Chapter 1. A territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals

This chapter presents the analytical framework for a territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), stressing the potential of the SDGs as a tool for implementing a new local and regional development paradigm. It argues that the 2030 Agenda should not be considered as an agenda in addition to all the others, but as a framework to shape, improve and implement regions' and cities' visions, strategies and plans. It analyses how cities and regions are using the SDGs to develop new plans and strategies or adapt and assess existing ones. The chapter also includes highlights from an OECD-Committee of the Regions survey, analysing the level of awareness, actions and tools, sectoral priorities and main challenges of cities and regions addressing the SDGs. The chapter also explains the need for granular data to measure progress on the SDGs, presenting the experiences of the nine pilot cities and regions of the OECD programme A Territorial Approach to the SDGs.

A territorial approach to the SDGs: The analytical framework

Why a territorial approach to the SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2015, set the global agenda for the next 15 years to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. The 17 SDGs and related 169 aspirational global targets are action-oriented, global in nature and universally applicable (Figure 1.1). The SDGs aim to reach environmental sustainability, social inclusion and economic development in both OECD and non-OECD countries. The SDGs are included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda, in addition to the 17 SDGs, includes: i) a political declaration; ii) the means of implementation; and iii) a framework for follow-up and review of the agenda.

The 17 SDGs are very comprehensive in their scope and cover all policy domains that are critical for sustainable growth and development. They are also strongly interconnected (meaning that progress in one area generates positive spill-overs in other domains) and require both coherence in policy design and implementation, and multi-stakeholder engagement to reach standards in shared responsibilities across multiple actors. The implementation of SDGs should, therefore, be considered in a systemic way and rely on a whole-of-society approach for citizens to fully reap expected benefits.

Figure 1.1. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development (2015-30)

Source: UN (n.d.), *About the Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations*, www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals.

The universal nature of the 2030 Agenda is one of its key innovative elements compared to previous global frameworks. The SDGs follow the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aimed at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality and reducing child mortality over 2000-15. The key difference between the SDGs

and the MDGs is that the former are universal and apply both to developed and developing countries, while the latter were an agenda for developing countries.

Although the 2030 Agenda was not designed specifically for or by them, cities and regions play a crucial role to achieve the SDGs. The OECD estimates that at least 100 of the 169 targets underlying the 17 SDGs will not be reached without proper engagement and co-ordination with local and regional governments (see Chapter 2). Regardless of the level of decentralisation across countries, cities and regions have core responsibilities in policies that are central to sustainable development and people's well-being. They range from water services to housing, transport, infrastructure, land use, drinking water and sanitation, energy efficiency and climate change, amongst others. They also discharge a significant share of public investment, which is critical to channel the required funding to meet the SDGs and targets. Indeed, subnational governments are responsible for almost 60% of total public investment in the OECD region (OECD/UCLG, 2016) and for almost 40% worldwide; and more specifically they are responsible for 64% and 55% of environment and climate-related public investment and spending respectively (OECD, 2019b).

Although the SDGs provide a global framework to drive better policies for better lives, the opportunities and challenges for sustainable development vary significantly across and within countries. For example, regarding SDG 13 on Climate Action, some cities and regions are more vulnerable to climate change impacts than others. The global warming at 1.5°C may expose 350 million more people to deadly heat by 2050 (IPCC, 2018), exacerbated by local heat island effects. In Europe, 70% of the largest cities have areas that are less than 10 meters above sea level (OECD, 2010), thus exposed to higher risks of flooding. Cities are responsible for almost two-thirds of global energy demand and over 70% of energy-related CO_2 emissions (IEA, 2016), produce up to 80% of greenhouse gas emissions and generate 50% of global waste (UNEP, 2017). But cities are also part of the solution. For example, while transitioning from linear to circular economy, cities contribute to keeping the value of resources at its highest level, while decreasing pollution and increasing the share of recyclable materials. The varying nature of challenges related to sustainable development within countries calls for place-based solutions that are tailored to territorial specificities, needs and capacities now and in the future.

Acknowledging that the SDGs provide unique opportunities to strengthen multi-level governance in countries, more and more national governments use them as a framework to promote better policy co-operation across levels of government. The SDGs framework provides a common foundation and language to leverage the opportunities to engage cities and regions in monitoring and data collection in many countries, aligning priorities and rethinking sustainable development from the ground up. The SDGs can help align priorities in areas such as climate change, social inclusion, health, education, transport, infrastructure and sustainable mobility, energy, business development, among others. In practice, this means ensuring that decisions taken across levels of government on public policies do not work against each other, can be tailored to specific needs in places, and ultimately contribute to drive opportunities for all and ensure no-one is left behind.

Advancing and implementing the OECD New Regional Development Paradigm for Cities and Regions through the SDGs

The SDGs represent a key tool to advance and implement a new local and regional development paradigm to promote sustainability in cities and regions (Table 1.1). Over the last three decades, the OECD has argued that the combination of factors leading to poor socioeconomic and environmental performance is usually context-specific and needs to be

tackled through place-based policies (OECD, 2019). This is why regional development policy has a critical role to play in addressing the root causes of persistent territorial disparities.

Place-based policies incorporate a set of co-ordinated actions specifically designed for a particular city or region. Place-based policies stress the need to shift from a sectoral to a multi-sectoral approach, from one-size-fits-all to context-specific measures and interventions, from a top-down to a bottom-up approach to policymaking and implementation. They are based on the idea of policy co-ordination across sectors and multi-level governance, whereby all levels of government, as well as non-state actors, should play a role in the policy process. They consider and analyse functional territories, in addition to administrative areas. They build on the endogenous development potential of each territory and use a wide range of instruments and actions, including targeted investment in human capital, infrastructure investments, support for business development and research and innovation, among others (OECD, 2019).

The SDGs can help to both advance conceptually the shift towards a new regional development paradigm and, in particular, provide a framework to implement it because:

- The 2030 Agenda provides a long-term vision for strategies, plans and policies with a clear and common milestone in 2030, while acknowledging that targeted action is needed in different places since their exposure to challenges and risk vary widely within countries, and so does their capacity to cope with them.

- The 17 interconnected SDGs cover the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way and therefore allow policymakers to better address them concomitantly, building on the synergies and interlinkages, and taking into account the positive and negative impacts of such linkages.

- The interconnected SDGs framework allows the promotion of policy complementarities and the management of trade-offs across goals in addition to cities and regions using the SDGs to set their priorities.

- The SDGs allow to better implement the concept of functional territories. They represent a common framework that neighbouring municipalities can use to strengthen collaborations and to co-ordinate actions and can, therefore, provide for a common language and narrative to support territorial reforms.

- The SDGs can be used as a powerful tool to promote multi-level governance, partnerships with all stakeholders, including the private sector – extremely active on the SDGs –, and to engage civil society and less traditional stakeholders in the policymaking processes, strengthening accountability.

Table 1.1. Implementing the new OECD Regional Development Paradigm through the SDGs

	Traditional approach	OECD New Regional Development Paradigm (2019)	New SDGs Development Paradigm for Cities and Regions
Problem recognition	Regional disparities in income, infrastructure stock and employment	Low productivity (levels and growth); underused regional potential; lack of regional competitiveness; inter-regional and inter-personal inequality	Lack of an integrated approach to sustainable development, sectoral bias still persists
Objectives	Equity through balanced regional development	Increasing productivity growth; delivering high-quality of life and well-being to people across economic, social and environmental dimensions	Integrating competitiveness, equity and environmental dimension to promote people's well-being following the five "Ps" of the 2030 Agenda: people, prosperity, planet, peace and partnerships
General policy framework	Compensating temporally for location disadvantages of lagging regions, responding to shocks (e.g. industrial decline)	Tapping underutilised regional potential through regional programming; building on existing strengths; developing regional innovation systems	Tapping underutilised regional potentials through regional programming; building on existing strengths to rethink strategies from the group up; developing regional innovation to achieve the SDGs
Theme coverage	Sectoral approach	Integrated development projects for economic growth	Integrated approach using the SDGs to identify priorities while maximising synergies and managing trade-off across sectors
Spatial orientation	Targeted at lagging regions	All-regions focus with policies adapted to each region	All-regions focus with policies adapted to each region
Unit for policy intervention	Administrative areas	Both administrative and functional areas	Combining administrative and functional areas
Time dimension	Short term	Long term	Long term, with 2030 as a key milestone
Approach	One-size-fits-all	Place-based approach	Place-based approach within a global common framework
Data/Indicators	Focus on gross domestic product (GDP), mainly economic indicators	Well-being indicators	SDGs indicator framework
Focus	Exogenous investments and transfers	Endogenous development based on local assets and knowledge	Combining endogenous and exogenous focus – SDGs to attract exogenous investments and value local assets

	Traditional approach	OECD New Regional Development Paradigm (2019)	New SDGs Development Paradigm for Cities and Regions
Instruments	Subsidies and state aid (often to individual firms)	Broad range of instruments: targeted investment in human capital; infrastructure investments; support for business development; research and innovation support; co-ordination between non-governmental actors	Broad range of instruments: targeted investment in human capital; infrastructure investments; support for business development and research and innovation for SDGs challenges; public procurement and de-risking private investments to support the engagement of private sector in SDGs
Governance	Mainly central government	Different levels of governments, various stakeholders (public, private, non-governmental organisations [NGOs])	SDGs as a key framework to promote multi-level governance and engage all territorial stakeholders
Role of the private sector	Disconnected from the public sector	Public-private partnerships	SDGs as a key tool to promote public-private collaborations, with private sector extremely active on SDGs beyond Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Role of the civil society	Civil society as an untapped potential	Civil society started being engaged in the policymaking process	Civil society as a key actor to achieve the SDGs, in particular students/youth; proactive role of citizens

Source: Revised and adapted from OECD (2019a), "*OECD Regional Outlook 2019: Leveraging Megatrends for Cities and Rural Areas*", https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264312838-en.

SDGs as an enabler to fit for the future

The SDGs provide a forward-looking vision for governments to consider, anticipate and respond to some global changes and trends that impact and shape the policy environment. Four critical megatrends influencing the achievement of the SDGs in cities and regions are herein identified: i) demographic changes, in particular urbanisation, ageing and migration; ii) climate change and the need to transition to low-carbon economy; iii) technological changes, such as digitalisation and the emergence of artificial intelligence; and iv) the geography of discontent. The impact of these four megatrends on people and societies is very much context-specific and therefore requires place-based policies to effectively respond, minimise their potential negative impact on regional disparities and capture the opportunities related to those trends locally.

Demography

Urbanisation continues to grow all over the world, with cities accounting for over 80% of global GDP today and projected to house 70% of the global population by 2050 (UN-Habitat, 2016). In OECD countries, the urban population has grown by 12% since 2000, with the largest cities experiencing growth that is even more pronounced. Between 2006 and 2016, 81% of young people (age 15-29) who moved within the same country settled in an urban or intermediate region (OECD, 2019a). This makes cities hotspots for inequalities and environmental stresses, with negative externalities on surrounding areas. Income inequality – which has been rising in the last decades – is higher, on average, in cities than in their respective countries. The health implications of inequalities in cities are also striking: while the richest 40% of urban dwellers are likely to reach the age of 70 or more, the poorest struggle to reach 55 years (UN-Habitat, 2015).

The SDGs can help to design and implement a more balanced and sustainable urban development model. The integrated framework of the SDGs allows analysing the key drivers of urban development in a holistic way and managing possible trade-offs among them. For example, combining urban development with sustainable transport and mobility is often one of the main challenges for cities. Energy-efficient building standards, provision of clean and affordable energy (SDG 7) and low-carbon means of transport are key to meet the required CO_2 emission standards (SDG 13) while at the same time developing the city sustainably (SDG 11). Moreover, education (SDG 4) is central to keep the employment rate high (SDG 8) in a labour market characterised by high-skilled jobs. Cities can use the SDGs to analyse and address interlinked challenges.

An ageing population is another megatrend challenging many OECD countries. The number of people aged 65 or older per 100 people of working age has increased by close to 25% between 2000 and 2015 and is expected to increase by another 25% by 2050. Ageing will have a very concrete impact on policies that should strive to leave no-one behind, for instance pensions systems and the provision of public services, in particular in rural areas that are mostly affected by this megatrend and by the outflows of young people. Cities and regions should, therefore, provide the necessary infrastructures and services to support the ageing populations as well as to develop strategies to build age-friendly communities (OECD, 2019a).

The SDGs can help to identify new opportunities, both for the elderly population and for youth, and to promote social cohesion through intergenerational solidarity. For example, the city of Kitakyushu is using its strong environmental SDGs to create opportunities in the economic and social SDGs. Some economic sectors connected to the environmental

dimension, such as eco-industry offshore wind power generation, eco-tourism, or culture could offer additional job opportunities both to youth (preventing further population decline) and the elderly population, promoting social cohesion through intergenerational solidarity.

Migration, both domestic and international, is the third demographic megatrend with a strong impact on the sustainable development of cities and regions. Domestically, rural-urban migration is increasing, both in OECD and particular in non-OECD countries, and is contributing to global urbanisation and the decline of population in rural areas. International migration is a key driver of demographic change. International migrants are mainly concentrating in large cities because they tend to offer the most favourable labour market opportunities. Cities and regions should implement adequate place-based integration policies to fully seize the potential and benefits of migration while ensuring local integration of migrants across places and involving various stakeholders and different levels of government.

The SDGs can help to better analyse the causes of migration and identify possible opportunities for migrants in urban areas. The SDGs provide a framework to better analyse the interconnected causes of rural-urban migration and provide multi-sectoral policy responses. Regarding international migration, cities can use the SDGs as a tool to promote city-to-city co-operation (in OECD and in developing countries) and co-design measures to address both the root causes of migration in developing countries and the solutions for migrants' integration in OECD cities.

Climate change

Climate change is one of the most pressing megatrends with impacts, challenges and opportunities varying significantly across territories within and across OECD countries. Some cities and regions are more vulnerable to climate change impacts than others. The global warming at 1.5°C may expose 350 million more people to deadly heat by 2050 (IPCC, 2018), exacerbated by local heat island effects. In Europe, 70% of the largest cities have areas that are less than 10 meters above sea level (OECD, 2010), thus exposed to higher risks of flooding. Moreover, cities concentrate almost two-thirds of global energy demand (IEA, 2016), produce up to 80% of greenhouse gas emissions and generate 50% of global waste (UNEP, 2017). Nevertheless, cities are also part of the solution. Subnational governments are responsible for 57% of all public investment and 64% of all climate-related public investments. Moreover, while transitioning from linear to circular economy, cities contribute to keeping the value of resources at its highest level, while decreasing pollution and increasing the share of recyclable materials.

The SDGs can help to prioritise climate goals and address them in conjunction with the social and economic pillars of sustainable development rather than in isolation. When cities and regions prioritise social or economic goals, the SDGs can help to still consider the effect on the environment and avoid overlooking climate objectives. Looking at the policy complementarities among climate and social/economic goals is key. For example, climate mitigation policies (e.g. reducing CO_2 emissions from private cars) can generate important local co-benefits, such as improvements in air quality (SDG 11) and avoided health cost (SDG 3). However, climate policies may also negatively affect other policy goals such as social inclusion (SDG 10). While some climate-related investments (e.g. retrofitting buildings) can generate positive impacts for low-income and vulnerable populations (e.g. lower energy bills, improved housing quality), other instruments such as carbon taxes or congestion charges may affect them disproportionately. This is why by conceiving

climate and inclusion policies in tandem at a very local scale, governments can reap the benefits of policy complementarities (OECD, 2019a).

Digitalisation and the future of work

The impact, benefits and risks of digitalisation are strongly context-specific. In terms of benefits, digitalisation will reduce the costs of trading goods, ideas as well as the physical interactions for firms and people. Digital technologies will also improve access to services both for companies and workers, changing the geography of labour as the benefit of proximity might be reduced for some jobs. At the same time, digitalisation might strongly impact local labour markets and generate high rates of unemployment, if adequate place-based policies to adapt to the new technologies are not in place. Across the OECD, 14% of jobs are at high risk of automation, with more than 70% of tasks performed by workers expected to be replaceable within the coming decades. Across OECD regions, it varies from 4% to 40%. The gap between the region with the highest and lowest risk can be as wide as 12 percentage points within countries (OECD, 2019a).

The SDGs can help to link the potential benefits and risks of digitalisation to inclusive growth and well-being, connecting smart and sustainable cities. The core idea is to provide digital solutions that help advance urban sustainable development. For instance, there is great potential to use advanced technologies to measure at a granular level (e.g. use of mobile operators or other technology to measure the quality of air and water) to better estimate some SDGs indicators. Similarly, there is a large push from the local governments to digitalise many services related to health, education or environmental participation, which can have an impact on achieving some of the SDGs.

Geography of discontent

The emergence of the so-called "geography of discontent" is another factor that can make the SDGs a valuable tool for more inclusive and people-centred policymaking. High unemployment, low wage growth and other symptoms of poor socioeconomic performance have led to growing public discontent with the political and economic status quo. In parallel and since the 2008 global financial crisis, there has been a growing mistrust from citizens about the capacity of their governments to ensure well-being now and in the future. This has generated a pattern in which the degree of discontent reflects the economic performance of a region relative to others in the country. With unchanged policies, unfolding megatrends such as automation will further increase the spatial divides that create this pattern of discontent and likely increase tension while undermining social cohesion (OECD, 2019a).

Local and regional policies have a key role to play and the SDGs can help to better address some of the underlying causes of the discontent, in particular regional disparities. The geography of discontent is a symptom of an underlying policy failure. Too many regions struggle because public policy has not responded adequately to their problems. A focus on aggregate performance at the national level has obscured that struggling regions require distinct solutions. Only if policymakers address this fundamental issue will they be able to deal with the cause behind the geography of discontent (OECD, 2019a).

The SDGs provide a unique opportunity to rethink drastically the design and implementation of public policies, in a shared responsibility across levels of government and stakeholders to foster greater accountability, equity, inclusion and cohesion now and in the future. The SDGs are also a powerful tool to engage citizens in the policymaking process. This will contribute to addressing some of the root causes of the geography of discontent in a place-based manner.

The analytical framework: Key dimensions for the implementation of a territorial approach to the SDGs

Policies and strategies through the SDGs

Regional policy aims to effectively address the diversity of economic, social, demographic, institutional and geographic conditions across cities and regions. It also ensures that a wide range of sectoral policies, from transport and education to innovation and health, are co-ordinated with each other and meet the specific needs of different regions across a country – from remote rural areas to the largest cities. Regional policy targets specific territories and provides the tools that traditional structural policies often lack in order to address the region-specific factors that cause economic and social stagnation (OECD, 2019a).

Cities and regions can use the SDGs as a means to shift from a sectoral to a multi-sectoral approach, both in the design and particularly in the implementation of their strategies and policies. The importance of a multi-sectoral approach and the need to go beyond silos is well recognised in local and regional development policies. On paper, various strategies, plans and policies are designed in a holistic way, but when it comes to the implementation, a sectoral approach often still prevails. The framework provided by the SDGs can help to bring various departments of a local administration together and strengthen the collaboration in implementing the strategies and policies. This is particularly true when it comes to sustainable development, which is a shared responsibility across levels of government, citizens, civil society and the private sector.

The SDGs represent a powerful tool to promote the issues of sustainability in a holistic way. The 2030 Agenda is based on the concept of policy coherence and it promotes synergies between the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. The SDGs universal, indivisible and interlinked framework can help regions, cities and national governments to address social and economic goals while pursuing the environmental and climate objectives (or vice versa, pursuing environmental goals that do not undermine growth and social cohesion), including through the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in the policy responses.

Policy debates have tended to focus on the trade-offs among SDGs, often overlooking potential synergies. There is a growing awareness of the need to pursue the three pillars of sustainable development in a more balanced and complementary way. Such a system entails that every policy is reinforced through other policies. When it comes to addressing concerns of environmental sustainability and equity alongside growth objectives rather than as subsidiary goals, a differentiated approach taking into account the specific conditions in each city and region can help us understand trade-offs or potential complementarities among the three objectives (OECD, 2011).

Place-based policies are well equipped to promote synergies across the SDGs at the scale where they are most relevant and evident, in particular places, as opposed to policies that are "spatially blind". It is at the territorial level that it is most effective to implement a multi-sectoral approach based on the context-specific priorities, needs, challenges and opportunities. Various cities and regions are identifying their priorities, sometimes at goal level, sometimes at the target level. Although they are prioritising some SDGs, subnational governments recognise the importance of interlinkages among goals and are therefore developing approaches and methodologies to identify and measure those synergies in a more systematic way.

Figure 1.2. Analytical Framework for a Territorial Approach to the SDGs
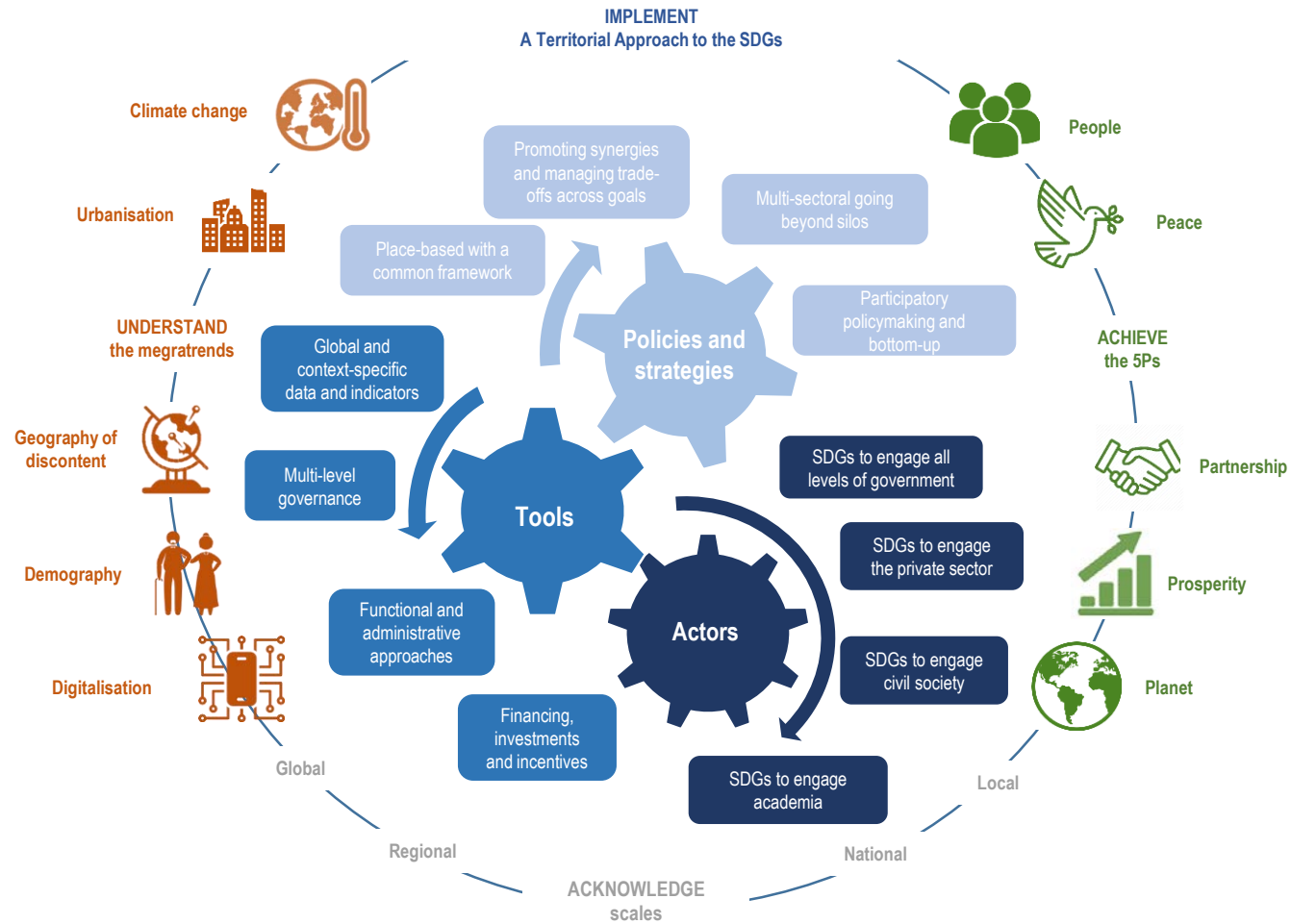
Key actors to implement a territorial approach to the SDGs

A participatory policymaking and bottom-up process is one of the core elements of a territorial approach to the SDGs. Shifting from a top-down and hierarchical to a bottom-up and participatory approach to policymaking and implementation is key for the achievement of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda requires a more transparent and inclusive model that involves public as well as non-state actors (private sector, not-for-profit organisations, academia, citizens, etc.) to co-design and jointly implement local development strategies and policies.

Being a shared responsibility, the SDGs provide cities and regions with a tool to effectively engage in multi-stakeholder dialogue with actors from the private sector, civil society, as well as schools and academia:

- **Businesses** that go beyond corporate social responsibility and invest seriously in sustainable development have an essential role to play in achieving the 2030 Agenda. Current levels of public investment will not be sufficient to catalyse the USD 6.3 trillion required to meet the 2030 Agenda infrastructure needs, and innovative financing sources will be instrumental. The perspective of the private sector and investors is often absent in the process of defining sustainable city development plans and strategies. This leads to a mismatch in priorities, barriers to implementation and missed opportunities to create shared value and impact. Including the private-sector perspective early on in the development process will help to bridge existing gaps between the public sector and private solution providers and investors. The SDGs can be a tool to bridge the gap between the public and private sectors and align priorities for effective implementation.

- **Civil society**, **citizens and in particular youth** are key agents for change towards sustainability. The civil society organisations have an important role to play both as a driver to achieve progress towards the SDGs and by holding governments at all levels accountable for their commitments towards the 2030 Agenda. Civil society is also a key player in traditional policymaking processes, including in formal consultations. Informed citizens can also change their daily habits in view of sustainability. Behavioural change of citizens is often a key component for achieving the intended policy outcomes, for example in sectors such as transport and mobility, water and waste management, sustainable consumption and production. Youth, including through youth councils, are also more and more engaged with the 2030 Agenda with an increasing number of schools introducing the SDGs into the curricula.

- **Universities** are also more and more active on the SDGs. The role of universities is particularly relevant when it comes to collaborating with the governments and community, including at the local level. Universities can support governments at all levels by generating and disseminating the knowledge required to address the SDGs, by co-designing policies and strategies, by monitoring and evaluating policies and progress, by educating, training and providing the necessary skills to students (future leaders) on sustainable development integrating the SDGs into curricula (El-Jardali et al., 2018). Lately, several networks and initiatives of universities addressing the 2030 Agenda are emerging, such as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Higher Education Sustainability Initiative and Principles of Responsible Management Education initiative. The Australia, New

Zealand & Pacific Network of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has also produced a guide on how universities can contribute to the SDGs.

Tools for the implementation of a territorial approach to the SDGs

The effective implementation of a territorial approach to the SDGs implies the combined use of a variety of tools. These span from a solid multi-level governance system, to global and context-specific data for evidence-based policies and actions, from combining functional and administrative approaches to address territorial challenges and opportunities beyond borders to soft and hard investment and incentives, in particular for the private sector.

Multi-level governance represents a key tool to promote vertical – across levels of government – and horizontal co-ordination – both within the government and between the government and the other key stakeholders, such as the private sector, civil society and academia. National governments can use the SDGs as a framework to promote policy coherence across levels of government, align priorities and rethink sustainable development through a bottom-up approach.

Cities and regions can use a range of soft and hard instruments and investments to promote the implementation of the SDGs locally. These span from targeted investments in human capital to adapt the human resources to the SDGs challenges, to infrastructure investments for more sustainable and smart cities (e.g. improving transport and mobility, housing, energy efficiency), to support for business development and research and innovation for SDGs challenges. In addition, the public sector can use some tools to incentivise the private sector to move towards the SDGs, such as sustainable public procurement, de-risking private investments to experiment innovative products/solutions for the SDGs, establishing a platform to co-ordinate small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) working on the SDGs and raising awareness among citizens to strengthen the demand for sustainable production and consumption.

A territorial approach to the SDGs implies looking beyond administrative boundaries and focusing on functional areas to make the most of the interlinkages between core cities and their surrounding commuting zones, and between rural and urban areas. Promoting sustainable development requires analysing challenges and identifying policy solutions both at an administrative and at a functional scale. Effective policies and strategies to achieve the SDGs should be co-ordinated across administrative boundaries to cover the entire functional area (OECD, 2019). For example, a functional approach allows for better analysis and provision of policy solutions to issues such as transport, waste management, climate change adaptation and the dynamics of the labour market that goes beyond the administrative boundaries of a city.

Measuring SDGs progress is a key priority to allow cities, regions and national governments to identify the main gaps and possible policy solutions to achieve the targets by 2030. The SDGs indicator framework offers a window of opportunity to strengthen national and subnational statistical systems, which can, in turn, serve as a tool for dialogue and action for better policies. Two key messages for measuring progress on the SDGs are:

- **The need to combine and integrate a global indicator framework with context-specific data**. This will help cities and regions to measure where they stand vis-a-vis their peers across and within countries and their distance to targets, the latter better describing the local conditions and adding more detailed information that is not captured in the global framework.

- **The importance of measuring progress both at the functional and administrative levels**. The functional approach (e.g. functional urban areas, defined according to where people work and live) is extremely useful to measure outcomes in policy domains that are place-sensitive, span across administrative boundaries and require understanding the economic dynamics of the contiguous territories. At the same time, it is important to measure SDGs progress within administrative (politically-defined) boundaries, including for data availability and consistency with local official statistics.

Making the most of the transformative nature of Agenda 2030

The 2030 Agenda calls for transformation to achieve the global targets set by the SDGs. Concretely, the 2030 Agenda states: "We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path" (p. 5, UN, 2015). Thus, the agenda urges to find new development models that help to advance the social, economic and environmental agenda and manage trade-offs among them.

New analytical frameworks to embrace the transformative element of the 2030 Agenda are flourishing at the international level. The international research community is producing evidence to help governments rethink their current approaches to public policies:

- **Six SDG transformations**: Sachs et al. (2019) claim that the six transformations provide an integrated and holistic framework for action that reduces the complexity, yet encompasses the 17 SDGs, their 169 targets and the Paris Agreement. In particular, they identify six SDGs transformations as building-blocks: i) education, gender and inequality; ii) health, well-being and demography; iii) energy decarbonisation and sustainable industry; iv) sustainable food, land, water and oceans; v) sustainable cities and communities; and vi) digital revolution for sustainable development. Each transformation identifies priority investments and regulatory challenges, calling for actions by well-defined parts of government working with business and civil society.

- **Planetary boundaries**: This framework aims to define the environmental limits within which humanity can safely operate in the world. Steffen et al. (2015) call for a new development paradigm that integrates the continued development of human societies and the maintenance of the Earth system in a resilient and accommodating state. Since its introduction, the framework has been subject to scientific scrutiny and has attracted considerable interest and discussions within the policy, governance and business sectors as an approach to inform efforts toward global sustainability, in particular in Nordic countries.

However, governments and other organisations are still struggling to fully embrace the transformative element of the agenda. At the national, regional and local levels, a number of governments are mainstreaming the SDGs into their strategies, policies and plans. Although of great value, these initiatives should be coupled with commitments to change existing practices and models, economic, social and environmental, to ensure long-term sustainability. It should also come with approaches to manage trade-offs across sectoral policies, in an attempt to address the 17 SDGs holistically. Private companies are also tempted to map their areas of work and previous corporate social responsibility plans against the SDGs, using it as a marketing tool. However, with respect to the private sector, the transformative element of the agenda calls for redesigning business models, strategies and practices to be fit for the future.

Transformations are long-term complex processes that cannot be bound exclusively to actions taken by governments. While governments at all levels do have a role to create a conducive environment for transformations through conducive legal, regulatory and incentive frameworks, they also need to work with stakeholders at large. The transformative element of the 2030 Agenda can reshape policies to make the most of new opportunities, such as the transition towards a low-carbon economy or new trends in globalisation. Decarbonisation policy poses perhaps one of the most urgent public policy challenges. Environmental policy aimed at improving the impacts of specific products and production activities – through regulatory measures such as energy efficiency and pollution standards and protection of natural areas. These have not been enough to achieve environmental sustainability (especially on greenhouse gas emissions) (OECD/IIASA, 2019). The 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity to reconsider how legal and economic frameworks can be reformulated to drive investments and production into more sustainable and resilient forms, and foster technological developments that trigger such a transition. Similarly, the adoption of international sustainable development objectives (2030 Agenda, Paris Agreement) has opened the debate on the need to rethink trade agreements beyond the sole objective to increase trade to ensure they contribute to the implementation of the international agendas (Hege, 2019).

Key highlights on the contribution of cities and regions to sustainable development: An OECD-CoR survey

The OECD and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) conducted a survey on "The key contribution of cities and regions to sustainable development" across cities and regions in European countries (Box 1.1). The survey addressed representatives of local and regional governments as well as other stakeholders at the local and regional levels (400 respondents) to collect examples and evidence about their work on sustainable development and in particular their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).


Box 1.1. Respondents to the OECD-CoR survey and key findings

From 13 December 2018 to 1 March 2019, the survey gathered answers from 400 respondents from across Europe, 90% of which from European Union (EU) member states and the rest from Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. A very small number of answers came from non-EU and non-OECD countries.

Many responses were received from municipalities (39%), with 18% of the total sample specifically from small municipalities (under 50 000 inhabitants), 15% from medium-sized cities (50 000 to 500 000 inhabitants) and a further 6% representing large cities (more than 500 000 inhabitants). Significant shares of respondents also represent regions (17%), intermediary entities such as counties or provinces (9%) or other local and regional bodies (10%). The remaining 26% of respondents represent diverse categories of stakeholders such as academia and research or associations, NGOs or public bodies, with a few answers from the private sector and individuals responding in their personal capacity.

The distribution of respondents among countries and levels of government is unbalanced and the respondents do not form a statistically representative sample. The aim of this survey was rather to offer a useful snapshot of the views expressed by diverse local and regional stakeholders regarding the SDGs and their implementation.

**Figure 1.3. Country coverage of respondents to the OECD-CoR survey**
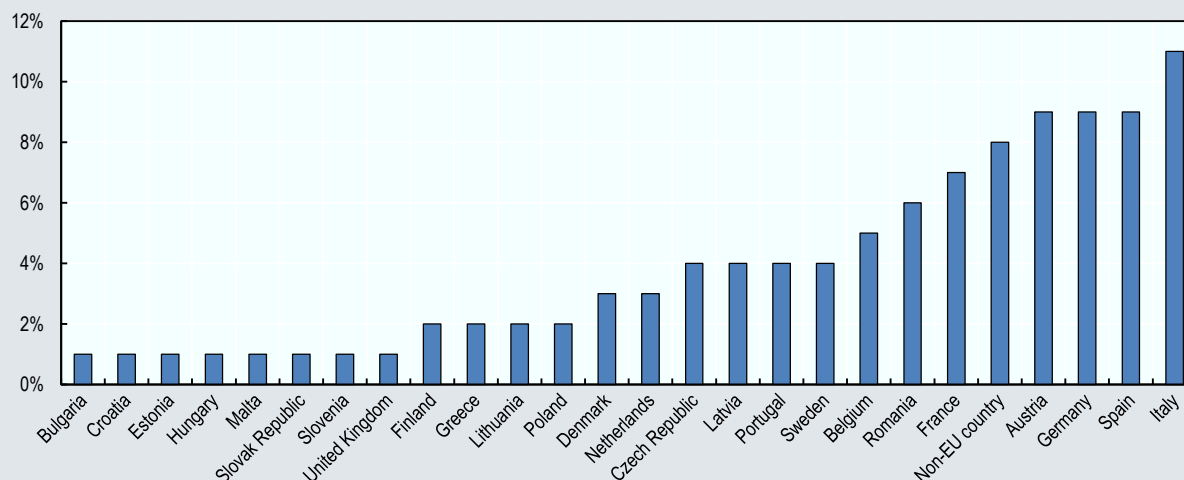
Key findings of the survey include:

- 59% of respondents are familiar with the SDGs and currently working to implement them. Among respondents representing cities and regions, this share rises to approximately 79% and 63% respectively. In large or medium-sized cities (more than 50 000 inhabitants), the share is 84% and in small cities (less than 50 000 inhabitants), 37%.

- 58% of the respondents currently working to implement the SDGs have also defined indicators to measure progress on the goals, with local indicators much more commonly used than those of the EU or the UN.

- The most common challenges in implementing the SDGs – highlighted by half of respondents – are the "lack of awareness, support, capacities or trained staff" and "difficulty to prioritise the SDGs over other agendas".

- More than 90% of respondents are in favour of an EU overarching long-term strategy to mainstream the SDGs within all policies and ensure efficient co-ordination across policy areas.

Level of awareness of the SDGs

Overall, respondents to the survey showed a relatively high degree of awareness on the SDGs. Only 18% of respondents were either unaware of or unfamiliar with them. Furthermore, a significant majority (59%) are actually in the process of implementing the SDGs, whether in early or advanced stages (Figure 1.4).
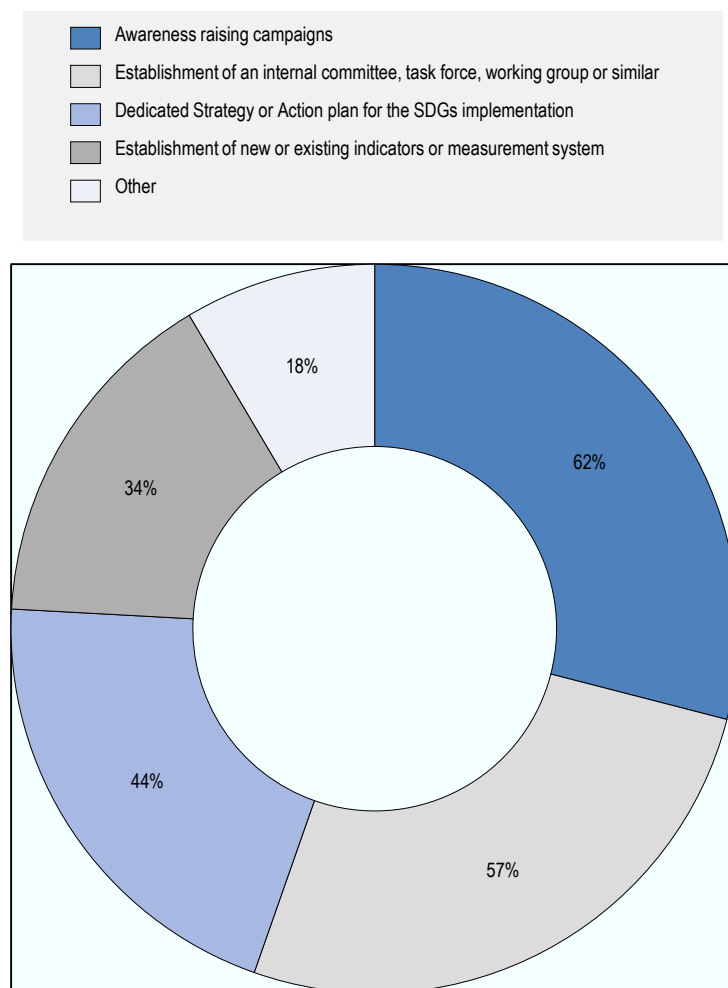
Figure 1.4. Level of awareness of the SDGs among cities, regions and stakeholders
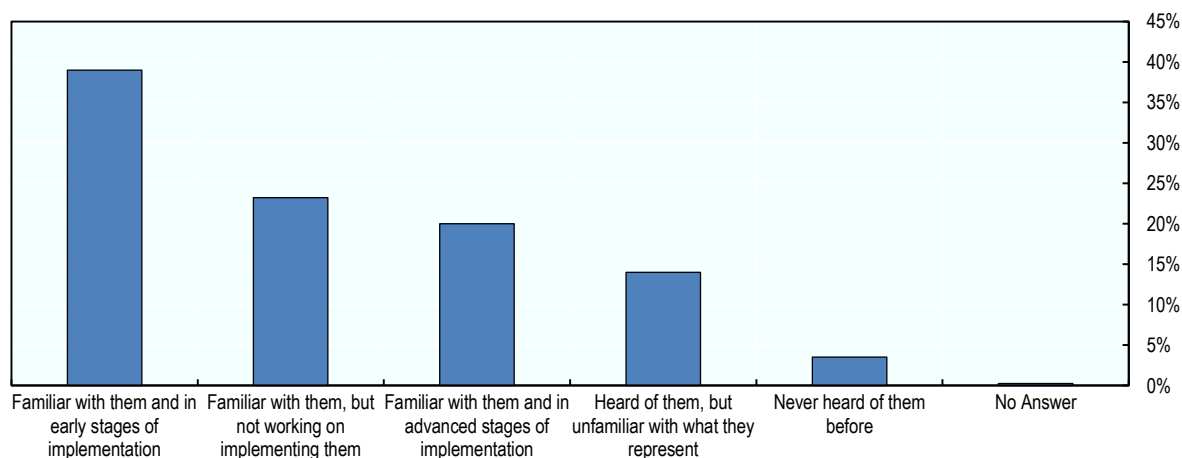
Source: OECD/CoR (2019), *Survey Results Note - The Key Contribution of Regions and Cities to Sustainable Development*, https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Documents/ECON/CoR-OECD-SDGs-Survey-Results-Note.pdf.

The majority of small municipalities have not yet started implementing the SDGs. The 59% share of respondents who are in the process of implementing the SDGs is an overall average that hides some marked differences, in particular according to the category of subnational authority represented. Interestingly, the share of respondents "implementing" the SDGs is distinctly higher than the average for large cities (87%), medium cities (83%) and regions (78%), while it is much lower for smaller municipalities (37%), which would suggest that larger entities are better equipped to work on SDGs implementation.

Policies and actions to implement the SDGs

The most common actions put in place to implement the SDGs are awareness-raising campaigns and establishing a dedicated body, selected by 62% and 57% of the respondents respectively (Figure 1.5). Having a dedicated strategy/action plan and establishing indicators are two of the key elements of a relatively advanced stage of implementation of the SDGs and these were selected by 44% and 34% of respondents taking action respectively. Among the "other" actions and policies, many respondents mentioned the integration of the SDGs in the organisations' plans and strategy, or intentions to do so in the future.

Figure 1.5. Policies and actions for the implementation of the SDGs at the subnational level

Source: OECD/CoR (2019), *Survey Results Note - The Key Contribution of Regions and Cities to Sustainable Development*, https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Documents/ECON/CoR-OECD-SDGs-Survey-Results-Note.pdf.

Sectoral priorities at the subnational level

Most cities and regions work with the SDGs because they consider them a valuable tool to strengthen regional and local development. Among respondents who are implementing the SDGs, 71% stated the reason is that they "See the SDGs as a transformative agenda" and 66% that they "See the value of the SDGs as a local development planning and budgeting tool".

However, from the sample and geographical scope (Europe), a strong emphasis is put on environmental sectors when prioritising actions to implement the SDGs. The most common topic or dimension of the SDGs tackled by respondents is the environment (73%), closely followed by energy (67%) and mobility (63%), with sustainable consumption, social policies and participative projects also scoring high (more than 50% of respondents). The diversity of sectors receiving high scores and the fact that respondents who answered this question selected on average five to six sectors each suggest that the cross-sectoral and

multi-faceted nature of sustainability and of the SDGs in particular is well taken into account (Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6. Sectoral priorities in the implementation of the SDGs at the subnational level
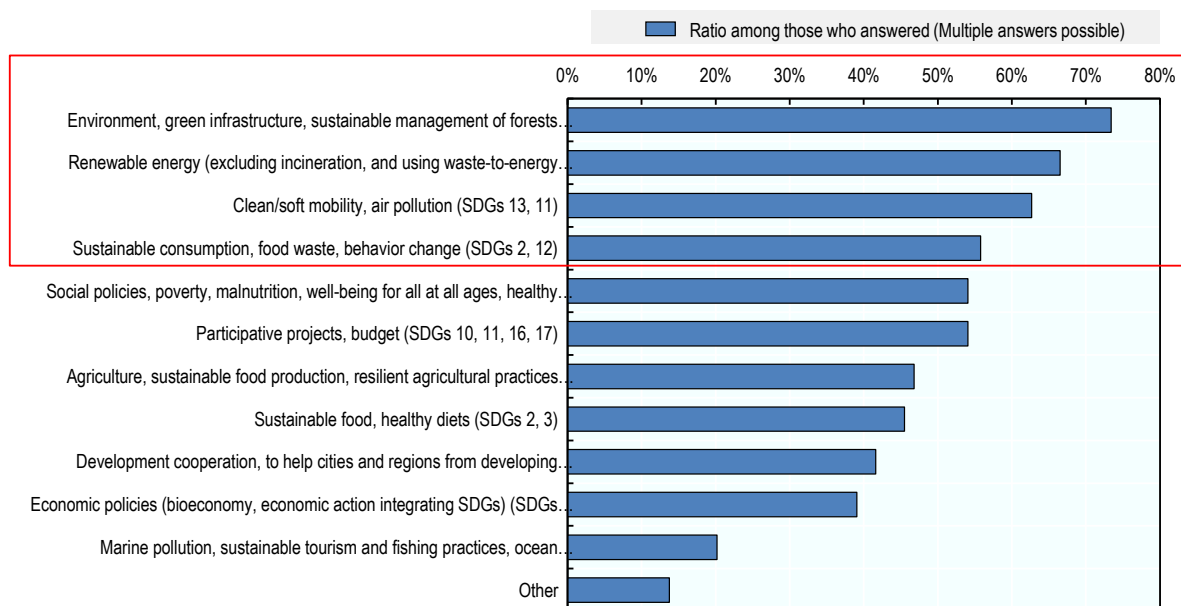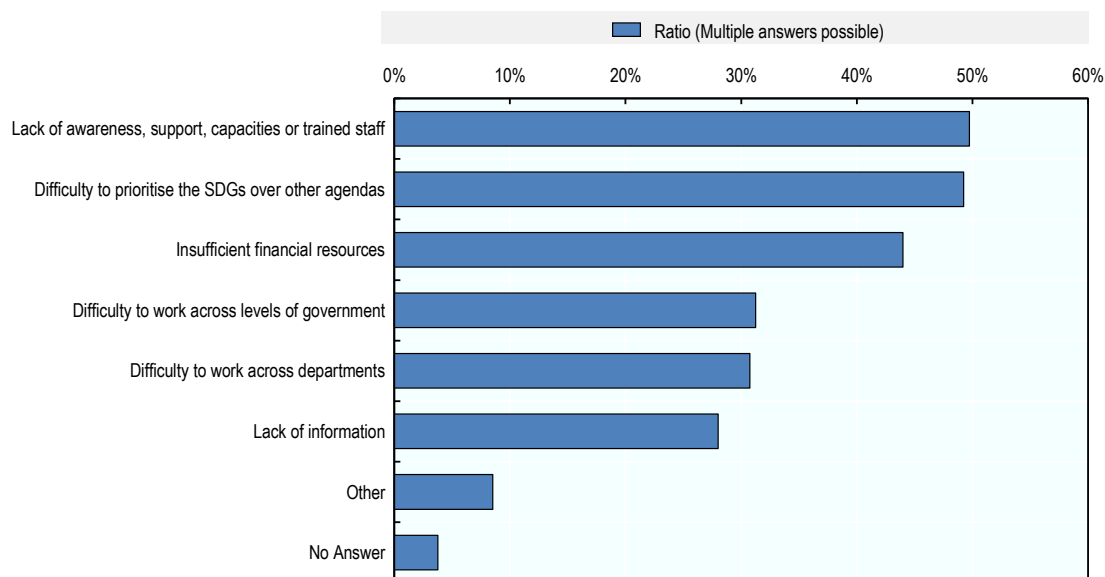

Source: OECD/CoR (2019), *Survey Results Note - The Key Contribution of Cities and regions to Sustainable Development*, https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Documents/ECON/CoR-OECD-SDGs-Survey-Results-Note.pdf.

Challenges to implementing the SDGs at the local and regional levels

Key challenges to SDG implementation conveyed by the survey respondents include the "Lack of awareness, support, capacities or trained staff" (50%) and "Difficulty to prioritise the SDGs over other agendas" (49%) (Figure 1.7). Interestingly, the share of respondents citing "Insufficient financial resources" as a challenge is not significantly different among respondents from small municipalities compared to the broader sample. The challenges specified by respondents who selected "Other" include the lack of high-level commitment and follow-up, difficulties in communicating the SDGs, the lack of harmonised data at different levels and the difficulty in defining an appropriate indicator framework. The two latter are particularly relevant to understand the current situation and monitor progress, and thus key to start working on SDGs. For instance, in the region of Flanders, VVSG (Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) has noted that while they estimate to reach around 65% of all municipalities with their indicator framework, the remaining challenge will be reaching those that are less prone to work with sustainability in the first place.

A total of 49% of respondents mentioned the "Difficulty to prioritise the SDGs over other agendas" as a key challenge, which testifies of the room for improving the understanding of SDGs as a framework to improve strategies, policies and their implementation rather than an additional agenda.

Figure 1.7. Main challenges in implementing the SDGs at the local and regional levels

Source: OECD/CoR (2019), *Survey Results Note - The Key Contribution of Regions and Cities to Sustainable Development*, https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Documents/ECON/CoR-OECD-SDGs-Survey-Results-Note.pdf.

SDGs indicators at the local and regional levels

Tracking and measuring the progress of cities and regions against the SDGs is an emerging priority for subnational governments. Around 70% of respondents track progress towards the SDGs. Almost 58% of respondents currently implementing the SDGs use indicators to monitor progress. Among all respondents who use indicators, most use local indicators (26%) or national indicators (19%). Fewer than 15% of respondents use EU- or UN-level indicators.

Overall, 40% of all respondents do not use any indicators. It is interesting to note that EU and UN indicators are roughly only half as commonly used as local indicators, which could suggest that they do not necessarily lend themselves to local and regional realities and constraints. In addition, the necessary data is not always available at the NUTS2 level (territorial level corresponding to basic regions of EU countries for the application of regional policies) for the EU indicators for example.

Multi-level and multi-stakeholder co-operation in implementing the SDGs

Respondents who are implementing the SDGs reported local-regional co-operation in that regard (60%). This highlights a high degree of co-operation between the different subnational levels, while answers related to co-operation with the national level were much less common among respondents (only 23% have joint projects with the national level to implement the SDGs).

In terms of stakeholder engagement and co-operation, 39% of the respondents highlighted that they mainly co-operate or have a dialogue with civil society or NGOs, followed by universities and by citizens (both 31%). Moreover, 28% of respondents stated that they already collaborate with the private sector, while 26% signalled that they are planning to.

As stressed by SDG 17, partnerships are fundamental to achieve the SDGs, but this opportunity is not fully exploited yet by subnational governments. Around 60% of all respondents answered "No" to the question "Have you established any formal partnerships (e.g. memorandum of understanding [MoU], purchasing power parity [PPP]) with other public, civil society and/or private sector actors to support the achievement of the SDGs?". Only 25% of the respondents selected "Yes, within my own region or city" with a further 9% each stating "Yes, with another region or city in their own country", or "With a city or region in an EU or OECD country" (7%), suggesting that very few subnational governments tackle the "external" function of the SDGs to drive international co-operation (north-south, north-north or south-south).

### *Cities' and regions' expectations from the EU on SDGs*

The survey also analysed what respondents expect from the EU on the SDGs.[1] Overall, respondents appear to be clearly in favour of ambitious action at the EU level in relation to the SDGs, including an EU overarching strategy ensuring policy coherence, mainstreaming the SDGs and financial support for sustainable projects. Specifically, between 85% and 95% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with all of the following statements:

- The EU should have an overarching long-term strategy to mainstream the SDGs within all policies and ensure efficient co-ordination across policy areas.

- A framework for policy coherence will be one of the essential objectives and aspects of an EU strategy on the SDGs.

- All of the EU institutions should break silo-thinking and mainstream the SDGs internally across all structures, and ensure policy coherence.

- The EU should have a financial mechanism dedicated to finance sustainable projects.

- The EU – through the European Commission – should strongly promote sustainable public spending and finance more sustainability-proof projects.

A large share of the respondents (66%) are in support of fiscal reforms, possibly including an EU tax to enhance sustainability at all levels. Regarding the possibility that the European Semester will be used to plan monitor and evaluate SDGs implementation in the EU, respondents were predominantly supportive (72% agree or strongly agree). Similar results were obtained regarding the possibility of using the "Better Regulation Agenda" to mainstream the SDGs within all EU policies.

Climate change emerged as the priority the EU should focus on, selected by almost two-thirds of respondents (who could select up to three answers). Investing in sustainable projects, poverty, creating ownership for sustainable development, education and mobility also scored high in this question (Figure 1.8).

Figure 1.8. Priorities the EU should focus on when addressing the SDGs according to local and regional stakeholders
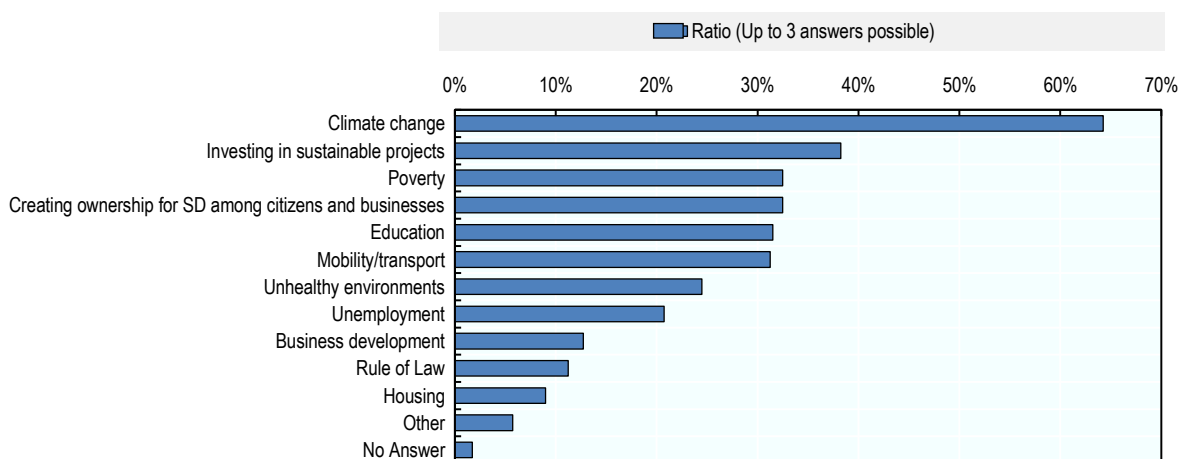
Source: OECD/CoR (2019), *Survey Results Note - The Key Contribution of Regions and Cities to Sustainable Development*, https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Documents/ECON/CoR-OECD-SDGs-Survey-Results-Note.pdf.

How cities and regions fit in the global UN process

United Nations member states review the progress achieved on the implementation of the SDGs through the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Respondents were asked whether their organisation has contributed to their national government's VNR and 21% of respondents stated that they have, either upon invitation by the national government or upon their own initiative. The share of respondents answering yes to this question is much higher among respondents representing regions (38%) and intermediary bodies (29%) than for respondents as a whole, and much lower for small municipalities (11%).

It is worth noting that the overall figure for involvement in the VNRs is significantly lower than the share of respondents that are implementing the SDGs (59%). This suggests that many of the subnational governments actively "localising" the SDGs are not involved in SDGs reporting at the national level, at least in the framework of the VNRs. The annual survey by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Global Taskforce of Cities and Local Governments (GTF) highlights that only 18 out of 47 countries reviewed (38%) formally engaged local and regional governments in the preparation of their VNRs in 2019.

As a parallel process, a handful of cities and regions are preparing Voluntary Local Reviews to assess their progress on the SDGs: this is the case of Buenos Aires in Argentina, Helsinki in Finland, Kitakyushu, Toyama and Shimokawa in Japan, Cascais in Portugal, Bristol in the United Kingdom and New York City and Los Angeles in the United States.

Mainstreaming SDGs in the design and implementation of local and regional development visions, strategies and policies

Cities and regions are increasingly using the SDGs to design, shape and implement their development strategies, policies and plans. The SDGs represent a comprehensive framework to drive integrated policies, mitigate fragmentation and silos, promote synergies and policy complementarities, and manage trade-offs across policy sectors. The SDGs are

also a powerful tool and vehicle to engage all actors in the policymaking process, both within local and regional administrations and across non-governmental territorial stakeholders. They also provide a framework for local and regional leaders to better communicate and engage with citizens, and to enhance accountability through more ambitious policies and better monitoring of terms of sustainable development outcomes.

Overall, cities and regions use the SDGs to rethink local and development strategies in three main ways depending on their policy cycle, leadership, resources and goals:

- Some use the SDG framework as a "checklist" or "health check" to assess the extent to which their programmes cover the span of sustainable development outcomes, to identify gaps to fill or areas where policies need to be upscaled.

- Some revise and adapt existing strategies and plans against the SDGs to enhance more holistic, comprehensive, cross-sectoral and integrated actions that can drive sustainable development.

- Others develop new plans and strategies from scratch, based on SDGs as a guiding framework as a means to build greater consensus and a shared vision for the future.

Assessing cities' and regions' programmes against the SDGs

Some cities and regions use the SDG framework as a "checklist" or "health check" to assess the extent to which their programmes cover the span of sustainable development outcomes, to identify gaps to fill or areas where policies need to be upscaled. For example, the city of Moscow (Russian Federationn Federation) has mapped all relevant initiatives and responsible departments for each SDG (Table 1.2). The core objective is to identify strong areas in terms of local action and others where more focus should be placed in the short, medium and long term. A next foreseen step is to use SDGs as an engine and opportunity to further improve policy outcomes in the city with three main strategies for the coming decade:

- **The 2010-35 Master Plan** aims to respond to the most complex challenge for the city of Moscow, which is to promote a "balanced urban development". The latter relates to promoting an integrated approach to urban planning, which should seek a balance between access to green areas, efficient transportation and quality housing. The key objective is to make Moscow a liveable city for everyone. Local departments within the city administration seem to be co-ordinating well when it relates to specific programmes, such as for the urban regeneration programme, Moscow electronic school or the Magistral Route Network. Moscow's metropolitan area (delineated using an economic-boundaries approach) encompasses around 20 million inhabitants, which requires co-ordination across municipalities to pool resources and capacities at the right scale for housing and transport amongst others. The SDGs could be used to think beyond administrative boundaries (i.e. those of the city of Moscow) to also enhance a metropolitan approach with neighbouring municipalities.

- **The Investment Strategy 2025** has the long-term objective to create a favourable investment climate in the city of Moscow. The Investment Strategy is the main guideline document for investment policy in Moscow. There is room for the local government to connect with umbrella organisations, such as chambers of industry and commerce, and to actively engage local businesses in mainstreaming sustainability as a standard for their core business (e.g. sustainable supply chains,

renewable energy). The strategy, therefore, provides a key tool to enhance private-sector collaboration in achieving the SDGs and for the public sector to encourage innovative "SDGs Solutions" by de-risking private investments, for example, through special economic zones and techno parks, or introducing awards for sustainability solutions.

- **The Smart City 2030 strategy** of the city of Moscow contains six main directions aligned to the SDGs, namely human and social capital, urban environment, urban economy, digital government, security and ecology, and digital mobility. The core idea is to provide digital solutions that help advance urban sustainable development, in particular to boost local living standards and to ensure more cost-effective management and service-provision processes. For instance, the use of advanced technologies can help to measure some SDGs indicators at a granular level (e.g. use of mobile operators to define Agglomeration of Moscow or technology to measure the quality of air and water). Similarly, the digitalisation of services related to health, education or environmental participation can help to achieve some SDGs.

Table 1.2. Mapping of SDG-related projects and responsible authorities in Moscow, Russian Federation

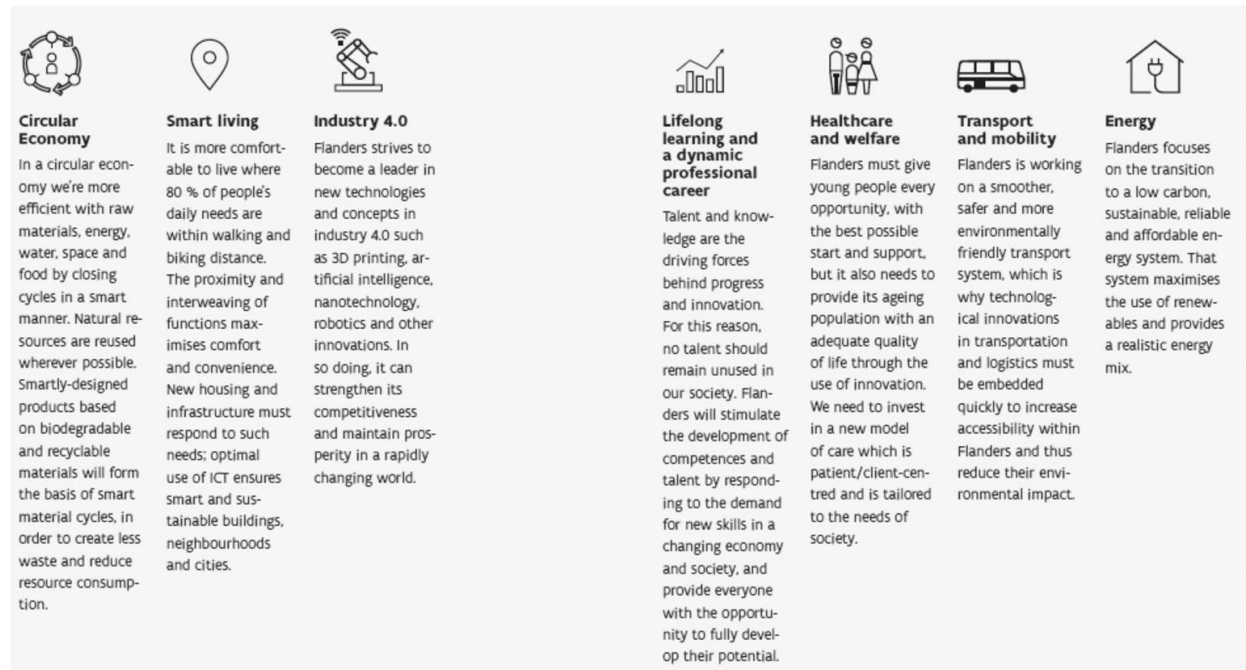| SDG	Projects and initiatives of the city	Executive agency
SDG 1	Socioeconomic Development of the city of Moscow	Department of Economic Policy and Development of Moscow
SDG 2	Eradication of Food Insecurity in the city of Moscow	Department of Trade and Services in Moscow
SDG 3	The Development of Preventative Measures in Moscow Medicine Healthy Moscow Moscow Longevity	Moscow Healthcare Department
SDG 4	Equal Access to the Education System in the city of Moscow	Department of Education and Science of Moscow
SDG 5	The Availability of Pre-school Education in the city of Moscow The Elimination of Gender Inequality and Access to Vocational Training for Vulnerable Populations, Including People with Disabilities The Integration of Different Levels of Education to Achieve High Educational Results Champions' Circles About the School Day in the Technopark	
SDG 6	The Rational Use of Resources and Maintaining the Purity of Water Bodies Environmental Education Activities The Formation of a Sustainable System for the Development of Housing and Communal Services	Department of Housing and Communal Services of the city of Moscow Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Moscow
SDG 7	Electric Buses and Charging Stations for Them The Development of Infrastructure for Electric Transport in the city of Moscow The Formation of Transport Hubs in the city of Moscow	Department of Transport and Development of Road Transport Infrastructure of Moscow
SDG 8 and 9	The Innovation Cluster in the city of Moscow The INVESTMOSCOW.RU Portal The Session of Moscow's Manufacturers Moscow Technology Parks The Innovation Cluster in the city of Moscow The Investment Policy in the city of Moscow	Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovative Development of Moscow Moscow Department for Economic Policy Development
SDG 10	Issues of Urban (Social) Inequality	Moscow Department of Labor and Social Protection
SDG 11	Targeted Investment Program Moscow Urban Renovation Program	Moscow Urban Planning Policy Department Department of Transport and Development of Road and Transport Infrastructure of Moscow

SDG	Projects and initiatives of the city	Executive agency
SDG 12	Tourism Development in the city of Moscow Environmental Education Events Sustainable Housing and Communal Service	Moscow Committee for Tourism Department of Housing and Communal Services of the City of Moscow Moscow Department for Environmental Management and Protection
SDG 13	Environmental Education Events Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change	Moscow Department for Environmental Management and Protection
SDG 14	-	
SDG 15	Biological Diversity Conservation Environmental Education Events Monitoring System for the State of Soil, Air and Water Bodies	Moscow Department for Environmental Management and Protection
SDG 16	Preventing Emergencies in the city of Moscow	Department of Civil Defense, Emergency Situations and Fire Safety of Moscow Department of Regional Security and Anti-corruption Activities of Moscow
SDG 17	Governmental Services Portal Mos.ru	Department of Information Technology of Moscow

Adapting local and regional development strategies and plans to the SDGs

Some cities or regions revisit or adapt existing strategies and plans against the SDGs to enhance more holistic, comprehensive, cross-sectoral and integrated actions that can drive sustainable development. For example, in Belgium, regional governments have important competencies for regional development. In this sense, sustainable development strategies have been in place since 2006 in the region of Flanders and updated every five years. A decree from 2008 framed sustainable development as an inclusive, participative and co-ordinated process. The second Flemish Strategy for Sustainable Development (2011) placed a strong emphasis on innovation and introduced a transition approach to achieving a long-term vision for Flanders.

Vision 2050 is the main strategic framework of the Flemish administration with seven priority transitions towards which the region strives (Figure 1.9). To achieve this vision, a new governance model was put in place based on transition management principles such as system innovation, taking a long-term perspective, involving stakeholders through partnerships, engaging in co-creation and learning from experiments. As a next step, Flanders has translated the 2030 Agenda to place-based needs and realities within the "Focus 2030: Flanders' Goals for 2030" (Flanders, 2019). This strategic document is guiding the implementation of the SDGs by the Flemish government by identifying 50 goals relevant to Flanders to achieve the 2030 Agenda. While not providing a one-to-one fit with the SDGs, the goals in Focus 2030 are mapped to the SDG framework. In addition, objectives related to sustainable development have been updated or redefined to better fit with the SDGs framework. The SDGs are seen as an indivisible whole with equal importance, as prescribed by the 2030 Agenda. Both Vision 2050 and Focus 2030 are umbrella strategies bringing together other plans, concepts and policies.

Figure 1.9. Key priorities of Vision 2050 in Flanders, Belgium

Circular Economy

In a circular economy we're more efficient with raw materials, energy, water, space and food by closing cycles in a smart manner. Natural resources are reused wherever possible. Smartly-designed products based on biodegradable and recyclable materials will form the basis of smart material cycles, in order to create less waste and reduce resource consumption.

Smart living

It is more comfortable to live where 80 % of people's daily needs are within walking and biking distance. The proximity and interweaving of functions maximises comfort and convenience. New housing and infrastructure must respond to such needs; optimal use of ICT ensures smart and sustainable buildings, neighbourhoods and cities.

Industry 4.0

Flanders strives to become a leader in new technologies and concepts in industry 4.0 such as 3D printing, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, robotics and other innovations. In so doing, it can strengthen its competitiveness and maintain prosperity in a rapidly changing world.

Lifelong learning and a dynamic professional career

Talent and knowledge are the driving forces behind progress and innovation. For this reason, no talent should remain unused in our society. Flanders will stimulate the development of competences and talent by responding to the demand for new skills in a changing economy and society, and provide everyone with the opportunity to fully develop their potential.

Healthcare and welfare

Flanders must give young people every opportunity, with the best possible start and support, but it also needs to provide its ageing population with an adequate quality of life through the use of innovation. We need to invest in a new model of care which is patient/client-centred and is tailored to the needs of society.

Transport and mobility

Flanders is working on a smoother, safer and more environmentally friendly transport system, which is why technological innovations in transportation and logistics must be embedded quickly to increase accessibility within Flanders and thus reduce their environmental impact.

Energy

Flanders focuses on the transition to a low carbon, sustainable, reliable and affordable energy system. That system maximises the use of renewables and provides a realistic energy mix.

Source: Flanders (2016), *Vision 2050*, https://www.vlaanderen.be/en/publications/detail/vision-2050-a-long-term-strategy-for-flanders.

Another example is the province of Córdoba, Argentina, which is using the 2030 Agenda for improving the effectiveness and impact of its governmental actions. The *Memoria de Gestion Gubernamental* (Province of Córdoba, 2017; 2018) aligned the three axes of governmental action to the SDGs (Figure 1.10) and paved the way for localised SDGs indicators. The provincial government considers sustainability as a key principle guiding the actions of the government, which aim to build a "sustainable state" enabling all the inhabitants of the province to enjoy a better quality of life.

The provincial government policy agenda has a strong focus on social inclusion and well-being. Because of Argentina's federal structure, Córdoba province is responsible for many of the policies that have a direct impact on people's lives such as education, housing, health, access to services or the environment. In view of the volume of resources devoted to fulfilling its well-being responsibilities and the growing demand for information, the provincial government has developed a framework of well-being indicators. The 2030 Agenda represents an opportunity to continue and expand the work on well-being and related indicators as well as to drive the social inclusion agenda in the province. In particular, SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 relating to poverty, food security, education, health, gender and inequalities have received primary attention. At the same time, to make the most of the interconnected and holistic framework of the 2030 Agenda, the province has developed a matrix to identify and measure the synergies and the trade-offs among those SDGs driving social inclusion and the other SDGs.

Figure 1.10. Three axes of governmental action in the province of Córdoba, Argentina
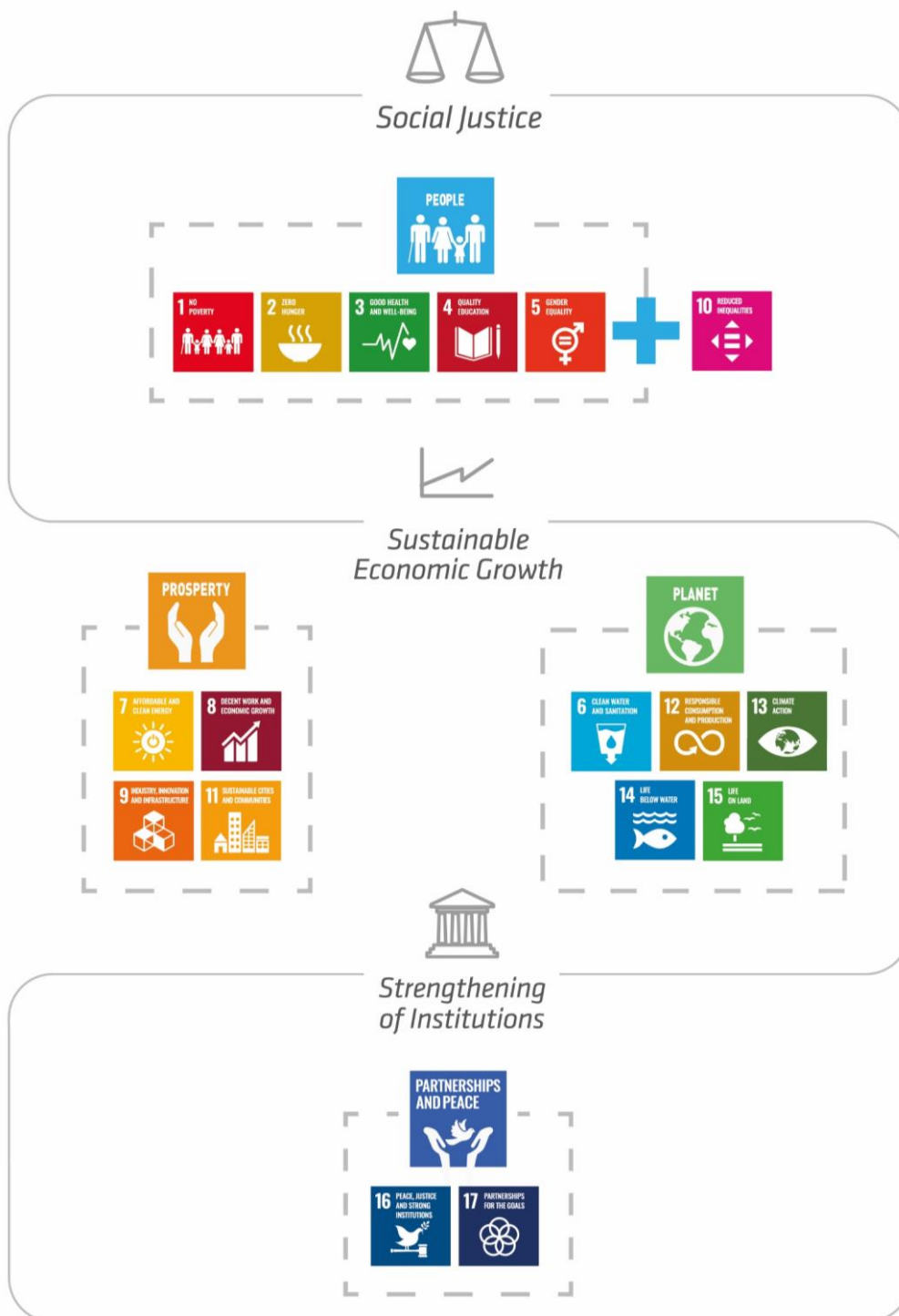
The state of Paraná, Brazil, is making important efforts to mainstream the SDGs in its budgetary planning. Paraná is aligning its multiannual plan (PPA) for 2020-23 and other tools for planning and budgeting with the SDGs. The Audit Court of the state of Paraná, Brazil, as a partner supporting the Social and Economic Development Council of Paraná (*Conselho Estadual de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social*, CEDES), is leading this work by analysing the 2016-19 PPA and the 2017 Annual Budget Law (LOA 2017) and extracting lessons for the development of the PPA 2020-23. In particular, the court has developed a model to: i) examine the link between ongoing public policies and the SDGs' targets; ii) evaluate budget expenditures related to the implementation of SDGs; iii) generate evidence to improve decision-making processes related to the SDGs; and iv) analyse the official indicators related to the budget-planning instruments (LOA and PPA). The work done by the Audit Court revealed the preponderance of process indicators over outcome indicators (Figure 1.11). From a scan of 202 initiatives, the Audit Court has concluded that only six were not linked to the SDGs and that only 21 contribute indirectly. The next step is to ensure that policies designed in the framework of the Multiannual Plan (PPA) 2020-23 are aligned with the SDGs. There is also an ambition to trickle down this methodology to the municipality level and follow up on the recommendations stemming from the analysis.

Figure 1.11. Audit Court initiatives to mainstream the SDGs into the budgetary planning process in Paraná, Brazil
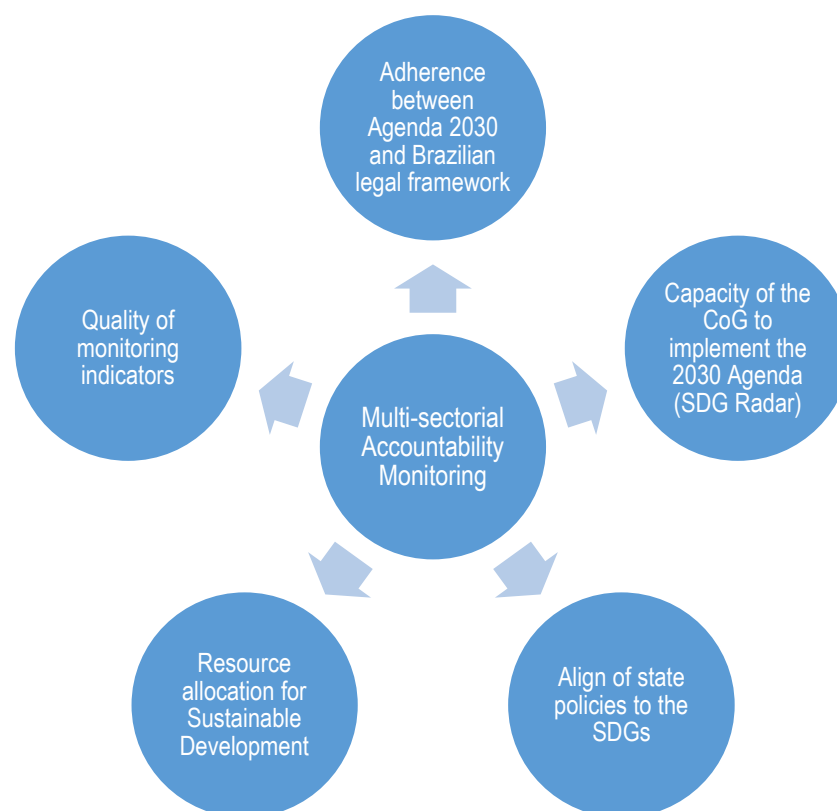
In parallel, Paraná is also strengthening its financial support to municipalities to help them advance the implementation of the SDGs. For instance, cities can access specific funding for institutional strengthening programmes and investments in urban infrastructure. The state is also working to identify local, national and international partners that can expand funding base to support municipalities in their localisation effort.

Developing new local and regional development plans and strategies through the SDGs

Some cities and regions develop new plans and strategies from scratch, based on the SDGs as a guiding framework, as a means to build greater consensus and a shared vision for the future. For example, the city of Kitakyushu is incorporating the SDGs into its various development plans, including establishing indicators relevant for the SDGs in their monitoring. Under the Kitakyushu City Plan for the SDGs Future City (City of Kitakyushu, 2018), 22 indicators were established in collaboration with the national government.

Kitakyushu's primary motivation to formulate this plan has been to turn the experience of overcoming high levels of pollution in the 1960s into a strength. This was achieved by applying the concept of green growth and developing an economy based on recycling and green industries, and sustainable and renewable energy. Collaboration between the local government, the industries and civil society – in particular women's associations – was key to overcoming the issue of pollution in the 1970s. These citizens' initiatives constitute good practices promoted by the city of Kitakyushu to face current challenges, like the need to engage the elderly population in social activities and secure appealing jobs for young people to prevent further population decline.
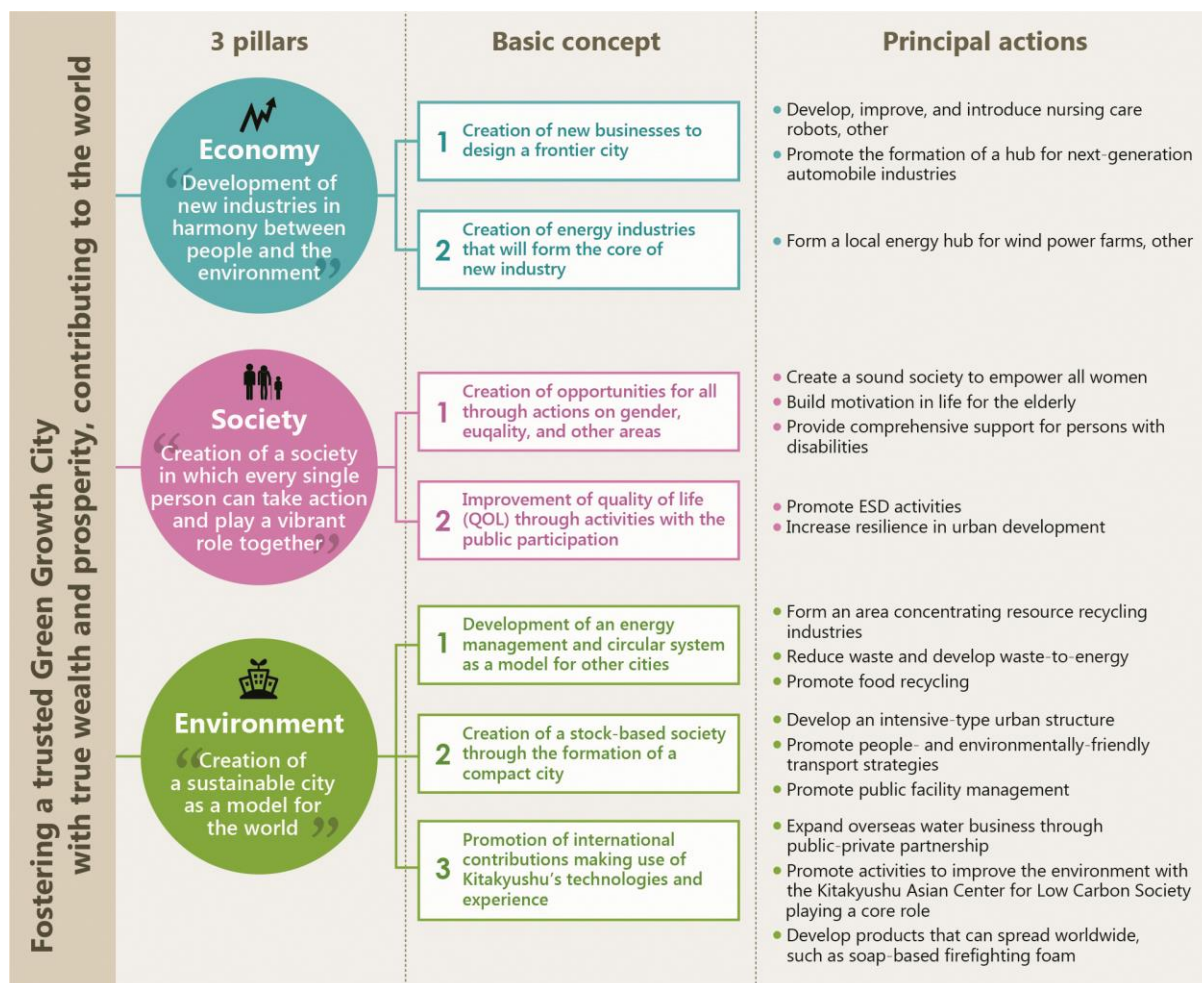
Building on Kitakyushu's long-term commitment to sustainability, the vision "Fostering a trusted Green Growth City with true wealth and prosperity, contributing to the world", was developed within the SDGs framework of the Future City programme launched by the Cabinet Office of the Japanese Government. The programme focuses on three pillars – economy, society and environment – and 17 specific measures to implement it (Figure 1.12). Kitakyushu has identified 8 SDGs that represent the main strengths of the city, mainly linked to the environmental dimension (SDGs 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 17), and has formulated its SDGs Future Plan.

Another example can be found in the city of Bonn, Germany, with a long-term commitment to sustainable development. This can be seen – inter alia – through its engagement in Local Agenda 21 since 1997, certification as Fair Trade Town since 2010, the establishment of a co-ordination unit on climate and as a signatory of the resolution by municipalities to support the 2030 Agenda in February 2016. Bonn's first sustainability strategy, developed in the context of the 2030 Agenda, was officially adopted by the city council in February 2019.

The city of Bonn has gone through a comprehensive process to localise the SDGs through its new sustainability strategy. The 2030 Agenda is seen as an opportunity to bring together the city's global responsibility agenda with actions promoting sustainable development within the city itself. As such, the sustainability strategy was designed to respond to key challenges and strengths of the city, for which some SDGs were identified as particularly relevant (Figure 1.13). For example, clean air and reduced CO_2 emissions are high on the political agenda in Bonn. As several other German cities, Bonn is struggling to reduce NO_2 levels to comply with European norms. This is particularly challenging in light of Bonn's growing population and persistently high rates of individual motorised vehicle traffic in the city, due to – among other things – high commuting flows. Mobility is thus a hot topic in

the public debate. Increasing rental and housing prices, with implications on housing affordability, and keeping green spaces intact (50% of the city's surface are protected green areas) are other challenges dealt with by the city.

Figure 1.12. Vision and action for the SDGs Future City Plan in Kitakyushu, Japan

Source: City of Kitakyushu and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (2018), *Kitakyushu City the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018 — Fostering a Trusted Green Growth City with True Wealth and Prosperity, Contributing to the World*, https://iges.or.jp/en/publication_documents/pub/policyreport/en/6569/Kitakyushu_SDGreport_EN_201810.pdf.

Bonn's sustainability strategy is developed with the support of Service Agency Communities in One World of Engagement Global on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). In this process, Bonn is 1 of 15 pilot cities, municipalities and administrative districts in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) that participated in the pilot project "Global Sustainable Municipality in NRW". The objective is to develop a common strategy that integrates both the local and global perspectives on sustainable development. The Service Agency is currently implementing this same project in eight more states (*Länder*) in Germany.

**Figure 1.13. Key SDGs for the city of Bonn, Germany**

SDG 11 is a cross-cutting priority goal for the city in its efforts to mainstream sustainable development throughout its institutions and structures. It also has political importance in light of the Mayor's role in forums like ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and Bonn's position as Federal and Germany's UN City.

Building on the city's long-term commitment to climate protection, as well as a location for global climate action, this goal plays an important role for the city's continued efforts to reduce CO_2 emissions

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Clean energy and reduced CO_2 emissions are central. Thus there is a strong focus on increasing the local production of renewable energies, by local energy providers (100% delivered from renewable sources by 2030) and by local households.

This priority goal reflects Bonn's role as Fair Trade City and aspiration towards global responsibility, promoting the concept at home and abroad. It is also seen as a cross-cutting goal with possible positive effects on goals like SDG 3 (health), 8 (decent work), 13 (climate protection) and 15 (protection of water and soils).

In light of over two decades of engaging in partnerships with the Global South, as well as the city's participation in international networks (e.g. ICLEI, Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy), Bonn is committed to continue expert exchange, particularly on topics like water, energy and waste management.

Source: OECD elaboration based on the OECD SDGs Questionnaire completed by the local team of the city of Bonn (Germany).

Denmark is another country where subnational governments have used the SDGs as a driver to implement better policies. For instance, the concepts of quality of life, well-being and sustainability have long been part of the regional narrative in Southern Denmark. The region's particular areas of strengths include renewable energies and energy efficiency, with over 40% of employment in the Danish offshore wind energy sector located in Southern Denmark. Moreover, competencies in health and welfare innovation, including automation, intelligent aids, information technology (IT) and telemedicine add to the region's strategic advantages, as well as the fact that Southern Denmark is the largest Danish tourism region. Although the SDGs are not formally included in the current Regional Development and Growth Strategy (2016-19) "The Good Life" (*Det Gode Liv*), the six priority areas and the policy themes covered are all directly or indirectly linked to the SDGs framework.

Moving forward, the region of Southern Denmark has been incorporating the SDGs in the new regional development strategy (2020-23). The overall concept of well-being and quality of life, the six strategy tracks, the specific regional goals and as well as the action of the region are linked to specific SDGs and are designed to contribute to their achievement. In particular, the region has decided to focus on 11 goals that are mostly relevant for its work: SDG 3 on health, SDG 4 on education, SDG 5 on gender, SDG 6 on water, SDG 7 on clean energy, SDG 9 on industry and infrastructure, SDG 10 on inequalities, SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities, SDG 12 on sustainable consumption, SDG 13 on climate and SDG 14 on life below water.

The regional government has developed a participatory process to engage local stakeholders in the new regional development strategy based on the SDGs (Figure 1.14). This includes: i) a public consultation process with local municipalities, education institutions, museums and other interested parties between 9 October 2019 and 17 January 2020; ii) a public "consultation conference" on 27 November 2019 in Vejle; iii) ad hoc consultations with local municipalities; iv) a dedicated consultation process with the partners on the German side of the Danish-German border; and v) a "kick-off conference" in May 2020.

Figure 1.14. Linking the regional development strategy 2020-23 and SDGs in Southern Denmark, Denmark
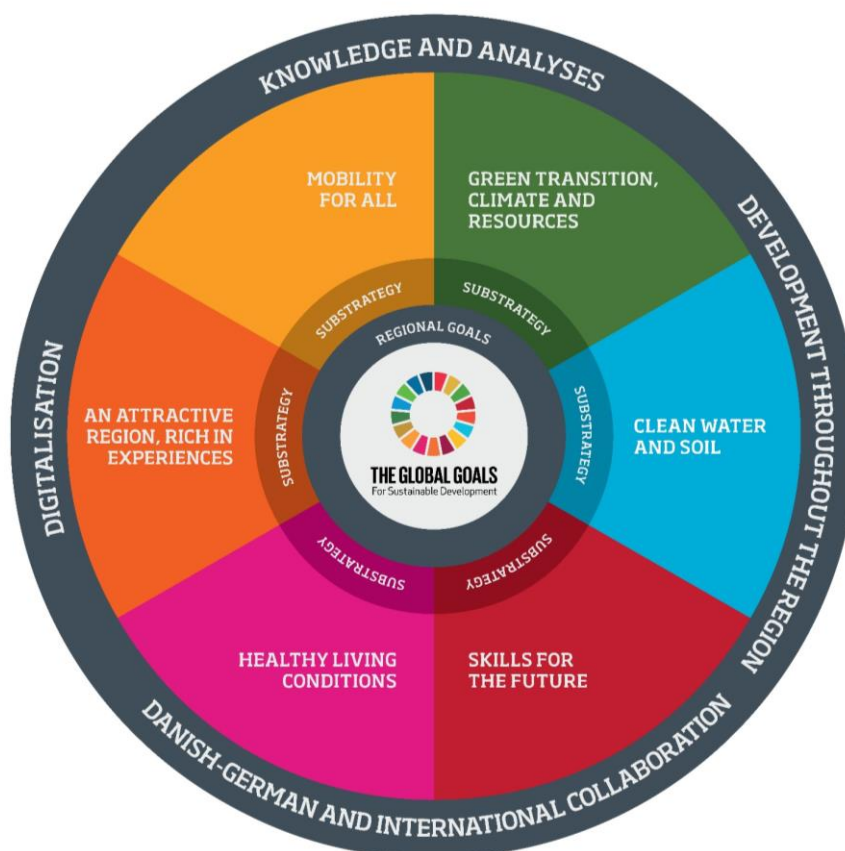
Source: Southern Denmark (forthcoming), *Southern Denmark Regional Development Strategy*, draft, 2019.

In 2018, Kópavogur, Iceland, formally included the SDGs into its comprehensive strategy for the municipality. A total of 15 SDGs and 36 targets have been prioritised for Kópavogur (Figure 1.15) based on a review of the 65 SDGs targets prioritised by the Icelandic national government, excluding goals where the national government has the main competencies, like international co-operation. A second criterion for selection were the 92 targets identified as important for local governments by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) to guide the prioritisation (UCLG, 2016[1]). Finally, seven context-specific targets relevant for Kópavogur were added based on ongoing commitments by the municipality, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the participatory budget platform OKKAR Kópavogur.[2]

Kópavogur's SDG strategy is meant to address policy silos, using the SDGs and their targets as a platform to explore synergies between the interconnected goals. This constitutes a new way of working for the municipality, which does not have a tradition of developing holistic master plans, but rather separate visions for each policy sector. The SDGs are also considered a useful framework for the municipality to prioritise actions across policy domains and over the short, medium and long term. The main goal of the strategy is to ensure the quality of life of residents, improve efficiency and participate in the global effort towards sustainability. To the backdrop of public spending cuts following the financial

crisis in 2008, the "Kópavogur model" puts a strong emphasis on efficiency of the local administration. To secure implementation and continuous monitoring of performance and progress, the Kópavogur strategy will develop strategic action plans where targets are linked to performance indicators and actions, which will be at least partly linked with the yearly budget of the municipality. Increasing staff awareness has resulted in positive action and different divisions have started working with the SDGs.

Figure 1.15. Selection criteria for the prioritisation of SDG targets by Kópavogur, Iceland

Source: Municipality of Kópavogur (forthcoming), Local development strategy of the municipality of Kópavogur.

The county of Viken, Norway, has started working with the SDGs in the context of a national territorial reform that foresees the merger of the counties of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold together with three bordering municipalities to establish the new Viken county as of 1 January 2020. To that effect, a joint board with elected political representatives from all three merging counties has been set up. Early in 2018, the Joint Board of Viken made the decision that the SDGs should form the basis of development in Viken. In March 2019, the board further adopted the proposed way forward for integrating SDGs holistically in Viken and the new county organisation. This involved developing a planning and steering system with the SDGs as a guiding principle, incorporating the SDGs as a management responsibility, connecting the SDGs to internal culture building and involving staff from communication, human resources and budget steering into a dialogue of how to develop this further.

The main motivation of Viken is to enable counties to take a stronger and more strategic and holistic role in regional development as part of the territorial reform. Taking this role, regional governments are expected to act as "bridge builders" between policy sectors at the

national level and diversified local needs. This implies more strategic regional development to solve complex societal challenges, such as long-term sustainable development. The SDGs in Viken drive two major process-developments: a regional planning strategy and a new planning and steering system for the county administration. Through the development of a holistic planning and steering system, the SDGs are used as an opportunity to link overarching strategic goals with the four-year regional financial plan, annual budgets and operational planning. This was seen as a weak or "missing link" in former regional planning practices. Based on the introduction of a model for comprehensive planning and management, a system will be set up whereby the SDGs are implemented from an overarching strategic level by the regional planning strategy through to other regional plans and action plans and then added to the four-year financial plan, annual budgets and operational planning.

Good practices from other champion cities and regions

The Autonomous Community of Euskadi (Spain) has developed the Agenda Euskadi Basque Country 2030 to align this administration's governmental programme and related sectoral policies to the SDGs. This document has localised the SDGs to the territorial characteristics of the Basque Country. It also aims to provide a common language to enhance co-ordination in public action among sectoral departments in the Basque government. In this sense, the General Secretariat of the President's Office is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the agenda in the Basque Country, and the General Secretariat of Foreign Affairs to foster partnerships and exchange on ways forward for its implementation with other regions, countries and international organisations. An annual monitoring report is expected to document the achievements and distance to the SDGs targets, with discussions in the regional parliament. Euskadi is also co-ordinating the implementation of the SDGs across levels of government and non-state actors. The External Action Department's Inter-institutional Committee, composed of the Basque government, the provincial councils, the three capital cities (Bilbao, San Sebastián and Vitoria) and the Association of Basque Municipalities (Eudel), is supporting such multi-level governance. Key social, economic and cultural actors also take part in the discussions of the External Action Department's Advisory Committee, chaired by the president of the Basque government (Basque Country, 2018).

New York City (NYC), United States, has been localising the SDGs since 2015 through OneNYC 2050: New York City's Strategic Plan. OneNYC 2050 is a strategy setting bold actions on domains such as health, infrastructure or education to confront the city's climate crisis, increase equity and strengthen democracy. OneNYC 2050 was launched in April 2019 under the requirements of Local Law 84 of 2013. The Global Vision, Urban Action framework is led by the NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs and fosters synergies between the 2030 Agenda and NYC's local development strategy. The Mayor's Office uses the SDGs to discuss innovations and challenges to implement the SDGs with other cities and countries around the world. Building on this work, NYC submitted a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) in September 2018 to the United Nations, based on the progress achieved through OneNYC 2050 (City of New York, 2019). The VLR addresses the five SDGs prioritised for the 2019 High-level Political Forum:

- **Quality education (SDG 4)**: Since 2014, the number of children in free, full-day high-quality pre-kindergarten has tripled (76% of students, the highest rate in the city's history) but is below the national average of 84.6% and disparities in performance across racial lines remain a key challenge. NYC, therefore, focuses on expanding the early childhood development programme, expanding the base for the

implementation of inequity-focused policies, or training for home-based childcare providers.

- **Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)**: There has been a record job growth in NYC in the last years, driven by high-paying professional occupations, and earnings are rising following the introduction of a USD 15/hour minimum wage that applies to more than 1.5 million New Yorkers. Significant challenges remain with regards to multiple occupational (more than 2 jobs) and more than 2 million citizens lack basic education and skills to access middle-class jobs. OneNYC 2050 plans to attract and create good-paying jobs by investing in businesses and sectors that promise fair wages and working conditions as well as in worker-owned business planned.

- **Reduced inequalities (SDG 10)**: NYC plans to expand the number of its youth leadership councils to influence city policies and to advance gender equity. NYC further aims to protect and provide resources to support new and undocumented New Yorkers. In particular, by expanding the municipal identification card IDNYC to increase access to public services.

- **Climate action (SDG 13)**: NYC's goal is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. The city already has a smaller per-capita carbon footprint than any big city in the United States and reduced 30% municipal greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 to 2017. Actions to reach the goals and protect the environment include multi-billion investments into the implementation of energy-efficiency measures in municipal buildings, the expansion of solar power and bike lanes, the completion of coastal protection projects and the operation of the largest electric municipal fleet in the USA.

- **Peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)**: OneNYC 2050 outlines strategies to expand voting rights, wants to ensure that residents are better informed about democracy and create opportunities for residents to directly impact their communities. At the international level, NYC is partnering with cities around the world in coalitions such as the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and led more than 50 cities in 2018 to advocate for the inclusion of local voices in the negotiations around the Global Compact for Migration.

Since 2017, the city of Los Angeles (United States) has started an incremental approach to align its local development policies to the SDGs (Figure 1.16, left panel). In particular, the city defined the following objectives (City of Los Angeles, 2019):

1. **Mapping and alignment** of plans, policies, initiatives, measures of impact, services or business areas that related back to the SDGs. This assessment helped to identify the policymakers and other state and non-state stakeholders that were already working towards some of the SDG targets, to understand what progress had been made and to identify where challenges remained.

2. **Gap analysis** to analyse the city's gaps against the activities mapped. The analysis showed gaps in certain SDGs targets, like those related to public health, that are governed by Los Angeles County and therefore require close co-ordination across levels of government to ensure their achievement.

3. **Localisation** to adapt the SDGs, targets and indicators to the local context, set and validate the results with stakeholders and monitor the implementation. Existing indicators and data sources are used to establish a baseline to monitor

future progress toward the SDGs. Los Angeles plans to work at a more disaggregated scale (i.e. going beyond city aggregates) and unpack data for different socioeconomic groups.

4. **Mobilisation**, with new ideas, partnerships and ways to advance the implementation of the SDGs. The city aims to go beyond the public sector to also engage with civil society, which is believed to be a great source of ideas due to the creative nature of the city.

A distinctive feature of Los Angeles is the close engagement with the academic sector in its localisation efforts. In fact, the SDGs localisation process was initiated by 18 graduate and undergraduate students, who spent the summer of 2018 gathering data and mapping activities on the SDGs across the public, private and non-profit actors. Students, with the support of the SDSN, also developed a methodology to determine the applicability of the targets to Los Angeles's local context, and proposed revisions (Figure 1.16). University partners that contributed to Los Angeles's SDG strategy include the John Parke Young Initiative on the Global Political Economy at Occidental College (Oxy) and the Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University (ASU), WORLD Policy Analysis Centre at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and the Institute on Inequalities in Global Health at the University of Southern California (USC).

Figure 1.16. The city of Los Angeles' approach for the localisation of the SDGs

Step 1: SORT
- Consider whether the target as written is applicable for the City or not

STEP 2: "THE GOLDEN RULE"
- For those not applicable, determine which targets may be applicable with revisions to the language or context, taking into consideration the original intent and vision

STEP 3: REVISE OR REPLACE
- Alter the target language as appropriate, revising the measure or language to reflect our local values and context

STEP 4: NEW TARGETS
- Develop new targets to ensure we leave no one behind

STEP 5: VALIDATION
- Validate the revised targets by ensuring alignment with existing City-commitments and by coordinating with policy owners and community stakeholders.

Source: Reproduced from City of Los Angeles (2019), *Los Angeles Sustainable Development Goals: A Voluntary Local Review of Progress in 2019*, https://sdg.lamayor.org/sites/g/files/wph1131/f/LA%27s_Voluntary_Local_Review_of_SDGs_2019.pdf.

The City of Helsinki, Finland has also aligned its local development strategies to the SDGs and is currently supporting its implementation. The Most Functional City in the World – Helsinki City Strategy 2017-21, approved by the city council on 27 September 2017, is the key document driving local development. The strategy focuses on three themes: securing sustainable growth, developing services and responsible financial management. The Carbon-neutral Helsinki 2035 Action Plan is another important document driving climate

action at the local level. The VLR conducted by the city in 2018 mapped Helsinki City Strategy, key projects implementing the strategy and the Carbon-neutral Helsinki 2035 Action Plan with the SDGs, and documented the linkages between Helsinki's key strategic objectives and the SDGs. In particular, the report focuses on examining five goals:

- **Quality education (SDG 4)**: The percentage of higher education graduates in Helsinki is more than 10% higher than the EU average. The city aims to be the most effective in the world at using the entire city as a learning space for people of all ages focusing on enabling access to digital technologies, embedding environmental education in curricula and fostering free education.

- **Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)**: Helsinki aims to become Finland's best city for businesses. However, land-use prices and traffic are key challenges for the city. Beyond that, there is a skill mismatch between the city's 30 000 unemployed and the 12 800 open vacancies in the construction and information and communication technology (ICT) industry that cannot find adequate workers. Helsinki aims to respond to these challenges by attracting foreign entrepreneurs, investments, skilled workers and tourists, supplying better vocational training to match future labour demand and increasing employment opportunities among excluded youth.

- **Reduced inequalities (SDG 10)**: Youth social exclusion is one of the most serious problems in the city. Helsinki aims to improve inclusiveness by increasing the offer of early age child support to families, improving access to services by increasing the provision of services in English and ensuring housing policies promote equity across neighbourhoods.

- **Climate action (SDG 13)**: Helsinki has managed to reduce its emissions by 27% from the 1990 level. Helsinki adjusted its carbon neutrality target from 2050 to 2035 setting up the Carbon-neutral Helsinki 2035 Action Plan including 147 measures to act against climate change and its effects. These measures tackle particularly targets 13.2 and 13.3. Through the plan, the city is constructing heat pump plants and bioheat plants and pursuing an expansion of solar energy.

- **Peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)**: Concerning security, 80% of the city's residents feel safe travelling to their residential areas on weekend evenings, however, the city aims to improve that number by increasing security measures across the city. With regards to the accountability of the public administration, only 56.6% of staff feel they have the opportunity to have an impact through their work. The city would like to enhance the accountability of public workers to improve the performance of the administration.

Helsinki is also co-ordinating reporting efforts with the national government. In September 2018, Helsinki was the first city in Europe to voluntarily report on SDG implementation. Finland was also one of the first countries to set national focal points, procedures and a monitoring and evaluation system for the implementation of the SDGs. Helsinki's local reporting complements Finland's national reporting and the city has been acting as a pioneer to encourage other Finnish cities to advance in the implementation of the SDGs (City of Helsinki, 2019).

The city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, is another good example of how to mainstream the SDGs into local policies, strategies and plans. The strategic approach, in this case, is driven by three overarching goals (City of Buenos Aires, 2019):

- **Adaptation**: The city conducted a thorough analysis to determine the contribution of its government plan and other key strategic projects to the achievement of the SDGs. A forthcoming Localisation Plan of the 2030 Agenda will specify medium and long-term targets established for 2023 and 2030 as well as proposed indicators to measure progress towards implementation. It will also highlight government policy priorities with regards to the SDGs, and key projects currently under implementation that have an important sustainable development feature including those from different local stakeholders towards the SDGs.

- **Dissemination**: The city has also undertaken a series of actions to disseminate and raise awareness among residents. For instance, the *Buenos Aires Elige* initiative of 2016 enabled residents to suggest and vote projects to be executed in the different neighbourhoods. In the 2019 edition, each project in the platform (e.g. construction of new green spaces, improving public transport, promoting culture, enhancing security, etc.) was assessed against its potential to achieve concrete SDGs. Furthermore, the city has placed important efforts in reinforcing the role of youth to achieve the SDGs. Some events used to raise awareness are the Youth Olympic Games Buenos Aires 2018, or the Lollapalooza music festival.

- **Partnerships** with other cities have become a strategic element to advance the implementation of the SDGs. For instance, the city was part of the "Implementing the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs: Comparative Urban Perspectives" project, during which Buenos Aires and six other international cities were benchmarked by academics on their urbanisation process and challenges around SDG 11. The city is also part of networks such as Latin American Capital Cities Union, UCLG, C40 Cities or the Mercosur Cities Network, where it exchanges with other peer cities. Lastly, the city, alongside the national council on social policy, championed an online course on "Localisation of SDGs in municipalities", which aims to share Buenos Aires' experiences with other public officials from Argentinian local governments.

In the United Kingdom, Bristol's efforts to integrate the SDGs into local development is a collective action across diverse actors in the city (Bristol City Council, 2018).

- First, the city council is integrating the SDGs into the city's ongoing projects. The 558 initiatives delivered within the One City Plan, Bristol's strategic local development document, have been mapped onto their contribution to the SDGs.

- Second, through its One City Approach, the city is leveraging the potential of important local institutions and networks to implement the SDGs, for which the Bristol SDG Alliance plays an instrumental role. It is a network of city stakeholders that aims to drive interest and action towards the implementation of the SDGs in the city, the region and nationally.

- Third, the city has established a new mechanism to harness resources locally. The Bristol City Funds is a mixed funding mechanism that provides loans and grants to deliver key priorities under the One City Plan. The funds operate as a source of investment and grant funding to support projects that will help transform Bristol and achieve the SDGs.

- Last, the city council is also considering how to align its procurement policy with the SDGs. Following the Social Value Act (2012), the city has been embedding social and environmental consideration into its procurement policy. Now, the city

has taken a further step to map targets, outcomes and measures for its procurement policy against the SDGs.

Prioritising the SDGs in cities and regions

The prioritisation of the SDGs is an important step that subnational governments are undertaking when using the SDGs as a tool to shape their local development visions, strategies and policies. Prioritising allows to identify key regional and local development issues for the territory and to link them to the SDGs. This can provide an integrated framework to address regional and local development issues more effectively in a holistic manner. Prioritising some SDGs does not mean considering only a few goals and overlooking the others. A core component of the 2030 Agenda is the interconnectedness and indivisible nature of the 17 SDGs and the need to progress on all the goals. Therefore, although some cities and regions might identify local priorities to better address some pressing place-based issues, the link, impact and trade-off on the other goals should always be considered and managed.

Cities and regions are prioritising the SDGs – or the targets – in different ways. The main approaches that are emerging to SDGs prioritisation are:

- **Technical and top-down process.** Some cities and regions are identifying their priority SDGs or targets through a technical process starting from the SDGs/targets prioritised by their national governments. These targets are screened and eventually integrated based on the context-specific priorities or on local competencies. This is the case, for example, for the city of Kópavogur, which started the prioritisation process based on the priority targets identified by the national government of Iceland.

- **Engaging stakeholders.** The prioritisation process can represent an opportunity to engage local stakeholders in the definition of the vision of the city or region. A stakeholder engagement process can complement a technical approach. It can be developed *ex ante* to identify the priorities of local stakeholders or *ex post* to validate and integrate the SDGs priorities defined in a technical way, as in the case of the province of Córdoba in Argentina.

- **Reflecting and strengthening political priorities.** Often, the choice of the priority SDGs/targets reflects the political priorities of a city or region. The SDGs can indeed be a powerful tool to move forward the political agenda of the government, at all levels. This is why subnational governments in Europe are mainly prioritising environmental SDGs (OECD/CoR, 2019) while Latin American ones are mainly focusing on social inclusion/social SDGs.

- **Focusing on the main strengths/competitive advantages.** Some cities and regions are prioritising the SDGs where they have a particular strength. Thus, the SDGs are used to strengthen the competitive advantages of the city or region. Linking the competitive advantages with the SDGs where the city or region is performing less well, can help to identify new development opportunities. An example is the city of Kitakyushu that is linking Planet SDGs with People SDGs.

- **Limited number of priorities vs. holistic focus on all the SDGs.** Some local and regional governments are identifying a limited number of priority SDGs, focusing on key local issues, areas of competencies or political priorities (e.g. Bonn has identified five priority SDGs, Córdoba six, Kitakyushu eight). Other cities and

regions have not defined specific priority SDGs (e.g. Flanders, Paraná, Viken), some might start the prioritisation process at a later stage while others will keep the broader focus.

Linking the prioritised SDGs to the others and measuring/assessing the impact of the actions on the non-priority goals is a key step to implement and maintain the policy coherence element of the 2030 Agenda. The integrated and interconnected nature of the SDGs allows to both prioritise and, at the same time, to address the broader SDGs framework in a holistic and coherent way.

Cities and regions should prioritise key issues relevant to their territorial specificities and then link them to the SDGs, not vice versa. The key lesson emerging from the examined prioritisation processes is that the priorities should be identified and communicated based on the key local and regional challenges and opportunities. The SDGs should serve as a framework to better address them and capture their integrated component.

Measuring cities' and regions' progress: The need for granular data

The nine pilot cities and regions analysed in this synthesis report provide good practices to localise the SDGs, including for measuring progress at the subnational level. They have taken different approaches to identifying and developing local indicators. They range from seeking inspiration from international or national guidance and indicator frameworks to using sustainability reporting efforts to map existing indicators to the SDGs. This section highlights some of the commonalities and challenges that emerge from these different attempts and provides an overview of local indicator frameworks under development in these places.

A place-based approach to measuring SDGs in selected cities and regions

Local and regional indicators provide tangible data that can guide actions and policies relevant to local and regional competencies. This often implies the use of administrative and operational data to monitor the performance of the city's or region's strategies, plans, programme and projects. Two interesting examples where indicators have been contextualised are Bonn, Germany, and Kitakyushu, Japan. It is worth mentioning that both cities have good data availability for selected performance indicators and a well-established reporting culture and framework.

The city of Bonn, Germany started its sustainability reporting in 2002. The latest report from 2016 includes an analysis of 45 indicators (over 2012-15) structured around four main categories: well-being, social justice, environmental quality and resource efficiency, and economic efficiency. Due to its long experience in sustainability reporting, Bonn has solid foundations for analysing key indicators over time with some indicators in place since 2002 such as for energy efficiency and waste produced per capita. In the 2016 report, the SDGs are identified as important forward-looking goals, and the 2019 report monitors progress in localising the SDGs in Bonn. For most of the SDGs, several relevant indicators were identified. In addition, the indicator framework in the 2019 report has been expanded to 55 indicators, with the aim of covering most aspects of the 2030 Agenda (City of Bonn, forthcoming). The report will be officially published in March 2020.

The Local Agenda office responsible for Bonn's sustainability reporting sees the value of having indicators for different purposes, including benchmarking as long as such indicators can inform action relevant to the city administration. The aspiration moving forward is thus to keep the existing 45 indicators, since they provide actionable intelligence for the city

administration, and expand the existing set to a total of 55 indicators. The office remains cautious about benchmarking cities since it can generate negative perceptions of already disadvantaged places.

Thus, Bonn's indicator framework also includes indicators available for all German municipalities, such as those in the catalogue developed by the Bertelsmann Foundation to measure the SDGs in German municipalities (see Box 1.2). Seventeen of the 47 indicators identified by the Bertelsmann Foundation were already part of Bonn's sustainability reporting. However, the alignment of indicators between national, state and municipal levels is a challenge.

Box 1.2. An overview of available SDG Indicators for Municipalities in Germany

A catalogue to measure SDGs progress at the local level

To facilitate monitoring progress towards the SDGs at municipal level in Germany, the "SDG Indicators for Municipalities" – developed by the Bertelsmann Foundation, the German Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, the German County Association, the Association of German Cities, the German Association of Towns and Municipalities, the German Institute of Urban Affairs, Engagement Global and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, and the German Association – provides a catalogue with 47 outcome and impact-oriented indicators.

The catalogue was developed through a four-step process starting with a "SDGs relevance check" breaking down the 169 UN SDG targets into 220 SDG targets and sub-targets. These were further selected depending on whether the target (or sub-target) corresponds to a major challenge for German municipalities, and whether municipalities can make contributions towards them within the scope of their mandated tasks. For the 126 targets and sub-targets that passed the relevance check, relevant indicators are identified and described. A total of 47 suitable indicators were then selected from 600+ indicators from the UN, Eurostat, national, *Länder* and municipal levels based on four criteria: data quality, data availability, function (i.e. whether it is an input, output, outcome or impact indicator) and validity (how well it represents the target or sub-target). Then, indicator parameters derived from official statistics were analysed, namely at which administrative level the indicators are available. The analysis found that data availability declined at lower administrative levels. The final indicators included in the catalogue apply to municipalities with more than 5 000 inhabitants.

The current step of the process is to disseminate the results through various means. One is the publication of the detailed indicator catalogue describing the 47 indicators to all cities and municipalities. The indicators and data are also disseminated through various online portals in German and English, where municipalities can tailor and download reports and compare themselves to peers in terms of individual indicators (i.e. not the overall progress towards SDGs or an SDG index).

Out of the 47 indicators identified by the Bertelsmann Foundation, 17 are already used in Bonn's sustainability reporting, whereas 10 indicators will require more expertise and adaptation in order to be adopted. One example is renewable energy, where the wind energy production indicator is considered irrelevant for Bonn since this development holds less

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potential than solar energy, for example. Adapting indicators to fit the context of Bonn is a work in progress.

The Bertelsmann Foundation and its partners plan to develop further the indicator catalogue and the SDG Portal in 2020.

Sources: Assmann, D. et al. (2018), *SDG-Indikatoren für Kommunen – Indikatoren zur Abbildung der Sustainable Development Goals der Vereinten Nationen in deutschen Kommunen [SDG indicators for municipalities - Indicators for mapping the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations in German municipalities]*,
https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/Projekte/Monitor_Nachhaltige_Kommune/SDG-Indikatoren_fuer_Kommunen_final.pdf;
Bertelsmann Stiftung (2018), *Monitor Nachhaltige Kommune – Bericht 2018* [*Monitor Sustainable Community - Report 2018*] https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/Projekte/Monitor_Nachhaltige_Kommune/MNK_Bericht_2018.pdf.

The city of Kitakyushu, Japan, has also carried out a comprehensive analysis of how SDGs targets and indicators can be contextualised, including drawing on indicators used for monitoring existing strategies and plans. This work has been done partly in collaboration with the national government, within the scope of the Kitakyushu SDGs Future City plan supported by the national SDGs Promotion Headquarters, for which 22 indicators have been established. Another vehicle to local measurement is the Kitakyushu Basic Environment Plan, revised in 2017 to include an "Environmental Capital and SDGs Realisation Plan". Its monitoring framework includes 38 indicators to measure progress related to the SDGs. All of these indicators are already available for Kitakyushu and are evaluated annually.

The indicators in the Basic Environment Plan and SDGs Future City plan are further complemented by indicators in other administrative plans of the city, as well as the Kitakyushu statistical yearbook. Each bureau and department of the city administration monitors data for relevant SDGs related to their policy domains. For example, the Environment Bureau covers indicators like greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and water quality. In addition, most city bureaus and departments undertake project-based monitoring to verify the results of specific projects. The General Affairs Bureau compiles these results in an annual report. All ongoing projects in the city (around 2 000) will be linked to the SDGs from the 2019 fiscal year.

Acknowledging that the UN and national SDG targets and indicators are not always suited to the city level, Kitakyushu has proposed some adaptation to better suit the local context. Some of these are illustrated in Table 1.3.

In Flanders, Belgium, VVSG has developed a "menu" of about 200 indicators, of which 54 are almost exclusively available from existing public sources and cover all the SDGs (1-5 indicators per goal). While this is described as a "ready-to-go" set, the organisation recommends that each municipality customises and complements the set based on the local indicators and needs.

The state of Paraná, Brazil, is measuring 13 SDGs and 44 targets with 83 indicators in 399 municipalities. These indicators are calculated with data from national surveys that are regularly published (periodically and some of them on a yearly base). If data is not available, official registries and proxies at the regional level can be used. The state is working to complement the initial 83 indicators by 2020, which are under review to check consistency and viability at the local level. The state of Paraná is using business intelligence

(BI) tools to monitor the evolution of the SDGs and to better support the decision-making process related to the achievements of the goals. The main objective is to deliver more effective public policies. Based on the "BI Paraná Keeping an Eye on SDGs", the government is planning to create a system-based report that will help the state and municipalities develop a diagnosis to identify priority SDGs. In addition to the BI tool, there is a digital platform to share good practices in the state. It aims to stimulate the replication of good practice and contribute to a better quality of life by registering and disseminating initiatives from all sectors in the state related to the SDGs.

Table 1.3. Proposed localisation of selected SDG indicators in Kitakyushu, Japan

SDGs and target	Proposed localisation of indicators
SDG 4 – Quality education	Example of national-level target: Extent to which education for sustainable development is mainstreamed at all levels of education (target 4.7.1)
	Example of city-level indicator: Number of citizens who are engaging in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
SDG 6 – Clean water and sanitation	Example of national-level target: Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance (6.a.1)
	Example of city-level indicator: Number of water- and sewage-related international co-operation under the intercity collaboration
SDG 7 – Affordable and clean energy	Example of national-level target: Renewable energy share in the total energy consumption (7.2.1)
	Example of city-level indicator: Introduced renewable energy (amount of renewable energy produced within the city)
SDG 17 – Partnerships for the goals	Example of national-level target: Total amount of approved funding for developing countries to promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies (17.7.1)
	Example of city-level indicator: Number of projects in developing countries by the intercity co-operation
	Example of national-level target: Dollar value of financial and technical assistance committed to developing countries (17.9.1)
	Example of city-level indicator: Number of trainees from the cities of developing countries accepted at the city to support capacity building

Source: OECD SDGs Questionnaire completed by the local team of the City of Kitakyushu (2018).

Cities and regions' increasing attention to data-driven policymaking

The SDGs provide an opportunity to strengthen data-driven policymaking in cities and regions. In the province of Córdoba (Argentina) and the municipality of Kópavogur (Iceland) efforts are being put into further developing a culture of, and competencies for, performance measurement and data-driven policymaking. These efforts include – inter alia – developing survey instruments and information systems, such as, for example, Córdoba's well-being survey and Kópavogur's open-source software MÆLKÓ, integrating over 50 different databases from the municipality's different services.

The province of Córdoba, Argentina, has started to define relevant indicators to monitor in the context of the province's prioritised SDG targets. As a first priority, 82 of the 169 UN targets were selected while an additional 90 to 111 targets are under discussion. The Secretariat of Institutional Strengthening, which is the provincial government's focal point institution for the SDGs, and the provincial Statistics and Census Department (DGEyC) collaborate on identifying relevant indicators. Using the prioritised SDG targets as a basis,

both institutions have carried out an analysis of the following indicator sets to define place-based metrics for Córdoba:

- SDG indicators proposed by the United Nations and the World Bank (based on the World Development Indicators).

- SDG indicators adopted at the national level by the Argentinian government.

- Provincial indicators within the OECD regional well-being framework.

- Management indicators used by the various departments for monitoring programmes and initiatives of the provincial government.

Córdoba estimates that 40% of the prioritised SDG target indicators could be measured through the provincial well-being survey carried out directly by the DGEyC, as part of a broader effort to measure 12 material and non-material conditions that matter to people against the OECD regional well-being framework. The development of provincial well-being statistics has been supported through policy dialogues with the OECD since 2019, in view of modernising and strengthening the provincial statistical infrastructure (OECD, 2019).

In Kópavogur, Iceland, the municipal administration invested in improved infrastructure and competencies for data-driven policymaking as part of the strategic work on localising the SDGs. In 2016, the municipality started drafting its new 5-year strategy, prioritising 36 SDG targets. Part of the strategy development consisted in developing a local Social Progress Index (SPI)[3] for Kópavogur, including the collection of survey data to assess its strengths and weaknesses related to social and environmental outcomes. A total of 56 context-specific indicators were thus collected to create a local "social progress portrait" for Kópavogur, showing how the municipality performs in relation to the SPI. The SPI has been mapped against the SDGs to show how the indicators can be used to monitor the implementation of the goals. However, this exercise needs to be further refined if the SPI indicators are going to be used to monitor the SDGs.

More recently, Kópavogur issued data and relevant supporting documents for 97 key performance indicators that are part of the ISO 37120 standard for sustainable development of communities. The ISO 37120 standard was developed by the World Council on City Data (WCCD) to raise the bar for high-calibre city data (all ISO data is verified by third parties). In June 2019, Kópavogur was awarded the "Platinum" certification – the highest ISO 37120 certification level available – due to the quality of the data provided. As part of this process, the Administration Department is promoting an internal culture of monitoring and performance measurement. Kópavogur has developed the Child Friendly City Index (CFCI) in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Social Affairs in Iceland as the goal of the municipality is to become a child-friendly city. The index recently won a Child Friendly City Initiative Inspire Award at a UNICEF summit.

In Kópavogur, the SPI, CFCI and ISO 37120 indicators will be linked to the municipality's prioritised SDG targets through the local administration's online management and information system MÆLKÓ. MÆLKÓ draws on over 50 local databases integrated into one data warehouse, including service data from schools and kindergartens, building inspections data, human resources indicators, among others. The main function of MÆLKÓ is to link performance indicators with tasks and goals. The system will further help the local administration to calculate performance measures and composite SDG

indexes (see Figure 1.17). The next steps for Kópavogur foresee the use of MÆLKÓ and the key performance indicators as a tool for policy dialogue.

Figure 1.17. Planned calculations of SDGs indexes in Kópavogur, Iceland

The information and management system MÆLKÓ links performance indicators with tasks and goals related to the SPI, ISO 37120 and the SDGs
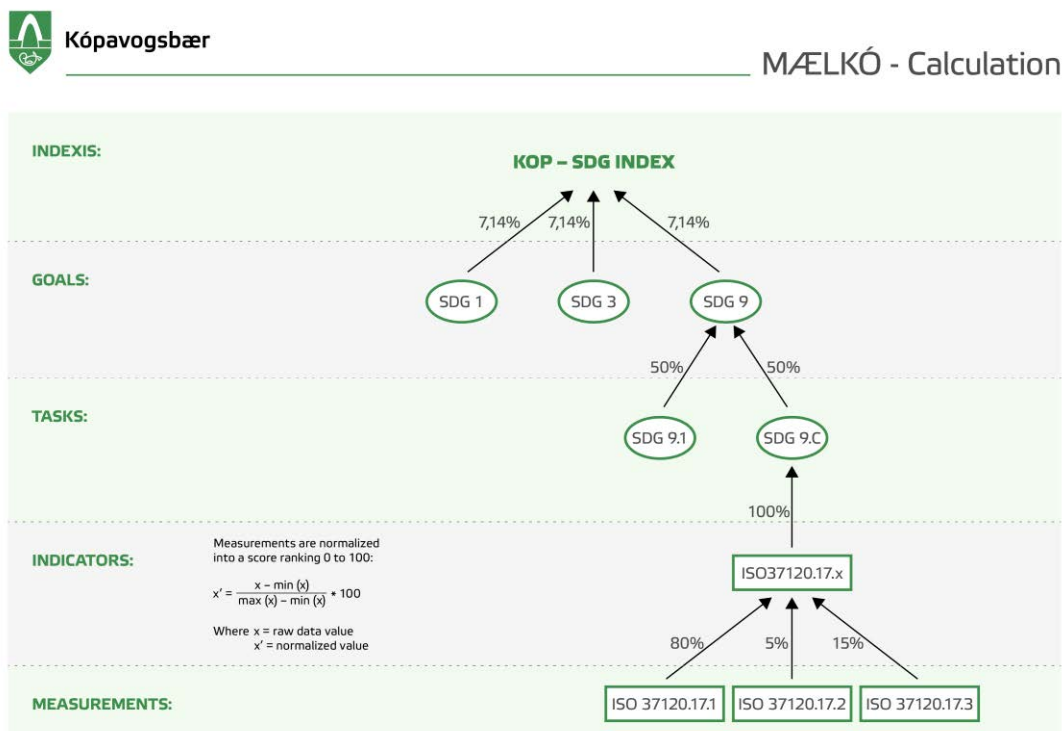
Note: The assigning of weights in the SDGs indexes is work in progress. The figure is for illustrative purposes. ISO 37120 in the figure includes: ISO 37120.17.1 Internet connections per 100 000 inhabitants; ISO37120.17.2 Cell phone connections per 100 000 inhabitants; ISO37120.17.3 Landline connections per 100 000 inhabitants. *Source*: Provided by the municipality of Kópavogur.

Regional level data is an essential input to strategic planning. In Viken (Norway) for instance, regional development trends have been analysed using the SDGs as a framework to inform the region's planning strategy, while in Flanders (Belgium), SDGs targets were analysed and translated into a set of 48 goals linked to the region's long-term Vision 2050. In Southern Denmark, the SDGs are used to shape regional policy dialogue.

In Viken, the new county administration (taking office as of 1 January 2020) was tasked to develop a comprehensive baseline study of regional trends in Viken – the "knowledge base" – using the SDGs as an overarching framework. The knowledge base will include indicators showing societal development trends that relate to all the SDGs and help the county to prioritise actions and targets while monitoring progress towards the SDGs. While county and municipal level data is rather well developed in Norway, the Knowledge Base may incorporate indicators that are currently not available at regional and municipal level. These include for example waste management in other sectors than private households (SDG 12), such as the construction sector, which is estimated to make up 25% of total

waste in the county. The knowledge base is also seen as an instrument to inform strategic planning. For example, the political Joint County Board for Viken prescribed some specific uses of the Knowledge Base, including informing the formation of new inter-municipal political boards based on functional and socioeconomic regions, as well as opportunities for smart specialisation. Such analyses are essential in the context of Viken, where geographic "mismatches" between national and subnational levels lead to a complex system of territorial governance with overlapping functions and administrative borders.

The challenge of aligning SDGs indicators across government levels

In many cities and regions, aligning indicators across levels of government is both a multi-level governance challenge and a natural result of different government capacities. In Belgium, for instance, indicator frameworks to measure progress related to the SDGs are developed in parallel by different subnational governments, reflecting different data needs and availability depending on the competencies of the different governments. Both civil society and municipalities have expressed a desire to be active in the monitoring of progress towards the SDGs and in the definition of indicators used for local-, regional- and national-level reporting.

In Southern Denmark, the Regional Development Strategy 2020-23 is linked to the SDGs. For each strategy track, three regional goals are formulated that define the direction and contribute to meeting the challenges, or to bringing special regional potential to bear. At the same time, the regional goals all contribute directly or indirectly to help achieve the ambitions set out in the SDGs. In each of the six strategy tracks, status and development will be traced in an annual publication. The annual follow-up will feature a brief description of developments in relation to the regional goals. This description will be backed by a range of indicators that can be adapted in relation to both the current situation and the development achieved. In this way, the follow-up can not only identify current challenges but also track new developments. The method for following up will naturally vary depending on the different types of goals. Some data can be collected directly from the set of indicators in the SDGs, while other indicators will be used as a supplement if this provides more accurate information about local and regional conditions. When developing the indicators, the region of Southern Denmark gets inspiration from OECD, Statistics Denmark and the municipalities. For instance, the region works with the municipality of Haderslev to develop indicators at the municipal level in Denmark.

Indicators at the municipal level vary according to the availability of national statistics sources and the capacity and interest of the local administrations. Small municipalities naturally have less human resource capacity to develop local indicators, which is why strengthened support from national governments is needed in many cases. At the same time, there is some reluctance observed at the national level to "impose" reporting requirements on municipalities. Such a lock-in situation was observed in the context of Viken, where the Ministry of Local Development and Modernisation of Norway did not want to place additional burdens on municipalities in terms of monitoring the SDGs, while small municipalities would need ready-made indicators and advice on how to proceed.

Although it exists, structured collaboration between subnational governments and national statistical institute (NSIs) on localising SDGs indicators is rare. NSIs often do not have enough capacity to work on regional and municipal level indicators for the SDGs, even in cases where formal partnerships exist. This makes the alignment of indicators less likely, as subnational governments develop their own frameworks based on operational and other data (see Chapter 2).

Using indicators as a tool for stakeholder dialogue

Localised SDG indicators are not an end in themselves but can be used to structure policy dialogue with territorial stakeholders. Most pilot cities and regions are still at the early stages of developing their SDG indicator frameworks; often these efforts are rather internal to the local or regional administration and do not systematically engage stakeholders because the exercise is considered technical and time-consuming. One exception is Córdoba, where the provincial government has developed an open data portal and started a process of identifying interlinkages between the SDGs through a matrix approach. Kópavogur may embark on a similar process when it comes to developing the SDG composite indexes.

The state of Paraná, Brazil is establishing partnership agreements with its 399 municipalities to implement the SDGs. By August 2019, 248 municipalities had engaged with CEDES in a municipal capacity, building strategy to improve articulation and co-ordination at the local level. Since the beginning of its mandate in 2016, there has been a mobilisation of mayors for the involvement of municipalities. Another strategic partnership the municipalities located in the western part of the state was built with Itaipu bi-national, a world leader in clean and renewable energy production, and there is a plan in place to improve the engagement of the municipalities located in the lakeside. The initiative also involves academia, civil society and the private sector and counts with the participation of all state secretariats. CEDES is the institution in place responsible for supervising the implementation of the SDGs. It is also responsible for developing long-term sustainable planning for the state. The articulation with the federal level and the municipal level and their dependence on systems and statistics that sometimes relies on census implemented every ten years are the main challenges faced so far.

Civil society can also use SDG reporting to hold local governments accountable and to scrutinise policy proposals. This has been witnessed for example in the case of Flanders, where the strategic advisory boards raised some criticism regarding the ambition level of the target framework. In the case of the state of Paraná, stakeholder dialogue is engaging the population through partnerships with the civil society organisations, such as the SDGs art project, which uses artistic and cultural manifestations to stimulate reflection on the 2030 Agenda. CEDES is also bringing together the justice system and the Court of Accounts to improve not only the state justice but also the accountability systems, as SDG 16 is considered a basic condition to implement other SDGs.

Notes

[1] To this end, respondents were asked a series of questions taking the form: "Do you agree with the following statement?". Respondents could choose among the following options: "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Disagree", "Strongly disagree", "No opinion" or not answer.

[2] Platform providing residents with small-scale funding to maintain and improve different areas of the municipality.
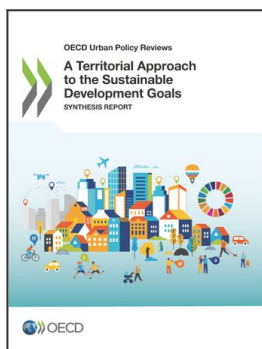
[3] For more information on the SPI, visit: https://www.socialprogress.org/.

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