

A renewed policy framework for sustainable development

The international SD agenda and its impact on Europe

Umberto Pisano, Lisa Lange, Markus Hametner and Gerald Berger

ESDN Conference 2014 – Background and Discussion Paper



European Sustainable Development Network

Authors:

Umberto Pisano, Lisa Lange, Markus Hametner and Gerald Berger, ESDN Office

Contact:

*ESDN Office at the
Institute for Managing Sustainability
Vienna University of Economics and Business
Welthandelsplatz 1, Building D1, A-1020 Vienna, Austria
E: esdn-office@sd-network.eu
T: +43-1-31336-4807*

© 2014 European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)

Visit www.sd-network.eu for

- Basic information on SD
- Country profiles
- Quarterly reports
- Policy briefs
- Case studies
- Conference papers
- Workshop papers
- Getting in touch with us

The **European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)** is an informal network of public administrators and other experts who deal with sustainable development strategies and policies. The network covers all 28 EU Member States, plus other European countries. The ESDN is active in promoting sustainable development and facilitating the exchange of good practices in Europe and gives advice to policy-makers at the European and national level.

Contents

Introduction	4
1. The UN post-2015 agenda for SD	5
1.1. Current status	5
1.2. The Post-2015 agenda	6
1.2.1. The Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG)	7
1.2.2. Other work streams	7
1.2.3. Process and Timeline of the Post-2015 Agenda	10
1.3. Comparing MDGs and proposed SDGs	13
1.4. Governance for SD: Challenges and opportunities for SDGs implementation in the EU	14
2. Impact of SDGs in Europe and SD governance	17
2.1. The EU's role in the Post-2015 Agenda	17
2.1.1. The EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS)	17
2.1.2. The Europe 2020 Strategy	17
2.2. The analysis of the SDGs	18
3. Conclusions and reflections	34

Introduction

This conference discussion paper provides background information for the **ESDN Conference 2014**, including the interactive group work sessions. The ESDN Conference 2014 is entitled, **“A renewed policy framework for sustainable development – The international SD agenda and its impact on Europe”**. During the Italian EU Presidency, important decisions on the SDGs and the post-2015 process will be taken. Therefore, the ESDN Conference 2014 will reflect on how the UN process will impact on the EU and national level with regards to sustainable development. This also refers to the Greening of the European Semester, which provides a good opportunity in the future for policy strategies to integrate environmental aspects, and more general issues of governance for SD (e.g. cross-sectoral coordination, stakeholder involvement, etc.). Moreover, the conference will reflect upon the role of National SD Strategies in the context of current socio-economic and environmental policy challenges.

The conference will comprise six sessions:

- Session 1: The international sustainable development agenda (SDGs/post-2015)
- Session 2: Impacts of the international SD agenda on Europe
- Session 3: Involving societal stakeholder in addressing international SD issues in Europe
- Session 4: Governance for SD in Europe
- Session 5: New challenges for National SD Strategies (NSDSs) in the context of current socio-economic and environmental challenges
- Session 6: Making NSDSs ‘fit for purpose’

The conference discussion paper has the following structure: In chapter one, we provide a general overview on the UN post-2015 agenda and the SDGs. The second chapter reflects upon the impact of SDGs in Europe and SD governance. The concluding chapter provides a short summary of the main points raised in the Discussion Paper and offers some questions for discussion.

A full documentation of the keynotes, discussions and group work at the conference will be published as ESDN Conference Proceedings shortly after the event.

1. The UN post-2015 agenda for SD

1.1. Current status

The UN General Assembly's Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) agreed on and published a 'zero draft' proposal at the conclusion of its thirteenth and final session on the 19th July 2014. The proposal contains **17 goals** (see following Fig.1.1), accompanied by **169 targets**. This list of goals and targets is, however, only temporary as the final decision on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and related targets will be taken during 2015. In fact, the post-2015 sustainable development agenda is expected to be adopted by UN Member States at a summit in September 2015 at the UN Headquarters in New York. By the end of 2014, the UN Secretary-General will produce a synthesis report bringing together the results of all the different work streams on the post-2015 development agenda to facilitate the General Assembly's further deliberations¹.

Fig.1.1 List of proposed SDGs

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere*
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture*
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*
- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all*
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*
- Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*
- Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all*
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation*
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries*
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*
- Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*
- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*
- Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss*
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*

Source: UN, 2014²

The mandate to develop the proposal on the SDGs has been included in the Rio+20 Outcome Document, 'The future we want' (2012), which incorporated the request to create an Open Working Group with the task of developing the set of SDGs. It also provided the basis for their conceptualization, and instructed that such a list of goals should be coherent with and integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015. Therefore, **Rio+20** needs to be considered a **crucial milestone** in the development process of the SDGs, and represents a key component to understand such a process. The Rio+20 Outcome Document dedicates a

¹ See also: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/sustainable/sdgs-post2015.html>

² UN. 2014. Outcome Document - Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. Available at: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>

special section on Sustainable Development Goals – *Chapter V. Framework for action and follow-up, Section B* – that is composed of seven paragraphs from para.245 to para.251⁽³⁾.

At Rio+20⁴, UN Member States agreed that SDGs must:

- be based on Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;
- fully respect all the Rio Principles;
- be consistent with international law;
- build upon commitments already made;
- contribute to the full implementation of the outcomes of all major summits in the economic, social and environmental fields;
- focus on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development, being guided by the outcome document;
- address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their interlinkages;
- be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015;
- not divert focus or effort from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and
- include active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, in the process.

In addition, the outcome document specified that the development of SDGs should:

- be useful for pursuing focused and coherent action on sustainable development;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- serve as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the UN system as a whole; and
- address and be focused on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development.

Paragraph 18 of the introduction to the Outcome Document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals⁵ is of particular importance. In this paragraph, several crucial topics are touched upon that define the way SDGs are generally understood and will be developed further. First, **SDGs will be followed by indicators** that will measure progress towards SDGs and, therefore, will facilitate monitoring implementation and achievements. Secondly, SDGs are not only meant to be **action-oriented**, but take into consideration **different levels of application**: on the one hand SDGs will be **global in nature and universally accepted**. On the other hand, while **respecting national policies and priorities**, they will account for **different national realities, capacities and levels of development**. Thirdly, SDGs will follow the work done in the context of the **Millennium Development Goals**, but they will further this work and **answer to new challenges** with a special attention to those related to sustainable development, **integrating economic, social and environmental aspects** and their **interlinkages**.

1.2. The Post-2015 agenda

The Outcome Document of the [2010 Millennium Development Goals Summit](#) requested the Secretary-General to initiate thinking on the global development agenda beyond 2015. It also called for “increased efforts at all levels to **enhance policy coherence for development**” (para.41) while affirming that to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) “mutually supportive and integrated policies across a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues **for sustainable development**” (ibid.) were required.

³ UN. 2012. The future we want – final outcome document. A/CONF.216/L.1 <http://rio20.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/N1238164.pdf>

⁴ Please refer to the online UN’s [Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform](#) for more information.

⁵ UN. 2014. Outcome Document - Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. Available at: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>

Therefore, the necessity and the opportunity for strongly linking the two discourses of the MDGs and of the SDGs for a post-2015 Agenda are widely agreed upon. These two processes would ultimately converge in *one global development agenda beyond 2015 with sustainable development at its core*.

As briefly mentioned above, the Rio+20 Outcome Document initiated such a process with the aim of developing a set of SDGs. Therefore, several work streams were established in the form of “an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process” (paragraph 248).

1.2.1. The Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG)

The main work stream has been the **formation of a 30-member Open Working Group (OWG)**. After thirteen rounds of meetings and negotiations, which have taken place between September 2013 and July 2014, the OWG has recently presented its proposal (see Fig.1.2).

Fig.1.2 OWG sessions

Session	Date
OWG 1	14-15 March 2013
OWG 2	17-19 April 2013
OWG 3	22-24 May 2013
OWG 4	17-19 June 2013
OWG 5	25-27 November 2013
OWG 6	9-13 December 2013
OWG 7	6-10 January 2014
OWG 8	3-7 February 2014
OWG 9	3-5 March 2014
OWG 10	31 March-4 April 2014
OWG 11	5-9 May 2014
OWG 12	16-20 June 2014
OWG 13	14-18 July 2014

Source: UN, 2014

The OWG was established by decision 67/555 of the General Assembly⁶, on 22 January 2013. Member States used an innovative, constituency-based system of representation in which most of the seats in the OWG were shared by several countries (see Fig.1.5). Two co-chairs were elected: Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the UN, and Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN. In the first eight sessions, the OWG performed a stock-taking exercise; at the 9th session (March 2014), the group started a consideration of elements for a goals and targets framework. The following sessions started producing focused texts on SDGs and targets, which then culminated in a **‘zero draft’ proposal** that was published and adopted on July 19, 2014. This ‘zero draft’ was then presented in its final report to the UNGA by September 2014⁷.

1.2.2. Other work streams

In order to ensure coherence across the different work streams, an informal senior coordination group of four Assistant Secretaries-General (ASGs) was put in place together with a One Secretariat to facilitate coordination and coherence across work streams, and guarantee independence. This coordination group included: (1) the ASG for Economic Development at DESA; (2) the ASG for Development Policy at UNDP; (3)

⁶ Please refer to decision [A/67/L.48/rev.1](#)

⁷ <http://www.fao.org/post-2015-mdg/background/en/>

the ASG for Policy and Programme at UN Women; and, (4) the Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning.

Apart from the OWG, in the next paragraphs we briefly delineate the main work streams that describe the work on the Post-2015 Agenda and the path to a negotiated agreement on the new framework that will be presumably decided in the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda

Launched by the UN Secretary-General in July 2012, the [High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) was tasked with advising on the global development framework beyond 2015. Co-chaired by the Presidents of Indonesia and Liberia and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Panel assembled representatives from civil society, private sector, academia, and local and national governments. The resulting report "[A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development](#)" (May 2013) sets out a universal agenda to eradicate extreme poverty and deliver on the promise of sustainable development. In the report, the Panel calls for the new post-2015 goals to drive **five big transformative shifts**:

- i. Leave No One Behind: to move from reducing to ending extreme poverty, in all its forms;
- ii. Put Sustainable Development at the Core: to integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability;
- iii. Transform Economies for Jobs and Inclusive Growth: to end extreme poverty and improve livelihoods, by harnessing innovation, technology, and the potential of business;
- iv. Build Peace and Effective, Open and Accountable Institutions for All: to recognize peace and good governance as a core element of wellbeing, not an optional extra;
- v. Forge a New Global Partnership: with a new spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual accountability.

UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda

Established by the UN Secretary-General in January 2012, the [UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda](#) assembles more than 60 UN agencies and international organizations. Co-chaired by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Task Team supports the process by providing analytical thinking and substantial inputs. Its first report [Realizing the Future We Want for All](#) (July, 2012) outlined the vision of the UN system on the global development agenda beyond 2015. The report calls for an integrated policy approach to ensure inclusive economic development, social progress and environmental sustainability and a development agenda that responds to the aspirations of all people for a world free of want and fear. Moreover, the Task Team is currently engaged in providing analytical inputs on the global partnership for development and on monitoring and indicators.

In addition, an inter-agency technical support team (TST) has been established to support the Open Working Group, under the umbrella of the UN System Task Team. The TST is co-chaired by UN DESA and UNDP, and it consists of over 40 UN entities. The TST is to provide technical support, including analytical inputs, background material and expert panellists. Thus it constitutes an information platform will share UN system knowledge with the OWG.

National, global and thematic consultations

In order to facilitate an inclusive global conversation, the United Nations Development Group has initiated (1) consultations at the national level; (2) consultations at the global level; and, (3) a set of eleven thematic consultations.

National consultations took place in more than 60 developing and developed countries through online and offline outreach programmes that are tailored to national circumstances and needs, and closely linked to national development priorities.

Global consultations aimed at a global participation of every citizen through the establishment of the initiative [My World](#), which asks every online citizen / user to select the most important six priorities for them and their families among the following issues: Better transport and roads; affordable and nutritious food; Action taken on climate change, Freedom from discrimination and persecution, A good education, Access to clean water and sanitation, Protection against crime and violence, Phone and internet access, Reliable energy at home, Political freedoms, Support for people who can't work, Better job opportunities, Protecting forests, rivers and oceans, Better healthcare, Equality between men and women, An honest and responsive government (an open field was left blank for suggesting other issues). By October 2014, more than five million votes had been cast. The results of this survey will be submitted to the Secretary-General's High-level Panel.

A set of **eleven multi-stakeholder thematic consultations** were convened, each led by two or more UN agencies that work closely together with representatives from civil society, the private sector and academia as well as with co-hosting governments. The consultations aim to explore the role such themes could play in a new framework, different ways in which they can be best addressed, and the interlinkages between them.

Regional consultations

The five⁸ [UN Regional Economic Commissions](#) also engaged in regional consultations with the intention of providing a regional perspective on the post-2015 development agenda. This process culminated in a [report](#) identifying a number of **regional priorities** and four key messages aiming at informing the global debate of: (i) the importance of placing employment generation at the centre of the post-2015 agenda; (ii) the need for more effective approaches to tackle inequality; (iii) the need to incorporate a more comprehensive approach to environmental sustainability; and (iv) the effective incorporation of democratic governance into the post-2015 debate.

Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

The [Sustainable Development Solutions Network \(SDSN\)](#), led by Jeffrey Sachs, is a global, **independent network of research centres, universities and technical institutions** that works with stakeholders including business, civil society, UN agencies, and other international organizations. In September 2013, the SDSN released its report to the Secretary General. Recently updated in April 2014, the report [An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) outlines a shared framework for sustainable development through the following interconnected priority challenges that must be addressed at global, regional, national, and local scales:

⁸ The five UN Regional Economic Commissions are: 1) Economic Commission for Europe; 2) Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; 3) Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; 4) Economic Commission for Africa; and, 5) Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

1. End extreme poverty including hunger;
2. Promote economic growth and decent jobs within planetary boundaries;
3. Ensure effective learning for all children and youth for life and livelihood,
4. Achieve gender equality, social inclusion, and human rights for all,
5. Achieve health and wellbeing at all ages,
6. Improve agriculture systems and raise rural prosperity,
7. Empower inclusive, productive and resilient cities,
8. Curb human-induced climate change and ensure sustainable energy,
9. Secure biodiversity, and ensure good management of water, oceans, forests, and natural resources,
10. Transform governance and technologies for sustainable development.

UN Global Compact

The [UN Global Compact](#) has been actively involved in ensuring that the views and contributions of **businesses and the private sector** feed into the post-2015 process. Among the multiple initiatives and activities started by the UN Global Compact, the publication of the paper "[The Role of Business and Finance in Supporting the Post-2015 Agenda](#)" highlights the role of business and investors in advancing sustainable development goals through responsible business actions. The paper was introduced at the high-level luncheon of the Global Compact Board meeting (2 July 2014), which was attended by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and nearly 150 participants.

1.2.3. Process and Timeline of the Post-2015 Agenda

To conclude this section we present a focused timeline of the Post-2015 Agenda framework preparation (see Fig.1.3) and a graphical presentation that we hope will facilitate a better understanding of the whole process (see Fig.1.4): the main meetings and key milestones are highlighted.

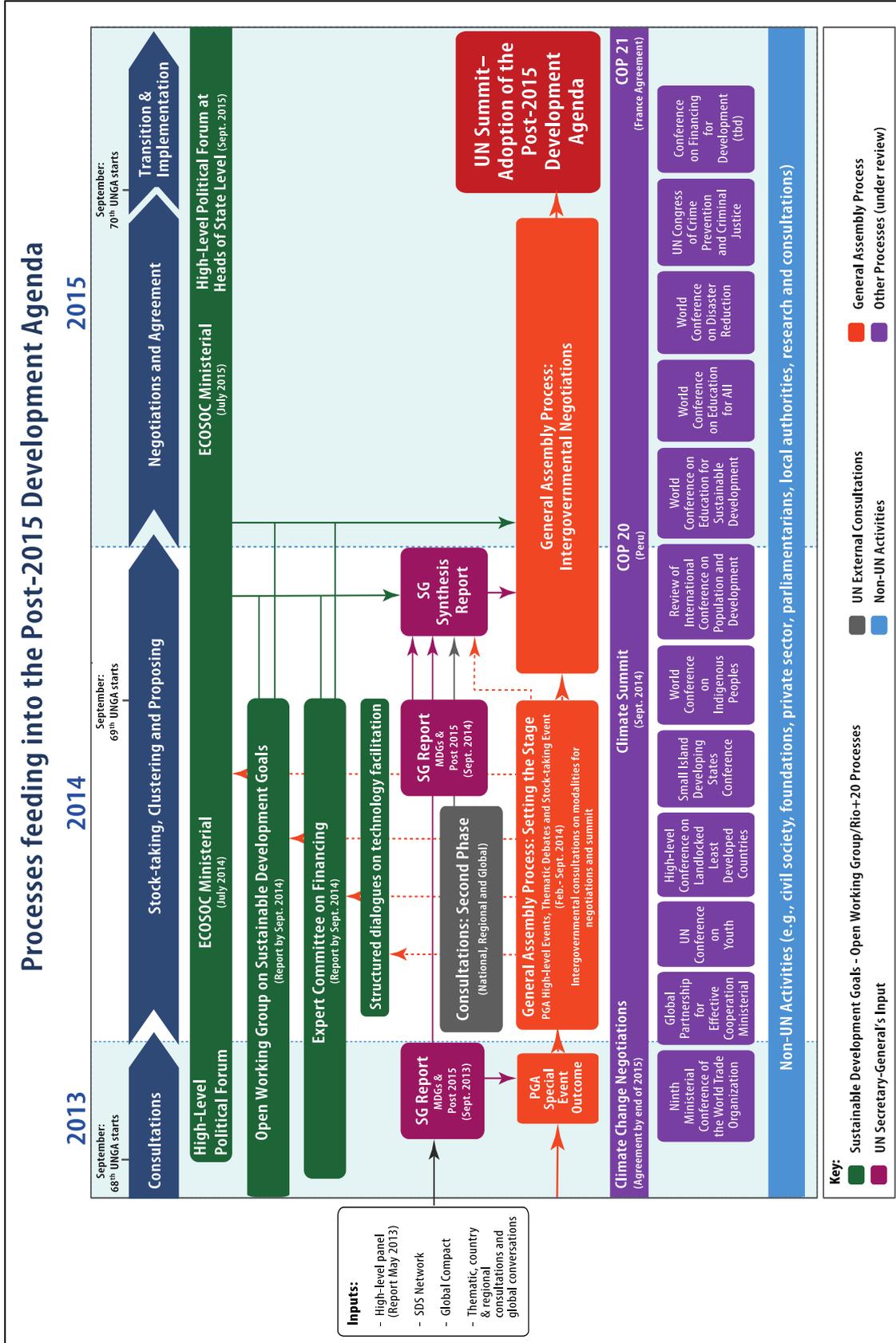
Fig.1.3 Timeline for the Post-2015

Date	UN event
2000	World leaders adopt the Millennium Declaration , a shared vision
September 2010	MDG Summit, UN Member States take first steps towards advancing the 'Post-2015 Development Agenda'. Secretary-General releases report Keeping the promise : a forward-looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015
June 2012	Rio+20 , governments commit to the promotion of a sustainable future, and mandate an intergovernmental Open Working Group to form a set of Sustainable Development Goals
2012-2013	UNDG identifies 11 Global Thematic Consultations, which together with 87 national consultations and the MyWorld Public Survey, engage 1.3m people in visualising new goals
March 2013 – June 2013	First four sessions of the OWG on SDGs
May 2013	SG-appointed High Level Panel of Eminent Persons releases post-2015 report, " A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development "
June 2013	UN Global Compact releases report to Secretary-General on post-2015
September 2013	Sustainable Development Solutions Network releases report to Secretary-General
September 2013	UNDG releases report based on consultations/public survey, " A Million Voices: The World We Want "
September 2013	SG hosts ' MDG success: Accelerating Action and Partnering for Impact ', showcasing multistakeholder partnerships as a model for the Post-2015 Agenda
September 2013	SG presents report on the MDGs and the post-2015 agenda at the UNGA, " A Life of Dignity for All "
September 2013	General Assembly adopts the Outcome Document of the Special Event on MDGs.

November 2013 - February 2014	Second four sessions of OWG on SDGs
February - June 2014	The President of the 68th session of the UNGA, John Ashe, organises six multi-stakeholders events to advance consensus on the post-2015 Agenda
March - July 2014	The OWG on SDGs moves into negotiation phase
2014	The UNDG organises a second round of consultations among stakeholders focusing on the means of implementation of a post-2015 Agenda
By September 2014	OWG on SDGs to report back to UNGA with proposals for a set of SDGs
By end of 2014	SG to synthesise all inputs to the post-2015 process in a final report
End of 2014 – September 2015	Intergovernmental negotiations to begin on a successor framework to MDGs
September 2015	High-level summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Source: [FAO](#)

Fig.1.4 The Post-2015 Development Agenda



Source: [Beyond 2015](#)

1.3. Comparing MDGs and proposed SDGs

In 2000, with the main aim of eradicating poverty and fostering development, 189 countries agreed on the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** in the [UN Millennium Declaration](#): eight individual MDGs and 21 related targets, measured by 60 official indicators. Among the numerous studies and reflections on the MDGs, the UN Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda (2012) has acknowledged the major **critiques** mentioned in the literature, and recommended a more holistic approach to the MDG framework along four key dimensions: (1) inclusive social development; (2) inclusive economic development; (3) environmental sustainability; and (4) peace and security (UNSTT, 2012, p.i)⁹. From our analysis, we had the impression that at least these four main dimensions were taken into consideration during the OWG sessions and seem reflected in the ‘zero draft’ of the sustainable development goals agreed upon in July 2014. In order to provide a brief outlook of what is meant for the SDGs to conclude the unfinished business of the MDGs and respond to new challenges, we put in Fig.1.5 below both, the MDGs and the proposed SDGs next to each other.

Fig.1.5 Comparing MDGs and proposed SDGs

MDGs	Proposed SDGs
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. Achieve universal primary education	Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Reduce child mortality	Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
5. Improve maternal health	Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
8. Develop a global partnership for development	Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
	Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
	Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
	Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
	Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
	Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
	Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
	Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
	Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
	Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Taking a closer look, it seems that all MDGs are well translated into the SDGs list and its targets. For instance, SDG 1 and 2 evidently follow the first MDG ‘Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger’. SDG 4 clearly mirrors and deepens the second MDG ‘Achieve universal primary education’ by adding important considerations concerning inclusiveness, equity and a continuous process of education throughout a life-time (e.g. life-long learning).

⁹ UNSTT (2012). Realizing the future we want: A report to the Secretary General. New York: UN.

As questioned and criticised by many in the past years, the seventh MDG ‘Ensure environmental sustainability’ has been completely remodelled and significantly enlarged by several new SDGs that reflect well many of the concerns expressed, especially by scientists and NGOs. In this context, for instance, while we favour the inclusion of a SDG to ‘Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’ (SDG 11), which puts the attention of policy-makers on crucial sustainability-related issues of urbanisation and cities as major engines of environmental problems, it is also important to point out that there is **no mentioning of ‘limits to growth’, ‘planetary boundaries’ or the physical limits of Planet Earth.** In this regard, we want to highlight and challenge one aspect of SDG 8 to ‘Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all’. Especially with respect to the physical limits of the environment, we ask: to what extent can a ‘sustained economic growth’, hence infinite, perpetual and continuous, be ‘sustainable’?

Likewise, we also note the weakness of the SDG 13 ‘Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts’ and, especially, of its targets that do not really account for the actual and critical peril that climate change is posing and will continue to pose to a sustainable development of the human people.

From a social perspective, we welcome the many references to inclusiveness by several SDGs. Similarly, we want to point out two SDGs that are very interesting and worth taking a closer look: on the one hand, SDG 10, ‘Reduce inequality within and among countries’, is particularly important with respect to equity issues that have been so often overlooked in the past, and represents “one of the most transformative goals proposed by the OWG” ([Beyond 2015](#)). On the other hand, SDG 16 ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels’ takes into consideration the need for peace, justice and good governance for effectively supporting and promoting sustainable development.

1.4. Governance for SD: Challenges and opportunities for SDGs implementation in the EU

The **effective implementation of SDGs** warrants coordinated actions from different institutions and stakeholders at the EU, national and subnational levels. The complexity of a multitude of institutions and stakeholders with diverse aims, competences and incentive structures could best be conceptualised through a ‘governance for SD’ lens. Through this lens one can better understand the dynamic relationships between different institutional actors and other stakeholder, and appreciate the inherent complexity of the processes through which the objectives of SDGs need to be realized (see also Niestroy, 2014)¹⁰. Three main challenges emerge: vertical policy integration between different institutional levels, horizontal policy integration between different sectors and policy arenas, and participation of relevant stakeholders.

In this context, **governance for sustainable Development** could assist and guide the implementation of SDGs through 3 steps. First, to conceptualize the complexity of the situation and identify institutions and stakeholders that are significant for a successful implementation of the SDGs (i.e. responsible actors and their specific competencies and capacities). Second, to assess which actions could be most effectively implemented at different governance levels, supported by coordinated actions of different institutional levels and stakeholder groups, and how they affect synergies between different SDGs (i.e. vertical policy integration). Third, we need to investigate if the effectiveness of the modes of governance could be

¹⁰ Niestroy, I. 2014. Governance for Sustainable Development: How to Support the Implementation of SDGs?. Chapter 10 In: *ASEF Outlook Report 2014-2015 - Facts and Perspectives - Volume II: Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, pp.141-155

improved through the creation of coordinating institutional structures and policy instruments (i.e. horizontal policy integration and policy coherence).

Sustainable development policies and initiatives require **multi-layered decision making, multi-level coordination and cooperation, and multitude of stakeholders** intervening in the process (Lafferty, 2002; Berger & Streuer, 2009)¹¹. This need for integration and cooperation is also evident between different levels of political institutions – UN, EU, national governments, municipal governments – as well as local and international stakeholders. Furthermore, stakeholders are diverse, have different perceptions of relevant time frames and face different incentive structures. The diversity of areas touched by the SDGs represents an additional governance challenge, since this could result in contradictions between policies and mechanisms and the weighting of different challenges will be goal-specific rather than universal.

Bulkeley et al. (2013, pp.966-967)¹² have identified three opportunities to advance governance for SD:

1. Reframing of the way in which problems of sustainability are described and approached;
2. Formulating effective sustainable development goals; and
3. Identifying new ways to open up the sustainable development debate to a multitude of actors and interests.

The **formulation of universal SDGs** clearly responds to these three opportunities. They could be a **new way to describe and approach sustainability more effectively both on a national and sub-national level**. Furthermore, the aim of tying the SDGs to specific targets and indicators enhances opportunities for effective implementation, facilitates monitoring, and, therefore, could contribute in improving reflexivity. Considering the complexities of SD issues (multi-actor, multi-level, multi-sector), governance for SD through institutions and processes that guide and coordinate a concerted effort is required (Niestroy, 2014). This puts the existing institutions as well as individual policymakers in a crucial role to promote dialogue, cooperation and coordination of different actors in order to promote SDGs effectively. There are five key principles to guide this governance effort put forward in UN and EU documents (Berger, 2009; Steurer, 2009, Lange et al, 2013)¹³: horizontal policy integration, vertical policy integration, participation, reflexivity and the integration of long and short-term time scales. Niestroy (2014) compiles these principles and conceptualizes them in terms of specific governance challenges for sustainable development (see fig.1.6).

Fig. 1.6 Five normative governance principles for SD

Characteristics of integration	Governance principle	What needs to be coordinated/ integrated?	Challenge for governance for SD
Policy sectors / areas	Horizontal coordination/ integration	Multiple sectors: economic, social and environmental policies	Policy coherence and systemic thinking
Policy levels / spatial scales	Vertical coordination/ integration	Multiple levels: local, subnational, national and supranational	Coordination, links and cooperation of governments and administrations at all levels

¹¹ Berger, G. & Streuer, R. 2009. 'Horizontal Policy Integration and Sustainable Development: Conceptual remarks and governance examples'. ESDN Quarterly report. June 2009

Lafferty, W.M. 2002. 'Adapting governance practice to the goal of sustainable development'. Available at <http://webs.uvigo.es/dialogos/biblioteca/goals.pdf>.

¹² Bulkeley H, Jordan A, Perkins R, Selin H, 2013, 'Governing sustainability: Rio+20 and the road beyond'. Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy, 31(6) 958 – 970.

¹³ Berger, G. 2009. 'Governance for Sustainable Development: Concepts, principles and challenges', paper presented at the Eurofound Expert meeting: Industrial Relations and Sustainability, Brussels, 3rd December, 2009.

Steurer, R. 2009. 'Sustainable development as governance reform agenda; an aggregation of distinguishes challenges for policy –making'. Institute of forest, Environment and natural resource Poliy, Discussion Paper. 1-2009.

Lange P. et al 2013. 'Governing Towards Sustainability—Conceptualizing Modes of Governance'. Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning. 15(3) 403-425/

Characteristics of integration	Governance principle	What needs to be coordinated/integrated?	Challenge for governance for SD
Actors / stakeholders	Participation	Multiple actors: decision-makers and stakeholders from politics, business and civil society	Stakeholder participation in discussion and decision-making processes
Knowledge	Reflexivity	Knowledge and experience from various areas in society, learning process	Continuous reflection and evaluation of decisions and policy instruments
Time	Intra- and Inter-generational equity	Long- and short-term thinking	Long-term thinking despite short election cycles

Source: adapted from Steurer (2009) and Niestroy (2014)

Efforts for SDG implantation will primarily be concentrated on the national level. Considering the high level of interconnectedness in Europe in particular, the EU should play a crucial role not only in terms of coordination, but also engage in an incentivising role, and take the lead in revitalising SD policies and goals among EU Member States. Although policy coherence at EU and national level is of uttermost importance, at the same time, sufficient flexibility is necessary to react to regional and local developmental needs. This needs to be considered not only at the implementation stage, but already at the negotiations of the SDGs. Coherently, Osborn & Ullah (2014)¹⁴ question the proposed SDGs as they put too much emphasis on poverty eradication, which is more relevant for developing countries and do not adequately address the “sustainability transformation needed in the developed and middle income countries over the next generation” and how this will in turn affect developing countries.

To fully assess and improve the effectiveness of the implementation process of SDGs we do not only have to look at goal attainment, but at the process itself. This is when governance for SD is most needed as it should be part of the SDGs targets itself, with the main intention to assure coherence and effectiveness for all SDGs. However, the assessment of the success of any approach to governance for SD will not be an easy task. A central component of governance for SD is reflexivity, by which we mean the continuous reflection and re-evaluation of specific policies as well as questioning and re-defining of long-term normative objectives (Steurer, 2009, p.9). This calls for a system of monitoring and reviewing progress and the identification of policy-relevant knowledge from different institutional actors and stakeholders. This would warrant a move away from traditional policy processes that based on short term targets towards a transition management approach¹⁵ characterised by continuous re-evaluation and adaptation of policies both in terms of short-term objectives and long-term goals (Kemp and Loorbach, 2003; Kemp, Parto & Gibson, 2005, p. 23)¹⁶. The SDGs could act as an articulation of these long-term goals. However, vertical and horizontal integration of such transition management process will be challenging. Furthermore, the challenge remains in formulating SDG targets in such a way that they display a level of specificity that facilitates effective implementation and remain flexible enough to account for evolving national and sub-national idiosyncrasies.

¹⁴ Osborn, D. & Ullah, F. 2014. 'Sustainable Development Goals. A Universal Agenda that should shape strategies, priorities and action in both developed and developing countries, and in middle income countries. How to build on the Draft Goals prepared by the UN's Open Working Group- A Challenge - and an Opportunity - for Europe'. Paper by Stakeholder Forum for ESDN Conference. Rome 6-7 November 2014.

¹⁵ For an over view on sustainable transitions see:

Pisano, Lepuschitz & Berger (2014) 'Transformative environmental and sustainability policy: new thematic issues, actor constellations and governance modes', 11th ESDN Workshop Discussion Paper

¹⁶ Kemp, R. & Loorbach, D. 2003. 'Governance for sustainability through transitions management'. Paper for Open meeting of the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Research Community. October 26-19 Montreal Canada.

Kemp, R.; Parto, S. & Gibson, R. 2005. 'Governance for sustainable development: moving from theory to practice'. International Journal of Sustainable Development. 8 (1/2).

2. Impact of SDGs in Europe and SD governance

In this chapter our main intention is to provide an overview of how the European Union's SD goals and targets relate to the targets included in the list of the zero draft of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). In our analysis, we took into consideration two of the major **European policy strategies**: the **renewed EU SDS** (2006) and the **Europe 2020 Strategy** (2010)¹⁷. We firstly describe these two strategies and then explain what sources and indicators we used in our analysis. These indicators are mainly drawn from the EU SD Indicators Framework developed by Eurostat. In the second section, we offer the actual analysis we performed looking at the main differences and commonalities among the SDGs and targets and the European indicators on the same or similar topics.

2.1. The EU's role in the Post-2015 Agenda

2.1.1. The EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS)

Renewed and adopted in 2006, the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) sets out objectives and concrete actions for **seven key priority challenges**, mostly for the period until 2010:

1. **Climate change and clean energy**: *to limit climate change and its costs and negative effects to society and the environment;*
2. **Sustainable transport**: *to ensure that our transport systems meet society's economic, social and environmental needs whilst minimising their undesirable impacts on the economy, society and the environment;*
3. **Sustainable consumption & production**: *to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns;*
4. **Conservation and management of natural resources**: *to improve management and avoid overexploitation of natural resources, recognising the value of ecosystem services;*
5. **Public Health**: *to promote good public health on equal conditions and improve protection against health threats;*
6. **Social inclusion, demography and migration**: *to create a socially inclusive society by taking into account solidarity between and within generations and to secure and increase the quality of life of citizens as a precondition for lasting individual well-being;*
7. **Global poverty and sustainable development challenges**: *to actively promote sustainable development worldwide and ensure that the European Union's internal and external policies are consistent with global sustainable development and its international commitments.*

Additionally, the renewed EU SDS includes **two cross-cutting policies** that aim to contribute to the knowledge society: 1) **Education and training**; and, 2) **Research and development**.

2.1.2. The Europe 2020 Strategy

Adopted in 2010, the Europe 2020 Strategy '**A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**' outlines three "mutually reinforcing priorities" (EC, 2010, p.3)¹⁸ for the EU:

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation

¹⁷ The next two sections are mainly based on a previous study we undertook in 2011. Please refer to: Pisano, U., G. Berger, A. Endl and M. Sedlacco (2011) Sustainable development governance & policies in the light of major EU policy strategies and international developments. ESDN Quarterly Report September 2011. Available at: http://www.sd-network.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2011-September-SD_governance_and_policies.pdf

¹⁸ European Commission (2010) EUROPE 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. COM(2010) 2020 final, 2010, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>

- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy
- Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

Although they are not exhaustive, **five EU headline targets** are to be achieved by 2020:

- I. 75% of the population aged 20-64 should be employed;
- II. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D;
- III. the "20/20/20" climate and energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction *if the conditions are right*);
- IV. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree;
- V. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.

The EU headline targets are then translated into national Europe 2020 targets that reflect the different national situations and circumstances.

2.2. The analysis of the SDGs

We mainly used two sources in our analysis, both published by EUROSTAT in 2013: the **Eurostat Monitoring Report of the EU SDS**¹⁹ and the **Europe 2020 strategy monitoring report**²⁰. These two sources represent for us the **EU SD Indicators Framework** that we refer to in the whole analysis. Additionally, we also used the Eurostat website for more information. All information about the EU's performance is retrieved from the above-mentioned sources and deliberately used here to provide readers with an understanding of the SDGs themes as treated in the European context.

As explained by Eurostat, the set of the EU SDS Indicators distinguishes between three levels of indicators:

- **Headline (or level 1) indicators** monitors the 'overall objectives' related to the seven key challenges of the EU SDS. On the whole they are widely used indicators with a high communicative and educational value. They are robust and available for most EU Member States, generally for a period of at least five years.
- The **second level** consists in most cases of indicators related to the 'operational objectives' of the Strategy. They are the lead indicators in their respective sub-themes. They are robust and available for most EU Member States for a period of at least three years.
- The **third level** consists of indicators related to actions described in the strategy or to other issues, which are useful for analysing progress towards its objectives.

Eurostat also adds that **contextual indicators** are used and are part of the SDI set, but either do not directly monitor a particular SDS objective, or they are not policy responsive. Generally, they are difficult to interpret in a normative way. They are included because they provide valuable background information on issues that have direct relevance to sustainable development policies and are helpful to gaining an understanding of the topic.

When reading the **list of SDG targets** of the zero draft, one can immediately see that such targets are presented on two levels and are described by two digits: the number of the SDG followed by either a number (i.e. target 1.3) or by a letter (i.e. target 2.b). We noted a different approach among the two types: on the one hand, numbered targets seem to be more specific, precise and with clear timelines; on the

¹⁹ EUROSTAT. 2013. Sustainable development in the European Union. 2013 monitoring report of the EU sustainable development strategy. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

²⁰ EUROSTAT. 2013. Smarter, greener, more inclusive? Indicators to support the Europe 2020 strategy. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

other hand, targets with letters seem to have a broader approach and are more open to interpretation. Therefore, we will address the ‘numbered targets’ more specifically, and will call them as ‘**level 1**’ targets. We will still provide a general overview of the other targets that we will call ‘**level 2**’ targets, but without going in too much detail.

Another consideration to take into account is that several of these zero draft targets **do not directly apply to the European context**, as they are either more focused on developing countries or consider issues that have been already largely tackled in the EU. We will try to address such issues in the description of each SDG area.

Each of the following sections includes a table showing the SDG, its proposed targets and the respective link with one or more indicators in the EU SDIs framework. Please consider that: (i) when the cell has a dash symbol ‘-’, the target cannot be related to the EU SDIs framework; (ii) when an indicator is in brackets it means that they are only implicitly related with the respective SDG target; and (iii) when an indicator is included, this means that we found a connection.

SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

The first SDG comprises five ‘level 1’ targets and two ‘level 2’ targets. Only two out of five ‘level 1’ targets suggested for the first SDG are currently expressed by EU SD Indicators, namely: targets 1.2 and 1.4. The ‘level 1’ targets on the topics **Extreme poverty**²¹ (target 1.1) and **social protection systems** (target 1.3) do not seem included in the EU SD framework, as both issues have been already addressed in Europe. Concerning, the two ‘level 2’ targets indicated with letters (a) and (b), reference can be implicitly made to the European indicator 'Bilateral official development assistance by category'. Among others, it is very interesting to note that under this SDG (see target 1.5), there is the consideration of climate change in relation with the most vulnerable part of society: the poor.

Table 2.1: Targets of SDG 1

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1.1 by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day	-
	1.2 by 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	People at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion
	1.3 implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	-
	1.4 by 2030 ensure that all men and women, particularly the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services including microfinance	(Severely materially deprived people)
	1.5 by 2030 build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters	-
	1.a. ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular LDCs, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	1.b create sound policy frameworks, at national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies to support accelerated investments in poverty eradication actions	-

Concerning Target 1.4, we show in the table that the EU indicator ‘Severely materially deprived people’ can only be implicitly related to it. However, measuring poverty and social exclusion is done following a multidimensional approach through a broad ‘**At-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion**’ indicator to serve the

²¹ Defined by the World Bank as living on less than US\$ 1.25 per day

purposes of the Europe 2020 strategy. This approach measures three forms of poverty: monetary poverty, severe material deprivation and lack of access to jobs.

SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

The SDG 2 includes five 'level 1' targets and three 'level 2' targets. Out of five 'level 1' targets, two do not have a European counterpart, as they do not seem to clearly apply to EU circumstances, namely targets on malnutrition (target 2.2) and on agricultural productivity of small-scale food producers (target 2.3). In addition, SDG 'target 2.1' is somehow loosely addressed by the EU Indicator '**Severely materially deprived people**', which is one of three components of the Europe 2020 strategy's headline indicator 'People at risk of poverty or social exclusion'. Severely materially deprived people are living in conditions severely constrained by a lack of resources: among other issues, these people cannot afford *eating meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day*.

Table 2.2: Targets of SDG 2

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	2.1 by 2030 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	(Severely materially deprived people)
	2.2 by 2030 end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving by 2025 the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons	-
	2.3 by 2030 double the agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment	-
	2.4 by 2030 ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality	Area under organic farming
	2.5 by 2020 maintain genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at national, regional and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge as internationally agreed	Farmland bird index
	2.a increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development, and plant and livestock gene banks to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular in least developed countries	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	2.b. correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets including by the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round	Aggregated measurement of support for agriculture
	2.c. adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives, and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility	-

SDG targets 2.4 and 2.5 can be more clearly related to EU SD indicators '**Area under organic farming**' and to the '**Farmland bird index**'.

Finally, 'target 2.a' seems loosely addressed by EU indicator '**Bilateral official development assistance by category**'. Also 'target 2.b' could be associated to the EU Indicator '**Aggregated measurement of support for agriculture**' that, as observed by Eurostat, shows how in recent years the EU reduced trade-related subsidies for agriculture. Finally, we could not find any European counterpart with SDG target 2.c.

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Nine 'level 1' targets and four 'level 2' targets describe further the third SDG on **health** and **well-being**. Only one 'level 1' target is clearly addressed within the EU SD indicators framework. SDG target 3.6 is in fact considered by Eurostat's indicator '**People killed in road accidents**'.

Table 2.3: Targets of SDG 3

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	3.1 by 2030 reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births	-
	3.2 by 2030 end preventable deaths of newborns and under-five children	-
	3.3 by 2030 end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases, and other communicable diseases	-
	3.4 by 2030 reduce by one-third pre-mature mortality from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through prevention and treatment, and promote mental health and wellbeing	-
	3.5 strengthen prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol	-
	3.6 by 2020 halve global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	People killed in road accidents
	3.7 by 2030 ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes	-
	3.8 achieve universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all	-
	3.9 by 2030 substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, and soil pollution and contamination	(Index of production of toxic chemicals, by toxicity class)
	3.a strengthen implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries as appropriate	-
	3.b support research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the TRIPS agreement regarding flexibilities to protect public health and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all	-
	3.c increase substantially health financing and the recruitment, development and training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in LDCs and SIDS	-
	3.d strengthen the capacity of all countries, particularly developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction, and management of national and global health risks	-

Somehow related to the SDG target 3.9 is the EU SD indicator '**Production of toxic chemicals**' that expresses the EUSDS objective of 'Ensuring that by 2020 chemicals, including pesticides, are produced, handled and used in ways that do not pose significant threats to human health and the environment'. In this context, the EU adopted the Regulation for the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH) that entered into force in 2007.

Concerning the SDG targets 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, we could not find an appropriate pairing within the EU SD indicators framework. Finally, we had the impression the whole list of targets related to the third SDG are not really well addressed to European circumstances and context.

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all

Table 2.4: Targets of SDG 4

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all	4.1 by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	(Early leavers from education and training)
	4.2 by 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	Participation in early childhood education
	4.3 by 2030 ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	(Tertiary educational attainment, by sex, age group 30-34)

	4.4 by 2030, increase by x% the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	(Lifelong learning)
	4.5 by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations	-
	4.6 by 2030 ensure that all youth and at least x% of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	(Low reading literacy performance of pupils)
	4.7 by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	-
	4.a build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	-
	4.b by 2020 expand by x% globally the number of scholarships for developing countries in particular LDCs, SIDS and African countries to enrol in higher education, including vocational training, ICT, technical, engineering and scientific programmes in developed countries and other developing countries	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	4.c by 2030 increase by x% the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially LDCs and SIDS	-

The fourth SDG comprehends seven 'level 1' targets and three 'level 2' targets. Almost all targets seem reflected within the EU SD indicators framework and, especially, in the **Europe 2020 strategy**, which has one of its headline targets addressing education and life-long learning, namely: (i) Reducing early school leavers to less 10%; (ii) At least 40% of 30-34 year-olds completing third level education. The two Europe 2020 targets are embedded in the broader [Strategic Framework for Education and Training 2020 \(ET 2020\)](#), which covers the areas of life-long learning and mobility; quality and efficiency of education and training; equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training.

However, only one out of seven 'level 1' targets can be clearly associated with an EU SD Indicator, namely we found a coherent match only between target 1.2 and EU SD Indicator 'Participation in early childhood education'. Concerning 'level 2' targets, there is no clear link to the EU SDIs framework.

Among others, we want to highlight target 4.1 ***“by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes”***: what is meant by 'free' education? This seems to have the potential to induce enormous changes in every country around the world, when primary and secondary education are made free for everybody. Another potentially very interesting and particularly effective target is number 4.7 that concentrates on ensuring by 2030 that ***“all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development (...)”***, which, we believe, could help create new generations of world citizens more attentive to sustainability key issues.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

SDG 5 is further elaborated through six 'level 1' targets and three 'level 2' targets. Almost all SDG 5 targets seem to more relevant for developing countries than the European context. **No clear connection** is to be seen between the two frameworks.

Table 2.5: Targets of SDG 5

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	5.1 end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	(Gender pay gap in unadjusted form)
	5.2 eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	-
	5.3 eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations	-
	5.4 recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the	-

	household and the family as nationally appropriate	
	5.5 ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life	-
	5.6 ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	-
	5.a undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources in accordance with national laws	-
	5.b enhance the use of enabling technologies, in particular ICT, to promote women’s empowerment	-
	5.c adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	-(²²)

However, in many ways European policies and the EU SD indicators framework take particular attention to the situation of women in the EU. For this reason, we have the impression that SDG 5’s target 5.1 can be therefore associated to the European context, although rather implicitly. For instance, by using the indicator ‘**Gender pay gap in unadjusted form**’, Eurostat explains the gap between women’s and men’s earnings and reflects on one of the operational objectives and targets of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy under the Key Challenge ‘Social inclusion, demography and migration’ with the intention of *significantly increasing the labour market participation of women*.

SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

SDG 6 is further described by six ‘level 1’ targets and two ‘level 2’ targets. Among all SDG 6 ‘level 1’ targets, only two targets can be clearly associated to the EU SDIs framework. For instance, target 6.4 appears to be mirrored in the EU SD framework through the indicator “Water exploitation index”. This indicator presents:

- the annual total fresh water abstraction in a country as a percentage of its long term average available water (LTAA) from renewable fresh water resources;
- the annual groundwater abstraction as a percentage of the country’s long-term annual average groundwater available for abstraction; and
- the annual surface water abstraction as a percentage of the country’s long-term annual average surface water resources available for abstraction.

Table 2.6: Targets of SDG 6

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	6.1 by 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	6.2 by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	6.3 by 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater, and increasing recycling and safe reuse by x% globally	Biochemical oxygen demand in rivers
	6.4 by 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity, and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity	Water exploitation index
	6.5 by 2030 implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate	-
	6.6 by 2020 protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes	-
	6.a by 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	6.b support and strengthen the participation of local communities for improving water and sanitation management	-

²² This is not really addressed, but we could find some references to this target in the Eurostat Monitoring Report

Currently, in the EU, water-related issues are mainly addressed by the [Water Framework Directive](#) that represents the main legal instrument for water policy. At the same time, in 2012, the EU Commission published the Communication '[A Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources](#)' outlines actions that concentrate on better implementation of current water legislation, integration of water policy objectives into other policies, and filling the gaps in particular as regards water quantity and efficiency²³. The Water Blueprint represents the water milestone of the [2011 Resource Efficiency Roadmap](#) of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Of the two 'level 2' targets only target 6.a can be implicitly associated with the EU SD indicator '**Bilateral official development assistance by category**'.

SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

SDG 7 is further described by three 'level 1' targets and two 'level 2' targets. In general, we can say that SDG 7 'level 1' targets are very well reflected within the EU system. Additionally, while target 7.b is not really applicable to EU circumstances as it is directed towards developing countries in particular, target 7.a does not appear considered in the EU SD indicators framework.

Table 2.7: Targets of SDG 7

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all	7.1 by 2030 ensure universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services	-
	7.2 increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by 2030	Share of renewables in gross final energy consumption
	7.3 double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency by 2030	Primary energy consumption
	7.a by 2030 enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies	-
	7.b by 2030 expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, particularly LDCs and SIDS	-

In 2009 - and then kept as key headline targets by the Europe 2020 Strategy – the EU endorsed the [climate and energy package](#) as a set of binding legislation in order to meet the so-called "**20-20-20**" targets by 2020:

- A 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels;
- Raising the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%;
- A 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.

In addition, the EU proposed to increase its emissions reduction to 30% by 2020 if other major economies in the developed and developing worlds commit to undertake their fair share of a global emissions reduction effort²⁴.

With this in mind, while SDG target 7.1 does not really apply to the European context, 'level 1' targets 7.2 on **renewable energies** and 7.3 on **energy efficiency** are already monitored in EU by the respective indicators '**Share of renewables in gross final energy consumption**' and '**Primary energy consumption**'.

²³ For more information, refer to: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

²⁴ The European Commission has published a Communication analysing the options for moving beyond a 20% reduction by 2020 and assessing the risk of "carbon leakage". For more information, refer to: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0265&from=EN>

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

SDG 8 comprises ten 'level 1' targets and two 'level 2' targets. Among the ten 'level 1' targets, we have the impression that three of them are not really relevant in the EU context (namely, targets 8.3, 8.7, 8.10). However, the 8th SDG and its targets are broadly very close to the EU context and particularly to the Europe 2020 strategy, which is working towards **smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**. Accordingly, the majority of these targets are already translated in the EU system.

For instance, with regard to target 8.2, the EU is measuring **Labour productivity**. A second example is target 8.4, which is again largely mirrored in the EU context through one of Europe 2020 strategy's flagship initiatives dedicated to resource efficiency. The indicator used in the European context is '**Resource productivity**'.

Table 2.8: Targets of SDG 8

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.1 sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries	Real GDP per capita
	8.2 achieve higher levels of productivity of economies through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors	Real labour productivity growth per hour worked
	8.3 promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises including through access to financial services	-
	8.4 improve progressively through 2030 global resource efficiency in consumption and production, and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production with developed countries taking the lead	Resource productivity
	8.5 by 2030 achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	Total employment rate
	8.6 by 2020 substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	NEET
	8.7 take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, eradicate forced labour, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms including recruitment and use of child soldiers	-
	8.8 protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment	(Serious accidents at work)
	8.9 by 2030 devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products	-
	8.10 strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and to expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all	-
	8.a increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, particularly LDCs, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for LDCs	(EU imports from developing countries, by income group)
	8.b by 2020 develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the ILO Global Jobs Pact	-

SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

SDG 9 is further developed through five 'level 1' targets and three 'level 2' targets. Most of the targets either do not appear very relevant to the EU context, if not for those more related to fostering innovation, or do not appear clearly considered in the EU SD indicators framework.

Table 2.9: Targets of SDG 9

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote	9.1 develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all	-
	9.2 promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and by 2030 raise significantly industry's share of employment and GDP in line with national circumstances, and double its share in LDCs	-

inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	9.3 increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, particularly in developing countries, to financial services including affordable credit and their integration into value chains and markets	-
	9.4 by 2030 upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities	-
	9.5 enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, particularly developing countries, including by 2030 encouraging innovation and increasing the number of R&D workers per one million people by x% and public and private R&D spending	Total R&D expenditure
	9.a facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	9.b support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for inter alia industrial diversification and value addition to commodities	-
	9.c significantly increase access to ICT and strive to provide universal and affordable access to internet in LDCs by 2020	(E-government on-line availability)

The closest of these targets to EU goals is target 9.5. In the EU context, Research, Development, and Innovation all have a pivotal role and are crucial components in the Europe 2020 strategy. Accordingly, one of the headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy is to make sure that 3% of the EU's GDP is invested in R&D. Eurostat clarifies that the EU headline indicator '**gross domestic expenditure on R&D**' shows the proportion of GDP dedicated to research and development: the indicator is also referred to as 'R&D intensity' because it reflects the extent of research and innovation activities undertaken in terms of resources input.

All 'level 2' targets are somehow related to supporting and assisting developing countries in the themes of the ninth SDG. Therefore, we could only find two implicit connections as can be seen in the table.

SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

SDG 10 includes seven 'level 1' targets and three 'level 2'. Although this SDG seems to be one of the most innovative, as it introduces highly important and often-contested topics on the global agenda (i.e. inequality, global financial markets regulations, migration), from our analysis it does not appear to be clearly mirrored in the EU SDIs Framework. Despite this innovative approach, these targets do not seem really well-targeted enough to the EU context.

Possibly the closest of the EU SD Indicators to this area is 'Inequality of income distribution', which somehow implicitly reflects target 10.1. Another example of an EU indicator close to SDG 10 targets can be given considering migration and target 10.7: in this case, the EU SD indicators framework uses 'Crude rate of net migration plus adjustment'.

All 'level 2' targets are somehow related to supporting and assisting developing countries in the topics of the tenth SDG.

Table 2.10: Targets of SDG 10

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.1 by 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average	(Inequality of income distribution)
	10.2 by 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status	-
	10.3 ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard	-
	10.4 adopt policies especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality	(Gender pay gap in unadjusted form)
	10.5 improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations	-

	10.6 ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions	-
	10.7 facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies	Crude rate of net migration plus adjustment
	10.a implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with WTO agreements	Aggregated measurement of support for agriculture
	10.b encourage ODA and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to states where the need is greatest, in particular LDCs, African countries, SIDS, and LLDCs, in accordance with their national plans and programmes	Official development assistance
	10.c by 2030, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%	-

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Table 2.11: Targets of SDG 11

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	11.1 by 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums	-
	11.2 by 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons	(People killed in road accidents)
	11.3 by 2030 enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacities for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries	-
	11.4 strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	-
	11.5 by 2030 significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of affected people and decrease by y% the economic losses relative to GDP caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with the focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations	-
	11.6 by 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality, municipal and other waste management	1: Municipal waste generation and treatment, by type of treatment method 2: Urban population exposure to air pollution by particulate matter 3: Urban population exposure to air pollution by ozone
	11.7 by 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	-
	11.a support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning	-
	11.b by 2020, increase by x% the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, develop and implement in line with the forthcoming Hyogo Framework holistic disaster risk management at all levels	-
	11.c support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, for sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)

Ten targets (seven 'level 1' and three 'level 2' targets) further explain SDG 11 on cities and human settlements.

Among 'level 1' targets, only one target is clearly mirrored in the EU SD indicators framework. Target 11.6 that can be associated with at least three indicators in the EU SD indicators framework, namely: 1) Municipal waste generation and treatment, by type of treatment method; 2) Urban population exposure to air pollution by particulate matter; and, 3) Urban population exposure to air pollution by ozone.

For what concerns 'level 2' targets, we could not find a clear relation with the EU system, but only an implicit one between target 11.c and EU SD Indicator 'Bilateral official development assistance by category'.

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

SDG 12 is further described by eight ‘level 1’ targets and three ‘level 2’ targets. This SDG and its targets are in general very much under the lens of European policies and strategies. Accordingly, ‘Sustainable consumption and production’ represents the second of ten themes of the EU SD Indicators framework.

However, we could not find a direct and clear mirroring of SDG 12 targets in the European framework, even though some EU indicators treats similar topics (i.e. waste management) and can be implicitly associated to the SDG’s targets.

For what concerns ‘level 2’ targets, we could not find a clear relation with the EU system.

Table 2.12: Targets of SDG 12

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.1 implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production (10YFP), all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries	-
	12.2 by 2030 achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	(Domestic material consumption by material)
	12.3 by 2030 halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer level, and reduce food losses along production and supply chains including post-harvest losses	-
	12.4 by 2020 achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle in accordance with agreed international frameworks and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	(1: Index of production of toxic chemicals, by toxicity class 2: Generation of hazardous waste, by economic activity)
	12.5 by 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse	(Generation of waste excluding major mineral waste)
	12.6 encourage companies, especially large and trans-national companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle	(Organisations and sites with EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) registration)
	12.7 promote public procurement practices that are sustainable in accordance with national policies and priorities	-
	12.8 by 2030 ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature	(Ecolabel licenses)
	12.a support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacities to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production	-
	12.b develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products	-
	12.c rationalize inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities	-

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

SDG 13 is constituted by three ‘level 1’ targets and two ‘level 2’ targets. This SDG aims at taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. However, apart from *acknowledging that the UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change*, all targets not only seem weak but, moreover, are not really able to convey this message of urgency or necessary response, arguably for two main reasons. First, so differently compared to the other targets analysed until now, SDG 13 targets **do not have clear timelines**, neither close in time to the present to signal urgency, nor they include future timeframes to envision a future that is less threatening and less prone to disasters and *key risks* to human societies (especially the least developed countries and vulnerable communities) as the ones that are at moment foreseen (see for instance IPCC, 2014, pp.12-13)²⁵. Secondly,

²⁵ IPCC (2014) Summary for policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Field, C.B., V.R. Barros, D.J.

such targets are **much more vague** and **do not refer to any clear and precise measure** that could assist in conveying such a message of urgency.

This second point is especially relevant when one compares these targets and the 13th SDG in general to what is done in the European Union: the EU SD Indicator Set touches completely different topics, related to GHG emissions and global temperature, which are not at all addressed in this SDG topic.

Table 2.13: Targets of SDG 13

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	13.1 strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries	-
	13.2 integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning	-
	13.3 improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning	-
	13.a implement the commitment undertaken by developed country Parties to the UNFCCC to a goal of mobilizing jointly USD100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible	-
	13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change related planning and management, in LDCs, including focusing on women, youth, local and marginalized communities	-

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Seven 'level 1' targets and three 'level 2' are included in the SDG 14. Differences seem quite evident with the EU system. Accordingly, apart from target 14.4, we could not find other 'level 1' targets appropriately mirrored in the EU SD indicators framework (see Table 2.14). Also, 'level 2' targets do not seem at all included in the EU system.

Table 2.14: Targets of SDG 14

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	14.1 by 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution	-
	14.2 by 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration, to achieve healthy and productive oceans	-
	14.3 minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels	-
	14.4 by 2020, effectively regulate harvesting, and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics	1) Fishing fleet, total engine power; 2) fish catches from stocks outside safe biological limits
	14.5 by 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information	(Sufficiency of sites designated under the EU Habitats directive)
	14.6 by 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation *	(Aggregated measurement of support for agriculture)
	14.7 by 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism	-
	14.a increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacities and transfer marine technology taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to	-

Dokken, K.J. Mach, M.D. Mastrandrea, T.E. Bilir, M. Chatterjee, K.L. Ebi, Y.O. Estrada, R.C. Genova, B. Girma, E.S. Kissel, A.N. Levy, S. MacCracken, P.R. Mastrandrea, and L.L. White (eds.]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, pp. 1-32.

	enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular SIDS and LDCs	
	14.b provide access of small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets	-
	14.c ensure the full implementation of international law, as reflected in UNCLOS for states parties to it, including, where applicable, existing regional and international regimes for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by their parties	-

The EU SD Indicators framework treats marine resources in its eight theme ‘Natural resources’. Two indicators are mainly used here: **conservation of fish stocks**, and **fishing capacity**. These two indicators could somehow be related to SDG 14 target 14.4.

Additionally, we found that target 14.5 could be somehow related to the European index of ‘**Sufficiency of sites designated under the EU Habitats directive**’ measures the extent to which Sites of Community Importance proposed by the Member States adequately cover the species and habitats listed in Annexes I and II to the habitats directive. This index is therefore related to the ‘Habitats Directive’ that, together with the Birds Directive, forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy.

SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

SDG 15 is further defined by nine ‘level 1’ targets and three ‘level 2’ targets. Apart from target 15.5, all SDG 15 targets seem not to be reflected very well in the EU SD Indicators framework. The only connections we could find are loosely related to target 15.1. The EU SD indicators framework treats this topic with the indicator ‘**Water exploitation index**’.

This being said, we have to point out that many of these issues are anyway taken into consideration by the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, especially under the key objective ‘**Conservation and management of natural resources**’ that aims at improving management and avoid overexploitation of natural resources, recognising the value of ecosystem services. For instance, SDG target 15.2 is addressed by the EU SDS’s operational objective ‘Contributing effectively to achieving the four United Nations global objectives on forests by 2015’, through a number of actions among which sustainable forest management represents one of the most important ones. In the context of conservation, we already mentioned the EU Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive, which form the foundation of Europe's nature conservation policy.

Table 2.15: Targets of SDG 15

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	15.1 by 2020 ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	(Water exploitation index)
	15.2 by 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests, and increase afforestation and reforestation by x% globally	(1: Forest increment and fellings 2: Deadwood)
	15.3 by 2020, combat desertification, and restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation neutral world	-
	15.4 by 2030 ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, to enhance their capacity to provide benefits which are essential for sustainable development	-
	15.5 take urgent and significant action to reduce degradation of natural habitat, halt the loss of biodiversity, and by 2020 protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species	Sufficiency of sites designated under the EU Habitats directive
	15.6 ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, and promote appropriate access to genetic resources	-
	15.7 take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products	-
	15.8 by 2020 introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems, and control or eradicate the	-

	priority species	
	15.9 by 2020, integrate ecosystems and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes and poverty reduction strategies, and accounts	-
	15.a mobilize and significantly increase from all sources financial resources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems	-
	15.b mobilize significantly resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management, and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance sustainable forest management, including for conservation and reforestation	-
	15.c enhance global support to efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities	-

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

SDG 16 includes ten ‘level 1’ targets and two ‘level 2’ targets. Several of these targets relate in many ways to the European context, especially considering for instance the following guiding principles of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy:

1. *promotion and protection of fundamental rights;*
2. *solidarity within and between generations;*
3. *open and democratic society;*
4. *involvement of citizens;*
5. *involvement of businesses and social partners;*
6. *policy coherence and governance;*
7. *policy integration;*
8. *use best available knowledge;*
9. *precautionary principle;*
10. *make polluters pay.*

However, we could not find a clear relation between the two frameworks. Only four EU SD Indicators seem implicitly reflect three of the SDG16 targets.

We can somehow relate SDG target 16.3 to two EU SD indicators: ‘New infringement cases’ and ‘Transposition deficit’. Also somehow related to the EU SD Indicators framework are SDG target 16.6 and target 16.7. More specifically, SDG target 16.6 could be loosely mirrored in the EU system with the indicator ‘Level of citizens’ confidence in EU institutions’. Concerning SDG target 16.7, this could be associated with EU indicator ‘Voter turnout in national and EU parliamentary elections’.

Table 2.16: Targets of SDG 16

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.1 significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere	-
	16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children	-
	16.3 promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all	(1: New infringement cases, 2: Transposition deficit)
	16.4 by 2030 significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime	-
	16.5 substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all its forms	-
	16.6 develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	(Level of citizens’ confidence in EU institutions)
	16.7 ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	(Voter turnout in national and EU parliamentary elections)
	16.8 broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance	-
	16.9 by 2030 provide legal identity for all including birth registration	-
	16.10 ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements	-
	16.a strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for	-

	building capacities at all levels, in particular in developing countries, for preventing violence and combating terrorism and crime	
	16.b promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development	-

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Table 2.17: Targets of SDG 17

SDG	Targets	EU SDIs Framework
Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Finance	
	17.1 strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection	-
	17.2 developed countries to implement fully their ODA commitments, including to provide 0.7% of GNI in ODA to developing countries of which 0.15-0.20% to least-developed countries	Official development assistance
	17.3 mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources	Total EU financing for developing countries, by type
	17.4 assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) to reduce debt distress	(Bilateral official development assistance by category)
	17.5 adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for LDCs	-
	Technology	
	17.6 enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation, and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, particularly at UN level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism when agreed	-
	17.7 promote development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed	-
	17.8 fully operationalize the Technology Bank and STI (Science, Technology and Innovation) capacity building mechanism for LDCs by 2017, and enhance the use of enabling technologies in particular ICT	-
	Capacity building	
	17.9 enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation	-
	Trade	
	17.10 promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO including through the conclusion of negotiations within its Doha Development Agenda	(EU imports from developing countries)
	17.11 increase significantly the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the LDC share of global exports by 2020	EU imports from least-developed countries
	17.12 realize timely implementation of duty-free, quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries consistent with WTO decisions, including through ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access	-
	Systemic issues	
	Policy and institutional coherence	
	17.13 enhance global macroeconomic stability including through policy coordination and policy coherence	-
	17.14 enhance policy coherence for sustainable development	-
	17.15 respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development	-
	Multi-stakeholder partnerships	
	17.16 enhance the global partnership for sustainable development complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of sustainable development goals in all countries, particularly developing countries	-
	17.17 encourage and promote effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships	-
	Data, monitoring and accountability	
	17.18 by 2020, enhance capacity building support to developing countries, including for LDCs and SIDS, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts	-
17.19 by 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement GDP, and support statistical capacity building in developing countries	-	

SDG 17 is further described by 19 targets divided in five sections: 1) Finance; 2) Technology; 3) Capacity building; 4) Trade; and, 5) Systemic issues.

The first section 'Finance' comprises five targets that are almost completely dedicated to support developing countries, especially through the mobilisation of financial resources. This section is clearly linked to the European context as it represents one of the EUSDS Key Challenges, namely, **Global poverty and sustainable development challenges**, which aims to *'actively promote sustainable development worldwide and ensure that the European Union's internal and external policies are consistent with global sustainable development and its international commitments'*. More precisely, the Eurostat Monitoring Report of the EU SDS dedicates the whole ninth chapter on the '**Global partnership**' theme. The headline indicator of this section is the indicator 'Official Development Assistance (ODA)'. Other important indicators of this theme that seem clearly related to the SDG 17 Finance targets are: 'Financing for developing countries', 'Share of official development assistance for least-developed countries', and 'Share of foreign direct investment in low-income countries'.

The following two sections of SDG 17, 'Technology' and 'Capacity Building', do not seem at all clearly mirrored in the EU SD Indicators framework. In addition, the three 'Technology' targets and the one 'Capacity Building' target appear all directed to developing countries and to favouring in particular North-South cooperation.

The fourth section 'Trade' is clearly considered in the EU SD Indicators framework again within the **Global Partnership** theme. Two main indicators are included under the sub-theme 'Global trade': 'Imports from developing countries' and 'Share of imports from least-developing countries'.

The last section 'System issues' of the SDG 17 is formed by seven targets divided in three subsections: a) Policy and institutional coherence (3 targets); b) Multi-stakeholder partnerships (2 targets); and, c) Data, monitoring and accountability (2 targets). This whole section does not appear to be mirrored within the EU SD Indicators Framework.

3. Conclusions and reflections

Arising from the previous chapters, several points can be made to foster reflection and, ultimately, debate among the participants of the ESDN Conference 2014:

A zero draft has been agreed with 17 SDGs and 169 targets. One year is left for deciding on the Sustainable Development Goals

The post-2015 agenda is aligning, integrating and uniting the Millennium Development Goals process with the agenda of sustainable development. SDG targets have now been put on the international agenda for a one-year final round of negotiations, waiting for a final agreement in September 2015 at the 70th UN General Assembly. In this context, the Rio+20 outcome document, 'The future we want', represents a key component for understanding the process and serves as a crucial milestone, as it initiated the SDG development process with a clear mandate. Several work streams were, therefore, established in the form of an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process: the OWG, the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, the national, global and thematic consultations, the regional consultations, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), and the UN Global Compact. The main and most prominent work stream has been the **formation of a 30-member Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG)** which had the task of developing such a set of SDGs. After thirteen rounds of meetings and negotiations, which have taken place between September 2013 and July 2014, the OWG has recently presented its proposal, a zero draft that includes 17 SDGs and 169 targets.

All MDGs seem well translated into the SDGs list and its targets: several crucial inclusions and changes have been made, some critical issues remain.

Among the numerous studies and reflections on the MDGs, the UN Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda (2012) recommended a more holistic approach to the MDG framework along four key dimensions: (1) inclusive social development; (2) inclusive economic development; (3) environmental sustainability; and (4) peace and security. From our analysis, it seems that all MDGs are well translated into the SDGs list and its targets. For instance, SDG 1 and 2 evidently follow the first MDG 'Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger'. Also, the seventh MDG 'Ensure environmental sustainability' has been completely remodelled and significantly enlarged by numerous new SDGs that better reflect many of the concerns expressed in the past, especially by scientists and NGOs. New crucial topics have been included such as, for instance, an SDG to 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' (SDG 11) or the innovative SDG 'Reduce inequality within and among countries', that is particularly important with respect to equity issues that have been so often overlooked in the past. However, some critical issues remain: For instance, it is important to point out that there is **no mentioning of 'limits to growth', 'planetary boundaries' or the physical limits of Planet Earth.** In this regard, we want to highlight and challenge one aspect of SDG 8 that aims to 'Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all'. Especially with respect to the physical limits of the environment, we ask: to what extent can a 'sustained economic growth', hence infinite, perpetual and continuous, be 'sustainable'? Likewise, we also note the weakness of the SDG 13 'Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts' and, especially, of its targets that do not really account for the actual and critical peril that climate change is posing and will continue to pose to a sustainable development of the human people.

The majority of targets appear not to be related to the EU SD Indicators Framework: only 20% can be clearly linked

SDG targets are to be divided into two slightly different categories: target 'level 1' and targets 'level 2'. As noted in chapter 2, when reading the *list of SDG targets* of the zero draft, we saw that such targets are presented on two levels and are described by two digits: the number of the SDG followed by either a number (i.e. target 1.3) or by a letter (i.e. target 2.b). We noted a different approach among the two types: on the one hand numbered targets seem to be more specific, precise and with clear timelines; on the other hand, targets with letters seem to have a broader approach and are more open to interpretation. Therefore, we called the 'numbered targets' as '**level 1**' targets, whereas the other targets with letters were considered as '**level 2**' targets, and we did not analysed them in too much detail. Another important consideration we made that needs to be part of our reflections and discussions, was that several of these zero draft targets do not seem to directly apply to the European context, as they appear either more focused on developing countries or consider issues that have been already largely tackled in the EU.

In this respect, a very important message emerges from our analysis. In total, the zero draft suggests 169 targets, which, as we call them, can be divided in 126 'level 1' targets and 43 'level 2' targets. If we take the total number of targets (169), we see that only 20% of them can be **clearly linked** to the EU SD Indicators Framework. Also, on a total of 169 targets, 108 targets seem not to be addressed at all in the EU's SD Indicator Framework (64%). When we make the distinction, only 17% of 'level 1' targets appear to be **clearly addressed**, while 60% of them do not find an appropriate relationship in the EU SDIs Framework. This picture results even stronger when we look at the 'level 2' targets: 74% do not appear to be related to the European context, and only a 7% of them find such a connection.

Governance for SD represents a good tool for better framing SDGs and their implementation, especially through reflexivity

SDG targets represent a strong opportunity for boosting a new momentum for sustainable development action at the international, national and local levels. The challenges these SDGs will pose are of course multi-faceted, especially in terms of vertical and horizontal integration and coordination, inclusion and participation of a multitude of stakeholders, policy coherence, implementation and effectiveness to move forward the SD agenda. In this context, we believe that *governance for SD*, and especially one its main components, *reflexivity*, should be reflected either among – and included in – the SDGs or should be part of a coherent and effective process of implementation, monitoring and knowledge and practice exchange at all levels.

The EU should take a leading role, both internally and internationally

We also believe that the EU should not only take the lead in revitalising SD policies and goals among EU Member States, but should also guide and play the crucial role of coordinating at a more macro-regional level with a new European framework that would express SDGs for EU countries and aim at effectively translating them on the ground – at the national and sub-national level. On the other hand, the EU would also act as key protagonist in setting more inspiring, engaging and visioning examples that could lead countries internationally towards more sustainable development.



European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)

www.sd-network.eu