1st OECD Roundtable on Cities and Regions for the SDGs

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Issue Notes
The City of Bonn, Germany: **BUILDING ON A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TRADITION TO ACHIEVE THE SDGs**

### Key highlights

- The City of Bonn has gone through a comprehensive process to localise the SDGs through its new *Sustainability Strategy*, supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development alongside 15 pilot cities and municipalities in Germany.
- The city is using the SDGs to address concrete challenges of the local community, such as sustainable mobility, energy and the trade-offs between affordable housing and green spaces.
- Moving forward, the implementation of the strategy can help to ensure broad-based support for the 2030 Agenda, with a potentially expanded role for local businesses and education to contribute to achieving the SDGs in Bonn and abroad.

Following the transition of Germany's Federal Capital from Bonn to Berlin in 1991, the City of Bonn developed a new profile focussed on its role as Germany's UN City and a growing sustainability hub for key players from all sectors. Under the slogan “UN in Bonn: shaping a sustainable future”, the UN Campus hosts organisations working on topics like climate change (e.g. UNFCCC), desertification (e.g. UNCCD), disaster risk reduction (e.g. UNISDR, UN-SPIDER), education (e.g. United Nations University) and voluntarism (UNV), among others. The Global Campaign Centre of the UN SDG Action Campaign is further located in Bonn. The UN Campus forms part of a wider community of actors focussing on sustainability, including NGOs, academia and businesses.

**The City of Bonn has 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 and as 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 Feb 2019.

The 2030 Agenda is seen as an excellent 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). For example, clean air and reduced CO₂ emissions are high on the political agenda in Bonn. As several other German cities, Bonn is struggling to reduce NO₂ 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 commuter flows. Mobility is thus a hot topic in the public debate. Increasing rents is another challenge dealt with by the city within the confined city limits and the desire to keep its green spaces intact (50% of the city’s surface are protected green areas).

**Figure 1. Key SDGs for the City of Bonn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sustained cities and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Affordable and clean energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Responsible consumption and production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Climate action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** OECD elaboration based on SDG survey compiled by the City of Bonn (2018).
Bonn’ Sustainability Strategy is developed with the support of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). In this process, Bonn is one of 15 pilot cities, municipalities and administrative districts in North Rhine Westphalia (NRW) that participated in the pilot project “Global Sustainable Municipality in NRW”, funded by BMZ and implemented by the Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW) of Engagement Global. Key priority areas of the strategy are: i.) Mobility; ii.) Climate and energy; iii.) Natural resources and environment; iv.) Work and business; v.) Social participation and gender; vi.) Global responsibility. Existing plans and projects have funds for some measures included in the strategy (e.g. education), while some will require case-by-case decisions by the city council (e.g. some mobility-related measures).

The City of Bonn has produced key indicators on sustainable development since 2002. The current sustainability report, covering 2012-2015, includes 45 key indicators structured around four main categories: wellbeing, social justice, environmental quality and resource efficiency, and economic efficiency. It applies a traffic light system to visualise whether the trends are moving in the desirable direction. The SDGs will become more in focus in the next report, covering the period 2016-2018, for which adaptation of local indicators is currently ongoing. These indicators will further serve to monitor the Sustainability Strategy.

Taking a holistic view, the City of Bonn identifies SDG 11 as a guiding theme for the city, in particular for generating synergies with SDG 7 and SDG 13. Energy-efficient building standards, provision of clean and affordable energy and low-carbon means of transport are key to meet the required CO2 emission standards while at the same time developing the city sustainably. Moreover, SDG 4 (education) is central to keep the employment rate high in a labour market characterised by high-skilled jobs. The city thus uses the SDGs to analyse and address interlinked challenges.

Bonn is growing into a popular hub for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) focussing on sustainability as part of their core business. The Chamber of Industry and Commerce also sees Bonn as a vibrant environment for social entrepreneurship and is currently supporting companies to connect with each other around common themes.

The City of Bonn has made great efforts to raise awareness of the SDGs among the public. Campaign initiatives include the Bonn SDG-Days and postcards suggesting how individuals’ actions can contribute to the SDGs and showing what the city is doing to address them. Prior to the 2030 Agenda, the city already successfully engaged in collaboration with primary schools in the Climate Ambassadors initiative. With around one-third of the city’s primary school students (around 8 700) becoming Climate Ambassadors, the concept has been presented to local schools in La Paz (Bolivia), Bukhara (Uzbekistan), Cape Coast (Ghana) and Chengdu (China).

While social participation, gender and business development are included among the priorities in the Sustainability Strategy, environmental issues and urban planning are predominant in the perception of sustainable development. The SDGs offers an opportunity to broaden this perspective and look at interlinkages between socio-economic and environmental goals. For example, addressing climate change and maintaining the city’s green spaces, while at the same time catering for a growing population and the need for affordable housing, is key to Bonn’s future development potential.

**FORWARD LOOKING POLICY RESPONSES**

Embed the horizontal coordination and multi-stakeholder mechanisms set up in the development of the strategy in the organisational structure of the city administration. This will help to ensure broad-based support to the implementation and further development of the strategy through to 2030, conveying multiple stakeholders around e.g. funding decisions.

Strengthen the vertical coordination for implementing the SDGs, including in the work on indicators and reporting, with stronger direct involvement by cities and municipalities in national processes. In order to raise its SDGs profile internationally, the city can start to align its reporting more closely with the UN format for the VNR. Engagement Global and the German Associations of Cities and Municipalities can play a key role in advocating for enhanced involvement and visibility at national level.

Integrate the extensive context specific data on SDGs with an international comparable indicator framework to allow identifying strengths and weaknesses compared to the national and OECD averages. While benchmarking at national and international level can be useful to identify areas for improvement, this does not replace context-specific indicators.

Step up the efforts by the City of Bonn to connect with the business community on the SDGs. Providing a platform that allows businesses to connect will help to seize the private sector’s contribution to the SDGs. Support to local Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) working on sustainability by e.g. R&D grants to help their contribution to the SDGs can be considered.

Strengthen the work on citizen engagement and expand the work on SDGs in the education system, including the Vocational Education and Training System, helping to shape the habits and lifestyles (e.g. sustainable mobility and consumption) of future citizens. Awareness-raising efforts could be linked to HLPF priority SDGs each year to connect with global visibility.

Use the SDGs to analyse policy interlinkages and promote synergies between the goals. Participatory urban planning can further help to link all dimension of sustainability while preventing social issues from becoming worsened or entrenched (e.g. housing, long-term unemployment).
**The Province of Córdoba, Argentina: THE SDGS AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION**

**Key highlights**
- The current proactive role of the Province of Cordoba on localising the SDGs aims at giving continuity to the social inclusion agenda and to the work on well-being.
- The Province will use the SDGs to develop its Vision 2030, through a participatory multi-stakeholder process engaging the private sector and civil society.
- Moving forward, the province will develop a Matrix to identify the drivers of social inclusions and measure the links between to environmental/economic SDGs and the social SDGs.

The Province of Cordoba is using the 2030 Agenda for improving the effectiveness of its governmental actions. The Memoria de Gestion Gubernamental (2017) already aligned the three axes of governmental action with the SDGs (Figure 1), which will be further strengthened in the third Memoria de Gestion Gubernamental, including through work on SDGs indicators. The provincial government stresses in the reports of 2016 and 2017 that sustainability is 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 province sees in the 2030 Agenda an opportunity to advance and strengthen its management model. This is because: i) it promotes evidence-based policies and the monitoring of people’s well-being and living conditions, ii) it is based on globally agreed long-terms goals and targets; iii) it promotes the cooperation with and the engagement of territorial stakeholders; iv) it is a tool that allows to coordinate with the national level. For example, the province signed a collaboration agreement with the Consejo Nacional de Coordinacion de Políticas Sociales (CNCPS).

The provincial government has a strong focus on social inclusion and well-being. This is why the province has started a collaboration with the OECD on “How’s life in the province of Córdoba, Argentina?” which has a strong component on the production of regional indicators to measure well-being. Because of Argentina’s federal structure, Córdoba province is responsible for many of the policies that have a very direct impact on people’s lives. In view of the volume of resources devoted to fulfilling its well-being responsibilities and the growing demand for information, the provincial government was prompted to initiate the development of a framework of well-being indicators.

The current proactive role and activities of the Province of Cordoba on SDGs aims at giving continuity to the social inclusion agenda and to the work on well-being. For this reason, the Province of Cordoba focuses on the social SDGs, in particular on the SDGs from 1 to 5. At the same time, to make the most of the inter-connected and holistic framework of the 2030 Agenda, the province will develop a Matrix to identify and measure the synergies and the trade-offs among the social and the other SDGs.

![Figure 1. Three Axes of Governmental Action in the Province of Córdoba](image-url)

**Source:** Memoria de Gestion Gubernamental (2017).
To promote vertical coordination in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the province has signed a Cooperation Agreement with the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies (Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales - CNCP). The CNCP provides guidelines and methodological suggestions for the incorporation of the SDGs as a management and planning tool at the sub-national level, while the province will participate in the "Provinces Report", which describes the progress on the adoption of the SDGs.

The Province of Córdoba has taken several steps to involve citizens in the work of the 2030 Agenda. First, it launched the Open Government Roundtable (Mesa de Gobierno Abierto) composed by civil society organizations, including representatives of some universities, responding to the Open Government ambition in the province. The province is further working on the Open Government Portal (Figure 2), which provides "data with sense" on Governmental actions on the SDGs to the general public. This portal, as well as the intensive work carried out by the province on well-being data and SDGs indicator respond to one of the key challenges identified in OECD's Territorial Review of Córdoba (2016), namely the lack of availability of, and access to, reliable data and statistics as well as governance issues around transparency and accountability.

The private sector and the civil society are active on the SDGs, but their actions are quite isolated. The lack of a common platform to coordinate the ongoing efforts of the territorial stakeholders, in particular private sector and civil society, is a challenge and a possible area of improvement for the future. In addition, the institutionalisation of the process towards 2030 emerged as another challenge in the province.

**Figure 2: Córdoba’s Open Government Online Platform**

FORWARD LOOKING POLICY RESPONSES

Use the SDGs to develop the Vision 2030 for the Province of Córdoba. The 2030 Agenda and its horizon can provide an appropriate framework to gather the territorial stakeholders and jointly define a Vision for the province of Córdoba, potentially leading to a development strategy, which is currently missing in the Province.

Develop a Matrix to identify the drivers of social inclusions and measure the links between the environmental/economic SDGs and the social SDGs. The matrix should allow to identify and prioritise key sectors that can drive the social inclusion, while promoting synergies and managing trade-offs.

Provide platforms for coordinating and sharing knowledge on the actions of the private sector and civil society, possibly in the framework of a 2030 Vision for Cordoba, where all the actions by public and private sectors, as well as civil society, can contribute to shared and common goals.

Institutionalise the process towards 2030 by developing Vision 2030. The 2030 Agenda offers the opportunity to develop a join and multi-stakeholder process towards 2030 with clear goals and targets. The institutionalisation of the process and in particular the definition of a Vision towards 2030, can allow also going beyond political cycles in the implementation of the SDGs.

Collect and share good practices on the role of the private sector and civil society for the SDGs. As a first step, the province could collect the good practices related to SDGs and upload them on the open data portal, so they will also appear in the Memoria de Gestion. As stressed by the association of industries, there is a survey and database on business competitiveness that can be made available and liked to the SDGs.

Support the private sector on the SDGs through public procurement, for example public procurement can include a percentage related to the criteria of ISO certification, making sustainability a key principle.

Continue the efforts to increase the availability and the dissemination of data to the citizens and civil society. This will contribute to bridge the information gap that is hindering the engagement of the civil society in the 2030 Agenda. Strengthening the collaboration with the media could contribute to better dissemination of information on the provincial government’s actions on SDGs and raise awareness on the 2030 Agenda in the province.
The Region of Flanders, Belgium: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS THROUGH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

Key highlights

- The Flemish government is experimenting with an innovative governance model that aims to break policy silos and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to the 2030 Agenda.
- Many municipalities are working to mainstream the SDGs into their policy planning processes and are communicating vividly with their local citizens.
- The active role of private sector and civil society actors provide fruitful grounds to implement a territorial approach to the SDGs in Flanders.

Actors across the region of Flanders demonstrate strong commitment towards localising the 2030 Agenda in a holistic way. The shared perception among public and private actors, including civil society, appears to be that the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda calls for new solutions beyond business-as-usual. Flemish actors are thus favouring transversal, multi-stakeholder and bottom-up approaches. Nonetheless, the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda needs to be proven in practice and there is still some way to go to fully capture its potential to break policy silos and change status quo.

Sustainable development strategies are in place since 2006 in Flanders, with updates every five years. A Decree from 2008 further determines sustainable development as an inclusive, participative and coordinated process. The second Flemish Strategy for Sustainable Development (2011) placed strong emphasis on innovation and introduced a transition approach to achieving a long-term vision for Flanders. This focus remains in the current government’s vision, Vision 2050. Vision 2050 outlines seven priority transitions towards which the region strives (Figure 1). To achieve this, a new governance model is put in place based on transition management principles, namely: system innovation, taking a long-term perspective, involving stakeholders through partnerships, engaging in co-creation and learning from experiments.

Flanders has also started translating the 2030 Agenda into the context of Flanders through “Focus 2030: Flanders’ Goals for 2030”, which is the key document guiding the implementation of the SDGs by the Flemish government. Both Vision 2050 and Focus 2030 are umbrella strategies bringing together other plans, concepts and policies, however, Vision 2050 stipulates that sustainability is a guiding principle for all policies.

Figure 1. Priority Transitions in Flanders’ long-term vision, Vision 2050

Source: Department of Public Governance and the Chancellery (2016).
Flemish cities and municipalities have a key role to play in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including when developing their local strategies and plans. Flemish municipalities are tapping into current political momentum to address the SDGs in local policy development processes. In light of the recent local elections (October 2018), many local administrations seize the opportunity to prepare for integrating the SDGs in the new 6-year policy plans that the newly elected municipal councils will adopt in 2019 (covering 2020-2025), as part of the Flemish policy and management cycle for municipalities. Municipalities participating in a SDG-pilot project implemented by the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) have been supported in this endeavour, including by using the “SDGs Circle Exercise” as a popular tool to incorporate the SDGs in local policies and projects (Figure 2).

In the Belgian context, coordination between federal and regional levels, including harmonisation of indicators at all levels, is challenging. One key reason for this is that each governments have their own strategies and set of goals linked to their own competences. This means that strategies are not necessarily coordinated or aligned, even if regular updates are provided between different governments. The first Belgian VNR preparation, coordinated through the Inter-ministerial Conference for Sustainable Development, involved federal and regional governments, whereas the municipal level could have been more involved.

The tradition of stakeholder engagement is highly visible in Flanders, where multi-stakeholder platforms like the Strategic Advisory Councils and the civil society campaign Perspective 2030 contribute to advising and holding regional and local governments accountable for their commitment to the 2030 Agenda.

**FORWARD LOOKING POLICY RESPONSES**

Use the SDGs as a framework to enhance strategic alignment between all governments’ sustainable development strategies, taking advantage of the common language and shared goals of the framework.

Improve the coordination in the development of SDGs indicator frameworks and reporting tools, including involving municipalities in the VNR and in defining indicators. This could further help to clarify future reporting requirements by municipalities and promote the use of common indicators and targets (where feasible) to measure progress towards the SDGs.

Create an open data platform where civil society can be involved in monitoring progress towards the SDGs. Through this open data platform, reporting on progress by all levels of governments can be made transparent, allowing citizens to provide their inputs and feedback.

Use the SDGs as a budgeting tool to ensure implementation of the Flemish government’s Focus 2030 strategy. The SDGs can provide a useful framework for convening stakeholders from different policy domains around financial decisions and could also help to show accountability for the agenda. The new governance model can be conducive to this.

Continue to support cities and municipalities to implement the 2030 Agenda holistically, including expanding the SDG-pilot project work by VVSG, as well as awareness-raising efforts to reach all 300 municipalities.

Ensure widespread dissemination and uptake of good practices related to sustainable public procurement, using it as a tool to leverage private sector contribution to the SDGs. Practical examples provided by both the Flemish government and the city of Ghent can be promoted across the region, including through the government’s multi-stakeholder transition spaces.

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**Figure 2. Game board 17 SDGs: Circle Exercise**

![Figure 2. Game board 17 SDGs: Circle Exercise](source)

**Source:** VVSG (2018).

The Chamber of Commerce’s (VOKA) Charter on Sustainable Entrepreneurship offers companies the opportunity to work on sustainable entrepreneurship using an action plan based on the SDGs. Public institutions also influence and engage with private sector stakeholders by using their purchasing power related to public procurement. Both the Flemish government and municipalities apply Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) practices to ensure that public spending helps to support responsible business conduct that promote social and environmental goals.
The City of Kitakyushu, Japan: LINKING PLANET TO PEOPLE AND PROSPERITY TO PROMOTE THE SDGs IN KITAKYUSHU

Key highlights

- The City of Kitakyushu is part of the national government’s SDGs Future City programme and have started to link all its major plans to the SDGs, including their targets and indicator frameworks.
- Collaboration between the local government, industries and civil society helped the City of Kitakyushu overcome the issue of severe pollution in the 1960s, inspiring a culture of turning environmental challenges into development opportunities.
- The 2030 Agenda represents an opportunity to address the social challenges of the city by linking and promoting synergies between the environmental SDGs (strengths) and the social/economic SDGs.

The City of Kitakyushu has been very successful in turning one of its main problems, high levels of pollution in the 1960s, into a strength while 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. It constitutes a good practice promoted by the City of Kitakyushu to face current challenges, like the need to engage elderly population in social activities and secure appealing jobs for young people to prevent further population decline.

Building on its long-term commitment to sustainability, the city has developed its vision “Fostering a trusted Green Growth City with true wealth and prosperity, contributing to the world”, within the framework of the SDGs 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). Kitakyushu had identified eight 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 now has been working on updating those priority goals through the Kitakyushu City SDGs Council. Kitakyushu was selected for the Eco-Model City in 2008 and for the Future City initiatives in 2011, as well as one of 10 Model SDGs projects for the SDGs Future City programme in 2018.

The City of Kitakyushu is also actively supporting cities in developing countries through decentralised development cooperation, in particular environmental activities like waste and water management. The SDGs offer a key opportunity to further develop the link between local development activities in the city itself and to promote good practices in partner countries.

Figure 1. Vision and Actions for the Kitakyushu SDGs Future City Plan
The City of Kitakyushu was – together with New York City - the first local government to present a “Local Voluntary Review” at the UN High Level Political Forum in 2018. In collaboration with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), the city presented the Kitakyushu Sustainable Development Report 2018, which is based on the UN handbook for preparation of Voluntary National Review.

The City of Kitakyushu is now incorporating the SDGs into its various development plans, including establishing indicators relevant for the SDGs in their monitoring. Under Kitakyushu City Plan for the SDGs Future City, 22 indicators have been established in collaboration with the national government (Figure 2). Additional indicators will be identified through the OECD programme.

The city of Kitakyushu has established an institutional and governance framework to implement the SDGs. The key structures include the SDGs Future City Promotion Headquarters, strengthening collaboration and coordination across departments, under the direct leadership of the Mayor. The city also established the Kitakyushu City SDGs Council, which is expected to provide advice on the implementation of the SDGs through the engagement of eight experts in environmental, economic and social fields from civil society, private sector, finance and academia. The city also created the Kitakyushu SDGs Club, which is open to everybody - citizens, companies, NGOs, schools, etc. – with the aim to raise awareness on 2030 Agenda, promote SDGs activities and foster collaboration.

**FORWARD LOOKING POLICY RESPONSES**

Support the university and the education systems including elementary and middle schools in their ongoing efforts to raise awareness on the SDGs, including though Education for Sustainable Development. Programmes like the Kitakyushu City educational plan for children’s future could be linked more and more to the 2030 Agenda.

Use the SDGs in designing and implementing international cooperation activities. The universality of the 2030 Agenda represents a key opportunity to connect the “internal” activities for sustainability with the international cooperation actions, focusing on the SDGs where the city has a comparative advantage and knowledge/good practices to share with its peers.

Civil society, universities and research institutes, as well as private sector actors, are also engaged on the SDGs. For example, the department of regional development of the University of Kitakyushu seeks to support sustainable development by promoting education for sustainable development (ESD), agriculture, social welfare, supporting disabled persons and revitalisation of local shops. Through the Kitakyushu Eco-town project, intensive industry-academia-government collaboration further helps to address environmental, economic and social goals of the City of Kitakyushu.

**Figure 2. Proposed localisation of indicators for selected SDGs in Kitakyushu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDGs</th>
<th>Proposed localisation of indicators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example of national-level target: Extend to which education for sustainable development are mainstreamed at all levels of education (target 4.7.1) &gt; Example of city-level indicator: Number of citizens who are engaging in ESD</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Example of national-level target: Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance (6.6.1) &gt; Example of city-level indicator: Number of water- and sanitation-related international cooperation under the UNDP/UNICEF/UNEP Climate and Development Programme</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Example of national-level target: Renewable energy share in the total energy consumption (7.2.1) &gt; Example of city-level indicator: Number of wind turbines and solar panels</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>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) &gt; Example of city-level indicator: Number of projects in developing countries by the Interagency Coordination Committee on Environmentally Sound Technologies (ICM/ESD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example of national-level target: Dollar value of financial and technical assistance committed to developing countries (17.8.1) &gt; Example of city-level indicator: Number of renewable energy projects supported by the government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD elaboration on Kitakyushu City the SDGs Report 2018
The Region of Southern Denmark, Denmark: THE SDGs AS A TOOL TO SHAPE THE NEW REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Key highlights

- The region of Southern Denmark will use the SDGs for the formulation of the next Regional Development Strategy (2020-2023).
- Municipalities are also starting to work with the 2030 Agenda, albeit not always seizing its full potential as a planning and prioritization tool.
- Moving forward, developing indicators at regional and municipal levels and mapping and engaging the key agents for change in the process to formulate the regional strategy will help to move forward with the localisation of the SDGs.

The concepts of quality of life, well-being and sustainability are already part of the regional narrative in Southern Denmark, including in the current Regional Development Strategy. Although the SDGs are not formally included in the current Regional Development and Growth Strategy (2016-2019) “The Good Life” (Det Gode Liv), the six priority areas and the policy themes covered are linked to the SDGs framework (Figure 1). Particular areas of strengths for the region include renewable energies and energy efficiency, with over 40% of employment in the Danish offshore wind energy sector located in Southern Denmark. Moreover, competences in health and welfare innovation, including automation, intelligent aids, IT and telemedicine add to the region’s strategic advantages, as well as the fact that Southern Denmark is the largest Danish tourism region. The region also collaborates with municipalities to enhance energy efficiency of public buildings and to address climate change mitigation and adaptation through urban regeneration and development projects.

“Knowledge in motion” is at the core of the strategy and aims to improve evidence-based policies and information provided to citizens and other actors in the region. It includes various measures, such as an online portal, detgodeliv.regionsyddanmark.dk, where the region of Southern Denmark publishes studies about regional well-being and growth in the region as a whole and in each of the municipalities.

The region of Southern Denmark will use the SDGs in the development of the next Regional Development Strategy (2020-2023). The SDGs are a powerful tool to promote dialogue among regional stakeholders and to define priorities without overlooking synergies across sectors. Regular meetings between the 22 municipalities and the region, as well as consultations with civil society, schools and universities, are foreseen elements in this process.

**Figure 1. Linking “The Good Life” regional strategy (2016-2019) and the SDGs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key policy themes</th>
<th>SDG-linkages</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Evidence-based policy, information sharing, research</td>
<td>Cross-cutting</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Health, education, well-being, skills, employment</td>
<td>SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Innovation, competitive advantage, sustainable energy, health and welfare innovation, tourism/experience industries</td>
<td>SDG 3, SDG 7, SDG 8, SDG 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Circular economy, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable communities</td>
<td>SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 11</td>
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<td>5. Policy coherence, inter-municipal collaboration, territorial cohesion, culture</td>
<td>SDG 17, SDG 10, SDG 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Regional/international cooperation, sustainable infrastructure, internet access, labour market</td>
<td>SDG 9, SDG 8, SDG 17</td>
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Some municipalities are addressing the SDGs, albeit not always using the framework as a planning tool. Yet, the municipality of Haderslev will fully integrate the SDGs in the new strategic plan for 2019, seeing the 2030 Agenda as appealing to its holistic, interdisciplinary development agenda, as well as for promoting “public service motivation”. Other municipalities, like Vejle and Kolding, have used the SDGs to engage with their local citizens to inform them about the 2030 Agenda, while others (e.g. Middelfart and Haderslev) are linking their climate adaptation projects to the SDGs.

There is a need for more data and statistics to localise the SDGs in Southern Denmark. The Region of Southern Denmark has signed an agreement with Statistic Denmark to develop a localised indicator framework with SDGs indicators on a regional and municipal level. The ambition of Statistics Denmark is to develop two SDGs indicator frameworks: one for the global reporting and one with indicators tailored to the context of Denmark. The project also includes the municipality of Haderslev, where the Region of Southern Denmark will work with the municipality to develop indicators for the municipal level. Both a regional and local baseline for the SDGs is under development, which also looks at data availability at regional and municipal levels.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and an active civil society are prominent features of SDGs implementation in Southern Denmark. For example, a network of 12 secondary schools called Global High Schools (Globale Gymnasier) is spreading awareness, knowledge and fostering action for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Another project led by the foundation Chora 2030 in Southern Denmark is the creation of two urban farms, one in a disadvantaged “ghetto” area Finlandsparken in Vejle and one at the Jelling refugee centre. The farms will provide internship and employment opportunities for asylum seekers and long-term unemployed women, and are designed as a common framework for education and training, increased quality of life, and for fostering local involvement and inclusion, while showcasing contribution towards the 17 SDGs on local scale.

Danish companies are increasingly considering the SDGs as a business opportunity. With the perception that failing to incorporate the SDGs in the core business may leave the company out of business in the long-run, many companies are starting to use the SDGs to strengthen their core business, beyond focussing on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In the short term, key bottlenecks to fully leverage the potential of the private sector to contribute to the 2030 Agenda relate to public procurement frameworks and consumer preferences, which are not always conducive to sustainable practices. A recent national reform of the law on business promotion (1 January 2019) transferred the administration of business development support from the regions to the Danish Business Authority.

FORWARD LOOKING POLICY RESPONSES

Use the SDGs as a tool to move forward with the well-being and quality of life agenda of the region. The SDGs should be the tool to formally include these dimensions (economic, social and environmental sustainability) in all regional development activities and can be used to communicate about these efforts in order to raise awareness about the 2030 Agenda among both institutions and citizens at large. For example, the current regional strategy has an online portal that can be used to publish updates on how the region is contributing to the SDGs.

Shape the next Regional Development Strategy (2020-2023) of Southern Denmark through the SDGs. The current regional development and growth strategy is well connected to the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs should be used as a means to shape the next strategy, and the region should use the mechanisms and forums connected to the strategy to engage stakeholders on the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs can further provide a useful budgeting tool, convening stakeholders around financing decisions for the priorities in the next strategy.

Use the SDGs to engage all the key regional actors in the design, development and implementation of the Regional Development Strategy, from the private sector to the municipalities, civil society and schools. This engagement should go beyond ad hoc consultations, involving key stakeholders in co-creating the different aspects of the strategy.

Support both municipalities that are already quite active on the SDGs, as well as those that still have to start working on the 2030 Agenda, including through awareness-raising activities. The stakeholder engagement process launched by the region with the first OECD mission should continue and allow involving municipalities in the design of the strategy through the lens of the SDGs.

Scale up initiatives that involve schools and civil society in a more systemic way, like the Global High Schools, to inform and engage students with the SDGs. Civil society organisations can provide useful and practical insights to teaching and learning about the 2030 Agenda.

Map of all the agents of change for the private sector to be more engaged in the regional activities on the SDGs. Some key aspects to be analysed are: i) Citizens’ willingness to pay for sustainability and ii) The role of the government to promote sustainability through for example legislation and procurement.