



Norwegian Ministry
of Local Government and Modernisation

Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Report

Voluntary National Review 2021 Norway

Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Contents

1	Opening statement by the Prime Minister	4
2	Highlights of the report	6
3	Introduction	9
4	Methodology and process for preparation of this review	11
4.1	Key changes/lessons learned	11
4.2	Preparation of the VNR	12
4.3	Main messages from the Peer Dialogue	13
4.3.1	Denmark's main message from the Peer Dialogue	13
4.3.2	Indonesia's main message from the Peer Dialogue	15
4.4	Sámediggi's message to the Government	16
4.5	Message to the Government from the university sector	17
4.6	Message to the Government from the private sector	19
5	Policy and enabling conditions	22
5.1	Key changes/lessons learned	22
5.2	Creating ownership of the SDGs	23
5.2.1	Whole-of-government approach	23
5.2.2	Whole-of-society approach	24
5.3	The SDGs in Norwegian counties and municipalities	28
5.4	Dissemination and communication	29
5.5	Incorporation of the SDGs in national frameworks	32
5.5.1	Key changes/lessons learned	32
5.5.2	The Norwegian Parliament's role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda	32
5.5.3	The Government's policy priorities 2016–2021	33
5.5.4	Incorporation of the SDGs into ministries' strategies and programmes	34
5.5.5	The National Action Plan for SDGs	35
5.5.6	The SDGs in national planning and budgeting processes	35
5.5.7	Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into the education system at all levels	35
5.5.8	Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into development, foreign and security and trade policy	38
5.5.9	Linkages to the work of the EEA, the Nordic Council of Ministers, Arctic Council, Barents Sea Cooperation and Council of the Baltic Sea States	39
5.6	Leaving no one behind (LNOB)	41
5.6.1	Key changes/lessons learned	41
5.6.2	Upholding the LNOB principle nationally	42
5.6.3	Five national minorities	43
5.6.4	Promotion of the LNOB principle in foreign and development policy	44
5.6.5	LNOB in national follow-up and disaggregation of data	46
5.6.6	LNOB online – web accessibility	46
5.7	Institutional mechanisms	47
5.7.1	Key changes/lessons learned	47
5.7.2	Governmental mechanisms	48
5.7.3	Structural issues	50
5.7.4	Structural issues in the context of COVID-19	50

5.7.5	Monitoring and review mechanisms – development of national indicators	52
5.7.6	Institutional mechanisms for involving civil society	52
6	Progress on Goals and targets	54
6.1	Current state and key changes 2016–2021	54
6.2	Progress in SDGs	55
1	No poverty	56
2	Zero hunger	58
3	Good health and well-being	60
4	Quality education	62
5	Gender equality	64
6	Clean water and sanitation	66
7	Affordable and clean energy	68
8	Decent work and economic growth	70
9	Industry, innovation and infrastructure	72
10	Reduced inequalities	74
11	Sustainable cities and communities	76
12	Responsible consumption and production	78
13	Climate action	80
14	Life below water	82
15	Life on land	84
16	Peace, justice, and strong institutions	86
17	Partnership for the goals	88
6.3	Norway's performance 2016–2020 according to the SDG-Index and Dashboard	90
6.4	Policy coherence for the 2030 Agenda	90
7	SDGs in Norwegian Municipalities and Regions	93
7.1	Key changes/lessons learned	93
7.2	The municipal sector's significance for the SDGs	94
7.3	Local and Regional governments' efforts to localise the SDGs	94
7.4	Progress on SDGs and targets	99
7.4.1	Adolescents and quality of life (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17)	101
7.4.2	Climate and environmentally friendly development (SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17)	102
7.4.3	Adaptable business community (SDGs 8, 9, 11, 12 and 17)	104
7.4.4	Attractive places and cities (SDGs 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 17)	106
7.4.5	Diversity and inclusion (SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17)	107
7.4.6	Citizens' participation (SDGs 5, 10, 16 and 17)	108
7.5	Local governments' message to the Government	110
8	Means of implementation	111
8.1	Key changes/lessons learned	111
8.2	Sustainable development in the Norwegian state budget	111
8.3	Norway's official development assistance	112
8.4	The Knowledge Bank	114
8.5	Research and innovation enhancing SDGs	115
9	Conclusions	118
10	Next steps	120
11	Annex	123



1 Opening statement by the Prime Minister

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed new challenges to our efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. Progress on some goals has slowed and there have been setbacks on others. This presents us with a choice: we can choose to sit back, or we can view the challenges as a call to action. The enormous effort needed to bring life back to normal also provides an opportunity to build back better.

Norway's second Voluntary National Review will serve as a roadmap. We identify our positive results and point out where we have not yet succeeded. Our ambition is to learn from the past and plan for the future.

Norway ranks high on the SDG Index. But we, too, have challenges to resolve. Although we have free, high-quality state schools, too many students are dropping out. And while women in Norway have the same legal rights as men, obstacles such as gender-based violence and labour market disparities are preventing us from achieving full gender equality. There is inequality between different groups in society. Mental health is an area of concern. Greenhouse gas emissions are decreasing, but due to unsustainable consumption patterns there is too much waste and emissions remain too high. There is much work that remains to be done.

The 2030 Agenda has become more integrated in Norwegian policy planning since 2016. Nonetheless, the Office of the Auditor General has pointed out that the follow-up of the Sustainable Development Goals has not been coordinated effectively enough and that Norway needs a more comprehensive plan for

implementation. The Government will present a White Paper and an Action Plan on this in 2021. These will set out national targets and indicators, identify challenges and provide a common platform for further action. We hope the plan will pave the way to a more integrated approach, greater coherence and more rapid progress.

I am very pleased to see the clear increase in knowledge, involvement and activities to achieve the 2030 Agenda throughout the Norwegian society. Today, 69 per cent of the Norwegian population is familiar with the 2030 Agenda. Eight out of ten consumers want to contribute to sustainable development through the choices they make. 73 per cent of Norway's largest companies now give priority to the Sustainable Development Goals in their business strategies, which is three times higher than in 2017. Children have become actively involved. This gives me hope for the future and the important tasks ahead.

I hope that you will find our review useful reading. I would like to thank all the participants for their valuable contributions, views and recommendations during this process. Your efforts make it possible for us to continue to work towards a society that leaves no one behind.

Erna Solberg

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized first name and a more legible last name 'Solberg'.

Prime Minister of Norway