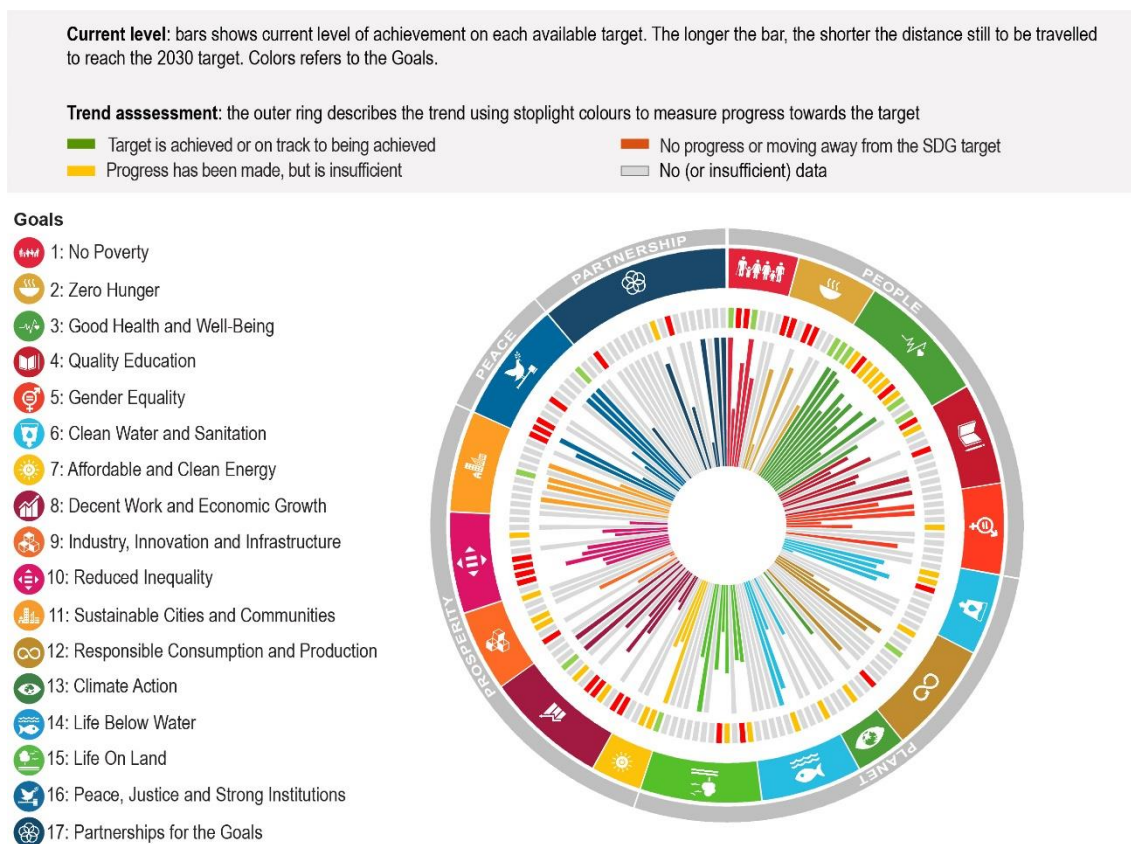# Measuring distance to the SDG targets – Australia

Australia has already achieved 21 of the 124 SDG targets for which comparable data are available and, based on most recent trends, it is expected to meet 5 additional targets by 2030 (Figure 1). As virtually all OECD countries, Australia has already met (or is close to meeting) most targets related to securing basic needs and implementing the policy tools and frameworks mentioned in the 2030 Agenda (see details in Table 1). Australia has many resources to support the well-being of its population. Still, while Australia is reducing some of the main environmental pressures, the impact of the Australian economy on the environment remains significant.

This country profile provides a high-level overview of some of Australia's strengths and challenges in performance across the SDG targets. As such, it differs in nature from Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) or other reporting processes. To ensure international comparability, this assessment builds on the global indicator framework and relies on data from the *SDG Global Database* and OECD databases. VNRs typically use national indicators that reflect national circumstances and are more up-to-date (See the section How to read this country profile that provides some methodological details on country profiles).

Figure 1. Australia's distance from achieving SDG targets included in this report

Source: All data is taken and adapted from (UNDESA, 2021[1]), *SDG Global Database*, https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg and (OECD, 2021[2]), *OECD.Stat,* https://stats.oecd.org/ (accessed on 29 October 2021).

Main strengths

Australia has many resources to support the well-being of its population. Australia performs particularly well in terms of health status. The incidence of communicable diseases such as AIDS, Hepatitis B or Tuberculosis is low (Target 3.3) and mortality from non-communicable disease is below the OECD average (Target 3.4). These achievements partly reflect low prevalence of tobacco consumption (Target 3.a) and alcohol use (Target 3.5), a high immunisation rates (Target 3.b) but also broad health coverage – the proportion of households with large health expenditures is well below the OECD average (Target 3.8). On education, the picture is more nuanced. While on average students outcomes are slightly above the OECD average, this advantage has been eroded over the past decade. Yet, the proportion of teachers who received in-service training in the last 12 months is one of the highest of the OECD. Australia also shows good performance on adult's skills: the share of the population with adequate proficiency in functional skills is above the OECD average (Target 4.6) and the participation rate of adults in formal and non-formal education is in the top third of OECD countries (Target 4.3). On gender equality, Australia has a very strong legal framework when it comes to "violence against women" and "employment and economic benefits" (Targets 5.1 and 5.3). In addition, relatively to other OECD countries, few women report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former partner (Target 5.2). Still, there is scope for improvement. Australia is around the OECD average on the "overarching legal frameworks and public life" and "marriage and family" dimensions of the legal framework, while it is lagging behind when it comes to sharing the burden of unpaid work between partners in the couple (Target 5.4).

Australia has reduced some of the main environmental pressures. However, agriculture's environmental impact remain significant on the quantity and quality of water resources (Goal 6) while the nutrient balance is relatively low (Target 2.4). On urban development, while Australia remains well above the OECD average in terms of built-up area per capita, it experienced one of the largest reductions over the past decades – almost -1% per year on average between 2000 and 2014 (Target 11.3). It also made significant progress towards Targets 11.6 and 12.5 on the environmental impact of cities. Mean population exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ in metropolitan areas has declined below the OECD average and WHO recommendations. As a result, Australia reports well below average rates of mortality attributed to household and ambient air pollution (Target 3.9). On waste, all municipal solid waste is collected and almost half of them is composted or recycled (Target 11.6). Australia already meets international treaties on waste such as the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions (Target 12.4). On biodiversity, as one of the most diverse countries in the world, Australia has already implemented legislation, regulations or administrative acts on preventing the introduction and management of invasive alien species (Target 15.8) and on combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (Target 14.6). Australia has also made progress in expanding protected areas, exceeding the international 2020 Aichi targets for terrestrial areas (Target 15.1) and marine protection (Target 14.5). However, gaps remain: around one-third of marine, terrestrial and mountains areas and two-third of freshwater areas that are key for biodiversity are not protected (Targets 14.5, 15.1 and 15.4).

Main challenges

Australia has significant scope for progress on achieving food security for all (Goal 2). On the consumption side, while severe hunger (Target 2.1) has been eradicated (as in most OECD countries), malnutrition (Target 2.2) and food insecurity (Target 2.1) remain an issue, and the situation is unlikely to improve enough by 2030. Recent data suggest that one third of the adult population was obese in 2019 while more than in 12% faced food insecurity. Food waste per capita is also well above the OECD average (Target 12.3). On the production side, despite progress in some dimensions, the environmental performance of agriculture is still insufficient. Finally, Australia has the highest OECD score on food price

anomalies (i.e. periods of abnormally high market prices) suggesting higher volatility in food commodity markets (Target 2.c), although remaining in the "normal range" defined by the FAO.
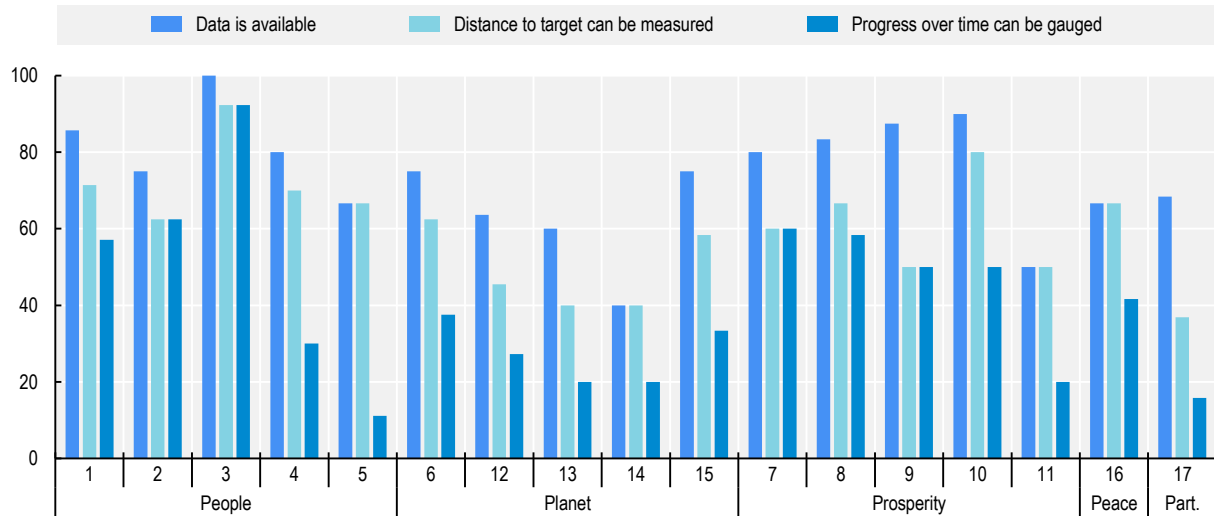
The impact of the Australian economy on the environment remains significant. Australia is among the top ten largest greenhouse gas emitters in the OECD. Over the past decade, it has managed to reduce many environmental pressures despite higher GDP but it remains one of the most resource- and carbon-intensive OECD economies. Australia's carbon intensity in relation to GDP has fallen but remains around twice as high as the OECD average (Targets 13.2 and 9.4). Renewable energy production has increased in recent years, though its share in total primary energy supply remains below the OECD average (Target 7.2). Further, Australia is one of the most resource-intensive OECD countries due to its high extraction and use of metal ores and fossil energy materials (Target 12.2). On biodiversity, besides some improvements (see above) and despite gaps in knowledge, the overall status of biodiversity is poor and worsening (Targets 2.5 and 15.5). On adoption and implementation of national Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategy, Australia provides a mixed picture: Australia has an above average score on adoption of DRR strategies in line with the Sendai Framework strategies but only a fifth of local governments have adopted and implemented local DRR strategies (Targets 1.5, 11.b and 13.1).

Australia is also far from meeting a number of Targets within the Peace and Partnership categories. While subjective measures of safety shows low incidence of physical violence, robbery and homicides, perception-based measures show that in 2020 around a third of the population reported not feeling safe when walking alone at night in the area where they live. Further, distances are also large, although smaller than the OECD average, when it comes to Targets 16.3 on rule of law (because of a high share of unsentenced detainees) and 16.7 on inclusive decision-making (with low score in the pilot index on diversity of the central government workforce). On Partnerships, Australia still has some way to travel to meet the Target 17.2 on ODA to developing and least developed countries (in 2020, the share of ODA in GNI was only a quarter of the 0.7% global target). In addition, there is scope for improvement when it comes to aligning ODA to partner countries' priorities and country-owned results frameworks (Target 17.15) as well as on the cost of sending remittances (Target 10.c).

Statistical gaps

Like in many other OECD countries, data availability remains a challenge when measuring distances to targets (see the Overview chapter for details). For Australia, available data on the level of the different indicators allow covering 124 of the 169 targets. As shown in Figure 2 below, indicator coverage is uneven across the 17 goals. While seven goals (within the People and Prosperity categories have most of their targets covered (the indicator coverage exceeds 80%), coverage is much lower for Goal 14 on life below water and Goal 11 on cities, with only half of targets or fewer covered. Data gaps becomes starker when looking at indicators that allow measuring distances, i.e. excluding those providing contextual information. In this case, coverage exceeds 80% for only two goals (Goals 3 on health and 10 on inequalities). Moreover, for eight goals, mostly related to the Planet category (Goals 12, 13, 14 and 15) but also to education (Goal 4), gender equality (5), cities (11) and partnerships (17), data are lacking to monitor progress over time for more than two in three targets.

Figure 2. Australia's share of the 2030 Agenda's targets covered by at least one indicator, by goal

Note: The figure represents Australia's share of targets covered by at least one indicator for each SDG. Numbers from 1 to 17 stand for the goals: 1 No poverty, 2 Zero hunger, 3 Good health and well-being, 4 Quality education, 5 Gender equality, 6 Clean water and sanitation, 7 Affordable and clean energy, 8 Decent work and economic growth, 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure, 10 Reduced inequalities, 11 Sustainable cities and communities, 12 Responsible consumption and production, 13 Climate action, 14 Life below water, 15 Life on land, 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions and 17 Partnerships for the goals. These goals are grouped under five broad themes (the "5Ps"): People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. Beyond data availability, other statistical gaps such as timeliness or granularity also need to be considered. For instance, given the lag in available data, the effects of the pandemic on current distance and trajectories may not be reflected in the estimates.
Source: All data is taken and adapted from (UNDESA, 2021[1]), *SDG Global Database*, https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg and (OECD, 2021[2]), *OECD.Stat,* https://stats.oecd.org/ (accessed on 29 October 2021).

Detailed information

While some SDG Targets are, on average, close to being met, performance is very uneven across the 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Table 1 presents an overview of Australia's progress towards targets based on available data for each of the 17 Goals. It shows that distances to Targets and trends over time differ significantly even when considering a specific goal.

Table 1. Australia distances to targets and recent trends

Goal	Target	Short Label	Distance to Target (s.u.)	Trend Assessment	OECD Average distance (s.u.)	OECD Trend Assessment
1	1.1	Extreme poverty	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
1	1.2	Poverty in all its dimensions	1.66	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.41	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
1	1.3	Social protection coverage	0.58	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.80	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
1	1.4	Access to basic services	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
1	1.5	Resilience to shocks	0.91	n.a.	1.00	n.a.
2	2.1	Hunger	0.60	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.28	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
2	2.2	Malnutrition	2.39	No progress or moving	2.46	No progress or moving

Goal	Target	Short Label	Distance to Target (s.u.)	Trend Assessment	OECD Average distance (s.u.)	OECD Trend Assessment
				away from the SDG target		away from the SDG target
2	2.4	Sustainable production	0.41	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.34	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
2	2.5	Diversity of seeds and livestocks*	4.74	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	3.59	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
2	2.c	Food prices anomalies	1.13	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
3	3.1	Maternal mortality	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
3	3.2	Death of newborns and children	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
3	3.3	Communicable diseases	0.12	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.56	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.4	Premature mortality	0.94	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.26	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.5	Prevention of Substance abuse	0.30	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.63	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.6	Road traffic accidents*	0.59	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.78	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.7	Access to sexual health-care	0.35	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.58	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.8	Health coverage	0.95	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	1.79	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.9	Deaths and illness from pollution	0.29	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.55	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
3	3.a	Tobacco consumption	1.62	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	2.65	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
3	3.b	Vaccination	0.11	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.37	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
3	3.d	Health emergency preparedness	0.82	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	1.19	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
4	4.1	Primary and secondary education	1.16	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.17	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
4	4.2	Pre-primary education	1.67	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.24	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
4	4.3	Lifelong learning	0.69	n.a.	1.25	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
4	4.5	Disparities in education	1.11	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.49	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
4	4.6	Adults' literacy and numeracy	1.23	n.a.	1.57	n.a.
4	4.a	Education facilities	0.00	n.a.	0.05	n.a.
4	4.c	Qualification of teachers	0.00	n.a.	0.60	n.a.
5	5.1	Discrimination against women	0.82	n.a.	1.32	n.a.
5	5.2	Violence against women	0.00	n.a.	0.89	n.a.
5	5.3	Harmful practices	0.00	n.a.	1.37	n.a.
5	5.4	Unpaid care and domestic work	2.19	n.a.	1.79	n.a.

Goal	Target	Short Label	Distance to Target (s.u.)	Trend Assessment	OECD Average distance (s.u.)	OECD Trend Assessment
5	5.5	Women's participation	1.46	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	1.89	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
5	5.b	Women's empowerment	0.38	n.a.	0.53	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
6	6.2	Waste water treatment	0.62	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.35	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
6	6.3	Water quality	0.46	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.68	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
6	6.4	Water-use efficiency	0.42	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.54	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
6	6.5	Water resources management	0.68	n.a.	0.98	n.a.
6	6.6	Water-related ecosystems*	2.10	n.a.	2.18	n.a.
7	7.1	Access to energy	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
7	7.2	Clean energy	1.48	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.62	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
7	7.3	Energy efficiency	1.31	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.98	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
8	8.1	GDP growth	2.12	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.89	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
8	8.2	Productivity	2.28	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.77	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
8	8.4	Material footprint	1.27	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.82	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
8	8.5	Employment	0.64	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.97	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
8	8.6	NEET	1.60	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.69	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
8	8.8	Labour rights	1.04	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.80	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
8	8.10	Financial institutions	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.45	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
8	8.b	Strategy for youth employment	0.00	n.a.	0.45	n.a.
9	9.2	Sustainable industry	1.93	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.95	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
9	9.4	Environmental impact	2.89	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.87	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
9	9.5	Research and development	1.09	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	1.06	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
9	9.c	ICT	0.28	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.36	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
10	10.1	Income distribution	1.43	n.a.	1.23	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
10	10.2	Social inclusion	1.39	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.54	No progress or moving away from the SDG target

Goal	Target	Short Label	Distance to Target (s.u.)	Trend Assessment	OECD Average distance (s.u.)	OECD Trend Assessment
10	10.3	Inequalities of outcome	0.52	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.27	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
10	10.4	Redistribution	0.94	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.12	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
10	10.5	Financial markets	1.09	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.90	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
10	10.7	Migration	1.76	n.a.	0.69	n.a.
10	10.a	Tariff-lines	1.48	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.93	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
10	10.c	Remittances	2.11	n.a.	2.21	n.a.
11	11.3	Urbanization	0.00	n.a.	1.19	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
11	11.5	Impact of disasters	0.09	n.a.	1.19	n.a.
11	11.6	Environmental impact of cities	0.08	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.49	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
11	11.a	Urban policies	0.00	n.a.	0.23	n.a.
11	11.b	Disaster Risk Reduction	1.72	n.a.	0.81	n.a.
12	12.2	Efficient use of natural resources	2.04	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.87	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
12	12.3	Food waste	1.56	n.a.	1.36	n.a.
12	12.4	Chemical and hazardous waste*	0.04	n.a.	1.02	n.a.
12	12.5	Waste generation	0.33	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.66	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
12	12.b	Tourism sustainability	0.45	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.87	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
13	13.1	Resilience to climate events	1.17	n.a.	0.73	n.a.
13	13.2	Greenhouse gas emissions	3.51	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	1.15	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
14	14.1	Marine pollution**	1.52	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	1.84	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
14	14.4	Overfishing and IUU fishing*	1.79	n.a.	1.78	n.a.
14	14.5	Protected marine areas*	0.37	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.38	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
14	14.6	Harmful subsidies to fisheries*	0.00	n.a.	0.36	n.a.
15	15.1	Ecosystem protection*	1.18	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.74	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
15	15.2	Sustainable use of forest*	1.24	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.60	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
15	15.4	Mountain ecosystems	0.94	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.73	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
15	15.5	Threatened species*	1.90	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	1.20	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
15	15.6	Benefits from genetic	1.02	n.a.	0.78	n.a.

Goal	Target	Short Label	Distance to Target (s.u.)	Trend Assessment	OECD Average distance (s.u.)	OECD Trend Assessment
		resources				
15	15.8	Invasive alien species*	0.00	n.a.	0.30	n.a.
15	15.9	National and local planning*	1.27	n.a.	0.54	n.a.
16	16.1	Violence and related deaths	0.50	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.66	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
16	16.2	Violence against children	0.01	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.65	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
16	16.3	Rule of law	2.13	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	2.33	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
16	16.6	Accountable institutions	2.03	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	2.26	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
16	16.7	Inclusive decision-making	1.59	n.a.	1.85	n.a.
16	16.9	Legal identity for all	0.00	n.a.	0.00	n.a.
16	16.10	Access to information	0.00	n.a.	0.00	n.a.
16	16.a	National institutions	0.00	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved	0.54	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
17	17.2	Official Development Assistance	1.53	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.94	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target
17	17.10	Multilateral trading system	0.37	Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target	0.45	Target is achieved or on track to being achieved
17	17.12	Market access for least developed countries	1.51	No progress or moving away from the SDG target	0.72	No progress or moving away from the SDG target
17	17.15	National leadership to implement policies for poverty eradication	2.42	n.a.	2.32	n.a.
17	17.16	Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	0.00	n.a.	0.89	n.a.
17	17.18	Statistical capacity	0.00	n.a.	0.09	n.a.
17	17.19	Statistical capacity-building	0.00	n.a.	0.11	n.a.

Note: * refers to targets with a 2020 deadline. ** refers to targets with a 2025 deadline. The OECD average is measured as the simple average across OECD countries with available data.

Source: All data is taken and adapted from (UNDESA, 2021[1]), *SDG Global Database,* https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg and (OECD, 2021[2]), *OECD.Stat,* https://stats.oecd.org/ (accessed on 29 October 2021).

How to read this country profile

The OECD report *The Short and Winding Road to 2030: Measuring Distance to the SDG Targets* evaluates the distance that OECD countries need to travel to meet SDG targets for which data are currently available. It also looks at whether countries have been moving towards or away from these targets, and how likely they are to meet their commitments by 2030, based on an analysis of recent trends and the observed volatility in the different indicators.

As most authors and international organisations, this report adopts a rather simple geometric growth model for assessing the direction and pace of recent changes in the context of the SDGs. Yet, instead of making direct estimates of the value of the indicator by 2030, it models the likelihood of achieving a specific level using Monte Carlo simulations.

While the report provides an overview of where OECD countries, taken as a whole, currently stand, country profiles provide details of the performance and data availability of individual OECD countries.

How to read the OECD SDG Wheel?

Progress on SDGs requires a granular understanding of countries' strengths and weaknesses based on the consideration of the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda. Figure 1 shows both **current achievements** (in the inner circle; the longer the bar, the smaller the distance remaining to be travelled) **as well as whether OECD countries are on track** (or are at least making progress) to meet their commitments by 2030 (in the outer circle).

The length of each bar shows current level of achievement on each target. As detailed in the Methodological Annex, countries' distance to target is measured as the "standardised difference" between a country's current position and the target end-value. For each indicator, the standardised measurement unit (s.u.) is the standard deviation observed among OECD countries in the reference year (i.e. the year closest to 2015). Therefore, the longer the bar, the shorter the distance still to be travelled to reach the target by 2030. The colours of the bars applied to the various targets refer to the goals they pertain to.

The outer ring shows how OECD countries are performing over time and how likely they are to meet the different targets by 2030 based on the observed trends of the various indicators. It uses stoplight colours to classify the progress towards the target:

- green is used to indicate those countries that (based on the change in the different indicators over a recent period) should meet the target in 2030 just by maintaining their current pace of progress (i.e. more than 75% of (randomised) projections meet the target);
- yellow for those countries whose current pace of progress is insufficient to meet the target by 2030 (i.e. less than 75% of randomised projections meet the target, while the correlation coefficient between the indicator and the year is high and statistically significant, implying that a significant trend could be detected); and
- red for those countries whose recent changes have been stagnating or moving them further away from the target (i.e. less than 75% of randomised projections meet the target and the correlation coefficient between the indicator and the year is low or statistically insignificant, implying that no statistical trend could be identified).

How to read the Strength and Challenges sections?

With the aim of helping its member countries in navigating the 2030 Agenda and in setting their own priorities for action, this report relies on a unique methodology for measuring the distance that OECD countries have to travel to achieve SDG targets. The identification of the main strengths and challenges proposed in this report relies on current performances only:

- A target is considered to be a strength when the distance to the target end-value is lower than 0.5 s.u. (i.e. the distance is deemed to be small) <u>or</u> when the country is closer to the target than the OECD average. For instance, while Korea's distance to Target 2.2 on malnutrition is 1.4 s.u. (i.e. classified as medium distance), the average OECD distance is 2.5 s.u. Therefore, Target 2.2 is categorised as being a strength for Korea.
- A target is considered to be a challenge when the distance to target is greater than 1.5 s.u. (i.e. distance is deemed to be long) <u>or</u> when the country is further away from the target than the OECD average. For instance, Estonia's distance to Target 4.2 on pre-primary education is 1.1 s.u. (i.e. medium distance), which is higher than the 0.24 s.u. distance for the OECD average. Target 4.2 is therefore classified as a weakness for Estonia.

While the lack of consistent time series often prevents an exhaustive assessment of trends, they are discussed when available and relevant in nuancing the assessment of current performance.
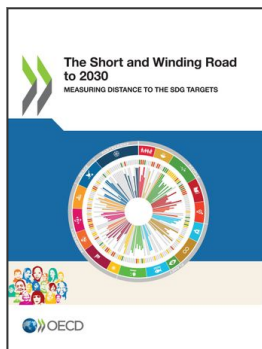
How to read the Statistical Gaps section?

In total, this report relies on 537 data series supporting 183 of the 247 indicators listed in the *global indicator framework* (or for close proxies of these indicators). These indicators cover 134 of the 169 SDG targets. Yet, target coverage is uneven across the 17 goals and among OECD member countries.

Figure 2 summarises data availability:

- darker blue bars indicate the share of *targets* for which at least one indicator (including indicators providing context information) is available
- lighter blue bars indicate the share of *targets* for which the available indicator(s) include those having a clear normative direction (i.e. allowing to distinguish between good and bad performance), which are the only ones used to measure distances to target levels.
- medium blue bars indicate the share of *targets* for which progress over time can be gauged (i.e. at least three observations are available over a five-year period).

All methods and concepts are further detailed in the Methodological Annex.