU have created new committees or expanded the mandate of existing sustainable development committees with the aim to specifically monitor SDG implementation. These 'SDG committees' are always composed of different political factions. They either include new members or bring together members representing several existing key committees. There are some very clear advantages of establishing a specific 'SDG committee' in parliament. First of all, establishing such a committee, can be considered an important political message on the importance of the SDGs within the parliament. Moreover, a specific committee provides a central focal point for all SDGs within the parliament, thereby centralising the tracking of the implementation of all SDGs. Given the cross-sectoral nature of the SDGs, it can allow for better coordination and communication with relevant committees.

²³ UN Environment Management Group Nexus Dialogue Series

²⁴ SDG 16 Plus: https://www.sdg16.plus/

LATVIA: PARLIAMENT'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION²⁵

The Saeima (Parliament's) Commission on Sustainable Development is an important driver of sustainable development. The Commission provides a public platform for reviewing proposals on promoting sustainable development. It promotes new policy initiatives by working with all stakeholders, highlighting their newest research and sharing international best practice. The Commission puts major sustainability challenges on the agenda. For example, in 2017, it highlighted the role of lifelong learning in the transformation of the economy, development of the Latvian innovation ecosystem and climate change policy.

GERMANY: PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PBNE)²⁶

In 2004, the German Bundestag created an Advisory Council on Sustainable Development, which adapted its mandate to include the SDGs in 2015. The Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development (PBnE), which is composed of 17 members and 17 substitutes, plays an important role at the interface between society and politics. It monitors the Federal Government's sustainable development policy in the German Bundestag.

Its activities are varied and included for instance the organisation of a plenary debate with a speech by the Federal Minister and Head of the Federal Chancellery Peter Altmaier on the German Sustainable Development Strategy and presentation of an opinion on the German Sustainable Development Strategy. During the 18th parliamentary term (2013-2017), the PBnE provided oversight over 800 proposals from the executive by holding hearings and, if necessary, formulating critical opinions to the lead committees and federal departments. The PBnE continues to oversee the Federal Government's sustainability impact assessments for laws and regulations.

MAINSTREAMING AGENDA 2030 INTO THE WORK OF ALL STANDING COMMITTEES

Most parliaments in the EU have mainstreamed the SDGs into work of existing committees or created sub-committees within existing committees. This institutional setup has the advantage of not needing to change the existing committee structure in terms of additional staff and funding. As the existing staff and MPs already have expertise on a particular issue, there is no need to provide additional expertise and training except for awareness raising on the linkages between the issues the committee is dealing with and the SDGs. This institutional arrangement allows for more in depth scrutiny on a particular SDG.

²⁵ Republic of Latvia, 2018, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN HighLevel Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19388Latvia Implementation of the SDGs.pdf

²⁶ German Sustainable Development Strategy, 2018 Update. For more information, visit: https://www.bundestag.de/nachhaltigkeit

However, working in silos also carries some risks related to coordination. Lack of coordination can lead to inconsistent laws and regulations that result in policy incoherence²⁷. Working through committees also does not allow to track overall progress on all SDGs in a holistic manner.



DENMARK: PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES28

The Danish Parliament normally works through thematic standing committees corresponding to the government's division of labour along ministerial line.

ESTABLISHING NETWORKS OR CAUCUSES

Finally, some parliaments in the EU have established informal mechanisms, such as an SDG network or SDG caucus. As achieving the SDGs requires concerted efforts, these cross-party networks or caucuses allow members of different political parties, but with a similar outlook on issues related to sustainable development, to join forces. They do not take part of formal parliamentary processes, which entails that it is easier for them to involve many different stakeholders and raise cross-party awareness on certain issues related to the SDGs.



FRANCE: 'ACCÉLÉRONS' PARLIAMENTARY GROUPING FOR ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION²⁹

The 'Accerlerons' parliamentary group was established in October 2018 and has currently 170 cross-party members of parliament. Its objectives are to share analysis and on key issues and initiate or support coalitions of innovative projects. The initiative 'does not aim to erase political differences but to build bridges, to coordinate efforts to do more and better'.

Some of their successes in 2019 include: an increase of 40% for the heat fund, the creation of a mechanism of tax amortization for the investments made by the owners for the purchase of ships propelled with liquefied natural gas (LNG), hydrogen energy, the extension of the tax reduction planned for the provision of bicycles to employees of the company to the rental costs of fleet of bicycles.

²⁷ De Temmerman J., Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities, March 2019

²⁸ Denmark, 2017, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN HighLevel Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16013Denmark.pdf

²⁹ Accelerons website: http://www.acceleronslatransition.fr/



DENMARK: PARLIAMENT'S INTER-POLITICAL NETWORK FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SDGS (2030 NETWORK)30

The Folketing's Inter-political Network for the UN's SDGs is composed of approximately 50 members from all Danish political parties. The purpose of the 2030 Network is to promote the SDGs and monitor its implementation nationally and internationally by:

- Contributing to knowledge sharing and debate around the 2030 Agenda, thereby raising awareness of the SDGs to the Parliament and the public;
- Promote focus on the SDGs as a Danish priority through the work of the Parliament, the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council, IPU, various UN forums and other appropriate forums:
- Participate in regular dialogue with the Minister responsible for the Danish action plan for the SDGs and the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in general.

In June 2017, the 2030 Network established a 2030 Panel. The purpose of the 2030 Panel is to support the political work of the 2030 Network through analysis, knowledge sharing and meetings with the network on independent topics. The 2030 Panel can take independent initiatives and is not subject to political instruction by the Network. The panel consists of 21 strong profiles designated by the 2030 Network as representatives of key players in Danish society or by virtue of their personal capacity and knowledge of the implementation and fulfilment of the UN's global goals nationally and globally.

For more information on individual EU parliaments' institutional approach, please see annex 1.

5. PARLIAMENTARY PARTICIPATION IN SDG NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

Because of its role in adopting national development priorities and overseeing government policies, some parliaments have positioned themselves to play a key role as part of the national institutional arrangements. In some EU countries, parliamentarians lead the national coordination mechanism for the SDGs, whereas in other EU countries, they are part of the institutional arrangements as members or observers.

HUNGARY: THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (NCSD)31

The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) is a national institution, which was established by the Hungarian Parliament in October 2008. Its mission is to advise and oversee issues pertaining to sustainable development in Hungary independently from the executive, and enhance public understanding, engagement, and awareness. Since 2015, it has been responsible for overseeing the implementation of the SDGs and it acts as national coordinator for many initiatives, such as the European Sustainable Development Week for example.

It is chaired by the Speaker of the Parliament, and includes about 30 members drawn from political parties, academia, NGOs, the private sector, and civil society. It meets four times a year and is supported by a Secretariat and four working committees (the Strategic Working Committee, the Professional Coordination Working Committee, the Climate Working Committee, and the Health and Social Working Committee).

6. REPORTING OF THE SDGS

Thanks to their oversight role, the parliaments can monitor the reporting that government undertakes on the SDGs at national or international levels. At national level, parliaments review national reports on the implementation of the SDGs, including reports of independent bodies, such as Supreme Audit Institutions, NHRIs, etc. At the international level, reporting on the SDGs is done through the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) held yearly at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. The objective of the VNR is to review the progress that has been made towards meeting the SDGs at national level and identify the gaps that need additional attention.

³¹ UNDESA, 2018 Compendium of National Institutional Arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For more information: National Council for Sustainable Development in Hungary, The National Council for Sustainable Development: http://www.parlament.hu/web/ncsd/national-council-for-sustainable-development

Although the VNR process is mainly led by the executive, parliaments should be involved in this process.

- 'We also encourage Member States to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of
- progress at the national and subnational levels which are country-led and country-driven.
- \blacksquare National parliaments as well as other institutions can also support these processes 62 .
- This includes reviewing the VNR and providing recommendations, including members of parliament in the national delegation to the HLPF and discussing the HLPF conclusions and recommendations in parliament. Moreover, the parliament should collaborate with the government to report on the specific indicators.
- Until now, the participation of parliaments globally has been rather limited. In 2017, of the 44 countries, which submitted voluntary national reviews, only 13 parliaments had been involved to varying degrees in the drafting of those reviews, while only 3 had had the opportunity to review and comment on the national review produced by the government before it was finalised³³. However, as the VNR is not done on an annual basis, it is still recommended for parliaments to anchor an annual debate on the review of the SDGs in the national process.



GREECE: MONITORING OF SDG IMPLEMENTATION BY THE PARLIAMENT³⁴

In Greece, the Parliament is essential to overseeing implementation of the SDGs and integrating the 2030 Agenda within the legislative framework. Regular progress reports on the implementation of the SDGs are submitted to the Parliament for discussion and review in the context of joint meetings of parliamentary committees involving all political parties. The joint meetings discuss and examine all voluntary national reports submitted to the HLPF.



NETHERLANDS: PARLIAMENT'S OVERSIGHT ON SDG REPORTING³⁵

In 2017 and 2018, the Government of the Netherlands reported to Parliament on the SDGs. The Government has also reported on its attendance at United Nations meetings on the SDGs (for example the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2017). The SDGs are also included in the annual budget reports and in debates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

³² UN Resolution 70/1 adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

³³ De Temmerman J., Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities, March 2019

³⁴ Greece, 2018, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustain $able\ Development, New\ York\ \underline{https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19378Greece\ \ VNR\ \ \underline{Greece\ \ 2018\ \ pdf\ \ FINAL\ \ 140618.pdf}$

³⁵ IPU, Institutionalization of the Sustainable Development Goals in the work of parliaments, 2019



MAINSTREAMING THE SDGs INTO PARLIAMENTARY **PROCESSES**

Agenda 2030 brings a new focus to ensuring that parliaments are 'fit for purpose' for the role that they will need to play in ensuring that all citizens benefit from the implementation of the SDGs. Within the framework of the law and the constitution, all parliaments should be considering how they can mainstream the SDGs into parliamentary processes. The responsibility for this task rests with all members of parliament and with the senior members of the parliamentary administration.

1. THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

In order to successfully implement the SDGs, countries need to ensure that the legislative frameworks are in place. Whilst passing and amending legislation is not the only response needed from parliaments to effectively implement the SDGs, it is often the very first step.

IDENTIFYING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES RELATED TO SDGS AND SUBMIT DRAFT BILLS

Due to their power to introduce legislation in parliament, individual members of parliament can identify specific pieces of legislation related to the SDGs that need to be introduced as a priority. As the SDGs require quite a comprehensive set of legislative frameworks, parliamentarians are not necessarily equipped to undertake these reforms.

Hence, conducting a SDG Law Reform Assessment³⁶ to identify which targets require new laws or amendments; prioritize those law reform needs and amendments; and create a medium to longterm legislative reform agenda to guide the drafting and enactment of laws, might be a useful exercise for the parliament.

³⁶ UNDP, Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, 2017

Moreover, the process of identifying legislative priorities related to the SDGs can be used by members of parliament to raise awareness on particular issues the country is facing in the implementation of the SDGs or publicly promote an enabling environment that will guarantee that the SDG targets are met.



SWEDEN: ADOPTION OF LAWS RELATED TO THE SDGs³⁷

All laws adopted by the Swedish parliament directly or indirectly relate to the SDGs. An example of a law, which was adopted by the Swedish parliament and directly relate to SDG3, is the Health and Medical Services Act (2017:30). The Health and Medical Services Act stipulates that care needs to be delivered with respect to the equal value of all humans and the dignity of every individual. Gender-equal health has become one of the targets of the overall gender equality policy in Sweden.

ALIGNING LEGISLATION RELATED TO SDGS TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

When scrutinizing new legislation, the members of parliament have a duty to ensure that the legislation align with all national frameworks. This is also the case for specific legislation related to the SDGs. Verifying that these pieces of legislation conform to national development priorities and strategies of the government, is part of the role of members of parliament.

LITHUANIA: PASSING A NEW LEGISLATION PACKAGE ALIGNED WITH THE SDGs³⁸

The Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas) plays a key role in creating the legislative framework for the implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development. In 2017, the government of Lithuania carried out a comprehensive evaluation of national strategy's conformity with the SDGs. For instance, a legislative package adopted in 2017, called "A New Social Model" identified priority legislative measures for the implementation of Agenda 2030. Long term legislative measures, such as the revision of social allowances and pensions, the development of financial incentives and services for young families and families with small children, the improvement of access to medical care services and the improvement of taxation system aiming to facilitate growth, were adopted by parliament.

³⁷ Sweden, 2017, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16033Sweden.pdf

³⁸ UNDESA, Compendium of National Institutional Arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2018

CHECKING ALL LEGISLATION AGAINST SDGS

Introducing an SDG impact analysis to identify how the proposed draft law impacts the achievement of the SDGs, might be a useful step to undertake by parliament. Alternatively, environmental, socio-economic, and gender pre-legislative impact assessment, that are already in place, could identify some of the SDG-related gaps as well.

Proposed draft laws specifically dealing with issues related to the SDGs could explicitly identify which specific SDGs and their targets they support. This could be done through attaching an explanatory memorandum to the draft³⁹ or through an online system.

GERMANY'S NACHHALTIGKEITSPRUEFUNG

Using an online system (https://www.enap.bund.de), the parliament is able to check the effects of all draft laws on sustainability.

NETHERLANDS' SDG'S TEST⁴⁰

Launched in January 2019, the SDGs 'test' is an addition to Dutch policy making processes. Policy makers are asked to include an analysis of the effects of their new policy and law proposals on SDG implementation, developing countries and gender⁴¹. In 2016, the House of Representatives called on the government to introduce an SDG check. The government subsequently agreed to adapt its Integrated Assessment Framework for policy and legislation (the IAK) to accommodate the SDGs.

PARTICIPATORY LEGISLATION

In the law-making process, parliament should involve civil society organisations, citizens and other stakeholders 'leaving no one behind'⁴². Getting different inputs into the legislative process can be done through a myriad of different ways, online or through in-person engagement with committees.

The most common means of public engagement is through a public hearing. In a public hearing, a committee holds a formal meeting to which interested people, stakeholders, subject experts and

³⁹ UNDP, Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, 2017

⁴⁰ SDG Netherlands, 'New assessment framework helps civil servants make policy and legislation SDG-proof': https://www.sdgnederland.nl/nieuws/new-assessment-framework-helps-civil-servants-make-policy-legislation-sdg-proof/

⁴¹ SDG Watch Europe, Netherlands country page https://www.sdgwatcheurope.org/the-netherlands/

⁴² For more information: UNDP, 'What does it mean to leave no one behind?, 2018: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Sustainable%20Development/2030%20Agenda/Discussion Paper LNOB EN Ires.pdf

civil society are invited to provide oral and/or written submissions on specific aspects or the entire content of a draft law⁴³. The more recent trend of using technology to harness public intelligence and expertise to improve the quality of legislation (also known as crowdlaw)44, allow citizens to not only follow parliamentary discussions and submit questions and comments, but also to participate at different levels in the legislative process.

2. THE OVERSIGHT PROCESS: SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT INTERNATIONAL **COMMITMENTS**

Overseeing the executive on the implementation of the SDGs is without a doubt one of the central roles of the parliament to ensure effective delivery of the 2030 Agenda. However, the SDGs are longer-term and more transformative than the objectives usually pursued by most policy makers.

Therefore, they require a major overhaul in technologies and innovations in social mobilisation, politics, and governance and a far richer policy framework to set the transformations in motion⁴⁵.

Parliaments have the ability to play this transformative role when monitoring implementation of day-to-day policies of the government, by taking the strategic distance required to review the comprehensive long-term objectives of these policies. This role might compel parliamentarians to take a certain distance from political short-sightedness and look beyond an electoral cycle.

Parliaments in the EU have used different means at their disposal to monitor the government's implementation of the SDGs:

APPROVAL OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES

In most countries, national strategies require the approval of the parliament, as well as regular updates on its implementation. Some countries in the EU have developed specific strategies on the SDGs or linked their sustainable development strategies to the SDGs. These national frameworks enable the parliament to anchor the SDGs in national processes.

⁴³ UNDP, Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, 2017

⁴⁴ For more information, please visit: https://congress.crowd.law/files/crowdlaw-playbook.pdf

⁴⁵ SDSN and IEEP, 2019 Europe Sustainable Development Report: Towards a strategy for achieving the SDGs in the EU, Nov 2019.



Latvia 2030 is the country's main sustainable development strategy, identifying key economic and social priorities over 20 years. It was approved by the Parliament in 2010. The strategy lays out 7 priority areas, divided into 55 targets: development of culture space (SDG 4); investments in human capital (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 16, 17); change of paradigm in education (SDG 3, 4, 8); innovative and eco efficient economy (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17); nature as future capital (SDG 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17); perspective of spatial development (SDG 9, 11); innovative government and participation of the society (SDG 16, 17). All these priorities are individually connected to the SDGs by linking performance indicators defined in Latvia 2030 to each of 169 SDG targets⁴⁷. Once every 2 years, the government submits the Report on National Sustainable Development and Strategy Implementation Progress for review at the Saeima. On the basis of the Report, the Saeima may decide regarding certain changes in strategic tasks, such as for instance the establishment of the Commission of Sustainable Development.

PLENARY DEBATES ABOUT THE SDGS

Parliamentary debates give the opportunity to members of parliament to express their views on certain topics and voice the concerns of the party or of their constituents. These debates help parliamentarians to make informed decisions about a given subject⁴⁸. They are the most public forum of parliament, as they are often broadcasted or open to the public.

MALTA: YEARLY PLENARY DISCUSSIONS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT⁴⁹

Each year, the Maltese Parliament is required by law (Article 14 of the Sustainable Development Act⁵⁰) to discuss the Sustainable Development Annual Report presented by the Minister responsible for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change. It provides information about the work undertaken by the Government concerning sustainable development throughout, the previous year, the report also aims to enable all interesting stakeholders to gain a good understanding of how sustainable development is planned to be mainstreamed. The concept of sustainable development has been further elaborated in its sustainable development strategy, 'Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050'51, and linked to the SDGs.

⁴⁶ Parliament (Saeima) of the Republic of Latvia, 2010, Latvia 2030: Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030

⁴⁷ Latvia, 2018, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York $\underline{https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/Latvia\%20Implementation\%20of\%20the\%20SDG\%202018-single.pdf}$

⁴⁸ IPU, Institutionalization of the Sustainable Development Goals in the work of parliaments, 2019

⁴⁹ Republic of Malta, 2018, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20203Malta_VNR_Final.pdf

⁵⁰ Sustainable Development Act (10 July 2012): http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=11917&l=1

Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050' $\underline{https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MSDEC/Documents/Malta%27s\%20Sustainable%20Development%20Vision%2050.pdf}$

Question time constitutes an important aspect of government oversight and accountability. It allows parliamentarians to ask the government about its activities and policies⁵².

ORAL AND WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON THE SDGS ASKED IN EU PARLIAMENTS⁵³

Oral and written questions were quite frequent in some countries, such as Ireland, where 96 parliamentary questions (written and oral) had related to the SDGs between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2018. At the other end of the scale, in Finland, there had been only one such question in 2016 and another in 2017 (both oral).

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT

Parliamentary committees are the cornerstone of the work of parliament. They usually perform their oversight tasks by conducting inquiries and scrutinizing government.

Inquiries that are conducted by committees can be extremely powerful to raise awareness on the SDGs, especially when they conduct hearings and collect evidence of experts, civil society and citizens are large. The reports published by committees can be used in plenary to question government about particular aspects of the implementation of the SDGs under its international obligations.



UNITED KINGDOM: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE INOUIRY ON UK'S PROGRESS ON THE SDGS54

In December 2018, the International Development Committee launched an inquiry into the UK's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which was published in July 2019. This inquiry corresponded with the UK presentation of its VNR to the UN in July 2019, detailing the progress it had made towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This inquiry also followed another inquiry on the UK implementation of the SDGs made in June 2016 (and published in September 2016) by the International Development Committee. This inquiry also complemented another report published by the Environmental Audit Committee's scrutiny of domestic implementation. Written submissions and oral evidence were collected, and an evidence session organised, which was broadcasted. The Committee published a report with recommendations, which were reviewed and addressed by government.

⁵² IPU, Institutionalization of the Sustainable Development Goals in the work of parliaments, 2019

⁵⁴ For more information: https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees-a-z/commons-select/international-development-committee/inquiries/ parliament-2017/uk-progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals/

Through this inquiry, the International Development Committee identified 'serious failings' in the preparation and presentation of UK's first Voluntary National Review of progress towards the UN's SDGs, such as the fact that it has only committed to one VNR so far (whereas other countries have committed to two). Another drawback identified by the report was the fact that the UK, despite having 19 months to develop the VNR, squeezed the work in a short period of time, which resulted in very limited stakeholder engagement and ability to comment and influence the report.

Committees will focus in depth on specific SDGs that relate to their thematic priorities. Whilst their monitoring will be comprehensive on specific SDGs, they would not review all SDGs in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

POST LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY

Post legislative scrutiny is the parliamentary practice of overseeing the implementation of legislation against impact and legality. While in principle there may be benefits to carrying out Post-Legislative Scrutiny on most acts, a careful selection of legislation for review will be needed given the time and resources required to complete this exercise⁵⁵. The parliament could therefore for instance decide to scrutinize certain pieces of legislation that relate to specific SDGs and see whether the legislation is working out in practice, as intended. Understanding the effects of legislation may lead, via the identification of good practice, to better secondary legislation⁵⁶. It can also help parliaments and governments capture the impact of legislation on certain SDGs, which can be useful in the overall national or international reviews, such as the VNRs.

Post-legislative scrutiny is an interesting practice when linked to the SDGs as it allows for an opportunity to assess the impact of legislation on issues which cut across different acts⁵⁷. This allows, on the one hand, to take a holistic approach to the SDGs and link different SDGs, and, on the other hand, review what a specific act has had as impact on women and minority groups applying the principle of 'leaving no one behind'.

Post legislative scrutiny practices around the world recommend collecting views and information of a wide range of stakeholders⁵⁸. Within the framework of the SDGs, many parliaments, through committees or caucuses, have established channels or platforms of communication with a wide range of stakeholders, including statistics offices that can provide disaggregated data. Using these existing channels can be useful to undertake this exercise.

⁵⁵ De Vieze, F., 'Post Legislative Scrutiny: Guide for Parliaments', WFD, 2017: https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/WFD_Manual-on-Post-Legislative-Scrutiny.pdf

⁵⁶ Fitsilis F. and De Vrieze F., Parliamentary Oversight of Sustainable Development Goals and the Application of Post-Legislative Scrutiny Principle, Wroxton Working Paper, 2019

⁵⁸ Fitsilis F. and De Vrieze F., Parliamentary Oversight of Sustainable Development Goals and the Application of Post-Legislative Scrutiny Principle, Wroxton Working Paper, 2019

3. THE OVERSIGHT OF THE BUDGET

An adequate national budget and the need for budget adjustments are key components of the policy response needed to achieve Agenda 2030. If the SDGs are a priority for the government, they should be reflected in the country's budget. Once the SDGs are accounted for in the national budget, the ministries have the mandate to incur the costs to meet the targets set out within the SDGs, making it much easier for them to become realized and thereby enhancing the chances of successful implementation⁵⁹.

Parliaments' role in the budget process varies across EU parliaments in terms of its ability to influence the budget. In some countries, parliaments can only approve or reject the budget and in others, it can amend the budget draft law by reducing proposed budget allocation or moving funds across budget lines, without exceeding the overall budget ceiling. However, in order to play a greater role in the budget process, parliamentarians need to have a full understanding of how the national action plan to implement the SDGs impacts the national budget. In the budget process, parliaments have different tools at their disposal to influence the national budget.

BUDGET FORMULATION

Although the parliament does not have a formal role in the budget formulation, which is dealt with by the executive, it is nonetheless an important actor in advocating for certain budget priorities during the implementation of the previous budget and formulation of the current budget phases. Some parliaments hold a debate on priorities and fiscal policies or conduct pre budget consultations in budget/finance committees. The budget formulation is crucial to help the government prioritize implementation of certain SDGs, for which the country lags behind.

All EU Member States have a Medium-Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF) in place but these frameworks differ substantially across countries in terms of political commitment, planning horizon, coverage, level of detail, formulation of targets, exclusion of certain items, carryover arrangements and binding nature⁶⁰. These multiannual programme frameworks determine the budgetary, expenditure, revenue and fiscal policy over a medium to long period (usually between 4 and 7 years) and connects to different degrees to the annual budgetary cycle⁶¹. This allows for a longer-term vision and focus on public policies as the long-term strategic plans are aligned with budgetary allocations and priorities of the government. It also allows for investments to be considered from a multi annual perspective rather than annually. These frameworks, that set out the financial priorities and ceilings over multiple years, are particularly helpful when reviewing longer term objectives, such as Agenda 2030. In all EU countries, parliaments are involved in the preparation of these frameworks, albeit to varying degrees⁶².

⁵⁹ Mulholland E. and Berger G., Budgeting for the SDGs in Europe: Experiences, Challenges and Needs, ESDN, April 2019

⁶⁰ Sherwood, M., 'Medium-Term Budgetary Frameworks in the EU Member States', Discussion Paper 21, 2015: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/dp021_en.pdf

⁶¹ For more information on the EUMS MTBF, please visit the EU Commission Medium-term budgetary frameworks database: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/medium-term-budgetary-frameworks-database_en

⁶² For more information on parliaments involvement in the MTBF, please visit the EU Commission Medium-term budgetary frameworks database: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/medium-term-budgetary-frameworks-database_en

ANNUAL BUDGET APPROVAL

Once the executive has drafted the budget proposal, it is submitted to the parliament. The parliament reviews the budget annually before enacting it into law. The annual budget approval stage is an important stage for parliament to ensure that the budgetary implications of the SDG implementation have been considered. Whilst some governments might have allocated funds to broad areas that relate to the SDGs, others might have introduced specific financial envelopes allocated to individual SDGs⁶³.

The role of members of parliament is to analyse the budget proposal. This analysis can be undertaken from the perspective of the SDGs. This means that the parliament reviews whether the funding allocations are in line with the overall objectives of all international commitments, such as the SDGs, and the national development policy. Secondly, this budget analysis entails that members of parliament analyse whether the funding allocations are coherent, meaning that it avoids conflicts between different resource allocations. This is particularly relevant for the SDGs. For example, how would parliament assess the budget allocation for road infrastructure as it could benefit Goal 9 (Infrastructure) and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities) but also damage Goal 13 (Climate Action) and Goal 15 (Life on land)⁶⁴? Members of parliament will also need to measure whether a country has sufficiently addressed the question of financial resources to attain the SDGs. This could be done by mapping the national budget against individual SDGs or by including qualitative reporting in the budget document, giving an overview on how the budget is linked to different SDGs⁶⁵.

Because budget allocations do not automatically align with the SDGs, members of parliament might want to consider requesting the government to provide additional clarification on budget allocations from an SDG performance angle. However, this might be a challenge in some countries as budget documents have an official size limit and might not allow space for a comprehensive report on all SDGs and targets and might require the identification of the most pressing goals⁶⁶.

In the EU, there has been virtually no additional funding for the SDGs⁶⁷. Rather, line ministries have used existing budgetary provisions and connected their expenditures to the SDGs⁶⁸. This has been mostly done through the lens of using national development strategies that are directly linked to the SDGs, such as in Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Finland, Italy and Romania or government development plans that are making strong links to the SDGs, such as in Greece, Latvia, Poland, and Sweden, rather than doing comprehensive SDG integration within their national budgets⁶⁹. Finland seems to be the only EU country that integrates SDGs within its national budget.

⁶³ IPU, Institutionalization of the Sustainable Development Goals in the work of parliaments, 2019

⁶⁴ Hege E. and Brimont L., Integrating SDGs into national budgetary processes, IDDRI, July 2018

⁶⁵ IBIDEM

⁶⁶ IBIDEM

⁶⁷ Mulholland E. and Berger G., Budgeting for the SDGs in Europe: Experiences, Challenges and Needs, ESDN, April 2019

⁶⁸ IBIDEM

⁶⁹ Mulholland E. and Berger G., Budgeting for the SDGs in Europe: Experiences, Challenges and Needs, ESDN, April 2019



FINLAND'S BUDGET ALIGNMENT WITH THE SDGs70

In Finland, during the preparation of the 2018 budget, the Ministry of Finance asked each ministry to include a short paragraph under each of the main titles in the budget proposal. In these paragraphs, ministries provided information on how sustainable development would be reflected in their sectoral policies during the 2018 financial year. Based on lessons learned from the 2018 budget, some modifications have been introduced in the 2019 budget, including to broaden the analysis to add justifications which cover both of Finland's priority areas and the 2030 Agenda connections⁷¹.

It has also carried out an independent gap analysis and chosen two overarching themes for national SDG implementation (carbon neutral society and resource-wise economy), these two themes can then be reflected in the budget document. They plan to include a concrete analysis on the link between budgetary appropriation and SDGs in the General Strategy Outlook section of the budget, including taxation issues, that will concentrate on one of the focus areas in the Government's implementation plan.

Cities and regions have a crucial role to play in the achievement of SDGs as most investments needed to reach the SDGs are a shared responsibility across different levels of government and require a proper engagement of, and coordination with, local and regional governments. The OECD estimated that subnational governments were responsible for 59.3% of total public investment (related to health, education, drinking water and solid waste management for instance) in 2016 in the OECD area and that an estimated 65% of the 169 targets behind the 17 SDGs will not be reached without engagement of local and regional governments⁷².

OVERSEEING SDG BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Another stage in the budget cycle, which enables parliaments to play an important role to advance the SDGs, is the oversight of the expenditures. With the trillions needed to fund the implementation of Agenda 2030, it is imperative that governments keep proper tracking of the impact funding specific policy areas has made. A research by the International Budget Partnership (IBP) looked at the relative ease of identifying government spending on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and concluded that only one third did not have enough data to allow further analysis⁷³.

⁷¹ Finnish Government, 'Finland at the forefront of sustainable development budgeting', 2018: $\underline{https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/artikkeli/-/asset_publisher/10623/suomi-toimii-edellakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kestavan-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kehityksen-budjetoinnissallakavijana-kehityksen-budjetoinni$

⁷² OECD, 'Programme on a Territorial Approach to the SDGs', 2019: https://www.oecd.org/cfe/Territorial SDGs flyer 2019.pdf

⁷³ IBP, Tracking Spending On The Sustainable Development Goals: What Have We Learned From The Millennium Development Goals?, May 2017

The process for reviewing expenditures usually happens through committee structures, in collaboration and coordination with the finance committee or the public accounts committee. Unfortunately, in most EU countries, SDGs are not used to improve budget performance evaluation system or decide on resource allocation and arbitration⁷⁴. For committees, tracking of relevant expenditures according to the SDGs can be challenging for the reasons outlined above. Coding expenditures according to SDG indicators could enable parliaments to review how different allocations have impacted the SDGs⁷⁵.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Participatory budgeting should occur throughout the budget cycle and should be facilitated by government and parliament. Participatory budgeting is essential to ensuring that citizens know how public money is being raised and spent to deliver critical public services and implement priorities under the SDGs.

Participatory budgeting allows citizens to identify priorities, which should be funded and increases participation of civil society. It can ensure certain marginalised groups are reached or allow to focus on certain groups, such as old people or young people (youth participatory budgeting). In assigning public resources to specific projects that are chosen for funding, citizens and civil society organisations can be invited to contribute either online or through face to face meetings and their contributions can be either consultative or binding⁷⁶.

Open budget practices, including publishing comprehensive budget information, enabling meaningful public participation and ensuring strong oversight throughout the budget cycle, are essential to tackling global and country challenges in implementing the SDGs⁷⁷. Using participatory budgeting contributes directly to SDG 16.7. in terms of responsiveness- (responding to citizen's priorities), participation (generating deep levels of participation and deliberative intensity) and representative decision-making. Participatory budgeting also allows for 'all levels' of participatory decision making to be taken into account, from streel level to national level and is a powerful tool to support the SDG principle of 'leaving no one behind'78.

⁷⁴ IBIDEM

⁷⁵ IBIDEM

⁷⁶ Cabannes, Yves. (2019). The contribution of participatory budgeting to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: lessons for policy in Commonwealth countries. Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335948749 The contribution of participatory budgeting to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals lessons for policy in Commonwealth countries

⁷⁷ Schouten, C., 'Open The Books: Why We Need To Open Budgets And Doors To Budgetary Engagement To Achieve The Sustainable Development Goals', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation's blog, 8 September 2017

⁷⁸ Cabannes, Yves. (2019). The contribution of participatory budgeting to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: lessons for policy in Commonwealth countries. Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335948749 The contribution of participatory budgeting to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals lessons for policy in Commonwealth countries

4. REPRESENTATION

One of the main recommendations from the 2019 Europe Sustainable Development Report was to urge 'European institutions and governments at all levels to engage with academia and civil society more generally in the design of SDG pathways and in the pursuit of SDG goals"79'.

Members of parliament are ideally placed to engage with relevant stakeholders on the SDGs. As members of parliament, they steer national policies and laws with a vision informed by how communities can truly benefit from the 2030 Agenda.

Agenda 2030 specifically requires more inclusive government institutions, including parliaments. SDG 16 calls for political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status⁸⁰.

Participatory and representative decision making (SDG 16.7.) requires members of parliament to engage civil society and citizens into parliamentary processes and develop a culture of parliamentary openness. While some efforts have been undertaken by parliaments in this regard, for example through the Open Government Partnership, much still needs to be done in this regard. Civil society has also an active role to play in holding parliament to account. Some civil society organisations in the EU are organizing themselves to monitor specifically how parliament is implementing Agenda 2030. Because these organisations are independent from parliament, they are able to present impartial data and analysis and present the challenges in an open manner. These civil society are usually quite effective in increasing parliament's accountability and enhancing reforms.

SPANISH PARLIAMENTARY MONITORING ORGANISATION: PARLAMENTO203081

Parlamento 2030 is a platform created to gather the information of the Spanish national Parliament activity related to the Sustainable Development Goals. Parlamento 2030 addresses questions, such as which SDGs are affected by a certain legislative initiative, which of Agenda 2030's goals or targets receive the most attention by MPs, and which are being left behind, which MPs are most active in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and who is neglecting it. It also provides a means to analyse political activity by detecting all legislative initiatives related to a goal or target being proposed and discussed at the same time across different parliamentary committees.

⁷⁹ SDSN and IEEP, 2019 Europe Sustainable Development Report: Towards a strategy for achieving the SDGs in the EU, Nov 2019.

⁸⁰ UNDP, Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, 2017

⁸¹ Platform of Parlamento 2030: https://www.parlamento2030.es/about-en



GERMANY

GENERAL CONTEXT

Sustainability has been an important issue in German politics much before the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. As early as 2002, the German government adopted a national sustainability strategy entitled 'Perspectives for Germany'. Intergenerational equity, quality of life, social cohesion and international responsibility, were core elements of this strategy⁸². In 2016, the German government approved a new strategy⁸³ to identify how the national goals would have to be modified in the light of the global SDGs84. This strategy was updated in 2018 to prioritize 66 indicators for Germany⁸⁵. To show the importance that sustainability has in Germany, it is one of the very few topics that is not allocated to a ministry but directly managed by the German Chancellery86. Germany was one of the first countries to submit a VNR at the HLPF in 2016 and is planning to submit its second report in 2021.

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG

Institutional architecture. Sustainability has been a priority of the Bundestag since 2004 with the creation of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development (Parlamentarischer Beirat für nachhaltige Entwicklung)- see above. The Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development not only oversees the implementation of the SDGs, but also proactively influences the topic and the legislative process. It approved the sustainability strategy and organises annual debates on sustainability policy in the German Bundestag.

⁸² Website of the National Council for Sustainability: https://www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/aktuelles/nachhaltigkeitspolitik-sieben-fragen-sieben-antworten/

 $^{83 \}quad \text{Germany's sustainability strategy (2016): } \\ \underline{\text{https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/975292/730844/3d30c6c2875a9a08d364620ab7916af6/20ab7916af6$ $\underline{deutsche} - \underline{nachhaltigkeitsstrategie} - \underline{neuauflage-2016-download-bpa-data.pdf?download=1}$

⁸⁴ Chancellor Angela Merkel government statement on the SDGs, September 24, 2015

⁸⁵ Germany's sustainability strategy (2018 update): https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/975292/1559082/a9795692a667605f652981aa9b6cab51/ $\underline{deutsche}{-nachhaltigkeitsstrategie-aktualisierung-2018-download-bpa-data.pdf?download=1\\$

⁸⁶ Website of the National Council for Sustainability https://www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/aktuelles/nachhaltigkeitspolitik-sieben-fragen-sieben-antworten/

Awareness raising. The Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development regularly holds public hearings and publishes policy papers to trigger debate on various aspects of sustainable development. As early as February 24, 2016, experts discussed the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015, in a public hearing organised by the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development. Many public hearings, technical discussions and discussions have been held since, such as a hearing on whether sustainability should be anchored in the constitution or on sustainable education.

Legislation. Germany requires all draft legislation to be accompanied by an assessment of their impact on sustainability (Nachhaltigkeitspruefung)⁸⁷ which checks the effects of the draft law on sustainability. The Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development formally reviews whether the sustainability impact assessment of draft legislation of the government has been conducted in a plausible manner. The assessment is conducted through an online platform (https://www.enap.bund.de).

Oversight. The Federal Government reports⁸⁸ to the German Bundestag once per legislative period on the status of the implementation of the national sustainability strategy and specifies what concrete measures it has taken to achieve the goals and further develop the strategy.

Between 2014 to 2016, the German Bundestag organised three plenary debates on sustainability, including on the report of the Peer Review 2013 or on the national sustainability strategy 'Sustainability made in Germany', the sustainability policy of the federal government.

In addition, there have been numerous written and oral questions to the Federal Government regarding its sustainability policy and deal with the implementation of the SDGs that were raised in Question Time at the German Bundestag⁸⁹.

CONCLUSION

The strength of the German model is that the SDGs are anchored in a national strategy for sustainable development, which has strong cross-party political support, and institutional architecture. The German Bundestag plays a key role in ensuring that the strategy is implemented, and its Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development has been a decisive factor in ensuring SDGs are mainstreamed throughout all parliamentary processes.

⁸⁷ https://www.enap.bund.de/intro

⁸⁸ The Federal Chancellery, in coordination with the ministries, is responsible for implementing the national sustainability strategy and for producing progress reports

⁸⁹ Example of question asked by MP Uwe Kekeritz on 13 April 2016 on sustainable production standards http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/18/080/1808051.pdf

ROMANIA

GENERAL CONTEXT

The first National Sustainable Development Strategy of Romania (NSDS) was elaborated in 1999, reviewed in 2008 (one year after the EU accession) and an updated strategy was approved in November 2018⁹⁰. This strategy is implemented by the Interdepartmental Committee for Sustainable Development, which develops a Yearly Report to be submitted to the Romanian Parliament. The strategy reviews every SDG against the Romanian context and includes three main considerations of involving all segments of society, having experts and a robust monitoring system⁹¹. In April 2017, the government created the Department for Sustainable Development, which has as its main responsibility the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national level⁹². Romania submitted a VNR at the HLPF in 2018.

SDGS IN THE ROMANIAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Institutional architecture. In 2015, the Chamber of Deputies decided to create a Sub-Committee for Sustainable Development within the Committee of Foreign Affairs. The Sub-Committee for Sustainable Development is tasked with reviewing legislation. The Senate established a Committee for Development and Strategy, which is tasked with monitoring the SDGs⁹³.

Awareness raising. In April 2016, both Houses of Parliament adopted a Declaration of the Parliament of Romania on Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁹⁴. The Declaration highlights the need for the SDGs to be approached in an integrated manner when improving institutional capabilities, calls upon the need for the SDGs need to be integrated within the Sustainable Development Strategy, including through the establishment of a Department of Sustainable Development and affirms the fact that the Parliament is a key actor in promoting the SDGs due to its power to legislate and budget.

In 2016, the parliament translated two handbooks that are geared towards MP's on the parliamentarian dimension of the 2030 Agenda into Romanian. These handbooks were used to inform members of parliament about Sustainable Development and enable them to make better decisions⁹⁵.

⁹⁰ Romania's National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 (2018): http://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Romanias-Sustainable-Development-Strategy-2030.pdf

⁹¹ Romania, 2018, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York:

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19952Voluntary_National_Review_ROMANIA_with_Cover.pdf

^{92 &}lt;u>http://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Hotarare-313.pdf</u>

⁹³ Interview Lucian Romascanu, Romanian MP, on parliaments' role in achieving SDGs, IPU (November 2018), https://www.facebook.com/InterParliamentaryUnion/videos/327206981441781/?v=327206981441781

^{94 &}lt;a href="http://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Declaratie_ODD.pdf">http://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Declaratie_ODD.pdf

⁹⁵ Presentation László BORBÉLY, State Counsellor at the IPU: https://www.ipu.org/file/5442/download

Legislation. Based on a decision of the 'permanent office of both houses,' all committees are obliged to analyze the impact of each and every law proposal on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In practice, this requires every parliamentary committee to take the SDGs into consideration when discussing laws⁹⁶.

Budget process. The government of Romania, together with the Budget Committee and the subcommittee for Sustainable Development, and with support from OECD, are currently examining how to better align budget programmes to SDGs and evaluating what is the impact of national budget in terms of sustainable development goals. A report on linking policy planning and budgeting to support the implementation of the SDGs in Romania is expected in 2020⁹⁷.

CONCLUSION

The 2016 declaration on the 2030 Agenda, adopted by both Houses of Parliament, generated the necessary cross-party political will to create the necessary framework to implement the 2030 Agenda nationally. As a result of this cross-party initiative, the parliament was able to position itself as one of the major players in overseeing the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Presentation László BORBÉLY, State Counsellor at the OECD: http://www.oecd.org/gov/pcsd/L%C3%A1slo_Borb%C3%A9ly_From_vision_to_reality_Romania%E2%80%99s_%20road_to_achieving_SDGs.pdf



LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE VRU

To be finalised after the workshop in Kyiv

GENERAL CONTEXT: UKRAINE AND THE SDGs

After the UN Resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly, Ukraine initiated a process to adapt the SDGs to the Ukrainian context. This comprehensive process, which involved four national level and ten regional level consultations and the participation of many experts, reviewed every global target, taking into consideration the specific national context. In this process of adaptation of the SDGs to the Ukrainian context, every single target included in the Agenda 2030 was changed, reformulated or dropped, which resulted in a less ambitious agenda for Ukraine⁹⁸, contrary to the legally binding framework of goals and targets that had been agreed in New York. This exercise led to the establishment of a national strategic framework for Ukraine⁹⁹ and a national baseline¹⁰⁰.

Four areas were identified as key priorities for Ukraine: equitable social development; sustainable economic growth and employment; effective governance; and environmental balance and building resilience¹⁰¹. For each of the 17 SDGs, key indicators and recommendations were identified, which fit the overall vision for the development of Ukraine. Unfortunately, following the adoption of the baseline report, there has been no alignment of the national government action plans or policy frameworks with the SDGs, despite efforts to by the Planning Directorate of the Cabinet of Ministers Secretariat.

In his decree 722/2019, the President of Ukraine reaffirmed the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals for Ukraine. The Decree¹⁰² instructs the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine: (1) to conduct the analysis of forecast and programme documents taking into account the SDGs of Ukraine (rather

⁹⁸ In Ukraine's Baseline Report, 74 targets were changed (made less specific or less ambitious), 15 targets are listed as "not addressed", 43 as "addressed", 12 targets were added.

⁹⁹ Ukraine SDG Strategy, 2017: https://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/sustainable-development-report/Sustainable-Dev-Strategy-for-Ukraine-by-2030.html

¹⁰⁰ Sustainable Development Goals: Ukraine, 2017 National Baseline Report

¹⁰¹ IRIDEM

¹⁰² DECREE OF THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE №722 / 2019 on the Sustainable Development Goals of Ukraine until 2030: https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/7222019-29825

than Agenda 2030) for the period of till 2030; (2) to implement an effective system for monitoring the SDGs implementation for the period of till 2030; (3) to recommend to the academic institutions to take into account the SDGs when defining the scientific researches.

The Government Programme of September 2019 includes 17 goals, but these objectives do not match the SDGs despite benefiting from a similar structure as the Agenda 2030 and although many targets are substantively similar to the SDGs. The new Government elected in March 2020 put the achievement of SDGs in the core of its draft Program¹⁰³, which was considered by the Parliament but lacked votes in support.

According to the Order of the Prime Minister of Ukraine dated 03 December 2019, the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture (MoEDTA) is responsible for the SDGs implementation and monitoring processes in Ukraine, including preparation of the Voluntary National Review (VNR). The VNR theme in 2020 is "Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development". In this regard, the Cabinet of Ministers initiated establishment of two working groups:

- The SDGs Inter-Ministerial Working Group (deputy ministers' level). This is a high-level working group that will serve as a decision-making body and will coordinate the process of the SDG implementation in Ukraine. It is expected that the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, or the Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, will chair this group.
- The Voluntary National Review Working Group. This group will support preparation of the Voluntary National Review Report and should facilitate inclusive process.

On 30 June 2020 Ukraine published its the Voluntary National Review Report. 104

VRU INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO MAINSTREAMING THE SDGs

AWARENESS RAISING

About 80% of the MPs, who were elected on 21st July 2019, are new to politics¹⁰⁵. As the MPs have familiarized themselves with their main roles and responsibilities as MPs, much of the induction seem to have missed the opportunity to put an emphasis on the SDGs. A Ukrainian version of the Agenda 2030 has been prepared and published by the UN in Ukraine, but has not been widely disseminated to MPs.

¹⁰³ https://www.kmu.gov.ua/npas/pro-zatverdzhennya-programi-diyalnosti-kabinetu-ministriv-t120620

¹⁰⁴ https://me.gov.ua/Documents/Download?id=4819b04d-99d6-47d3-a0db-fd4a4215f13d

¹⁰⁵ Carnegie Europe, 'Who Is Who in the Ukrainian Parliament?', September 24, 2019: https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/79905

Convincing the leadership of the VRU to play a major role in leading on the agenda for the VRU, would be of importance for the overall process. It could also nominate participation of members of parliament in the SDGs Inter-Ministerial Working Group to offer institutional support and put forward the views of constituents.

In order to raise awareness on the SDGs, the parliament could organise an annual hearing on the SDGs, including the need to integrate the SDGs into government strategies and policies that was developed in Ukraine in 2017. And as per article 236 of the Rules of Procedure, the parliament could adopt a resolution stating its cross-party support for Agenda 2030 and including recommendations for the way forward, as was the case in Romania (see example above). This approach would enable the parliament to establish itself as one of the major state institutions in charge of the SDGs. It would be an opportunity to discuss the 2030 Agenda for Ukraine.

Moreover, beyond raising the awareness of the VRU's role in Agenda 2030, it would be relevant for parliament to consider developing a mechanism that enables it to track the SDGs that are directly related to parliament, namely SDG 5.5., 16.6 and 16.7. In its 2017 report¹⁰⁶, Ukraine has identified this target as a key priority for Ukraine with the following goals: 2015 – 12% women MP; 2020 - 30% women MP; 2025 - 30% women MP and 2030 - 30% women MP. However, the new Electoral Code, which was adopted by Parliament on 19th December 2019, sets a parliamentary nomination quota at 40% women. The 2017 baseline report for Ukraine has not prioritized SDG targets 16.6 and 16.7 ¹⁰⁷. However, exploring greater diversity in parliaments and new working methods, including by aiming for greater transparency, should constitute a priority for the VRU¹⁰⁸.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

The VRU, like other parliaments, does not have an institutional framework that naturally fits the SDGs and ensures policy coherence between the different goals. It could consider three different institutional arrangements: establishing a new committee, mainstreaming SDGs into existing committees or creating a new SDG caucus. A combination of different institutional arrangements might be best suited to the Ukrainian context.

■ In establishing a new SDG committee, the VRU would be rather limited as per rules of procedure. Article 81 of the RoP state that 'the list of committees shall be approved at the first session of the newly elected VRU by a majority of votes of national deputies of its parliamentary assembly, if required.' As an SDG committee hasn't been established during the first session, the establishment of a temporary committee could also be considered to review particular laws related to the SDGs. Article 85 and 86 of the RoP state that the VRU has the authority to form temporary special commissions to be established for the period of time but usually not exceeding six months. The commissions are tasked with preparing, considering and finalizing draft laws and other acts. Their mandate being limited and timely, this would not be a preferred option.

¹⁰⁶ Sustainable Development Goals: Ukraine, 2017 National Baseline Report

¹⁰⁸ De Temmerman J., Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities, March 2019

- As for the majority of EU parliaments, it is recommended that the VRU considers how to best mainstream SDGs into the work of its existing 23 committees (see section below). A specific SDG annual workplan could be developed for each committee, which would highlight on an annual basis all activities that each committee is planning to undertake. Annual committee planning might enable different committees to jointly review SDGs that are of cross-sectoral nature and review the impact of one SDG on one or more others.
- As per order of the Prime Minister of Ukraine, the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture (MoEDTA) is responsible for coordinating the SDGs implementation and monitoring processes in Ukraine. Therefore, an option for the VRU could be that the mirroring Committee on Economic Development takes on the main coordination of all SDGs within the parliament. As the mandate for the Committee on Economic Development is quite broad, it might consider setting up a subcommittee, as has been done in several EU countries, such as Romania (see example below).
- In order to ensure policy coherence between the different SDGs, a cross-party caucus on the SDGs could be established. A model for such a caucus is found in Denmark's 2030 Network, which is very active and engages with multiple stakeholders.

MAINSTREAMING IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

In reviewing the legislation introduced by the government, article 91 of the rules of procedure mandates the draft law to be submitted with an explanatory note, which should 'contain an expected socio-economic, legal and other consequences of the law's implementation'. As such a pre legislative assessment is already foreseen in the rules of procedure, the 'other consequences' could be expanded to include an SDG assessment. An interesting model for such an assessment can be found in the German Nachhaltigkeitspruefung (see above).

Moreover, as the national deputies have the right to introduce legislation (article 89 RoP), each committee could consider, based on the 2017 Ukraine national baseline report on the SDGs¹⁰⁹, conduct a SDG Law Reform Assessment to identify which targets require new laws or amendments and create a legislative reform agenda to guide the drafting and enactment of laws. This exercise should be aligned with the government's strategies and action plans.

MAINSTREAMING IN THE OVERSIGHT PROCESS

The VRU has different oversight tools at its disposal to monitor the implementation of the government on the SDGs.

First of all, the existing committees can launch an inquiry into the implementation of the SDGs to date, based on the SDG strategy for Ukraine and the 2017 Ukraine national baseline report.

As was the case for the UK International Development Inquiry (see example above), the committee can invite stakeholders from the government, academia, NGOs, media, citizens to submit written or oral evidence.

Secondly, as per article 233 of the RoP, the parliament could organise a hearing on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. These hearings could focus on general topics, such as the implementation of the SDGs or could be more specific on certain SDGs.

Finally, members of parliament should take advantage of the current Voluntary National Review process, which has started in Ukraine and expected to be finalized for the High-Level Political Forum in New York mid-July 2020. The parliament could formally request the government to present the VNR in plenary and make recommendations. In Netherlands, for example, the parliament has played a very active role in this process (see example above). To date, the parliament has not been involved in this process and been invited to be part of the Working Group on VNR.

MAINSTREAMING IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

The budget process in Ukraine starts with the development of a draft paper stating the basic budgetary policies for the upcoming budgetary period by the Cabinet of Ministers and submission to parliament. National deputies and parliamentary committees have the right to develop proposals to the basic budget policy for the upcoming budgetary period, which are adopted into a resolution on approval or consideration of the basic budgetary policy (article 151-154 RoP). This allows for member of parliaments to question the government's budget policy, including on the budget allocation to the SDGs. However, the issue might be to identify which budget allocations directly relate to specific SDGs. Parliament could request clarification on this issue during question hour, as per article 228 RoP for example. This would require strong engagement of Ministries of Economics and Finance, among others.

Moreover, in the exercise of their mandate to oversee of the implementation of the state budget, the VRU has the possibility to review the expenditure as per SDG indicators. This review should include full statistical disaggregation. As started in article 228 of the RoP, the report on implementation of the State Budget is accompanied by 'any reports on the course and results of implementation of the approved national programs on economic, scientific, technical, social, national and cultural development and protection of environment'. In this regard, the parliament could request that these additional reports, which report on economic, scientific, technical, social, national and cultural development and protection of environment issues, should be fully aligned with the SDGs targets and specifically describe the efforts made under every specific SDG target.



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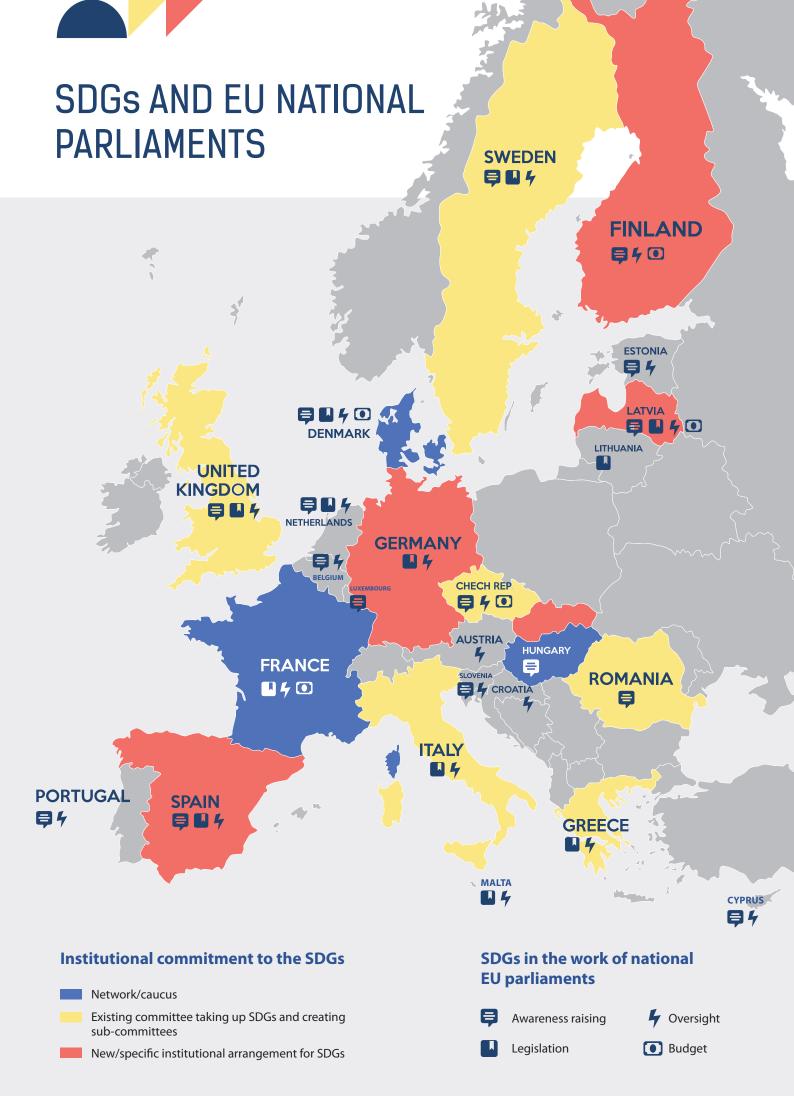
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ANNEX 1:

Institutional commitment to the SDGs for EU national parliaments

COUNTRY	New/specific institutional arrangement for SDGs	Existing committee taking up SDGs and creating sub-committees	Informal group or network (parliamentary network, caucus, working group)
Czech Republic		Subcommittee on Sustainable Development under Environmental Committee	
Denmark		Danish Parliament normally works through thematic standing committees corresponding to the government's division of labour along ministerial line	2030 Network
Finland	Parliamentary Committee for the Future		
France	Parliamentary Committee for Sustainable Development		Accelerons Network
Germany	Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development		
Greece		There are a number of parliamentary committees which are responsible for elaborating and examining draft laws that fall within the various thematic areas of the SDGs, including poverty reduction, employment, healthcare and social protection, economic development, research and innovation, environmental protection and climate change	
Hungary			National Council for Sustainable Development
Italy		Standing Sub-Committee on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals under the Foreign Affairs Committee ¹¹⁰	
Latvia	Commission on Sustainable Development		
Romania	Committee for Development and Strategy (Senate)	Sub-Committee for Sustainable Development within the Committee of Foreign Affairs (Chamber of Deputies)	
Slovakia	Committee for the Future (intended)		
Spain	Parliamentary Committee for Agenda 2030 (September 2019)		
Sweden		Committee on Environmental Objectives, Committee for Agriculture and Committee for Finance mainly deal with SDGs. in view of the comprehensiveness of the Agenda and the sustainable development goals, virtually all the committees will in practice be concerned by and involved in their implementation.	
United Kingdom		Parliamentary Environmental and Audit Committee	All-Party Parliamentary Group on the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development

ANNEX 2:

SDGs in the work of national EU parliaments¹¹¹

COUNTRY	Awareness raising	Legislation	Oversight	Budget
			Written questions on SDGs by MPs ¹¹²	
Austria			Austrian Parliament has the overall oversight for tracking progress made in their implementation 113	
Belgium	Walloon Parliament adopted a decree for the adoption of a sustainable development strategy		Discussion of the VNR in Foreign Relations, Environment and Health Committees Parliamentary inquiry to the Minister for Sustainable Development regarding the 2030 Agenda ¹¹⁴	
Bulgaria				
Croatia			Adoption of the strategy Croatia 2030 by parliament	
Cyprus	Presentation of the SDGs in the Environmental Committee Presentation of the SDGs at the Foreign and European Affairs		Discussion of the VNR in Foreign Affairs and Environment Committee	
Czech Republic	Adoption of the national strategy Czech Republic 2030		Discussion of the VNR in both Chambers	Budget allocations approved by Parliament in the annual budget negotiations, including through the launch of the SDG Fund
Denmark	MP participation in the conference on Denmark's follow-up on the SDG	Concept for assessing assess the consequences of new legislation and major initiatives for the SDGs (intended)	Annual SDG progress report discussed in parliament Review of VRN and participation of MPs at HLPF	Subcommittee for SDG in Budget Committee develop recommendations
Estonia	Parliament adopted the Estonian Sustainable Development Strategy, "Sustainable Estonia 21" in 2005		Indicator Report discussed in Parliament	
Finland	Awareness raising on Agenda 2030 in June 2016 Open debate and discussion about the SDGs and Parliament's role in November 2016115		Government Report, which dealt with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, submitted to the plenary session of the Finnish Parliament ¹¹⁶ Consultation of members of parliament for the VNR Organisation of topical debates on the SDGs Committee of Future, Committee of Foreign Affairs, Committee of the Environment have drafted reports, including recommendations, on	The Finnish 2018 national budget was aligned with the SDGs. Each Ministry provided information on budget allocation related to SDGs The National Audit Office (VTV) provides a statement on the

 $^{111 \}quad This information has been collected from the VNR reports: \\ \underline{https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates}$

¹¹² Interview with Petra Bayr, Austrian MP, on parliament's role in achieving the SDGs, IPU (November 2018): $\underline{https://www.ipu.org/news/voices/2018-07/video-petra-bayr-austrian-mp-parliaments-role-in-achieving-sdgs}$

¹¹³ OECD, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity, 2017, $\underline{https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/9789264272576-5-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/9789264272576-5-en\&mimeType=text/html/sitemId=/content/component/9789264272576-5-en\&mimeType=text/html/sitemId=/content/component/9789264272576-5-en\&mimeType=text/html/sitemId=/content/component/9789264272576-5-en\&mimeType=text/html/sitemId=/content/component/9789264272576-5-en\&mimeType=text/html/sitemId=/content/component/grape=text/html/sitemId=/content/component/grape=text/html/sitemId=/content/grape=text/grape=text/grape=tex$

¹¹⁴ Mulholland, E., The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, ESDN, July 2017

¹¹⁵ Mulholland, E., The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, ESDN, July 2017

			the Government's report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda ¹¹⁷ The Development Policy Committee is tasked with following up on SDG implementation from a development policy perspective, and monitoring the implementation of the Government Programme in compliance with development policy guidelines ¹¹⁸	Government's annual report and regularly expresses its opinion on the effectiveness of administrative actions in achieving the 2030 Agenda goals ¹¹⁹ Sustainability budget checks against the SDGs
France		Reviewing multiple legislative proposals, such as on recovering biodiversity, nature and landscape	Public policy evaluation on SDGs Annual review of the trends in wealth indicators	Review and approval of taxes related to climate/ energy contributions
Germany		Performs assessment of impact of all laws on sustainability (Nachhaltigkeitspruefung)	German Bundestag has passed a motion (Bundestag printed paper 18/7361) asking federal government to consequently implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Germany ¹²⁰ Annual review of the National Sustainability Strategy Organisation of hearings, discussions, workshops Written and oral questions	
Greece		Hellenic Parliament adopted, in December 2016, the law 4440/2016, art. 43 (2) which assigns to the Office of Coordination, Institutional, International and European Affairs of the General Secretariat of the Government the duty of coordinating and monitoring the implementation of SDGs at national level ¹²¹ .	Discusses progress reports of SDGs and VNR Committees track progress, on a regular basis, on the legislative and policy framework Written questions regarding the government's approach and actions to achieve the SDGs ¹²²	
Hungary	Adoption of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development Organisation of public conferences "The accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals in Hungary" in 2017			
Italy		Italian Parliament has passed the Financial Law 2017-19 which explicitly sets the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, labelled a 'global challenge', as one of the main policy objectives of Italian Development Co- operation ¹²³	Inquiry on the status of the SDGs led by the Standing Sub-Committee on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals ¹²⁴ Hearing on the Sustainable Development Strategy	

¹¹⁷ IBIDEM

¹¹⁸ OECD, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity, 2017,

¹¹⁹ Mulholland, E., The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, ESDN, July 2017

¹²⁰ Mulholland, E., The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, ESDN, July 2017

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¹²³ OECD, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity, 2017,

¹²⁴ Mulholland, E., The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, ESDN, July 2017

	Approval by parliament	Adoption of various laws,	Annual report by the Prime Minister to	
Latvia	of Latvia's Sustainable Development Strategy	such as Law on Aid for Start- up Companies, Law on Whis- tleblower Protection, etc.	parliament on progress in achieving goals of NDP2020 and Latvia 2030	Sustainability review of fiscal policy
Lithuania		Parliament adopted a legislative package called "A New Social Model" in line with the SDGs		
Luxembourg	National Sustainability Plan discussed in parliament			
Malta		Adoption of bills relevant to SDGs, such as for instance Human Rights and Equality Act or Marriage Equality Bill	Annual discussion in parliament on the Sustainable Development Annual Report	
Netherlands	2-3 parliamentary committee debates per year on the SDGs but no plenary debates ¹²⁵	House of Representatives has adopted two motions (25 Jan and 15 June, 2017) asking the Government to look at the possibilities, as well as at the pros and cons, of a general (obligatory) preliminary examination, testing all new or envisaged legislation on compatibility with the SDGs ¹²⁶ . This was launched in January 2019.	Annual review of SDG report in parliament House of Representatives has also adopted a motion (15 June 2017) asking the Government to look into ways of monitoring the impact of the SDGs on vulnerable people within marginalised groups ¹²⁷	
Poland				
Portugal	Seminar on the planning and implementation of SDGs, in collaboration with civil society Organisation of Youth Parliament		VNR report discussed in parliament	
Romania	Declaration of the Parliament of Romania on Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development			
Slovakia				
Slovenia	Organisation of a Children's Parliament		Review of the VNR	
	Non-Legislative Motion	All la cialesta o to the Consulta	Annual plenary on the SDGs Annual report to corresponding	
Spain	161/001253 for political guidance from the Government in defining the national strategy to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development approved in parliament	All legislation in the Spanish Parliament presented by the Government must include a compulsory analysis of impact on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs (intended)	committee on progress of specific SDGs Senate launched a Study Paper for the Definition, Drafting and Coordination of the Spanish Strategy to Achieve the SDG Regular meetings with civil society on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda	
Sweden	Adopted the Policy for Global Development A seminar was organised at the Riksdag to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda ¹²⁸	Adoption of many laws related to SDGs, such as asylum legislation, Health and Medical Services Act.	Annually review of reports related to approved strategies, such as the achievement of the national environmental objectives that correspond to many of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda	
United Kingdom	Promotion of SDGs through the APPG on Sustainable Development Goals	Approval of bills related to the SDGs	Inquiries on the SDGs by Environmental Audit Committee, International Development Committee and Women's and Equalities Committee	

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ANNEX 3:

Reporting on the SDGs by national EU parliaments

COUNTRY	HLPF reporting year	VNR report parliament mention (with 1 only a mention and 2 a description of approach activities of the parliament in mainstreaming the SDGs)
Austria		Review due in 2020
Belgium	2017	1
Bulgaria		Review due in 2020
Croatia	2019	1
Cyprus	2017	1
Czech Republic	2017	1
Denmark	2017	2
Estonia	2016	1
Finland	2016	1
France	2016	1
Germany	2016	2
Greece	2018	2
Hungary	2018	2
Ireland	2018	1
Italy	2017	1
Latvia	2018	2
Lithuania	2018	1
Luxembourg	2017	1
Malta	2018	1
Netherlands	2017	1
Poland	2018	1
Portugal	2017	1
Romania	2018	2
Slovakia	2018	1
Slovenia	2017	1
Spain	2018	2
Sweden	2017	2
United Kingdom	2019	2



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