



# Italy and the Sustainable Development Goals



ASviS Report 2019







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We have provided support for production of the English version of the ASViS Report because we believe it is necessary for all of us to show commitment to sustainable development and, above all, for businesses to play their part. As an electricity transmission system operator, we play a key role in enabling the use of renewable energy and ensuring the resilience of the Italian national grid. We operate in a sustainable, responsible way in order to create value for society, aware that we have a shared responsibility for the radical changes affecting today's world.

Terna. Energy is our responsibility. Responsibility is our energy.



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## Introduction

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by the 193 member countries of the United Nations, including Italy, there is a growing awareness worldwide of the need for an integrated approach to address complex economic, social, environmental and institutional challenges in order to shift to a sustainable development model. This awareness on the part of governments, businesses, civil society and individual citizens, especially young people, is emerging against an international backdrop of growing tensions and undeniable difficulties in finding multilateral solutions to global problems.

In this context, it should be noted that the 2030 Agenda is central to the strategies of the new European Commission chaired by Ursula von der Leyen, which - marking a clean break from the vacillation of the Juncker Commission - has presented a five-year action plan aimed at making sustainable development the cornerstone of European and national policies. In Italy too, the issue of sustainable development has taken on a more important role in the last year, partly thanks to the actions of ASviS. An understanding of the need and potential for a shift in the socio-economic paradigm has finally gained a foothold in civil society and the business world, in national government and among regional and city authorities, as well as in schools and among the general public, also thanks to the mobilisation of students and the success of the Italian Sustainable Development Festival, which held 1,061 events. Some of the proposals put forward by the Alliance have been endorsed by the European Commission and the new government, but only concrete actions will allow for an assessment of institutional players' effective commitment to sustainable development.

This ASviS Report for 2019, now in its fourth edition, introduces several innovations. The Report sets out the position of Italy, its regions and the European Union with regard to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, analyses the regulatory output of the last twelve months, and puts forward proposals to improve Italy's economic, social and environmental performance, thereby reducing the stark inequalities that characterise our country. The 21 Targets that Italy has committed to achieving by 2020 are then analysed in depth.

Once again, this year's Report reveals Italy's many contradictions. On the one hand, there have been alarming delays and the lack of a clear implementation strategy for the 2030 Agenda. On the other, encouraging signs have emerged, such as the new government's commitment to include the principle of sustainable development in the Constitution, to have an Urban Agenda for sustainable development, and to orient policies towards the green economy, the circular economy and combating forms of inequality, including gender-based ones.

ASviS has become a reference point in the debate on sustainable development in Italy, and is unique at international level. Once again, the Alliance's membership has grown this year (currently standing at 227, plus an additional 111 associates), and its activities have expanded. In 2019, the Festival attracted a large number of participants and was selected, from among more than 2,000 projects, as a finalist for the UN Award for sustainable development initiatives. Partnerships with institutions, businesses, universities and research centres, local authorities and civil society organisations have increased, reflecting the growing "demand" for sustainable development. As members of the Alliance's working groups, over 600 experts have contributed to drafting the 2019 Report, which is one of its kind in the international arena.

I would like to take this opportunity to wholeheartedly thank Enrico Giovannini, the ASviS Secretariat, and everyone who has contributed to this outstanding Report, which we offer Italy in order to help our country to move rapidly along a sustainable development path. As the President of the Republic, Sergio Mattarella, wrote in the declaration signed with other heads of state and government on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Action Summit on 23 September: "We are shaping a positive future for our planet. Let's leave a world worth living in as a legacy to our children and future generations". This is the commitment that gave rise to ASviS, and the commitment we are all called upon to make.

Pierluigi Stefanini, *President of the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development*



## Executive summary

Last year, we expressed our disappointment at the way Italy and the European Union were tackling the implementation of the 2030 Agenda - amid inexcusable delays and the lack of a coherent vision - by saying "we are not doing enough". However, this year we can highlight the positive signs - albeit only proclamations for now - that have recently emerged in the approaches set out by the new European Commission and the new Italian government. Likewise, we can see changing attitudes in the world of business and in international public opinion regarding the need to shift towards a different development model, partly thanks to the stance taken by the millions of young people who are calling on us all to tackle the climate emergency.

Nonetheless, we are aware that the world is not on a sustainable development path. Environmental degradation continues and global warming is accelerating, with devastating effects on ecosystems and the lives of millions of people, especially the most vulnerable. Concerns about a new economic crisis are spreading, international political and trade tensions are growing, and nationalistic and protectionist responses to national and global problems are on the increase. Inequality is still widespread and persistent.

The contradictions briefly mentioned here have also emerged in recent weeks at the UN General Assembly meeting on the 2030 Agenda, four years after its adoption. Many countries have announced concrete measures to help put the world onto a sustainable development path; major companies and financial institutions have made new commitments to change their business models and contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and demonstrations around the world have called for a drastic change in economic, social and environmental policies. However, none of these actions appear to be up to meeting the challenge we are facing, and they clash with many aspects of the everyday behaviour of individuals and institutions. Many political leaders seem unable to convince the general public that changes are needed, and in many governments and companies a short-term vision still prevails, at odds with the concept of sustainability.

The indicators developed by ASviS show the progress made in the European Union and Italy in terms of the 17 SDGs. Between 2016 and 2017, the European Union shows signs of improvement for ten Goals and a significant deterioration for one Goal, while for the other five the situation is unchanged. However, sharp disparities still exist between the performances achieved by individual European countries. For Italy, nine Goals improved between 2016 and 2017, two remained largely unchanged and six deteriorated.

Potentially a game changer for the whole world, the President-elect of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen's decision to opt for the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development caught many observers by surprise. The action plan for the next five years revolves around a vision in which economic, social and environmental policies appear to be coherently oriented towards the goal of making the European Union the "world champion of sustainable development", as affirmed in the title of the opening event of the 2019 Italian Sustainable Development Festival. The von der Leyen plan adopts some of the proposals put forward by ASviS at that event, which are set out in greater detail in the letters of appointment sent to the Vice-Presidents and Commissioners: each person has a direct responsibility, within their sphere of competence, for the achievement of the SDGs, and for the European Semester review - the policy coordination process - which should have the 2030 Agenda as its central focus.

The new President-elect's programme is a quantum leap forward after the wavering of the previous Commission, and provides a robust response to the calls made over the last twelve months by the European Parliament, the Council and European civil society. Now it is a question of moving from words to deeds, and in particular of gauging the reaction of some member countries, which have so far opposed ambitious and far-sighted decisions, regarding not only environmental issues, but also economic and social ones.

As the new government takes office in Italy, sustainable development has become a key item on the Italian political agenda. The policies agreed between the majority political parties include some of the proposals put forward by ASviS in recent years, such as including the principle of sustainable development in the Constitution, introducing an Urban Agenda for sustainable development, using the 2030 Agenda to redesign the functioning of the socio-economic system, and assessing the economic, social and environmental impact of new laws. In Italy too, it is a question of moving from statements to concrete actions, and therefore the Report sets out the actions - both systemic and relating to specific sectors - that should be undertaken as soon as possible.

In particular, with regard to cross-cutting actions and the structure of sustainable development governance, we recommend that the Prime Minister:

- send individual ministers a policy document that explicitly refers to their responsibility in the achievement of the SDGs and their Targets, with special attention paid to those with a 2020 deadline, in the same way as the President-elect of the European Commission has done;
- strengthen and clarify the role of the steering committee set up within the Cabinet Office, in order to ensure effective coordination of sectoral policies for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and also with a view to redefining the European Semester on this basis;
- set out guidelines so that the explanatory reports accompanying all draft laws include an ex-ante (and qualitative) assessment of the expected impact on the 17 SDGs, starting from the next Budget Law.

We also recommend that the Government:

- convert the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE) into the Interministerial Committee for Sustainable Development with the next Budget Law, in order to gear public investment policy towards achievement of the SDGs;
- update the National Sustainable Development Strategy to include detailed, precise objectives in the light of the new policy guidelines, and, in February 2020, present a report on the state of progress in its implementation;
- urgently identify what needs to be done to achieve the 21 Targets that Italy has committed to reach by 2020 and which it is clearly not on track to achieve;
- consider the possibility of drawing up an annual law on sustainable development, designed to introduce systemic regulatory changes (without financial implications) in order to achieve the Goals of the 2030 Agenda;
- initiate dialogue with the regions, autonomous provinces and municipalities within the framework of the Joint Conference, in order to coordinate the actions for which the various institutions are responsible in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- implement a comprehensive information and communication plan on the issue of sustainable development aimed at the entire population, similar to the one that was run when the euro was introduced.

The announcement of the intention to develop a National Urban Agenda for Sustainable Development must be followed by concrete actions, first and foremost the re-establishment of the Interministerial Committee for Urban Policies with new terms of reference. In line with the policy guidelines, we call on the government and the political parties to initiate discussion as soon as possible on the inclusion of the principle of sustainable development in the Constitution, starting with the text submitted to Parliament, and to declare a “state of climate emergency”.

The last chapter of the Report illustrates the policy actions to be taken, adopting a modern and integrated vision of sustainable development, based on seven “key areas”: the climate crisis and energy; poverty and inequality; circular economy, innovation and labour; human capital, health and education; natural capital and environmental quality; cities, infrastructure and social capital; and international cooperation. These are concrete proposals, some of which (land use, right to water, protection of ecosystems, etc.) may benefit from the work already carried out by Parliament. It is then a question of ratifying certain important agreements signed by Italy, and of rapidly implementing European Union directives.

As already mentioned, compared to the past, support from citizens, businesses, trade unions, civil society and the general public for bold actions is growing, even though some of these actions may appear to be costly in the short term. The sequence of actions is a crucial factor, as is paying attention to the most vulnerable. ASviS stands ready to assist all institutions in this process, and the success of its many activities shows that the only credible response to Italian society’s “demand for a future” lies in the sustainable development paradigm. We thought so four years ago, when very few people even knew what the 2030 Agenda was. And we continue to believe so today, bolstered by the worldwide awareness that “time is running out”.

Enrico Giovannini, *Director of the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development*



## Glossary

AAAA - Addis Ababa Action Agenda  
AICS - *Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo*  
Italian Agency for Development Cooperation  
ANCI - *Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani*  
National Association of Italian Local Authorities  
WES - Work Experience Scheme  
ASL - Local Health Authority  
EIB - European Investment Bank  
FSW - Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing  
CDP - *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti* Deposits and Loans Fund  
ESC - Economic and Social Councils  
EESC - European Economic and Social Committee  
CIAE - Interministerial Committee for European Affairs  
CICS - Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation  
CIPE - Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning  
CIPU - Interministerial Committee for Urban Policies  
CNCS - National Council for Development Cooperation  
COP 24 - 24th session of the Conference of the Parties to the Paris Agreement  
CPIA - *Centro Provinciale per l'Istruzione degli Adulti*  
Provincial Adult Education Centre  
CRUI - *Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università Italiane*  
Conference of Italian University Rectors  
DEF - *Documento di Economia e Finanza*  
Economic and Financial Planning Document  
DESA - Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat  
EFSD - European Fund for Sustainable Development  
EOD - Earth Overshoot Day  
EPSC - European Political Strategy Centre  
ESDN - European Sustainable Development Network  
ESDW - European Sustainable Development Week  
ESG - Environmental, Social, Governance  
GBS - Green Bond Standard  
GRI - Global Reporting Initiative  
GSIA - Global Sustainable Investment Alliance  
HLEG - High-level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance  
HLPF - High-level Political Forum  
ILO - International Labour Organisation  
INDIRE - *Istituto Nazionale di Documentazione, Innovazione e Ricerca Educativa*  
National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research  
IoT - Internet of Things  
IPCC - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  
ISTAT - *Istituto Nazionale di Statistica*  
Italy's National Statistical Office  
ITUC - International Trade Union Confederation  
MAECI - Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation  
MATTM - Italian Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea Protection  
MiPAFT - Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Tourism Policies  
MIUR - Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research  
NEET - Not in Education, Employment, or Training  
OECD - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

WHO - World Health Organisation  
UN - United Nations PA - Italian Public Administration  
PA - Italian Public Administration GDP - Gross Domestic Product  
PNACC - *Piano Nazionale per l'Adattamento ai Cambiamenti Climatici*  
National Climate Change Adaptation Plan  
PNIEC - *Piano Nazionale Integrato Energia e Clima*  
National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan  
PNR - *Piano Nazionale di Riforma*  
National Reform Programme  
RdC - Italian Basic Income Scheme  
RUS - *Rete delle università per lo sviluppo sostenibile*  
University Network for Sustainable Development  
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals  
SDSN - Sustainable Development Solutions Network  
SIF - Sustainable Investment Forum  
SNA - *Scuola Nazionale di Amministrazione*  
National School of Administration  
SNSvS - *Strategia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile*  
National Sustainable Development Strategy  
SR15 - Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C  
SRI - Socially Responsible Investments  
SRSP - Structural Reform Support Programme  
SSN - *Servizio Sanitario Nazionale*  
National Health Service  
STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics  
TEG - Technical Expert Group on Sustainable Finance  
EU - European Union  
UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme  
UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organisation  
EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment  
HIA - Health Impact Assessment  
VNR - Voluntary National Review  
WEF - World Economic Forum  
ZEB - Zero Emission Buildings



## The 2030 Agenda around the world

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## 1. The 2030 Agenda around the world

### 1.1 The global commitment to sustainable development

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by the 193 countries of the United Nations, awareness of the need for an integrated approach to address the complex economic, social, environmental and institutional issues required to shift to a more sustainable development model appears to be growing worldwide. Given this greater public awareness, the world is showing significant signs of progress on the economic front and regarding certain social aspects, but also worrying signs of deterioration of the environmental situation and of certain social issues, which are set out in detail in the growing number of reports from international organisations and research centres.

The abundance and range of the reports written and the number of global initiatives undertaken to address the economic, social and environmental challenges from a global perspective provide strong evidence of the unprecedented attention that civil society organisations, businesses, financial intermediaries, administrations and local communities are paying to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Fridays for Future movement of school students taking time off class to participate in demonstrations to demand more effective action in combating climate change (see the relevant text box) is a prime example of the deep interest in the issue of sustainable development being shown by the younger generation and not only.

Awareness of the global risks deriving from the unsustainability of the current development model clearly emerges from the **World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2019**, presented in Davos in January, which opens with these words: "Is the world sleepwalking into crisis? Global risks are intensifying but the collective will to tackle them appears to be lacking".

Based on a survey involving almost 1,000 public, private, academic and civil society decision-makers, the report describes a world that is increas-

#### #FRIDAYSFORFUTURE: STUDENTS' COMMITMENT TO COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

It all started with the young Swedish girl, Greta Thunberg, who, in August 2018, organised a protest outside the national parliament to ask the government to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in line with the Paris Agreement, displaying a sign that read *Skolstrejk för klimatet* (school strike for the climate). The teenager decided not to attend school until the Swedish elections in 2018, and on 7 September, shortly before the elections, she announced that she would continue to demonstrate every Friday until Sweden fell into line with the Climate Agreement, coining the slogan "Fridays For Future", which attracted the world's attention and inspired millions of students to take part in the protest.

Many other boys and girls, as well as many adults, took up her initiative, and on 15 March 2019 the first world strike for the climate was held, with more than one million young people in many cities around the world participating, including in 100 Italian cities. On 24 May 2019, the day of the second worldwide strike, demonstrations took place in 1,664 cities in at least 125 countries.

Since the start of the #FridaysForFuture global movement, the media has given the initiative wide coverage. According to some people, just like the impetus for renewal that changed the world in many ways in the 1960s and 1970s, the climate movement is also making history. And it is no longer merely an invitation to politicians to tackle the challenges that are threatening our planet, but rather an urgent demand for change that calls on everyone to assume their responsibilities. A new strike has been called from 20 to 27 September 2019: a week of worldwide mobilisation with a view to expanding beyond youth participation, and especially involving workers.

## THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

On 25 September 2015, the United Nations approved the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), broken down into 169 Targets to be reached by 2030 (see Annex).

On this historic occasion, a clear opinion was expressed on the unsustainability of the current development model, not just in terms of the environment, but also from an economic and social point of view. In this way - and this reveals the highly innovative nature of the 2030 Agenda - the idea that sustainability is merely an environmental issue is definitively superseded in favour of an integrated vision of the various dimensions of development.

All countries are called upon to contribute to set the world on a sustainable path, with no longer any distinction between developed, emerging and developing countries, although clearly problems may vary depending on the level of development achieved. This means that each country must commit to defining its own sustainable development strategy in order to achieve the SDGs, reporting on the results obtained within a process coordinated by the UN. Obviously, given its breadth and "transformational" nature, implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires strong engagement of all components of society, from businesses to the public sector, from civil society to philanthropic institutions, from universities and research centres to information and cultural providers.

The process of changing the development model is monitored via a complex system based on 17 Goals, 169 targets and over 240 indicators. Each country is periodically assessed by the United Nations with respect to these parameters, through the activities of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) and by national and international public opinion. Every four years a debate also takes place on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the UN General Assembly, namely at the level of heads of state and government. The first such review was held in September of this year.



ingly concerned about political tensions, the economic situation and environmental disasters; a world that knows perfectly well it is going off the rails, but is also aware that it lacks the common will to face the global challenges. For many of the respondents, we are living in an increasingly anxious, troubled and lonely world. Anger is

growing, and empathy is declining. Environmental risks continue to dominate the results of the Global Risks Report. The risk causing the greatest concern is represented by extreme weather events, while many other respondents are increasingly worried about the failure of environmental policies.

Geo-economic tensions increased throughout 2018, to the extent that 91% of the respondents expect that 2019 may see growing risks related to “economic conflict between major powers” and 88% expect “rules and multilateral trade agreements to be undermined”. With the weakening of relations between the major world powers, in the current geopolitical context it will be impossible to resolve the many unrelenting conflicts around the world. According to the report, political and economic tensions are currently the most urgent global risks to be addressed. The world is evolving, but the reshaping of relations between countries and trade is not exempt from pitfalls. However, the importance of the ongoing structural changes should not divert our attention from the human aspects of global risks.

“The Global Risks Report 2019 is being published at an important time,” said Børge Brende, President of the World Economic Forum. “The world is facing a growing number of complex and interconnected challenges, from the slowdown in

global growth to climate change and geopolitical tensions. If we don’t work together to address these challenges, there will be no future. Never before has there been such a need for a collaborative and multi-stakeholder approach to shared global problems”.

At the international institutional level, 2019 has been marked by two major events: the **Climate Action Summit** on 23 September, organised by UN Secretary General, António Guterres, and the debate at the **UN General Assembly** on 24 and 25 September on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the first of which attended by heads of state and government after the annual monitoring carried out over the last four years by the High-level Political Forum, in which ministerial delegations usually participate.

## NEW UN WORLD POPULATION FORECASTS

The world population, which until 1820 remained below one billion people, continues to grow rapidly, as evidenced by the UN’s World Population Prospects 2019. According to the most reliable estimate, world population is projected to grow from 7.7 billion this year to 8.5 billion in 2030, and further to 9.7 billion in 2050 and 10.9 billion in 2100.

Population dynamics will vary widely from one region to another: Europe’s population is projected to fall from the current 748 million to 710 million in 2050, while Africa’s will almost double, from 1.3 to 2.3 billion, with an even greater increase in sub-Saharan countries. More than half of the population growth between now and 2050 will take place in nine countries: in descending order, India (which by 2027 will surpass China’s population, set to fall from the current 1.44 billion to 1.40 billion by 2050), Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt and the United States. The presence of the USA among the most demographically active countries should be cause for reflection, as it marks a radical difference from the situation in Europe, with all the economic implications this may entail.

Among the most significant components of demographic dynamics, the report mentions migration flows, which saw 14 countries receive more than one million migrants and another 10 countries transferring more than one million migrants between 2010 and 2020. Among the countries set to receive a net inflow of migrants in the future to rebalance the declines arising from domestic trends, the report mentions, in descending order, Belarus, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine.

The United Nations’ demographic projections highlight the complexity of an increasingly crowded world. As reported in the official commentary from the United Nations: “Many of the fastest growing populations are in the poorest countries, where population growth brings additional challenges in the effort to eradicate poverty (SDG 1), achieve greater equality (SDG 5 and SDG 10), fight hunger and malnutrition (SDG 2), and strengthen the coverage and quality of health and education systems (SDG 3 and SDG 4) to ensure that no one is left behind”.

## 1.2 Combating climate change and the risks for peace

Regarding the issue of climate change, signs of danger and of inadequate collective responses are multiplying. The most recent was the **further progression of the date of Earth Overshoot Day (EOD)**, the day on which the world has consumed all the resources produced by the planet in a given year: it fell on 29 July in 2019, while it had occurred on 1 August last year, and in mid-September in the year 2000). On average, in one year, humanity consumes the resources of 1.7 planets, but if everyone consumed as Americans do, we would need 5 planets, 3 if the world had a German lifestyle, and 2.7 if the model were Italy.

Scientists also report that climate change is happening more quickly than envisaged, as awareness of the damage it causes to people on all continents grows. The recent **Special Report on Climate Change and Land**, presented by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change, highlights the dramatic effects of climate change on hunger and migration. Global warming will lead to desertification of growing tracts of land, especially in the poorest regions of the world, particularly in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America. The consequence will be an inevitable increase in migration, within countries and across borders. “Economic migrants” will increasingly also be “climate migrants”, with the potential exacerbation of conflicts and social, cultural and political tensions.

This study follows the alarm bell sounded by the IPCC with the **Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C (SR15)** issued at the 48th session of the Intergovernmental Commission on Climate Change, held in South Korea from 1 to 6 October 2018. Commissioned to the IPCC by the Paris Conference (COP 21) in 2015, the report is the outcome of two years’ work by 91 researchers from 44 countries, who examined 6,000 studies on the subject and evaluated 42,000 reviews by colleagues and governments and their conclusions<sup>1</sup>.

Since pre-industrial times - the report points out - it is estimated that human activities have caused approximately 1 degree of global warming, with a probable variation ranging between 0.8 and 1.2 degrees. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate. According to the IPCC, if emis-

sions were drastically reduced and CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere were to be absorbed today, global warming could be kept below 1.5 degrees (the most ambitious target of the Paris Agreement), as past emissions alone would not cause this threshold to be exceeded. On the contrary, in the absence of immediate and drastic measures, there is a risk that this level could rise to 2 °C in just 12 years, causing irreversible damage to the environment and to our health, as well as serious repercussions on poverty and inequality. Therefore, the next ten years will be crucial in determining what kind of world we will have in the decades to come. “If we act decisively, innovate and invest in quality,” the report concludes, “we can prevent the worst climate change we know from occurring, and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda would also be achieved. If we fail to do this, we will face a world in which it will be increasingly difficult for us and future generations to prosper”.

The IPCC Report preceded **COP 24 held in Katowice** in December 2018. This much-anticipated conference gave rise to new regulations for governments (the Katowice climate package) aimed at reducing greenhouse gases and stepping up the Conference’s ambitions, which has the advantage of countering the declining role of multilateral negotiations brought about by the attitude of some countries, led by the United States, which prefer bilateral agreements. Indeed, one of the pillars of the “Katowice climate package” is the framework regarding transparency of the commitments, which aims to promote trust among countries around the world in terms of steadfastness and willingness to achieve the goals for 2020 and 2030. Another crucial issue dealt with regarded accounting for greenhouse gas emissions, given the historical absence of a standard calculation system. Under the new model, in the event of non-compliance with standards, the poorest countries can present their reasons and outline a plan to strengthen their capabilities.

In the negotiations, the direct commitment of UN Secretary General Guterres, who placed climate change at the centre of his agenda for action, was of great significance. Indeed, the Secretary General returned to Katowice three times to prevent failure of the negotiations arising from the hostility shown by certain countries and the boycotts by Saudi Arabia, the USA, Russia, Kuwait and Brazil, which joined this group of countries during the last phase of the negotiations. The impasse was resolved by China's willingness to accept binding reductions in its emissions, but due to pressure from Brazil, and in particular from the new president, Jair Bolsonaro, the package of measures governing the cross-border trading of carbon credits was postponed until 2019.

Compared to previous climate talks, dominated by global "heavyweights", mainly the United States and China, COP 24 has been able to achieve a delicate balance between the concerns of the smallest, poorest and most vulnerable countries, the developed nations responsible for global warming, and the emerging economies, which have always been reluctant to take on greater burdens. For example, regarding the complex issue of developed countries financing climate action in developing countries, the "Katowice climate package" sets out ways to form new, more ambitious targets from 2025 onwards, compared to the current commitment to mobilise US\$100 billion a year from 2020.

## CLIMATE BREAKDOWN: A CHANGE OF TONE IN THE MEDIA

"Faced with the climate disaster, we should not make the same mistake as in 1939, when the directors of American radio stations asked correspondents from Europe to speak about trivial matters to please listeners rather than the fact that Hitler was about to invade Poland". This, in a nutshell, was the message from the doyen of American journalism, Bill Moyers, at the Covering Climate Now conference held in New York on 30 April on the initiative of *The Nation* and the *Columbia Journalism Review* conference (CJR).

The need for a change of tone when talking about the climate, forcing even the most reluctant politicians to admit the seriousness of the situation, has become a topic of debate throughout the world. The campaign has gained momentum following the position taken by the British newspaper *The Guardian* - which has always paid attention to sustainability issues - when it changed its style book (where the stylistic rules its journalists must comply with are set out) to favour the use of terms such as "climate crisis", "climate emergency" or even "climate breakdown" over "climate change". Even "global warming" is no longer appropriate; we need to talk about "global heating", because "the planet is not getting a bit warmer than in the past, but rather risks being burnt".

Ahead of the events held in September (the World Climate Summit and the UN General Assembly on the 2030 Agenda), the CJR has promoted documentation tools and information centres around the world. "We want journalists to compare notes and discuss and analyse how the media should portray the climate crisis that is rapidly being unleashed. We want to highlight the good articles (there are some) and find ways to encourage their production. We want to convince newsroom chiefs that communicating the climate crisis is part of our responsibilities and doesn't mean losing money. Nor does it require a large increase in human resources (we are aware of the situation in which newspapers find themselves), but only smarter use of them, by incorporating a focus on climate in everything we do. We want to share ways of telling stories that attract viewers and readers and lead them to act. Above all, we want to break the climate silence that has long prevailed within too much of the news media".

In line with this initiative, ASviS has drawn up a partnership agreement with the Italian Association of Journalists aimed at launching joint initiatives to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda. As part of this partnership, the e-learning course created by the Alliance has been made available on the training platform for Italian journalists. In addition, ASviS has initiated partnerships regarding these issues with the University of Bologna, the LUISS School of Journalism and the Sole24Ore master's degree programme.

Among the Conference's thorny issues was the discussion on the adoption of the scientific results of the IPCC Report, which highlights the risk of soon reaching a "point of no return" in climate change trends. The debate about the document's validity led to it not being recognised by COP 24. Another unresolved issue concerned agreement on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, regarding the so-called "market mechanisms" for achieving national mitigation targets, which is to be discussed again at COP 25 or COP 26.

**At COP 24 in Katowice, the World Bank decided to double its climate provisions** by proposing a US\$50 billion action plan for climate change adaptation and resilience. The funding will support the development of: high-quality forecasting, early warning systems and climate information services to manage the climate risks to which 250 million people in at least 30 countries are exposed; management plans and better governance of river basin management; climate-focused social protection systems; and support for the efforts of at least 20 countries to respond rapidly to and overcome climate disruptions through additional financial protection instruments.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning the **Bonn Climate Change Conference**, a preparatory meeting for COP 25, which will take place in Santiago, Chile, in December 2019. The Bonn Conference, attended by over 3,300 delegates, discussed the mechanisms for implementing Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and the terms of reference for the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism regarding loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, which is a sensitive issue due to the financial implications of insurance cover associated with risk reduction strategies. Areas and aspects of the review were defined in Bonn and these will be discussed in Santiago.

In January 2019, the relationship between climate change and geopolitical change was also at the centre of the work of the peace and security body of the United Nations' **Security Council** dedicated to this issue. The link between security and the environment was first addressed in the UN peace and security body in April 2007. It should be noted that, at the last Security Council, the debate saw the participation of more than 70 Member States and included statements by a dozen ministers. "Climate change has a multitude of security impacts," said Pavel Kabat,

chief scientist and research director of the World Meteorological Organisation, invited to address the Security Council for the first time. Environmental problems are "rolling back the gains in nutrition and access to food; heightening the risk of wildfires and exacerbating air quality challenges; increasing the potential for conflict over water; leading to more internal displacement and migration". In other words, climate change should be "increasingly treated as a threat to national security".

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) published its **Emissions Gap 2018** report, reaffirming that the world is not taking the necessary steps to avoid the worst effects of climate change and that the targets set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement will not be met unless governments urgently introduce additional measures. Indeed, there is still a huge gap between words and actions, between the objectives agreed by governments and the measures needed to achieve them. For example, according to the report, new taxes on fossil fuels, investments in clean technologies and much stronger government policies to reduce emissions are needed.

If all fossil fuel subsidies were eliminated, global carbon emissions could be reduced by up to 10% by 2030. Carbon pricing is one way to achieve this, but such policies often face difficulties because taxes are generally unpopular, as demonstrated by the *gilets jaunes* protests in France, and regimes to reduce carbon through emissions trading are often challenged by companies.

Another problem highlighted by the report is that infrastructure such as buildings, transport networks and power generation, which are now built to rely on fossil fuels, will continue to emit emissions throughout the infrastructure's useful life (up to 50 years). Many companies and governments still rely on outdated measures of economic performance and obsolete methods for generating energy and constructing buildings; changing these criteria is therefore essential. However, according to the report, private investors increasingly appreciate the opportunity offered by the transition to a low-carbon economy, but government intervention is necessary to help release low-carbon investment from the private sector.

## THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

On 10 December 2018, on the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** began in Marrakesh. The need to adhere to common principles on migration was already enshrined in September 2016 with the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the New York Declaration for Migrants and Refugees. In Marrakesh, the UN pact was signed by 164 out of 193 countries which had given their initial support to the non-binding initiative to regulate migration flows and combat human trafficking during the High-level Political Forum held last July in New York.

The Global Compact for Migration is based on the values of national sovereignty, shared responsibility, non-discrimination and human rights, recognising that a co-operative approach is needed to optimise the benefits of migration and manage the risks and challenges it poses to individuals and communities in countries of origin, transit and destination.

The document comprises 23 objectives for better managing migration at local, national, regional and global levels. It aims to mitigate the adverse drivers and structural factors that prevent people from building and maintaining sustainable livelihoods in their countries of origin; it intends to reduce the risks and vulnerabilities faced at different stages of migration by respecting, protecting and fulfilling migrants' human rights and providing them with care and assistance; it seeks to address the legitimate concerns of states and communities, while recognising that societies are undergoing demographic, economic, social and environmental changes at different scales that may have implications for, and result from, migration; and it strives to create conducive conditions to enable all migrants to enrich societies through their human, economic and social capacities, and thus facilitate their contribution to sustainable development at the local, national, regional and global levels.

The countries that did not participate in the international conference or sign the agreement included the United States (which did not participate in the negotiations), Austria, Australia, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Switzerland. Although Italy had participated at all stages of the negotiations over the previous two years, it is one of the countries that did not take part in the Marrakesh summit, referring the decision as to whether or not it would participate in the Global Compact for Migration to Parliament. In February 2019, the Chamber of Deputies approved (with the abstention of the parties making up the governing coalition) a non-binding motion against Italy signing the Compact, while the President-elect of the European Commission recalled the need to amend the Dublin agreements governing the management of asylum within the European Union.

Regardless of Italy's position, the scale of migration clearly requires a multilateral approach. Not only because today 258 million people already live in a country other than the one in which they were born, but also because the pressure to emigrate will tend to grow as demographic imbalances and inequalities increase. For example, a survey conducted by Gallup reveals that "people's desire to migrate permanently to another country increased significantly between 2015 and 2017: 15% of adults around the world (more than 750 million people) said they would like to move to another country if they had the opportunity to do so".

**Finally, the restoration of ecosystems will be at the centre of the UN's activities over the next decade.** As established by the UN General Assembly, the period between 2021 and 2030 should be dedicated to the protection of biodiversity. For the UN, activities able to ensure that ecosystems are in a good state will offer unprecedented op-

portunities in terms of food security, carbon dioxide storage and the number of jobs created. The aim is to combat biodiversity loss, which has now reached alarming levels. The degradation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems puts the lives of 3.2 billion people at risk.

This is a very high cost if we consider that we lose an amount of natural capital corresponding to an estimated value of 10% of global GDP every year. Ecosystems underpin all human activities on the planet, thanks to the continuous production of “ecosystem services”, a term that refers to the production of goods and services provided by the environment, such as carbon storage, oxygen and food production, fresh water supply and protection from extreme events, such as heat waves and floods.

## THE LOSS IN BIODIVERSITY: A WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON

The current rate of global biodiversity loss has reached unprecedented levels, as illustrated by the **Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services** by the IPBES, the United Nations body that analyses biodiversity. The report shows that at least one million out of the eight million living species on Earth are threatened with extinction in the coming decades, while the current rate of extinction far exceeds (by tens to hundreds of times, depending on the case) the average rate of the last 10 million years. In particular, there has been a rapid and alarming decline of several insect populations in some areas of the world, especially of many pollinating species (10% of insect species are globally threatened with extinction).

According to the report, human intervention has significantly transformed 75% of the world's land-based environment, caused cumulative impacts for 66% of the marine environment and destroyed 85% of wetlands. This dramatic change in the structure and dynamics of the Earth's ecosystems, due to our actions, has especially taken place since the 1950s and is unprecedented in the history of mankind. The main causes of this change are the modification of terrestrial and marine habitats, the over-exploitation of the direct use of living species, climate change, various types of pollution and the spread of alien species.

The IPBES report is the most up-to-date documentation on the state of health of biodiversity and the services that ecosystems provide, daily and free of charge, to mankind. Ecosystems are defined as “nature's contribution to people” and consist of 18 categories of environmental processes, 10 regarding regulation (from creation and maintenance of habitats to climate regulation), 4 material contributions (such as the availability of energy, food and raw materials), 3 non-material contributions (such as teaching and inspiration) and a cross-cutting contribution that regards the fundamental issue of keeping options open. An assessment of the state of these “contributions” reveals a declining situation in 14 of these 18 categories, including the continuing deterioration of the capacity of ecosystems, habitats, species and genotypes to keep open options to support a good quality of human life in the future.

In order to implement the 2030 Agenda and the other commitments that countries around the world have undertaken over time, the IPBES deems a rapid and transformative change in the current economic, social, political and technological factors that are destroying biodiversity - and therefore human values and behaviour - to be essential, in order to bring about the inevitable change in the prevailing development model. The report's conclusions encourage international mobilisation to defend the world's biodiversity, from which we originate and without which we cannot live.

## 1.3 Implementation of the 2030 Agenda: an overall assessment

During the **High-level Political Forum** (HLPF), the annual meeting that assesses the implementation of the SDGs, UN Under-Secretary General, Liu Zhenmin, went through the key points of the work to be conducted at the General Assembly in September. First of all, achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is made more challenging by the slowdown of the world economy, which is expanding at 1% below the average growth rate of the fifteen-year period 2001-2015, when the world was committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the predecessors of the SDGs. And the situation could worsen in the coming years.

The theme of employment was at the centre of the HLPF, partly because Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) was among the Goals subject to specific review this year, together with Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 10 (Reducing Inequality), Goal 13 (Climate Action), Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and Goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals), which are reviewed every year.

Overall, the HLPF was attended by more than 2,000 government, business and civil society representatives, including over 125 heads of state and government, ministers and deputy ministers. 47 new Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) - the national reports on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (which Italy submitted in 2017) - were presented, making a grand total of 142 over four years.

Despite this large-scale mobilisation, the eight-day debate led to the conclusion that not enough is being done to meet the commitments made in 2015. The global population will reach 8.5 billion in 2030. This trend may offer a demographic bonus to developing countries which will have a plentiful workforce, but many young people may be excluded from the labour market: an estimated 1.8 billion people are at risk of chronic unemployment. "We are running late and we need to accelerate", said UN Secretary General António Guterres, inaugurating the ministerial session of the meeting. He cited two figures: poverty rates are not decreasing fast enough to achieve the Goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030; and five

billion people cannot rely on a fair and efficient judicial system as required by Goal 16. On the occasion of the HLPF, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) gathered together best practices regarding implementation of the 2030 Agenda on the **Sustainable Development Goals Partnerships Platform**, in the hope that they may inspire other initiatives. Under the heading "Action Networks & Databases", the actions that regard one or more of SDGs include the Sustainable Development Festival organised by ASviS.

This year's report **Measuring Distance to the SDG Targets 2019: An Assessment of Where OECD Countries Stand**, published in May by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), represents an important contribution to understanding whether and to what extent progress is being made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In the report, the indicators that describe the situation are aligned with those established by the United Nations. However, the available data only enabled accurate analysis of 105 out of the 169 Targets into which the 17 SDGs are divided. In general, OECD countries appear to be quite well placed in terms of sustainable development issues; they represent the parts of the world where access to energy and various communication technologies is largely guaranteed, and where infant mortality rates are the lowest. However, there are still many thorny issues that make the path to 2030 a difficult one.

SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) are the best performers in OECD countries. However, the Goals relating to inclusiveness, SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reducing Inequality), and those relating to food waste and good quality institutions, SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), are lagging far behind.

A major problem regards the policies that have been put in place so far to address inequality. A great deal still needs to be done for equality in education (throughout the OECD area, 14% of young people are not in education or training or employment), for women's empowerment (the vast majority of managerial posts are held by men, and on average women hold less than a third of the seats in national parliaments); and for com-

## THE UN REPORT ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR THE HLPF 2019

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and just under ten years from the target date, the UN Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019 shows that, although the world is making progress in many critical areas, more rapid and ambitious actions and policies are needed to bring about the economic and social transformation required to achieve the SDGs. Above all, the areas relating to combating climate change and inequality require the most urgent action. In the first case, the catastrophic and irreversible effects that will occur if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced immediately will make many parts of the world uninhabitable, particularly affecting the most vulnerable. With regard to inequality, poverty, hunger and disease are increasing in several countries, affecting the poorest most. But just as the Goals of the 2030 Agenda are complex and interconnected, so are the solutions. Therefore, the UN report highlights certain areas of action that may lead to significant progress in terms of all the 17 Goals: finance, resilience, inclusive and sustainable economies, more effective institutions, local action, better use of data and digital transformation.

- 1. No poverty.** Although the share of the global population living in extreme poverty fell to 10% in 2015 (compared to 16% in 2010 and 36% in 1990), the world is not on track to end poverty by 2030.
- 2. Zero hunger.** After years of decline, the number of people suffering from hunger has risen again since 2014. In 2015, 784 million people were undernourished, while in 2017 the figure was 821 million.
- 3. Good health and well-being.** A great deal of progress has been made in improving the health of millions of people: the number of children dying under the age of five fell from 9.8 million in 2000 to 5.4 million in 2017, while in the same period, thanks to vaccines, deaths caused by measles have decreased by 80%. The incidence of HIV in adults aged 15-49 in sub-Saharan Africa fell 37% between 2010 and 2017.
- 4. Quality education.** Although education is the key to socio-economic progress and poverty reduction at global level, 617 million children and adolescents do not meet the minimum standards of literacy and numeracy, and one in five children between the ages of 6 and 17 do not attend school. 750 million adults are illiterate, two-thirds of whom are women.
- 5. Gender equality.** The situation of women has improved over the last decade, but discrimination, harmful practices and violence persist. At least 200 million girls have suffered mutilation in the 30 countries where the practice is most widespread. 18% of women and girls aged 15-49 have suffered physical and/or sexual violence from a partner in the last 12 months. Women represent 39% of the workforce, but hold only 27% of management positions.
- 6. Clean water and sanitation.** Water is an endangered resource for which demand is growing faster than population growth. Worldwide, 785 million people do not have access to clean water. 2 billion people live in countries with high water stress and 700 million people may be displaced due to severe water scarcity by 2030.
- 7. Affordable and clean energy.** The world is making good progress towards Goal 7, with nearly 9 out of 10 people having access to electricity. Of the 840 million people who do not have access to electricity, 87% live in rural areas. The share of energy from renewable sources in final consumption reached 17.5% in 2015, compared to 16.6% in 2010. However, 3 billion people still do not have access to clean fuel for cooking.
- 8. Decent work and economic growth.** In 2018, the overall unemployment rate fell to 5% from 6.4% in 2000, but remains high for young people, one fifth of whom are NEETs (not in education, employment or training). Men earn on average 12% more per hour than women, a pay gap that rises to 20% for management positions.

- 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure.** Companies in the high and medium technology sectors are growing, representing 45% of the total value of production. At the same time, investment in research and development has risen from US\$739 billion in 2000 to US\$2 trillion in 2016. 90% of the world's population lives in areas covered by 3G networks or higher, but for many people the cost of access is too high. Only slightly more than half of the world's population use the internet.
- 10. Reduce inequalities.** In many countries, an increasing share of net aggregate wealth goes to 1% of the population, while the remaining 40% receives less than 25% of the national income. In addition, significant inequalities persist in terms of access to healthcare and education. A growing number of countries have policies to facilitate safe and orderly migration, but greater efforts are needed to protect the rights and socio-economic well-being of migrants.
- 11. Sustainable cities and communities.** Today 3.5 billion people live in cities, a number that is expected to grow to around 5 billion in 2030. Only half of those living in cities have easy access to transport and 9 out of 10 people breathe polluted air. To meet these and other city planning challenges, 150 countries have developed national urban plans, almost half of which are already being implemented.
- 12. Responsible consumption and production.** Globally, our ecological footprint is growing at a faster rate than economic or population growth. In high-income countries, the per capita footprint is 13 times higher than in low-income countries. Almost 100 countries are adopting policies or measures to promote sustainable patterns of production and consumption.
- 13. Climate action.** In 2017, the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere reached 405.5 parts per million, or 146% of pre-industrial levels. Moreover, the last four years have been the hottest ever, with a global average temperature that exceeded pre-industrial levels by about 1°C in 2018. In May 2019, 186 countries had ratified the Paris Agreement and 182 countries plus the European Union had notified the UN of their national contributions to combating climate change.
- 14. Life below water.** The global share of fish stocks in biologically sustainable conditions fell from 90% in 1974 to 67% in 2015 and marine acidity (caused by the absorption of anthropogenic carbon dioxide from the atmosphere into the oceans) increased by 26% compared to the pre-industrial era. The percentage of marine waters safeguarded in protected areas is 17%, twice as much as in 2010.
- 15. Life on land.** Biodiversity loss is accelerating and according to the Red List Index the risk of extinction of more than 20,000 species has risen 10% in the last 25 years. Between 2000 and 2015, soil degradation affected 20% of the earth's surface, with direct impacts on the lives of more than a billion people. Deforestation continues to take place, although in recent years it has been occurring at a 25% slower rate than in 2000-2005.
- 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions.** Murders of human rights activists, journalists and trade unionists are on the increase: between January and October 2018 alone, 397 were killed in 41 countries while carrying out their work. Regarding human trafficking, raped women and girls account for 70% of the victims of this phenomenon, which primarily occurs in connection with sexual exploitation. An increase in the number of countries that have set up a national body dedicated to human rights is a positive figure.
- 17. Partnership for the Goals.** In 2018, public aid to developing countries (Official Development Assistance, ODA) amounted to a net figure of US\$149 billion, down 2.7% on 2017 in real terms. The decline is due to a reduction in aid for the reception of refugees, while aid for bilateral projects or technical assistance rose 1.3% in real terms.

bating poverty (approximately 14% of the OECD population lives in relative poverty and has difficulties in using certain goods and services that are needed to live a dignified life).

With regard to biodiversity in general, SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life On Land), and sustainable production, SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), the data are incomplete or unreliable. The improvement of statistical gathering in these areas could change their assessment, which is currently quite positive<sup>2</sup>.

In parallel, the **Sustainable Development Report 2019**, produced by the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), analyses progress made on the 2030 Agenda from a global perspective, which means that fewer indicators are used than in the OECD report. The situation is critical: “No Country is on track to achieve all 17 Goals,” the report says. “There are also major shortcomings in developed nations regarding Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), Goal 13 (Climate Action), Goal 14 (Life Below Water) and Goal 15 (Life on Land)”. Moreover, inequality of income and wealth still pose major policy challenges in developing countries, as do health and education. Indeed, “the eradication of extreme poverty is still a global challenge,” the report concludes, and around half of the world’s nations are not on track to achieve this Goal.

“The high-level political commitment to the SDGs does not live up to the promises made,” the document emphasises. Of 43 Countries examined with regard to their implementation efforts, including all G20 members and those with a population of more than 100 million, 33 have approved the SDGs in official statements since 1 January 2018, but only 18 of these have mentioned them in their budgets. The report also warns that the SDGs can be made operational, but they require precise action in six specific areas: education and gender inequality; health, well-being and demography; energy de-carbonisation and sustainable industry; food and preservation of seas and oceans; sustainable cities and communities; and the digital revolution.

However, the worst scores were recorded for Goals 13, 14 and 15. In particular, no nation obtained a “green rating” (synonymous with Goal achieved) for Goal 14, and high-income countries even had negative effects on the environmental and socio-economic conditions of the

least developed ones. Human rights and freedom of speech are in great danger in many countries.

Delays in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda were discussed at the **G20 in Osaka** last June. The joint declaration states that countries will strive “to foster development and address other global challenges to pave the way toward an inclusive and sustainable world, as envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. Furthermore, in the part dedicated to “realising an inclusive and sustainable world”, the G20 countries committed to “playing a leading role in contributing to the timely implementation of the Agenda” and to “supporting the efforts made by developing countries to implement it”, but regarding climate change, the financing related to mitigation and adaptation for poor countries and the irreversibility of the agreements reached in Paris at COP 21 in 2015 were merely reaffirmed.

Combating inequality was the theme of the G7 held in Biarritz in August 2019. The summit adopted an innovative format, involving a number of partner countries, in particular African countries, as well as representatives of civil society, to explore concrete solutions aimed at combating all forms of inequality. The French Presidency set five priorities: promoting gender equality and access to education and health services; protecting the planet through support for green finance and a fair ecological transition based on the conservation of biodiversity and the oceans; peace, combating security threats, and terrorism; using the opportunities created by digital technology and artificial intelligence in an ethical and people-oriented way; and tackling inequality through renewed cooperation with Africa.

Although there was no final communiqué, it is worth noting the joint declaration by the French President Macron, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the OECD, which highlighted the risks posed by inequality to global growth, economic stability, social cohesion and the achievement of the SDGs. The declaration called for “renewed and effective multilateralism” and that organisations should commit, among other things, to continue cooperation to support each other’s efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

## ANALYSIS OF GOAL 8 CARRIED OUT BY ASViS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

At a side event of the High-level Political Forum 2019, called “SDG 8 - Decent Work and Just Transition at the Heart of the 2030 Agenda”, organised by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC on 12 July), ASviS presented the results of a research conducted with the International Trade Union Confederation to promote the monitoring and implementation of Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) at the global level.

The aim of the project is to identify the interactions between the Targets of Goal 8 and those of other SDGs, in order to demonstrate the key importance of the employment and economic dimension within the 2030 Agenda. Starting with the multidimensionality of Goal 8, which incorporates various topics relating to growth, employment, productivity, working conditions and workers' rights, the research highlights that it is vital to achieve the Goal without jeopardising other Goals, such as those on environmental and climate issues, in order to ensure fulfilment of the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. The study is based on a data set collected in 166 countries, corresponding to 98.9% of the world's population. Composite indicators regarding Goal 8 were drawn from the basic indicators, revealing that the best performers are usually high-income countries (e.g. the United States, Canada, Japan and most EU countries). But income level does not necessarily explain performance with regard to Goal 8; even in countries with a low per capita income, workers' rights can be fulfilled, a good social dialogue can be established and economic growth can be boosted. Therefore, the idea that relaunching economic growth is the only way to make progress with regard to decent work is not entirely correct as there are many other variables that make a difference, such as the right to lifelong learning and the potential gains connected with environmental sustainability.

As far as monitoring is concerned, a need to improve data collection regarding Goal 8 also emerged during the HLPF side event, given the scarcity of data on workplace health and safety, the gender pay gap, the role of labour inspectors, the informal employment rate and the coverage rate of collective bargaining.

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the heads of state and government of the signatory countries met in New York for the first **SDG Summit**, within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly, to examine the state of its implementation. In the joint policy statement, which has not yet been finalised at the time of printing this report, the heads of state and government reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the Agenda's Goals by 2030, and pledged to ensure that the next decade is “one of action and results”.

The document acknowledges the growing national commitment to integration of the SDGs into public policy, as evidenced by the 142 Voluntary National Reviews presented at the HLPF over the past three years, and the efforts of local authorities, civil society, the private sector, the world of education, youth and many other non-state actors. Moreover, the increasing efforts of

multilateral institutions, including financial ones, to incorporate the SDGs into their operations were highlighted. However, the statement notes with concern that progress is still limited in many areas, such as poverty eradication, hunger, women's empowerment, inequality and loss of ecosystems.

To ensure that the SDGs are achieved, the heads of state and government have asked the UN Secretary General to continue involving stakeholders in order to generate new solutions, and also requested him to organise an annual meeting during the General Assembly at which the best experiences in promoting the SDGs can be highlighted. Moreover, world leaders have made ten commitments to help achieve the SDGs: leaving no-one behind, by combating all forms of economic, gender and social inequality; mobilisation of adequate financial and non-financial resources by all actors; boosting implementation

of national 2030 Agenda policies; strengthening institutions to increase their effectiveness and transparency; strengthening the actions of local actors such as cities; reducing the risks deriving from disasters and increasing countries' resilience; finding solutions to global challenges through global collaboration and multilateralism, in accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter; promoting scientific and technological development with a focus on digital innovation for sustainable development; investing in analysis of data and statistics to

monitor sustainable development; and strengthening the HLPF to make it a more effective instrument.

In conclusion, many good intentions are reiterated, but we will have to see in practice whether the countries that have so far considered the SDGs to be an abstract "dream list" will shift gear and seriously commit to implementing them. It will also be important to assess the improvements that are set to be made to the functioning of the HLPF, an instrument that many people deem to be too weak to have an impact on national policies (for

## FUTURE SCENARIOS: THE SDGs AND PLANETARY BOUNDARIES

How can the world achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within planetary boundaries? This is the question that gave rise to the report entitled "Transformation is feasible. How to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within Planetary Boundaries", produced by the Stockholm Resilience Centre and the BI Norwegian Business School for the Club of Rome on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. The document analyses the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, outlining various scenarios for economic, social and environmental evolution with regard to the achievement of the SDGs and the state of the Earth's ecosystem until 2050.

**The first scenario (Same)** is business as usual, which explores a future in which the same policies implemented in recent decades are applied and the "key variables" (the economy, technology, etc.) evolve at the same rate. In this case, it would be impossible to achieve most of the Goals of the Agenda by 2030, or even by 2050. The good news is that hunger and poverty would be eradicated by 2050, but at the cost of irreversible damage to the Earth's ecosystem. Therefore, most people on Earth would find themselves in a more precarious situation in 2050 than at present.

**The second scenario (Faster)** analyses the situation that would occur if governments and economic systems merely accelerated the pace of economic growth. Achievement of the SDGs by 2050 would be slightly easier compared to the first scenario, but planetary boundaries would be exceeded even further, entailing over-exploitation of available resources. Many people would become richer, but societies would be marked by increasingly destabilising inequalities.

**In the third scenario (Harder), the report considers what would happen if governments and socio-economic systems were more committed to sustainable development, by strengthening policies and strategies to achieve the SDGs more quickly, while reducing pressure on ecosystems.** The limitation of this approach is that it acts on the SDGs in an un-integrated way, and generates many trade-offs. In 2040, planetary boundaries would still be under strong pressure, with scant progress made on the SDGs between 2030 and 2050. Humankind would continue to damage natural systems, albeit to a lesser extent than in the first two scenarios.

**In the fourth scenario (Smarter), governments would opt to implement five major transformations in the economy and society:** rapid growth of renewable energy to halve carbon emissions every ten years starting from 2020; investment in food chains to generate a 1% productivity increase per year; implementation of new development models in the poorest countries; reduction of inequalities to ensure that the richest 10% of the population does not receive more than 40% of national income; and investment in education for all, gender equality, health and family planning policies to stabilise the world population. A synergistic implementation of these five transformations could lead to the achievement of the majority of the SDGs, in almost complete compliance with planetary boundaries.

example, in the case of the recent fires in the Amazon region). Finally, the call for greater multilateralism will also have to play out in practice, given that some large countries, such as the United States, appear to increasingly favour bilateral relations.

## 1.4 The role of financial instruments in implementing the 2030 Agenda

Over the last 12 months, the global debate on financial instruments for implementation of the 2030 Agenda has intensified. For example, 2018 was a record year for the issuing of “green bonds”, while 2017 saw the launch of the first bonds connected with the Sustainable Development Goals: SDG-linked bonds. However, although the contribution of private capital to sustainable development has increased, only a small part of the world of finance has addressed the issue of sustainability, and more investment is needed to implement the 2030 Agenda.

In recent years, there has been a **significant increase in sustainable and responsible investment (SRI)** at global level, as well as at European level and in Italy. The integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) sustainability criteria into investment policies and strategies is an increasingly widespread practice among investors. This trend is driven by a growing awareness of the financial importance of sustainability issues and the central role of markets in supporting inclusive, economic growth with a low environmental impact.

In recent years, the interest of responsible investors has focused mainly on environmental issues, partly as a result of the attention aroused by the Paris Agreement on climate change and other initiatives such as the encyclical *Laudato si'*. The regulatory and policy measures proposed by the European Commission in its **Action Plan on Financing Sustainable Growth** also focus on the objective of directing investment towards projects with positive environmental effects.

The integration of ESG criteria into investment processes enables **prevention of a series of risks** that are difficult to identify with economic and financial analysis alone. For example, by including climate change considerations in their investment processes, SRI actors can avoid financial losses caused by extreme weather events and natural disasters (physical risks). In addition, they are able to anticipate possible changes in national and international legal frameworks aimed at reducing the environmental impact of human activities (legal risks). Together with considerations regarding mitigation, a growing number of academic and

market research studies show that the integration of ESG criteria in investment decisions is likely to achieve **returns in line with or above market returns in the medium to long term**.

According to the latest edition of the **Global Sustainable Investment Review** by the Global Sustainable Investment Alliance (GSIA) on the state of the global sustainable finance market, in the two-year period 2016-2018 SRI investment amounted to more than US\$30 trillion, up 34% on 2016. Europe ranks first in terms of managed assets with US\$12.3 trillion, or 46% of the global SRI market. A significant figure also regards the ratio of sustainable investment to total professionally managed assets: in Europe, this ratio stands at around 50%.

In the international context of sustainable finance, the role of central banks is also expanding. Indeed, the effects of climate change are

deemed increasingly important for the stability of financial systems. In April 2019, the network of central banks, **Greening the Financial System<sup>3</sup>**, published a report entitled **A call for action: Climate change as a source of financial risk**, which includes a set of recommendations aimed at strengthening the role of central banks, financial institutions, supervisory authorities and policy makers in managing climate risks and reducing the environmental impact of financial markets.

At global level, the **Fossil Free - Divest from Fossil Fuels movement** regarding the divestment of companies involved in the extraction and sale of fossil fuels is particularly significant. Founded in the United States in 2012 on the initiative of a group of university students, the movement currently has more than 1,000 member institutions and organisations, which have divested more than

## THE REFORM OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO SPEED UP THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS

The “UN system” is reforming its organisational model to make the implementation of the 2030 Agenda more flexible. Development, peace and security, and management are the three areas where organisational structural changes will be implemented, making the system more efficient, streamlined, transparent and capable of accelerating progress towards achievement of the SDGs.

“At the current pace, the world will not achieve the SDGs nor will it avoid the tragic consequences of climate change,” stressed Amina Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, the coordination centre between 34 different UN agencies committed to sustainable development. “There is no time for an incremental approach,” she went on, “and success will be based ‘first and foremost’ on a change in the organisational culture and mentality of the United Nations at all levels. It will be crucial to bring about a culture that goes beyond the mandates of individual departments and embraces the integrated approach required by the 2030 Agenda”.

Organisational change primarily regards sustainable development, an objective “at the heart” of the UN system, both as a goal and as a tool, aimed at preventing conflicts and stabilising peace processes. Therefore, “full-time” collaboration between Member States and the UN Country Teams set up in 1997 has been strengthened to better coordinate the presence of UN agencies in various countries in order to promote their development.

Ensuring adequate funding for reform is a crucial step for its success. Therefore, a draft Funding Compact has been drawn up, underlining that contributions to the fund are voluntary and open not only to Member States, but also to external donors. The second area of reform, “peace and security”, saw the launch of two new departments, the Department for Political Affairs and Peace-building, regarding strategic and political responsibilities, and the Department for Peacekeeping Operations, responsible for field operations. Also, regarding the third area of “management”, the reform has created two new departments: the Department for Strategy Management, Policy and Regulatory Compliance and the Department for Operational Support.

US\$9.2 billion. The movement encourages investors to use divested capital for the financing of environmentally and socially sustainable projects and activities.

In this context, the United Nations has approved a new action plan, the Secretary General's strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (2018 - 2021).

Recalling the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA)<sup>4</sup> 2015 - the framework for financing sustainable development - and the Paris Agreement, the new Strategy sets out three objectives the United Nations will focus on until 2021: aligning global financial and economic policies with the 2030 Agenda; improving sustainable financing and investment strategies at regional and national level; and harnessing the potential of financial innovation, new technologies and digitalisation to enable more equitable access to credit.

“Mobilising funding is still a major challenge in implementing the 2030 Agenda”. This statement opens the **Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019**, produced by the United Nations in collaboration with more than 60 agencies of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development, which brings together UN agencies and international partner organisations. This document recognises the scale and urgency of the challenge: “Despite signs of progress, the key investments for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals are still under-funded”. It should be noted that, in 2018, several developing countries recorded huge capital losses amounting to more than US\$200 billion, while inequalities increased particularly in the most populated countries, where overall growth in real wages is only 1.8%, the lowest figure since 2008.

In September 2019, at the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the **Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance** was launched. Comprising company managers from all over the world, it aims to channel private investment towards sustainable development. The Alliance was announced on 15 April during the ECOSOC 2019 Financing for Development Forum<sup>5</sup> by UN Secretary General António Guterres, who said: “Existing resources alone will be far from sufficient: we will need substantial, long-term investment from the private sector”. Indeed, according to a recent study by the International Monetary Fund cited by the Secretary General, achievement of the Sustainable

Development Goals requires additional investment in developing countries of US\$2.6 trillion per year.

Also according to the **World Economic Forum**, in order to attain the Sustainable Development Goals additional investment to the amounts already planned is needed, but this outcome cannot be achieved without a shift from project funding based on public finance to overall financing mechanisms that also raise private capital on national and global markets, and then guarantee the optimal allocation of these funds. This is the position taken by the report **“From funding to financing. Transforming SDG finance for country success”**, which analyses the financial, systemic and behavioural obstacles that affect each country's capacity to achieve its own national goals.

The new agreement between the World Bank and the European Commission also leans towards multi-stakeholder cooperation, in the spirit of Goal 17. The institutional partnership will focus on three areas. First of all, the challenge will be to provide workers with new skills to address the changing nature of the labour market, equipping people with basic education and digital skills, as well as other “21st century skills” such as critical thinking and teamwork. Secondly, the partnership will be tasked with improving, innovating and adapting social protection systems, thus ensuring adequate economic coverage and universal protection for all workers. Finally, the two parties will analyse potential changes in the labour market, including from a climate and sustainability standpoint. The aim is to develop policies to maximise the creation of quality jobs by stimulating private investment in labour-intensive sectors with high growth potential.

In order to achieve the standards set by the 2030 Agenda, such as the elimination of gender differences, the first step will be to promote integration between the two institutions, thereby sharing priorities, data, best practices and areas of intervention.

### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The three IPCC working groups worked together for the first time to produce an interdisciplinary report, preceded by the plenary vote on the “Summary for policy makers”.

<sup>2</sup> According to the OECD report, Italy is showing signs of improvement regarding 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. For example, good assessments are given regarding health and well-being (SDG 3) and affordable energy (SDG 7). Negative performances are registered for education (SDG 4), combating poverty (SDG 1), and decent work and fair and inclusive economic growth (SDG 8).

<sup>3</sup> At the One Planet Summit in Paris in 2017, the central banks of eight countries (China, France, Germany, Morocco, Mexico, the Netherlands, Singapore and the United Kingdom) set up the Greening the Financial System network, with the aim of supporting the transition to development models in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement and increasing investment in projects with a positive impact on the environment. Currently, the initiative involves 36 institutions, including the Bank of Italy.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA\\_Outcome.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffdforum/>.





## The 2030 Agenda in Europe

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## 2. The 2030 Agenda in Europe

Over the past year, European institutions have also gone through some crucial moments with regard to sustainable development. A number of legislative “packages” have been adopted (for example, the one banning single-use plastic) and significant initiatives have been launched by the European Commission (for example, on sustainable finance). Finally, the elections to the European Parliament and the launch of the new legislature were followed by the drafting of the new strategic agenda for the next five years and the confirmation, by the European Parliament, of Ursula von der Leyen as the President of the Commission.

At the same time, the international and European political context has confirmed that a multilateral approach to the many global problems is beset by great difficulties. Among these, growing trade tensions between the United States, China and the European Union, the difficult Brexit negotiations, and the diverging opinions among European countries on how to deal with migration and environmental and economic issues. Nonetheless, against this difficult backdrop, the European Union has brought values in line with those of the 2030 Agenda into the global arena, both before the UN and within other international organisations, in accordance with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

### 2.1 The situation of the European Union with regard to the SDGs

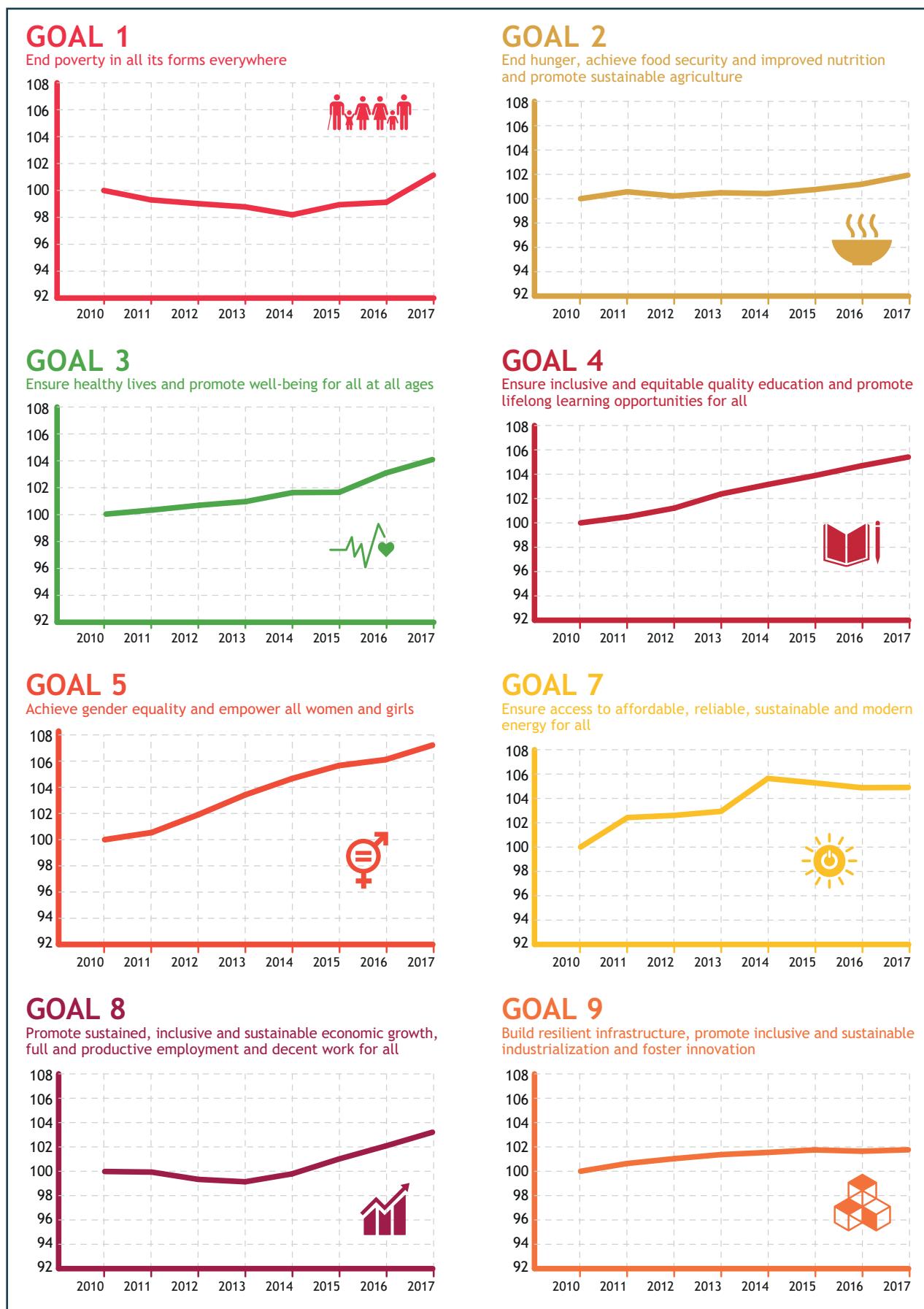
In this report, ASviS presents revised composite indicators<sup>1</sup> to measure the performance of the European Union and of its individual countries with respect to the SDGs. This complex analysis<sup>2</sup> is based on data published by Eurostat and allows an assessment of progress and a comparison of the relative performance of individual countries with the EU average.

On the basis of these indicators, between 2010 and 2017, the European Union, the world’s most advanced area in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals, showed signs of improvement for nine of the 17 Goals (3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14), and significant deterioration for two (15 and 17), while for the other five (1, 2, 9, 10 and 16) the situation was largely unchanged (it was impossible to develop a composite indicator for Goal 6 due to the lack of data). Between 2016 and 2017, improvements were noted in two thirds of the Goals, namely 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 14 and 16. Goals 7, 9, 12, 13 and 17 were largely stable, while Goal 15 worsened. For most of the Goals, these aggregated results conceal significant disparities in terms of member states’ relative performance. An in-depth analysis of the performances of the 28 countries was therefore carried out (see pages 46-56). Looking once again at the medium-term perspective, between 2010 and 2017, the situation improved for the following Goals:

- **Goal 3** (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages). The composite indicator shows a positive trend for all elementary indicators. In particular, life expectancy increased in all EU member states, while the death rate from tuberculosis, hepatitis and HIV decreased by 28% and the share of the population with self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care fell by 1.4 percentage points compared to 2010.

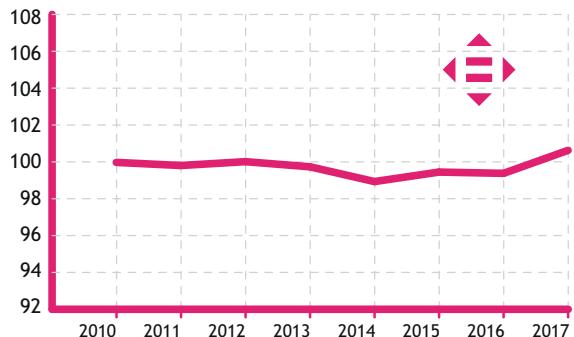
- **Goal 4** (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all). The composite indicator shows an uptrend over the observed period. In this case, all European Union countries report an improvement, albeit of varying degrees, determined by significant increases in the share of the population having attained tertiary education (39.9% in 2017, substantially in line with the 40% target of the Europe 2020 Strategy), and in the share of adults participating in learning (10.9% in 2017, a level that is still far from the Europe 2020 target of 15%). In addition, the rate of early leavers from education and training has fallen significantly, although the pace of improvement has slowed in recent years, which puts the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy target of 10% at risk.
- **Goal 5** (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls). Here too, the indicator shows a steadily rising trend, thanks to the increase in the seats held by women in national parliaments and of those held by women in senior management positions (for which the figure has doubled). It should be noted that the gender employment gap, after decreasing by 1.5 points from 2010 to 2014, remained fairly stable until 2017.
- **Goal 7** (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all). The composite indicator for this Goal rose continuously until 2014 and then flattened out. The positive trend is due to the increase in the share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption (in line with the European target of 20% by 2020), and the decrease in household energy consumption per capita. However, with the economic recovery in 2016, final energy consumption has started growing again, and it is highly likely that the European Union's 2020 target will not be achieved. Despite the significant differences in the levels of consumption in the various countries, almost all of them show fairly similar trends.
- **Goal 8** (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all). The indicator for this Goal was stable until 2013, and then rose in subsequent years, thanks to a reduction in the share of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), and increases in the investment share of GDP and the employment rate, which is close to the target of 75% set for 2020. Real GDP per capita has also recovered since 2010 and, despite the decline in the two-year period 2012-2013, shows an average annual increase of 1.2% between 2010 and 2017.
- **Goal 11** (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable). This composite indicator has risen continuously, driven by an increase in the recycling rate of municipal waste, lower exposure of the population to air pollution by particulate matter and a reduction in the number of people killed in road accidents, which declined by 21% compared to 2010. At the same time, the indicators relating to housing problems are also improving.
- **Goal 12** (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns). The trend for this Goal was positive until 2016, thanks to resource productivity and domestic material consumption (up by 12% between 2010 and 2017) and average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per km from new passenger cars. A slight deterioration has been registered since 2016, due to an increase in the generation of waste (excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness), while the recycling rate of waste has been stable throughout the period under consideration. Here, too, similar trends were recorded in the various countries of the European Union.
- **Goal 13** (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts). The indicator shows a steadily rising trend, due to a reduction in the emissions intensity of energy consumption (down by 6% between 2010 and 2017) and of greenhouse gas emissions. The latter have fallen by 10% compared to 2010, exceeding the Europe 2020 Strategy target, despite the fact that over the last four years the situation has not shown any significant improvement.
- **Goal 14** (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development). This indicator saw a steady increase over the period under review, due to an improvement in all the elementary indicators. In particular, since 2013, the indicator for the surface of marine sites designated under the Natura 2000 network has been rising, doubling in just four years.

Figure 1 - Composite indicators for the European Union



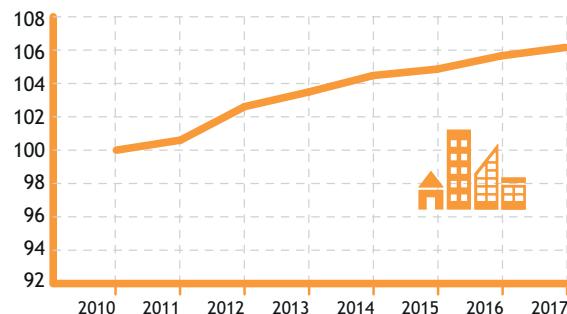
## GOAL 10

Reduce inequality within and among countries



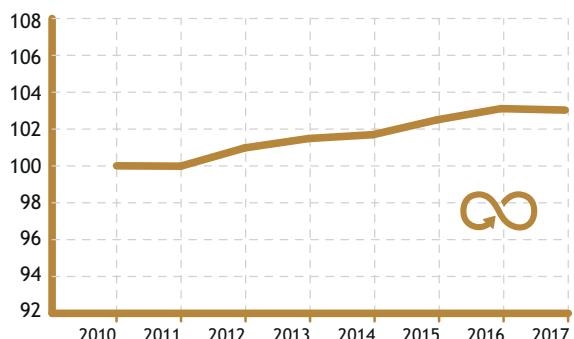
## GOAL 11

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



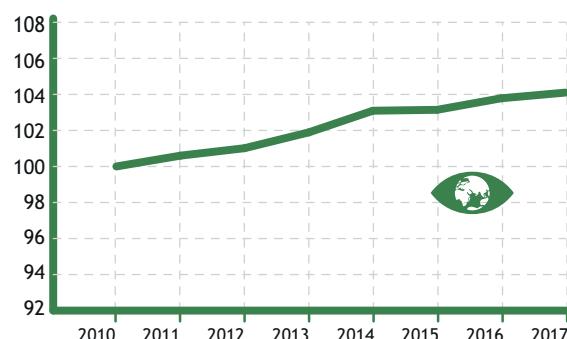
## GOAL 12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



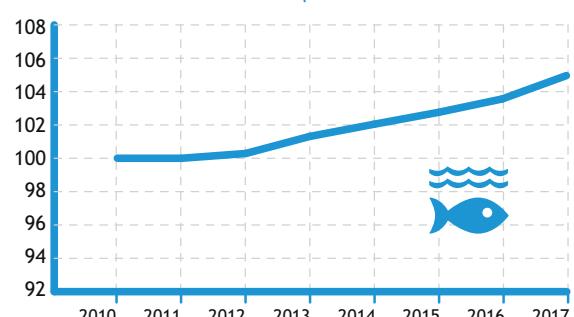
## GOAL 13

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



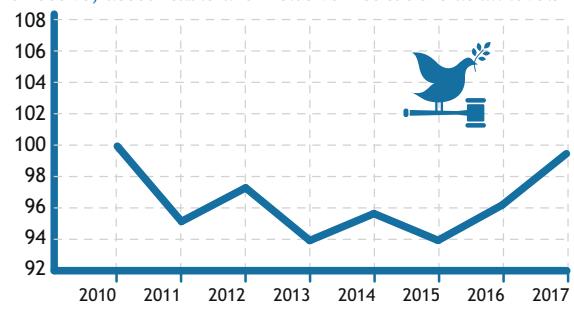
## GOAL 15

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



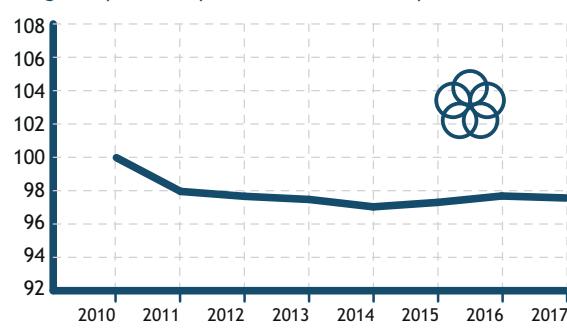
## GOAL 16

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



The situation has worsened for two Goals:

- **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). The composite indicator for this Goal has significantly deteriorated. This performance reflects the substantial increase in soil sealing, which grew by about 350 km<sup>2</sup> per year (an area larger than the surface area of Malta) in the period 2006-2015.
- **Goal 17** (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development). In this case, the indicator's negative performance is affected by decreases in European imports from developing countries and the rise of general government gross debt. This deterioration is only partly offset by the increase in the share of official development assistance (ODA) in gross national income (GNI). In addition, the share of environmental taxes in total tax revenues has declined continuously since 2010, and stood at 6.1% in 2017.

Finally, the situation is stable for these Goals:

- **Goal 1** (End poverty in all its forms everywhere). The composite indicator for this Goal fell until 2014 due to increases in the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion and in the population living in households with very low work intensity. From 2016, the increase registered for the composite indicator is driven by improvements in all the elementary indicators taken into account. In particular, in 2017 the severe material deprivation index reached its lowest point during the entire historical series. Although the share of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion has decreased to 22.4% between 2016 and 2017, the achieved figure of 113 million people is still a long way off the 96.1 million set for 2020 in the Europe 2020 Strategy.
- **Goal 2** (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture). The overall situation was stable in the period 2010-2017, affected by minor fluctuations in the elementary indicators that tend to offset each other. Indeed, from 2014 to 2017, the composite indicator grew moderately due to an improvement in agricultural productivity and an increase of areas under organic farming, which rose from 5.1% to 7% of

total utilised agricultural area. However, it should be pointed out that ammonia emissions from agriculture continue to rise.

- **Goal 9** (Build resilient infrastructure, and promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation). The composite indicator shows a stable trend during the period 2010-2017, since improvements deriving from increases in the share of R&D personnel in the labour force and the gross domestic expenditure on R&D (2.1% in 2017, still a long way off the Europe 2020 target of 3%), are offset by reductions in the share of rail in total freight transport and patent applications to the European Patent Office.
- **Goal 10** (Reduce inequality within and among countries). The composite indicator registered a slight downturn until 2014, caused by the worsening of the inequality of income distribution. The slight improvement in 2017 is driven by an increase in purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita and a reduction of the people at risk of income poverty after social transfers.
- **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). After a significant reduction, the composite indicator has registered an upturn in the last two years, bolstered by citizens' growing confidence in EU institutions (the European Parliament, the Commission and the European Central Bank), and by a reduction in the death rate due to homicide (0.62 homicides per 100,000 people), which fell by 31% between 2010 and 2017.

## 2.2 Policy statements by the President-elect of the European Commission and the European Council's Strategic Agenda 2019-2024

For the first time ever, the elections at the end of May and the subsequent agreement between governments brought a woman to the presidency of the European Commission. In her keynote address to the Parliament, Ursula von der Leyen clearly supported the idea that sustainable development should be one of the cornerstones of European policy for the next five years. The word “sustainable” appeared twelve times in her address, and the latter contains many proposals relating to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda as well as an explicit commitment to “leave no one behind”, the exact motto in the 2030 Agenda.

In particular, the new President proposed six guidelines:

- **European Green Deal.** The aim is to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent, and it is in this sense that the proposal for a special plan, to be presented in her first 100 days in office, should be understood. The plan will be based on:
  - > a socially just energy transition that takes into account the differences between the various countries and regions and is based on clean energy and the circular economy, regarding which Europe should aim to become a world leader;
  - > a sustainable Europe investment plan based on the transformation of the European Investment Bank into the European Climate Bank;
  - > the protection of biodiversity and efforts to combat pollution in all its forms (including those resulting from single-use plastic), as well as a stronger commitment to rural areas and sustainable agriculture.
- **A people-centred economy.** The European social and market economy model has enabled EU economies to grow and develop a welfare system based on social equity. In this scenario, the new Commission's commitment entails:
  - > support for SMEs as drivers of innovation and job creation;

> strengthening of the Economic and Monetary Union thanks to full use of the flexibility provided for in the Stability Pact, completion of the Banking Union and establishment of a deposit guarantee scheme. The commitment to transforming the European Semester in order to orient it towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda (a proposal also put forward by ASViS), which could mark an unprecedented turning point, is also underlined. Indeed, the European Semester (created to coordinate economic, social and environmental policies to achieve the Europe 2020 Strategy, but then “diverted” to financial issues with the economic crisis) is the core of the political action of the Commission and the Council and culminates in the Specific Recommendations for each country. The decision to orient this process towards the 2030 Agenda could lead to a radical shift in the European Commission's approach to sustainable development;

> improvement of the European Pillar of Social Rights in order to “reconcile” social and market aspects by proposing a minimum wage, a reinsurance mechanism to combat unemployment, a greater commitment to combating poverty, the creation of a “child guarantee”, as proposed by the European Parliament, focused on education and training, and finally a plan to combat cancer;

> greater equality through the introduction of new anti-discrimination legislation, a gender equality strategy and the inclusion of violence against women in the list of crimes defined by the European Treaty;

> a fair tax system that combats tax evasion and ensures the taxation of big tech companies.

- **A Europe fit for the digital age.** In order to take advantage of the opportunities offered by new technologies, Europe needs legislation that takes account of the ethical implications of artificial intelligence and a Digital Services Act that establishes rules for digital platforms and complements the Digital Single Market. A core element of the strategy is getting Europe up to speed on digital skills for both young people and adults by updating the Digital Education Action Plan.

- **Promoting the European way of life.** This entails:
  - > upholding the rule of law based on the protection of European values, compliance of which will be monitored in each Member State;
  - > reviewing the Dublin Agreement on asylum and migration and strengthening the role of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.
- **A stronger Europe in the world.** Europe should take on global and responsible leadership based on:
  - > free and fair trade with the highest standards of transparency, environmental and climate protection, and labour protection with a zero-tolerance policy regarding child labour;
  - > playing a more active role in international cooperation, particularly with regard to Africa, which is the European Union's natural partner.
- **A new push for European democracy.** In order to achieve this:
  - > European citizens must be involved in the Conference on the Future of Europe, which will start operating in 2020 with the aim of setting the European Union's priorities and ambitions;
  - > it is essential to improve the relationship between the Commission and Parliament, also by strengthening the legislative powers of the Parliament.

Before the election of Ursula von der Leyen, the European Council had approved the **New Strategic Agenda for 2019-2024**, divided into four areas of intervention in which many SDGs are directly or indirectly referred to:

- **Protecting citizens and freedoms.** The European Union must guarantee the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms for its citizens and, at the same time, develop a comprehensive migration policy, also based on cooperation with countries of origin and transit, to combat illegal migration and human trafficking and to guarantee effective returns to countries of origin.
- **Development a strong and vibrant economic base: a European model for the future.** A model based on the Banking Union, the union of capital markets and the international role

of the euro should be strengthened, in order to maximise the European Union's impact on the world stage and create jobs, taking full advantage of the potential offered by the Single Market. At the same time, Europe must be able to take full advantage of the challenge of digital transformation, without neglecting investment in people's skills and education, do more to promote entrepreneurship and innovation, and step up research efforts, in particular by tackling the fragmentation of the research, development and innovation sector.

- **Building climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe.** Europe should take advantage of the opportunities offered by the green transition, technological progress and globalisation, while ensuring that no one is left behind. In this context, it is important to promote private and public investment to speed up the transition to renewable energy, energy efficiency, diversification of sources of supply and mobility solutions. At the same time, Europe must not reduce its commitment to environmental protection and the promotion of sustainable agriculture, which is essential to ensure food security and encourage quality production. The European Union intends to strengthen the European Pillar of Social Rights in order to reduce generational, gender, territorial and educational disparities, which are forms of exclusion and constitute a political, social and economic risk.
- **Promoting European interests and values on the global stage.** Protection of its interests and values, and its way of life, should be at the heart of the European Union's policies, with a view to guiding the response to global challenges, strengthening the fight against climate change, promoting sustainable development and implementing the 2030 Agenda. It is also essential to promote the European cooperation model, which could be the basis for developing a broad-based partnership with Africa, by continuing to strive for global peace and stability, and to promote democracy and human rights.

## 2.3 European institutions and the 2030 Agenda: a growing commitment to an integrated approach

Over the past year, many European institutions have addressed the issue of the role of the 2030 Agenda in European policies. The positions adopted by the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Court of Auditors have confirmed, on the one hand, that the European Union as a whole is the most sustainable continent in the world and, on the other, that it is lagging behind and has shortcomings due to the piecemeal way in which European policies have so far been oriented towards the 17 Goals and the 169 Targets set by the 2030 Agenda.

This criticism was directly expressed by the European Court of Auditors, which published the review “**Reporting on Sustainability: A Stocktake of EU Institutions and Agencies**” in June 2019. The Court points out that, despite its declarations, the European Commission does not yet produce any information on sustainability, let alone publish reports on the contribution made by EU policies and the EU budget to the achievement of the SDGs. In essence, the European Union does not yet have a sustainable development strategy up to 2030 that defines the relevant SDGs, or the reference Targets.

The position of the European Court of Auditors was adopted despite the fact that, in January 2019, the Commission published its long-awaited reflection paper, “**Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030**”, on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the European Union, in which ASviS is mentioned as an example of good civil society practice, especially with regard to the implementation of Goal 17. After a detailed and useful analysis of everything the European Union has done since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the document focuses on the “political pillars” of the transition to sustainability (for example, the transition from a linear to a circular economy), and the “cross-cutting factors” supporting the sustainable transition, such as education, science, technology, research, innovation and digitisation; finance, taxation and competition; corporate social responsibility and new business models; open and

rules-based trade; and governance and policy coherence at all levels<sup>3</sup>.

Looking to the future, the Commission proposes three different scenarios to guide the discussion on how to incorporate the 2030 Agenda into European policies, in the belief that the European Union has a strong competitive advantage for taking a global lead on sustainable development:

- **Scenario 1: An overall EU strategy for the SDGs to guide EU and Member State actions.** In this case, the SDGs should become overall strategic objectives for the EU and Member States and serve as the only source of guidance for any EU action or for action taken by the various levels of government, including regional and local authorities, in close cooperation with all stakeholders. This approach also envisages boosting the European Union’s international action on sustainability in its relations with third countries, as well as the creation of a “European coordination process for SDG strategies” and regular monitoring of the progress made.
- **Scenario 2: Integration of the SDGs into all EU policies, but without imposing any obligations on Member States.** In this scenario, the 2030 Agenda should inspire the decision-making process regarding the definition of EU policies, without requiring Member States to adopt similar national policies. This approach would leave the latter free to decide whether and how to modify their actions to achieve the SDGs.
- **Scenario 3: More focus on external action, while consolidating the principle of sustainability at EU level.** As the EU is already at the forefront of the achievement of the SDGs, the European Union should primarily focus on helping other countries meet EU standards in terms of the 2030 Agenda, while pursuing policies aimed at improving the European situation.

It is obvious that only the first scenario reflects the vision of a Europe that is strong and united with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, while the other two (especially the third, which even opposes the positions taken in recent years by the Council and the Parliament) are the outcome of a lack of enthusiasm for sustainable development issues by the outgoing Juncker Commission. It is no coincidence that one of the first actions of the new President was to remove Martin

Selmayr, the former Head of Cabinet of the Juncker Commission, who, amidst much controversy, had been appointed Secretary General of the Commission in 2018.

In February 2019, the European Parliament published “**Europe’s approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: Good practices and the way forward**”, a report that takes a snapshot of the current situation in individual countries, sets out good practices and formulates recommendations for the achievement of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. On several occasions the document refers to ASviS as one of the most participatory, independent and active stakeholders, and as an example of a network of civil society organisations and a high-level alliance for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In a nutshell, the report notes that:

- most Member States are revising their national development plans to include the SDGs;
- substantial efforts have been made to improve stakeholder engagement in the processes relating to the 2030 Agenda;
- most Member States regularly publish reports and indicators on progress towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- many Member States are planning to improve their systems for assessing the impact of policies on sustainability by linking budgetary processes to the 2030 Agenda;
- a growing number of Member States have special bodies dedicated to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Among its recommendations for the implementation of the SDGs at EU level, the report suggests the creation of joint, multi-level governance mechanisms between the EU and the Member States, using inter-parliamentary dialogue and co-operation between the European Parliament and national parliaments. As European institutions still need to make a great deal of progress in order to meet the challenges of sustainability in a satisfactory manner, the report proposes to:

- develop a full implementation strategy for the SDGs for the years beyond 2020;
- integrate the SDGs into the EU’s economic and budgetary monitoring processes;
- step up the use of peer learning mechanisms at all levels of government, in order to encour-

age the sharing of knowledge, practices and approaches for the implementation of the SDGs;

- promote the use of the EU’s Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP), in order to reform policies and institutions in line with the content of the 2030 Agenda.

One of the last actions of the European Parliament was the approval, in March 2019, of a resolution entitled “**Annual strategic report on the implementation and delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals**”, which focuses on inclusive and fair education, the development of technology, and funding for research and innovation as particularly important tools for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, the Parliament has called for greater investment by the Commission and Member States in implementing structural measures. In particular, micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, co-operative enterprises, and inclusive business models as drivers of local growth, employment and innovation are recognised as having an important role to play. The Commission and Member States are also called on to encourage the emergence of new entrepreneurship and to promote innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence. In order to achieve equality of means as well as of objectives, the Parliament calls on the Commission to pay special attention to the facilitation of technology transfer mechanisms in developing countries, which is an essential step towards bringing about tangible, concrete change, including in less developed parts of the world.

Two reports presented in April by the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC) also focus on the challenges facing the EU in the coming years, with a particular focus on sustainable development issues: “**Europe’s Sustainability Puzzle**” and “**Global Trends to 2030: Challenges and choices for Europe**”. The first shows how European citizens are feeling increasingly concerned about unequal outcomes and, above all, about unequal opportunities for the future. This brings about changes that negatively affect society and the economy, as citizens distance themselves from institutions. The “business as usual” approach is being questioned, and may be overcome by policies linked to sustainable development and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

According to the Commission's think tank, this opportunity must be seized to truly aim for a radical socio-economic transformation of Europe, in order to ensure long-term prosperity for both current and future generations. The document sets out the choices Europe must make in order not to miss the opportunity to embark on a long-term sustainable development path: divesting from fossil fuels as soon as possible and shifting to a renewable energy system. In this regard, it should be noted that the process of decarbonisation must not only involve the energy sector; it must also involve simultaneous investment in markets, policies, industry, scientific research and even people's cultural approach.

Moreover, it is necessary to move from a system based on GDP growth and the maximisation of private profit to one based on the spread of added value among the most vulnerable sectors of the population; from a society built on individual use of private cars to the sharing of public transport; from classic to sustainable finance; from current tax systems to a system that supports the poor and has mechanisms to protect all forms of employment.

The second report, on the other hand, focuses on the role Europe will have to play over the next decade in order not to get caught up in the trade war between China and the United States, and to establish itself as a leader in technological innovation. First of all, the report suggests preserving the democratic future of the planet. Indeed, while until 2005 the figures were telling us that freedom of thought and action was increasing in the world, since then things have started to change. In the last 13 years, the report points out, the spread of democracy around the world has regressed, while internal conflicts within individual countries are on the rise.

With regard to inequality and discrimination, in its report "**Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in the EU: A matter of human and fundamental rights**", the European Agency for Fundamental Rights stresses that, despite recent progress, the elimination of poverty and discrimination, a necessary social condition to facilitate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, has not occurred in Europe, as prejudice and violence continue to threaten the safety of women, immigrants, religious minorities and LGBTI people.

In the light of this assumption, based on Eurostat data, the report analyses the state of rights in Europe, noting that the gap between rich and poor has increased in recent years, with a slight improvement registered in 2017. Poverty affects the vulnerable and marginalised sectors of the population, such as children, immigrants, Roma people, the disabled and the elderly. Indeed, compared with an overall at-risk-of-poverty rate of 17%, 80% of Roma people, 63% of people of North African descent and 55% of people of sub-Saharan African origin have an income below the poverty threshold.

Finally, the report emphasises the need for a comprehensive strategy shared by the countries of the European Union to coordinate policies for the Sustainable Development Goals. To achieve this, Member States need to produce national dossiers on the SDGs, with a special focus on Goals 10 and 16 (such as the National Implementation Plan released in 2017 by the Finnish government), and engage civil society. In this regard, the report points out that the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development should be considered as a good practice for civil society engagement and for raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda.

In May, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), which has been very active with regard to the issue of sustainable development, organised a conference entitled "**A new frontier of rights and progress for the EU**" to reflect on the challenges of the 2030 Agenda. The European Union's response should entail four courses of action:

- reaffirm the interdependence of the three dimensions (environmental, economic and social) of the 2030 Agenda. Progress made will depend on the extent to which policy choices and strategic actions reflect this interconnectedness. Hence the need to measure well-being "beyond GDP" and to move from the mere calculation of indices to the design of welfare-oriented policies;
- take advantage of the opportunities associated with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which appears to be the most relevant economic and social development strategy for the European democratic tradition, as it is fair and universal;
- step up communication about the benefits of pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals for individuals and society as a whole;



- achieve effective civil society engagement in the governance and implementation of the SDGs, at national and European level.

The EESC's proposal is to make the 2030 Agenda the "European Social Contract for the 21st century", based on seven principles:

- the EU must assume its responsibilities and implement the 2030 Agenda;
- the 2030 Agenda must become the strategic framework for the future of the EU;
- it is necessary to go "beyond GDP" in order to embrace a new definition of human development and growth;
- it is essential to ensure that no person, territory or periphery is excluded from change and long-term innovation;
- culture should be recognised as a key dimension of sustainable development;
- the 2030 Agenda should be implemented through an active partnership: all countries, regions, civil society and stakeholders must commit to a global strategy on sustainable development;
- young people should be allowed to lead the 2030 Agenda in changing the United Nations.

## 2.4 Climate change, the circular economy and energy

In the last year of the European legislature, a number of legislative measures relating to the themes covered by the 2030 Agenda were approved, and important initiatives were undertaken which bear witness to a growing awareness of the importance of sustainability among EU institutions.

In June 2019, Directive 2019/904, which introduces new restrictions on certain products made of single-use plastic, was approved. Under the new regulations, disposable plastic plates, cutlery, straws, balloon sticks and cotton buds will be banned by 2021 and Member States have committed to achieving a 90% collection target for plastic bottles by 2029.

In its **Communication of 18 June 2019, "United in delivering the Energy Union and Climate Action: Setting the foundations for a successful clean energy transition"**, the Commission reiterated the objectives already approved with a number of energy-related initiatives, including:

- Directive 2018/2001/EU on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, through which the European Union intends to maintain a leading position in the fight against climate change, setting targets for 2030. In particular, the aim is to achieve a 32% share of renewable energy in the EU as a whole, to increase the share of renewables used for heating/cooling by 1.5% per year, to achieve a 14% share of renewables in transport and to give priority to self-consumption and energy efficiency.
- Directive 2018/2002/EU on energy efficiency, which sets a 32.5% target for 2030 (compared to 2007) and also addresses the serious issue of energy poverty, that still lacks a shared definition at European level. The "whereas clauses" highlight that around 50 million Europeans are affected by energy poverty, which is exacerbated by the deterioration of many buildings that are damp, inefficient and difficult to heat. Three guidelines are then set out to overcome energy poverty and avoid waste:
  - > improve the energy efficiency of social housing, through state interventions, and private housing, through renovation incentives. This first step would lead to a reduction in con-

- sumption, by decreasing environmental impact and energy bill costs;
- > incentives to support households in need;
- > the right to self-consumption, namely the possibility of producing renewable energy for consumption, storage and sale, so as to reduce energy bills.
- **Regulation 2018/1999/EU**, which establishes a single system of European energy governance, so that Member States can plan and collectively achieve the set targets. The Regulation also establishes that each State must approve its own National Energy and Climate Plan by 31 December each year.

Regarding the climate and energy, in November 2018 the Commission published its new assessment of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy launched in 2013. The document highlights the negative impacts on ecosystems, economic sectors, human health and well-being in Europe. Overall, economic losses in Europe in the period 1980-2016 caused by weather events and other extreme climate-related events exceeded €436 billion. Adaptation, unlike mitigation actions (namely measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere), is designed to anticipate the effects of climate change and to act to prevent or minimise the damage it may cause or even, in some cases, to take advantage of opportunities that may emerge.

In order to make Europe more resilient to climate change, the strategy approved in 2013 focused on three specific objectives: make EU countries, regions and cities more resilient; improve knowledge to enable countries to make more informed adaptation decisions; and increase the resilience of the most vulnerable key sectors. In the assessment report, which takes into account the main areas for improvement, lessons learned and areas with the greatest need for action, a need emerges to support all regions in implementing national adaptation plans, by strengthening the infrastructure for managing environmental disasters and indicating which sectors will be most vulnerable. In addition, it is necessary to create synergies between member countries in order to reduce and mitigate the risks that environmental disasters could cause to the economy, including at international level.

Another relevant contribution to the climate debate is the Commission's analysis entitled "**European policies on climate and energy towards**

**2020, 2030 and 2050**", which aims to describe the European Union's climate and energy policies, as well as the challenges that must be faced in order to keep the global temperature below two degrees Celsius. In particular, it should be noted that in recent years new legislative measures have been adopted, including an efficient emissions trading system, funding for renewable energy sources, the construction of numerous energy-efficient zero emission buildings (ZEBs), regulations on the circulation of polluting cars, and provisions to decouple economic growth and emissions. The latter are considered particularly satisfactory, given that between 1990 and 2017 the EU's GDP rose by 58%, while total greenhouse gas emissions fell by 22%. The document also shows that the EU is on track to reduce emissions to 20% below 1990 levels by 2020 and that, in accordance with policies implemented so far and without further measures, emissions in 2030 should be 30% below 1990 levels. But it is also specified that a greater effort including a roadmap for 2050 would be desirable, aimed at further reducing emissions by 40%, 60% and 80% respectively by 2030, 2040 and 2050, maintaining the global warming caused by climate change below 2°C and attempting to achieve the 1.5°C threshold.

The European Environment Agency has presented its third report, "**The circular economy and the bioeconomy - Partners in sustainability**" to illustrate the synergies between the circular economy and the bioeconomy, and to support an EU policy based on circularity with a view to reducing the pressures on the environment imposed by our current lifestyles. In this context, the main aim of EU strategies and policies must be to increase the lifetime of products and materials, thereby reducing waste.

With regard to the circular economy, in August 2018 the Commission signed a memorandum of understanding with China with the objective of defining standards and policies for launching production systems that focus on recovering materials, renewable sources of energy and accelerating the transition towards sustainable low-carbon practices on a global scale. According to the MacArthur Foundation, the economic benefits of the transition to a circular economy would be considerable for both parties. In Chinese cities, it could make goods and services more accessible to citizens and reduce the negative effects normally associated with middle-class lifestyles, such as air



pollution. For its part, by 2030 the European Union could add €0.9 trillion to its GDP, at the same time halving CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and increasing household incomes by €3,000 per year.

In June 2019, the Commission published key **guidelines for improving companies' non-financial reporting**, with the aim of greening the economy. The proposal aims to encourage companies to adopt a more sustainable approach, based on evidence that companies opting to take this path achieve better results over time, enjoy lower funding costs, attract and retain talented employees and are ultimately more successful. In particular, the Commission's document states that companies must include a non-financial statement in their report to describe the negative and positive impact of a company's business and activities and, above all, the context in which it operates, as data which may be relevant in one context may not be relevant in another. Indeed, companies in a specific sector are more likely to share environmental, social and governance challenges that are different from those facing companies operating in other sectors.

## 2.5 European institutions' commitment to sustainable finance

As already mentioned, the European market for responsible and sustainable financial services is expanding greatly, thanks to the commitment of institutional investors. This has led to significant growth in the retail component in recent years, which rose from 3.4% in 2013 to 30% at the end of 2017.

The latest edition of the **European SRI Study**, a biennial study on the European sustainable finance market conducted by Eurosif in collaboration with national Sustainable Investment Forums (SIF), bears witness to these trends, confirming the dissemination of SRI strategies at aggregate and national level. Exclusions<sup>4</sup> constitute the most widespread approach and are applied to €9.4 trillion of assets, while engagement<sup>5</sup> is on the rise, standing at around €5 trillion. This trend shows that institutional investors are increasingly interested in influencing the sustainability policies of the companies they invest in.

Impact investing is one of the fastest growing strategies. From 2013 to 2017, the sector rose from €20 billion to €108 billion. These investments - which are characterised by an investor's stated intention to achieve measurable positive social and environmental impacts as well as a financial return - are increasingly aligned with the SDGs. Indeed, in the field of impact investing, the SDGs can be instruments for ex-ante assessment and ex-post measurement of the environmental and social impact of investments.

An important sustainable finance actor at European level is the European Investment Bank (EIB), which back in 2007 launched the first green bond (**Climate Awareness Bond**), aimed at funding projects focusing on climate change solutions. The EIB is currently the largest issuer of green bonds, with €18 billion in funding as at 31 December 2017. In September 2018, the Bank launched the first **Sustainability Awareness Bond** dedicated to financing sustainable projects in line with the SDGs. In the initial phase, the proceeds have been allocated to water resources, but in the future, allocations will also be made to the health and education sectors.

## THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S ACTION PLAN TO FINANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

With the ratification of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement in 2015, the European Union has put environmental and social sustainability at the heart of its policies<sup>6</sup>. The EU Commission has estimated that €180 billion in investment per year will be needed to meet environmental and climate targets by 2030, in addition to the funds already earmarked<sup>7</sup>. To bridge this gap, the private sector can play a crucial role in supporting public investment.

With a view to steering the capital market towards sustainable investment, the EU institutions have launched a programme of financial market reform. In December 2016, the EU Commission set up a High-level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance (HLEG) to draw up recommendations for the development of sustainable finance. On the basis of the final report produced by the HLEG, in March 2018 the EU Commission published the **Action Plan “Financing Sustainable Growth”**, a roadmap with specific measures and deadlines, aimed at: directing capital flows towards sustainable investment; more efficiently managing the financial risks arising from climate change, resource consumption, environmental degradation and social inequality; improving transparency and encouraging a long-term approach in financial activities.

In May 2018, the EU Commission followed up the Action Plan's initial measures by introducing **three regulatory proposals** regarding: a taxonomy of environmentally-friendly economic activities, which is a definition and classification system that will enable investors to direct investment towards environmentally sound activities; two new types of climate benchmarks linked to issuers' emissions levels; and ESG risk disclosure by institutional investors.

In June 2018, the EU Commission appointed a **Technical Expert Group on Sustainable Finance (TEG)** to advise on: taxonomy, with priority given to climate change mitigation and adaptation; revising the guidelines on corporate reporting of climate-related information; the Green Bond Standard (GBS), a European quality certification for green bonds; and common criteria for creating climate benchmarks.

Alongside the work of the TEG, consultations took place on the proposed regulations between the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament in 2018 and 2019. In February and March 2019, the Parliament and the Council reached agreement on the introduction of climate benchmarks (**EU Climate Transition and EU Paris-aligned Benchmarks**), and **transparency requirements regarding the integration of ESG risks and opportunities** into institutional investors' policies and processes. The regulations will come into force in the second half of 2019. Moreover, the EU Commission is active in introducing the ESG criteria into its advisory activities. On 4 January 2019, two proposals for delegated regulations were published regarding the ways in which investors, asset managers and insurance companies will be required to include ESG considerations in their advisory activities.

Four important documents regarding implementation of the Action Plan were published in June 2019. The EU Commission published a **revision of the guidelines on corporate reporting of climate change information to investors**, while the TEG produced a technical report on the taxonomy of environmentally-friendly economic activities, a final report on the GBS, and an interim report on climate benchmarks and the introduction of ESG reporting requirements for all benchmarks.

In line with the guidelines used by its international counterparts, the European Central Bank has recently referred to climate change in the context of the Financial Stability Review. The Frankfurt-based institute emphasised the importance of physical risks for market stability, inviting opera-

tors to adopt adaptation strategies and develop new models to improve risk management skills; it also stressed the importance of having more effective and more comparable data.

Still on the subject of finance, the European Parliament has released data on the performance of the **European Fund for Sustainable Development** (EFSD). The fund, which was inaugurated in 2016, uses a mixed finance approach, involving public and private funds, and activates agreements to implement investment in key sectors such as renewable energy, providing support for small and medium-sized enterprises and limiting the initial risk by including a guarantee fund that, if necessary, provides liquidity to offset pre-determined losses over the term of the agreements. The EFSD is the first of the support measures that the External Investment Plan makes available to third countries, together with technical assistance to help investors and businesses develop projects that can be financed by banks, and to foster dialogue between different countries, governments, institutions, businesses and stakeholders, in order to boost investor confidence.

In the EFSD's first year of operation, €4.1 billion were invested, which according to the European Union's forecasts will produce €44 billion of actual expenditure, 11 times the initial figure. Therefore, investments supported by the fund are aimed at creating a virtuous circle that affects the creation of new jobs, supports entrepreneurs, especially young people and women, promotes economic growth, and has an impact on the socio-economic aspects of migration, thereby promoting achievement of the SDGs and application of the Paris Agreement.

## 2.6 Civil society initiatives

During the past year, European civil society worked to raise public and political awareness of sustainable development issues in the run-up to the European elections.

In June 2019, one month after the European Parliamentary elections, the annual joint meeting of the Presidents and Secretaries-General of the Economic and Social Councils (ESC) of EU countries and the EESC was held in Rome. This event focused on the 2030 Agenda, sustainable development and the European Pillar of Social Rights. The leitmotif of the conference was extremely clear: the current economic model is unable to ensure well-being and prosperity in a world where the economic, social and environmental problems associated with the unsustainability of the current system are increasingly evident. Recalling that natural resources are limited and can therefore no longer be over-exploited, the Councils reaffirmed that the 2030 Agenda is the only effective response "to the economic and social challenges facing Europe".

Therefore, in the meeting's final declaration, the participants:

- affirmed that the 2030 Agenda represents the right strategy to provide the necessary responses to these five fundamental transitions that will have to be tackled in the coming years: economic; environmental and energy; social; democratic and participatory; and, finally, geopolitical;
- stressed that the 2030 Agenda is a win-win strategy for all, including employers, as they can be competitive and innovative by seizing the growth opportunities in the sectors connected with sustainable development; workers, who will be better protected, trained and safeguarded by pursuit of the Goals; and civil society, provided that it is fully involved in the governance process so that it can further improve it and help to monitor the SDGs;
- pointed out the need to strengthen the European Pillar of Social Rights, especially in terms of social protection and inclusion. In this regard, they appreciated a number of recommendations made by EU institutions, such as the above-mentioned European Commission Reflection Paper, the European Parliament's annual strategic report, and the Council's conclusions of 9 April 2019, "Towards an ever more

sustainable Union by 2030”, all of which focus on the need for greater commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

- suggested that it is important for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the period 2021-2027 to make sustainable development its key objective, and that the Commission should allocate 40% of its total budget to sustainable development and the fight against climate change. They also called for the appointment, in the next Commission, of a Vice-President responsible for integrating the Goals into EU policies;
- stressed the urgent need for greater engagement of civil society, citizens (especially young people) and intermediate bodies, as a link to decision-makers and with unquestionable power to influence the adoption of decisions in line with the 2030 Agenda;
- called on the European Union, by virtue of its economic weight, to play a key role in promoting - and even imposing - the Sustainable Development Agenda at global level through its trade policy.

Also worth mentioning is the call to join forces for a New Deal for Europe, signed by 100 CEOs brought together by CSR Europe in May 2019, aimed at raising awareness among the European public and policymakers on the need to strengthen dialogue and interaction between the latter, civil society and companies in order to achieve sustainable development. In particular, it was emphasised that the rule of law and cooperation between companies, civil society and governments are the most important assets for responding to concerns about Europe's future, and that the business world should use the SDGs to drive sustainable innovation that creates value for society. All stakeholders were called on to commit to the creation of collaborative platforms and digital and circular economic models that ensure lasting employment for workers and social cohesion.

Also important is the reflection and awareness-raising carried out by the Multi-stakeholder Platform on the SDGs, which was set up in May 2017 to provide support and assistance to the Commission and to all stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In October 2018, partly on account of the preparation of the Commission's Reflection Paper, the

platform presented its “**Europe moving towards a sustainable future**” report, in which it makes a number of recommendations on how to transform the SDGs into practical solutions for the well-being of present and future generations. As a priority action, the European Union should develop and implement a strategy for a sustainable Europe by 2030, which will guide all European policies and programmes.

The platform also recommends a redefinition of the European governance system in order to ensure a coherent approach to the 2030 Agenda, entrusting its coordination to the President of the Commission, who should be responsible for reporting on the state of implementation at the annual “State of the Union” address. Moreover, the Commission should promote a territorial approach to the achievement of the SDGs, by encouraging the commitment of regions, cities, citizens, communities, businesses and civil society.

The report also contains some specific recommendations on how to direct existing instruments towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, the European Union should:

- strengthen the Better Regulation Agenda by integrating sustainable development objectives and principles into the policy-making process;
- integrate sustainable development into European policy impact assessment guidelines;
- use the “Strategy for a Sustainable Europe by 2030” as a guide for the European Semester;
- make European finance and the Multiannual Financial Framework sustainable by incorporating the definition of environmental, social and governance risks into financial regulations;
- continue to develop an integrated monitoring system and a comprehensive set of European indicators regarding the SDGs.

As far as specific sectors are concerned, the report identifies the integration of sustainable development principles in five key areas as a priority to achieve the SDGs: responsible consumption and production; research, innovation, employment and social inclusion; climate and energy policies; the agri-food sector and common agricultural policy; and cohesion policies.

In parallel, in view of the European Parliamentary elections, SDG Watch Europe, a network of over 100 civil society organisations, prepared an “**Appeal to European leaders**”, also signed by ASviS, which insists on the need for the EU to fully imple-

ment the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Appeal was presented at the European Council on 14 and 15 December 2018.

In particular, the document stresses the urgent need to focus on the future of the Union, by adopting an ambitious political vision, acting as a world leader for sustainable development and taking the latter as its main political mission. It also deplores the fact that, more than three years after the signing of the 2030 Agenda, the EU has not yet adopted a European sustainable development strategy. SDG Watch highlighted the urgent need to adopt internal and external policies that are coherent and aimed at implementing the 2030 Agenda, to develop appropriate governance and approve desirable reforms, to review the organisation of the European Semester, and to have a medium-term financial programme (2021-2027) that is geared towards sustainable development to accompany the transition.

Other civil society organisations made similar appeals to European leaders.

For example, in the “**Open letter to EU leaders: Our sustainable future must start now**”, signed by various organisations, including ASviS, and addressed to the European Council at its summit on 20 and 21 June, heads of state and government are called on to be more ambitious with regard to environmental issues, while directing funding to those sectors that can enable achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the basis of an analysis of the current situation and the results of surveys showing that European cities want more social and environmental justice, the signatories to the letter reiterate that, despite some progress, the European Union’s efforts are still not up to the enormous challenges facing it and that urgent action is needed to tackle them. These challenges include growing inequality and the climate crisis, halting the rapid loss of biodiversity, ensuring sustainable consumption and production of goods and services, and guaranteeing quality employment for all.

## IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

### Disparities between European countries with regard to the 2030 Agenda

ASviS regularly monitors the progress of European countries towards achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals<sup>8</sup> through the selection of over 70 elementary indicators and their aggregation into 16 composite indicators. The various composite indicator values calculated for the EU are determined on the basis of the level and performance of the elementary indicators relating to the individual countries, which are in turn aggregated, thereby producing composite indicators for each Goal at country level<sup>9</sup>. This in-depth study takes into account the gaps between countries as measured by the composite indicators, highlighting the disparities between EU Member States. Once the composite indicators for the 16 Goals regarding the individual countries were calculated, “sensitivity” analysis (also known as influence analysis) was carried out. This allowed for an assessment of whether and to what extent European

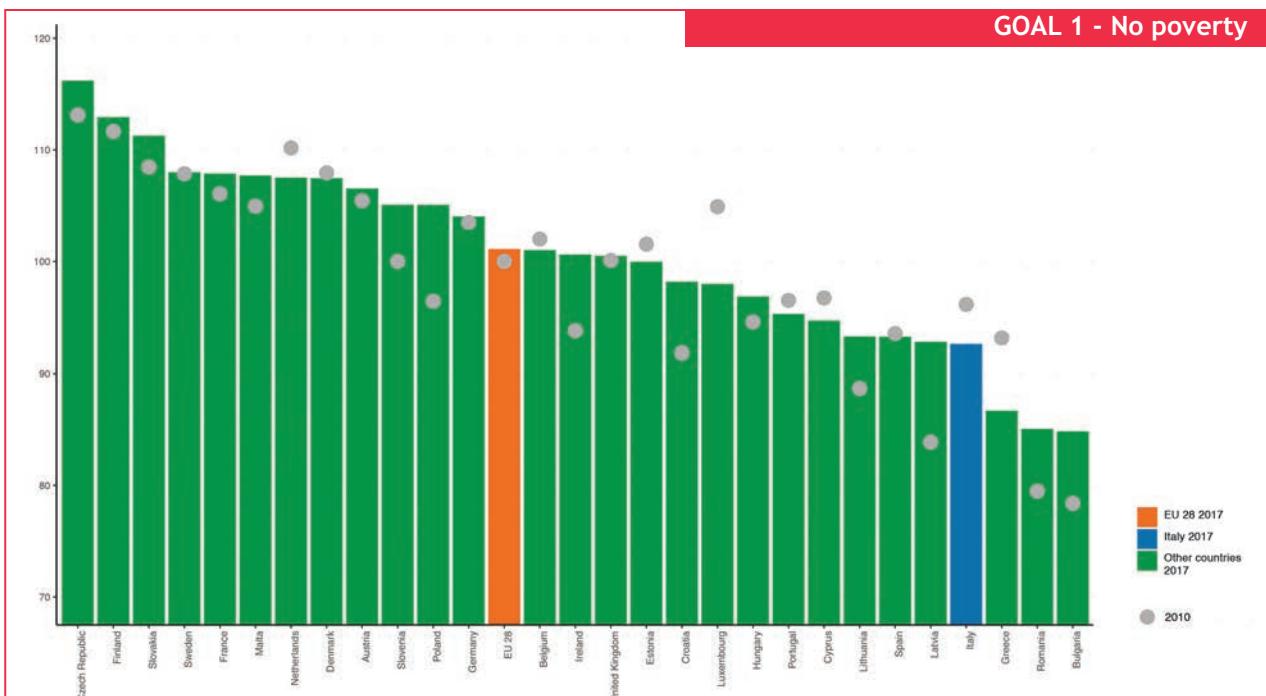
country rankings change after the elimination of an elementary indicator from the initial set. For each Goal, given the n elementary indicators available, n replications were carried out by eliminating a different indicator each time, and calculating the values of the composite indicators on the basis of the remaining n-1 indicators. For each replication, European country rankings were constructed, calculating the absolute differences in ranking between the position of each country in the original ranking and that in the ranking relating to the n-1 indicators.

The following table shows the elementary indicators used to develop the composite indicators for each Goal, ordered according to their “influence”<sup>10</sup>. Subsequently, the bar charts for each Goal show the differing levels of the composite indicator for the various European countries.

**Table 1 - List of elementary indicators used to develop composite indicators for European countries in descending order of “influence” on the performance of the composite indicators**

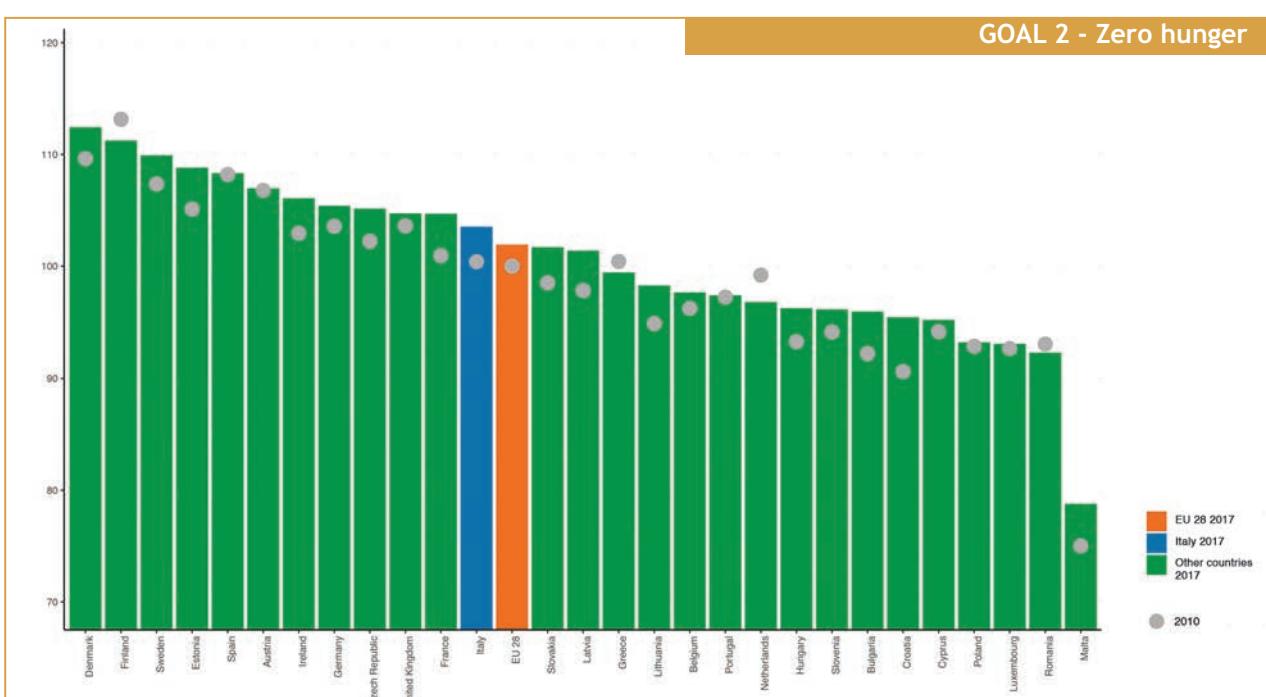
Indicator	Average
<b>GOAL 1</b>	
Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames of floor	1,79
People at risk of income poverty after social transfers	1,64
In work at-risk-of-poverty rate	1,64
People living in households with very low work intensity	1,21
Severely materially deprived people	0,71
People at risk of poverty or social exclusion	0,36
<b>GOAL 2</b>	
Government support to agricultural research and development	2,79
Area under organic farming	2,64
Ammonia emissions from agriculture	2,43
Agricultural factor income per annual work unit (AWU)	2,36
<b>GOAL 3</b>	
Self-reported unmet need for medical care	1,36
Share of people with good or very good perceived health	1,14
Alchol consumption	1,07
Death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis	1,07
Life expectancy at birth	0,61
Death rate due to chronic diseases	0,50
<b>GOAL 4</b>	
Adult participation in learning	2,14
Tertiary educational attainment	1,93
Participation in early childhood education	1,79
Early leavers from education and training	1,57
Employment rates of recent graduates	1,50
<b>GOAL 5</b>	
Seats held by women in national parliaments	1,86
Positions held by women as board members	1,79
Positions held by women as executives	1,64
Gender pay gap in unadjusted form	1,43
Gender employment gap	1,36
Seats held by women in national governments	1,29
Female/male ratio of inactive population due to caring responsibilities	0,71
<b>GOAL 7</b>	
Final energy consumption in households per capita	3,14
Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption	2,79
Final energy consumption	2,21
Population unable to keep home adequately warm	2,07
Energy productivity	2,00
Primary energy consumption	1,93
<b>GOAL 8</b>	
Real GDP per capita	2,21
People killed in accidents at work	1,50
Young people neither in employment nor in education and training	1,43
Investment share of GDP	1,21
Employment rate	0,86
Long-term unemployment rate	0,57

<b>GOAL 9</b>		
R&D personnel		1,31
Share of collective transport modes in total passenger land transport		1,31
Gross domestic expenditure on R&D		1,23
Share of rail and inland waterways activity in total freight transport		1,23
Employment in high- and medium-high technology manufacturing sectors and knowledge-intensive service sectors		1,00
Patent applications to the European Patent Office		0,69
<b>GOAL 10</b>		
Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita		1,79
Income share of the bottom 40 % of the population		1,57
Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap		1,50
Income distribution		1,29
Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita		1,07
<b>GOAL 11</b>		
Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise		2,36
Overcrowding rate		2,00
Recycling rate of municipal waste		1,86
People killed in road accidents		1,21
Exposure to air pollution PM10		1,21
<b>GOAL 12</b>		
Resource productivity and domestic material consumption (DMC)		1,92
Recycling rate of waste excluding major mineral wastes		1,54
Average CO <sub>2</sub> emissions per km from new passenger cars		1,46
Circular material use rate		1,39
Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes		0,92
<b>GOAL 13</b>		
Greenhouse gas emissions		3,50
Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption		3,36
<b>GOAL 14</b>		
Bathing sites with excellent water quality		4,70
Surface of marine sites designated under NATURA 2000		4,61
<b>GOAL 15</b>		
Soil sealing index		4,92
Share of forest area		4,42
Surface of terrestrial sites designated under NATURA 2000		3,25
<b>GOAL 16</b>		
Death rate due to homicide		2,07
Population with confidence in EU central bank		1,79
Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area		1,64
Population with confidence in EU Parliament		1,07
Population with confidence in EU Commission		1,07
<b>GOAL 17</b>		
General government gross debt		5,36
Shares of environmental taxes in total tax revenues		5,14
Official development assistance as share of gross national income		4,71
EU imports from developing countries		4,29



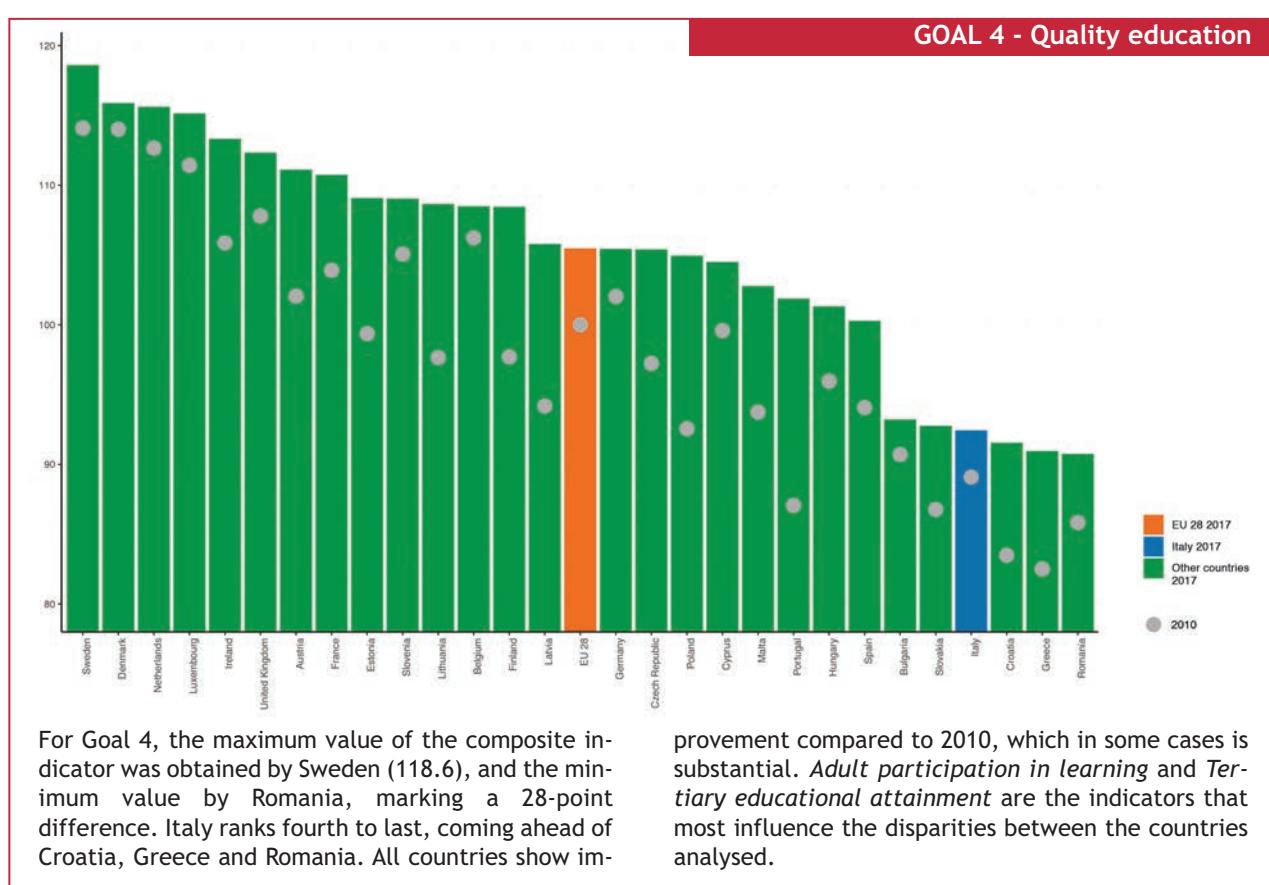
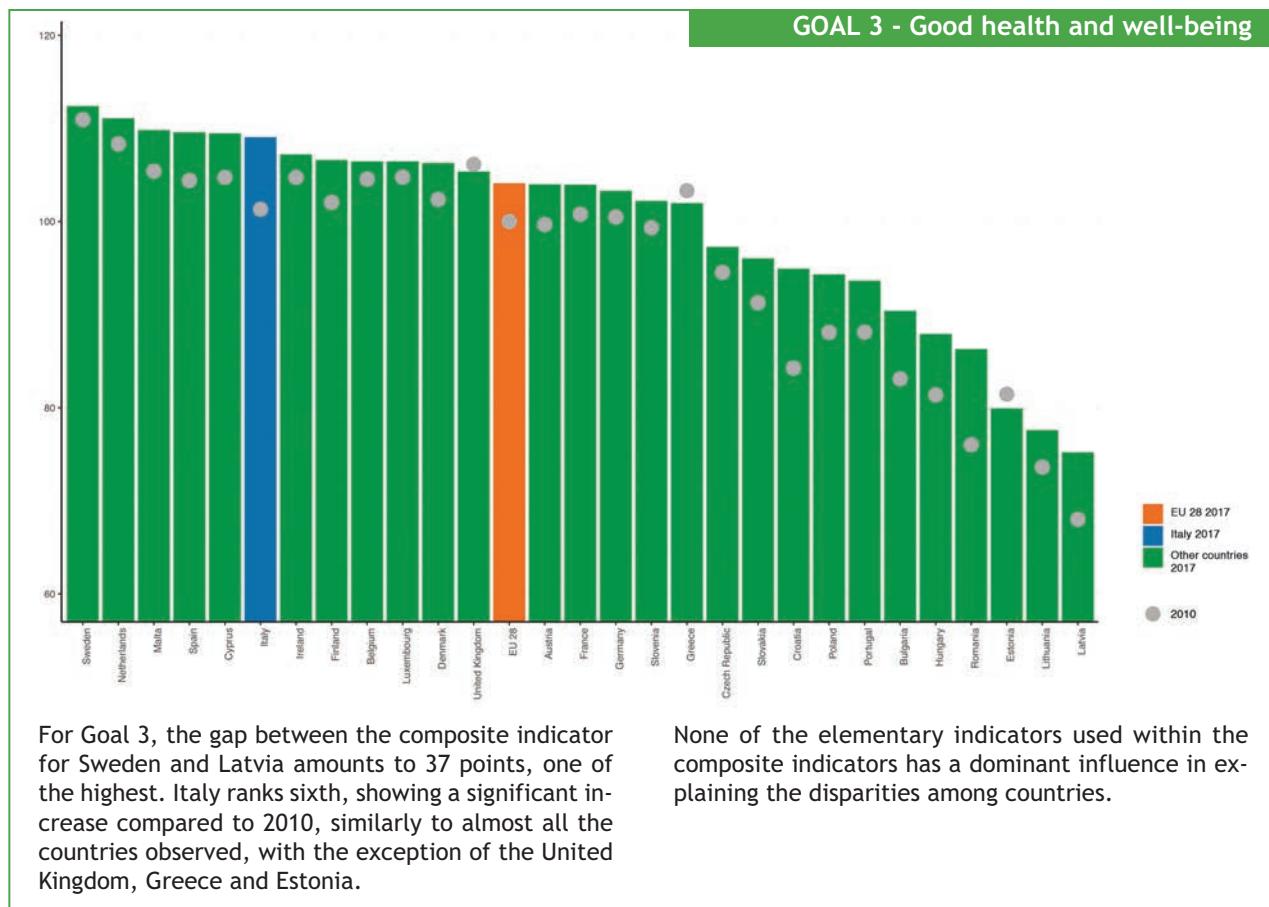
The chart highlights substantial gaps between country performances with respect to Goal 1. There is a 31.4 point difference between the composite indicator value for the best performer (Czech Republic) and that of the country at the bottom of the ranking (Bulgaria). Italy ranks twenty-fourth, ahead of Greece, Romania and Bulgaria. Between 2010 and

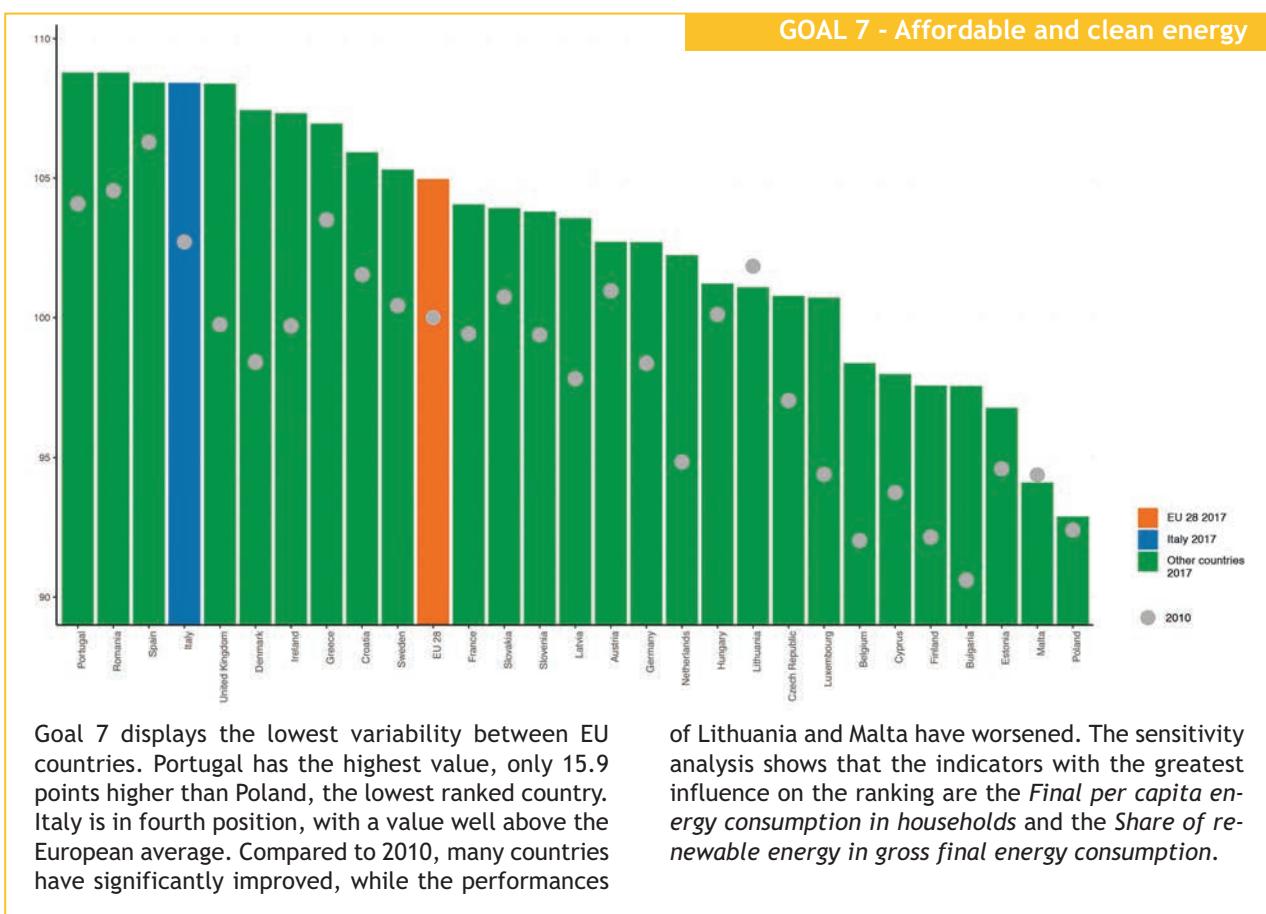
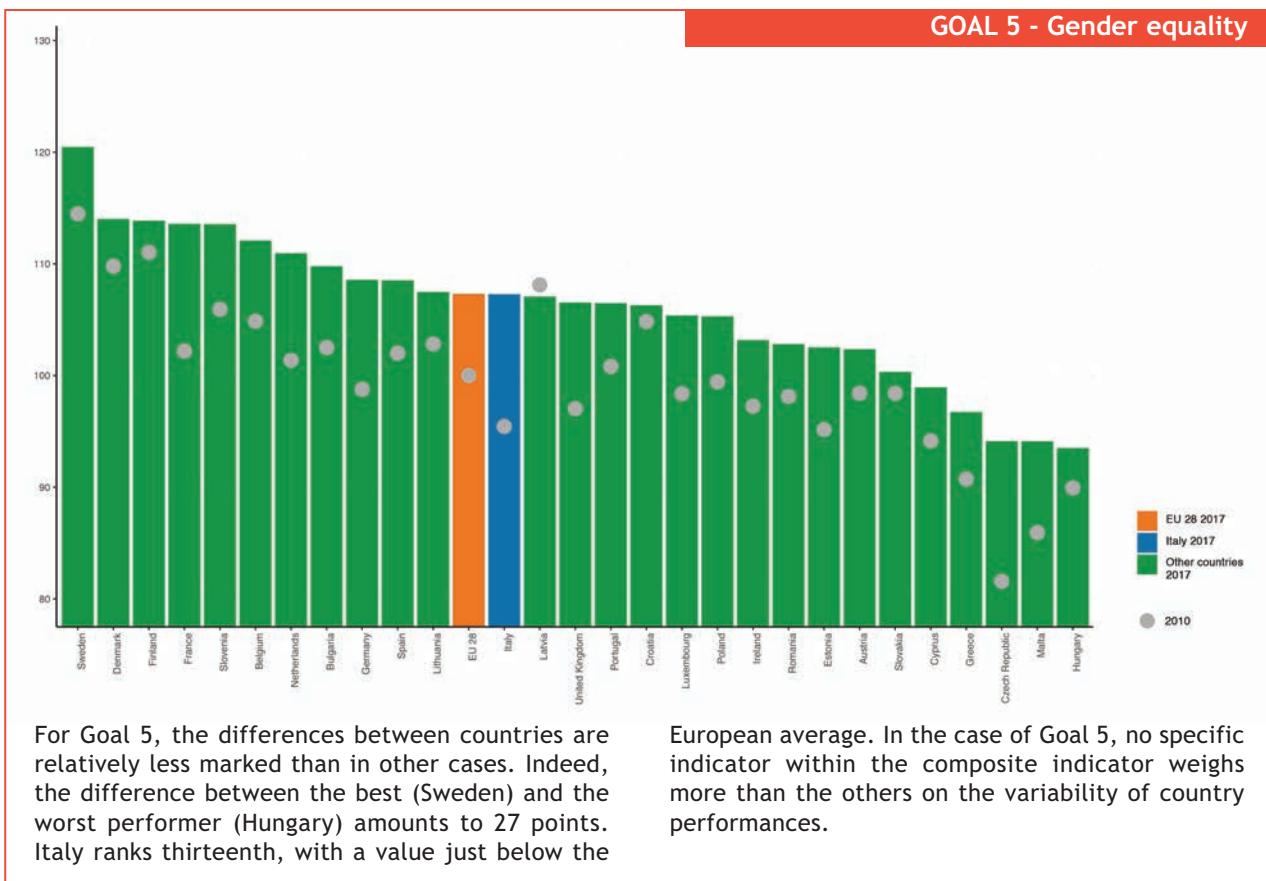
2017, individual country trends differ considerably. In terms of “influence”, there is a degree of homogeneity between the considered indicators, with the share of the *Population living in dwellings with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames* and of *People at risk of income poverty after social transfers* being the most relevant.



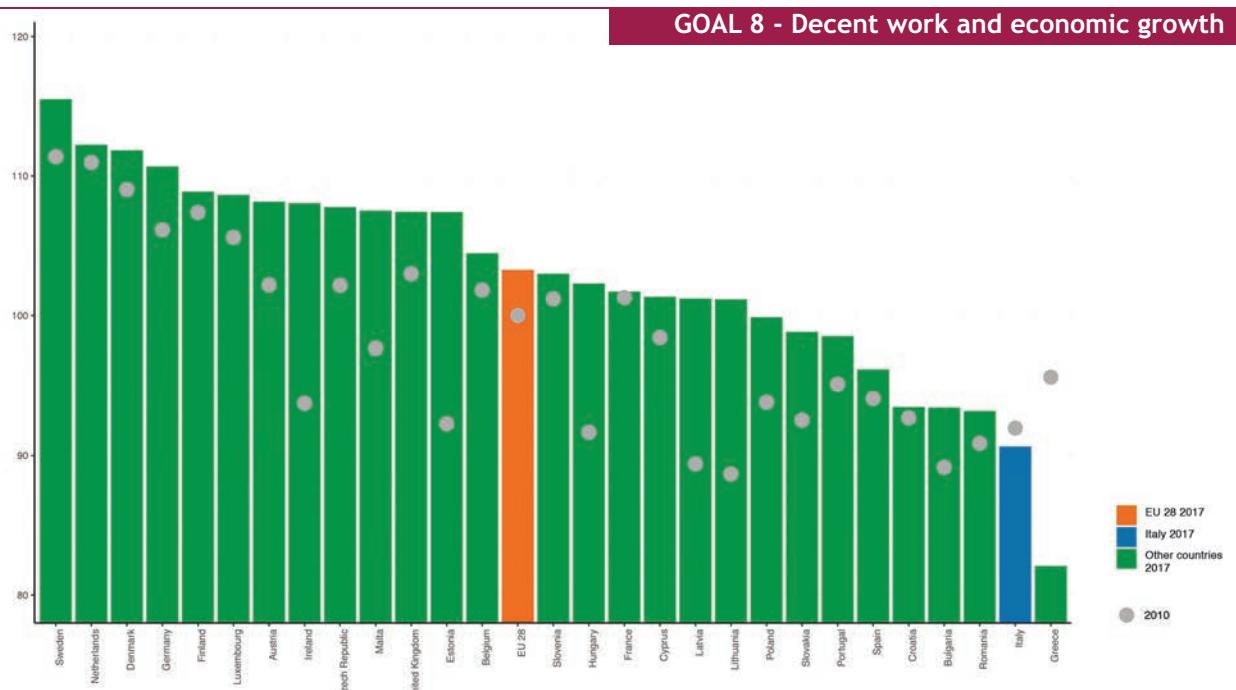
For Goal 2, Denmark is the country with the highest value for the composite indicator, over 33 points above Malta, which ranks last. Italy ranks slightly above EU average.

The indicators that most affect territorial differences are those relating to *Government support for agricultural research and development* and the *Area under organic farming*.





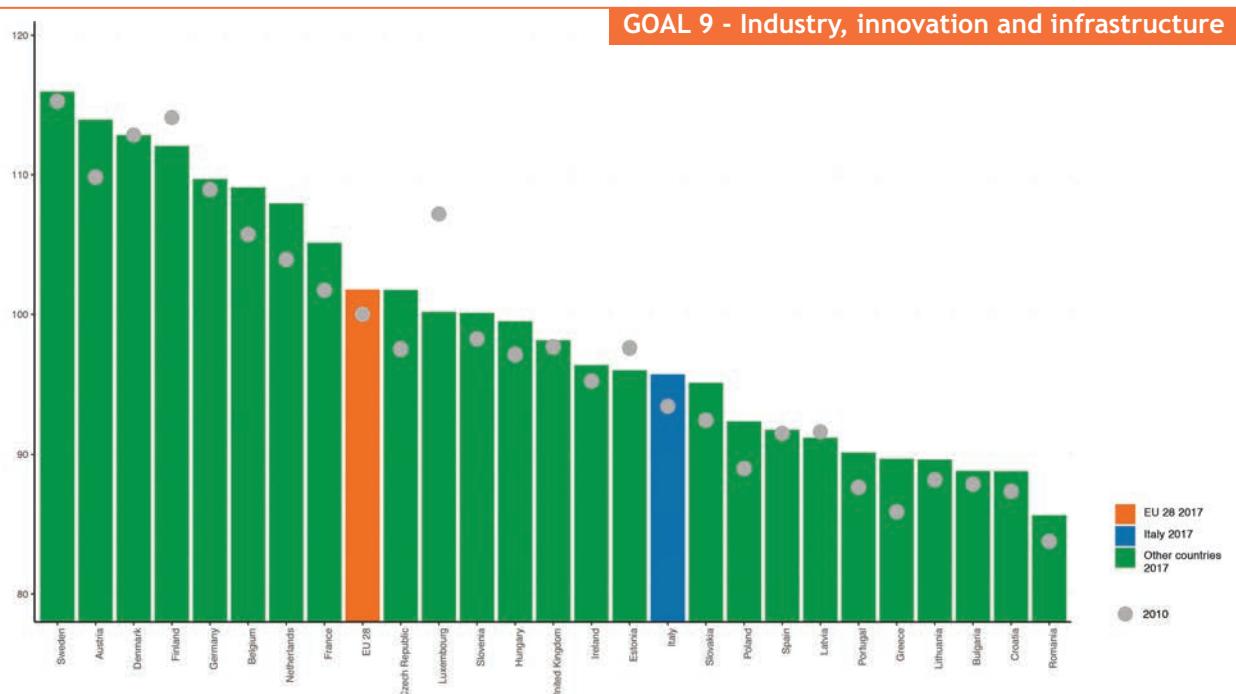
### GOAL 8 - Decent work and economic growth



For Goal 8 too, Sweden is the country with the highest value for the composite indicator, which is 33 points above Greece, the country ranking last. Italy is in penultimate position, the only country together with Greece registering a downtrend between 2010 and 2017.

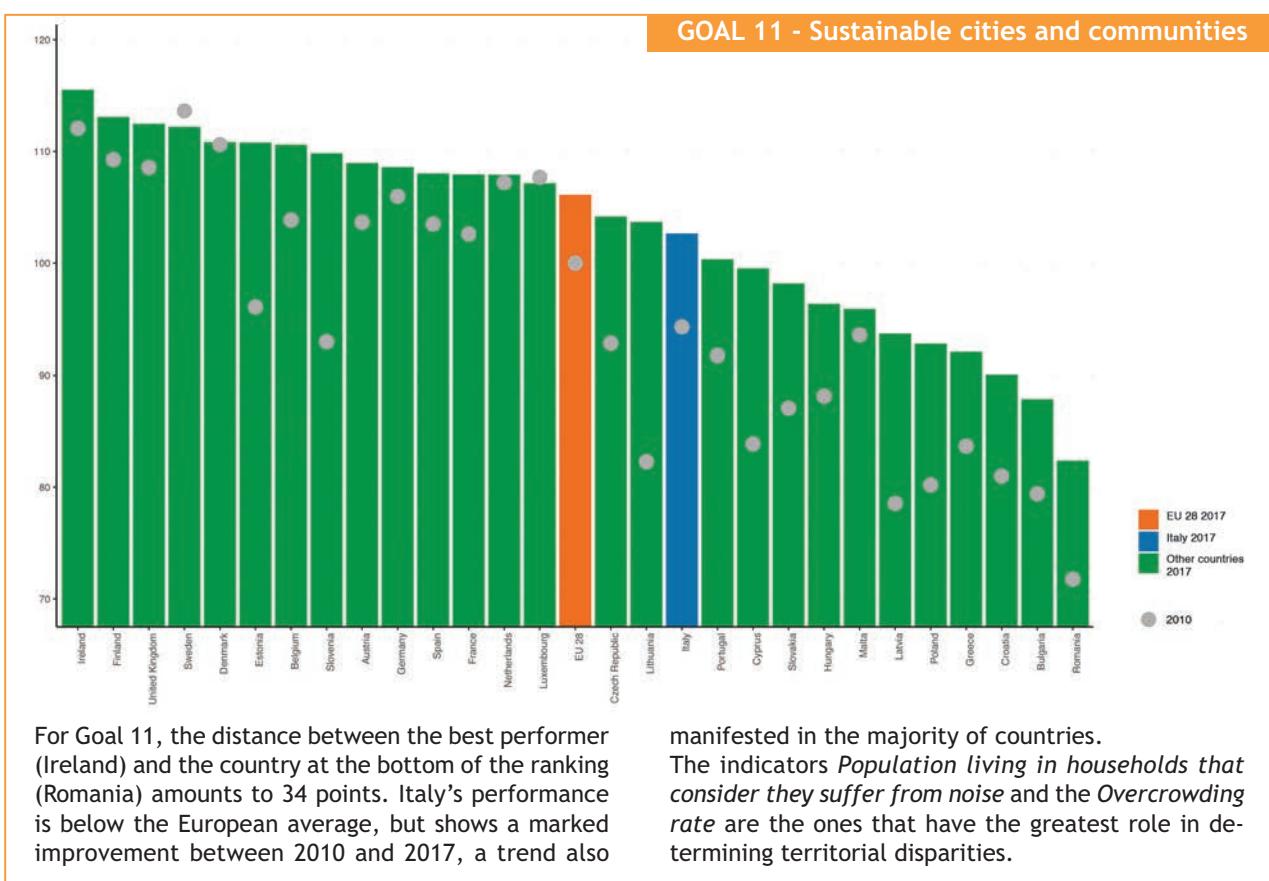
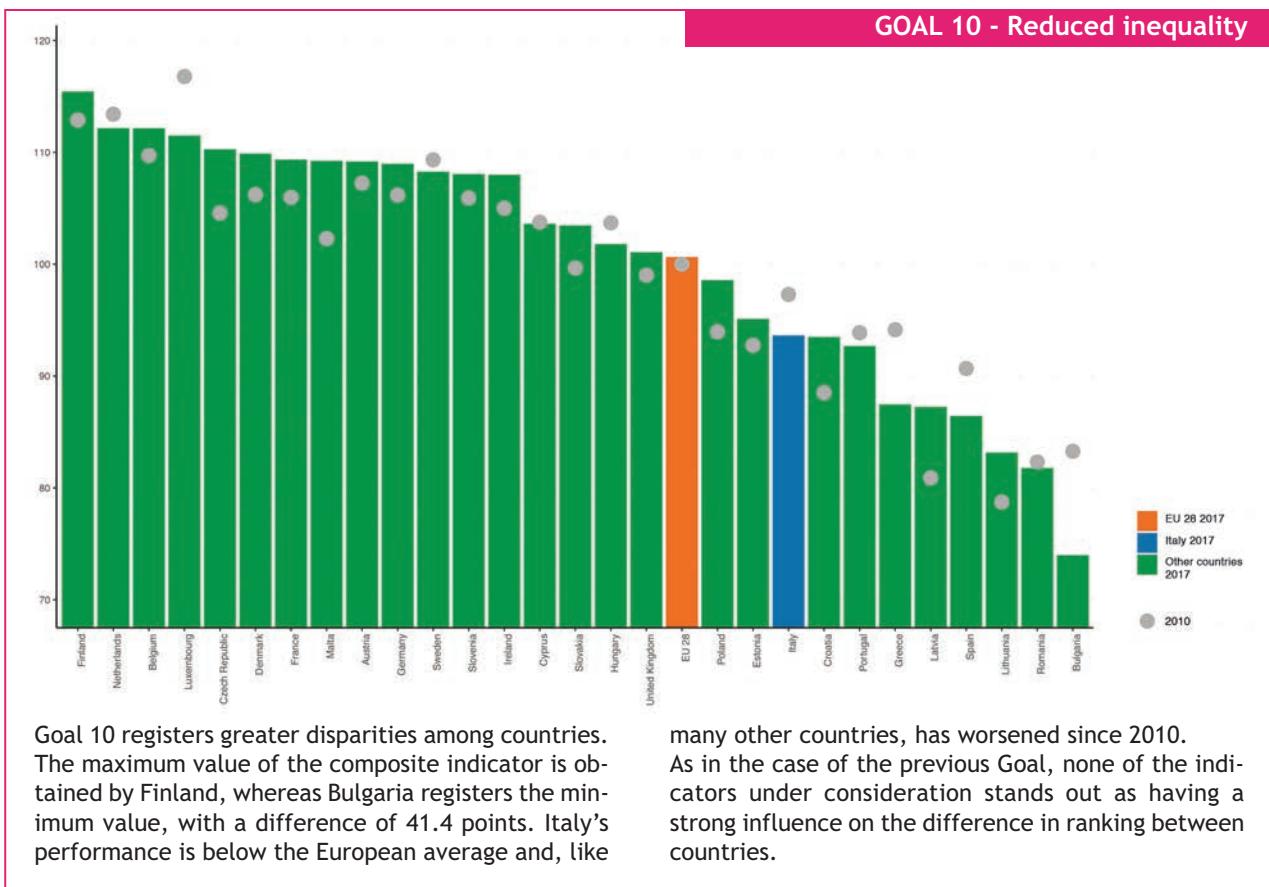
Among the elementary indicators, the one relating to *Real GDP per capita* has the greatest influence on the degree of disparity between the countries under consideration.

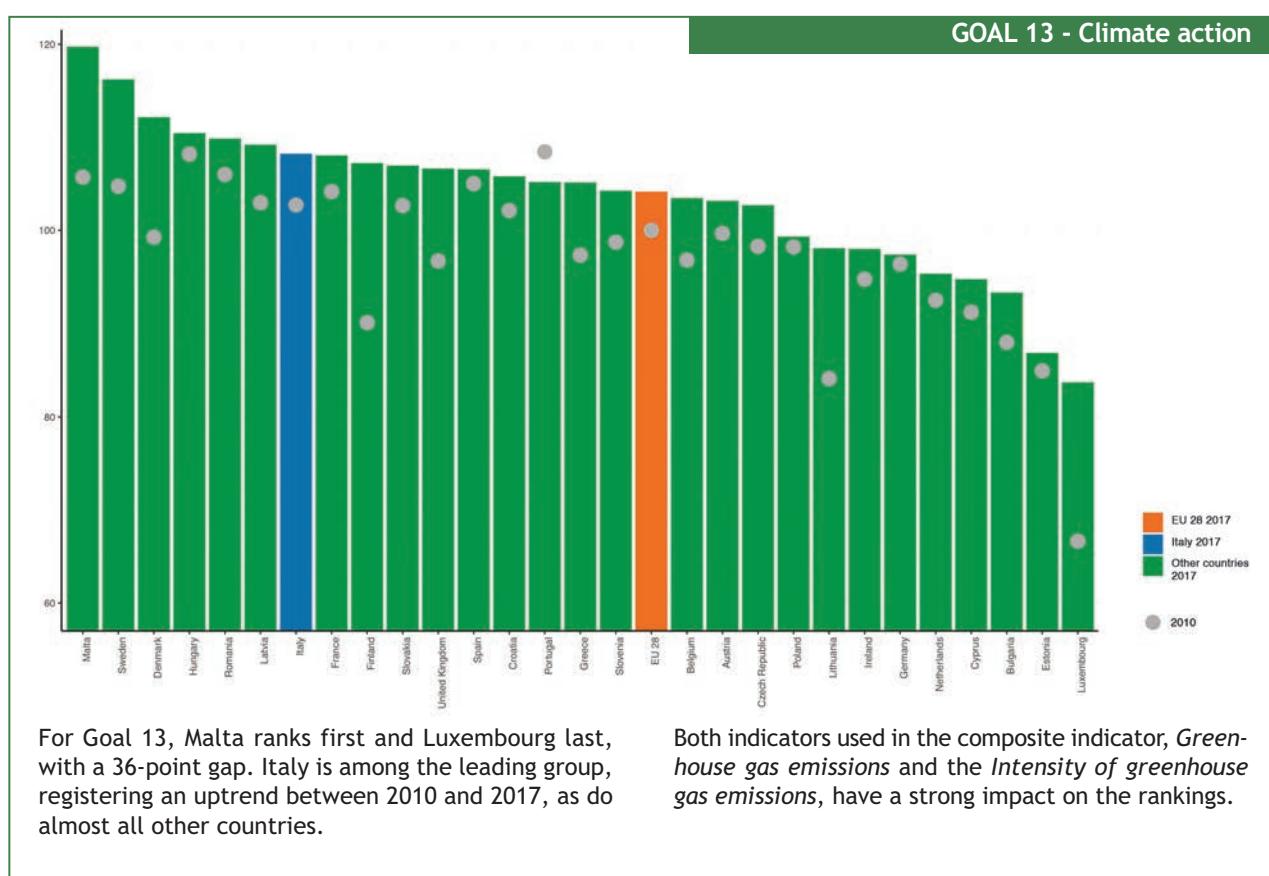
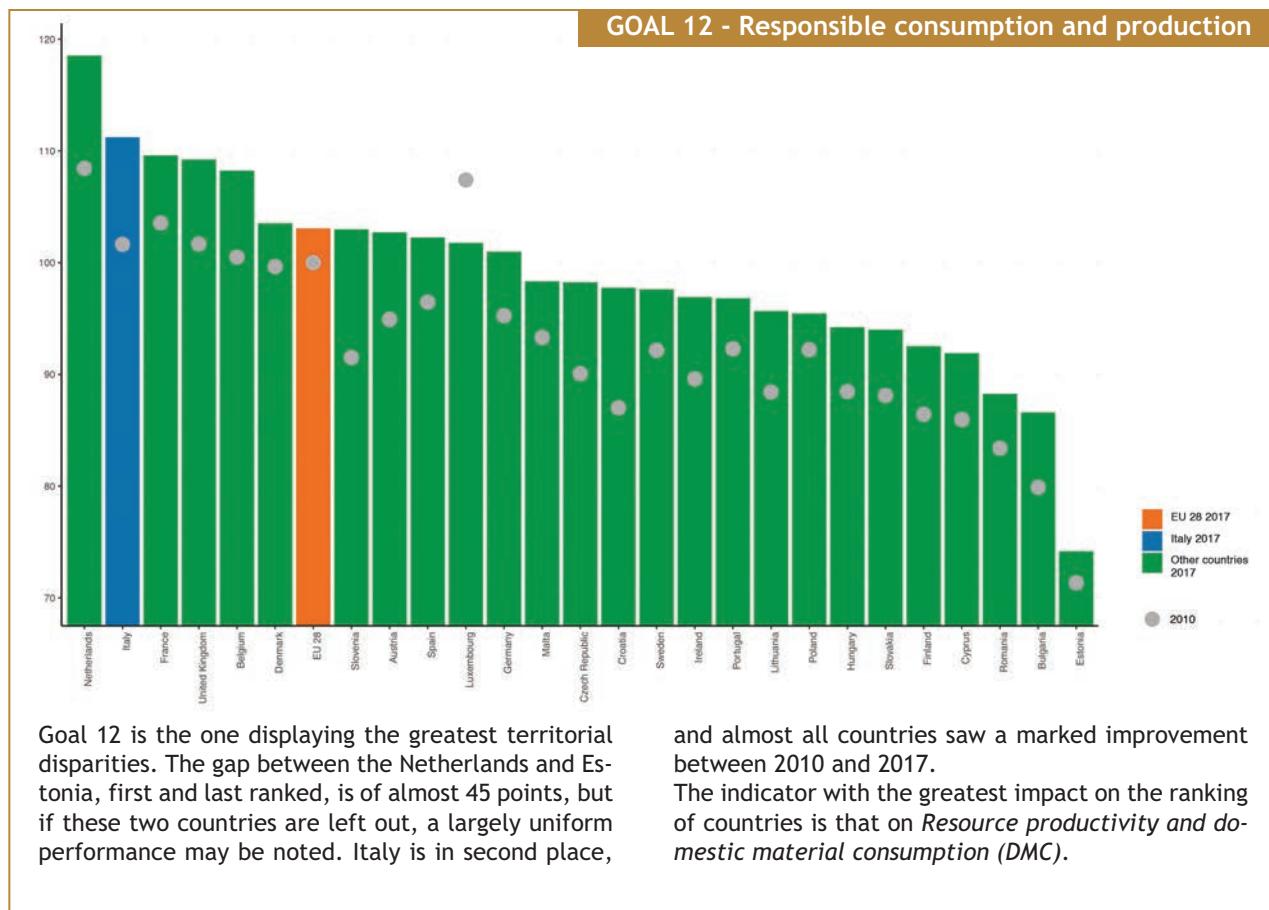
### GOAL 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure

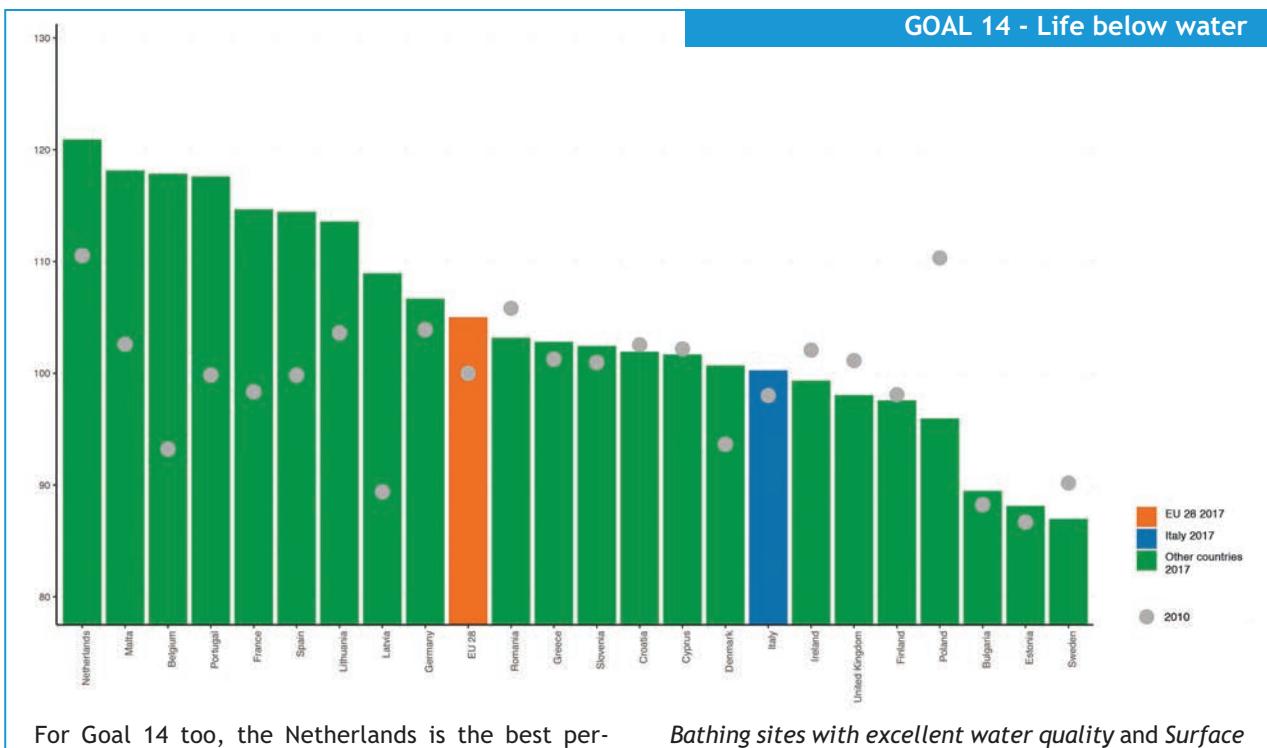


For Goal 9, the difference between the values of the composite indicators calculated for Sweden and Romania, respectively the first and last country in the ranking, corresponds to 30.3 points. Italy ranks seventeenth, registering a slight improvement between

2010 and 2017, a trend that also occurs in most European countries. Given the high level of consistency among the elementary indicators in determining the rankings, none of them appears to be particularly responsible for the disparities noted between countries.

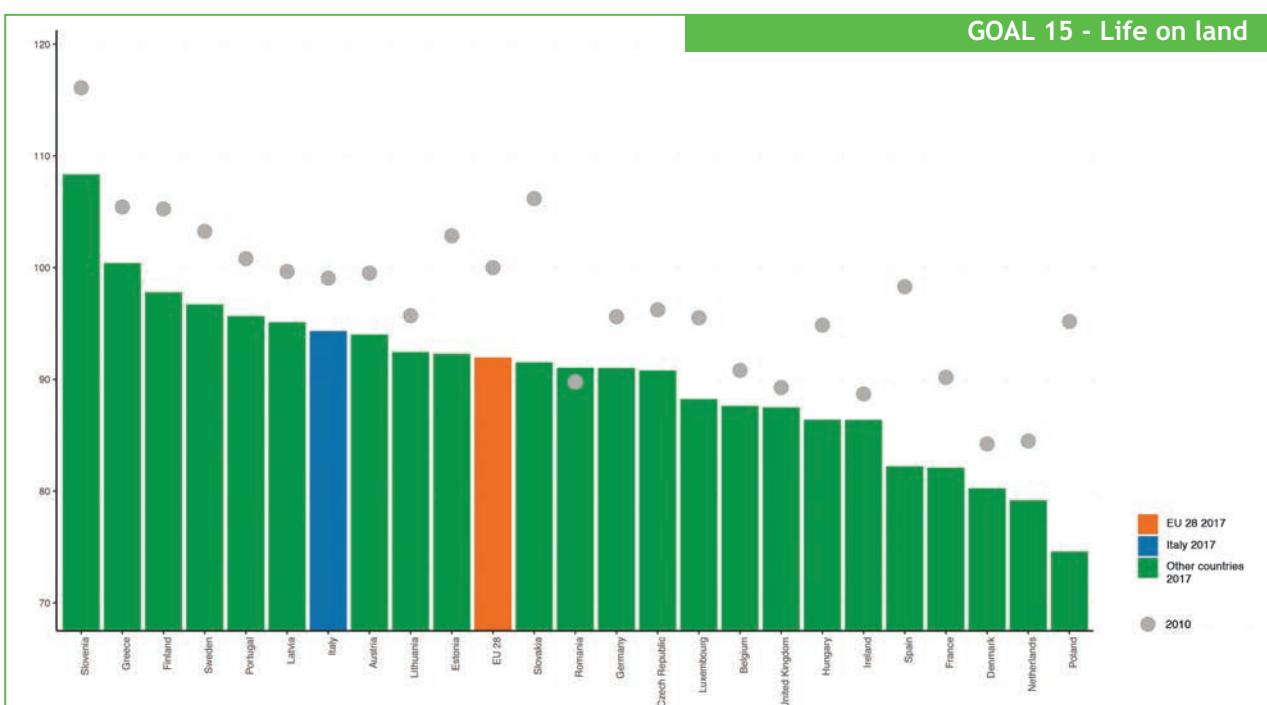






For Goal 14 too, the Netherlands is the best performer, 34 points ahead of Sweden, the lowest ranked country. The internal variability of the indicator is quite high, highlighting a degree of heterogeneity among countries. Italy registered a below-average performance.

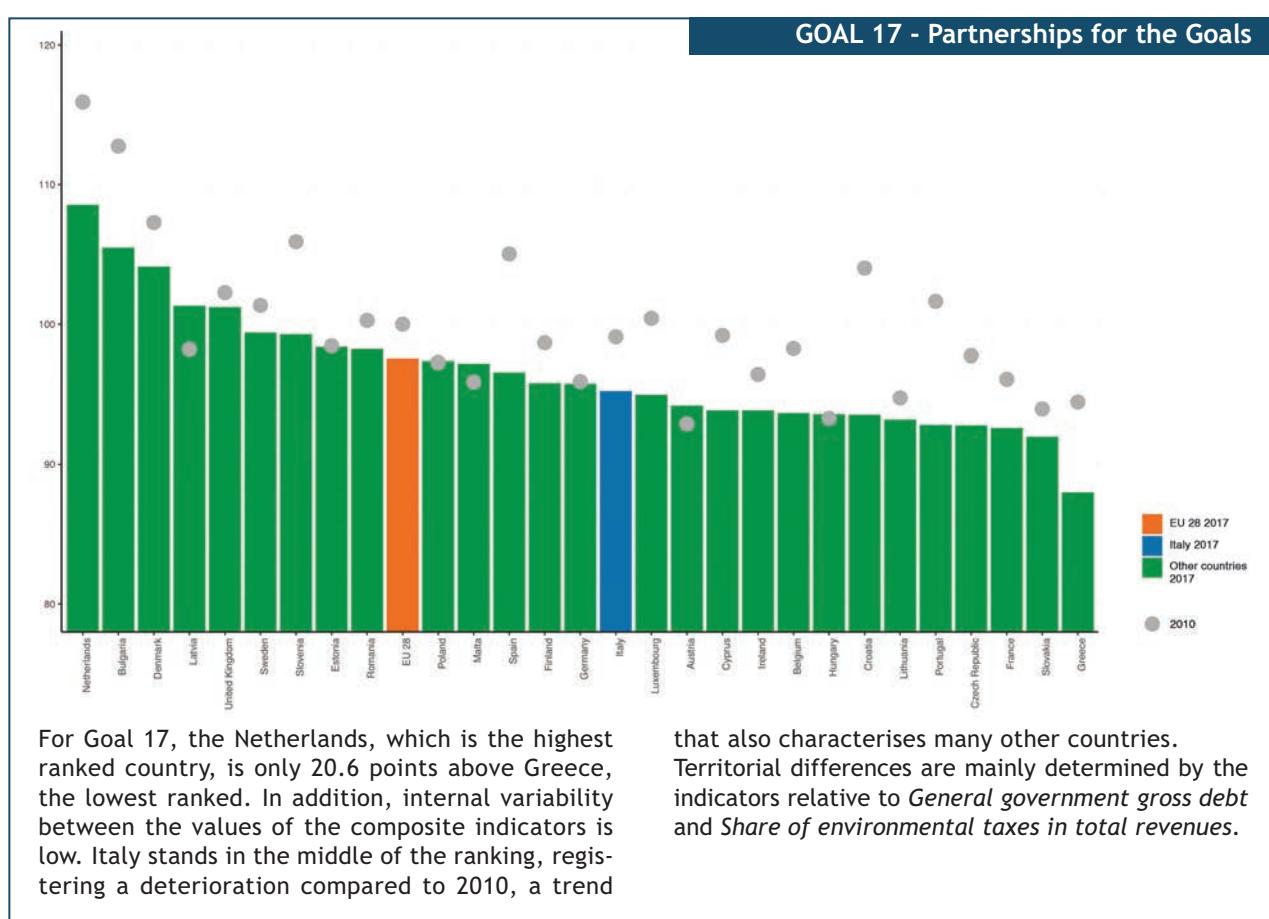
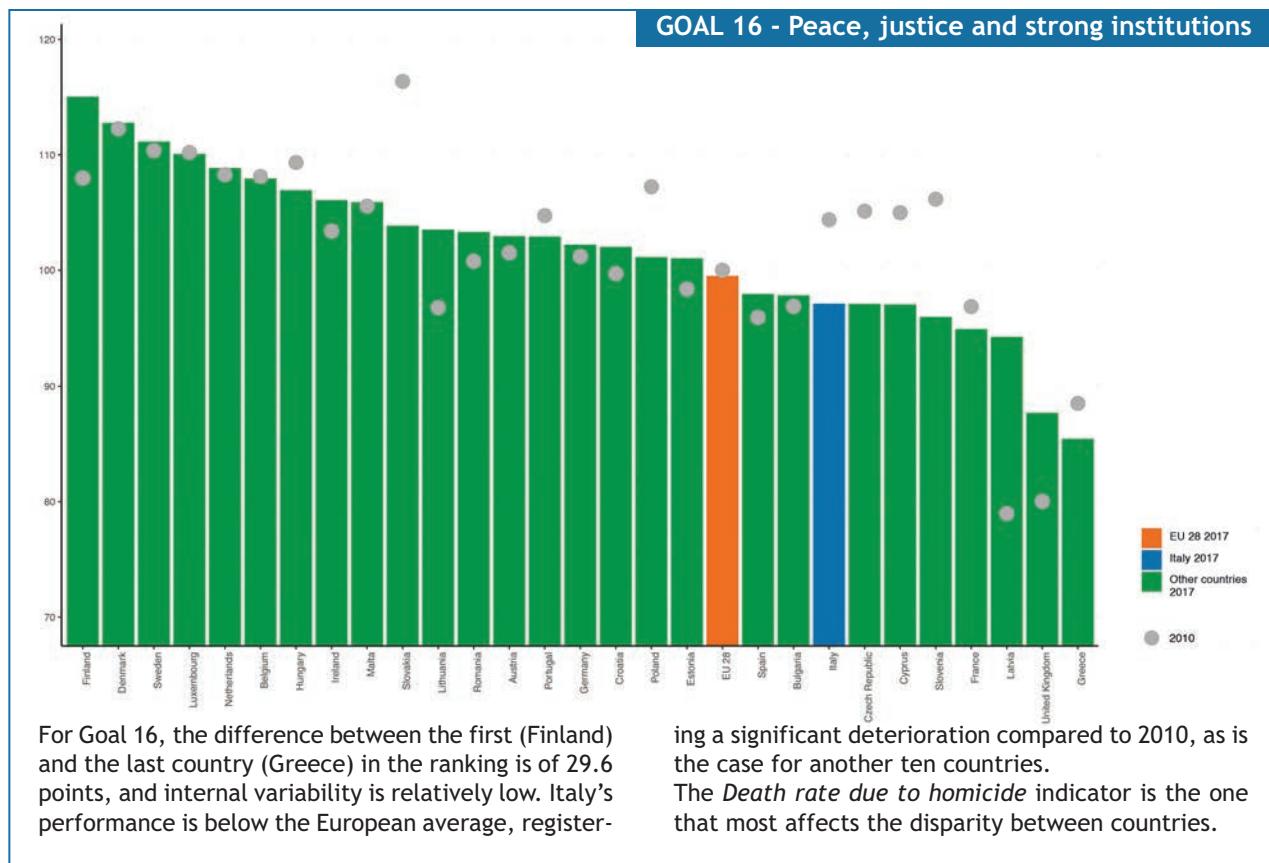
*Bathing sites with excellent water quality and Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000 are the indicators with the greatest influence on the ranking of countries.*



For Goal 15, Slovenia leads the ranking, with a composite indicator that is 33.7 points greater than Poland, the lowest ranked country. Italy is above the European average, but all countries, except for Romania, register a significant deterioration be-

tween 2010 and 2017.

The indicators relating to the *Soil sealing index* and the *Share of forest area* have the greatest impact on country ranking.



## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Note that in this report the terms “indicators” and “indices” are considered synonymous.
- <sup>2</sup> Detailed analysis regarding the calculation and interpretation of the composite indicators may be found on the ASviS website at <https://asvis.it/dati/>
- <sup>3</sup> In July 2019, the Commission presented the Joint Synthesis Report ([https://ec.europa.eu/eu-ropeaid/sites/devco/files/jsr-report-20190717\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/eu-ropeaid/sites/devco/files/jsr-report-20190717_en.pdf)) at the HLPF, which is a kind of National Voluntary Review for the Union as a whole. The document comprises a self-assessment of progress towards the 2030 Agenda within the EU and in terms of EU international cooperation.
- <sup>4</sup> Approach whereby individual issuers, sectors or countries are explicitly excluded from the world of investment on the basis of specific principles and values. From [www.investiresponsabilmente.it](http://www.investiresponsabilmente.it)
- <sup>5</sup> This activity involves dialogue between the company and the investor on sustainability issues and in the exercise of voting rights by shareholders. This is a long-term process aimed at positively influencing the behaviour of the company and increasing the level of transparency.
- <sup>6</sup> ASviS has been active in this area with the Europe Ambition 2030 project: <https://bit.ly/2MdNSv6>.
- <sup>7</sup> Overall, according to the EU Commission, the European Court of Auditors and the World Bank, the equivalent of €1.115 trillion per year will be needed from 2021 onwards to meet the EU's 2030 targets. See: Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the European Finance and Climate Pact (2019/C 62/02). See <https://bit.ly/2SCsP6H>.
- <sup>8</sup> No results can be produced for Goal 6 due to a lack of data.
- <sup>9</sup> In some cases, the EU average is not based on all 28 Member States, but only on those for which data are available.
- <sup>10</sup> The calculation of influence is based on the absolute average difference in decreasing rank, which expresses, on average, the extent to which elimination of the indicator entails changes in the ranking of countries, and therefore in the value of the composite indicator. Consequently, the higher this average, the more relevant the elementary indicator in determining changes in the composite indicator and, therefore, differences between the countries analysed.





## 3. The 2030 Agenda in Italy

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## 3. The 2030 Agenda in Italy

### 3.1 Government and public administration initiatives four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda

Since the publication of the 2018 ASviS Report, Italy has witnessed a flurry of activity at all levels focusing on the issue of sustainable development, involving civil society, businesses, national and regional governments and the autonomous provinces. The lack of a clear, shared plan to implement the 2030 Agenda has meant that, four years after signing the Agenda, our country has failed to achieve the kind of progress seen in other countries. If last year's ASviS Report opened with the words "we are not doing enough", events occurred during the last year have raised even more concerns about the extent to which Italy continues to lag behind, because of the inertia shown by the last three governments and a lack of interest among the general public, despite more frequent and ever closer attention to the issue of climate change.

#### Government initiatives

A step towards providing Italy with a governance structure for the 2030 Agenda was taken with the establishment of the *Benessere Italia* ("Wellbeing Italy") steering committee, announced by the Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, on 21 May at the opening of the third edition of the Sustainable Development Festival. The committee was set up with the aim of "coordinating, monitoring, measuring and improving the policies adopted by all ministers with a view to focusing on the wellbeing of citizens". The committee met for the first time last July.

The committee will facilitate coordination of economic, social and environmental policies, with the aim of achieving the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda, as envisaged in the Directive issued last spring by the administration led by the former Prime Minister, Paolo Gentiloni, which set up a special National Sustainable Development Committee, to be chaired by the Prime Minister or a delegated person<sup>1</sup>.

The decree establishing the steering committee actually refers to the Directive, leading to interpretational uncertainty as to the resulting organisational structure, since the bodies set up by the two documents have a number of overlapping functions. It is hoped that this uncertainty will be resolved as soon as possible.

Since its establishment, ASviS has argued for the creation of a body within the Cabinet Office with responsibility for coordinating and integrating the policies adopted by the various ministers with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Such an initiative is, therefore, to be welcomed, as is the inclusion of the Director of ASviS, as the sole representative of Italian civil society, in the scientific committee<sup>2</sup> that will assist the steering committee in carrying out its duties.

The creation of a body to coordinate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda potentially marks important progress after the major disappointments of the last year. These included the decision taken by the Chamber of Deputies Budget Committee, in December 2018, to reject the Budget Law amendment proposed by ASviS that would have changed the name of the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE) into the Interministerial Committee for Sustainable Development. Prior to the elections, this idea had been met with widespread approval by many of the parties represented in Parliament, including the Five Star Movement (Movimento 5 Stelle). The name change would clearly not have been a mere formality, but the indication of a desire to assess public sector investment on the basis of economic, social and environmental criteria.

Progress has been made in implementing the National Sustainable Development Strategy, approved in December 2017<sup>3</sup>. Whilst waiting for the Cabinet Office steering committee to start its work, the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection has proceeded to set up the "Sustainable Development Forum" provided for in the Strategy, officially presenting the Forum's terms of reference during the first National Sustainable Development Conference, held in Naples in December 2018.

The Forum, which has yet to be officially constituted, is intended to take the form of a multi-stakeholder platform similar to the body set up by the European Commission in 2017. The Forum's members will be tasked with providing support designed to achieve consistency across sustainability policies, setting up working groups designed to focus on the various areas indicated in the Strategy (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership), as well as another working group to look at cross-cutting issues identified as "sustainability vectors" (knowledge, education and communication). In order to ensure a coherent approach to supporting development of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, the Forum will work closely with the National Council for Development Cooperation in relation to the Strategy's international dimension, whilst the annual national conference is intended to provide an opportunity to assess and discuss the progress made with regard to both dimensions of the Strategy.

In August 2018, the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection published a call for tenders inviting the submission of expressions of interest to conclude partnership agreements with regional authorities and the autonomous provinces in order to devise sustainable development strategies at the regional and provincial levels. By the end of 2018, almost all the regional authorities (18) and one of the autonomous provinces had entered into partnership agreements with the Ministry, and various initiatives have been launched, some in collaboration with ASviS. In July 2019, the Ministry published a second call (worth €4 million, in line with the previous notice) relating to activities that are totally distinct from those provided for in the earlier agreements but which, at the same time, are intended to supplement and link up with them, as part of the wider process of drawing up and implementing the regional and provincial strategies.

In line with the proposal put forward by ASviS at the Sustainable Development Festival, during a meeting held to discuss how to implement the 2030 Agenda at the local level, in August 2019 the Ministry published a similar call for tenders aimed at metropolitan cities. Its objective is "to define metropolitan sustainable development strategies designed to implement the 2030 Agenda and national and regional sustainable strategies and focusing on the social, environmental and economic aspects of sustainability. The aims of the call (€2.5

million) are: to strengthen and improve the focus on sustainable development in the master plans for metropolitan areas, fully integrating all the dimensions of sustainability into metropolitan planning, programming and management processes; to promote, alongside local institutions and metropolitan actors, integrated sustainable development initiatives; to spread awareness and promote social and business activism in relation to sustainability, including actions designed to broaden the involvement of citizens and civil society.

Finally, under existing legislation, in February the government presented its "Report on the impact of the Budget Law on the indicators of Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing". The impact analysis should be based on the 12 indicators of Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing selected by the ad hoc scientific committee in 2018, which included the Director of ASviS<sup>4</sup>. Unfortunately, the Report's assessment of the impact of the Budget Law through to 2021 is limited to just four indicators: average per capita income, inequality, non-participation in the labour market (broken down by gender) and greenhouse gas emissions. As the document states, "Further indicators will be added in later editions as progress is made in developing the necessary statistical and modelling tools to provide forecasts over the time-scale covered by the economic planning cycle".

## Parliamentary initiatives

In April, the Chamber of Deputies debated a number of motions regarding sustainable development, the declaration of a "climate emergency" and Italy's candidature to host the COP 26 in 2020, a summit that will take stock of policy efforts to combat climate change. The motion approved (no. 1/00154 dated 1 April 2019) commits the government to:

- "the immediate and full implementation of the Directive of March 2018, establishing a National Sustainable Development Committee within the Cabinet Office, with the aim of guiding and coordinating sustainability policies, including periodic reviews of the National Sustainable Development Strategy and of the policies intended to implement it;
- take initiatives designed to ensure that the legislation and measures implementing the Strategy contain a technical report on the expected impact in relation to each of the Sustainable Development Goals;



- take steps to compel the government to deliver on its commitment to present to Parliament a report on the implementation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy by February of each year, providing an update on both implementation of the national sustainable development plan and of the impact of the Budget Law;
- launch, in coordination with other public and scientific bodies and with private entities and associations, a national information campaign targeting the general public and the worlds of business and finance, and focusing on the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda and on the role to be played by each and every citizen or business;
- set up a permanent roundtable with regional authorities, the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano and other local authorities to coordinate sustainable development initiatives being carried out by the central government and regional, provincial and municipal authorities;
- initiate a widespread consultation around the country and among institutions to develop planning and policy proposals backing Italy's candidature to host COP 26 in Milan in 2020<sup>5</sup>;
- initiate widespread discussion of the topic of sustainability, partly in relation to the reflection paper published by the European Commission entitled "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030", bearing in mind that the next European Council will be called on to express an opinion on this document;
- begin a widespread process and discussion with a view to identify the legislative steps to be taken in order to introduce, via the appropriate procedures, the principle of sustainable development into the Italian Constitution as one of the founding principles".

During the debate on the motion, all political parties, with varying degrees of emphasis, supported the idea of promoting circular economy, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, decarbonization of the economy, energy efficiency and more efficient waste management. The government, however, voiced opposition to a number of proposals, such as changing the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan to bring it more into line with the achievement of the goals set by the Paris Agreement of 2015.

## THE ITALIAN SENATE PLAYS HOST TO GRETA THUNBERG

In April, the young Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg, who is championing the fight against climate change, was invited by the Speaker of the Senate, Elisabetta Alberti Casellati, to take part in the event, *Il tempo cambia. È tempo di cambiare* ("The weather is changing. It is time to change"), coordinated by the Director of ASviS, Enrico Giovannini.

"We have come here today to listen to someone who reminds us that we are abandoning the most educated generation in human history, a generation that bears no responsibility for the current state of the world," observed Giovannini. For her part, Speaker Casellati described the first steps taken by the Senate to cut emissions and the use of plastic and told those present that next year the Senate would take stock of what had been achieved.

According to Greta Thunberg, "The saddest part is that many children aren't even aware of the fate that awaits them and the risk is that they won't understand it until it's too late. In thirteen years, we could find ourselves in a situation that is beyond human control and that could lead to the end of our civilisation as we know it. But we also need to realise that we are basing our projections on estimates and calculations. In reality, we may well reach the point of no return even sooner than 2030".

The statements made by other young activists taking part in the debate also pointed to the need for urgent cultural change across all the generations. According to the "World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", published by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in February 2019, governments must take urgent steps regarding education and employment: 142 million young people have failed to complete secondary education, whilst 71 million are unemployed. The Report then goes on to highlight the fact that this issue primarily affects developing countries, where a further 1.9 billion young people are projected to turn 15 by 2030. As a result of targeted policies, and also thanks to the endless opportunities offered by social media, each member of this extraordinary mass of young people could become a promoter of sustainability, driving efforts to achieve the SDGs.

The motion refers to the inclusion of the concept of sustainability in the Constitution, one of the key recommendations advanced by ASviS since its foundation. At the beginning of the XVIII legislature, the draft bill providing for its inclusion was presented, whilst, at the beginning of this year, draft legislation drawn up as part of a citizens' initiative, providing for the amendment of articles 2 and 9 of the Italian Constitution in order to guarantee greater intergenerational justice, sustainability and respect for the environment, was filed with the country's Supreme Court.

In June, however, the Senate voted down the request to declare a climate emergency in Italy, contained in three motions presented by three parties (Forza Italia, Partito Democratico and Liberi e Uguali), after it was opposed by the government. The motion put forward by the governing parties was, on the other hand, passed. The latter, however, does not refer to an emergency and commits the government "to promote eco-design; to facilitate the distributed production of energy from renewable sources; and to promote public awareness and information campaigns in synergy with local authorities, including the launch of environmental education programmes in schools".

The presentation, on 27 February of this year, of ASviS's report on "The 2019 Budget Law and sustainable development"<sup>6</sup> to members of the government and Parliament provided an excellent opportunity to discuss the issues with representatives from the country's leading political parties and movements. The report is a unique, innovative document that, in providing a qualitative assessment of the expected impact of the over 1,000 provisions in the Budget Law on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, opens the way to a new approach to drawing up and evaluating policies.

In order to bring about changes in the legislative process in response to the 2030 Agenda, ASviS has written to the Speakers of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate and to the party whips to recommend the inclusion, in the explanatory notes accompanying each draft bill, of details on the expected impact of the proposed legislation on the achievement of the 17 SDGs. The recommendation was put forward again by the Director of ASviS during the hearing before the Joint Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate held to discuss the report on the Fair and Sustainable Well-being indicators referred to above.

Finally, as part of the *Nuove narrazioni per la cooperazione* (New Narratives for Cooperation) project, coordinated by ActionAid and financed by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, ASviS coordinated and ran the training course for members of Parliament (from both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate) on the 2030 Agenda, held at the Luigi Sturzo Institute from 25 March to 15 April.

### 3.2 Education on sustainable development in schools, universities and the public administration

As already noted, partnerships between civil society and educational institutions should be at the heart of a shared mission to refocus the educational system around a sustainable development culture, transforming teachers and learners into “agents of change”. For this reason, in the last twelve months, ASviS has strengthened its partnership with the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, following the signature three years ago of a Memorandum of Understanding (no. 3397 of 6 December 2016). The aim is to provide education in sustainable development at public and private schools of all types and levels and within provincial adult education colleges, in order to boost awareness, knowledge and adoption of the lifestyles described in the 2030 Agenda.

The 2019 edition of the competition set up by ASviS and the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, “Let’s score 17 Goals”, witnessed a significant increase in the number of participating schools: the number of competition entries examined by the jury have risen from 200 in 2017 to over 250 in 2018 and 472 in this year’s edition. However, it is clear that, despite growing interest and commitment in quantitative terms, we have yet to see evidence of a full understanding of the complexities surrounding sustainable development, or of the ability to effectively communicate the need for change, or to lead people to think about how they might change their personal behaviours in order to drive such change.

In order to strengthen training programmes focusing on the 2030 Agenda for teachers and the heads of schools of all types and levels, and to prepare them not only to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, but also to pass on all the skills needed to respond to the challenges posed by sustainable development, ASviS has boosted its existing partnership with the National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research (INDIRE). In particular, at the request of the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, a section has been created within the Institute’s platform to enable Italian school teachers to access the e-learning course created

### E-LEARNING COURSES BY ASviS

In 2017, ASviS developed an e-learning course entitled “The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals”, which uses a simple and accessible language to explain the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs. The course is divided into 20 modules and lasts for a total of approximately three hours.

The first three modules provide an overview of the 2030 Agenda and of the implementation and measurement strategies for the Goals, whilst each of the remaining modules covers one of the 17 Goals. The training course features multimedia teaching materials, interactive exercises and references to current events in order to show how the 2030 Agenda relates to the international and Italian context and to people’s everyday lives.

The course is delivered asynchronously, enabling the use of bookmarks and providing a help desk. Handouts are made available at the end of each lesson and certificates are issued at the end of the course as proof that the training has been completed.

The course has been made available to over 220 ASviS members and numerous non-member businesses and organisations. Thanks to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research and ASviS, the course is also available on the INDIRE platform for all teachers currently in service. Italy’s Association of Journalists has also included the course in its SIGeF online learning platform, with training credits issued to participants and a questionnaire drawn up by ASviS to assess what has been learned.

The course is available to approximately 70 universities in the Rete delle Università per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile (University Network for Sustainable Development or RUS), which use it as a “starter course” on sustainable development, to the Association of Italian Libraries (AIB) and Italy’s National Association of Service Centres for Volunteering (CSVnet). Many large companies have also made the course available to their employees.

Finally, production of an English version of the course was completed in August 2019, whilst a new e-learning course is in the process of being created for businesses focusing on sustainability, the circular economy and on sustainable, responsible impact investing.

by ASviS on the subject of “The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals”<sup>7</sup>.

Since last May, access to the e-learning course (see the text box “E-learning by ASviS” on page 64) has been extended to all of the 800,000 teachers that work in Italy’s schools, having previously been available only to newly hired staff (around 63,000 teachers, in addition to the same number of their tutors that over the last two years have had access to the course in the form of online self-learning). In addition, ASviS has worked with INDIRE and the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research to develop the portal “School 2030: education to create value” ([scuola2030.indire.it](http://scuola2030.indire.it)) launched in June. This of-

fers all teachers access to self-learning content, resources and materials designed to educate people on the values and the vision behind the 2030 Agenda. The portal has also been used to make available the book *Un mondo sostenibile in 100 foto* (“A sustainable world in 100 photos”), written by Enrico Giovannini and Donato Speroni and published by Editori Laterza. This is an explanatory guide to the 2030 Agenda in the form of photographs and articles describing the state of our planet and of our socio-economic systems.

However, efforts to educate people about sustainable development go beyond the school. In April, the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research hosted an event arranged by ASviS (in col-

## THE ASviS SUMMER SCHOOLS

In 2018, ASviS launched an advanced training programme focusing on the systemic logic of sustainable development, addressing the issues of environmental, economic and social sustainability through an interdisciplinary approach. The first **Summer School on Sustainable Development** took place in Siena in September of last year. It was organised in collaboration with the Enel Foundation, Leonardo, the University Network for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Italy, the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the University of Siena’s Santa Chiara Lab.

The first edition proved a great success, with 146 applicants for the 30 places available. The decision to organise a two-week residential intensive course was much appreciated by both tutors and participants, who were able to discuss, debate, learn and experiment with the various aspects of sustainability, whilst creating a network of people able to work over time within the various organisations to which they belong. The second Summer School, held between 9 and 20 September 2019 with over 50 participants, focused on the same key aspects as the first edition, but included a greater number of international experts and an open day featuring a debate on the question, “Can education save the planet?”.

ASviS also ran a second School in 2019: the **Milan Summer School on Wellbeing and Sustainability in Cities**, held between 31 August and 7 September. This was organised in partnership with the “Milano 2046” initiative, set up by the President of the Milan City Council to focus on the city’s future and centred on issues surrounding the wellbeing of citizens and the community. The School was planned and run with the support of universities in the Milan area (Bicocca, Bocconi, Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Umanitas, IULM, La Statale Politecnico and San Raffaele) and of the Eni Enrico Mattei Foundation, with contributions from Assimoco, Banca Generali, BlackRock and Edison.

In this case, the aim was to provide high-profile, high-level training in wellbeing and sustainability, with a particular focus on policymaking for cities. 49 participants attended the School, including PhD students and researchers, local government leaders, members of associations that deal with local policymaking and teachers. The Milan School is intended to be the first in a series of initiatives to be replicated around the country, partly with the aim of developing agendas for urban sustainable development, as envisaged by the recent call for tenders aimed at metropolitan cities launched by the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection.

Finally, preparations are underway for a third training programme for personnel from regional authorities and the autonomous provinces, to be run in parallel with initiatives organised in collaboration with the National School of Administration (SNA) and aimed at central government personnel.

laboration with the Enel Foundation) on “Higher education and lifelong learning for sustainable development”. The meeting with the Undersecretary of State, Lorenzo Fioramonti, gave rise to a number of concrete proposals, including a request for the Undersecretary to write to Italian university rectors, inviting them to commit to the 2030 Agenda.

In April, following Greta Thunberg’s visit to Italy, the Undersecretary of State wrote to university rectors recommending them to:

- introduce interdisciplinary courses and research projects linked to the 2030 Agenda. Given that the transition to a sustainable approach requires, above all, a cultural and conceptual revolution, students and researchers must be encouraged to think and act in a “systematic” way, based on an approach that involves different disciplines and that acknowledges the relationship between social and natural sciences;
- promote concrete actions by, for example, making every university, research centre, academy, conservatoire and art college plastic free, in line with best national and international practices. Energy efficiency, clean energy production (by installing renewable energy plants) and the responsible use of water can play an equally important role in reminding everyone that the world of research and training is a sector where innovation is a part of everyday life;
- integrate sustainability principles into the way they run their institutions. In order to boost the impact of innovative practices, it can help to give sustainable development principles an integral role in the day-to-day and extraordinary management of research centres and universities (for example, by adopting sustainable procurement practices and introducing sustainable development considerations into universities’ “third mission”, focusing on engagement with local businesses and other institutions).

The universities wasted no time in replying. Putting universities at the heart of sustainable development was the main focus of the fifth edition of the *Magnifici Incontri*, a series of events organised by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI). The meeting took place over two days and involved representatives from 65 universities, who discussed issues relating to sustainable development, covering good practices and potential

strategies for the future. At the end of the discussion, the *Manifesto delle Università per la Sostenibilità* (the “Universities’ Sustainability Manifesto”) was approved and will be turned into an action plan by the University Network for Sustainable Development. The Manifesto acknowledges the key role played by universities in implementation of the SDGs and indicates the concrete actions to be taken in the near future in various areas, adding a series of professional roles linked to the principle of sustainability to the training courses on offer.

The launch of courses on sustainable development for managers in the public sector is also important. The National School of Administration (SNA), in collaboration with ASviS, organised the first “Sustainability Management” course for senior and middle managers from central government involved, above all, in managing general services (human resources, general affairs, contracts and services, etc.). The course, which took the form of 120 hours of lessons held between November 2018 and April 2019, aims to equip management personnel with the necessary skills to create specific leadership roles within central government, with responsibility for coordinating activities in accordance with the SDGs (the management of human and capital resources, energy procurement, waste management, mobility, etc.).

In June 2019, the SNA launched a second course entitled “Integrated policies for the UN’s 2030 Agenda on sustainable development”. The course is designed for managers from the ministries involved in the policy areas relating to the 2030 Agenda and aims to develop the public administration’s ability to define and implement public policies that systematically take into account the interconnections and potential trade-offs between policy choices. The new course is being run alongside the course entitled “Europe and sustainable development. Economic, social and environmental policies within the context of European economic governance”, which takes an in-depth look at issues linked to the 2030 Agenda from the point of view of relations with the European Union.

### 3.3 The mobilisation and commitment of businesses

Sustainable development is playing an increasingly important role as a model for analysis, innovation and action, guiding businesses and the country through the process of transforming risks into opportunities, including the definition of favourable long-term economic scenarios. Businesses are themselves asking for a shift towards sustainable development and there has clearly been a step-change over the last twelve months.

In particular, during the 2019 edition of the Sustainable Development Festival, the representatives of business and finance were keen to highlight the urgent need to transition the economic and industrial system towards a system based on economic, social and environmental sustainability, recognising that the transition to a sustainable, circular economy model represents an opportunity to accelerate the country's economic and social development. During the Conference entitled *Le imprese e la finanza per lo sviluppo sostenibile. Opportunità da cogliere e ostacoli da rimuovere* ("Business and finance for sustainable development. Opportunities to embrace and obstacles to overcome"), the ten leading business associations at the national level presented the government with a joint document entitled "**Speeding up the transition to sustainability. Businesses and the 2030 Agenda**"<sup>8</sup>, setting out the steps to be taken to accelerate implementation of the SDGs.

The document published by the ten business associations, all members of ASViS and signatories of the Milan Pact<sup>9</sup>, presents policymakers with concrete proposals for the actions necessary to create an environment conducive to sustainable development, to accelerate the decoupling of economic growth from environmental pressure, to deal with the social aspects of the transition to an eco-friendly productive system, to drive the development and resilience of local communities and to promote an economic model based on sustainable development. The document also recommends that policymakers and regulators work together to carry out initiatives designed to drive a more deeply-rooted commitment to a culture of sustainability within companies and adoption of the related principles. It also urges the above figures to engage in dialogue with the Cabinet Office for the purpose of developing relevant policies.

At the same time, in keeping with European trends, Italy's sustainable finance sector has made important progress and shown that it is increasingly aware of the need to make the existing development model sustainable. Italy's sustainable and responsible investment (SRI) market is led by institutional investors but, at the same time, there is growing interest among ordinary investors in basing their investment decisions on environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria, as shown by the significant growth in SRI instruments aimed at this customer segment.

In terms of size, the Italian market continues to grow and now represents almost 10% of the European market. Yet, as noted in the final report produced by the High Level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance (the HLEG) and in the European SRI Study, in Italy it is also necessary to expand the SRI offering for the retail market and accompany this with efforts to boost the availability of information and financial education on sustainability issues for both investors and financial advisors, with the aim of increasing the take-up of sustainable finance products and services.

With regard to SRI strategies, according to the European SRI Study, "exclusions" and "engagement" are the preferred approaches followed by the European market, with approximately €1,450 billion and €135.7 billion in assets under management. Engagement has seen solid growth, reflecting, in Italy as elsewhere, renewed interest among institutional investors in persuading companies to adopt policies based on sustainability. Thematic funds have, however, seen the strongest growth, with assets managed by thematic funds having risen from over €2 billion in 2015 to almost €53 billion at the end of 2017, whilst the impact investing market has also recorded strong growth in Italy.

In this regard, a turning point for Italy's sustainable finance market was marked by the Bank of Italy's decision to increase the weight given to environmental and social sustainability factors in investment strategies, as announced in May 2019 and illustrated by the Governor, Ignazio Visco, when attending the opening of the Sustainable Development Festival in Rome.

It should also be noted that, in 2019, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP) amended its articles of association to include among its activities the provision of financing to fund investment in the promotion of sustainable development. This will

allow CDP to have a positive impact, including from a social and environmental viewpoint. In addition, the new business plan explicitly refers to CDP's contribution to achieving the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

The introduction of non-financial reporting by Legislative Decree 254/2016, which has transposed EU Directive 2014/95 into Italian law, has made a significant contribution to increasing awareness of the issue of sustainable development among major Italian companies. The legislation requires entities of significant public interest to publish a non-financial statement enabling readers to understand the business's activities, its performance, its results and its impact in terms of the environment, society, people, respect for human rights and efforts to combat active and passive corruption, based on their significance within the context of the company's activities and nature of the business<sup>10</sup>.

In this regard, the European Commission has drawn up guidelines designed to improve non-financial reporting by businesses, increase corporate transparency and enable Europe to play a leading role in the sector. The main aim is to boost transparency and encourage businesses to adopt sustainable business models and strategies, explaining the short-, medium- and long-term implications of the decisions they take.

The importance of the contribution the private sector makes to the SDGs also emerges from the survey of 1,300 sustainability reports presented to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which has identified the areas and objectives that businesses consider to be priorities. In the light of the importance of this contribution, last December, the Governance & Accountability Institute published a study entitled "Sector Study on Sustainability Materiality of the SDG Targets and GRI Indicators", based on a survey of sustainability reports prepared in accordance with the GRI's G4 guidelines and published between March 2016 and March 2017, setting out decisions taken by businesses in relation to the 169 targets in the 2030 Agenda.

### 3.4 ASviS's activities

#### Organisational structure and cooperation with other stakeholders

In September 2019, ASviS had 227 member organisations (15 more than last year) and 111 "associates" (up 61), namely organisations that, while not falling within the categories qualifying for membership, play an active role in promoting sustainable development and provide examples of good practice, and thus collaborate with the Alliance.

ASviS's activities, defined by the General Assembly through an annually approved programme, are carried out with the support of 20 working groups (14 focusing on the SDGs, in some cases grouped together by topic area, and 6 on cross-cutting issues), in which around 600 experts appointed by members participate. Two new working groups have been set up in the last twelve months: the first to focus on finance for sustainable development, the second to look at the role of culture for sustainable development.

The Secretariat encourages and coordinates implementation of the programme of activities and contributes to realisation of the various initiatives. The Editorial Board is responsible for managing the website and producing the weekly newsletter, which has come to be considered a key source of information on sustainable development issues.

In terms of working with government institutions, which are too numerous to be described in detail here, ASviS participates in the following initiatives:

- the "2030 Agenda, policy consistency, effectiveness and assessment" working group set up by the National Development Cooperation Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation;
- Italy's Sustainable Finance Observatory at the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection;
- the coordinating group at the National Sustainable Development Forum set up by the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection;
- five partner topic groups to work on planning for the period 2021-2027 and set up by the Cabinet Office's Department for Cohesion Policies.

The Director of ASviS is a member of the *Benessere Italia* ("Wellbeing Italy") steering committee set up by the Cabinet Office in July 2019.

Finally, the Alliance is involved in planning activities at Italy's pavilion, focusing on sustainable development issues, at EXPO DUBAI 2020.

At the international level, ASviS also belongs to:

- the **European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)**, a network of institutional actors, associations and experts which has been dealing with sustainable development policies and strategies since 2003;
- the **SDG Watch Europe** association, a European alliance of civil society organisations created to monitor implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in the European Union;
- the **Partnership for the SDGs**, the multi-stakeholder network, led by the UN's Sustainable Development Division, that works on achievement of the SDGs;
- **Europe Ambition 2030**, the coalition of civil society actors set up in March 2017 after the Conference, "Europe Ambition 2030, making Europe the world leader in sustainable development: a unique opportunity to build a stronger European Union", organised by ASviS, which has set out to rethink EU governance and policies, making achievement of the SDGs the cornerstone of the Union's future actions.

ASviS has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which will see the Alliance work with the GRI on the publication, scheduled for the second half of 2019, of an Italian version of the reporting standards to be used by companies when reporting on their sustainability performance. ASviS has also entered into a participation agreement with Foundation 20 (F20), a platform set up by over 20 foundations and philanthropic organisations from various parts of the world, in view of the G20 summit to be held in Italy in 2021. The Alliance is on the European Union's Transparency Register, which is jointly managed by the European Parliament and the EU Commission.

A recent study conducted by the European Parliament, "**Europe's Approach to Implementing the SDGs: good practices and the way forward**", which examines the governance systems adopted by all EU member states in implementing the 2030 Agenda, has highlighted ASviS as an example of European good practice for civil society organisations. Similarly, in June of this year, the report on "**Implementing the Sustainable Development**

**Goals in the EU: a matter of human and fundamental rights**", published by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), refers to ASviS as an example at European level, above all with regard to the implementation of Goals 10 and 16.

ASviS has an agreement with the Global Compact Network Italy Foundation, created to contribute to the development in Italy of the UN's Global Compact, and with the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Italia (SDSN Italia), which is part of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network coordinated by Jeffrey Sachs on behalf of the United Nations. The latter was established in response to the UN's appeal to partnerships for sustainable development to lobby government agencies and economic and social entities within society and thus cooperate on promotion of the 2030 Agenda in Italy.

ASviS also works with the *Rete delle Università per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile* (University Network for Sustainable Development or RUS), established by the Conference of Italian University Rectors. The main aim of RUS is to spread sustainability culture and good practices, within and beyond universities, by sharing skills and experiences, so as to increase the positive environmental, ethical, social and economic impact of the initiatives implemented by individual universities, and also strengthen the recognition and value of Italian experience at international level. Approximately 70 universities are currently members of RUS.

## Institutional engagement

At the beginning of the year, the Alliance prepared a study of individual provisions in the 2019 Budget Law with reference to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This is contained in the document "**The 2019 Budget Law and sustainable development**", which includes contributions from experts from the Alliance's member organisations. The study shows that, beyond the individual provisions, the 2019 Budget Law fails to present an integrated vision of the various policies for sustainable development, a widely supported objective backed by over 80% of Italians, above all among the young and well-informed, as shown by ASviS's survey of awareness of the 2030 Agenda and of "demand" for sustainable development policies. The absence of a "systemic" approach to circular economy, the greening of production systems and to youth and female employment is a

matter of concern, as are the half-hearted attempts to combat climate change and environmental degradation.

The document, the first of its kind to be published in Italy, was presented and discussed at the Chamber of Deputies on 27 February. This event was attended by the Chamber's Speaker, Roberto Fico, the Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, Enel's CEO, Francesco Starace (the only Italian representative on the multi-stakeholder platform on sustainable development created by the European Commission) and representatives from the country's leading political parties and movements. On this occasion, ASviS recommended the inclusion, in the explanatory notes accompanying each draft bill, of an explanation of the expected impact of the proposed legislation in the light of the 2030 Agenda.

ASviS also took part in a number of hearings on issues relating to the 2030 Agenda, notably:

- on 21 November 2018, the Director of ASviS gave evidence before the Chamber of Deputies' Foreign Affairs Committee as part of its assessment of Italy's international efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development;
- on 2 April 2019, the Director of ASviS gave evidence before the Joint Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate as part of its examination of the report on the Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing indicators for 2019;

- on 10 July 2019, the coordinators of ASviS's Goal 4 working groups gave evidence before the Chamber of Deputies' Culture Committee as part of its survey of innovation in education.

Since its establishment, ASviS has argued for the creation of a body within the Cabinet Office with responsibility for coordinating and integrating the policies adopted by the various ministers with regard to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. On 9 October 2018, the President and Director of ASviS were invited to Palazzo Chigi to meet the Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte. During the meeting, ASviS's key proposals were put forward, including those regarding implementation of the Directive approved by the previous government and then announced by the Prime Minister when opening the third edition of the Sustainable Development Festival.

### The Sustainable Development Festival

One of the highlights of ASviS's activities was the third edition of the Sustainable Development Festival, which over the years has played a leading role in raising awareness in civil society of the issues surrounding economic, social and environmental sustainability. The Festival aims to bring about the cultural and political change that will enable our country to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

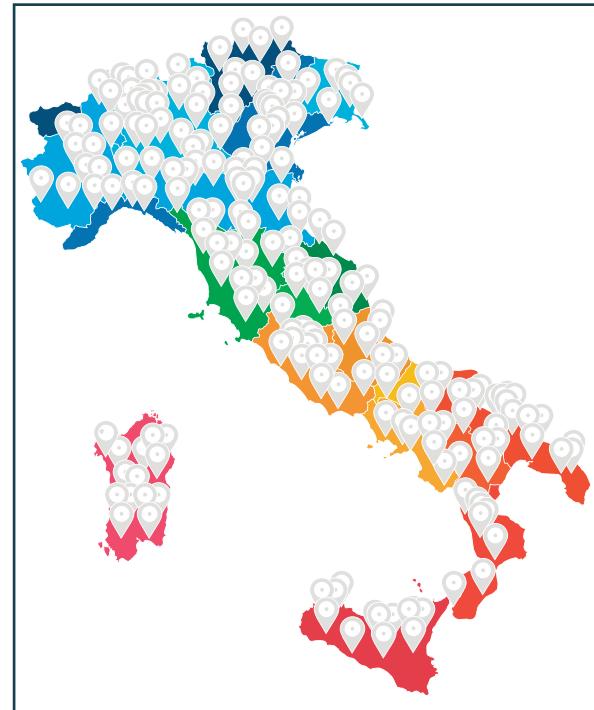


Organised with invaluable contributions from ASviS members and associates and with the support of the partners and tutors, the 2019 edition of the Festival was held between 21 May and 6 June, a period of particular importance for the future of our country and for Europe: at the end of May, EU citizens were called on to elect a new European Parliament and to take part in regional and municipal elections in Italy. The Festival thus served as an ideal opportunity to raise awareness among newly elected MEPs and local councillors on the challenges represented by the 2030 Agenda, with the aim of ensuring that the European Union and Italy's local authorities put sustainable development at the heart of their policymaking.

Since its first edition, the Festival has achieved growing success, resulting in increased awareness of the issues relating to sustainable development within Italian society. When ASviS launched the first Festival in 2017, we were extremely pleased to have promoted the organisation of 220 events in almost every region. In 2018, the number of events rose to 702, before increasing to 1,061 in 2019 (up 51% compared with the previous year), with events being organised by our members, universities and schools, many cities, businesses, public bodies and NGOs, as well as by the Alliance's Secretariat and its working groups. Thousands of people from all over Italy took up the slogan for the third edition, *Mettiamo mano al nostro futuro* ("Let's lend our hands to the future"). ASviS's Secretariat organised the following five events:

- the press conference launching the Festival<sup>11</sup>, held on 2 May;
- the Festival's opening event, *Per un'Europa campionessa mondiale di sviluppo sostenibile* ("Make Europe the world champion of sustainable development")<sup>12</sup>, held at the Sala Petrassi in Rome's Auditorium Parco della Musica complex on 21 May;
- followed, on the evening of 21 May, by the Concert for a Sustainable Europe<sup>13</sup> performed by the European Union Youth Orchestra's string ensemble;
- the conference *Le imprese e la finanza per lo sviluppo sostenibile. Opportunità da cogliere e ostacoli da rimuovere* ("Business and finance for sustainable development. Opportunities to embrace and obstacles to overcome")<sup>14</sup>, held at the Assolombarda Auditorium in Milan on 28 May;

**Figure 2 - Locations for Sustainable Development Festival events in 2019**



- the event that closed the third edition entitled *Italia 2030: un Paese in via di sviluppo sostenibile* ("Italy 2030: a sustainably developing country")<sup>15</sup>, held at the Chamber of Deputies in Rome on 6 June.

In addition, events of national importance<sup>16</sup> were held on every day of the Festival, highlighting the links between the 17 SDGs and dealing with topics such as: poverty and inequalities; gender equality; climate change and energy; natural capital and the quality of the environment; the circular economy, innovation and work; health, food and sustainable agriculture; international cooperation; cities, infrastructure and innovation. These were high-level meetings organised by ASviS members, with contributions from the Alliance's working groups and tutors.

The various editions of the Festival have seen a growing commitment from Italian cities<sup>17</sup>, with municipal authorities working with local organisations and activists, including universities, to encourage and coordinate initiatives and make venues available to host events, discussions, training and gatherings focusing on the issue of sustainability. The cities of Bari, Bologna, Milan, Padua, Parma, Rome and Turin were the most heavily involved, with the latter hosting a projection of the logo of the 2030 Agenda on the Mole Antonelliana every evening during the Festival.

Over 20 million people got involved in the 2019 edition of the Festival via social media, whilst hundreds of thousands took part in the events or were able to stream them live. More than 100 million people saw the government advertising campaign broadcast on RAI's various channels, in collaboration with the Cabinet Office's Department for Information and Publishing and RAI's Corporate Responsibility unit.

There were over 1,044 press, radio and TV reports on the Festival (58% more than in 2018), whilst the hashtag #FestivalSviluppoSostenibile was used in 7,500 tweets in 30 days, to be seen by over 21 million people and more than 10 million unique users. The hashtag #METTIAMOMANOALFUTURO reached over 5 million people and 100,000 unique users in 10 days. ASviS's website saw a record number of visits in May 2019 (45,000 visitors, double the previous month and almost a third more than one year earlier), whilst the Festival website<sup>18</sup> had 52,000 visitors (up 40% on the previous year). The webTV, with its daily news programme, was visited by 35,000 people, whilst the advert promoting the Festival was shown in stadiums during the final round of games in the Serie A football league season, in airports and on high-speed trains and regional services operated by Ferrovie dello Stato. During the Festival, the importance and urgency of adopting a new development model that would put Italy on a more sustainable footing was expressed by many participants across government institutions and the different sectors of Italian society. In addition to the above-mentioned statements from the Prime Minister and the Governor of the Bank of Italy, the 10 leading business associations told the government what needs to be done to speed up the transition to sustainable development and asked for the creation of a specific group of experts to work on the related policies. The trades unions (CGIL-CISL-UIL), environmental campaigners and representatives from the private sector have drawn up guidelines for an ambitious and fair energy transition. Women's rights groups have asked the government to set up a women's empowerment committee. Italian universities have drawn up a Manifesto for sustainable development in universities and hundreds of schools have involved students in concrete projects designed to raise awareness of the issues surrounding sustainability. Finally, from this year, the Sustainable Development Festival has partnered with another seven of the most important festivals focusing on issues of importance to Italian civil so-

ciety<sup>19</sup>, with the aim of combining all the country's energies and proposing radical changes to Italy's social and economic systems.

The Festival is also unique at international level, so much so that the 2018 edition was selected (as Italy's sole representative) to be among the three finalists in the "Connector" category, of the "SDG Action Awards"<sup>20</sup> one of seven into which the competition created by the United Nations Secretariat, is divided, representing a sort of Oscar prize for the 2030 Agenda. The prizes awarded to the winners, chosen from among the approximately 2,000 projects entered, reward innovative, high-impact initiatives designed to engage the public and build networks in order to bring about the changes needed to achieve the SDGs.

### Awareness raising and information

As part of a number of communication and information campaigns, the Alliance has begun working with leading news providers, who have used materials produced by ASviS. If, in general, media coverage of ASviS's activities has increased considerably compared with the previous year, the ASviS Report continues to grow in size and the news provided through other communication channels is referred to in the media, three initiatives stand out above all:

- "Corriere Buona Notizie" published key content from the ASviS Report for 2018 in 17 features, dedicating two pages to an analysis of each SDG, with interviews, comment and expert analysis, accompanied by effective infographics;
- from the beginning of January to the end of May 2019, each week the Repubblica.it website published weekly articles relating to sustainability and ASviS's activities, accompanied by an edition of ASviS's webTV news programme;
- from 15 March 2019, the editorial from the weekly newsletter is published in full at Linkiesta.it.

The asvis.it portal, with its 17 sites focusing on each of the Sustainable Development Goals, is regularly updated and improved, registering a significant rise in visits, even after adjusting for those linked to the Festival. A project was recently launched with the aim of bringing the portal into line with the growing demand for information and fully exploiting synergies with social and multi-media channels. At the same time,

the weekly newsletter, published every Thursday, now has a readership of 10,000 and offers information and commentaries on aspects of sustainable development currently in the news in Italy and around the world.

ASviS is responsible for two weekly programmes on Radio Radicale: *Alta sostenibilità*, featuring a half-hour debate organized by ASviS with the participation of politicians and experts; *Scegliere il futuro*, a Friday show with Enrico Giovannini, looking at current issues.

Over the last twelve months, a number of social media campaigns have been run with the aim of helping to publicise the Alliance's messages. This has increased the number of followers on Facebook (@asvisitalia) to 21,000 and on Twitter (@ASviSItalia) to 8,700, whilst increasing visibility on YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn. In particular:

- following publication of the Report for 2018, an **online campaign called *Un goal al giorno*** ("A goal a day") was run, featuring in-depth analysis of Italy's position with regard to the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda taken from the Report. The campaign was run through ASviS's Twitter and Facebook accounts, reaching over 630,000 people;
- a second campaign was run in February 2019 to mark the presentation of ASviS's report on "The 2019 Budget Law and sustainable development";
- ASviS took part in the global #fridaysforfuture campaign to raise awareness of the fight against climate change, in addition to various social media campaigns promoting and publicising initiatives such as SEEDSandCHIPS on the future of food, #Obiettivo2030, as part of the Italian Earth Day Village, and the Food Economy Summit promoted by the Feltrinelli Foundation.

**ASviS's webTV**, which broadcasts weekly throughout the year, offers a summary of major events in Italy and around the world focusing on sustainable development, featuring interviews, reports and in-depth analysis. During the Festival, the webTV broadcast a **special daily edition** focusing on the various events, including opinion and footage from across the country, broadening its audience through various social media channels and websites. Each edition was published on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and on the websites asvis.it and festivalvilupposostenibile.it, with a total of around 35,000 views. A **summary of the 17 days of events** throughout Italy was also produced.

In collaboration with Radio Radicale TV, live coverage of the second global climate strike was broadcast on 24 May, with reports from events in Rome, Milan, Naples, Turin and Bari. Photos, infographics, books and reports were used to describe what would appear to be the biggest youth movement in the last 40 years, created in response to the biggest emergency of this century. The events were live streamed over ASviS's channels and Radio Radicale TV, including the station's digital terrestrial channel.

Finally, in September, the publishing house, Editori Laterza, published *Un mondo sostenibile in 100 foto* ("A sustainable world in 100 photos"), written by Enrico Giovannini and Donato Speroni, with artwork by Manuela Fugenzi. Thanks to support from Enel, an online version of the book is available for secondary schools and can be accessed on the INDIRE platform.

## Research initiatives

Over this year, the working group on statistical indicators has developed an information system, updated at the time of this Report, with the aim of monitoring the progress made towards achieving the 17 SDGs at national, regional and European level. Working closely with the groups responsible for each of the Goals, the group processed the data made available by Istat (Italy's National Statistical Office), ISPRA (the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research), Eurostat and other authoritative sources to calculate composite indicators for each EU country, for Italy and for the 21 regions and autonomous provinces.

In 2018, ASviS worked with the *Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della piccola e media impresa* (Italy's National Confederation of Crafts and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, or CNA) on two research projects focusing on the reduction of food waste in the bread production chain and energy efficiency in private homes. In addition, the group has initiated work on a project, commissioned by the Lazio Region, that aims to create a model capable of estimating the economic impact of the NGOs located in the region.

The group is also responsible for the support provided to local government, such as regional and municipal authorities, in rating their performance with respect to the SDGs and in drawing up local sustainable development strategies, in accordance with the agreement entered into with the

Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection. ASviS is currently working on these aspects with a number of authorities, including the Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany Regions, the Autonomous Province of Trento and the cities of Taranto and Parma.

Finally, ASviS has launched the Local Goals project, as part of the NOPLANETB hub. This project aims to make the research and awareness-raising activities carried out nationally by ASviS, in relation to the 2030 Agenda, relevant at local level. The objective of Local Goals is to support the Emilia-Romagna Region in creating statistical tools to monitor progress towards achieving the SDGs, in rating local businesses in terms of sustainability and in using the information gathered in order to raise awareness among two target groups: regional policymakers and businesses.

### Saturdays for Future

The Saturdays for Future ([saturdaysforfuture.it](http://saturdaysforfuture.it)) initiative was launched by Enrico Giovannini (ASviS) and Leonardo Becchetti (NeXt) on 5 June via a letter published in the daily newspaper, Avvenire: “What if the young generations taking part in the ‘Fridays for Future’ movement, that has mobilised students from all over the world in order to urge adults and institutions ‘not to steal their future’ and to build a sustainable tomorrow for the Planet, were to involve their families in a ‘Saturdays for Future’ initiative, dedicated to changing consumption habits? That is to say, what if Saturday - the day following the climate strikes, the day on which over half the population does their weekly shopping - were to become a day on which everybody focused on environmental and social sustainability?”. The proposal was welcomed by large parts of Italian society and in particular by the Prime Minister, who reacted positively to the appeal, reiterating the government’s commitment to such issues.

ASviS invited everyone, starting from its network of member organisations, to work together to create Saturdays for Future. The first step in this process took place on 28 September 2019, the day after the third global climate strike, and marked the beginning of a shared path towards building greater awareness of sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

### Other projects

ASviS has sponsored more than 30 events over the last year, in recognition of the proven commitment of the events’ organisers to spreading awareness of 2030 Agenda issues throughout Italy. For the second year running, ASviS sponsored and participated in the Alberobello Summer School, “The philosophy behind sustainable development”, organised by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research and the *Centro di Ricerca per gli Studi Filosofici* (the Centre for Research into Philosophical Studies, or CRIF). The course is aimed at primary and secondary school teachers and other people working in education and the social and cultural sectors.

Sponsored by ASviS, the *Associazione Parchi e Giardini d’Italia* (the Italian Association of Parks and Gardens, or APGI) participated in the Sustainable Development Festival, encouraging all Italian gardens to take part in the *Appuntamento in Giardino* (“Open Gardens”) initiative. The aim is to have the general public discover Italy’s gardens, by their nature small ecosystems and accurate reflections of how our climate is changing, with a view to raising visitors’ awareness of issues surrounding the environment and sustainability.

Finally, ASviS is a member of the Turin Book Fair’s Sustainability Board, set up in 2019 with the aim of making the Fair not only a sustainable event, but also with a view to promoting a culture of sustainability and spreading awareness of the related issues.

In terms of research activities:

- At the European level, ASviS participates in the **NOPLANETB** project, whose goal is to develop, test and disseminate effective solutions designed to meet local and global social needs, organising matching funds campaigns to raise money from donors and businesses in order to create a shared fund to finance efforts to combat climate change. The organisations that benefit from the funding are also included in coaching and training programmes designed to boost their expertise;
- the European **Schools for the UN Sustainable Development Goals implementation** (SUDEGO) project, a part of the Erasmus+ programme, is coming to an end. The project, of which ASviS is a partner, was set up to facilitate the acquisition of expertise and encourage the attainment of relevant, high-quality skills. In addition

to Italy, the other countries involved are Spain, Finland, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria. The project is primarily aimed at secondary school teachers, with students from the same educational cycles as final beneficiaries, but also seeks to involve business and public sector stakeholders, and decision makers in the field of education.

The Alliance also took part in the two editions of the WIP-ECOSOC project organized in 2019. This project was set up by the *Associazione Diplomatici*, an Italian NGO and a member of ASviS with special consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC, and run between March and April and in July of this year on the occasion of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). The high-level WIP-ECOSOC training programme offers young aspiring diplomats the chance to access high-quality work experience and get a first-hand taste of the work of the United Nations, by taking part in numerous seminars, visits and meetings with professionals, representatives of international organisations and civil society actors. The aim of the last edition was to inform students on the issues being debated during the HLPF, the annual assembly of UN member states in New York that reports on the progress made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, ASviS has continued to work on the **TOWard 2030**, a project combining art and urban regeneration launched in partnership with Turin City Council and Lavazza. By the end of 2019, the aim is to use the universal language of street art located in the centre of the city and in its suburbs to spread the word about the 17 Goals. In addition to being a member of the scientific committee, ASviS also worked on creating the area of the project's website dedicated to the 2030 Agenda, including an in-depth look at the various Goals. A catalogue is to be published at the end of the project, with a view to fully capitalising on the project and the works produced and reaching a wider audience.

### 3.5 Italy's path to sustainable development

#### How does Italy rank with respect to the SDGs

During an event at the Chamber of Deputies on 27 February 2019, attended by the Chamber's Speaker, Roberto Fico, and the Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, ASviS presented an updated version of the composite indicators developed to describe Italy's performance with respect to the 17 SDGs. The data presented here benefit from the publication by the second Istat Report on the SDGs, presented last April, which included a number of new elementary indicators. As a result, the composite indicators have undergone certain changes that are particularly significant for Goals 1, 4, 7 and 14<sup>21</sup>.

The composite indicators were developed using the Adjusted Mazziotta-Pareto Index (AMPI) method, which was also adopted by Istat to develop the composite indicators for the Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing indicators referred to above. Specifically, a composite indicator (starting from more than 100 elementary indicators) was developed for 15 out of the 17 Objectives, while for Goals 13 and 17 it was decided to continue using a single headline indicator. Both the indicators provided by Istat and the composite indicators are available in the ASviS database, which also contains data for the different regions. The Italian figure for 2010 represents the base value (equal to 100) and the indicators show the improvement (if the value rises) or the deterioration (if it falls) in the situation compared to the value for 2010. If a composite indicator shows improvement, this doesn't necessarily mean that Italy is on a path that will enable it to meet the Goals by 2030, but merely that "on average" the country is moving in the right direction, as the distribution (i.e. aspects relating to inequalities) of the phenomenon is not accounted for.

Looking at the most recent data, Italy shows signs of improvement in nine Goals (3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16 and 17) between 2016 and 2017, whilst, in the same period, its performance with respect to Goals 4 and 13 was broadly unchanged and the indicators for Goals 1, 2, 6, 7, 14 and 15 deteriorated. Between 2010 and 2017, on the other hand, Italy reports improvements in nine areas: food and sustainable agriculture, health, edu-

tion, gender equality, energy system, innovation, sustainable patterns of production and consumption, efforts to combat climate change and international cooperation.

In six areas, on the other hand, the situation has worsened: poverty, economic and employment conditions, urban conditions, the condition of the sea, the terrestrial ecosystem and the quality of governance, peace, justice and strong institutions. In the case of the two other Goals (water and inequalities), the situation is broadly unchanged.

**Between 2010 and 2017, the situation improved significantly for the following Goals:**

- **Goal 2** (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture). After the significant improvement seen through to 2016 - due primarily to increases in agricultural productivity and in the proportion of agricultural land under organic cultivation - the last two years have witnessed a downturn, caused mainly by increased use of fertilisers in agriculture (up 7.1% between 2016 and 2017). There is, however, positive news regarding one of the elementary indicators relating to the use of plant protection products (pesticides, weed killers and so on), which fell 20% between 2010 and 2017.
- **Goal 3** (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all and at all ages). This indicator has improved over the period in question. Above all, since 2015, the improvement reflects reductions in the probability of death under 5 years old (3.4 deaths under 5 years old per thousand live births in 2017) and in the standardised proportion of people aged 14 or over who do not engage in any physical activity, despite a contemporaneous increase in mortalities resulting from road traffic accidents. After a significant decline in such mortalities until 2016, the rate started to rise again in 2017.
- **Goal 4** (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all). This indicator has significantly improved over the years. Since 2010, there has been a major improvement in both the proportion of people aged 30 to 34 with a university degree and in the proportion of 25 to 64-year olds who have at least completed secondary school. It should also be noted that the per-

centage of 15-year old students failing to attain functional skills in mathematics has declined over time. Finally, in the last year, the rate of early leavers from education and training has worsened, in contrast with previous years, to stand at 14%.

- **Goal 5** (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls). The relevant indicator has improved throughout the period under review. After the slight decline seen in 2016, the indicator again improved in 2017 thanks to an increase in the participation of women on the boards of listed companies and in decision-making bodies. The good performance of the composite indicator was backed by growth in the employment rate for women and in the proportion of graduates who are women.
- **Goal 7** (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all). This composite indicator, after an initial increase due to improvements in all the elementary indicators, has declined since 2014. This reflects a reduction in the quantity of energy produced from renewable sources which, after peaking in 2014, has fallen by six percentage points in the last four years.
- **Goal 9** (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation). All the elementary indicators for this Goal have continued to show significant improvements. Indicators regarding households with access to broadband, internet use, the number of researchers per 10,000 inhabitants and the proportion of freight transported by rail have all increased. The performance of the composite indicator has also benefitted from growth in the value added by manufacturing industry and the sharp decline in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per unit of value added.
- **Goal 12** (Ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns). This composite indicator has risen significantly thanks to improvements in almost all the elementary indicators. Major progress has been made in relation to the circularity of materials and the percentage of recycled waste, which at 49.4% is close to the European target for 2020 (50%). Beyond this, the internal consumption of materials per unit of GDP continues to fall (down 26% compared with 2010), whilst the

number of organisations registered with the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) has worsened, having declined year after year.

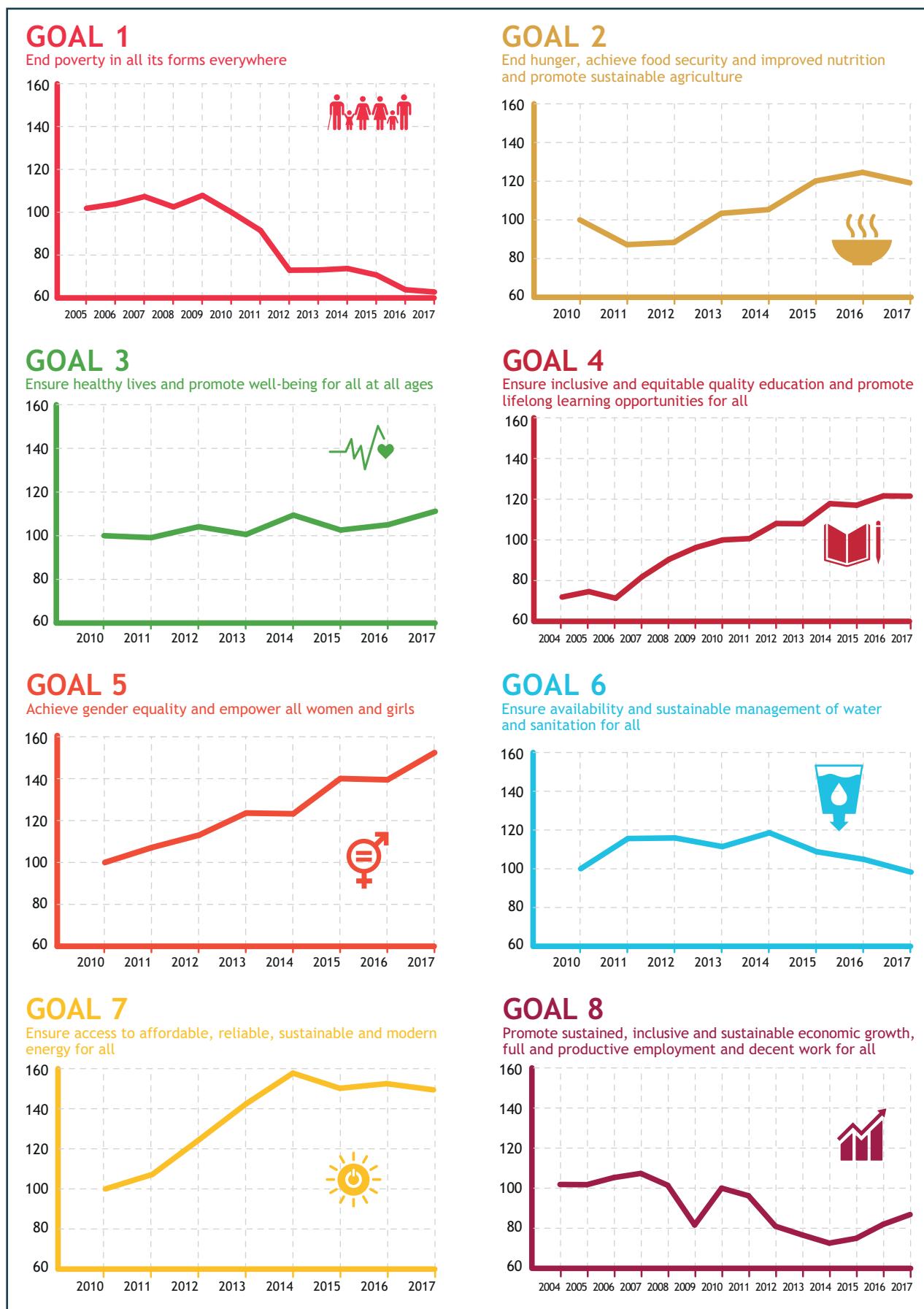
- **Goal 13** (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts). The headline indicator (total greenhouse gases according to air emissions accounts) improved until 2014, before worsening in the following three years as the economy picked up. Analysing the indicator in detail, it should be noted that three-quarters of total greenhouse gas emissions are produced by industry, whilst the remaining emissions are caused by households.
- **Goal 17** (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development). The headline indicator - represented by the share of official development assistance (ODA) in gross national income (GNI) - increased significantly in the period 2014-2017, partly due to the increase in aid for immigrants, which rose to account for 0.3% of GNI. Despite the progress made, the level reached remains well below the target of 0.7% of GNI set in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

#### The situation is significantly worse for these Goals:

- **Goal 1** (End poverty in all its forms everywhere). This indicator, after remaining stable from 2012 to 2014, has worsened considerably since then. In the two-year period from 2016 to 2017, the decline was due to increases in both absolute and relative poverty, which are both at their highest levels for the period in question (8.4% and 15.6% of the population, respectively). People in absolute poverty include 1,112,000 young people between the ages of 18 and 34, the highest figure since 2005. 2017 saw a reduction in serious material deprivation, although this remains 3.5 percentage points above the European average.
- **Goal 8** (Encourage sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all). This indicator is strongly influenced by the economic cycle. As a result, the indicator worsened until 2014 due to the decline in GDP per capita and increases in unemployment and in the proportion of young NEETs (the highest in the EU), followed by a slow recovery between

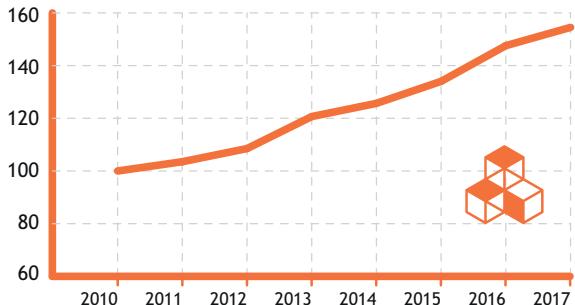
2015 and 2017. Finally, there has been an ongoing decline in the number of fatal injuries and permanent disabilities per 10,000 workers, reflecting a 25% improvement in the period 2010-2016.

- **Goal 11** (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable). The comparison with 2010 continues to be negative, despite the improvement of the last three years. The recent positive trend is primarily due to an improvement in the indicators relating to recycling and the proportion of total urban waste collected that is sent to landfill, in addition to a decrease in the number of people living in dwellings with structural or damp-related issues. There has also been a sharp fall in the proportion of the urban population exposed to particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) since 2010. The problem of illegal building has got worse throughout the period under review, having risen by eight percentage points compared with 2010.
- **Goal 14** (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development). This indicator has seesawed, having improved until 2015, thanks to a notable improvement in the indicator for protected marine areas, before worsening significantly in the last two years as a result of an increase in fishing activity and in overfishing, the indicator for which stands at 83.3% compared with the European average of 42%.
- **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). The composite indicator shows an extremely negative trend caused by sharp deteriorations in the elementary indicators for territorial fragmentation and land cover. There has been an improvement in wooded areas, though this is linked to the progressive abandonment of agricultural land.
- **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). This indicator shows a very negative trend until 2014, before improving considerably, thanks to an overall improvement in the

**Figure 3 - Composite indicators for Italy**

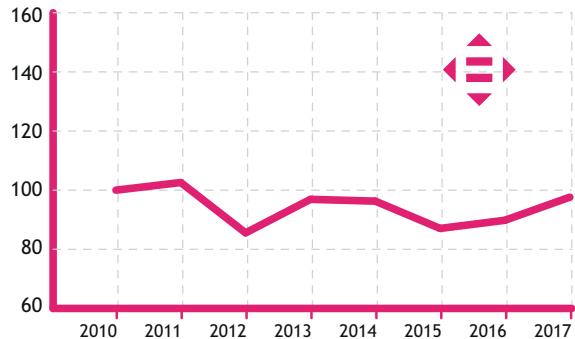
## GOAL 9

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



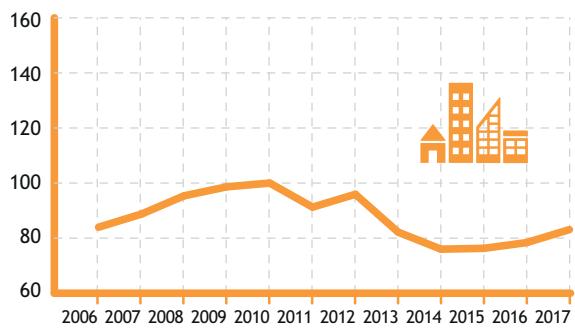
## GOAL 10

Reduce inequality within and among countries



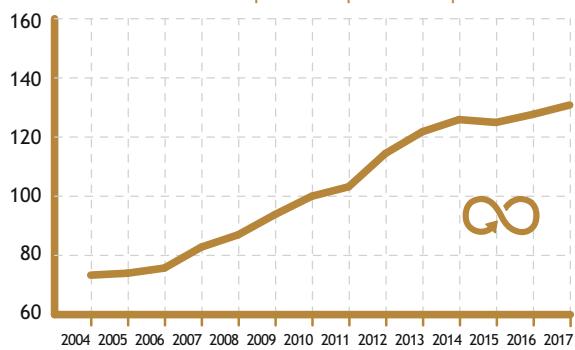
## GOAL 11

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



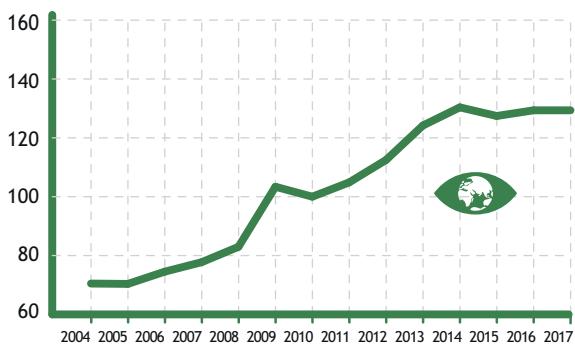
## GOAL 12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



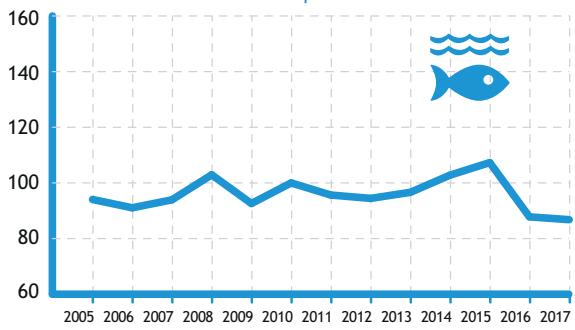
## GOAL 13

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



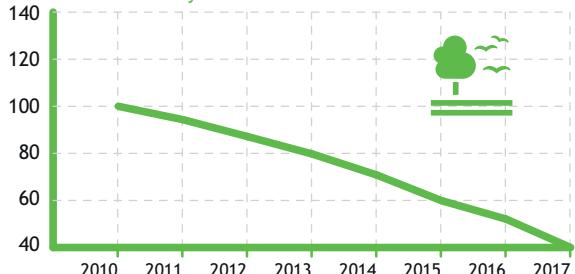
## GOAL 14

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



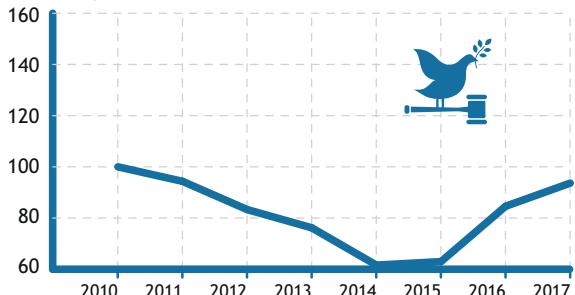
## GOAL 15

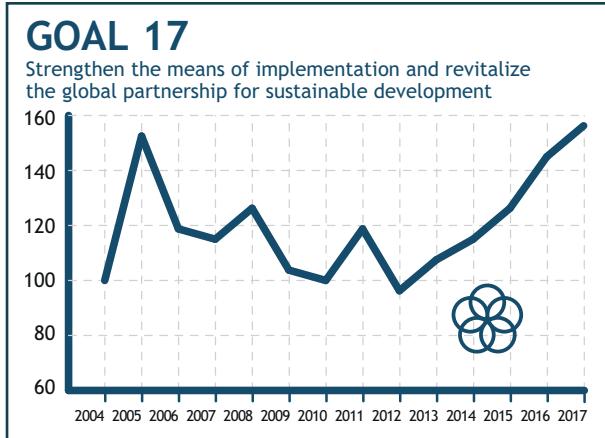
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



## 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





indicators for crime (the homicide rate - one of the lowest in Europe -, robberies, burglaries and muggings) and for the percentage of adult prison detainees awaiting judgement. However, whilst this latter indicator has fallen, prison overcrowding has worsened (114 detainees per 100 available places in 2017).

#### Finally, the situation is unchanged for these Goals:

- **Goal 6 (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all).** This indicator showed a positive trend until 2014, driven by a reduction in households who do not trust their tap water for drinking purposes and in those who complain about irregularities in the water supply. In the last three years, however, there has been a notable decline, reflecting an increase in the number of households who complain about irregularities in the water supply and a decrease in the efficiency of drinking water distribution.
- **Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries).** After a lengthy period of ups and downs, from 2015 onwards, this indicator has improved thanks to an upturn in the rates of growth in per capita household income among the poorest 40% of the population and in per capita household income among the total population. The indicator of disposable income inequality is higher in 2017 compared with 2010 and is above the European average. Finally, there has been an ongoing deterioration in the poverty risk indicator.

#### The regions and sustainable development policies

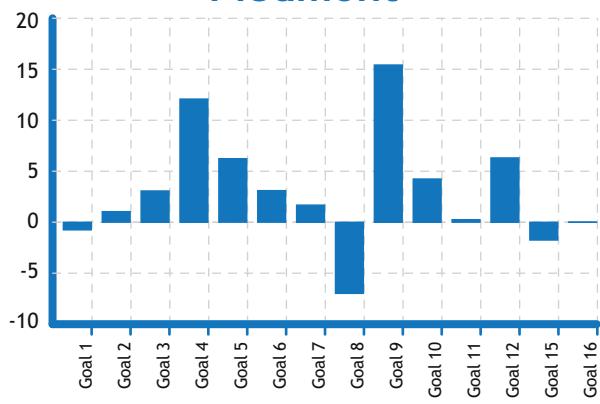
As noted previously, the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection has urged regional authorities and the autonomous provinces to draw up regional sustainable development strategies in line with the national strategy approved by the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE) in December 2017. As set out in the latter, regional strategies should be developed on the basis of the capabilities of the various local institutions to cooperate in order to devise, plan and deliver on a shared strategy. This means organising targeted interventions: to foster and mobilise the resources that can enhance local expertise and have an impact on the local ecosystem and its governance, increasing the degree to which citizens take part in public decision-making and improving social quality for local communities.

In the Report for 2018, ASviS used composite indicators to measure regional performance for the first time, enabling it to assess the progress made in implementing each of the SDGs in the different regions. The Alliance subsequently began talking to a number of regional authorities about helping them to draw up a position statement on the SDGs. To this end, rather than focus on the relative position of each region, it is important to assess performance with respect to the various SDGs. The following pages provide an analysis of the changes in the composite indicators for each region between 2010 and 2017, in relation to the various Goals.

To ensure a correct interpretation of the composite indicators at regional level, it should above all be noted that the following charts are based on elementary indicators that are partially different from those applied with reference to Italy as a whole, given that disaggregated figures for the separate regions are not in all cases available. For this reason, it was not possible to compute the indicators for Goal 13 (Climate change), Goal 14 (Life below water) and Goal 17 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). Secondly, the method used to compute the composite indicators is based on the choice of a base value (the one used by Italy in 2010) and the standardisation of elementary indicators within an interval set between the minimum and maximum values for each indicator for all the components taken into account and over

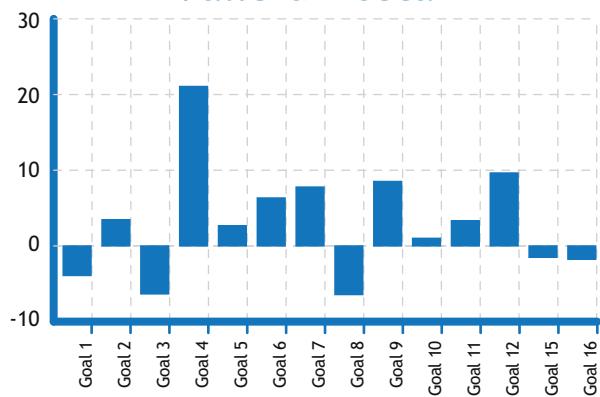
the full period of time. This means that the minimum and maximum values differ depending on whether they refer to Italy as a whole or to all the Italian regions. Finally, whilst all the regional indicators have been computed with reference to the base value for Italy in 2010, it is possible to compare the performance of the various Goals over time within the same region, but not the absolute rankings for the various indicators. As a result, the following charts show absolute changes in the composite indicators between 2010 and 2017 for the various Goals and for each individual region.

### Piedmont



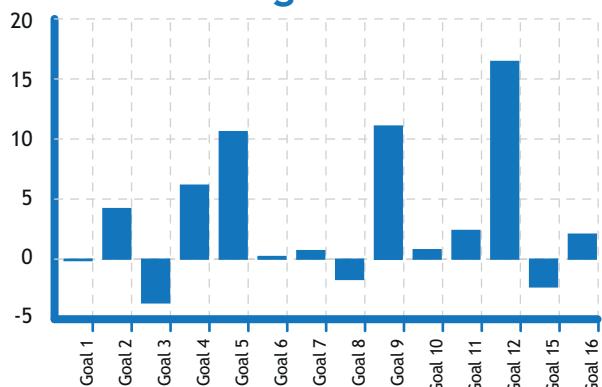
Compared to 2010, Piedmont has made significant progress in terms of Goals 4 and 9, whilst recording a major decline in only the indicator for Goal 8 (down 6%), above all due to a reduction in real annual GDP growth per inhabitant and per worker and an increase in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers. The positive performance with regard to Goal 9 (up 9%) reflects increases in research intensity, in the number of researchers (in full-time equivalent terms) and in the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband (up 25 percentage points). Finally, the improvement in Goal 4 reflects a reduction in early leavers from education and training and an increase in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree.

### Valle d'Aosta



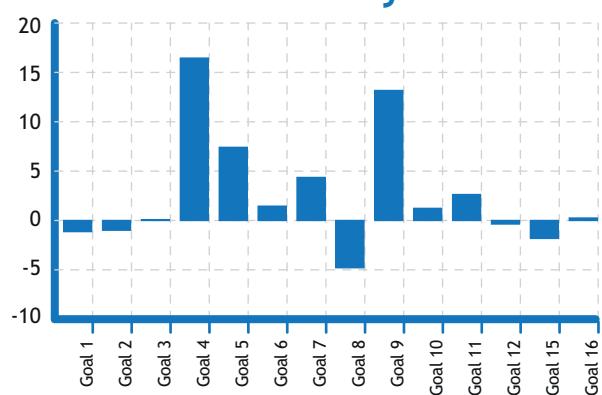
Valle d'Aosta has seen major improvements in relation to Goals 4 and 12, whilst recording significant declines for Goals 3 and 8. The deterioration in Goal 3 reflects an increase in the rate of mortality due to suicide and in the rate of injury resulting from road traffic accidents, which has risen from 12.6 per 100,000 people in 2012 to 32.2 per 100,000 in 2017. The indicator for Goal 8 has declined due to an increased unemployment rate and an increase in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers as a proportion of the total employed. Goal 4 has seen the biggest improvement between 2010 and 2017 (up 23%), thanks to the increased percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks (the figure has doubled over a seven-year period) and in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree.

## Liguria



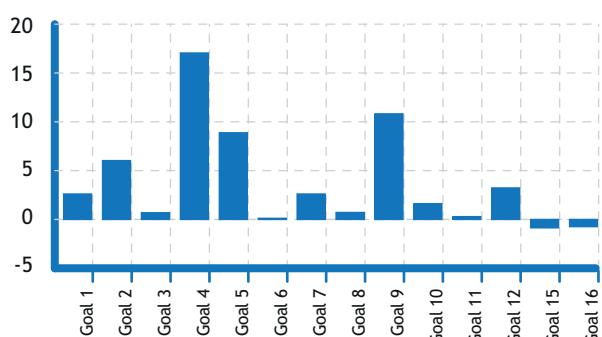
Liguria has improved significantly in relation to Goals 5, 9 and 12. The composite indicator that has made the biggest progress is the one for Goal 12 (up 19%), thanks to improvements in the elementary indicators relating to waste (above all the proportion of urban waste sent to landfill out of total urban waste collected and the percentage of urban waste recycled, which has doubled over a seven-year period). The indicator for Goal 9 has improved by over 11%, reflecting increases in the number of researchers (in full-time equivalent terms) and in the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband. The Goal relating to health has worsened due to an increase in the rate of injury resulting from road traffic accidents, which has doubled in the period under review, and a reduction in the proportion of over-65s vaccinated against influenza.

## Lombardy



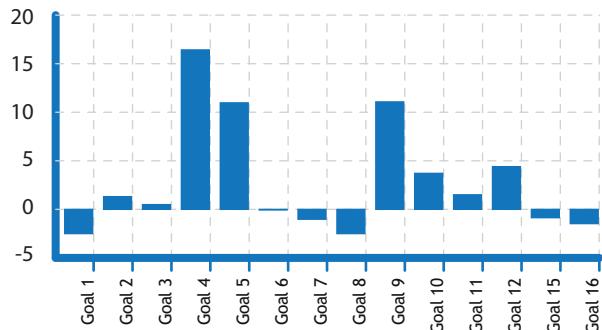
Lombardy has witnessed particular improvements with regard to Goals 4 and 9. The increase in Goal 4 is driven by increases in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks and in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree. The positive performance with regard to Goal 9 reflects increases in the number of researchers (in full-time equivalent terms) and in the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband. The situation regarding Goal 8, on the other hand, has worsened, above all due to a worsening of the indicators relating to the incidence of involuntary part-time workers as a proportion of the total employed and to real GDP growth per worker.

## The autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen



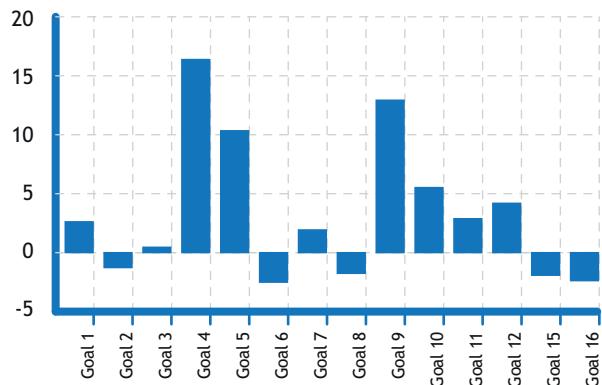
The autonomous province of Bolzano/Bozen has improved in relation to Goal 4 and, to a lesser extent, Goal 9, whilst none of the Goals has seen a major deterioration. There has been positive progress in relation to Goal 4, thanks to improvements in early leavers from education and training and in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks. Goal 9 has improved, on the other hand, due to increases in the number of researchers and in the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband.

## The autonomous province of Trento



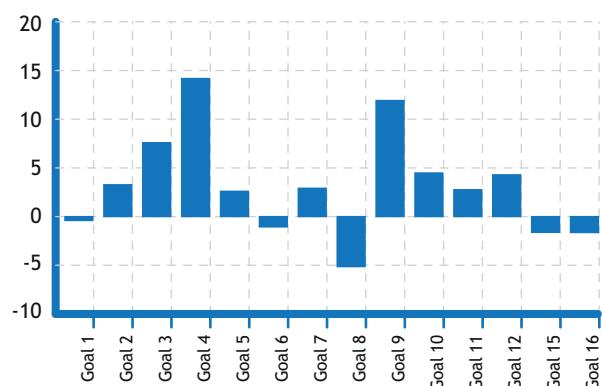
In the autonomous province of Trento, the composite indicator that has recorded most progress is the one for Goal 4 (up 14%), reflecting increases in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree and in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks. The indicators for Goals 5 and 9 have also improved significantly. In terms of Goal 5, the improvement is linked to an increase in the number of women elected to the provincial council and an increase in the number of female graduates.

## Veneto



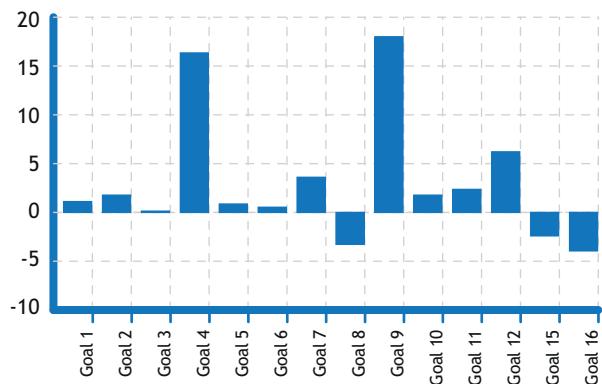
Veneto has seen a sharp improvement regarding Goals 4, 5 and 9. Goal 4 has improved thanks to increases in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks and in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree. The improvement in Goal 9 is instead due to increases in the number of researchers (in full-time equivalent terms) and in the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband.

## Friuli-Venezia Giulia



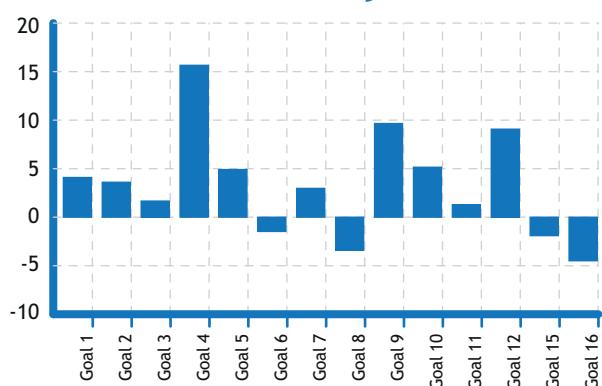
Friuli-Venezia Giulia has seen improvements above all in relation to Goals 4 and 9. The increase for Goal 4 is due to the elementary indicators regarding the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks and in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree. The improvement in Goal 9 reflects an increase in the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband and an increase in knowledge workers as a proportion of the total employed. Goal 8 has recorded a significant drop, reflecting increases in the rate of non-participation in the labour market and in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers as a proportion of the total employed.

## Emilia-Romagna



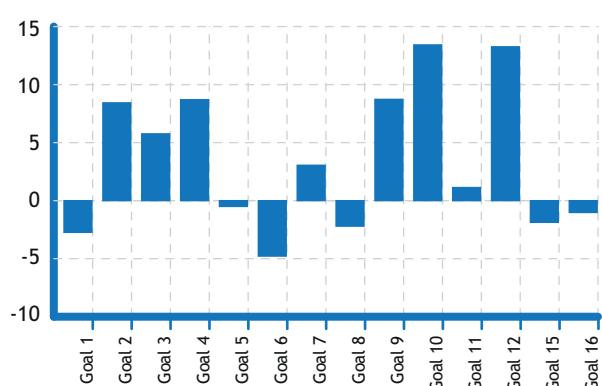
Emilia-Romagna has recorded improvements regarding Goals 4 and 9. Goal 9's 17% increase compared to 2010 reflects improvements across all the elementary indicators, above all those relating to the number of researchers (in full-time equivalent terms) and the percentage of households with access to fixed and/or mobile broadband. Goal 4 has improved thanks to increases in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks and in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree. The situation regarding Goal 16 has worsened slightly due to an increase in robberies, burglaries and muggings.

## Tuscany



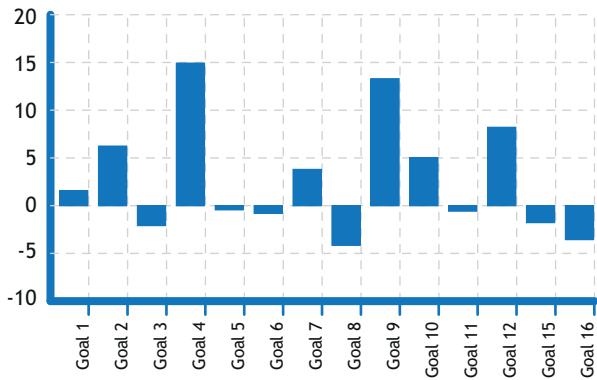
Tuscany has seen improvements in the composite indicators for Goals 4, 9 and 12. The improvement in Goal 4 was driven by a reduction in early leavers from education and training, accompanied by an increase in the percentage of people aged 30 to 34 who have a university degree. Goal 12 has improved due to improvements in all the indicators under review, above all those regarding the percentage of urban waste recycled and the production of urban waste. Goal 16 has seen a marked downturn over the relevant period due to an increase in robberies, burglaries and muggings.

## Umbria



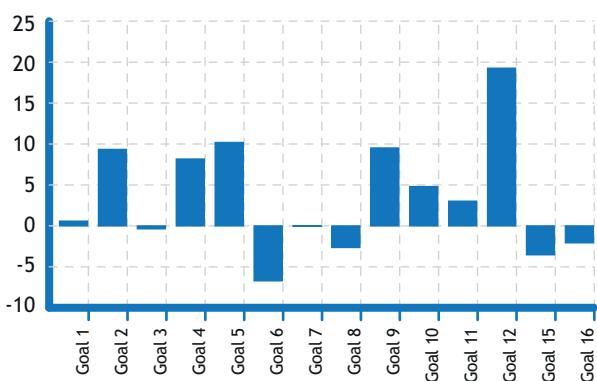
Umbria has above all improved its performance in relation to Goals 10 and 12, whilst recording a significant deterioration with regard to Goal 6. Goal 12 (up 14%) has benefitted from improvements in the indicators relating to the proportion of urban waste sent to landfill out of total urban waste collected and the percentage of urban waste recycled. Goal 10 has also seen a marked improvement (up 13%) since 2010, above all thanks to an increase in the rate of growth of per capita household income among the poorest 40% of the population. The situation regarding Goal 6 has deteriorated above all due to a reduction in the efficiency of drinking water distribution.

## Marche



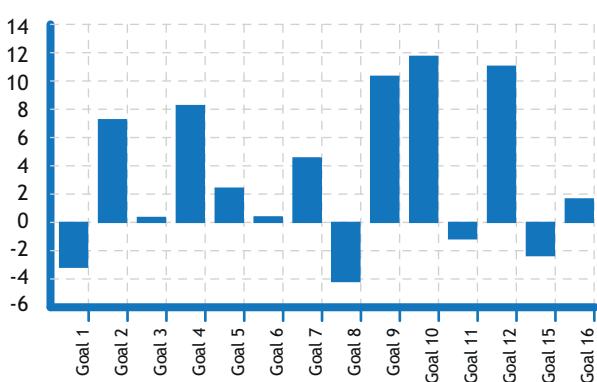
Over the period from 2010 to 2017, the Marche region has seen significant improvements regarding Goals 4 and 9. The increase in the indicator for Goal 9 reflects increases in the number of researchers per 10,000 inhabitants and in the proportion of households with access to broadband, whilst the improvement in Goal 4 is due to an increase in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks. The indicator for Goal 8, on the other hand, has worsened, with the incidence of involuntary part-time workers as a proportion of the total employed being higher than the figure for 2010.

## Lazio



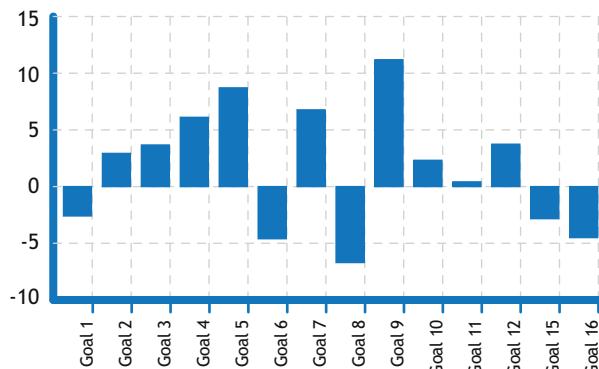
Lazio has seen particularly sizable improvements in the indicators for Goals 2, 4, 5, 9 and 12. The positive trend regarding Goal 12 has been driven by increases in the proportion of urban waste sent to landfill out of total urban waste collected and the percentage of urban waste recycled. Goal 5 has improved thanks to an increase in the number of women elected to the regional council and an increase in the number of female graduates. Goal 6 has gone backwards due to an increase in the number of households who complain about irregularities in the water supply and a decrease in the efficiency of drinking water distribution.

## Abruzzo



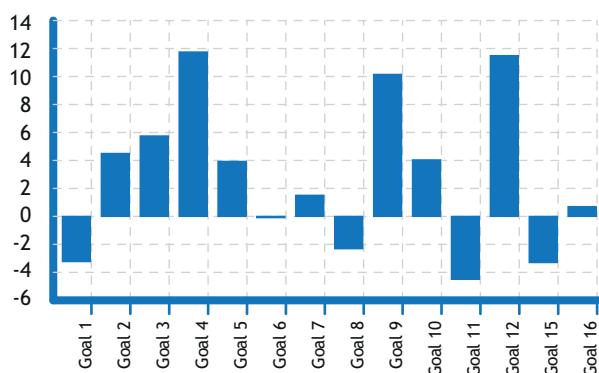
Abruzzo has seen major improvements regarding Goals 9, 10 and 12. The increases in the proportion of households with access to broadband and in the percentage of urban waste recycled (which has doubled in the period under review) have led the improvements in Goals 9 and 12, respectively. Goal 10, relating to inequalities, has also seen an improvement due to a sharp increase in the rate of growth of per capita household income among the poorest 40% of the population and among the population as a whole. Goal 8 has registered the biggest decline due to a reduction in real annual GDP growth per worker and an increase in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers.

## Molise



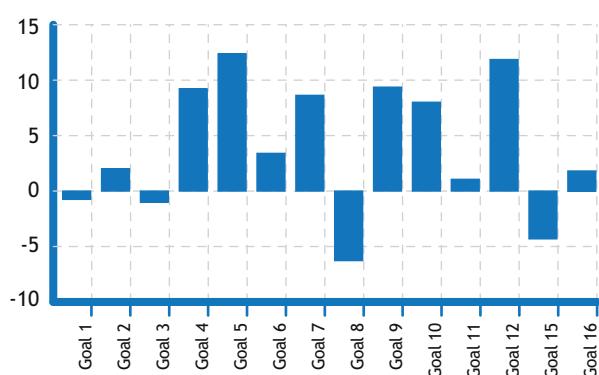
Over the period from 2010 to 2017, Molise witnessed a significant improvement in the indicator relating to Goal 9, which benefitted from an increase in the proportion of households with access to broadband. Goal 8 is the most critical area, with the decline linked to a general decline in all the elementary indicators, including an increase in the unemployment rate and in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers.

## Campania



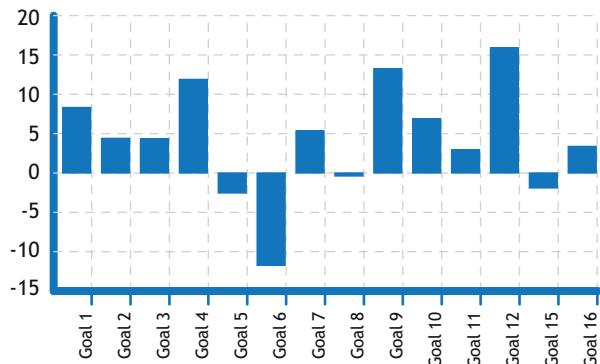
Campania saw major improvements in Goals 4, 9 and 12 between 2010 and 2017. The indicator regarding Goal 4 reflects an increase in the proportion of 30 to 34-year olds with a university degree, whilst the indicator for Goal 12 benefitted from a reduction in the proportion of urban waste sent to landfill out of total urban waste collected. The improvement in relation to Goal 9 reflects an increase in the proportion of households with access to broadband. Among the indicators that have gone backwards, the negative performance regarding Goal 11 is due to a reduction in seat kilometres offered by local public transport.

## Apulia



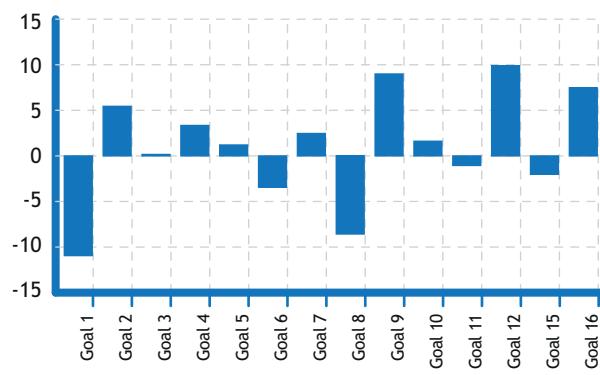
The Goals that show the greatest improvement in Apulia are 5 and 12. The indicator relating to gender equality has improved thanks to increases in the number of women elected to the regional council, in the employment rate for women and in the number of female graduates. In terms of Goal 12, the composite indicator benefitted from increases in the percentage of urban waste recycled and in the proportion of urban waste sent to landfill. Increases in the unemployment rate and in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers has instead had a negative impact in relation to Goal 8.

## Basilicata



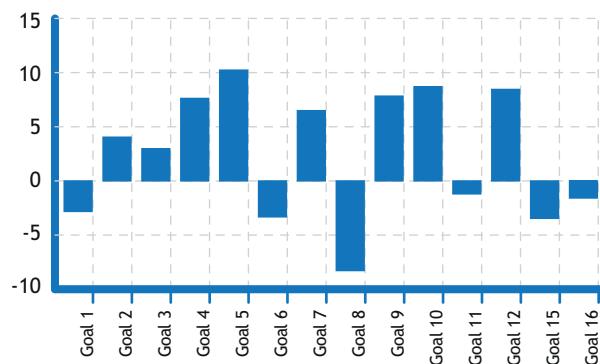
Over the period from 2010 to 2017, Basilicata witnessed an improvement in the indicators relating to Goals 4, 9 and 12. The improvement in the indicator regarding education above all reflects an increase in the proportion of 30 to 34-year olds with a university degree. The improvement in Goal 12, on the other hand, is due to an increase in the percentage of urban waste recycled. The only Goal to see a sharp decline is 6, reflecting a significant increase in the number of households who complain about irregularities in the water supply and a decrease in the efficiency of drinking water distribution.

## Calabria



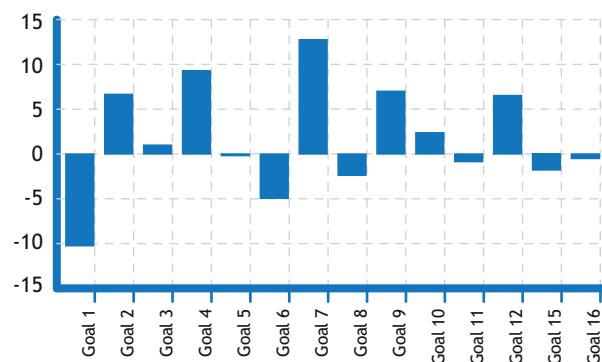
The biggest improvements in Calabria were registered by the indicators for Goals 9 and 12. The improvement in Goal 9 is due to increases in the proportion of households with access to broadband and in the number of researchers per 10,000 inhabitants. The improvement regarding Goal 12 reflects an increase in the percentage of urban waste recycled, which has more than tripled over the period under review. Goals 1 and 8 saw significant declines. The Goal relating to poverty was the worst performer, due to a sharp increase in the proportion of households in relative poverty (up from 19% to 35%) and in the number of individuals living in low labour-intensive households. The indicator for Goal 8 reflects growth in the rate of unemployment and in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers.

## Sicily



Sicily saw a major improvement in Goal 5, with smaller improvements regarding Goals 4, 9, 10 and 12. The indicator relating to gender equality has improved thanks to increases in the number of women elected to the regional council and in the employment rate for women. The positive performance relating to Goal 10 reflects an upturn in the rates of growth in per capita household income among the total population and in per capita household income among the poorest 40% of the population. The indicator for Goal 8 was the only one to register a significant decline, caused by a general worsening of all the elementary indicators, above all increases in the rate of unemployment and in the incidence of involuntary part-time workers.

## Sardinia



Sardinia saw a major improvement in Goal 7 and, to a lesser extent, in Goal 4. The overall indicator for Goal 7 improved thanks to sharp growth in the use of energy from renewable sources (as a proportion, up from 16% to 36%). The improvement in Goal 4 reflects increases in the percentage of people aged between 25 and 64 who have taken part in education or training in the previous 4 weeks and in the proportion of 30 to 34-year olds with a university degree. The worst performance relates to Goal 1, reflecting growth in the proportion of households in relative poverty and in the number of individuals living in low labour-intensive households.

## UPDATE OF THE URBAN AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Following *Report no. 1/2019 on the Urban Agenda for sustainable development. Goals and proposals* produced by ASviS and Urban@it (July 2019)<sup>22</sup>, we have updated 5 of the 17 priority goals selected to reflect recently published data. Figure 4 shows the goals for which updated figures are available (Poverty, Road traffic accidents, Housing, Urban mobility, Security) and the new overall situation. The goals were selected for the ASviS Report for 2018<sup>23</sup> and the relevant territory consists of the areas (Degurba 1 or Degurba 1+2) that Eurostat defines “urban areas” (where it was not possible to obtain data on this scale, the territorial classifications indicated from time to time were used). We have used the traffic light method to show the progress made (“green” indicates that good progress has been made towards achieving the Goal; “amber” indicates a situation of uncertainty; “red” means that the Goal cannot be achieved) and applied it to the last two years for which figures are available, compared with the previous two-year period.

**Figure 4 - Comparison of short-term performance of the 17 priority goals over time**

	2012-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Goal 1 - Poverty			●	●*
Goal 3 - Road traffic accidents			●	●*
Goal 4.1 - Dropouts from education			●	●
Goal 4.2 - University graduates			●	●
Goal 5 - Gender equality			●	●
Goal 6 - Water	●			
Goal 7 - Renewable energy		●	●	
Goal 8 - Employment			●	●
Goal 9 - Digital transition			●	●
Goal 11.1 - Housing			●	●*
Goal 11.2 - Urban mobility			●	●*
Goal 11.3 - Use of the land			●	●*
Goal 11.4 - Culture	●			
Goal 11.5 - Air quality			●	
Goal 11.6 - Green space	●		●	
Goal 12 - Waste recycling		●	●	
Goal 16 - Security			●	●*

To summarise: ASviS Report for 2019 4 ● and 13 ●. Report no. 1/2019 5 ● and 12 ●.

\*The figures have been updated with respect to Report no. 1/2019

The situation has deteriorated with respect to the Report in July, which showed green for 5 goals and red for 12, whilst there are now 4 goals marked green and 13 red. The goals where progress is positive (green) are: poverty (Goal 1); university graduates (Goal 4); renewable energy (Goal 7) and security (Goal 16). With regard to poverty, the situation is in any event concerning, as in 2018 the people at the risk of poverty and social exclusion were more or less the same as in 2008 and were concentrated in less densely populated areas (Degurba 3).

The 13 goals with a negative performance (red) are: housing (Goal 11), which has changed colour with respect to the Report of last July; road traffic accidents (Goal 3); dropouts from education (Goal 4); gender equality (Goal 5); water (Goal 6); employment (Goal 8); innovation (Goal 9); urban mobility (Goal 11); use of the land (Goal 11); culture (Goal 11); air quality (Goal 11); green space (Goal 11) and waste recycling (Goal 12).

## 3.6 The evolution of legislation in relation to the SDGs

### GOAL 1 - NO POVERTY

#### End poverty in all its forms everywhere

In the last year there has been a significant increase in the resources directed towards combatting poverty, even though the frequent policy changes tend to have a negative impact on their effectiveness. Istat's SDG Report for 2019 shows that, in 2017, 28.9% of Italians lived in poverty and in a state of social exclusion, marking a reduction compared to the previous year but still far away from achieving the target set in the Europe 2020 Strategy. Also, the Report noted, 20.3% of the population was at risk of poverty and 10.1% was experiencing severe material deprivation. Regional disparities are unfortunately all too apparent: almost half (44.4%) of individuals in southern Italy are living either in poverty or in a state of social exclusion, whilst the corresponding figure for the north of the country is 18.8%.

Moreover, there were over 1.8 million (7%) of households living in absolute poverty in 2018, making a total of 5 million people (8.4% of the entire population). Despite the modest economic recovery of recent years, these figures remain close to the highest levels recorded since 2005. Young families, in particular, are the worst hit (with an incidence of poverty of 10.4%) and the condition of minors is the cause for greatest concern: 12.6% of minors live in absolute poverty, making a total of 1.3 million children.

The commitment included in the Coalition Agreement to introduce a Citizens' Basic Income (CBI) began to take shape in the 2019 Budget Law. "The measure is designed to provide income support for Italian citizens in need; the amount to be disbursed shall be determined with reference to the poverty threshold in terms of both income and assets". The value of the payments has been set at €780 per person, per month, whilst the OECD equivalence scale is used in the case of larger families. The government plans to allocate €17 billion a year to pay for the initiative, setting up a "Fund for Citizens' Basic Income". In reality, this amount is due to finance both the Citizens' Basic Income and the pension reform dubbed "Quota 100" (Law Decree 4 of 28 January 2019).

It is important to note that introduction of the CBI has not resulted in the abolition of the so-called

"Poverty Fund" set up in 2017, but has merely reduced its funding, which nevertheless remains significant for the 2019-2021 period (approximately €347 million for 2019, €587 million for 2020 and €615 million for 2021). These sums represent approximately 15% of the total amount allocated to the "Poverty Fund" and refer to the amount previously earmarked for use in expanding local social services (the Fund's so-called "services quota"). This is important, as it will enable the government to continue to pay the Inclusion Income (Reddito di Inclusione, Rel), the measure introduced at the beginning of 2018 with the aim of combatting poverty at national level.

The introduction of the CBI marks an extremely important development in the Italian welfare provision, as it marks a renewed government drive to combat poverty and offer support to people living in deprivation. However, the form of the scheme and the way in which it is to be delivered have raised a number of doubts about the purpose of the policy, as well as concerns over the administrative aspects of implementation, which we will not analyse here.

Above all, the provision of income support cannot be expected to eradicate poverty as defined in the 2030 Agenda, which refers to a multidimensional phenomenon that is not limited to the economic aspect alone, but can at the most address only a number of the related issues. Social aspects, for example, relating to access to decent housing, healthcare and education, are almost entirely overlooked as a result of the decision to focus on income support, which is moreover to be provided in such a restrictive manner as to only be made available when the effects of poverty on people have reached the most advanced stage. In this way, the impact in terms of prevention, or at least of reducing deprivation, is downgraded.

Adequate attention is also not paid to employment, which has a key role to play in reducing poverty and social exclusion. The CBI limits itself to attempts to help the unemployed find work by boosting job centres, whilst failing to deal with the lack of demand for labour, which is especially notable in certain areas of the country due to years of economic stagnation at the national level, with major gaps between the different areas of Italy not only with regard to levels of employment, but also in terms of the quality of jobs on offer. It is in fact no surprise that there has been an increase in the numbers of the so-called

working poor, people who have a job, but who are not over the poverty threshold.

In conclusion, it is clear that the real impact of the Citizens' Basic Income does not depend only on the resources made available, but also on the efficacy of the implementing decrees, the effective involvement of bodies active at local level, the degree of beneficiaries' determination to find work, how it interacts with the different measures previously adopted in order to combat poverty and on synergies with job creation schemes.

In this regard, it should be remembered that investing in efforts to fight poverty, in its many different aspects, from the earliest years of life requires a combination of income support and equally sizeable investment in infrastructure and services for young children and adolescents and in the related personnel. The lack of such investment over the last decade has meant, as the above figures from Istat show, that children and young people have not been protected from the effects of the dual crisis that has struck Italy. It is also necessary to take an organic approach to reorganising the numerous subsidies and other measures intended to help parents, as these are currently highly fragmented and not very effective.

The government has also extended and refinanced the "Fund for initiatives to combat child educational poverty", although particular attention is required here, as it would seem that the available funding is to be reduced. It is crucial to ensure the continuity of the measures adopted to combat this form of poverty and put in place inclusion initiatives designed to foster the active involvement of children themselves.

## GOAL 2 - ZERO HUNGER

### End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

The main legislative interventions relating to the achievement of Goal 2 are included in the 2019 Budget Law, in Law Decree 27 of 29 March 2019, containing "Urgent measures to provide a boost for the agricultural sectors", and Law Decree 35 of 2019, containing "Urgent measures to promote economic growth and resolve specific crises".

With regard to the efforts to **overcome food poverty**, the 2019 Budget Law has increased the amount of money (€1 million annually for 2019, 2020 and 2021) available to the fund set up to fi-

nance food banks (created by art. 58, paragraph 1 of Law Decree 83 of 2012), which already had funding for €5 million per year. In addition, the Interministerial Decree of 25 July 2019 has earmarked €14 million to fund the purchase of DOP-certified pecorino cheese to be distributed by charities to people in need. This measure has two objectives: to help producers avoid a market crisis and to provide people with a highly nutritious food.

With regard to the **impact of the food system on health**, the 2019 Budget Law has increased the number of staff employed by the Central Inspectorate in order to boost efforts to protect food quality and combat agri-food fraud. Interministerial Decree 131 of 1 October 2018, "Regulations governing the use of the terms 'baker' and 'fresh bread' in labelling and introduction of the term 'processed bread'", thanks to which Italian consumers throughout the country can finally distinguish bread that is truly fresh from bread that has been processed, precooked and frozen or where the baking process is completed at the point of sale. Law Decree 135/2018 (the so-called "Simplifications Decree"), converted into law on 13 February 2019, has introduced a number of amendments to the "Provisions on food labelling and quality", specifying when it is mandatory to show the place of origin. In Italy, this is only mandatory for dairy products, pasta, rice and tomatoes, whilst the European Union has extended the legislation to cover fresh meat, fruit, fresh vegetables, eggs, honey, extra virgin olive oil and fish, whilst excluding, for example, processed meats, fruit juices and preserves. The new rules (which will come into effect once an implementing decree has been issued) makes it possible to extend the mandatory inclusion of the place of origin to all food labelling. Finally, Law 44 of 2019 has allocated €2 million to finance promotional and information campaigns created by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Tourism and designed to promote the consumption of extra virgin olive oil, citrus fruits and products made from sheep's and goat's milk.

The **agri-food sector's ability to achieve sustainability** is influenced by measures designed to have an impact on the competitiveness of businesses. In terms of incentives for training and investment, the 2019 Budget Law has confirmed the existing measures. However, the aspect that should be highlighted most is the fact that these measures

## THE STATE OF FOOD SYSTEMS IN ITALY AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS

The Food Sustainability Index<sup>24</sup>, an index developed by the Economist Intelligence Unit with the Barilla Centre for Food & Nutrition (BCFN) to measure the sustainability of food systems, offers us an overview of the situation in Italy. Based on these findings, we can see that:

**Figure 5 - Food systems in Italy: strengths and areas for improvement**

Pillar	Strengths	Areas for improvement
 <b>Sustainable agriculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presence of insurance mechanisms for agriculture</li> <li>Relatively low greenhouse gas emissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant virtual water trade</li> <li>Low level of carbon in soil</li> <li>High average age of farmers and low percentage of women in agriculture</li> <li>Few opportunities to invest in sustainable agriculture</li> </ul>
 <b>Food waste and losses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative legislation</li> <li>Positive initiatives by the third sector</li> <li>Public-private partnerships</li> <li>Good level of scientific interest in the issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High levels of waste per capita</li> <li>Absence of monitoring systems</li> <li>Absence of specific waste reduction and food loss targets</li> </ul>
 <b>Nutritional challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High life expectancy</li> <li>High healthy life expectancy</li> <li>Many initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overweight children, adolescents and adults</li> <li>Low levels of physical activity</li> <li>High levels of sodium consumption</li> </ul>

are primarily designed to drive technological and digital transformation, with little attention paid to the circular economy. The bonus made available for talented young people aims to reward merit, an excellent initiative that needs to be reviewed with regard to timing.

As for **local development initiatives**, other than the additional resources made available for the plan to promote “Made in Italy” products, one positive step has been the plan to handover public land to large young families. There are two sides to this measure: on the one hand, the government wishes to boost population growth by providing support for families, whilst on the other promoting the socio-economic development of rural areas and helping to reverse the trend towards the abandonment of agricultural land in certain areas of southern Italy. The scheme offers families an opportunity to make a living, whilst also stimulating entrepreneurship in the primary sector.

With regard to the **environmental sustainability of agriculture**, all the measures included in the Budget Law could have a positive impact, but what is missing is a proper strategy. Alongside con-

firmation of certain policies, such as incentives for biogas production or refinancing of the sustainable phosphorous platform (at a relatively low cost given its importance for the sector’s productivity), a number of new measures have been introduced to encourage businesses to improve their environmental performance. More immediate initiatives regard incentives for the use of recycled products or compostable or recyclable packaging, whilst longer term policies relate to boosting the availability of knowledge. Efforts to develop bee-keeping are also welcome, above all if this involves incentives for biomonitoring.

With regard to the more general measures relating to the profitability of firms, changes to the legislation on direct selling could have a positive impact (offering sellers the opportunity to expand the range of products they offer by adding those produced by other firms), as could the introduction of a national register of fruits and vegetables. This measure responds to requests from members of the fruit and vegetable trade. Detailed information about land use and production potential in this sector could help to improve production plan-

ning and the balance between supply and demand. Exact details on how the legislation is to be implemented are to be provided in a ministerial decree.

Law Decree 27 of 29 March 2019, containing “Urgent measures to provide a boost for the agricultural sectors”, focuses on the dairy, sheep and goat, olive and olive oil, citrus fruit and pig farming sectors, which have been the worst hit by the crisis. The legislation has introduced measures designed to boost the quality and competitiveness of sheep’s milk with benefits throughout the supply chain, temporary measures to regulate supply, the private storage of DOP-certified cheeses, research, innovation and infrastructure works. It has also intervened in the olive oil sector, providing for the destruction of olive trees infected with Xylella, in derogation of existing legislation and other measures designed to combat the disease. To contribute to the restructuring of these sectors, given the problems relating to production and the need to improve productivity and competitiveness, the legislation provides agricultural businesses with financial aid to help them cover all or part of the interest expense payable in 2019 on bank loans obtained by 31 December 2018.

Law Decree 35 of 2019, containing “Urgent measures to promote economic growth and resolve specific crises”, provides financing of €1.5 million a year for Italian consortia operating abroad, with the aim of covering the cost of obtaining legal protection for products affected by the phenomenon of “Italian sounding”<sup>25</sup>.

With regard to trading relations with third countries and improvements to competitiveness in the Italian food industry, the following should be noted:

- the EU Commission’s Implementing Regulation 2019/67 of 16 January 2019, introducing safeguards with regard to imports of Indica rice originating in Cambodia and Myanmar/Burma, a measure adopted at Italy’s request;
- the free trade agreements between the EU and Vietnam (June 2019) and the EU and Singapore (October 2018), whilst in February 2019 the agreement with Japan came into effect. These agreements will, among other things, enable a country’s products to be protected through the use of geographical indications, such as DOP or IGP, from the sort of imitations commonly found in the countries concerned;

- EU Directive 2018/2001 of 11 December 2018, promoting the use of energy from renewable sources, and the Commission’s Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/807 of 13 March 2019, have introduced measures designed to boost the sector’s competitiveness and its ability to produce food that can help to overcome food poverty;
- EU Directive 2019/633 of 17 April 2019, addressing the issue of unfair trading practices between agricultural and food businesses, has introduced protections designed to boost the system’s competitiveness.

Finally, in December 2018, the UN General Assembly approved the “Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas” (A/HRC/RES/39/12). Although this is a non-binding document, it represents clear policy guidance for the international community in recognising agricultural models capable of helping to beat food poverty, improving the state of agriculture in developing nations, and having an impact on the production of safe, quality food in line with social and environmental restrictions. In this regard, it should be noted that Italy abstained during the vote on adoption of the Declaration.

## GOAL 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

Over the last year, new legislation regarding health and wellbeing issues has focused on three key areas: the size of available resources and the shortage of health professionals; renewal of the *Patto della Salute* (“Health Pact”); regionalism and the request for greater differentiated autonomy from three northern regions.

With regard to financing, the 2019 Budget Law has halted the decline in funding for Italy’s National Health Service, allocating €114.439 billion in funding for 2019 (€1 billion more than for 2018) and providing for increases of €2 billion in 2020 and €1.5 billion in 2021. This is in addition to additional funding for regional authorities to finance the purchase of innovative drugs and cancer treatments (€164 million and €500 million, respectively, from 2019). The increases are, however, subject to agreement being reached by central and regional governments on the new “Health Pact for 2019-2021”, which should have taken

place by March 2019. Despite these decisions, the Parliamentary Budget Office has forecast that health service spending as a share of GDP will continue to decline, falling from 6.6% in 2018 to 6.3% in 2021, a level below the European average. Moreover, there is no additional funding for initiatives aimed at promoting and fostering healthy lifestyles, which would prevent many chronic diseases (cardiovascular diseases, cancers, respiratory illnesses, diabetes, etc.).

Numerous issues regarding the various expense items have been raised. In relation to infrastructure, expenditures of €150 million for 2019 and €100 million a year in 2020 and 2021, targeted at plans to modernise the technology infrastructure used in electronic booking systems, is thought to be insufficient in view of the increase in chronic diseases and the resulting growth in demand for treatment, and given repeated warnings that, in many regions, patients are having to wait much longer for treatment than the related waiting time targets. Shortages of both doctors and nursing staff, held to be one of the principal causes behind growing waiting lists, represent a further pressure point, as the resources made available to fund contract renewals are inadequate. One positive aspect is the rise in the number of specialists, but no steps have been taken to resolve the lack of nursing staff and of other healthcare professionals.

The Budget Law has also addressed a number of key aspects linked to expenditure on drugs, relating in particular to the system of paybacks, spending caps and negotiation of drug prices. The new legislation aims to overcome the difficulties encountered since 2013 with the systems put in place to make up for the deficits recorded by a number of health trusts and the related disputes, focusing on the introduction of electronic invoicing. The Plan, announced on several occasions by the Planning Department, has yet to be made public.

The fund for people in need of continuous care has been increased by €100 million per year for the three-year period 2019-2021, but the resources provided appear in any event to be insufficient to adequately meet the needs of disabled people. Increased funding has been made available for labour market inclusion, with INAIL reimbursing 60% of the salary paid to a disabled worker returning to work for up to 12 months, where the worker's absence was due to a tempo-

rary inability to work. Funding has been increased for the *Dopo di Noi* project (which again amounts to €56.1 million), whilst funding for carers (€5 million per year over the three-year period) and for disabled mobility has also risen. At the same time, however, measures have been introduced that have increased inequalities, such as the decision to exclude non-EU immigrants from the Family Card scheme granting large families discounts on services, whilst the government has removed restrictions on the use of the funds allocated for the provision of healthcare to foreigners not registered with the National health Service.

The increased revenue raised from the tax on gambling (video lotteries, slot machines, remote gaming, betting, bingo, etc.) is to be used to combat addiction and the related diseases, with an annual sum of around half a billion expected to be raised. Above all, it could be used to slow the continuous growth in gambling.

With regard to the levels of basic healthcare, which were updated in 2017, approval of the related fare classes has yet to be received from the Ministry of the Economy and Finance and no funds have been allocated. The so-called *superticket* (an additional fee payable for medical services in certain regions) has not been eliminated, as promised, but the option for regional authorities to replace it with a similar charge has been expanded.

The process of revising the "Health Pact" is proving difficult, above all due to the issues arising from the request for greater autonomy from three northern regions. According to sources within the Ministry, the new Pact is expected to contain planning provisions and measures designed to improve the quality of the treatment and services provided and cost efficiencies. To this end, in May 2019, the Minister of Health set up eleven working groups to draw up the Pact for the period 2019-2021, each focusing on the following areas: levels of basic healthcare and deficit reduction plans, human resources, mobility, entities in special measures, the management of medicines and medical devices, local arrangements for the provision of health and social care, supplementary funds, forecasting models, research, efficiencies and the appropriate use of resources. In addition, a consultation process took place in July with the aim of gathering views on what should be included in the new Pact. This involved three separate sessions at-

tended by 350 representatives from patients' groups, civil society organisations (including ASViS), trade associations, research and development bodies, labour organisations and professional bodies.

With regard to the request for greater differentiated autonomy made by the Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna regions as prescribed by Law 405 of 2001, talks between the regional authorities and the government are still ongoing, with the two sides a long way from reaching agreement.

Draft Law 1315 was approved on 19 June 2019. This was converted, with amendments, into Law Decree 35 of 30 April 2019, containing emergency measures for national health service provision in the Calabria region and other urgent health-related measures. The legislation has appointed a Special Commissioner to assume control of health services in Calabria, as well as containing various provisions applicable at national level. With regard to the placement of regional health services in special measures (involving the appointment of a Commissioner), the "Health Pact" calls for each region placed in special measures to work alongside a partner region acting as a benchmark. Such regions have been granted the possibility to choose with which other region they wish to partner.

Finally, it should be noted that:

- since June 2019, the Ministry of Health website includes a new service enabling members of the general public, patients' groups, health trusts, National Health Service personnel, suppliers, regional authorities and autonomous provinces to request the inclusion of new treatments or services among those classified as basic;
- on 30 May 2019, central government and regional authorities reached agreement on the "Plan for the application and dissemination of gender medicine", drawn up by the Ministry of Health with the support of the relevant department within the National Institute of Health and in collaboration with a technical and scientific committee. The Plan proposes to issue coordinated guidance by indicating practices that take into account the differences linked to gender, with the aim of guaranteeing that the National Health Service provides quality, gender appropriate services on a consistent basis throughout Italy.

## **GOAL 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION**

### **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

In the last twelve months a number of worrying signs have emerged, requiring careful interpretation and an appropriate political response. We are referring above all to the increase in the rate of early school leaving reported by Eurostat, with the rate for people leaving education or training without having obtained a diploma or any form of qualification rising from 14% in 2017 to 14.5% in 2018. This marks the end of a ten-year period of gradual convergence towards the much lower European average. The most notable reversal of the trend regards girls for reasons that have yet to be understood.

A second alarm bell rang when the results of the INVALSI tests were presented, as usual, during the summer: instead of diminishing, the already sizeable gaps between the different regions are widening, with highly unsatisfactory results achieved by schools in the south of Italy and their students. This led the experts from INVALSI to declare that "in large parts of the south, there are adolescents sitting their third-year middle school exams with the knowledge of a fifth-year primary school student". Moreover, such poor results shouldn't be allowed to hide the unconvincing performance of regions in central Italy.

The result of the OECD's three-year PISA survey, expected in December, will presumably confirm (at district level, given the lack of funding for regional surveys) the existence of large gaps between the various areas of the country. This despite the fact that the educational system is in theory based on highly uniform approaches to the recruitment and remuneration of teachers and to regulating and organising the use of facilities and the school day, and a highly-standardised national curriculum. At least with regard to SDG 4, therefore, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that different areas of the country are unfortunately making uneven progress towards meeting the Goals of the 2030 Agenda<sup>26</sup>, contradicting the motto "no one left behind".

In the last year, Italian lawmakers have proven to be rather inconsistent when it comes to education. On the one hand, they appear committed to systematically demolishing and

## THE INCLUSION OF THE 2030 AGENDA IN THE CIVIC EDUCATION LAW

The approval of the law on the introduction of civic education courses (Law 92 of 20 August 2019, in force from the next school year) - for a total of at least 33 hours a year from the first year of primary school through to the fifth year of high school - can be viewed in two ways. On the one hand, the fact that the process of "shaping responsible and active citizens and fostering full and informed involvement in the civic, cultural and social life of communities" (art. 1) is expected to make reference not only to the Italian Constitution, but also to the equally essential 2030 Agenda (art. 3), should be warmly welcomed. The traditional pillars of civic education, based on a knowledge of Italian and European institutions and promotion of the principles of legality and rights and obligations, are therefore to be reinforced with new, no less important, pillars: intergenerational solidarity and education on sustainable development and on global citizenship. In this regard, the 2030 Agenda training courses for teachers already created by ASviS in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research and the National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research (INDIRE) may prove useful.

On the other, however, the approved legislation raises a number of doubts over its everyday application in Italian schools, which is expected to begin from the next school year. The first issue relates to the decision to make civic education a "cross-cutting subject" (art. 1): a subject to be taught for one hour a week and subject to the usual periodic and end-of-course assessments. Civic education - in both its traditional form and after the inclusion of sustainable development and global citizenship - should not only aim to ensure that students are adequately informed, but also foster virtuous behaviours. All the subject areas, and indeed all the learning that takes place in schools, should be involved in achieving this objective. It is not clear if, and to what extent, the term "cross-cutting education", repeated no less than five times in the text of the law, has been fully committed to and understood by teachers.

An answer appears to be provided by examining what the law says about who should be responsible for teaching the courses. In first-cycle institutions (primary and middle schools), responsibility is to be shared among all the teaching staff within the school. In secondary schools, on the other hand, teaching of the courses will be the responsibility of staff who teach law-related subjects and economics, provided that they are members of the school's teaching staff. A coordinator is to be nominated for each class. This means that a new subject is being introduced, but that there will be no new specifically trained staff to teach it. Moreover, the new courses will require schools to reach agreement on new arrangements within schools, affecting teachers' timetables and workloads, and this cannot be taken for granted. It is to be hoped that the shared course design aspect is given greater weight than contractual considerations, though it is by no means certain that this will be the case.

Finally, the new law "must not give rise to new or increased public spending requirements and the legislation should be implemented with existing human, capital and financial resources". This is yet another example of an ongoing weakness in the Italian educational system, represented by the lack of coordination between the setting of ambitious goals and the provision of the appropriate support and incentives. The legislation states that the €4 million to be used to fund the training of teachers to deliver courses in the cross-cutting subject of civic education must be taken from the existing training budget (thus reducing the funds available to finance potential training initiatives in other areas). The fact that there are almost 400,000 classes to be taught the new subject begs the question as to how far the allocated funds will go in supporting the initiative.

weakening everything done in recent years, above all in relation to Law 107 (the so-called "Good School" law) and the resulting legislative decrees. On the other, they have attempted to

take the educational system in a new direction, although this has often involved building on the very foundations that they have themselves weakened.

The Budget Law marked an opportunity to take two important steps backwards: with regard to the innovative didactic methods used in the work experience schemes that have been mandatory for all high school students over the last three years, and with respect to the new three-year training programmes forming part of the new approach to the initial training and recruitment of secondary school teachers, both introduced by Law 107 of 2015.

The new work experience scheme - renamed "Development of cross-cutting skills and orientation" - failed to take off, partly due to a delay in approval of the ministerial guidelines. Meanwhile, the old system has been delegitimised, with the result that the 2018-19 school year was wasted, with schools going back to doing their own thing.

The decision taken by the Chamber of Deputies' Culture, Science and Education Committee to carry out a survey of innovation in education (which saw ASViS give evidence during the session of 10 July) reveals the fact that parliament is fully aware of the importance of fostering new forms of teaching and learning in the school of the twenty-first century.

## **GOAL 5 - GENDER EQUALITY**

### **Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

Law 69 of 19 July 2019, the so-called Codice Rosso or "Code Red" legislation, is meant to protect the victims of domestic and gender-based violence and has amended the criminal code and the code of criminal procedure. The law has introduced important new offences, such as revenge porn, forced marriage and permanent facial injury. Provisions regarding the violation of restraining orders and stay-away orders have been strengthened, whilst sex offenders must receive psychotherapy, and special training courses are to be organised for police, Carabinieri and prison officers. Funding for children orphaned as a result of femicide has also been increased, whilst concerns have been raised about the requirement for victims to be interviewed within three days, as this could put the victim in danger, particularly given the widely acknowledged reluctance of some women to take action immediately after the event. Furthermore, the requirement for the law not to impose additional expenditure could also mean that it will not be fully applied,

despite the fact that funding has been allocated for other provisions.

Efforts to combat the verbal abuse of women have, as in previous legislatures, been the subject of proposed amendments to the Mancino Law (205/1993), though this has not resulted in significant changes. To address this issue, which has come very much to the fore in recent months, it is essential to adopt strategies designed to tackle the sort of socially unacceptable behaviour that appears to be on the rise in Italy, involving continuous and carefully planned efforts to deal with the issue. It is important to avoid the acceptance of any form of discrimination or violence against women in social media and elsewhere, and to keep a close eye on all types of sexist language. From this point of view, it is a shame that the recently approved law reintroducing civic education in schools has failed to make explicit reference to the issues around respect and gender equality. These issues were, in contrast, dealt with in the Regulation containing measures on respect for human dignity and the non-discrimination principle and relating to efforts to combat hate speech, approved by the *Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni* (the Italian Communications Regulator) in its Determination of 15 May 2019.

Evidence of the importance given to the issue of violence against women is provided by the Senate's decision, on 16 October 2018, to set up a Committee to look into the subject of femicide, with the aim of investigating the real size of the problem and the conditions and causes that lead to such crimes, monitoring implementation of the Istanbul Convention and identifying any inconsistencies or shortcomings in the existing legislation. In addition, July saw the steering committee set up by the Department of Equal Opportunities approve the "National strategic plan to combat male violence against women".

In terms of gender equality, the 2019 Budget Law has increased the mandatory parental leave to be granted to fathers by their employers within five months of birth to five days. The leave does not have to be taken all in one go and may be extended to six days in exchange for one day of the mother's maternity leave. The rules governing funding for policies designed to benefit families have been revised and further measures regarding the work-life balance and family support have been introduced. Funding for 2019 amounts to

€104 million, whilst the voucher helping to pay for state or private nursery school fees has been increased to €1,500 a year for the three-year period 2019-2021. Funding for family carers, totalling €20 million, has also been increased by €5 million a year in the same period.

The Budget Law has extended the Baby Bonus, payable for each child born (or adopted) until the age of one (or to the end of the first year after joining the family). In the case of a second child, the bonus is increased by 20%. Moreover, in order to boost the birth rate, 50% of publicly owned agricultural land and land that has been abandoned and left fallow is to be handed over free of charge, for no less than twenty years, to families with three or more children, of which at least one to have been born in 2019, 2020 or 2021, or to families expecting at least a third child in the period 2019-2021. The same families are also to be offered tax relief and subsidised loans tailored to their needs.

While useful, such measures are not capable of boosting the birth rate, which has fallen dramatically over many years (there were 458,151 births in 2017, 15,000 less than in 2016), or improving the work-life balance. Baby-sitting and kindergarten vouchers have not been continued<sup>27</sup> and extending mandatory paternity leave by one day, just for 2019, will not bring about the sort of cultural change needed if we are to succeed in redistributing parental responsibilities and making it easier for women to initially join and then rejoin the workforce. 49,451 parents voluntarily resigned in 2018, with mothers totalling 35,963. The most common reason was the inability to combine work with bringing up children where there was no support from family members, the impact of the cost of nursery provision or the failure to obtain a nursery school place.

With regard to the work-life balance, the European Parliament has issued Directive 2019/1158/EU, designed to improve the work-life balance for families, representing one of the main achievements deriving from the European Pillar of Social Rights. Whilst awaiting application of the Directive in Italian law, the 2019 Budget Law has introduced greater flexibility regarding the period covered by maternity leave. It is now possible, subject to appropriate assessment and provision of a medical certificate, to work until the ninth month of pregnancy, although removal of the obligation to provide pre-birth leave ap-

pears to have been introduced haphazardly, without looking at the overall picture. This means that application of the new law should be closely watched in order to avoid it becoming yet another source of difficulty for working mothers.

On the subject of female employment, the “Memorandum of understanding for the development and growth of female entrepreneurship and self-employment”, signed on 4 June 2014, has been further extended until 31 December 2019. Meanwhile, with regard to pensions, Law Decree 4/2019 has extended the possibility to take advantage of the so-called *opzione donna* (“women’s option”) for workers who, by 31 December 2018, have been paying contributions for 35 years or more and have reached the age of 58 or older (for female employees) and 59 (for self-employed women). Art. 3 of law 81/2017 relating to “smart working” has been amended. This legislation obliges employers to give priority to applications to transfer to this form of employment to women who have used up their maternity leave and to the parents of severely disabled children who require permanent care.

In this regard, Directive 2/19, issued by the Ministry for the Public Administration and the Under-secretary for equal opportunities on 26 June 2019, contains “Measures to foster equal opportunities and strengthen the role of equality committees within public entities”. The Directive stipulates, among other things, that public administration entities must use non-discriminatory language in all work-related documents (reports, circulars, decrees, regulations, etc.). This includes, for example, nouns or collective nouns including people of the two genders (e.g., “people” rather than “men”).

Given that many of the above provisions are valid only until the current year, close attention needs to be paid to the budget for 2020, in the hope that they will either be reconfirmed or made structural.

Finally, Law 120 of 12 July 2011 (the Golfo-Mosca), regarding the participation of women on the boards of companies, is close to expiry and may well not be applicable during the next round of elections. This situation risks doing away with the widely recognised benefits resulting from its application. In January 2019, a proposal to extend application of the legislation was presented in the Chamber of Deputies but so far, although backed

by members of all the various parties, a debate on the proposal has been scheduled but has yet to take place.

## GOAL 6 - CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

### Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

No legislation having a major impact on the implementation of Goal 6 was passed during the last year, although the 2019 Budget Law does contain certain measures relating to the efficiency of drinking water distribution and Target 6.6 in the 2030 Agenda. Following an examination of the Budget Law published in February 2019, ASviS welcomed the attention given to the very serious issue of water leaks, but judged the measures adopted to be totally inadequate with respect to what needs to be done, while also criticising the lack of funds allocated to pay for waste water treatment infrastructure. On 6 March 2019, the European Commission again took Italy to the European Court of Justice for its failure to ensure the proper treatment of urban waste water<sup>28</sup>.

The Cabinet Office Decree of 30 May 2019, regarding the “Identification of priority interventions and the criteria for using the guarantee fund for water infrastructure”, addresses the need to upgrade the country’s infrastructure, establishing regulations governing implementation of the provisions of art. 58 of Law 221/2015, which established the state guarantee fund. The fund supports investment by providing guarantees for operators of the integrated water service or the operators of major dams and the related abstraction and withdrawal, in addition to small dams. The Decree defines the role of the *Autorità di Regolazione per Energia Reti e Ambiente* (the Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and the Environment, or ARERA) and the *Cassa per i Servizi Energetici ed Ambientali* (the Fund for Energy and Environmental Services, or CSEA) that manages the fund, defining the order of priority to be followed when using the allocated resources.

In the meantime, the process of approving draft law AC 52, “Provisions governing public and participatory governance of the integrated water cycle”, presented on 23 March 2018, is still ongoing. Alongside this process, draft law AC 773, pre-

sented on 22 June 2018 and containing “Principles governing the protection, governance and public management of water resources”, has the same objectives, but differs with respect to the earlier document in relation to certain aspects of governance. These draft laws largely contain the same provisions contained in earlier draft legislation already presented and examined during the previous XVII Legislature (AC 2212). Indeed, the provisions of draft law AC 773 are almost identical to those already approved by the Chamber of Deputies<sup>29</sup>.

In this regard, it should be recalled that the resolution passed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 28 July 2010 (GA/10967), on which both texts are based, declares that “in addition to being a basic human right, clean drinking water and sanitation are a question of human dignity, are essential to the full enjoyment of life and all other human rights”, recommending that states take steps to guarantee “safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water” for all.

Approval of a law on this issue is key to achievement of the various Targets included in Goal 6, with direct implications for aspects included in other 2030 Agenda Goals. However, this requires an overall balance between guaranteeing rights, safeguarding environmental resources and competing uses of water, the economic aspects and investment in infrastructure, institutional capabilities, transparency and participation and solidarity, including at international level.

Based on the articles in AC 52, the text regards the following 2030 Agenda Targets and Goals:

- Art. 1 - Facilitate public and participatory governance of the entire integrated water cycle, so as to ensure a sustainable and shared use, within the scope of overall policies designed to protect and manage the Italian territory (see Coherence with the overall objectives of the 2030 Agenda);
- Articles 2-3 - Water as a basic universal human right (targets 6.1 and 6.2), essential to the life of ecosystems and all living creatures (Goals 14 and 15), definition of priority uses (Goals 2 and 7), promotion of the use of tap water (Goals 11 and 12);
- Articles 4-5-8 - Governance of management of the resource (Targets 6.4, 6.5, 6.6 and Goal 15);



- Art. 6 - Water quality, overall impact (Target 6.3 and Goals 3, 2 and 12);
- Articles 7-15 - Public nature of controls - Participatory democracy - Implementation of the Aarhus Convention (Targets 6.b, 16.6-16.7-16.10 and 11.3);
- Articles 9-13 and 17 - Integrated water service, public governance and renationalisation, funding (Targets 6.4, 6.5, 9.1 and 9.4 and Goal 16);
- Art. 14 - Tariffs and guarantee the minimum amount to meet essential needs of 50 litres per person per day (Target 6.1 and Goal 1)<sup>30</sup>;
- Art. 16 - Establishment of the international solidarity fund (target 6.a and Goal 17).

In the meantime, the process of approving the proposed European Directive concerning the quality of water for human consumption (approved by the European Parliament on 28 March 2019) continues. COM (2017) 753 is intended to revisit the existing Directive 98/83/EC, with the aim of updating the legislation in order to improve the quality, safety and healthiness of drinking water in Member States, thereby protecting the health of European citizens, while reducing the impact on the environment. The Directive also makes a contribution to reducing the use of plastic bottles purchased (with regard to Goals 12 and 14) by people who do not trust tap water, a share of the population that in Italy amounts to around 29%<sup>31</sup>. This also helps to explain why our country heads the European rankings for the consumption of bottled water (approximately 190 litres per capita per annum, compared with the European average of around 110 litres per capita per annum)<sup>32</sup>.

The Directive also has an impact on various aspects of the draft laws AC 52 and AC 773 in relation to the different Targets included in Goal 6, such as: 6.1 regarding the right to access water for human consumption - meeting the demands of the "Right2water" campaign; 6.3 and 6.4 regarding aspects relating to quality and safety; 6.b regarding aspects relating to participatory governance, public information and access to justice in accordance with the Aarhus Convention. As a result, Italian legislation should be brought into line with the Directive about to be issued, bringing forward its transposition and building on the progress made so far<sup>33</sup>.

## GOAL 7 - CLEAN AND ACCESSIBLE ENERGY

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**Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**

## GOAL 13 - CLIMATE ACTION

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**Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**

The energy transition is the key to combating climate change, meaning that it is no longer possible to consider Goals 7 and 13 of the 2030 Agenda separately. And it is equally impossible to understand recent Italian legislation without making reference to the global climate talks and the European policies on energy and the climate heading towards 2030 and 2050.

On 6 October 2018, the IPCC published its "Special Report 15 (SR15)", commissioned by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to assess the impact on the climate of a 1.5°C increase in the Earth's average surface temperatures by the end of the century (2100), compared with the pre-industrial era (based on records for 1880), and the steps required in order to achieve the necessary cuts to greenhouse gas emissions in order to meet the target<sup>34</sup> set in the Paris Agreement. The Report's message is that it is possible to limit temperature increases, but that it will require unprecedented economic and social change.

On 25 October 2018, the European Parliament approved a resolution<sup>35</sup> that proposes to raise the target for emissions cuts to 55% by 2030 compared with 1990. This revised goal was championed by the new Commission President, Ursula Von der Leyen, in her keynote address to the Parliament. As a result, Europe will head to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in September having assumed a lead role in efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

In November 2018, the European Commission called for a new strategy for a "climate-neutral" economy by 2050<sup>36</sup>, in line with its renewed commitment to taking action. The European Council replied to this on 18 February 2019, reiterating the need to go further and faster at both European and global level in order to make sufficient progress to keep the increase in surface temperatures to within 1.5°C<sup>37</sup>.



On the legislative front, two important European Directives on energy were adopted in 2018: the first has revisited the legislation on the energy performance of buildings and energy efficiency<sup>38</sup>, setting specific targets for decarbonization of the building industry by 2050 (with intermediate targets for Member States to reach in 2030 and 2040), and defining measures relating to electric transport and home automation systems, with new provisions regarding controls on equipment. The second Directive has updated the legislation promoting the use of energy from renewable sources, raising the target share of primary energy consumption to 32% by 2030, introducing new forms of support and promoting self-consumption and energy communities, renewables in the transport sector and the sustainability of biofuels and biomass fuels<sup>39</sup>.

In partial implementation of this Directive, and after having introduced a number of key measures in the 2019 Budget Law designed to encourage the purchase of electric vehicles, on 9 July 2019, the government adopted a renewables decree (FER 1) that has revised the incentives for renewable electricity in Italy and rewards the self-consumption of energy, above all for the installation of systems with a capacity of up to 100 kW in buildings, and the removal of asbestos. The aim of the decree is to achieve the installation of additional photovoltaic capacity of 8 GW. A second decree (FER 2) is expected to deal with renewable energy from biomass and geothermal energy.

In January 2019, the Italian government sent to the European Commission a draft of its National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan, a key step towards meeting Target 13.2 of the 2030 Agenda, which requires climate change to be taken into account in all national policymaking. Unlike earlier national energy strategies (the last was approved in 2017), the Plan is obligatory for EU Member States, is subject to public consultation and to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and must receive final approval by the end of 2019, once the Commission's feedback has been received. The Plan submitted in January 2019 by now contains objectives that are no longer valid and must be updated in line with the above-mentioned EU requirements. For example, it proposes to achieve what is now an obsolete target of a 33% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by non-Emissions Trading Scheme

sectors compared with 2005 and a 30% share for renewables, below the European average, but also a welcome 43% increase in primary energy efficiency.

The Plan expects carbon to be phased out by 2025, although it would seem that the trade unions have not been consulted on issues such as job protection and retraining, and has set 2030 as the intermediate date with respect to the target for 2050, which in the text is referred to as "deep decarbonisation", although the actual target and the method of implementation are not determined.

Enel has announced<sup>40</sup> that it is ready to play its part in the energy transition in Italy and Europe: the company is on track to achieve the goal of closing the coal-fired power stations by 2025 but, in order to ensure that there is a back-up for the system at times of peak demand, it will likely be necessary to add a number of new plants to the system, using both renewable and open-cycle gas turbines. In this context, one of the tools to be used in electricity system planning is the Capacity Market, which enables Terna (Italy's national grid operator) to procure all the capacity needed to ensure electricity service continuity in an economically efficient and technologically neutral manner. In this regard, in June 2019, the European Commission approved the Italian mechanism, considering it to be in compliance with state aid rules. A major role will also be played in the energy transition by digital smart grids, which are able to guarantee the sort of storage capacity needed for further development of renewable sources.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, required in implementation of Target 13.1, is still on hold, following completion of the consultation process on 31 October 2017<sup>41</sup>. The implementation guidance has yet to be produced and the necessary funds have yet to be transferred to local authorities, without whom the Plan would be completely irrelevant. There is also no further news regarding an increase in Italy's contribution in order to meet the goal of providing US\$100 million a year in financing for the green Climate Fund by 2020.

While it does not contain new economic policies aimed at cutting greenhouse gas emissions, and it has not introduced the expected legislation designed to launch the process of defining a strategic framework for responding to climate change,

the 2019 Budget Law does contain key legislation designed to mitigate hydrogeological risks, which are increasingly subject to the impact of climate change. In particular, the Law has explicitly adopted the concept of the ecosystemic resilience of geographical areas (in line with Target 13.1) and returns responsibility for hydrogeological risks to the Ministry for the Environment, allocating it significant funds to finance the related initiatives (€2.6 billion over a number of years).

Finally, while not constituting legislation, it is important to note Parliamentary Motion 135, which the government asked the Senate to approve on 5 June 2019<sup>42</sup>. In this way, the request to declare a climate emergency, in line with other countries and local authorities in Italy and Europe, was voted down. On the other hand, the Motion acknowledged the fact that human activity is contributing to global warming and commits the government to:

- taking all the steps necessary to decarbonise the economy, guaranteeing the security of the energy system;
- adopting all the measures required to promote the transition from fossil to renewable fuels, maintaining grid parity, and from a linear to a circular economy;
- adopting initiatives designed to boost the distributed self-production of energy from renewable sources (as indicated in the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan);
- promoting infrastructure development policies and green urban transport initiatives;
- taking all the steps necessary in order to achieve the targets for cuts in greenhouse gas emissions agreed at the international and European levels.

If actually implemented, Motion 135 sets out an acceptable government strategy for the energy transition and for combatting climate change.

## **GOAL 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

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**Encourage sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

Unlike most European countries, after a slight recovery in the three-year period 2015-2017,

per capita GDP is still well below its pre-crisis level. Istat's 2019 SDG Report notes that, following a slight rise in employment in the last four years, the unemployment rate declined to 10.6% in 2018 (from 11.2% in 2017), though this is still higher than pre-crisis levels and far above the European average. The improvement in employment has not benefited the southern regions, with the employment remaining static at below 44% (43.5% in the first quarter of 2019). Confirmation of this unsatisfactory situations is provided by the fact that, at 19.7%, non-participation in the Italian labour market is almost twice as high as the EU average, while the share of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) remains very high, despite the reduction seen in the last four years (27.1% in the 20-24 age group and 30.9% in the 25-29 age group). The highest proportion, 40%, can be found among 18 to 29-year-olds in Campania, Calabria and Sicily.

In the light of these figures, as remarked in the 2018 Report, the lack of a national youth employment strategy that takes into account the inter-generational, geographical, educational and gender disparities present in our country is worrying. Last year, we emphasised the need to focus resources and decision-making around the needs of young people, proposing a "youth employment pact", in line with the ILO document entitled "Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact", approved in 2009. We argued that this initiative should involve the government, economic and social partners and local authorities and result in a long-term plan for actions designed to support youth employment, covering the transition from school to employment, increasing funding for research, vocational training and other aspects.

On the contrary, the government has opted to make changes to work experience schemes, reducing their impact and halting efforts to make young people more employable when applying for jobs. The decision to cut both the hours involved and funding for work experience schemes does not appear to have any reasonable justification, other than the desire to save money. Mandatory work experience schemes have, overall proved successful, despite involving over a million students when fully operational, with all the problems that these numbers entail. The above changes shift Italy further

away from best practices at the European level and, as a result, slow the spread of vocational training programmes in areas of the country with the greatest need to strengthen links between schools and businesses (especially in the south).

Two major initiatives launched last year with a direct impact on the labour market are the introduction of a Citizens' Basic Income (CBI) and the pension reform dubbed "Quota 100". Taken together, these measures form part of the government's policies designed to boost generational turnover in the labour market, benefiting young people, encouraging job creation and offering financial support for people on low incomes. However, despite the evident need to strengthen the employment policy, the CBI risks failing to provide adequate support for the people most in need, discouraging job creation and providing insufficient help for young people still living in the family home, as is the case with most NEETs. Moreover, even if funding for job centres has been increased (their inadequacies were demonstrated all too clearly during the implementation of the *Garanzia Giovani* (Youth Guarantee) scheme, set up to help young job seekers find work), the legislative framework remains unclear for the role of "navigator", a person with a key role to play in awarding the CBI, without possessing the necessary professional expertise.

On the other hand, the pension reform has given rise to serious doubts about the effectiveness of the turnover between older people leaving work and young people entering the labour market. While the greater flexibility concerning retirement is a positive development, this will not necessarily lead to an increase in hiring, a rise in the number of hours worked or in increased salaries, partly owing to the growing tendency to automation, taking advantage of technological innovations. In this way, many low-skill jobs done by people retiring under the "Quota 100" scheme may well be lost. This would mean that Italy's already fragile pension system could face further problems in the absence of an adequate growth of the productive workforce that can support it with its contributions.

## GOAL 9 - INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

In spite of expectations of a renewed effort to provide the country with new infrastructure, there has been a failure in recent years to link the various initiatives undertaken in order to provide Italy with a long-term vision for quality, reliable, innovative, sustainable and resilient infrastructure. For example, the Public Procurement Code has been revisited, greater attention is being paid to road safety, Investitalia was established and other initiatives have been taken, but a concerted effort to draw up an industrial policy committed to achieving the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda continues to be lacking.

The so-called *Sblocca Cantieri* Decree (Law 55 of 14 June 2019) has introduced a number of important changes regarding public works, starting with reform of the Public Procurement Code. The legislation has simplified certain procedures in order to speed up the delivery of public works and has reduced the threshold for the contracting out of works. The changes are not expected to be particularly effective, as they fail to provide incentives for innovation and sustainability in the long run, creating new problems for commissioning bodies and companies as they adapt to the new framework and resulting in an uncertain period of transition.

A new temporary investment vehicle called Investitalia has been created with the role of boosting the spending capacity of public bodies. If well organised and run, this new entity has the potential to improve the management of resources by boosting and coordinating the planning and operational capabilities of commissioning bodies.

In terms of water infrastructure, the first part of the national plan to mitigate the damage caused by droughts and promote the expansion and upgrade of the water sector has been approved. The plan envisages a total of 57 projects at an overall cost of €260 million.

With regard to the planning for priority works, the resources (approximately €80 million) allocated to municipal authorities, metropolitan cities, provincial authorities and port authorities are to be used to fund the design of priority infrastructure and

settlements, project reviews of previously financed infrastructure, preparation of an Urban Plan for Sustainable Mobility and a Strategic Plan for Metropolitan Areas, and the design of port infrastructure and strategic plans, as defined in the Ministerial Decree of 10 May 2019.

With regard to digital networks and connections (our country is fifth to last among EU Member States in the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index), the fact that the development of a widespread public Wi-Fi network has led to a range of initiatives that aim to stimulate demand for digital services is to be welcomed. For example, as part of the "WiFi.Italia.it" project, the Ministry for Economic Development has launched the "Piazza Wi-Fi Italia" initiative, which has been allocated a further €45 million in funding (Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning resolution 61 of 25 October 2018). The Ultra-Broadband Development Plan for 2019 has also been presented, with the Ministry describing how the project will move forward. The Plan focuses on so-called "white areas" or areas of market failure, where the aim is to install a fibre network.

Art. 8-ter (Distributed register-based technologies and smart contracts) of the law converting the Simplifications Decree has assigned the *Agenzia per l'Italia Digitale* (the Digital Italy Agency) responsibility for establishing the technical standards to be followed during development of this sector. These technologies could, in the near future, have widespread applications in many fields and this also means that they need to be properly and effectively regulated. It is thought that this will be an incentive for the introduction of new technologies into e-government processes, although it will be important to avoid focusing only on the design phase at the expense of the actual implementation of projects. It is therefore necessary to be able to test, apply and take advantage of the related benefits as quickly as possible.

The 2019 Budget Law has retained the 50% tax credit on expenditure on research and development, in keeping with the past. One difference is the inclusion among qualifying items of materials and supplies used in the construction of prototypes or pilot plants, which were previously excluded.

In terms of digitisation and the modernisation of existing infrastructure, the government is pro-

ceeding with its smart roads programme, with the aim of creating road infrastructure equipped with platforms that can observe, monitor and forecast traffic flows, ready to exploit the synergies between digital infrastructure and the connected vehicles of the future. Initial trials are taking place in Turin and Modena. The collapse of the Morandi road bridge in Genoa highlighted the real and pressing need to install monitoring systems along the Italian road network capable of assessing the state of the infrastructure on a continuous basis. Most of the country's infrastructure has an average age of over 50 years and it is therefore crucial to keep it under constant observation.

Finally, with regard to non-financial statements, the 2019 Budget Law has widened the scope of the disclosures to be provided, above all in relation to risks, with the obligation to report on how they are managed and mitigated.

## **GOAL 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES**

### **Reduce inequality within and among countries**

New legislation relating to Goal 10 includes a series of measures that do not indicate the existence of a cogent, organic plan to combat inequalities. The main measure targeting inequalities in the 2019 Budget Law regards the Citizens' Basic Income, but efforts to deal with poverty appear to be connected solely with income from work, whilst the 2030 Agenda focuses not only on the absence of jobs, but on differing capabilities in terms of knowledge, training and opportunities.

Among the measures relating to access to essential services and the quality of such services, the 2019 Budget Law has increased annual funding for the "National integrated education and training system" (from 0 to 6 years) by €10 million from 2019. A grant of €400 million is available for municipal authorities to invest in the safety of schools, roads, public buildings and other publicly owned assets.

With regard to health, an expenditure of €150 million for 2019 and €100 million a year in 2020 and 2021 is expected, to be used to modernise the technology infrastructure used in electronic booking systems, aiming to cut waiting times in hospitals and health centres. Funding for initiatives designed to help families, introduced by the Bud-

get Law, aims to boost the birth rate, provide support for mothers and fathers and to strengthen protections for children and adolescents, with particular regard to the socially and economically disadvantaged.

In terms of efforts to address educational poverty, the “Fund for initiatives to combat child educational poverty” has been extended for the 2019-2021 period and new funding has been made available. The tax credit for banking foundations who contribute to this fund has also been retained, reducing the entity of the credit from 75% to 65% of the amounts contributed and lowering the cap on expenditure from €100 million to €55 million a year.

The voucher covering the payment of fees for attendance at state and private nursery schools has been increased from €1,000 to €1,500 per year for the 2019-2021 period<sup>43</sup>. The requirements to be met in order to access the help have remained the same as before, with the vouchers available to refugees and overseas citizens who have been in the country for some time, provided that they are residents.

There is no provision for specific measures relating to the welfare benefits provided by companies. The Budget Law only indicates that a part of the resources made available for initiatives designed to help families will be used to help fund work-life balance initiatives and to encourage companies to do more to help workers with families.

Public and private sector employers who enter into smart working agreements will be required to give priority to applications from working mothers in the three years after the end of their maternity leave or to the mothers of disabled children.

From 2019, funding for policies designed to benefit young people has been increased by €30 million, with the aim of financing cultural and professional training courses and social inclusion.

Funding for measures regarding the financing of facilities and help for people with disabilities is more substantial and structured. The 2019 Budget Law has strengthened existing provision and introduced some new measures: tax deductions for guide dogs for the blind; a grant for the Italian Federation for Overcoming Disability; grants for libraries for the blind or visually impaired; grants for the International Agency for the Pre-

vention of Blindness; funds for severely disabled people; the establishment of a fund for the inclusion of the deaf and people with hearing impairments; an increase in funding for family carers (€5 million a year between 2019 and 2021); the establishment of a fund to improve accessibility and mobility for disabled people; funding for disabled people’s right to work; pay for disabled people; funding for educational support services for disabled or disadvantaged students, adding a further €25 million per year in the period from 2019 to 2021 (increasing the total amount of funding for the three-year period to €100 million); funding for initiatives benefiting disabled students in arts, music and dance academies.

The combined provisions of the “Security Decree” and the Budget Law risk undoing everything that has been achieved so far in dispersing migrant reception centres around the country and for their integration (Italian language courses, professional training, voluntary work, etc.), and the loss of jobs, above all higher skilled ones, held by staff involved in the reception and integration of migrants. The legislation also risks the concentration of migrants in large centres only equipped to provide basic assistance and board and lodging. The Ministry for Internal Affairs has in fact been assigned responsibility for cutting the amount of money spent on migrant reception centres (bearing in mind the decline in the number of migrants) and reducing the daily cost of looking after them.

With regard to municipal authorities’ access to national funding for the reception of unaccompanied migrant minors, the provision introduced by the law converting Law Decree 113 of 2018 (article 12, paragraphs 2, letter h-bis) on security and immigration has been abolished. This provision granted a municipal authority access to the funding, without the authority interested in taking in an unaccompanied minor incurring any costs or expenses, where there was temporarily no place for the minor within a reception centre or within the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR).

One of the most important tax measures contained in the 2019 Budget Law relating to wealth redistribution was extension of application of the flat tax to the self-employed. This means that self-employed people with revenue of up to €65,000 have the option of applying the flat tax

introduced by the 2015 Stability Law (a tax rate of 15% in place of personal income tax and any additional taxes payable). This favourable tax treatment creates unfairness: many self-employed people will thus pay less tax than an employee at the same level of salary who has to pay progressive rates of income tax. Moreover, the measure may benefit the wealthiest taxpayers (the qualifying threshold for application of the flat tax is based on income in the tax year prior to the one to which the tax return refers), making it possible for these taxpayers to game the system. Moreover, from the point of view of economic efficiency, the new regime encourages businesses to remain small and subject to looser controls by the tax authority.

## GOAL 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

### Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

With regard to housing and urban regeneration policies<sup>44</sup>, the 2019 Budget Law has reversed the freeze placed on funding for the “Special suburban regeneration plan” by Law Decree 91 of 2018, following the agreement reached by the central government with regional, provincial and municipal authorities on 18 October 2018. The plan was originally established by the 2016 Budget Law (€2.1 billion). The same Law Decree reduced funding for investment by central and local government entities in order to achieve the budget cuts requested by the European Commission. This was done against a backdrop of falling capital spending (€33.8 billion in 2017, a drop of €20 billion compared with 2009), with negative repercussions for the funding available to cities.

Law 58 of 28 June 2019, which converted the *Decreto Crescita* (“Growth Decree”) into law, contains a number of tax measures designed to encourage urban regeneration. These include the removal of taxation on purchases of buildings to be demolished or renovated, extension of the “earthquake bonus” and the possibility for businesses to deduct the tax credit acquired (50% for energy efficiency initiatives) from the cost of works. Unfortunately, the legislation completely ignored two key recommendations contained in the final report of the Chamber of Deputies’ Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry

set up during the previous legislature to look into suburban areas, despite the recommendations receiving unanimous approval from members on 14 December 2017. These related to the need to draw up a “Multi-year strategy for Italian cities (6 to 10 years)” as a follow up to previous initiatives focusing on suburban areas (including the identification of target areas and a mechanism to provide continuous funding) and to develop a new “National public housing construction programme”.

The 2019 Budget Law contains a series of measures providing incentives for electric transport and cycling (trials of electric bikes within cities, access for electric and hybrid vehicles to restricted traffic zones, financing for cycling highways, incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles and tax relief on investment in charging point infrastructure, and incentive schemes to encourage people to buy new cars). These are without doubt welcome, but do not represent an adequate response to the situation. It is therefore no surprise that, in its opinion on the draft version of Italy’s National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan, the European Commission invited the Italian government “to present concrete measures for the decarbonisation of transport”.

In this regard, the Cabinet Office Decree approving the National Sustainable Development Strategy, signed on 18 April 2019, has released the funding of €3.7 billion for new buses allocated in the 2017 Budget Law through to 2033, whilst the law introducing adjustments to the 2019 Budget Law has restored funding of €300 million for national transport infrastructure that had been previously put on hold.

While the draft law on restricting land use is still being debated in the Senate (see pages 109-110), on 30 April 2019, the Apulia region approved legislation on this matter, adding to the legislation already in force in nine other regions and autonomous provinces (Abruzzo, Calabria, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Lombardy, Tuscany, Umbria, Veneto and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano).

The 2019 Budget Law contains numerous regulations governing cultural institutions and activities, but provides little in the way of funding and will thus fail to enable Italian public spending on the arts to catch up with the rest of Europe. One notable change is the introduction of a “landing fee” payable by tourists wishing to enter the city of

Venice, which has replaced the city tax. This will be applied from 1 January 2020 and can potentially be extended to other tourist cities.

Air pollution in major cities remains high, so much so that Italy has been referred to the European Court of Justice for breaching the limits on the presence of particulate matter (PM10) in October 2018 and of nitrogen dioxide in March 2019. In this regard, on 4 June 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the government and regional authorities setting up an “Air quality improvement action plan”. The Plan describes the initiatives that the various bodies have committed to undertake, including the creation of a Coordination Unit within the Cabinet Office.

Finally, with regard to public green space, the 2019 Budget Law has extended the tax relief of 36% on the cost of work on private gardens. This is a positive measure, but is not enough to encourage the sort of increases in green space in cities targeted in the “National strategy for urban green space” approved in May 2018.

## GOAL 12 - RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

### Guarantee sustainable models of production and consumption

At the national level, the 2019 Budget Law has introduced a tax credit for businesses that purchase recycled products or compostable or recycled packaging. Ministry for the Environment Decree 56 of 21 March 2018 has also come into force, introducing regulations governing implementation of the national voluntary scheme for companies to evaluate and disclose the environmental footprint of their products, called “Made Green in Italy”.

Alongside legislation, a number of responsible production initiatives have been undertaken: these include the recent establishment of the ISI/TC 323 Circular Economy committee, which aims to draw up a framework, requirements, guidelines and support mechanisms designed to encourage the development and implementation of a circular economy<sup>45</sup>.

In terms of responsible consumption, the following legislation has been introduced:

- EU Directive 2019/633 (approved in April 2019), addressing the issue of unfair trading practices in the agri-food sector. The aim is to achieve a

level playing field for suppliers, including any producer of agricultural products or natural or legal persons that sell agricultural or food products, and customers, thereby providing a minimum level of protection within Member States in order to combat unfair trading practices;

- the Delegated Decision of the Commission (C/2019/3211 final), published on 3 May 2019, that has amended Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and Council, relating to the establishment of a common framework and of minimum standards to be applied in measuring levels of food waste.

In terms of Italian legislation, the 2019 Budget Law has reinforced controls designed to safeguard the quality of food products and introduced regulations governing the direct sale of agricultural products. In addition, art. 3-bis of Law 12/2019, on “Food labelling”, has amended the legislation regarding the place of origin or provenance of food products, making it mandatory to provide information on the origin of such products.

The legislation implementing the EU’s MIFID Directive (Legislative Decree 129 of 3 August 2017), governing the transparency of the cost of financial and insurance products and changes to the responsibilities of producers and distributors. Finally, the *Autorità per l’Energia Elettrica, il Gas e i Servizi Idrici* (the Italian Regulatory Authority for Electricity, Gas and Water, or AEEGSI) has been replaced by the *Autorità di Regolazione per Energia Reti e Ambiente* (the Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and the Environment, or ARERA), expanding its regulatory powers to include the waste management sector (Legislative Decree 1017 of 10 August 2018).

Finally, the following legislation relates to sustainable finance:

- Legislative Decree 2018/147, implementing the EU’s IORP II Directive (2016/2341) on the activities and regulation of occupational pension funds. This legislation requires the integration of ESG criteria into corporate governance systems in relation to both investment policies and internal audits, based on a long-term approach. The Directive has also introduced disclosure requirements: occupational pension providers must now inform current and prospective scheme members on the integration of SDG criteria into their financial management and risk assessment.

- Legislative Decree 2019/49, implementing the EU's Shareholder Rights Directive (2017/828), regards the long-term commitment of shareholders. It encourages shareholders to take a longer-term view of their investments and requires greater transparency and disclosure on how investee companies are monitored with respect to ESG aspects. Shareholders are required to vote on companies' remuneration policies, which must be more closely linked to the achievement of determinate long-term objectives.
- IVASS Regulation 2018/38 on the governance of insurance undertakings, introduced on 3 July 2019. This requires boards of directors to take into account environmental and social concerns in their decision-making.

## **GOAL 14 - LIFE BELOW WATER**

### **Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**

As indicated in European Commission Communication COM (2018) 340 final<sup>46</sup>, plastic makes up 80-85% of total marine litter, based on beach counts. As a result, new steps aimed at cleaning up the seas and oceans include implementation of the EU's Plastics Strategy<sup>47</sup>, which has been included within the context of the circular economy (see Goal 12). This strategy aims to prevent marine pollution, in line with the recommendations set out in the European Parliament's report of 16 January 2018, "International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans in the context of the 2030 SDGs"<sup>48</sup>.

In implementation of the Plastics Strategy, EU Directive 2019/904 of the European Parliament and Council was approved on 5 June 2019, with the aim of reducing the impact of certain products made of single-use plastic on the environment<sup>49</sup>. Above all, art. 5 bans the sale of certain products made of single-use plastic, such as disposable plastic plates, cutlery and straws, from 3 July 2021. Other measures are designed to encourage the recycling of plastic, with the introduction of specific requirements relating to production, labelling that provides information on how to correctly dispose of the product, the wider responsibilities of producers, the definition of targets for recycling and building public awareness.

EU Directive 2019/883 of the European Parliament and Council, dated 17 April 2019<sup>50</sup>, has also completed its passage through Parliament. This regards port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, amending Directive 2010/65/EU and repealing Directive 2000/59/EC. The aim of the Directive is to "protect the marine environment against the negative effects from discharges of waste from ships using ports located in the Union, while ensuring the smooth operation of maritime traffic, by improving the availability and use of adequate port reception facilities and the delivery of waste to those facilities".

The Directive governs arrangements for the delivery of waste from ships in the ports of EU Member States and defines a cost recovery system (art. 8) that will help in achieving the aim, provided that it does not provide an incentive for ships to discharge their waste at sea and that there are no charges levied on the delivery of passively fished waste. The Directive must be complied with by 28 June 2021.

The provisions of the Directive have been implemented in draft law AC 1939 presented by the Minister for the Environment on 26 June 2019 on "Encouraging the recovery marine waste and the circular economy". The legislation aims to encourage the recovery of passively fished waste, provide incentives for voluntary marine clean-up initiatives, promote the circular economy by allowing passively fished waste, or waste collected as a result of clean-up initiatives, to be no longer classified as waste.

The draft law provides that passively fished waste can be delivered to port reception facilities free of charge and that the operating costs should be covered by a specific component to be added to the waste disposal tax, assigning ARERA responsibility for drawing up the related regulations. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Tourism and the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection will be responsible for issuing a decree setting out rewards for the captains of ships delivering waste (such as points on their license). A further decree to be issued by the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection will cover the following aspects:

- the procedures for implementing marine clean-up initiatives;
- the criteria for encouraging the recycling of plastic picked up at sea;

- the procedures for issuing fishing companies with an environmental certificate attesting to their commitment to protecting the marine environment and the sustainability of their fishing practices and for recognising these environmental certificates for eco-labelling purposes (as per article 18, paragraph 2, letter d of Legislative Decree 4 of 9 January 2012).

These measures are in line with the objective of achieving Good Environmental Status or GES<sup>51</sup> for marine ecosystems by 2020, in accordance with the European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC, later implemented in Italy by Legislative Decree 190 of 13 October 2010. In addition, the Cabinet Office Decree of 10 October 2017 has put in place monitoring programmes to measure progress towards GES for waste in keeping with the above draft law AC 1939.

The proposed measures are welcome, but remain limited and are a long way from enabling the achievement of GES for marine ecosystems by 2020 in accordance with the EU's and Italy's Marine Strategy. As a result, on 24 January 2019, the European Commission reminded Italy of the disclosure requirements for reporting on the environmental status of marine waters contained in Directive 2008/56<sup>52</sup>.

## **GOAL 15 - LIFE ON LAND**

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

No legislation having a major impact on the implementation of Goal 15 was passed during the last year, aside from the measures looked at in ASviS's earlier examination of the Budget Law. The latter introduced a number of key measures: the refinancing of Italy's sustainable phosphorous platform, the launch of experiments and research aiming to reduce the consumption of single-use plastic, the establishment by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Tourism of funding for Italian forestry, increased funding for mountain regions and the introduction of financial assistance for beekeepers in Italy. Despite the imminent deadline for achieving several of the Targets of Goal 15 by 2020, in line with the other targets

of the Convention on Biological Diversity, efforts to achieve them have not been stepped up. According to the European Commission, Italy is guilty of a number of infringements, included in the package of infractions dated 24 January 2019<sup>53</sup>.

Sustainable land management is essential to the achievement of all the Targets of Goal 15, with consequential impacts on the ability to implement the 2030 Agenda as a whole. The links between Goals 2, 6 and 13 are just one example. In this regard, consultation is still taking place on a number of proposals for legislation designed to halt or contain land use presented at the beginning of this legislature. These include draft law AC 63 of 23 March 2018, containing "Measures to halt land use and to encourage the use of brownfield sites", and draft law AS 164 of 27 March 2018, containing "Measures to halt land use, encourage the use of brownfield sites and protect landscapes". These are closely related initiatives being explicitly sponsored by members of the Movimento 5 Stelle in the Senate and in the Chamber of Deputies, who have adopted the citizens' initiative drawn up and promoted by the national forum, "Let's save our countryside".

As stated in art. 1 of the text, "as a non-renewable, non-replaceable resource, land plays a key role in enabling the survival of living creatures throughout the planet, and is capable of providing an extensive range of benefits that mean we cannot delay actions designed to protect it from any further transformations that would irreversibly compromise its ability to support food production and provide other ecosystem services". The draft law would put a halt to the use of land from the date of entry into force of the legislation, permitting exceptions only in the case of public works planned by government entities and subject to the related construction permits named, issued or drawn up at the date of entry into force of the legislation.

The law also requires future housing and infrastructure requirements to be met solely through the use of brownfield sites and the regeneration of existing property and infrastructure assets. In this way, instead of using more of the green belt, the legislation aims to encourage the regeneration of socially, economically and environmentally deprived urban areas where there is a shortage of adequate facilities and green space. For this purpose, the legislation requires munic-

ipal authorities to conduct a survey of the existing building stock in order to identify any empty and unused properties. Finally, making reference to the social purpose of private property as defined in article 42 of the Italian Constitution, with regard to the identification of assets considered abandoned or unused and no longer having any social purpose, the draft law introduces a specific procedure to enable municipal authorities, or groups of municipal authorities, to take such buildings under public ownership in order to put them to use for the benefit of the wider community.

The proposals under discussion certainly mark a radical change of direction in terms of altering the relationship between human beings and nature, requiring policymakers to give priority to considerations regarding the finite nature of environmental resources represented by land, which has an essential role to play in supporting ecosystem services, when formulating policies designed to meet social and economic needs. This also implies that collective interests and social utility should take priority and be given precedence over private interests, as stated in article 41 of the country's Constitution.

Any aspects of the law that may appear to be excessively rigid may be better assessed by considering how the social, environmental and economic aspects of the legislation concur with the approach adopted in the 2030 Agenda, establishing an order of priorities and assessing the effects in terms of synergies and trade-offs. The urgency and strategic importance of the draft legislation, in relation to the implementation all aspects of the 2030 Agenda in Italy, is proof of how the approval of effective legislation governing land use is key to putting our country on a sustainable development path.

## **GOAL 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**

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**Promote peaceful and more inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all and create efficient, accountable and inclusive organisations at all levels**

The very recent law on the "Introduction of civic education courses in schools" (see the text box on page 96), approved in August 2019, is of particular significance in relation to Goal 16. Article

3 delegates the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research to draw up guidelines for the teaching of civic education, bearing in mind the need to include a number of key topics, such as: the Constitution; the way that Italian, European and international institutions operate; education in digital and environmental citizenship and sustainable development; education on legality and on the need to combat organised crime. The new courses are thus required to cover various aspects relating to Goal 16, with the aim of passing on to younger generations certain key values linked to legality, inclusion and respect, essential in order to build peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable societies.

On the subject of combating all forms of violence and the related death rates (Target 16.1), lawmakers have recently approved Law 69 of 19 July 2019 (the so-called Codice Rosso or "Code Red" legislation), which has introduced additional and greater protections for the victims of domestic and gender-based violence. The legislation lists a series of offences falling within the scope of domestic and gender-based violence and has amended the code of criminal procedure in order to speed up the related proceedings and, as a result, accelerate the adoption of measures to protect the victims. The new law has also amended the criminal code, introducing stiffer penalties for certain offences, revising certain aggravating circumstances and adding new categories of offence.

With regard to Target 16.5 (Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms), Law 3 of 9 January 2019, contains "Measures to fight crimes against the public administration and on the matter of statutes of limitations and the transparency of political parties and movements". The legislation has introduced measures designed to combat crimes against the public administration, made changes to statutes of limitations and introduced regulations governing the transparency of political parties and movements. Stiffer additional penalties have been introduced for crimes against the public administration, adding to the list of cases to which such additional penalties apply and considerably increasing the duration of the penalties (no longer from 1 to 5 years, but now from 5 to 7 years) and expanding the situations in which the penalties are permanent. Article 346-bis of the criminal code, dealing with "Influence peddling", has also been amended to

replace the term “financial benefit” resulting from the offer or bribe with the broader term of “other benefits”.

Law 55 of 14 June 2019, converting Law Decree 32 of 18 April 2019 into law, has made significant changes to article 36 of the Public Procurement Code in relation to the procedure for awarding public contracts with a value below EU materiality thresholds. The legislation has simplified the procedures and made it possible to directly award contracts worth less than €40,000. Previously, it was necessary to apply paragraph 2.b of article 36 of the Code to tenders worth between €40,000 and €150,000, involving a negotiated procedure with at least 10 bidders. In contrast, currently, and until 31 December 2019, it is possible to use the simplified procedure restricted to just 3 bidders. In this regard, it is worth noting that the simplified procedure must continue to respect the principles of free competition, non-discrimination and transparency, thus ensuring that the award complies with the law.

Finally, in relation to Target 16.7 (Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels), the 2019 Budget Law has set up the National Youth Council with funding of €200,000 for 2019. The aim is to involve young people in the country’s social, economic and cultural development through a series of initiatives and activities designed to promote dialogue between government institutions and youth organisations, overcoming obstacles to young people’s participation in representative and direct democracy and promoting active citizenship.

## **GOAL 17 - PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**

### **Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development**

After six years of constant increases in Official Development Assistance (ODA), spending on ODA in Italy fell sharply in 2018. Last year, Italy disbursed a total of €4.2 billion (preliminary OECD DAC figures), marking a reduction of 21.3% in real terms compared with 2017. This represents 0.24% of Gross National Income (GNI), compared with 0.3% in 2017, which is the percentage that Italy had pledged to achieve by 2020 before the UN.

The Gentiloni Government had in fact allocated €5 billion for ODA, meaning that, with respect to this figure, in 2018 there was a shortfall of €800,000 in the funding given to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to pay for the reception of migrants. So far, it is not clear why these funds, which were not used for their original purpose, have not been spent on other forms of cooperation.

OECD DAC figures also show that almost half of ODA was spent through the multilateral channel, whilst bilateral ODA focused primarily on Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, but not necessarily on Italy’s 22 priority partner countries. This shows a lack of coherence between the priorities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation’s Three-year Plan and the actual choices made in operational programmes. Moreover, Italy continues to struggle to meet its commitment under the 2030 Agenda to invest a greater share of ODA in less developed countries (LDCs): comparing the bilateral funds disbursed to LDCs in 2018 with the matching figure for previous years, we estimate (the actual figure has not yet been published by the OECD DAC) a decline of 22% in real terms in bilateral funds provided to LDCs by Italy in 2018 compared with the previous year<sup>54</sup>.

OECD DAC figures also show that the share of ODA where the principal or significant objective is to support gender equality, the environment or adaptation to climate change has risen between 2017 and 2018. On the other hand, the 2019 Budget Law has introduced a tax on foreign currency money transfers to countries outside the EU, equal to 1.5% of the value of each transaction.

With regard to the future, while in September 2018 it appeared that the government intended to allocate a growing percentage of GNI to ODA<sup>55</sup>, the 2019 Budget Law has gone back on that commitment, with funds of €5.1 billion for 2019, €4.7 billion in 2020 and €4.7 billion in 2021. Moreover, it is not clear why, if the “significant reduction in the cost of the temporary reception of refugees and asylum seekers” was apparent from last April, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has allocated funding of no less than €1.7 billion for this purpose.

In addition to the quantitative data regarding ODA, in assessing the situation regarding Goal 17 (Target 17.14 “Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development”), it is clear that the main issue regarding Italy’s development cooperation relates to this aspect. This is reflected in the lack

of coherence between cooperation and trade policy, the internationalisation of businesses, and migrant and agricultural policies. Above all, there are no mechanisms for promptly correcting the policies or laws considered to be out of line on the basis of impact assessments. Law 125/2014 actually fails to formally attribute this power either to Parliament or to the Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation, merely providing for a chain of responsibility for monitoring policy coherence, where the actual mechanisms are not fully operational.

Aside from the fact that the Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation has yet to meet during this legislature, implementation of the Law remains incomplete five years after its entry into force. The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) has never been fully operational due to a shortage of staff and a lack of clarity over the division of roles with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The Agency has been seriously short of staff ever since its creation in 2014 and the recruitment process initiated by the Ministry for the Public Administration in order to resolve this problem is a long way from bearing fruit.

In the same way, while the institutionalisation of dialogue with all the various actors involved in development cooperation via the National Council for Development Cooperation marked a major step forward, the effective importance of the council has yet to become clear. Meetings have been occasional, formal and more a question of routine, providing little guidance and having no clear impact on policy coherence.

It is also necessary to amend art. 26 (development cooperation actors, including civil society organisations) and art. 28 (collective bargaining procedure for workers in the development cooperation sector, an article that has never been implemented) of Law 125 so as to reflect changes brought about by later legislation (Law 106/2016 and Law Decree 117/2017) on the social economy, the so-called "Third Sector Code". Here again, the current legislature has so far failed to produce the necessary circulars and resolutions needed to fully implement the reform, whilst there is ongoing uncertainty due to the fact that the Consolidated Third Sector Act has yet to enter force, with the resulting impact on taxation of the related organisations and on the process of amending their bylaws.

In this way, the potential of sustainable development resulting from the subsidiarity between the State and civil society is not fully exploited, in contrast with Goal 17 (Target 17.17 "Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships"), which encourages the inclusive, shared governance of processes, based on actual representational processes, whether institutional or otherwise.

## IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

### A race against time: the Targets to be achieved by 2020

We are little more than a year away from the deadline set for reaching 21 of the 169 Targets included in the 2030 Agenda. How far does Italy still have to go to meet these objectives? And how best can we describe the Targets that have not been precisely defined in quantitative terms?

Much is being done at the international level to measure the progress made by the various countries towards achieving the Targets for 2030, but none of the related initiatives has focused on the Targets to be reached by 2020, which are the following:

- 2.5) By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.
- 3.6) By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.
- 4.b) By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.
- 6.6) By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.
- 8.6) By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.
- 8.b) By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.
- 9.c) Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive

to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.

- 11.b) By 2020, substantially increase 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, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.
- 12.4) By 2020, achieve the 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 in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.
- 13.a) Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 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.
- 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 in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.
- 14.4) By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order 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.

- 14.5) By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.
- 14.6) By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated 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 World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.
- 15.1) By 2020, ensure the 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.
- 15.2) By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.
- 15.5) Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.
- 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 ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.
- 17.11) Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020.
- 17.18) By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, 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.

The 2030 Agenda clearly identifies quantitative indicators for only three of the 21 Targets. In the following charts, these objectives are shown with a red dot:

Target	Indicator	Target for 2020	Figure for Italy (last year for which data is available)
3.6	Deaths due to road traffic accidents	2.8 per 100,000 inhabitants	5.4 (2017)
14.5	Marine protected areas	10%	19% (2013)
17.11	Percentage of imports from developing countries	10.2%	5.2% (2018)

For the rest of the Targets, the 2030 Agenda does not provide specific quantitative objectives to be achieved. In reality, it should be up to each country to define these objectives, but the national Sustainable Development Strategy approved by the government in December 2017 does not contain any quantitative indicators either for the 21 Targets to be met by 2020 or for the others.

As a result, in order to come up with usable objectives for Italy, for the eight Targets for which it was possible to identify an indicator available at the European level, we have chosen to base the quantitative objectives to be met by 2020 on the most recent indicators for the four best-performing European countries most similar to Italy<sup>56</sup>, namely France (FR), Spain (ES), Germany (DE) and the UK (UK). These objectives are shown with a red dot in the following charts.

Target	Indicator	Target for 2020	Figure for Italy (last year for which data is available)
8.6	Percentage of young people aged 15 to 29 not in employment, education or training (NEETs)	7.9% (DE)	23.4% (2018)
8.b	Unemployment benefits (% of GDP)	3% (FR)	1.7% (2015)
9.c	Households with internet access (%)	95% (UK)	83% (2018)
13.a	Millions of US dollars contributed to the Green Climate Fund	6,730 (DE)	633 (2017)
14.4	Overfished fish stocks (%)	43% (north-eastern Atlantic)	83% (2016)
15.1	Terrestrial protected areas (% - NATURA 2000)	27% (ES)	19% (2018)
15.2	Forested areas (%)	39.2% (ES)	35.6% (2015)
17.18	Official development aid to fund statistical capacity building (\$m)	31.8 (UK)	0.3 milioni (2017)

For five of the Targets, it was not possible to identify an indicator at the European level, but only at the national level. It was not possible to establish quantitative objectives for these Targets, although it was possible to analyse the indicator's performance over time.

Target	Indicator	Figure for Italy (last year for which data is available)	% change
4.b	Official development aid to fund scholarships for students from developing countries (€m)	3.7 (2017)	-26% (2013-2017)
6.6	Wetlands of international importance (hectares)	80,836 (2018)	+5% (2013-2018)
12.4	Percentage of hazardous waste sent for recovery out of total special hazardous waste produced	29.1% (2016)	+ 1.4 percentage points (2014-2016)
15.5	Fragmentation of natural and agricultural land as a percentage of total land surface area	38.3% (2017)	+ 2.5 percentage points (2010-2017)
15.8	Spread of alien animal and plant species (number of alien species introduced per decade)	92 (2010-2017)	+241% (1900-1909 versus 2010-2017)

For the remaining five Targets (2.5, 11.b, 14.2, 14.6 and 15.9), it was not possible to identify an indicator at either the European or national levels.

## 2020 Targets with a quantitative objective defined in the 2030 Agenda

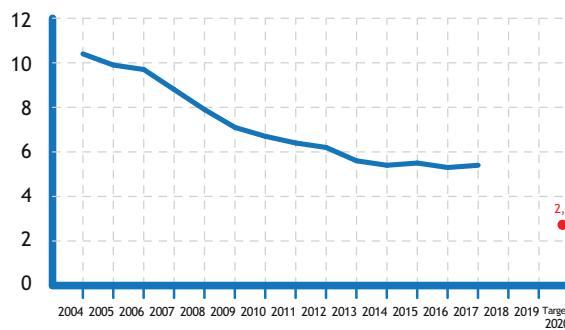
**Target 3.6 - By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents**

Based on the latest ISTAT Report on road traffic accidents in 2017, accidents resulting in injuries to people were slightly down compared with 2016, but the number of deaths has begun to grow again (up 2.9%). Between 2010 and 2017, the average annual reduction in road traffic accident victims was 3% in the EU28 and 2.8% in Italy. In both cases, the performance is not sufficient to meet the European objective of halving the number of deaths as a result of road traffic accidents by 2020.

In order to meet the Target set, the number of victims in the EU and Italy would have to fall at an annual rate of around 20% between 2018 and 2020.

### Target 3.6

Deaths due to road traffic accidents (per 100,000 inhabitants)



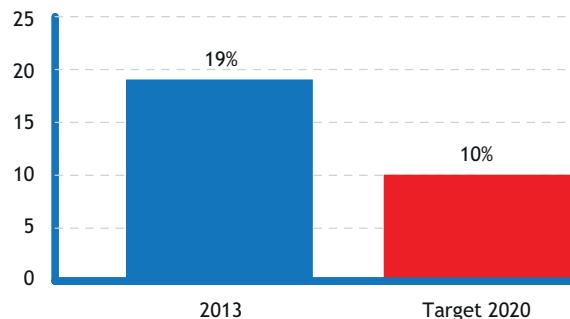
**Target 14.5 - By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information**

Italy's VI official Report on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)<sup>57</sup> shows that the proportion of Italian marine areas and coastlines that were protected in Italy in 2013 was 19.1%. Our country is thus well ahead of the 10% required by Target 14.5 and Aichi Target 11, on which the former was based.

The overall figure includes marine protected areas and "Nature 2000" areas, but does not take into account the quality of the level of protection. To make the figures more comparable, the CBD Report ought to take into account "efficiently protected areas" where there is a ban on extractive uses (so-called "no-take areas").

### Target 14.5

Marine protected areas

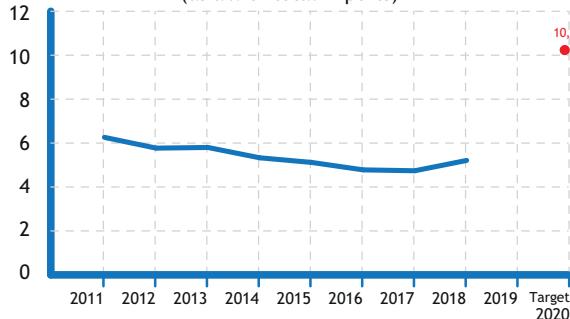


**Target 17.11 - Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020**

The figure for Italy is broadly stable between 2009 and 2017, indicating a lack of commitment to making the necessary progress and meaning that our country is not on track to meet the related Target<sup>58</sup>.

### Target 17.11

Percentage of imports from developing countries (as a % of total imports)

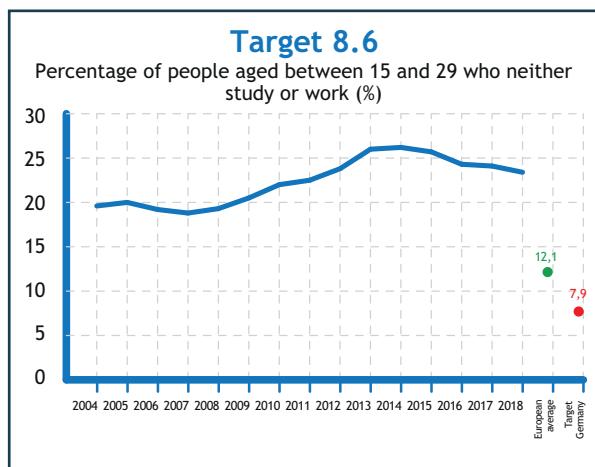


## 2020 Targets with a quantitative objective defined with reference to other European countries

**Target 8.6 - By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

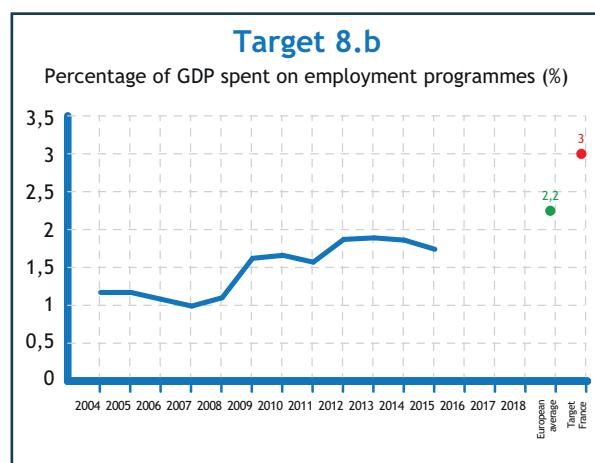
The related indicator concerns the number of people aged between 15 and 29 not in employment, education or training (NEETs). Despite the slight improvement in recent years, the situation in Italy remains extremely concerning and it is unrealistic to expect a significant reduction in

this figure. Between 2013 and 2018, the percentage fell from 26% to 23.4%, but Italy remained the lowest ranked EU country, well behind Greece (19.5%), Bulgaria (18.1%) and Spain (15.3%). In absolute terms, there are 2.1 million NEETs, with southern Italy accounting for a disproportionate share, at over half of this number. If we also consider young adults aged between 30 and 34, this figure rises to approximately 3.1 million.



**Target 8.b - By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

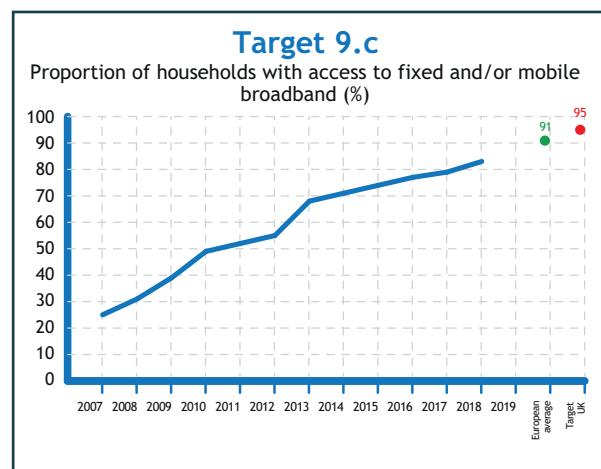
The indicator relating to this Target is the proportion of GDP spent on employment programmes. Italy has not yet reached the targets set for 2020, reporting a figure of 1.7% for 2015 (the latest year for which figures are available). This is half a percentage point higher than the figure for 2004. Italy lags well behind France (3%) and the average for the four countries referred to above (2.2%).



Moreover, the country does not have a youth employment strategy, as proposed in the ASViS Report for 2018.

**Target 9.c - Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020**

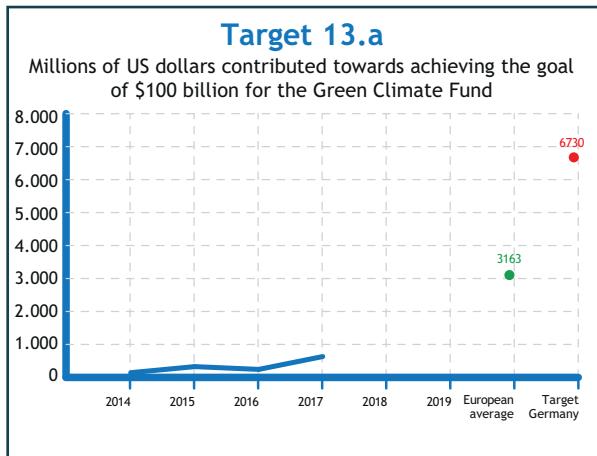
The indicator for Target 9.c, provided by Eurostat, is the proportion of households with access to fixed or mobile broadband, a figure that has risen sharply from 49% in 2010 to 83% in 2018. Should the trend of the last five years continue over the next two, Italy would be capable of reaching the 2020 Target, outperforming the figure of 95% recorded by the UK in 2018 and the average figure of 91% for the four countries used as a benchmark.



**Target 13.a - Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 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**

To measure the progress made towards Target 13.a, we have used the indicator, provided by Eurostat, based on the contribution (in US dollars) towards achieving the goal of \$100 billion for the Green Climate Fund<sup>59</sup>. Italy contributed \$143 million in 2014, \$327 million in 2015, \$243 million in 2016 and \$633 million in 2017 (making a total

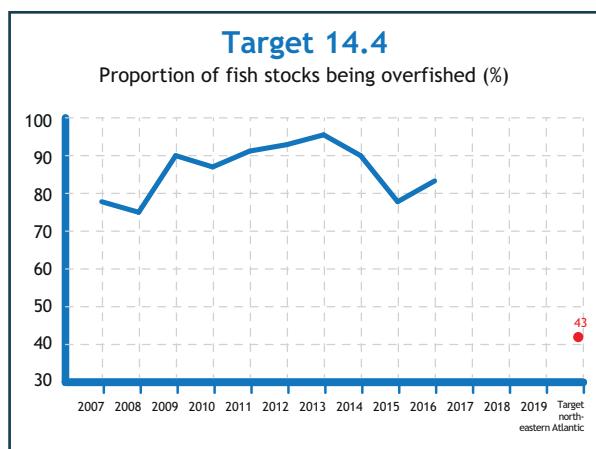
of \$1.3 billion). Despite the increase seen over these three years, Italy will fail to meet its commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. One only has to consider that Germany contributed \$6.7 billion in 2017 alone and that the average for the four countries in the benchmark was around \$3 billion.



**Target 14.4** - By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order 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

According to the data presented in ISPRA's yearbook, published in March 2019, most of the fish stocks surveyed are not sustainable. Between 2007 and 2013, the percentage of overfished stocks rose from 77.8% to 95%, before falling back to 78% in 2015 and then rising again to 83% in 2016<sup>60</sup>.

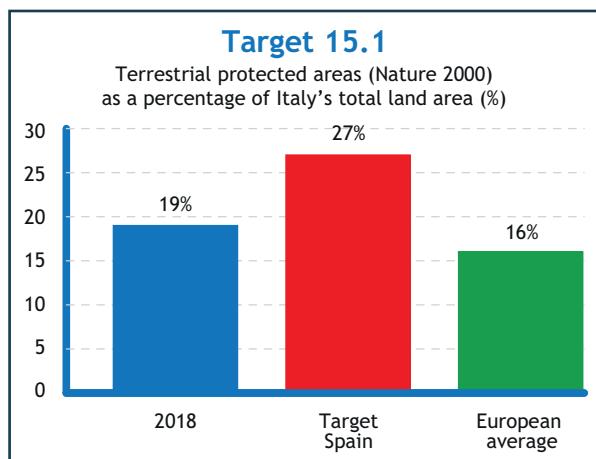
If the Italian figure is compared with the objective based on the north-eastern Atlantic, equal to 43%, it is clear that Italy is lagging a long way behind at 83%. Not only is the figure for last year a source of concern, but also is the fact that the trend is heading in the wrong direction: the figure for the Atlantic fell from 76% in 2007 to 43% in 2016, declining by over 30 percentage points in 10 years, whilst the figure for Italy recorded a significant increase, equal to five percentage points.



**Target 15.1** - By 2020, ensure the 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

Italy is a long way from reaching this Target, which has a key role to play in achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Aichi Target adopted no less than five years before the 2030 Agenda. Achievement of these targets was meant to be part of the efforts to make biodiversity a mainstream consideration in government policymaking and in economic policies in all sectors and at all levels, beyond the percentage of areas that are protected.

Based on the indicator for these areas<sup>61</sup>, which should be evaluated along with the other available indicators, such as those relating to land use, urban sprawl and those that monitor the implementation of the EU's Habitat and Birds Directives, in 2017 terrestrial protected areas



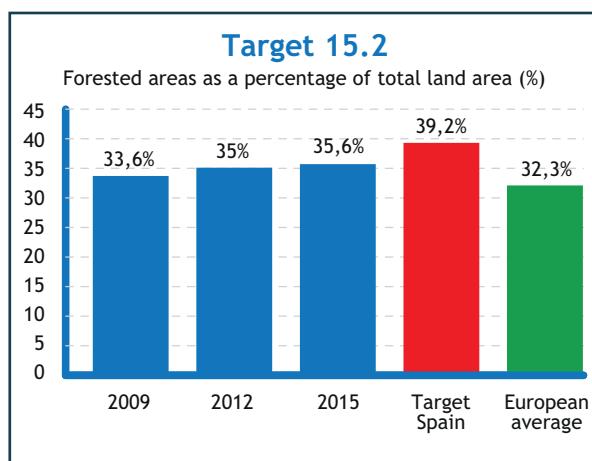
made up 19% of Italy's total land area, compared with 27% in Spain. It was, however, higher than the average of 16% for the four countries in the benchmark.

**Target 15.2 - By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally**

In the case of forests, the indicator calculated by FAO shows that the surface area of the country covered by forest rose from 33.6% in 2009 to 35.6% in 2015. This marks positive progress and is higher than the average for the four European countries in the benchmark. However, it is not sufficient to guarantee the ability to sustainably manage forested areas or adequate measures to prevent forest fires. Moreover, Italy will struggle to meet the 2020 Target, represented by the figure of 39.2% for Spain.

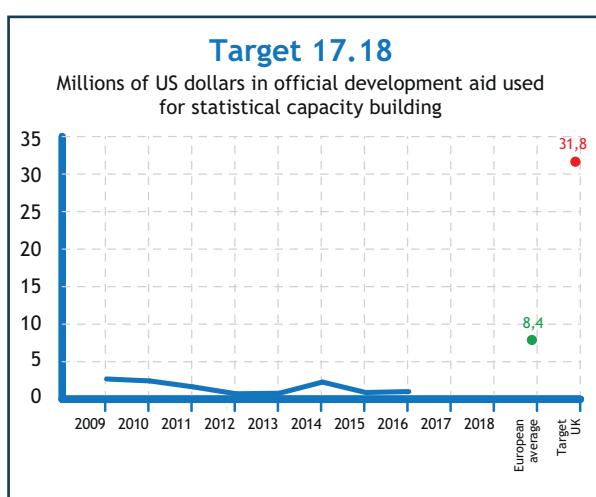
In Italy, by 31 December 2017, 745,559 hectares of land were certified under the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and 63,601 hectares were certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). A look at the historical data shows that there was a fairly constant increase in PEFC-certified forests until 2015, following by a downturn in 2016 and 2017. Forests certified by the FSC have registered an uneven trend, reaching a peak of almost 64,000 hectares in 2017<sup>62</sup>.

Given that the Target regards all types of forests, the analysis ought to take a closer look at forests in urban areas, which are important if we are not to lose biodiversity, maintain the water cycle, and mitigate and adapt to climate change.



**Target 17.18 - By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, 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**

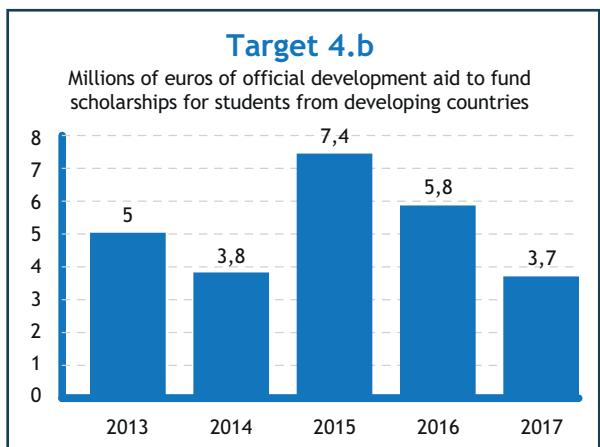
The data examined comes from the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System in relation to how much of official development aid is spent on statistical capacity building. In Italy's case, the figure was highly volatile between 2009 and 2017, while remaining at very low levels. In many instances, Italian funding for statistical capacity building is channelled through international institutions and programmes, rather than being used for projects managed directly by the Italian authorities. In absolute terms, Italy spent \$0.3 million in 2017 on statistical capacity building in developing countries, compared with the sum of \$31.9 million spent by the UK in the last year for which figures are available, and an average of \$10 million registered by the four countries in the benchmark.



## 2020 Targets without a quantitative objective, for which it was possible to identify an indicator at national level

*Target 4.b - By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries*

According to figures from ISTAT, ODA to fund scholarships for students from developing countries amounted to €7.4 million in 2015, €5.8 million in 2016 and €3.7 million in 2017, marking a 50% reduction in this form of aid in just three years.



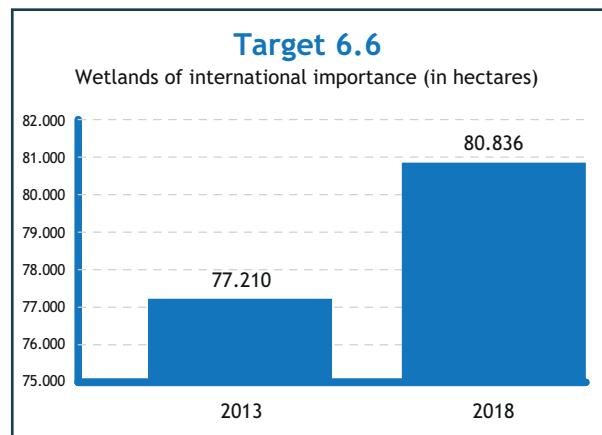
*Target 6.6 - By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes*

This Target should have already been largely achieved in 2015, in accordance with the obligations imposed by the Water Framework Directive of 2000, the aim of which was to achieve a good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies. Moreover, the Directive envisaged the potential to set more ambitious goals for ecological status as defined in Annex V and to make efforts to “restore” aquatic ecosystems more effective.

In its Communication of 26 February 2019<sup>63</sup>, the European Commission recommended that Italy commit to making “improvements to aspects relating to the measurement and standardisation of the related criteria, the planning of initiatives,

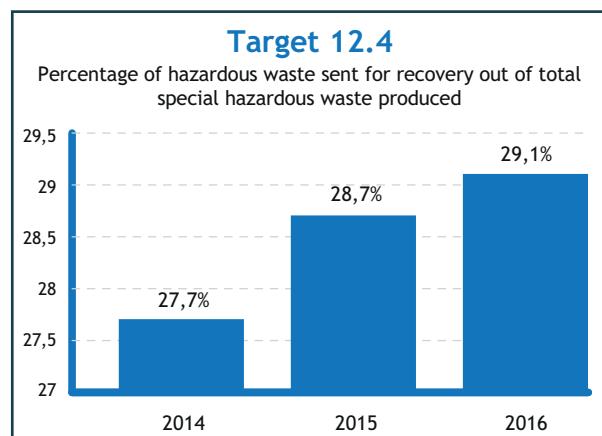
the definition of financial instruments, measures to combat the illegal extraction of groundwater, the inadequacy of measures regarding the quality of waste water and drought management”.

To monitor this Target, ISPRA computes an indicator that measures the size of wetlands of international importance, which has increased from 77,000 hectares in 2013 to 81,000 in 2018.



*Target 12.4 - By 2020, achieve the 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 in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment*

To measure the progress made towards Target 12.4, ISPRA uses an indicator showing the “Percentage of hazardous waste sent for recovery out of total special hazardous waste produced”, which increased from 27.7% in 2014 to 29.1% in 2015. It should be stressed that this improvement was achieved within the context of a 10% rise in the total production of special hazardous waste.



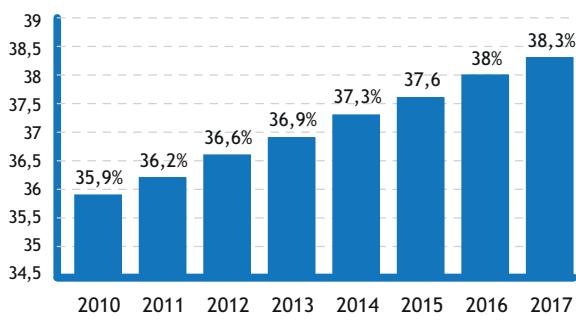
**Target 15.5 - Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species**

Preventing the extinction of threatened species is achieved by halting the degradation of natural habitats. For this reason, ISPRA uses an indicator showing the “Fragmentation of natural and agricultural land as a percentage of total land surface area”, which measures the process of reducing the continuity of ecosystems, habitats and landscape units following phenomena such as urban expansion and the development of infrastructure networks.

The indicator shows that, overall, around 38% of Italian territory is fragmented, of which 12% is very highly fragmented and 26% is highly fragmented. The very lowest levels of fragmentation are concentrated in the Alps, while more than half of the Apennine areas show average or high levels of fragmentation. There are no areas where fragmentation is very low in central Italy and a large part of the country's south. The regions with the highest levels of fragmentation are Veneto, Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy<sup>64</sup>.

### Target 15.5

Fragmentation of natural and agricultural land as a percentage of total land surface area



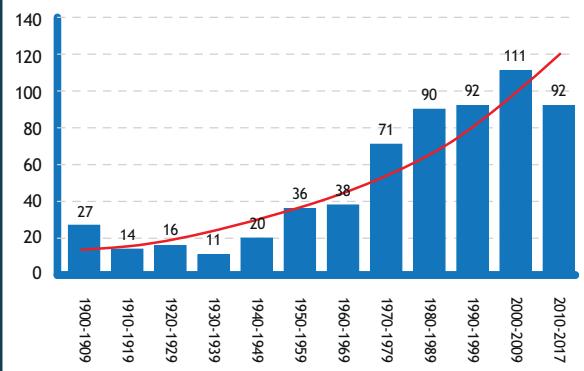
**Target 15.8 - By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species**

There is no available information to monitor or directly assess the preventive measures adopted, the need for which has been made even more urgent by climate change. In terms of alien species, on the other hand, the indicator shows that the

number of such species in Italy is progressively and constantly on the rise. More than 3,300 exotic species have been introduced into our country since 1900, with 3,182 currently present. Of these, 1,600 are animal species and around 1,500 are plant species (a quarter not present on a permanent basis), in addition to fungi, bacteria and chromista. The average number of species introduced per year has risen exponentially over time, arriving at 13 species per year in the period from 2010 to 2017<sup>65</sup>, even if it is likely that the actual figure is higher.

### Target 15.8

Number of alien animal and plant species introduced every 10 years



### Targets for which it was not possible to identify any indicator

**Target 2.5 - By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed**

The Target relates to the Nagoya Protocol on the Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation, signed by Italy in 2011 within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The protocol came into effect in 2014, but Italy has still not ratified it or adopted the measures introduced at the EU level in Regulation 511/2014<sup>66</sup>. As a re-

sult, the package of infractions published by the European Commission on 24 January 2019<sup>67</sup> includes a request for Italy to enact legislation designating the authority responsible for implementing the Regulation.

*Target 11.b - By 2020, substantially increase 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, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels*

ASviS-Urban@it's Urban Agenda for Sustainable Development Report no. 1/2019, published on 22 July 2019, reports on Target 11.b, examined in close relation to Goal 13, and it indicates that<sup>68</sup> “Currently, 4,204 municipal authorities have signed up to the Covenant of Mayors, a very high number, of which, 766, have committed to presenting a Mayors Adapt plan. Of the 3,296 action plans presented, 440 are from municipal authorities also committed to adaptation, though the nature of these plans has not been made clear”<sup>69</sup>.

The Italian situation is marked by a highly fragmented policy approach to reducing exposure to the risks associated with climate change and natural disasters. To overcome this, it is necessary to ensure “coordination between the various bodies responsible for preventing and mitigating the risks associated with natural disasters: the cabinet Office’s Casa Italia Department, responsible for preventing earthquake risk; the Department of Civil Protection, which is responsible for implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030; the Ministry for the Environment, which is tasked with the prevention of hydrogeological risk and approval of Italy’s National Climate Change Adaptation Plan; and the Ministry for Economic Development, which is responsible for approval of the country’s National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan<sup>70</sup>.

*Target 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 in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans*

Existing legislation (see Framework Directive 2008/56/EC regarding a strategy for the marine environment, as implemented by Legislative Decree 190/2010), which requires the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) for all marine waters by 2020, is aligned with both the content of and the deadline for Target 14.2. Italy has, however, fallen behind with respect to the practical application, leading the European Commission, following its latest assessment of progress in implementing the Marine Strategy<sup>71</sup> (July 2018), to request Italy to “address the lack of data about the status of its marine environments and better define the related methods”<sup>72</sup>.

*Target 14.6 - By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated 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 World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation*

The latest edition of the “Catalogue of environmental subsidies” (edition II relating to 2017, published in July 2018<sup>73</sup>) classifies the following as environmental subsidies that are harmful for fisheries:

- in terms of indirect subsidies, the reduction of the IRPEF and IRES income tax base for fishing companies, amounting to €7.5 million in 2017 and estimated at €6.1 million in 2018;
- in terms of direct subsidies, the recent introduction (not yet quantified in financial terms) of daily compensations payable to workers employed by sea fishing businesses during periods when they are banned from fishing and the extension of the guarantees for loans to fishing and fish farm businesses.

*Target 15.9 - By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts*

The Target requires the production of ex-ante and ex-post assessments of territorial planning initiatives and development strategies, which are to include aspects of non-financial nature. The

measure applies at the national level and to regions, metropolitan cities, provinces and cities.

To achieve Target 15.9, it is necessary to adopt a new legislative instrument combining financial and territorial planning tools, strengthening the content of the Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments required by Legislative Decree 152/2006. The legislative instrument should then include guidelines relating to the relevant methods, indicators, databases and measurement and monitoring processes, thereby providing the various authorities with standardised criteria and ensuring that data can be shared and exchanged and that there is vertical and horizontal cooperation between the different levels of government.

**NOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> Cabinet Office Decree of 16 March 2018, “Guidance on implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the National Sustainable Development Strategy” (18A04116) (Official Gazette, General Series no.137 dated 15 June 2018), art. 4.
- <sup>2</sup> Committee members include experts in this area and the presidents of Istat, INPS and ISPRA.
- <sup>3</sup> Implementation of the Strategy is the responsibility of the Cabinet Office, working in collaboration with the Ministry for the Environment, with regard to internal matters, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with regard to external matters, and the Ministry of the Economy and Finance in order to coordinate implementation of the Strategy with official economic planning documents, above all the *Documento di Economia e Finanza* (Economic and Financial Document or *DEF*), and coordinate the forms needed in order to define the related objectives.
- <sup>4</sup> The indicators regard economic wellbeing (measured on the basis of adjusted average per capita income, the related income inequality and the absolute poverty index); health (measured on the basis of healthy life expectancy at birth and overweight); employment and the work-life balance (the rate of non-participation in the labour market, broken down by gender; the ratio between the employment rates for women (aged between 25 and 49) with children of pre-school age and for those without children); education and training (early leavers from education and training); security (predatory crime and civil justice efficiency); the environment (CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas emissions and illegal building).
- <sup>5</sup> COP 26 will be held in the UK, while Italy will host the preparatory events, including a “Youth Event”.
- <sup>6</sup> See: <https://asvis.it/la-legge-di-bilancio-2019-e-lo-sviluppo-sostenibile/>
- <sup>7</sup> See: <https://asvis.it/corso-e-learning-l-agenda-2030-e-gli-obiettivi-di-sviluppo-sostenibile/>
- <sup>8</sup> See: <https://asvis.it/pubblicazioni/823-4409/acceleriamo-la-transizione-verso-la-sostenibilita-le-imprese-per-l-agenda-2030>
- <sup>9</sup> The “Milan Pact” (A commitment to foster, in line with the 2030 Agenda, the development of innovative business models, partnerships with all stakeholders and the use of ethical and responsible finance in order to help to achieve the sustainable development goals) was signed by a series of organisations during the Festival of 2017, as follows: the Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane, Confagricoltura, Confartigianato Imprese, CIA-Agricoltori Italiani, Confederazione Nazionale dell’Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa (CNA), Confcommercio, Confindustria, Federazione Banche Assicurazioni e Finanza (FEBAF), Unioncamere and Utilitalia. Since 2017, the signatories have carried out various activities, initiatives and projects designed to help the individual organisations and their members make the most of the SDGs.
- <sup>10</sup> Businesses that do not adopt specific policies in one or more of the areas referred to in the Directive must explain the reasons for this decision, in accordance with the comply or explain principle.
- <sup>11</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/home/310-2366/ecco-il-programma-della-terza-edizione-del-festival-dello-sviluppo-sostenibile>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/evento-21-maggio/>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/archivio-news/507-2499/concerto-per-uneuropa-sostenibile-allapertura-del-festival-con-il-complesso-darchi-della-european-union-youth-orchestra>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/evento-28-maggio/>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/evento-6-giugno/>
- <sup>16</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/gli-eventi-nazionali/.>
- <sup>17</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/citta-e-asvis-per-l-agenda-2030/>
- <sup>18</sup> <https://festivalsvilupposostenibile.it/2019/>
- <sup>19</sup> Festival Nazionale dell’Economia Civile, Festival della Generatività, Festival della Partecipazione, Adapt International Conference, Festival della Soft Economy, Mappa celeste - Forum per il Futuro del Paese and Le giornate di Bertinoro per l’Economia civile.
- <sup>20</sup> See: <https://asvis.it/home/46-4023/lasvis-tra-i-finalisti-dellsdg-action-awards-il-premio-assegnato-dallonu>
- <sup>21</sup> Further details of the methodological aspects and on the selection of the elementary indicators used is provided at <https://asvis.it/dati/>.
- <sup>22</sup> <https://www.urbanit.it/asvis-e-urbanit-presentano-il-primo-report-di-aggiornamento-dellagenda-urbana-per-lo-sviluppo-sostenibile/>.
- <sup>23</sup> ASViS Report for 2018, pages 110-113, [https://asvis.it/public/asvis/files/ASViS\\_REPORT\\_2018\\_Ristampa.pdf](https://asvis.it/public/asvis/files/ASViS_REPORT_2018_Ristampa.pdf).
- <sup>24</sup> For a closer look at the Food Sustainability Index: <http://foodsustainability.eiu.com>
- <sup>25</sup> The expression “Italian sounding” refers to imitations of a product /origin/brand by referencing the presumptive Italian origin of products that are not in reality what they pretend to be ([http://www.federalimentare.it/new2016/AreeOperative/Promozione\\_Internazionalizzazione/ItalianSounding.pdf](http://www.federalimentare.it/new2016/AreeOperative/Promozione_Internazionalizzazione/ItalianSounding.pdf)).
- <sup>26</sup> This situation of deep divides between regions is the background to the debate over greater regional independence, which in the case of education should, in the light of the new art. 116 of the Constitution, result in an asymmetrical federal system. There is no certainty that greater independence would reduce the gaps: it is in fact the regions that achieve the best results under a centralised regime (Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna) that are shouting the loudest about wanting more control.

- <sup>27</sup> The baby-sitting and nursery vouchers were not continued in 2019. Introduced on a trial basis in the three-year period 2013-2015, and then extended, they allowed working mothers to “at the end of their maternity leave and within the next 11 months, as an alternative to parental leave, apply for vouchers to help pay for baby-sitting services or the fees charged by state nursery providers or by approved private providers, for up to maximum of six months”. See: <https://www.inps.it/nuovoportaleinps/default.aspx?itemdir=50575>.
- <sup>28</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-19-1475\\_it.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-1475_it.htm)
- <sup>29</sup> See Chamber of Deputies’ evaluation form 54 of 24 October 2018: <https://documenti.camera.it/Leg18/Dossier/Pdf/AM0032.Pdf>
- <sup>30</sup> With regard to tariffs and guarantees of the minimum amount to meet essential needs of 50 litres per person per day, measures have already been taken in the Cabinet Office Decree of 13 October 2016 regarding “Social tariffs for the integrated water service” and the Cabinet Office Decree of 29 August 2016 regarding “Measures on reducing bad payers among integrated water service customers.”
- <sup>31</sup> <https://www4.istat.it/it/archivio/210384>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/455422/bottled-water-consumption-in-europe-per-capita/>
- <sup>33</sup> The technical regulations for this Goal have also defined different standards, at both European and international level, that cover matters ranging from waste water and sewerage networks (UNI EN 12255-1), to the use of rainwater (UNI EN 16941-1), effective irrigation, measurement of the water footprint and the services involved in the distribution of drinking water (UNI 9182).
- <sup>34</sup> SR15 states that “Climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food and water supply, human security and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5°C and increase further with 2°C. Limiting the risks from global warming of 1.5°C in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication implies system transitions that can be enabled by an increase of adaptation and mitigation investments, policy instruments, the acceleration of technological innovation and behaviour changes. Sustainable development supports, and often enables, the fundamental societal and systems transitions and transformations that help limit global warming to 1.5°C.”.
- <sup>35</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2018-0430+0+DOC+XML+V0//IT>
- <sup>36</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2018/IT/COM-2018-773-F1-IT-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>
- <sup>37</sup> <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6153-2019-INIT/it/pdf>
- <sup>38</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018L0844&from=en>
- <sup>39</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018L2001&from=EN>
- <sup>40</sup> Corriere della Sera of 8 July 2019, interview with Stefano Agnoli at pages 8 and 9.
- <sup>41</sup> [www.minambiente.it/notizie/piano-nazionale-di-adattamento-ai-cambiamenti-climatici-prolungato-fino-al-31-ottobre-il](http://www.minambiente.it/notizie/piano-nazionale-di-adattamento-ai-cambiamenti-climatici-prolungato-fino-al-31-ottobre-il)
- <sup>42</sup> <http://www.senato.it/japp/bgt/showdoc/frame.jsp?tipodoc=Sindisp&leg=18&id=1112727>
- <sup>43</sup> The so-called “nursery school voucher”, a scheme introduced in 2016 and later expanded on in the 2019 Budget Law for the three-year period 2019-2021, provides for an increase in the grant to help pay fees for attendance at state and private nursery schools or for home care (in cases of serious medical conditions) for children under the age of three from €1,000 to €1,500.
- <sup>44</sup> Use is made of the sub-goals for Goal 11 contained in ASViS-Urban@it’s Urban Agenda for Sustainable Development Report dated 14 march 2018 and Report no. 1/2019 of 22 July 2019. Sub-target 11.5 relating to the victims of natural disasters is considered in relation to Goal 13 *Climate action*, whilst the part of sub-goal 11.6 relating to waste is covered in Goal 12 *Responsible consumption and production*.
- <sup>45</sup> The technical documents include the “Guidelines on the management and development of responsible innovation processes”, UNI/PdR 27:2017; “Social responsibility in the construction sector - Guidelines for application of the UNI ISO 26000 social responsibility model”, UNI/PdR 49:2018; “Social responsibility in micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and craft enterprises - Guidelines for application of the UNI ISO 26000 social responsibility model”, UNI/PdR 51:2018.; UNI ISO 20121 “Sustainable event management systems” and la UNI ISO 20400 “Sustainable procurement”.
- <sup>46</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2018/IT/COM-2018-340-F1-IT-MAIN-PART-1.PDF](http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2018/IT/COM-2018-340-F1-IT-MAIN-PART-1.PDF)
- <sup>47</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0028&from=IT>
- <sup>48</sup> The text invites Member States and local and regional authorities to support innovative technological and financial initiatives to respond to pollution of the oceans and seas, in order to promote effective recovery systems for waste caused by marine transport, above all plastic litter, in port cities and in ports, so as to raise awareness in the marine transport sector of the consequences of disposing of plastic litter at sea.
- <sup>49</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L0904&from=EN>
- <sup>50</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L0883&from=IT>
- <sup>51</sup> The GES is defined by 11 descriptors, including 10 that specifically refer to marine litter.
- <sup>52</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-19-462\\_it.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-19-462_it.htm)
- <sup>53</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-19-462\\_it.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-19-462_it.htm)
- <sup>54</sup> “Italian Development Cooperation: a missed opportunity”, OpenPolis and Oxfam Italia, 2019.

- <sup>55</sup> “Though the result achieved in 2017 should be considered positive, it remains a long way short of the target of 0.7% of GNI set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The government has reaffirmed its commitment to making progress towards this objective by allocating funding for the three-year period 2019-2021 based on the following intermediate spending targets: 0.33% of GNI in 2019, 0.36% in 2020 and 0.40% in 2021”.
- <sup>56</sup> The countries most similar to Italy were identified as follows: (1) the choice of a set of available variables at European level - Population density, Population, Income distribution, GDP per capita, Artificial land cover, Tertiary educational attainment) and the creation of a dataset with all European countries; (2) implementation of an algorithm for k-means clustering in the matrix (3) the identification of the groups and countries included in the group to which Italy belongs. Given that the disaggregated figure for Target 14.4 for each nation is not available at European level, the objective chosen was based on the north-eastern Atlantic.
- <sup>57</sup> <https://chm.cbd.int/pdf/documents/nationalReport6/245699/1>.
- <sup>58</sup> The figure examined is based on the current price of imports. Eurostat's choice of this indicator reflects the need to analyse the trend in EU countries towards achievement of the Target, which however does not fully match the definition used in the 2030 Agenda. For example, Eurostat's indicator does not take into account the trend in south-north trade, which could be a good driver of sustainable development in developing countries.
- <sup>59</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg\\_13\\_50/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_13_50/default/table?lang=en).
- <sup>60</sup> Istat <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/229565>, see page 234. The indicator computed by ISPRA shows progressive growth, between 2007 and 2011, in the number of stocks assessed (up from 9 to 34), though the number has fallen back in recent years to approximately 30.
- <sup>61</sup> To date, Italy is behind schedule, also in terms of measures for the protected areas themselves. On 24 January 2019, the European Commission sent Italy a letter of formal notice because “463 Sites of Community importance for which the deadline has expired have not been designated as Special Areas of Conservation yet. Furthermore, Italy has generally and persistently failed to set site-specific detailed conservation objectives and to establish the necessary conservation measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types, in all the 19 regions and 2 autonomous provinces”. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-19-462\\_it.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-19-462_it.htm).
- <sup>62</sup> Yearbook of environmental data for 2018, ISPRA: <https://annuario.isprambiente.it/>.
- <sup>63</sup> Com (2019) 95 final <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2019/IT/COM-2019-95-F1-IT-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>
- <sup>64</sup> Yearbook of environmental data for 2018, ISPRA: <https://annuario.isprambiente.it/>.
- <sup>65</sup> Yearbook of environmental data for 2018, ISPRA: <https://annuario.isprambiente.it/>.
- <sup>66</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0511&from=EN>
- <sup>67</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-19-462\\_it.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-19-462_it.htm)
- <sup>68</sup> Source: Urban Agenda for Sustainable Development Report no. 1/2019.
- <sup>69</sup> [https://www.urbanit.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Agenda\\_Urbana\\_2019.pdf](https://www.urbanit.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Agenda_Urbana_2019.pdf), p. 48.
- <sup>70</sup> Urban Agenda for Sustainable Development Report no. 1/2019, page 48.
- <sup>71</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0562&from=EN>
- <sup>72</sup> On 24 January 2019, the European Commission urged Italy to meet its obligation to report on the ecological status of marine water, the deadline for which was 15 October 2018. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-19-462\\_it.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-19-462_it.htm).
- <sup>73</sup> [https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio/allegati/sviluppo\\_sostenibile/csa\\_ii\\_edizione\\_2017\\_luglio\\_2018.pdf](https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio/allegati/sviluppo_sostenibile/csa_ii_edizione_2017_luglio_2018.pdf).



## ASviS's recommendations

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## 4. ASviS's recommendations

### 4.1 Recent policy innovations at the European and Italian levels

The European and Italian policy frameworks have seen very significant changes in recent months. As mentioned in Chapter 2, since her keynote address to the European Parliament, President-elect of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, has placed sustainable development at the heart of her agenda for the next five years. In recent weeks, those announcements have been followed by the definition of the structure of the new Commission, the identification of the candidates for the roles of Vice-President and Commissioner, and the specification of the mandate entrusted to the Commissioners. In all these steps, the 2030 Agenda has played a key role, marking a sharp contrast with the previous Commission. In particular:

- the mandates given to the two Executive Vice-Presidents, Frans Timmermans and Margrethe Vestager, to create, respectively, a European Green Deal and a technological leap towards a digital Europe, as well as the definition of new portfolios that are much closer to the spirit and the letter of the 2030 Agenda (for example, the Commissioner for Equality), are very positive and significant signs. In addition, the drafting of the European Green Deal and the new draft law to make the European Union carbon-neutral by 2050 must be prepared within 100 days of the inauguration, set to take place on 1 November 2019;
- the letters of appointment of the various members of the Commission state that each one, within the scope of his or her powers, has the task of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, while the Commission as a whole will ensure that all the Goals are attained;
- in the letter of appointment of Paolo Gentiloni, the former Prime Minister of Italy, who is responsible for economic affairs, he was explicitly asked to review the functioning of the European Semester, and to make the 2030

Agenda the centrepiece of the process of co-ordinating national and European economic, social and environmental policies.

All of these actions are in line with the recommendations that ASviS has publicly made over the years, in particular at the opening event of the 2019 edition of the Sustainable Development Festival, dedicated to European issues. In practice, the new Commission has adopted the first of the three scenarios proposed in the Reflection Paper published in January 2019, partly in response to the requests received over the previous year from the European Council, the European Parliament and civil society, which were described in Chapter 2.

Obviously, beyond our satisfaction with this arrangement (as was officially expressed by ASviS), the possibility of the European Union making a real leap forward towards sustainable development will depend on the concrete actions taken in the near future (in some cases, the proposals must be made by the end of this year), and on the response that the governments of Member States and the European Parliament will make to the Commission's proposals. It should be pointed out that, in an international context in which some large countries are backtracking on the commitments given in 2015, including those aimed at tackling the climate crisis, the European Union seems willing to play a leading role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

A similar change, for the time being in terms of announcements, has taken place in Italy with the launch of the new government. In the policies presented to Parliament by Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, as well as in the agenda agreed by the political parties supporting him, the government undertakes an explicit commitment to put Italy on a path towards sustainable development, precisely referring to the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, some of the agenda points include specific proposals ASviS has been making since its inception. For example:

- the inclusion of the principle of sustainable development in the Constitution;

- a commitment to meet the challenge of a new period of development that will have the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as its strong point;
- the creation of a Green New Deal, entailing a radical cultural shift, that will direct the entire production system towards a circular economy;
- the introduction of an Urban Agenda for the sustainable development of cities.

While the text box on page 130 provides an overview of the state of implementation of the institutional recommendations put forward by ASviS ahead of the 2018 parliamentary elections, the detailed analysis of the links between policy commitments and the individual SDGs (published online on the ASviS website) shows that they are substantially aligned. Obviously, as in the case of Europe, the concrete actions undertaken will determine whether, in practice, Italy has finally taken a firm position. As the three political parties that support the government have signed up to the “guidelines” proposed by the Alliance, it will be possible to step up the pressure on the current government to respect the commitments made (in the first Conte government, the League did not sign up to ASviS’s recommendations)<sup>1</sup>.

As in previous editions, this Report sets out recommendations for actions to be taken in the near future, divided into two areas:

- cross-cutting and systemic actions;
- specific actions to move forward on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

This year, the Report has analysed in greater detail the 21 Targets the Italy is set to reach by 2020, which is next year. In Chapter 3 it was emphasised that the Targets for 2020 have been specified to varying degrees and, given the absence of a government document setting out the various quantitative objectives, it has only been possible to readily quantify them in a few cases.

Italy appears able to reach the broadband Target, has already reached the targets for terrestrial protected areas and forested areas, and has exceeded the Target relating to the extent of marine protected areas, although comprehensive information is lacking on the qualitative status of all the protected areas. On the contrary, given the current trends, Italy will not achieve the Targets relating to:

- the rate of reduction in the number of deaths from road traffic accidents (a 50% cut between

2010 and 2017), which has even started rising again in recent years;

- the share of imports from developing countries (10%, compared to the current figure of 5%);
- a “substantial” reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) (currently 23%), which has fallen by less than one percentage point per year over the last five years, and the lack of a youth employment strategy;
- the financial commitment, which is currently very limited, to the International Climate Change Fund and scholarship programmes for students from developing countries (halved in three years);
- a reduction in the proportion of fish stocks that are overfished (83% in 2016) and the elimination of fishing subsidies that generate this phenomenon;
- improvement of the management of water-related ecosystems;
- the recovery of special waste, the share of which is rising too slowly (38% in 2017);
- combating degradation of terrestrial ecosystems due to land consumption, and high and growing land fragmentation, especially in northern Italy;
- the containment of alien species within ecosystems, whose number has increased considerably in recent years;
- the effective integration of assessment of the impact of economic and social measures on natural capital.

In section 4.3, dedicated to the specific policies for each Goal, recommendations (highlighted in red and bold type) are made regarding various Targets “soon to expire”, but it would be advisable for the government to urgently consider what needs to be done to reach the Targets that, if action is not taken, Italy will fail to meet.

Finally, it should be noted that there is no adequate and reliable information regarding:

- the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, etc. covered by the Nagoya Protocol, signed in 2011, but not ratified by Italy;
- the number of municipal authorities that have plans for climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster resilience and disaster management;

- the management of marine and coastal ecosystems.

Also, regarding these aspects, the government could launch important initiatives, perhaps by

asking the National Office of Statistics and the bodies in charge to bridge the information gaps.

## RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY ASviS TO POLITICAL PARTIES DURING THE 2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Recommendations	Current state
1. Include the principle of sustainable development in the Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment given by the second Conte government</li> </ul>
2. Draft an effective national sustainable development strategy, to be implemented with close coordination by the Cabinet Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “Wellness Italy” steering committee set up by the first Conte government</li> </ul>
3. Promote the establishment of a cross-party group for sustainable development within the future Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in the Chamber of Deputies, but not in the Senate</li> </ul>
4. Respect the Paris Accords for combating climate change, and ratify the international conventions and protocols already signed by Italy on other issues regarding sustainable development as soon as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan prepared, to be finalised by December 2019</li> </ul>
5. Convert the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning into an Interministerial Committee for Sustainable Development, in order to direct public investment for this purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During discussion of the 2018 and 2019 Budget Laws, Parliament rejected the tabled amendments</li> </ul>
6. Draft a national strategy to implement an Urban Agenda for sustainable development, and relaunch the Interministerial Committee for Urban Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment given by the second Conte government</li> </ul>
7. Establish a permanent body within the Cabinet Office to consult with civil society on gender equality policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not established, but the second Conte government has a minister responsible for equal opportunities</li> </ul>
8. Involve the central and local government in the coordination of sustainable development actions within the sphere of responsibility of the state, the regions and cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calls for tender issued by the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection to encourage regions, autonomous provinces and metropolitan cities to prepare their own sustainable development strategies</li> </ul>
9. Boost official development assistance (ODA) to achieve the goal of 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2025, in line with Italy's commitments to the United Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No commitments up to 2025, and reduction in ODA in 2018</li> </ul>
10. Ensure that the European Union puts its commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda at the heart of its new medium-term strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European institutions have put the 2030 Agenda at the heart of their strategies for the coming years</li> </ul>

## 4.2 Cross-cutting and systemic actions

The European “shift” towards the 2030 Agenda requires Italy to radically rethink the way in which sectoral policies are coordinated. On paper, the “Wellness Italy” steering committee set up within the Cabinet Office may be a good starting point, but it must be strengthened and enabled to intervene where political decisions are made, with the right timing. In order to ensure that national policies are geared towards sustainable development, we recommend that the Prime Minister send individual ministers a policy document that explicitly mentions their responsibilities in achieving the SDGs and the related Targets, with special attention paid to those with a 2020 deadline. The 2020 Budget Law should contain specific actions regarding these Targets, especially those that current trends indicate will be very difficult to achieve. Moreover, in terms of the aspects relating to policy coherence, we recommend:

- To promptly clarify the steering committee’s tasks and operating procedures, given the element of contradiction between the 2018 Directive and the Decree that established it;
- To define Italy’s position, and therefore the organisational structure, with respect to the orientation of the European Semester towards the 2030 Agenda. So far, the Ministry of the Economy and Finance has played a coordinating role, together with the Cabinet Office, in the preparation of the Economic and Financial Planning Document and in the dialogue with the Commission’s departments, in line with the strong role played by the Economic and Financial Affairs Council in managing the Semester. In this perspective, the National Reform Plan (NRP) should explicitly provide linkage between the actions contained in it and the Goals and Targets in the 2030 Agenda, which is already the case for the actions taken by regional authorities, regarding the part for which they are responsible;
- To ensure that individual ministries’ work on European dossiers takes account of the 2030 Agenda, which will now also be the case for the Commission. This requires urgent provision of information and training regarding the contents of the 2030 Agenda to all persons representing Italy at European institutions;
- To proceed, with the next Budget Law, with

the conversion of the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning into an Interministerial Committee for Sustainable Development, so as to direct public investment decisions towards the pursuit of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda;

- To initiate dialogue with regional authorities, autonomous provinces and municipal authorities within the consultation framework for central and local government authorities, in order to coordinate the actions that the various institutions are responsible for in implementing the 2030 Agenda, partly in view of the preparation of regional and urban sustainable development strategies;
- To include in the explanatory report of all the draft laws initiated by the government an ex-ante (and qualitative) assessment of the expected impact on the 17 SDGs and the individual Targets, starting from the upcoming 2020 Budget Law. The steering committee could be responsible for this assessment, partly to ensure application of a standardised assessment method.

In order to strengthen dialogue with civil society on policies for sustainable development, we hope that the Prime Minister will open a roundtable with business associations, as requested at the 2019 Sustainable Development Festival, and that the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection will rapidly proceed with the official establishment of the Forum provided for in the National Sustainable Development Strategy. Moreover, the Strategy presented in 2017 was incomplete, as it lacked quantitative targets, and the 2018 Directive provided for its biennial review. Consequently, the government should commit to reviewing and detailing the previous Strategy with quantified targets by December 2019, partly in light of the new policy guidelines adopted.

This update would justify the request to the UN to submit an updated version of the Voluntary National Review to the 2020 HLPF, as has already been done by other countries. Moreover, in line with the provisions of the 2018 Directive, in February 2020 the government should submit a report on the state of implementation of the National Strategy, partly in view of the preparation of the next Economic and Financial Planning Document. At the same time, in the report provided for by the regulations (also to be prepared by

## OPERATING MECHANISMS IN A FULLY INTEGRATED SYSTEM

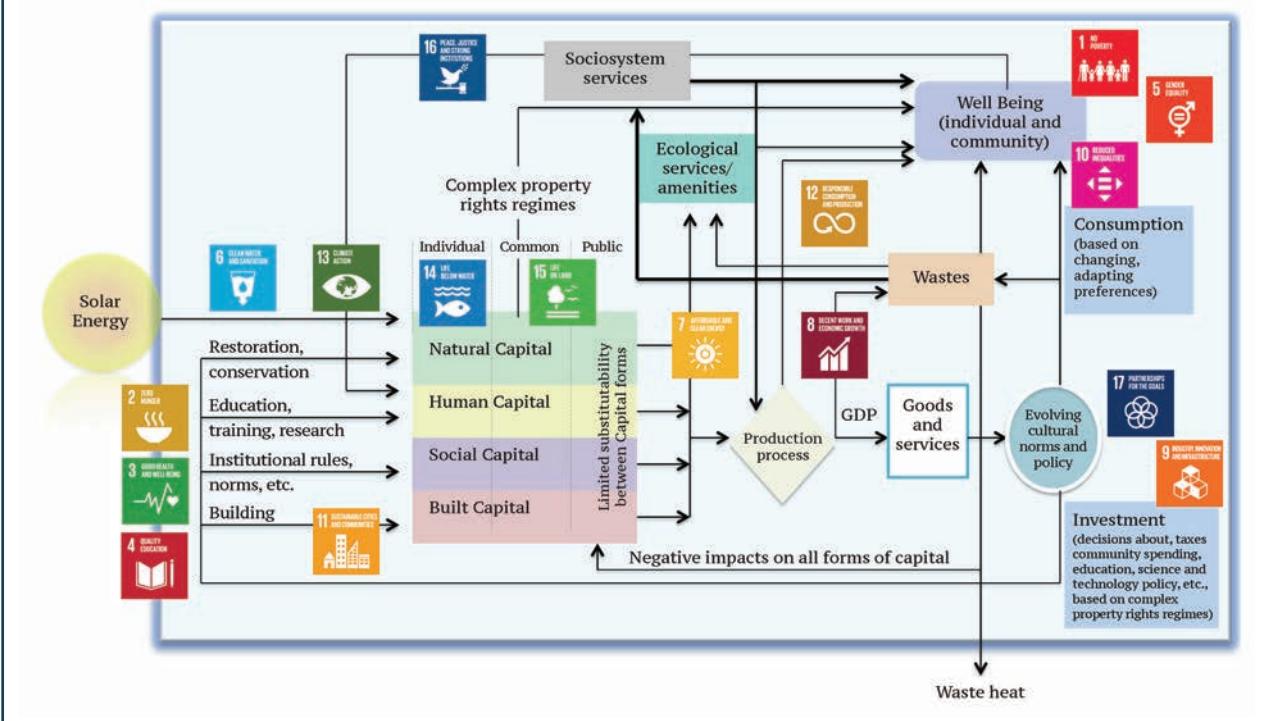
Figure 6 is a flowchart, derived from international studies on sustainable development, in which the main links between the functioning of the economy, society, the environment and institutions are shown. This framework starts by considering the four forms of capital (natural, economic, social and human), the use of which gives rise to all the activities aimed at enhancing the well-being of society, regarding tangible components (i.e. the goods and services produced and subsequently consumed or invested), and also intangible components.

The flowchart shows how the production processes that use the various forms of capital determine Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a part of which, based on political decisions and those made by economic operators, is consumed, thereby generating wellbeing, while another part is reinvested in order to replenish the capital used in the production process. Indeed, even the way in which production processes are organised has a direct effect on wellbeing (for example, the organisational models adopted by companies, the distribution of time between work and other activities, etc.).

On the other hand, depending on the model of production and consumption adopted, different amounts of “waste” are generated, both physical (litter, pollutants, etc.) and human (the unemployed, the poor, etc.), to use the language of Pope Francis’s encyclical *Laudato si’*. Obviously, waste generation has a negative effect on the level of wellbeing of individuals and society as a whole. Finally, production, consumption and wealth distribution models, together with the amount of physical and human waste generated, have an impact on the so-called “ecosystem services”, namely those that generate benefits necessary for life, and on “social system services”, namely those that generate benefits necessary for economic and social life, such as trust among people, economic operators and institutions. Both ecosystem services and social system services, in turn, have an important effect on people’s wellbeing, which influences human and social capital, in line with what occurs through investment in physical and natural capital.

By including the Sustainable Development Goals in this flowchart, it is possible to appreciate the role they play in improving the functioning of the system, and in increasing or decreasing the wellbeing of society in the short and long term.

**Figure 6 - Flowchart of an integrated economic, social and environmental system, and the role of the SDGs**



February of each year), the executive should extend coverage of the Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing indicators used to assess the 2020 Budget Law and specify the expected effects of the policies set out in April's Economic and Financial Planning Document.

The announcement of the intention to develop a **National Urban Agenda for sustainable development, an urban version of the National Strategy**, must be followed by concrete actions, first and foremost the drawing up of a Cabinet Office Decree re-establishing the Interministerial Committee for Urban Policies (CIPU), provided for since 2012, thereby making it an effective decision-making forum, following the example of the Interministerial Committee for European Affairs (CIAE).

In particular, this body should contribute to the coordination of urban strategies that metropolitan cities will prepare in response to the recent public notice issued by the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection, which notifies national and regional governments of priorities and concrete actions aimed at accelerating the transformation of local socio-economic systems to put them on the path towards sustainable development.

In line with these policy commitments, we call on the government and political parties to **initiate discussions as soon as possible on the inclusion of the principle of sustainable development in the Constitution**, starting from the text already submitted to Parliament. Given the announcement of a measure regarding other aspects of the Constitution, this recommendation could be rapidly processed, partly because most of the political parties have in any case signed up to the commitment to move in that direction.

Also, with a view to accelerating progress along the path towards the Goals and Targets, especially those with 2020 deadlines, we invite the government to consider the possibility of preparing an annual law on sustainable development, similar to the process that already takes place with regard to European and competition issues. This would be a vehicle designed to introduce purely regulatory changes (that is, without financial consequences), but with a systemic perspective that goes beyond the practice of using "interim laws" in order to include measures relating to different issues. Such a law, to be approved by June each year, could apply measures aimed at implement-

ing the policies set out in April's Economic and Financial Planning Document, perhaps in response to comments made during the previous cycle of the European Semester.

In order to encourage public authorities and the private sector to draw up strategies and actions in line with the 2030 Agenda, we recommend that:

- **ministries should be mobilised to orient measures towards the implementation of the National Strategy and the achievement of the SDGs.** In particular, as required by the 2018 Directive, by September of each year ministries should carry out an analysis to determine the consistency of the actions planned for the next three years with the content of the National Strategy and the outcomes of the annual monitoring of its implementation, and orient the planned measures to the achievement of the SDGs as much as possible;
- **the content of Legislative Decree 254/2016**, which makes **non-financial reporting mandatory** for just over 200 very large companies, **should be reviewed**. Today, three years after publication of the Decree, the business community has also fully realised that: a) non-financial reporting is a vital tool for enabling individual companies to access the most dynamic form of finance, namely that responsible and sustainable in nature; and (b) that adoption of sustainability-oriented management practices allows for significant cost reductions and productivity gains. Therefore, it is time to immediately make non-financial reporting mandatory for all large companies, and gradually (as in Spain) also for medium-sized companies;
- **preparations should be made to rapidly implementing the European directives relating to sustainable finance**, which will have a major impact on the functioning of the market and could open up new options for savers, as well as new opportunities for financial institutions, as pointed out by the Governor of the Bank of Italy, Ignazio Visco, in his speech at the 2019 Sustainable Development Festival.

In view of these and other legislative changes, we call on the government to draw up and implement a comprehensive public information and communication plan regarding the issue of sustainable development, in line with the initiatives undertaken when the euro was introduced. As the transition to sustainable development implies sig-

nificant changes in consumption and production habits, as well as in savings and investment - in a word in the country's "culture" - the initiative must reach all sectors of the population, especially adults and the elderly, who are far less aware of these issues than young people.

Reinstatement, after six years' absence, of a Minister for Equal Opportunities in the government marks an important step forward compared to the recent past, but the continuity of gender equality policies must be ensured, and best use made of the experiences gained by the associations that engage with this issue on a daily basis. Therefore, we repeat our call for the creation of a high-level gender policies committee within the Cabinet Office, which would involve civil society and experts on this issue. This body should: (a) help to design public policies relating to gender equality; (b) guarantee assessment of the gender impact of the various implementing laws and decrees, including financial and social security laws; c) promote studies, analyses and research, and disseminate the efforts undertaken by other actors in Italy, in Europe and at the international level regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women; and d) formulate proposals and recommendations to improve the situation of women in Italy. In addition, we reiterate the need to promote gender budgeting in order to assess the impact of public finance decisions on men and women.

We call on the government to consider the opportunity that may emerge with the **reprogramming of the European Structural and Investment Funds for 2014-2020**. As in the past, Italy is approaching the end of the seven-year period and runs the risk of not spending all the funds allocated to it. If this risk were to arise, it would be important (and relatively easy, given the European orientation towards implementing a Green Deal) to concentrate these funds on strategic projects for the transition to the circular economy and sustainable development, thereby making it faster and more economically advantageous. In this regard, it should also be recalled that Law 221/2015 (the "Environmental Annex") provides for the **gradual dismantling of environmentally harmful subsidies** - which the official Catalogue published by the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Protection estimates amount to €19 billion per year - and their conversion into support schemes for the transition to sustainable development.

Finally, it is important to **urgently draw up a national plan in line with the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**, which contains economic, social and environmental initiatives, and introduces management by objectives and measurement of performance via specific indicators, many of which are linked to the 2030 Agenda. The Plan must bring about a paradigm shift regarding agriculture and land management, as well as forests and ecosystem services in rural and peri-urban areas, in line with the SDGs. Indeed, sustainability needs to be combined with competitiveness, through innovation, local connections and the organisation of local production chains and systems.

## 4.3 Policies to accelerate the transition towards sustainable development

### The climate crisis and energy

In recent weeks, the UN General Assembly has been held to examine the state of progress towards the 2030 Agenda, together with a climate summit to raise all countries' ambitions as much as possible ahead of the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in 2020. At the same time, the European Commission's new approach and the change of government in Italy have put combating climate change, the green economy, the circular economy and the environment at the centre of the new political agenda. Therefore, the conditions appear to be met for adopting important measures which, in accordance with the recommendations of the IPCC Special Report SR15, can help to keep the global average increase in the temperature of the Earth's surface within 1.5°C of pre-industrial levels.

If one of the pillars of the "ecological transition" is to take into account the rights of future generations, to whom we must deliver a planet that allows them to enjoy - to the same extent and without degradation - the natural resources and ecosystem services the current generation is benefitting from, the transition must also be fair from an intragenerational point of view, so that no one is left behind, and the impacts are fairly distributed, with greater protection given to the most exposed sectors of the population and individuals. Therefore, governance of the transition process must define the timing and methods via three criteria:

- democratic participation, namely the full engagement of citizens, central institutions, companies, local authorities, workers, trade unions, employers' organisations, financial institutions, research centres, universities, civil society associations and communities;
- collective bargaining that recognises the central role of employment in the transition, to be agreed between the government and the social partners, income support measures, professional retraining, the creation of new areas of employment, and support for older workers as they approach retirement;
- precise, transparent and reliable planning of the decarbonisation of all sectors and eco-

nomic activities, taking full advantage of circular economy opportunities.

**First of all, we recommend that the government support the proposed "declaration of an environmental and climate emergency", which has already been approved in recent months by some regions and by several cities, but was rejected by the previous Parliamentary majority. Secondly, the government should recognise the key role of investment in lifting Italy out of economic stagnation by focusing on sustainable development and decarbonisation; the new Minister for the Economy and Finance has already expressed a liking for this recommendation. Therefore, Italy must also vote in favour of the new EIB financing programme, which excludes any new financing for fossil fuel projects from 2020, and will ensure that expenditure on reducing emissions, adapting to climate change and ensuring that local areas are not affected by hydrogeological instability, are excluded from the constraints of the Stability and Growth Pact.**

The ecological transition marks a change of pace that requires adequate public and private investment in decarbonisation, technological innovation, renewable energy infrastructure, energy efficiency and implementation of the smart electricity grid, urban renewal, sustainable mobility, prevention and protection of land from degradation, and climate change adaptation plans. Obviously, investment and innovation require capital, knowledge and expertise, so training, research and development are needed. These "Cinderellas" of Italian policy must become a central part of the government's strategies, in order to provide a training offering that guarantees current and future workers the skills, abilities and awareness required to help speed up the transition and carry out fully sustainable economic activities.

Clear structural measures are needed to guide businesses as they switch towards the transition, by encouraging the necessary investment to bring processes, products and services into line with the objectives of the green economy. This switch should be cross-cutting and concern the economic system as a whole, which is largely made up of small and medium-sized enterprises.

**For a just and sustainable transition, financial and fiscal instruments need to be adjusted. Consequently, in accordance with Article 15**

**of Law 23/2014, an ecological tax reform is unavoidable.** This must be able to transfer taxation from income to resource use, and to direct the market and private investment towards sustainable production and consumption. The elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies is urgently needed, through the introduction of carbon pricing instruments, such as a carbon tax, in order to set a precise and fair cost for greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, a rigorous review of the distribution of ETS<sup>2</sup> auction revenues (€1.4 billion in 2018) needs to be carried out. These revenues should be used to support decarbonisation targets by establishing a fund for retraining workers and developing employment in areas affected by the closure of coal-fired power stations, and by the energy transition in general.

**A substantial revision of the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan is urgently needed,** in order to target a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 55% by 2030, and to integrate the Plan into the new European strategy to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Planning of mitigation measures must be integrated with the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, whose participatory instruments should be used in full. This Plan, which was presented in 2017, urgently needs to be approved and supported by a regulatory instrument that prescribes its implementation in all national, regional, local and sectoral territorial strategies and plans. Infrastructure works subject to Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments should also be climate-proofed, in accordance with Climate Plans and the 2030 Agenda.

**In order to achieve decarbonisation, it is vital to create a national smart grid with renewable energy storage capacity.** Energy efficiency must be further promoted and incentivised, in order to avoid rebound effects and reduce demand for fossil fuels. We hope that EU Directive 2019/944 regarding reform of the electricity market will be rapidly implemented in order to empower and involve citizens, so that they can play an active role in the energy transition by adjusting their consumption according to energy availability, thus contributing to the flexibility of the system, and also by introducing cost flexibility measures. **Prosumers** and energy communities must be encouraged by taking advantage of the diversification of market actors and focusing on distributed

generation and small-scale plants for self-consumption. At the same time, measures should be taken to protect vulnerable consumers and to combat energy poverty, by adopting automatic mechanisms for the provision of bonuses (electricity and gas) to all eligible beneficiaries (currently provided to around 30% of potential beneficiaries), via synergies that can be activated across public databases.

**The 2025 deadline to phase coal out of power generation must be met.** Democratic participation and bargaining must be activated immediately to ensure an alternative and sustainable production outlook for the local areas, communities and workers involved in the transition process, by guaranteeing training, retraining, redeployment and quality of work for directly employed and ancillary workers. The new government's policy requires that no new concessions be granted for the extraction of hydrocarbons. This is not merely a symbolic issue, with obvious economic, social and environmental repercussions, regarding which the positions expressed by ASviS members do not concur.

**Bioenergy, sustainable woodland and forest management, and a robust green infrastructure in urban areas must be exploited for environmental, climate and health purposes.** A large part of Italian territory has available low-enthalpy geothermal energy in the subsoil, including at shallow depths. Therefore, it is necessary to develop research and development into technologies and equipment that encourage the use of this free and constantly available renewable energy, including in the construction sector.

**The construction sector can help to combat climate change, through the renovation of public and private residential and non-residential buildings, as well as via urban renewal processes based on the principles of the Living Labs,** which the EU SET-Plan deems to be laboratories for decarbonisation and fair energy transition in the construction sector, including for the anti-seismic safety and adaptation measures recommended by the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan for areas at risk of flooding, and urban areas most prone to heatwaves.

**Efforts to decarbonise the transport sector,** which is currently characterised by the extensive use of liquid and gaseous fossil fuels, should be strengthened. The shared guidelines for sus-

tainable transport provide for three areas of action: avoiding unnecessary traffic, shifting transport to sustainable options and improving efficiency. Especially in urban environments and as part of the implementation of the new Urban Plans for Sustainable Mobility, the so-called "soft mobility" pedestrian and cycling options, should be incorporated with a commitment to reducing private mobility in favour of public transport and shared mobility. Electrification of the transport sector is evolving rapidly, and is able to use vehicle batteries for smart digital network storage. Reducing the number of cars in circulation and parking spaces facilitates measures to adapt to climate change in urban areas by enabling the de-sealing of paved areas and restoration of the soil's ecosystem functions, thus improving the absorption of excess water in the event of heavy rainfall.

## Poverty and inequality

Stark inequalities, between people and regions, and a sense of social injustice mark this period, in Italy as in the rest of Europe. These regard many aspects of human life: the economy and employment; and social issues, regarding access to and the quality of basic services and common assets (the environment, the landscape, natural resources and knowledge). Regional and gender disparities are still very wide, and are also expressed via marked inequalities in the recognition of values, roles and aspirations, which gives rise to the growth of dangerous barriers. At the same time, the concentration of private wealth is increasing in Italy. In 1995, the richest 10% of the Italian population (around 5 million adults) held just under half of the country's net wealth. In 2016, this share exceeded 60%. Between 2010 and 2016, the 5,000 richest people in Italy (0.01% of the population) saw their share of national private wealth grow from 2% to 7%.

Article 3 of the Italian Constitution states that: "It is the duty of the Republic to remove these obstacles of an economic or social nature that constrain the freedom and equality of citizens, thereby impeding the full development of the human person". Yet, Italy ranks among the countries where levels of education and economic conditions, measured in terms of income and wealth, largely persist from one generation to the next, with people's financial outcomes highly

dependent on their family of origin and their initial circumstances.

The government has taken an important step towards combating poverty with the introduction of the Citizens' Basic Income (CBI), although, as already mentioned in the previous chapter, there are many doubts about its effectiveness as a tool for eradicating poverty. For this very reason, **it is essential that the effects of this measure are continuously monitored**, so as to be able to identify areas that require additional strengthening, with a view to making it a truly universal tool that covers the entire population in absolute poverty.

**Provision of the benefits should be accompanied by an adequate offering designed to prepare people to enter the labour market**, with targeted education and training pathways that trigger a virtuous cycle that reduces the high unemployment rate, as well the percentage of the so-called working poor (employed people who are below the poverty line). **Special attention should also be paid to minors**, for whom measures to counter economic and educational poverty, as well as social inclusion measures, should be strengthened.

**A robust policy to support and empower families - especially young and large families, which are more exposed to the risk of social exclusion - should also be implemented.** This could be combined with measures to support the birth rate, parenting and work-life balance, thereby also preventing younger people from moving abroad to seek better job opportunities. These measures are ever more urgently needed to counter Italy's demographic decline, which threatens to have serious repercussions on our welfare system. These policies should support families before and after childbirth, accompanying infants through early childhood, and then during education, ensuring access to the right to study and educational services at all levels, from kindergarten to post-graduate schools.

As social mobility across generations is a vital element for the development and equality of a society, **a comprehensive tax reform needs to be drafted, that will rebalance the tax burden among the various social strata and strengthen the current progressive nature of the tax system as a whole** (as set out in Article 53 of the Constitution), taking into account the redistributive effects of the current system of exemptions,

family tax allowances, deductions and special regimes. More effective action is also needed to identify hidden wealth, avoiding all forms of tax amnesty, as well as a gradual reduction in the favourable tax regime applied to financial income and wealth transfers (inheritance and donations), while assessing the appropriateness of gradually rebalancing the taxation of income and wealth<sup>3</sup>.

The relationship between employment and enterprise plays a decisive role in determining the distribution of wealth, pay gaps and living conditions. From a long-term perspective, policies should also be encouraged within companies that facilitate the promotion of people with entrepreneurial skills to management positions, as well as encouraging greater involvement of workers in strategic decisions, by promoting trials of Labour and Citizenship Councils in order to reunify the labour supply chain and combine the interests of companies and those of their local communities. Public support measures for workers or managers wishing to take over a company in crisis, deal with the generational turnover of a family business or relaunch a business that has fallen into the hands of organised crime (often by forming a cooperative), should be evaluated and strengthened.

As detailed better below, technological change should be geared towards environmental justice and social justice objectives, partly by leveraging the public enterprises system and the mission of universities to use knowledge to contribute towards social development, and also by including social and environmental clauses among the requirements for public funding of private research and public procurement for the acquisition of goods and services.

Regarding access to basic services, it is vital to consolidate national responsibility for achieving essential levels of provision, starting with education and healthcare, where the influence of family and local conditions on the ability to access quality services is still very strong. At the same time, in vulnerable areas of the country and in the peripheries, it is necessary to design and implement development policies for places that draw guidelines and methodological lessons from the National Strategy for Internal Areas; policies which, through strong public participation, combine improvement of essential services

with the promotion of opportunities and sustainable use of new technologies. In this context, community cooperatives can be a tool for offering local services and social and cultural participation to address the important issue of welfare at local level.

It is important to gear environmental sustainability measures towards the most vulnerable sectors of the population living in disadvantaged and polluted areas, including through pricing schemes for essential services (energy, water, etc.) that take into account the social conditions of users, and a reworking of the “ecobonus” for energy efficiency and anti-seismic measures in order to facilitate access for families in need. Strong action is needed to promote the renewal of housing stock and public spaces, as well as the strengthening of access rights for all sections of society.

Last but not least, substantial investment is needed in the public administration, which is increasingly understaffed (at central and local levels), taking advantage of the historic opportunity to upskill around half a million civil servants, by investing in continuous training and the organisation of public authorities, with incentive mechanisms based on skills and professionalism, and in the transparency of administrative procedures, in order to promote discretionary decisions that are monitored by citizens.

With regard to combating gender inequality and the empowerment of women, Italy has a system of good laws, but in recent years the implementation instruments have been radically disempowered. For example, some of the equality bodies provided for by Legislative Decree 198/2006 and subsequent amendments have been abolished, and those that still exist are often unable to perform the functions and tasks entrusted to them due to lack of funds and human resources.

The second Conte government finally has a Minister for Equal Opportunities, which is a necessary prerequisite but insufficient to direct all government policy towards gender equality in a comprehensive manner, along the lines of the 2030 Agenda. In order to be effective, the work of the new Minister should start by monitoring the legislation that cannot be applied due to a lack of implementing decrees, and by assessing the impact of the laws that are already in force.

**The draft laws under examination by the Chamber of Deputies' Employment Committee, relating to efforts to overcome the gender pay gap and promote women's access to employment, must be approved as soon as possible.** The measures are also aimed at rewarding companies that are effective in tackling the pay gap and/or facilitating a work-life balance. The proposal to extend to a larger number of companies the obligation (provided for in the Equal Opportunities Code for public and private companies employing more than 100 employees) to prepare a report, at least every two years, on the situation regarding staff and on the remuneration actually paid, is also important.

In order to provide concrete support to women's leadership, **the extension of the provisions of Law 120/2011 (the Golfo-Mosca law) regarding the presence of women on the boards of directors should be approved by the end of the year**, in order to consolidate the results achieved so far and strengthen a virtuous culture that is not yet fully established.

As far as violence against women is concerned, **there is an urgent need to strengthen the provision of shelters**, and to ensure that job training is provided for users of the shelters' services. Unfortunately, no information is yet available about the state of progress of the National Anti-violence Plan 2017-2020, on which a report was expected to be published by 30 June.

As "economic violence" is often used to isolate women, forcing them to give up their independence, **specific projects need to be launched in the digital economy sector that offer concrete opportunities to women** who wish to assert and achieve their independence, or use tools such as teleworking, which helps to balance work and care activities.

## Circular economy, innovation and employment

There is increasingly widespread recognition of the fact that the ecological transition and decarbonisation can only be achieved if there is a shift from a linear to a circular economy. The available statistics and studies point to significant benefits, in terms of productivity, for individual businesses as a result of the transition to the circular economy. Despite this, the viewpoints and approaches of large, medium-sized and small enterprises, in-

novative and traditional businesses and of companies operating as part of a global value chain and those focused solely on their home market continue to differ greatly.

**To speed up the transition to a circular economy, by altering companies' models of production, it is necessary to promote:**

- the design of circular products that are easy to disassemble and recycle and, more generally, the design of products with a reduced environmental impact;
- the effective launch of a market for secondary raw materials and renewable materials, and the adoption of advanced approaches to cut waste and use materials with high percentages of recycled products;
- the visibility of existing platforms for the exchange of good practices, such as Italy's Circular Economy Platform, and use of ISPRA's catalogue of EMAS/Ecolabel incentives, illustrating the national and regional legislation encouraging businesses to voluntarily register with EMAS and the EU's Ecolabel initiative;
- the establishment of local and/or supply chain partnerships and private-public and public-private partnerships;
- initiatives that aim to reuse products, including trading platforms;
- the development of a circular economy-based culture through corporate training initiatives, with the aim of fostering the development and acquisition of specialist expertise.

These actions must be accompanied by the introduction of tax breaks to drive the transition to the circular economy by, for example, reducing VAT on ecodesign products, with tax deductions varying on the basis of the type of initiative and of the number of companies involved in trading the products. Similar deductions might be offered to the suppliers of goods and services within circular economy projects. It should also be possible to introduce a tax on consumption that varies depending on the social and environmental impact of production, along the lines of a "green and social consumption tax", to be introduced as a replacement for other taxes.

**It is crucial to encourage businesses to measure and disclose the social and environmental impact of their products**, promoting the dissemination of methods for measuring circularity, drawing up a set of indicators to be used by the

various industrial sectors, widening the scope of application of non-financial reporting requirements and encouraging the preparation of integrated reports. At the same time, the legislation regarding the promotion of and support for innovative start-ups could also oriented towards the circular economy.

It is necessary to step up implementation of Green Public Procurement, which the new Public Procurement Code has made obligatory for public entities, through revision of the Minimum Environmental Criteria (MEC), the dissemination and circulation of good practices and the introduction of checks on effective implementation.

With regard to responsible consumption, on the other hand, **further efforts must be made to reduce food waste** through new circular economy solutions for tackling overproduction within the food supply chain. In addition, public information campaigns, such as “Trialogo” (created by ASviS’s Goal 12 working group), should be run in order to educate people about informed consumption, providing them with information on the degree to which the brand they are about to choose or habitually choose is committed to sustainable development. The campaigns could focus on how to cut plastic use, how to read product labels and on the fight against food waste. Related to this, **support should be provided for the Saturdays for Future initiative** ([saturdaysforfuture.it](http://saturdaysforfuture.it)) launched by ASviS and NeXt in the wake of the “Fridays for Future” youth movement, with a view to encouraging families to change their shopping habits and focus more on environmental and social sustainability.

Major investment in the circular economy can also have a beneficial impact on job creation. Partly in view of recent employment data, we wish to reiterate our appeal, already expressed in past ASviS Reports, for urgent action to reduce the wide geographical, gender and age disparities giving rise to the high numbers of young NEETs, youth underemployment and job insecurity previously referred to in this Report.

Unfortunately, ASviS’s call for the definition of a “youth employment pact”, in line with the ILO document entitled “Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact”, approved in 2009, was ignored by the government. There is, therefore, no serious, concrete, shared and comprehensive strategy for dealing with this difficult situation, which is having a negative impact on both the economy

and on many of the SDGs. **It is now indispensable to create a cross-cutting, Interministerial task force to devise a national youth employment plan in as short a time as possible, given that the deadline for achieving Target 8.b in the 2030 Agenda (“*By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization*”) is 2020.**

The measures to adopt in order to support youth employment must include actions designed to improve the transition from school to employment, increased vocational training and guidance provided to support employment and self-employment, investment in job creation schemes and support services for new households. It is also important to boost the resources allocated to research and development, the lack of which is holding back the development of the entire country and many regions, leading to a growing brain drain towards countries that offer better conditions for research.

In order to foster employment and boost consumption, a reform of employment taxes to benefit workers and their employers may offer support over the short to medium term, but would probably not be sufficient without an industrial strategy and against the backdrop of a gradually worsening global economic outlook. In this regard, it is clear that certain initiatives would be best managed at European level, with the introduction of a **European unemployment benefit** (an idea that the new European Commission intends to work on) and with the **rapid implementation of the second package of measures for fair working conditions, provided for in the European Pillar of Social Rights** approved in Gothenburg.

The creation of new job opportunities inevitably depends on the economic system’s ability to innovate and be competitive. Digital innovation is the main driver of innovation and it is here that policymakers must help the country to make the necessary leap forward. If the establishment of a minister without portfolio with responsibility for innovation marks an opportunity not to be wasted, there remains much to do in order to ensure that all areas of public policy are focused on this aspect.

In particular, **digital infrastructure initiatives, and above all those relating to the PA digitale**

(the “Digital Public Administration”), must be long-term in nature and not tied to individual budget laws, as this makes it easier to present such projects to our European partners as structural investments. Investment is needed in so-called “grey areas” in the ultrafast broadband network and in completion of the planned digitisation of the public administration, which would result in cost savings for both the public and private sectors.

A well-planned combination of the various technologies, including the Internet of Things (IoT), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Blockchain, are well within our country’s reach. These technologies could be harnessed in order to drive the digital transformation of our productive system and the modernisation of our infrastructure, thanks to predictive maintenance. We must therefore beef up the programme of support for emerging 5G technologies recently approved by the Ministry for Economic Development in its Decree of 26 March 2019. However, this means we need to take a systemic view via an organic approach to policy development, leading to the creation of a “law for digital development” that would organise the various initiatives involved and provide a coherent framework for the institutions responsible for overseeing the related investment.

Finally, Law 145/2018 has retained the 50% tax credit on expenditure on research and development, in keeping with the past. One difference is the inclusion among qualifying items of materials and supplies used in the construction of prototypes or pilot plants, which were previously excluded. In this sense, it is very important to succeed in linking innovation and the digital transformation of businesses, utilising and better coordinating the various existing tools for this purpose (Industry 4.0 tax breaks, digitisation vouchers, innovation advice, start-up initiatives, patents boxes, etc.).

We need to invest not only in physical capital, but above all in human capital, particularly in the development of digital skills, something that is currently missing from the existing approach (Industry 4.0, the three-year plan drawn up by the Agenzia per l’Italia Digitale (the Digital Italy Agency) and the Ultrafast Broadband Strategy) and that represents one of the country’s greatest structural weaknesses, as pointed

out in the European Commission’s “Digital Economy and Society Index”. A number of key issues need to be addressed in this regard: efforts to resolve the problem of digital exclusion (people who risk being unable to exercise their rights as citizens); retraining of the workforces and managements of SMEs (who risk being cut out of the market); a programme to boost research by strengthening competence centres; new programmes designed to attract researchers from overseas and increased participation in European projects.

One of the economic sectors most exposed to innovation is the agri-food industry, above all from the point of view of sustainability and food safety and in keeping with the changing needs of consumers, who are increasingly sensitive to these issues. Innovation through the adoption of models of production based on circular economy principles could provide an effective response in terms of health and the opening up of new markets. To this end, we should be aiming to adopt an integrated plan of action designed to: improve the knowledge of circular economy principles among agricultural firms; devise an incentive scheme to support the shift towards a new paradigm in the agri-food sector; spread the use of best practices as part of the move towards Agriculture 4.0; take advantage of the environment in order to apply the diversity principle.

Given the importance that the young are giving to issues surrounding sustainability, we need to help them gain access to land, whether public land or land that has been abandoned, located in both metropolitan and rural areas and above all at inland locations. To do this, it is necessary to promote measures designed to review and re-organise the way that municipal land is managed, with the aim of delivering integrated socio-economic development projects that will benefit agriculture, the environment and landscapes. The mapping of agricultural land that is in use or has been abandoned can provide us with a series of technical and legislative tools (for example, the “Land Bank”) that can enable us to allocate unused land or land that risks being abandoned, whilst also broadening and re-organising the offering of agricultural products and leisure/tourist/educational services in accordance with environmental restrictions.

Growing concerns about the impact of protectionist trade policies make it crucial for Italy to

strengthen its efforts at international level to boost the competitiveness of “sustainable” products, building consumers’ perception of the environmental and social values with which they are associated. It is also in Italy’s interest to reinforce the international networks that facilitate the gathering, promotion and exchange of good practices and innovative solutions that support sustainable food systems (such as, for example, the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact).

Similarly, we need to encourage universities to enter into partnerships with local businesses to promote sustainability in the food supply chain and help to create new jobs. To make it easier to form such partnerships, they need to be given growing priority when taking decisions about the funding provided under the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2017-2030, regional operational programmes, rural development programmes, projects of major national interest and the Social Impact Finance research network supported by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research.

## Human capital, health and education

With regard to Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda (Good health and wellbeing for all), despite the positive performance of many indicators, a number of critical areas require attention in relation to: economic sustainability in light of the limited resources available to the national health service; social sustainability in terms of the growing presence of the old and sick; the increase in out-of-pocket expenses and growing waiting lists for diagnostic tests and specialist treatment; gaps in the application of the principle of social equity, above all in terms of access to services and the distribution of service provision around Italy; failings, and in some cases the deterioration, in certain lifestyles that have an impact on health; the lack of integration between health and social care services.

As an addition to the “Sustainable Healthcare Guidelines” presented in the 2018 Report, we wish to make a number of further recommendations:

- the introduction of an “Equity Audit” to provide an advance method for monitoring levels of equity in terms of health and health service provision in the various parts of the country and in the different organisations, considering

that their relations with each other are key to wellbeing and good health;

- interministerial coordination across the various sectors at local level with regard to “health in all policymaking”, focusing on the factors involved in delivering health and wellbeing and those that, in contrast, lead to ill-health and disease in other areas of life, with a view to devising an appropriate policy response;
- the identification of good practices in terms of equity and “health in all policymaking” and the promotion of initiatives designed to disseminate such practices;
- the monitoring of new legislation, above all budget laws, with regard to the goal of “fair and sustainable health”;
- the promotion of links between regions and local areas so as to share positive experiences.

In addition to the aforementioned five points, we also recommend **stepping up the initiatives taken by national and regional institutions, acting across the various sectors, in order to reduce premature deaths from chronic non-communicable diseases**, including cardiovascular and lung diseases, stroke, cancer and diabetes, which accounted for 91% of deaths in Italy, and which in most cases the WHO believes are associated with environmental factors (exposure to pollutants or hazardous chemical substances, where the risk is extremely high among population groups living in situations of socio-economic deprivation). International, European and national statistics reveal, moreover, the high health-related and social costs of these diseases and call for a major commitment to putting in place prevention strategies focusing on the natural and built environment, places of work, urban planning and housing policies, to be adopted alongside healthcare initiatives.

The “**Working Group for efforts to prevent and combat overweight and obesity**”, set up by the Decree issued by the Ministry of Health’s Directorate General for Disease Prevention on 18 January 2019, should be strengthened. Obesity is a significant risk factor for chronic disease and, if present in childhood, can lead to the early onset of conditions normally associated with adults. To date, no country has been successful in its battle against the “obesity epidemic” and, even if there are certain encouraging signs, the

occurrence of obesity continues to reflect major inequalities.

**Greater attention should be paid to gender medicine<sup>4</sup>,** with the need to develop and implement the measures in the “Plan for the application and dissemination of gender medicine” approved on 13 June 2019. The Plan proposes, for the first time, that medicine should be gender-based across all areas of application at national level, both during the conduct of clinical trials for drugs and throughout the clinical and diagnostic process. We know that biological and social factors create differences between men and women in terms of the risks to their health, their state of health and access to health provision. On the other hand, gender health is not just a question of adopting a diversified approach to clinical procedures or to treatment, but has a major, wide-ranging impact on how organisations, and above all health service managers, act. This is because it implies and presumes that decision-makers will adopt a different approach to strategic and operational planning. At the same time, it is increasingly evident that a gender-based approach to diagnosis and treatment is appropriate, efficacious, cost-effective, ethical and fair.

**A specific problem regards food poverty**, requiring a response based around redistribution initiatives, lower prices through commercial innovation strategies, and food information and education to convince people to look for better value foods. It is, therefore, necessary to find the best way of implementing the Citizens’ Basic Income, improve the performance of the food poverty support systems (food banks, soup kitchens, etc.), create direct links between producers and consumers (short supply chains) and continue to invest in food and nutrition awareness and information campaigns.

**It would be advisable to conduct a review of how the mass catering system operates**, making changes to the specifications provided in calls for tenders and to control systems. Green Public Procurement for mass catering in both the public sector (schools, hospitals, military barracks, etc.) and private sector could prove to be a highly effective way to improve the diets of a large share of the population, increasing awareness among youngsters of the connection between food, health and sustainability. This form of procurement would also trigger the process of shifting to

more sustainable local agri-food production systems and bring agricultural production closer to its downstream markets, benefitting both the environment and society.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring a positive relationship between diet and health lies with consumers and the choices they make: for this reason, **it is necessary to strengthen checks on the reliability of the information provided via the various information channels**. The introduction of traceability, including details of ecological and water footprints, is essential to avoiding the importation of risky products.

With regard to sustainable development training and education, ASViS has for some time now established five priority areas for Italy:

- a) quality of learning, with specific attention paid to educating young people in work-related and life skills;
- b) reduction of early school leaving, including via concentration of resources on the areas and situations most at risk;
- c) giving priority to inclusion, by consolidating the Italian tradition of schools that are welcoming and open to everyone;
- d) lifelong learning, partly in response to a demographic change that has seen the Italian population increasingly concentrated in the adult and mature age groups;
- e) dissemination of education for sustainability and global citizenship, based on the belief that this is an essential condition for the achievement of all the various Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Given that progress in the educational field is the result of an accumulation of necessarily slow processes, these five priorities should be regarded within a 10-year timeframe and, as such, are reaffirmed here.

In greater detail, with regard to point a), **we would like to see initiatives promoting innovation in education**, helping schools and universities to develop alternatives to the traditional “talk-and-chalk” forms of teaching. During the inquiry carried out by the Chamber of Deputies’ VII Committee, ASViS welcomed the initiative and highlighted the fact that, although educational innovation is not an explicit Target in the 2030 Agenda, it has a key role to play in achieving the SDGs. Innovation in education, starting from the environment in which learning takes place, means

making it more dynamic and inclusive by replacing traditional teacher-led forms of learning with active learning.

Getting children to participate in school life, from the earliest years, and attention to relationships have a central role to play learning. Given that educational innovation linked to the use of digital technologies is seen as one of the ways to transform the way people are trained, it is important to specify that the digitalisation of schools relates to both the organisation of spaces and the relationship between physical and virtual environments, and the methods that integrate the use of digital technologies, the consideration of new forms of learning, the dissemination of computational thinking, the promotion of digital skills among teachers and students, the development of soft skills that enable the ethical and emotive aspects of using digital technologies to be addressed.

**The weakening of work experience schemes and three-year training programmes for new secondary school teachers should be challenged.** The desire to reverse the changes introduced by the “Good School” reform has restored the status quo in Italian schools, without proposing solutions to the challenges that await it. Italian universities should also provide more vocational courses, something that is almost absent in Italy, unlike the rest of Europe. This could prepare students less interested in theoretical studies for the world of work.

With regard to point b), **the renewed increase in early school leavers primarily requires further study** in order to understand how and why students are abandoning education. The largest increase is among girls, a worrying new trend that needs looking into in order to identify appropriate solutions.

In relation to the inclusion of disabled pupils, the amendments to Legislative Decree 66 of 2017 have just come into force. The changes are designed to involve all teachers in the related planning, based on the principle of shared responsibility for education. The exact shape of the reform remains incomplete, **as details of the related support and assistance, to be drawn up by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, are missing.** This support and assistance should include training for teachers and the creation of local groups to promote inclusion, made up of experts who will be ex-

pected to support schools in the preparation of inclusion programmes for students.

**There are almost no measures to promote lifelong learning or adult education.** In this regard, it would be interesting to know what form attempts to reintroduce people in receipt of the Citizens’ Basic Income into the labour market are taking and what obstacles they have met.

On the subject of educating people in sustainable development, it should be noted that, following late publication of the civic education reform in the Official Gazette, the reform will not come into effect immediately, with implementation delayed until the following school year. This a great pity, as the reform makes explicit reference to the 2030 Agenda, becoming, together with the Italian Constitution, the essential basis for programmes that will involve students from the first year of primary school through to their fifth year of high school, for at least 33 hours a year.

Finally, we feel it necessary, with regard to civic education, to highlight the need to provide adequate, ongoing support so that learning about sustainability and global citizenship, and about gender equality and human rights becomes a formal and integral part of national education policy, playing a widely accepted role in curricula, teacher training and the assessment of students. This support should above all take the form of continuous training for teachers, not only in the topics covered by the 2030 Agenda, but also in appropriate methods for imparting knowledge about sustainable development and global citizenship and in the need for coherence between the didactic approach and learning environments.

## Natural capital and the quality of the environment

The integrity of the biosphere is crucial to all aspects of the Earth’s natural systems, as it performs a critical role in determining the overall health of the planet, regulating its flows of energy and matter and the responses to gradual or abrupt changes affecting its dynamics. The state of health of the Earth’s biodiversity is thus key to ensuring the resilience of ecological systems and safeguarding prospects for the future wellbeing and development of human societies.

Humanity is facing a huge challenge for 2020, the year in which a number of key Targets of the 2030 Agenda have to be met and in which the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2010-2020), agreed during the UN Convention of Biological Diversity, comes to a close. The voluntary commitments (nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs) given by all countries in order to implement the Paris Agreement of 2015 will also expire next year. **2020 thus represents a unique opportunity to bring together concrete operational proposals in order to devise a new strategy for the period 2020-2030, with the aim of halting the loss of the world's biodiversity.** It is therefore important that, as the world mobilises, Italy play a leading role in rising to the challenge, particularly given that our country is home to an extraordinary wealth of biodiversity within the European and Mediterranean context. Key events in this regard will be the UN General Assembly of 2020 and the Biodiversity Summit to be hosted by the UN Secretary General.

Since the 1950s, Italy and the rest of the world have witnessed a decline in natural resources that is unprecedented in human history. Based on current trends, we shall unable to achieve a number of the Targets included in Goals 6, 14 and 15 in either 2020<sup>5</sup> or 2030, irrevocably compromising efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Against this backdrop, action should be taken in response to the recommendations contained in the various annual reports on the state of natural capital introduced by Law 221/2015. It is also essential that Target 15.9, which calls on the authorities to “integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts”, should be acted on at all levels of government.

**In order to equip ourselves with suitable tools for conducting ex-ante and ex-post assessments, for reporting and monitoring the impact of all the various environmental policies, it is necessary to define criteria for the incorporation of physical and economic impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services within the procedures for monitoring and assessing investments and policies, and to ensure, within the context of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, adequate quantification of the environmental objectives relating to natural**

**capital and ecosystem services and the most suitable indicators to monitor them.**

If we are to fully exploit partnerships between universities and specialist research centres, the following actions are needed: a) the public sector's responsibilities for the management of natural capital and ecosystem services should be strengthened; b) guidelines for the preventive quantification of the impacts and expected damage caused by planned actions to natural capital and ecosystem services, as well as the benefits deriving from restoration, management and environmental enhancement initiatives, should be issued. The above approach would also enable implementation of the Aarhus Convention on access to information, making available data and instruments that would permit the active participation of citizens and civil society in decision-making, and access to environmental justice.

**The tax system must be redesigned to gradually reduce the pressure of economic activities on natural capital and ecosystem services,** based on a reform of environmental taxation that shifts the market towards sustainable production and consumption. Public procurement practices should also adopt the same approach. As noted earlier, environmentally damaging incentives must be totally eliminated by 2025. The possibility of proposing that the EU allow exemptions to the Stability Pact, in order to finance the restoration and protection of ecosystems, should also be considered.

**There is an urgent need to approve national legislation aimed at reducing land use and land degradation to zero, as proposed in draft law AC 63, containing “Measures to halt land use and to encourage the use of brownfield sites”.** This would strengthen the consistency and effectiveness of efforts to achieve the Targets of Goal 15 and the 2030 Agenda in all its complexity. We need to define a specific plan for “land degradation neutrality”, in application of the Convention to Combat Desertification (see Target 15.3) and in synergy with various other Agenda 2030 Goals, in particular Goals 2 and 13.

When taking local planning decisions and assessing plans, programmes and projects, options that are “in harmony with nature” (nature-based and green infrastructure solutions, which are widely accepted components of European legislation) should be favoured over traditional infrastructure

options (grey infrastructure), while **work on the consolidation of the system of national and regional protected areas and the Natura 2000 Network on land and at sea should be continued, enhancing their role in protecting areas from land consumption and fragmentation of ecosystems, with the development of connections via ecological network and green infrastructure systems.**

Similar coordination should be carried out in the various regions, including with regard to climate change adaptation planning, and actions aimed at preventing hydro-geological, drought and fire risks in order to protect forests. In addition, innovative water management policies should be supported, including through the use of increasingly detailed data processing systems. In order to stem network leaks and inadequate purification, it is essential to carry out extraordinary interventions, ensuring the local coordination of catchment area authorities, regional authorities and water concession areas and defining industrial plans that oblige service operators to guarantee adequate standards and make investments linked to profits.

With the involvement of regional and local authorities, the commitment to achieving European and national targets regarding the recovery and restoration of degraded ecosystems must be strengthened, alongside efforts to improve ecological connectivity and reduce the artificialisation and waterproofing of the soil, with particular reference to river systems and wetlands.

In this regard, the approval of legislation implementing the outcome of the 2011 referendum, on the public ownership of water as a common good and an inalienable right, is a matter of urgency. The proposed draft law AC 52 ("Provisions governing public and participatory governance of the integrated water cycle") would overcome any related issues and bring legislation more into line with all the other SDGs. This would strengthen recognition of the human right to water, with a minimum subsistence level provided free of charge to everyone and not subject to market forces. At the same time, we should provide for activation of an International Solidarity Fund for international co-operation projects aimed at ensuring access to water in the poorest countries, promoting the commitment of local authorities and forms of participation to protect this resource (as ex-

pressed in the proposed "City Charter for the Right to Water"). This would make use of the progress made so far in the sector and enable us to better define the governance tools needed to achieve the ambitious Targets that make up Goal 6.

**In terms of marine ecosystems, the government should implement the existing measures and the new ones provided for in the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive**, ensuring that the human and material resources committed for this purpose are adequate and commensurate with the environmental, economic and social interest that the marine environment has for Italy, in line with what is also envisaged in the Targets of Goal 14. **The monitoring programme provided for by the Directive must be updated and implemented, so as to ensure that it is truly capable of measuring progress towards environmental targets.**

**Draft law AC 1939 on "Encouraging the recovery marine waste and the circular economy" (the so-called "Save our Seas" legislation) must be approved without delay. This should be accompanied by even stronger measures designed to bring forward the implementation of the EU's Plastics Strategy and Directive 2019/904 of the Parliament and Council of 5 June 2019 on the "reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment", given growing concerns over the impact that the release of plastics, microplastics and nanoplastics into the environment has on human health and ecosystems.**

Again, in relation to the EU, it will be necessary to propose the inclusion of social and environmental provisions in free trade deals that are aligned with international goals regarding biodiversity, the protection of ecosystems and the 2030 Agenda.

**Finally, Italy has yet to ratify: a) the Offshore Protocol regarding the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf, the seabed and its subsoil, adopted in 1994 within the framework of the Barcelona Convention; and b) the Nagoya Protocol (signed on 23 June 2011) on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilisation (as referred to in Targets 2.5 and 15.6 in the 2030 Agenda).**

## Cities, infrastructure and social capital

The government has announced its intention to draw up an “Urban Agenda for Sustainable Development”, responding to the recommendation put forward in previous years by ASviS and Urban@it. Obviously, many of the initiatives described in this chapter also apply at urban level. For example:

- **health and wellbeing:** strategies intended to reduce health inequalities around the country should be implemented locally by rigorously applying essential standards of care and delivery and provide incentives for local road safety programmes;
- **quality education:** universities and research centres should become the key drivers for the development of urban areas, by increasing investment in campuses and universities integrated in urban environments, with services for students, teachers and researchers, thereby reducing the gap between southern Italy and the central and northern regions;
- **gender equality:** support for municipal authorities in developing children’s services;
- **clean water and sanitation:** draft legislation under discussion by the Chamber of Deputies on “Provisions governing public and participatory governance of the integrated water cycle”, should be approved and the “Charter for the Right to Water” extended to all cities. Cities should be encouraged to run local campaigns and initiatives designed to reduce the use of plastic bottles and single-use plastic, in implementation of EU Directive 2019/904 and the “Strategy on Plastic in the Circular Economy”, adopted by the European Commission in 2018;
- **job creation:** areas within cities dedicated to the creative and knowledge economy should be created, partly by using rundown industrial sites;
- **digital transition:** adopt smart city projects in implementation of the Digital Growth Strategy 2014-2020 and to deliver ultrafast broadband;
- **housing policy:** follow up on the recommendations of the Chamber of Deputies’ Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry, unanimously approved in December 2017, which call for a plan for suburban regeneration and for initiatives designed to meet the housing needs of

the least well-off in society over the medium term (6 to 10 years), with forms of continuous funding and the identification of priority areas for action, such as redevelopment initiatives for suburban areas;

- **urban mobility:** in keeping with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport’s Guidelines for Urban Plans for Sustainable Mobility, mobility strategies targeting reductions in environmental impacts and the decarbonisation of transport should aim to combine the development of transport systems with the spread of sustainable mobility, to develop collective mobility projects and walking and cycling, and to encourage the progressive spread of car-sharing initiatives, the replacement of older vehicles with low-emission vehicles, the rationalisation of urban logistics and the dissemination of a transport safety culture. The National Plan for Sustainable Mobility should be effectively adopted, and a deadline set for the end of sales of vehicles with internal combustion engines, to be included in the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan, as has been done in France, the UK and Sweden;
- **land use:** legislation should be approved that limits the use of land and, in the meantime, an action plan should be agreed on by central government and regional and municipal authorities to identify targets for reducing land use and monitoring its implementation;
- **waste recycling:** a national circular economy action plan should be adopted in order to prevent the production of waste, strengthening the measures already provided for in the national waste prevention plan, and revisiting the current pricing system for waste collection so as to encourage virtuous behaviours. In addition, in accordance with the EU’s “pay as you throw” principle, it is necessary to support the conduct of pilot projects to trial usage-pricing models that take into account the type of waste collected, thereby rewarding the use of recyclable materials as a way of making our economies increasingly circular and promoting virtual models of consumption.

**Implementation of the Urban Agenda requires major investment in infrastructure throughout the country.** As stated in previous Reports, Italy has lacked a central framework for infrastructure investment capable of communicating a long-term

vision for the country's sustainable development. Even today, the list of "strategic projects" consists solely of transport-related initiatives, as important as these may be (motorways, underground railways, etc.), whilst there is no trace, just to cite two examples, of the 5G network or of the infrastructure needed to enable the transition to a circular economy.

With regard to the motorway network and freight transport, there are many needs and significant investment is required, in addition to immediate improvement in the monitoring of the state of existing infrastructure. **It is important to continue the development of rail freight transport**, where Italy can also make significant progress in reducing harmful greenhouse emissions. Adoption of the first phase of the national plan for investment in the water sector was an extremely positive step, but there is still a need for an overall framework and a long-term approach to the planning of water infrastructure.

**Sustainable finance can play a key part in improving infrastructure.** In recent years, the European Commission has played an increasingly active role in development the market for sustainable finance. In the Action Plan published in March 2018 and during the work of the Technical Expert Group on Sustainable Finance, attention was focused primarily on environmental aspects and, in particular, on efforts to adapt to and mitigate climate change. It is now essential to also focus on social issues to, for example, close the gap in social infrastructure highlighted by the High-level Task Force on Investing in Social Infrastructure in Europe".

Green bonds are making growing inroads into the Italian market. According to the Climate Bonds Initiative, at the end of 2018 the Italian market ranked sixth in Europe for green bond issues, with a total value of just under \$10 billion in issue. In addition to non-financial companies - mainly in the utilities sector - and institutional investors, **a number of public bodies, such as the Ministry of the Economy and Finance and regional authorities, could become major issuers**, in view of the role in investing in the country's protection, wellbeing and development. For example, the proceeds from the issue of a sovereign or regional green bond could be used to fund reforestation or forest maintenance following extreme weather events, with the dual aim of restoring damaged areas and helping to

boost local businesses and communities. In this connection, it may be possible to introduced tax breaks to put private green bonds on a par with government securities.

Numerous market surveys have shown that retail investors give importance to issues relating to sustainability and declare that they would be willing to invest in SRI (social and responsible investment) products. However, only a small number believe that they know enough about the sector and have received commercial offerings of such products. **It is, therefore, important to boost information and training in sustainable finance.** A key issue is the adequate training of financial, insurance and pensions advisors, as well as private bankers and family officers, so that they can provide appropriate assistance to customers. In this regard, it could be useful to introduce the study of ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) into accreditation courses. In addition, the offering of SRI products needs to be increased in order to satisfy unmet demand from retail investors.

Alongside investment in physical capital, Italy needs similar investment in social capital, which has deteriorated significantly in recent years. To ensure that institutions are effective, strong and transparent, as provided for in the 2030 Agenda, **it is firstly necessary to combat corruption, which blocks the country's socio-economic development, and strengthen the rule of law.** We thus recommend widespread efforts to raise awareness of the importance of legality and, therefore, of the need to combat violence, bullying, discrimination, corruption and criminality, starting from schools and engaging with civil society organisations who work in this area.

Radical reform of Italy's legal system is vital, from both an operational and an administrative viewpoint. Aside from specific actions, there is much still to do with regard to the duration of proceedings, with the aim of improving the system's efficiency and making civil, criminal and tax justice more efficient, partly by **drastically reducing the time it takes for cases to be heard.** To this end, we recommend greater and more widespread use of digital hearings in civil cases.

Law 55 of 14 June 2019, converting Law Decree 32 of 18 April 2019 (the so-called *Sblocca Cantieri* Decree) into law, has made significant changes to article 36 of the Public Procurement

Code in relation to the procedure for awarding public contracts with a value below EU materiality thresholds. In this regard, we recommend **widening and reinforcing the use of legality ratings**, partially revising how they work, to as to give them an important role in preventing the occurrence and spread of corruption, including among private individuals, during the award of contracts for public works and infrastructure projects.

In line with the UN Report on “Promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression” and with Legislative Decree 101/2018, which has transposed the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) into Italian law, we recommend **the strengthening of data protection legislation** in order to apply regulatory criteria and effective methods for safeguarding the privacy of individuals and, more generally, for promoting social equity. This is in response to the increasingly invasive use of data and the handling of sensitive data for both commercial and political purposes.

The national strategy for **exploiting confiscated assets for public and social benefit** should be implemented rapidly through the cohesion policies approved by the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning on 25 October 2018 and published in the Official gazette on 6 March 2019.

After that failure of several draft laws to make it through to approval, we recommend the adoption of strict, all-encompassing rules and regulations governing the lobbying of lawmakers and of regulations regarding potential conflicts of interest.

As part of the rigorous implementation of Law 199 of 29 October 2016 (the fight against the illegal recruitment of agricultural workers for very low wages), we recommend, following recent instances of modern slavery, that the workers concerned should receive the same forms of protection and compensation due to the victims of organised crime.

## International cooperation

International cooperation is a way for Italy to project its commitment to all the 2030 Agenda Goals abroad. Its effectiveness thus depends on the adoption of a coherent approach to sustainability policies both domestically and abroad,

something that our country currently lacks, even if existing legislation assigns responsibility for co-ordinating and controlling the coherence of individual initiatives.

In the case of international cooperation, Law 125/2014 hands responsibility for ensuring the planning and coordination of all the related activities to the Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation, as well as tasking it with ensuring that all national development cooperation policies follow a consistent approach. Committee meetings have so far been infrequent (less than once a year) and have failed to produce anything tangible. The same can be said for the National Council for Development Cooperation, which is meant to bring together all the actors involved in cooperation to express their views on the coherence of policy decisions, on strategy, guidelines, planning, types of intervention, their effectiveness and the related assessment.

The “Three-year Development Cooperation Policy Planning and Guidance Document”, provided for in the Law, structures the planning process in keeping with the 2030 Agenda, but the Document has not been updated since February 2018, despite the fact that the revised version should be approved by the Cabinet, once the views of the relevant Parliamentary committees have been taken into account, by 31 March of each year<sup>6</sup>. It should also be borne in mind that funding for international cooperation is allocated to various ministries, including the Ministry for the Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Ministry for Economic Development: as a result, coordination and planning across the ministries is essential if the funds are to be used to best effect.

The first recommendation is, therefore, to urgently revise the Three-year Document and convene meetings of the Interministerial Committee for Development Cooperation and the National Council for Development Cooperation, putting them in the condition to carry out their responsibility on a regular basis.

Another essential aspect is the need to **strengthen partnerships**. The first Conte government certainly did very little to establish a climate of collaboration with the various partners for sustainable development (the third sector, NGOs, businesses, social partners) and

subsidiarity was adjudged to be in contrast with the state's prerogatives and the powers to be exercised by government. The above Law 125/2014 and Law 106/2016 on the third sector make it possible partnerships a fully functioning reality, but there has been no effort to exploit their potential or enable them even to operate as they could.

International trade and cross-border supply chains have a wide-ranging impact on sustainable development. Models of trade that are unable of fairly distributing the value created by international trade to producers and workers risk exacerbating the gaps between rich and poor in the countries of origin. As a result, **it is necessary to encourage and regulate fair trade**, a subject on which various draft laws were presented in 2018. These have been combined in one piece of legislation being examined by the Senate's X Committee. The text presented is in certain aspects already out of date with respect to the sector's current situation at the national and international levels. The text, therefore, needs updating so that current good practices can be extended to and adopted for trade in general, also be engaging with importers and exporters.

Last April, the EU Directive addressing the issue of unfair trading practices between agricultural and food businesses was adopted. The Directive aims to protect farmers, agricultural organisations and other weaker members of the food supply chain from the power of buyers. It has banned 16 unfair trading practices and aims to standardise legislation among Member States, without preventing each country from adopting improved or stricter regulations. Member States must introduce legislation in compliance with the Directive by 1 May 2021 and apply it by 1 November of that year. **The challenge for Italy is to rapidly introduce the necessary legislation**, adopting the necessary control and complaints systems.

With regard to farmer-friendly legislation, it is important that the measures introduced effectively provide help for the weaker members of the chain, eliminating the informal barriers that are so important for small businesses. Finally, it is essential that protection from unfair trading practices is extended, as it has been for farmers and farm workers outside of the EU. In this way, it will be possible to guarantee that human rights are universally respected throughout the food supply chain and that there are no "grey areas", where

production is not sustainable and there are no protections, and where unfair trading practices are applied to the detriment of non-EU producers, as well as those within the EU.

The International Trade Centre recently conducted a study of the European market for sustainable products, focusing on Italy. The study, which concentrated on the retail sector, found that there was a growing willingness among market operators to adopt a sustainable approach to doing business. It is, therefore, **important to regularly gather data on the volume of fair trade conducted as a proportion of imports from developing countries**.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The first decision taken by the Minister for the Economy and Finance, Roberto Gualtieri, was significant in this regard. He announced that Italy would join the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action (which brings together 40 countries), in contrast with the previous government's position.

<sup>2</sup> The European scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading.

<sup>3</sup> In March 2019, the Inequalities and Diversity Forum presented a plan in "15 Proposals for Social Justice", to address the root causes of income and wealth inequalities: <https://www.forumdisugualianzediversita.org/proposte-per-la-giustizia-sociale/>

<sup>4</sup> Gender medicine is intended to reduce inequalities and make fairness a reality, by starting from an assessment of needs, rather than from an appraisal of the available resources.

<sup>5</sup> Derived from the Aichi targets in the Convention on Biological Diversity.

<sup>6</sup> The Document, including a report on the activities carried out during the previous year, must include details of the strategic vision, the objectives and the criteria followed, the choice of priority geographical areas and individual countries, and the different sectors on which development cooperation is to focus. In addition, it must set out political and strategic guidelines





## Appendix: Goals and Targets

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## Goal 1: NO POVERTY

### End poverty in all its forms everywhere

#### Targets

- 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
- 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, in particular 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

**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, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions
- 1.b** Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions

## Goal 2: ZERO HUNGER

### End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

#### Targets

- 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
- 2.2** By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 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 incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular 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
- 2.5** By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed



- 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 in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries
- 2.b** Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through 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

- 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

### Goal 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

#### Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

##### Targets

- 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 children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births
- 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 premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
- 3.5** Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol
- 3.6** By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic 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

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- 3.8** Achieve universal health coverage, 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
- 3.a** Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate
- 3.b** Support the 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 on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all
- 3.c** Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States
- 3.d** Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks



## Goal 4: QUALITY EDUCATION

**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

### Targets

- 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
- 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
- 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
- 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 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 a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the 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, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries
- 4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

## Goal 5: GENDER EQUALITY

**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

### Targets

- 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the 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 mutilation

- 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 International Conference on Population and Development 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 technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- 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

## Goal 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

### Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

#### Targets

- 6.1** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
- 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
- 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 substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally
- 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
- 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
- 6.b** Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management





## Goal 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

**Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**

### Targets

- 7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services
- 7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
- 7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency

7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology

7.b By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support



## Goal 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

### Targets

- 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries
- 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors
- 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the 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

- 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
- 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
- 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
- 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products

- 8.10** Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all
- 8.a** Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries

**8.b** By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization

## Goal 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

#### Targets

- 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, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries
- 9.3** Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular 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, with 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, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending

- 9.a** Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States
- 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 information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020





## Goal 10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES

### Reduce inequality within and among countries

#### Targets

- 10.1** By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average
- 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 by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
- 10.4** Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
- 10.5** Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations

**10.6** Ensure enhanced representation and voice for 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 the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

**10.a** Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements

**10.b** Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes

**10.c** By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent

## Goal 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

### Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### Targets

- 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

**11.3** By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity 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 people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a 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 and municipal and other waste management



- 11.7** By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular 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, substantially increase 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, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels

- 11.c** Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials

## Goal 12: RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

### Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

#### Targets

- 12.1** Implement the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, 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 the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources
- 12.3** By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses
- 12.4** By 2020, achieve the 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 in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment
- 12.5** By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse
- 12.6** Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle

**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

**12.a** Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production

**12.b** Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and 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





## Goal 13: CLIMATE ACTION

### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

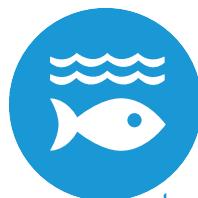
#### Targets

- 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 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change\* to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 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 capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

\* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change



## Goal 14: LIFE BELOW WATER

### Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

#### Targets

- 14.1** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular 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 in order 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 fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order 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

- 14.5** By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information
- 14.6** By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated 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 World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation
- 14.7** By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

- 14.a** Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity 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 enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries
- 14.b** Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

- 14.c** Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of “The future we want”

## Goal 15: LIFE ON LAND

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

### Targets

- 15.1** By 2020, ensure the 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
- 15.2** By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally
- 15.3** By 2030, combat desertification, 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, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development
- 15.5** Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species

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- 15.6** Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed

- 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 ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts

- 15.a** Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems

- 15.b** Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

- 15.c** Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities



## Goal 16: PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

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

### Targets

- 16.1** Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- 16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- 16.3** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- 16.4** By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime
- 16.5** Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms

- 16.6** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- 16.7** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- 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 capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime
- 16.b** Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

## Goal 17: PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS

**Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**

### Targets

#### 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 official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI to devel-

oping countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries

- 17.3** Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources
- 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 to reduce debt distress
- 17.5** Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries



<b>Technology</b>	<b>Systemic issues</b>
<b>17.6</b> 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, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism	<b>Policy and institutional coherence</b>
<b>17.7</b> Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agree	<b>17.13</b> Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence
<b>17.8</b> Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology	<b>17.14</b> Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development
<b>Capacity-building</b>	<b>17.15</b> Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development
<b>17.9</b> Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation	<b>Multi-stakeholder partnerships</b>
<b>Trade</b>	<b>17.16</b> Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries
<b>17.10</b> Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda	<b>17.17</b> Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships
<b>17.11</b> Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020	<b>Data, monitoring and accountability</b>
<b>17.12</b> Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access	<b>17.18</b> By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, 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
	<b>17.19</b> By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries

## Members of ASviS (at 12 September 2019)

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**T**he Report prepared by the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS), now in its fourth edition, assesses the progress our country, its regions and the European Union have made in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda, adopted by the governments of 193 countries on 25 September 2015. The Report also sets out the areas where action is needed to ensure the economic, social and environmental sustainability of our development model. The 2019 Report, drafted by experts from the Alliance's over 220 member organisations, offers a wide-ranging view of the situation in Italy vis-à-vis the various aspects of sustainable development. It formulates concrete policy recommendations to improve people's wellbeing, reduce inequalities and increase the quality of the environment in which we live. For the first time, the Report also provides an in-depth analysis of the 21 Targets that Italy has committed to achieve by 2020.

**ASviS** was established on 3 February 2016, on the initiative of the Unipolis Foundation and Rome's Tor Vergata University. The Alliance is committed to spreading a culture of sustainability at all levels and aims to raise awareness in Italian society and among economic stakeholders and government institutions of the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ASviS is the largest network of civil society organisations ever created in Italy and has rapidly become a point of reference for the government and an authoritative source of information on sustainable development, made available via the Alliance's website at [www.asvis.it](http://www.asvis.it) and on social media. The Sustainable Development Festival, organised by ASviS in the period between May and June, involved over 1,000 events throughout Italy in 2019.