



**National report on
the implementation
of the 2030 Agenda
for Sustainable
Development
PORTUGAL**



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The new United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an action plan focused on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership (5Ps). Its ultimate goal is poverty eradication and sustainable development. All States and other interested stakeholders assume their responsibilities in relation to its achievement. It should be underlined that no one should be left behind.

A transformative Agenda for sustainable development

The Summit of Heads of State and Government on the Post-2015 Development Agenda culminated in the adoption, by the United Nations General Assembly of the Resolution A/RES/70/1 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, on September 25th 2015. As a universal agenda, based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to be implemented by all countries, the 2030 Agenda calls for the integration of the SDGs into the policies, procedures and actions developed at the national, regional and global levels.

According to former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, “the 17 SDGs are our shared vision of humanity and a social contract between the world’s leaders and the people”. António Guterres, in turn, has identified the support to sustainable development, along with working for peace and internally reforming the Organization, as one of 3 priorities for his mandate as the current United Nations Secretary-General.

In fact, it should be noted that this is an Agenda with a universal dimension, to be implemented by all Parties, and not just the developing countries, in contrast with the 2000-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have therefore changed the way we approach development by: *i)* integrating the 3 dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental); *ii)* being based on universal goals and targets to be implemented by all countries (and not only by developing countries); *iii)* having a greater potential for tackling inequality and promoting human rights as a cross-cutting concern across all SDGs; and *iv)* involving new dynamic concerted efforts from a wide range of actors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private corporate sector, academia, social partners and other members of civil society, including the co-operation between parliament, government, regional and local authorities. This is a challenge which concerns us all.

Portugal's negotiating position in the process of adopting the 2030 Agenda

Portugal played an active role in drafting the document adopted at the Summit, including in the establishment of the common position to be taken by the European Union (EU), particularly in: *i)* recognizing the need to give more attention to issues pertaining to peace, security and good governance, with an emphasis on the situation of fragile States; *ii)* promoting and advocating the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, an issue of critical importance to Portugal; and *iii)* integrating a strong human rights dimension that tackles inequalities, while paying particular attention to the gender equality issues.

Portugal also argues that this Agenda needs to be based on genuine shared responsibilities between public and private actors, as well as between developed and developing countries, in addition to the traditional North-South approach.

Concerning the debate on the adaptation of the United Nations system to the challenges of the 2030 Agenda, Portugal has been arguing for an adjustment that would enable it to follow up on the degree of political commitment made, while highlighting the need to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of a United Nations system based on structured co-operation and complementarity between the different actors at the global, regional and national levels, that exploits synergies and interdependencies between their competences and strategies, avoids duplication and seeks to maximize capabilities and impact.

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the global level

Turning this vision into reality is primarily the responsibility of national governments, but the challenges also require new partnerships and a greater expression of international solidarity. All have a role to play so that no one is left behind.

Each country, including governments, civil society, companies and representatives of different stakeholders, will have to regularly assess the progress made. A set of about 230 global indicators will be used. Its results are set to be compiled in a comprehensive annual report, "The Sustainable Development Goals Report". The report highlights where the world stands regarding the implementation of these global goals, using statistical data and underlining the main gaps and the most pressing challenges facing our world.

The first report, published last year, shows that about 1 in every 8 persons in the world still lives in extreme poverty, some 800 million people are suffering from hunger, the birth of nearly one in four children under the age of 5 years is still unregistered, women spend about 2.4 times more hours per day on caregiving and household tasks than men, 1.1 billion people live without electricity, and water scarcity now affects more than 2 billion people in the world.

These statistical data highlight the importance of a global coordination of the international cooperation efforts, but the goals, in fact, apply to all societies. As the former United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, said, "developed societies still need to promote gender equality and eliminate all forms of discrimination".

The approach at the EU level

At our regional level, the European Union seeks to set out a new approach to ensure growth and sustainability in its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) beyond 2020. This process, which is associated to the review of the Europe 2020 strategy for the future, must reflect the internal and external achievement of the two major international milestones of 2015 in Sustainable Development: the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

In this respect it should be noted that sustainability in Europe extends far beyond its internal dimension. Multiple global challenges such as extreme poverty and inequality, conflicts, migration, terrorism, climate change, pandemics have, in the end, a direct impact on Europe, which is why sustainability in the region cannot be examined separately from its external dimension.

The commitment to sustainable development across borders shall be matched with efforts to ensure the internal sustainability of the European Union. It is therefore crucial that the different actors incorporate and align their strategies, programmes and initiatives to the SDGs.

In that sense, the European Commission has published, on November 22nd 2016, a Communication on the *“Next steps for a sustainable European future”* that sets out how the 2030 Agenda is to be implemented within the EU. That document confirms that sustainable development has for long been at the heart of the European project. The EU Treaties recognize the economic, social and environmental dimensions, which should be addressed together, reflecting a commitment to development that answers to today’s needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

The EU response to the internal implementation of the 2030 Agenda includes two work streams:

- The first one, presented in the referred Communication, is to fully integrate the SDGs in the European policy framework and the Juncker Commission’s ten priorities for its current term, identifying the most relevant sustainability concerns, but also assessing European policies and the efforts to achieve the 17 Goals;
- A second one will launch reflection work on further developing a long-term European vision and focus on sector-based policies after 2020 which enable the long-term implementation of the SDGs. The new Multiannual Financial Framework beyond 2020 shall also reorient the EU budget’s contributions towards that same end.

In addition, several EU financing instruments complement European policies and initiatives and contribute horizontally to the SDGs. Particular emphasis is to be given to the cohesion policy – through the European Structural and Investment Funds – as it is the main investment policy of the EU, with a view to achieving economic, social and territorial development by reducing disparities between European regions.

Simultaneously, regarding the external implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Commission also presented on November 22nd 2016 a Communication on the review of the European Consensus on Development (2005), seeking to adapt the development policy of the EU to the new international development architecture. The revised European Consensus will be adopted in 2017 and is organized around the 5Ps of the Agenda 2030. It will have a decisive impact on the elaboration of development instruments and programmes of the EU and its Member States, fostering their alignment with the SDGs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

On the other hand, the EU's impact outside its borders is not limited to its external action agenda. Many EU policies contribute to the implementation of the SDGs worldwide. Therefore, achieving coherence across all EU policies is crucial to achieving the SDGs.

Other ongoing multilateral processes

Moreover, Portugal has been strongly involved in the efforts undertaken by other international bodies to align their respective policies and instruments to the SDGs, in particular: *i)* the newly created contact network of the *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP) [Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries] aimed at achieving the SDGs and, in so doing, promotes experience-sharing and partnerships for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; *ii)* the adoption of an Action Plan of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the SDGs with a view to mainstream the SDGs across the organisation's work; and *iii)* the process of modernizing the OECD Development Assistance Committee, financing tools and the statistical reporting system, in the light of the SDGs.

Institutional model applied in Portugal: coordination and participation

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for coordinating the national position for the drafting of the 2030 Agenda. However, its implementation at the national level brings new challenges, which require some reshaping of institutional models to reflect and meet the inherent cross-sector coordination requirements.

In this process, it is also relevant to create mechanisms that provide the necessary coordination between the various institutional stakeholders, with a view to present progress reports in a number of different *fora* in which the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is discussed.

Accordingly, the Council of Ministers has adopted the first intra-governmental guidelines for the 2030 Agenda on February 25th 2016. Taking into account the need for a close alignment between the two lines of action of this Agenda – the internal and the external ones –, as well as the necessary structured dialogue with the United Nations bodies, within which the political management of the implementation will be carried out, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assumed the overall coordination, together with the Ministry of Planning and Infrastructures.

Pursuant to these guidelines, this role is played at an institutional level through the commissions responsible for the inter-ministerial coordination on foreign policy (acting as a coordination forum in charge of overseeing the domestic implementation by several ministries and preparing the reports that will inform the monitoring processes at different levels) and the inter-ministerial coordination on development cooperation (responsible for coordinating the incorporation of the SDGs into the national Development Cooperation, with regards to the external dimension of the Agenda).

In operational terms, a network of focal points from different government departments has been established. This mechanism enables, in a consistent and integrated manner, public authorities to better coordinate and exchange information between each other, thus contributing to regular updates and monitoring of the progress the country is achieving during this 15-year time horizon.

Thereafter, each of the SDGs was allocated to a coordinating ministry responsible for its implementation, monitoring and review. However, within a complementarity framework, it is important to promote the constant dialogue with other ministries and stakeholders, in a spirit of cooperation, with a view to implement this Agenda with an integrated and inclusive approach.

In this context, the country's baseline analysis on the implementation of the Agenda began with the collection of data and information in relation to all 17 SDGs, and, as a result, leading to a mapping of national policies contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In this exercise, one should underline the crucial role of Statistical Portugal and the Agency for Development and Cohesion. Indeed, in view of the challenges facing the country, the availability of data (in both quantitative and qualitative terms – available online at www.ine.pt¹) is essential for planning, monitoring and reviewing economic and social programmes and policies with an impact on development.

It should also be noted that the local authorities play a significant role in implementing the 2030 Agenda within their territory, through a set of initiatives that, in respect of their local autonomy, undoubtedly contributes to the implementation process at the national level, as a result of proximity and concrete action.

Simultaneously, a public consultation on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national and local levels took place in 2016. This process was led by a group of non-governmental organizations of the Portuguese civil society², with the support of Camões – *Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, I.P.* [Camões – Institute for Cooperation and Language] and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, with a view to collecting input on the operationalization, evaluation and monitoring of the Agenda, namely for the purpose of preparing periodic sectorial “shadow reports”.

Between April and July 2016, eight workshops took place, in different parts of the country, with a significant geographical scope, engaging participants representing more than 130 organizations. Moreover, this process included an online enquiry in an attempt to reach a wider audience and provide an opportunity for every citizen to share views, individually or on behalf of an organization. The main recommendations drawn from the civil society consultation process were presented during a seminar taking place at the Portuguese Parliament on April 19th 2017, contributing to the planning and implementation debates of the 2030 Agenda in Portugal.

In addition, being aware of the holistic and inclusive nature of this exercise, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized, on March 29th 2017, a multi-stakeholder seminar bringing together representatives of civil society. The purpose of this event was to present the inter-ministerial work, inform about the methodology used for drafting the present report as well as the next steps to be taken in preparation for the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, and hear the participating organizations' views on how the 2030 Agenda has been integrated into their own activities.

¹ See INE > Statistical information > Thematic files > Sustainable Development Goals ([link](#)).

² *Animar* – Associação Portuguesa para o Desenvolvimento Local [Portuguese Association for Local Development]; CNJ – Conselho Nacional de Juventude [National Youth Council]; *Minha Terra* – Federação Portuguesa de Associações de Desenvolvimento Local [Portuguese Federation of Associations for Local Development]; *PpDM* – Plataforma Portuguesa para os Direitos das Mulheres [Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights] e *Plataforma Portuguesa das ONGD* [Portuguese Platform for Non-Governmental Development Organizations].

Furthermore, the United Nations Global Compact Network Portugal coordinates the multi-stakeholder platform SDG Alliance Portugal, whose purpose is to raise awareness, inform, implement, monitor and evaluate the contribution of the private sector and other civil society partners to the SDGs at national level. Determined to build bridges for dialogue and cooperation, as advocated by SDG17, it creates a sustainable basis for the development of partnerships, projects, programmes and actions within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

The encouragement of partnerships is thus both a necessity and a priority, to be continuously updated within the scope of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

National priorities

The main level of the implementation process of the 2030 Agenda being undoubtedly the national one, each country has to establish how the SDGs should be implemented. Given that there are 17 SDGs and 169 targets, there is a natural tendency for each State to establish its own strategic priorities. According to this perspective, a reflection on the country's priorities is part of the national ambition, as a strategy closely associated with the cross-cutting evaluation of the state of play of the SDGs implementation.

While respectful of the national priorities and strategic guidelines, the 2030 Agenda implementation is carried out in: *i)* a full and comprehensive manner, taking into account the national effort to achieve all SDGs; *ii)* an integrated approach ensuring a global perspective on sustainable development promotion and avoiding considering policies in separate *silos*; and *iii)* a focused attitude, by clearly identifying priority areas in the light of the country's development strategy, particularly embodied in the National Reform Programme. Streamlining the 2030 Agenda into national strategies, plans and policies revolves around five thematic areas:

- People – reflecting the determination to end poverty and hunger, in all forms and dimensions, and ensuring that all human beings can fulfill their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment;
- Prosperity – ensuring that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature;
- Planet – strengthening the conviction that the planet needs to be protected from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations;
- Peace – emphasizing the determination to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence, while recalling that there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development;
- Partnership – mobilizing the means required to implement the 2030 Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people, leaving no one behind.



In light of the foregoing, Portugal embodies its strategic priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in SDG 4, 5, 9, 10, 13 and 14.

In relation to this aspect, as set out in the National Reform Programme, Portugal attaches great importance to education, training and skills throughout life. In so doing, Portugal seeks to reverse historical lags and exclusions having a direct impact on well-being, economic performance, fighting poverty, promoting equality and social cohesion, citizenship and on environment. Therefore, **SDG4 – Quality Education** is regarded as a priority area and cross-cutting issue for other Sustainable Development Goals.

One fundamental task of the State is to promote equality between women and men. Non-discrimination on grounds of gender identity or sexual orientation is a fundamental principle of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic and a structural element of the democratic rule of law. There is a clear obligation on any government to pursue active gender equality policies – a duty built on an obligation that applies to society in general. The gender equality dimension should therefore be taken into account whenever any public policy is devised and carried out. Equality between women and men is in itself an imperative and a social purpose; it is essential to fully experience citizenship and as such it is a prerequisite for building a modern, fair and equitable society, as well as for achieving truly sustainable development that fully respects human dignity. Thus, when prioritizing the SDGs at the national level, the high relevance of **SDG5 – Gender Equality** was identified.

On the other hand, economic growth, social development and climate change mitigation and adaptation are intertwined with investment in adequate infrastructure, in a modern, entrepreneurial and sustainable industry, with technological progress and the digitalization of the economy. Portugal is committed to addressing these challenges by presenting, to this end, strategies and programmes aimed at supporting and developing the infrastructure, industry and innovation sectors, while mobilizing public and private resources for that purpose. In its programme, the current Government has announced its intention to create the dynamics for balanced

economic growth and social cohesion, which mutually reinforce one another, ensuring consolidation of public finances; and adopted its medium-term strategy for development of the Portuguese economy in the National Reform Programme. It is therefore a priority to achieve **SDG9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**.

Within a prosperity framework, the principle of economic, social and territorial cohesion, widely recognized as the new paradigm of territorial development, attempts to tackle social and economic inequalities, as well as regional disparities, while being firmly based on the development of strategies to promote social justice as a normative principle associated with equity and equal opportunities. In the short-term, the Government's priorities for 2016-2017 include: *i*) fighting poverty and social exclusion, by implementing measures especially aimed at the most vulnerable groups; *ii*) reducing inequalities by further increasing the disposable household income; and *iii*) promoting access to essential goods and public services for all citizens. This aspect will be reinforced in the fight against poverty and in protecting human dignity. The structural intervention intended for these areas shall therefore be underpinned by sustainable and multifaceted criteria. It will cover areas as diverse as health, education, a fairer and more inclusive labour market, income recovery and a more balanced distribution of income, through wage policy, social protection, and fiscal policy, adjusted to new social trends and guaranteeing minimum social standards to the most vulnerable people. In this context priority is given to **SDG10 – Reducing inequalities**.

As mentioned above, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out clear economic, environmental and social goals, including concrete targets to combat climate change. In this context, two major international agreements were recently achieved: (1) a comprehensive global market-based mechanism for measuring aviation CO₂ emissions within the framework of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); and (2) the Amendment to the Montreal Protocol to reduce emissions of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), one of the most powerful greenhouse gases (GHG). The challenge in 2017 and in the coming years includes ensuring that national authorities, the private sector and civil society uphold the implementation of agreed commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase their share of renewable and clean energy, improve energy efficiency and increase the interconnection capacity, thereby gradually reinforcing the level of ambition set out in the Paris Agreement. Such commitments may be reviewed in 2018. In this context, the responses to climate change (mitigation and adaptation policies) should be framed and integrated so as to promote the proper planning and development of a resilient, competitive and low-carbon economy. Accordingly, the high relevance of **SDG13 – Climate Action** should be noted.

Finally, in a geopolitical context, Portugal is the largest coastal Member State of the European Union, and as such plays a central role in the Atlantic basin. Its maritime area covers about 4 million km² of continuous coastline, establishing the breadth of an inter-territorial sea that brings both an archipelagic and an Atlantic dimensions to the country. Consequently, Portugal plays a relevant role in ocean sustainability and governance. Considering the importance of the Sea from the point of view of its History, geography and identity, Portugal has been supporting the United Nations efforts to promote a global mobilization for the protection of the oceans and the sustainable exploitation of their resources. As seldom before, 2017 will be a particularly intense, rich and demanding year regarding the thematic area of Oceans within the United Nations framework, calling its Member States to make additional efforts towards political and diplomatic mobilization and involvement in several ongoing negotiations, in order to meet the challenges ahead. This framework supports the prioritization of a last, but not least important SDG, **SDG14 – Protecting Marine Life**.

National ambition to achieve sustainable development

Regarding the national commitment to sustainable development, enshrined in the Constitution, Portugal volunteers to present its national efforts to review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the 5th High-level Political Forum in the year whose focus theme is poverty eradication and promoting prosperity in a changing world. The set of goals to be reviewed in depth at the global level this year are SDG 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17. The fact that 3 of the national priorities that have been identified are to be reviewed this year should also be underlined.

This report sets out the national voluntary review of the implementation process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as a result of inter-ministerial coordination and public consultation efforts. It reflects the national perspective on each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, identifies priorities and challenges, policies and initiatives contributing towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and sharing good practices and national measures with the world.

Much more than just a reporting exercise, this document testifies Portugal's strong commitment to sustainable development, human rights and multilateralism embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.