Context

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) constitute our shared global roadmap for a peaceful and prosperous world, with human well-being on a healthy planet at its core.

Almost four years have passed since its adoption and in many areas the European Union (EU) has made significant progress. Within its borders, it has already embarked on a transition to a low-carbon, climate neutral, resource-efficient, circular and biodiverse economy, and is at the same time working hard to ensure social equality and inclusiveness. The EU has also put the SDGs at the heart of its external action and has aligned all development activities of the EU institutions and of its Member States with the 2030 Agenda through a new European Consensus on Development.

Nonetheless, the EU is facing complex and pressing challenges, in particular the ecological debt and climate change, demographic trends, increasing social inequalities, pressures on the public purse, and even the challenge to our democracy by extremist forces who deny facts for political gain. To accelerate the achievement of the ambitious and interlinked SDGs, we will need to systematically review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and follow up effectively.

The EU is determined to do this with great ambition:

The European Commission’s Reflection Paper ‘Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030’ takes stock of the progress made in Europe and identifies the necessary next steps. It underlines the need to move quickly from a linear to a circular economy, to place the food system onto a fully sustainable path, to green the energy, mobility and built environment sectors, while ensuring that the sustainability transition is socially fair, leaving no-one behind, and benefits all. It also recommends to better gear towards the achievement of the sustainability objectives our education, science, technology, research, innovation and digitisation, finance and taxation, as well as business conduct, trade policy and good governance, in order to ensure policy coherence at all levels in the EU and in our relations with third countries, including developing countries.

The first Joint Synthesis Report on the implementation of the European Consensus on Development shows how the EU and its Member States have worked better together through development cooperation to support partner countries in pursuing the SDGs across the world, whilst strengthening their partnerships with the United Nations and other multilateral organisations, with civil society and the private sector.

The ‘Eurostat Monitoring Report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context’ is a key tool for evaluating how well the EU and its Member States are advancing on the SDGs, helping also to highlight the cross-cutting and inter-connected nature of the SDGs.

The EU will continue to work towards the highest social and environmental standards, ambitious climate policies and green and inclusive economic development — all ingredients for tomorrow’s sustainable societies. But we are acutely aware that in an increasingly interdependent world, sustainable development can only be achieved through a global partnership and a collective race to the top. Therefore, the EU will strive to be a trailblazer in implementing the 2030 Agenda: at home, through its cooperation with partner countries based on the SDGs, and by defending effective multilateralism with the United Nations at its core.
Objectives

The EU side-event will take stock of EU action on sustainable development, underscoring its strong commitments and its support to monitoring and accountability. It will assess the progress made in the implementation of the SDGs within Europe and through the EU’s international cooperation, and look ahead to the opportunities and how to best address the many interconnected challenges of sustainable development.

The event will take place in parallel with the ongoing reflection within the EU, launched by the European Commission’s Reflection Paper on how to accelerate and reinforce the implementation of the SDGs across EU policies and better support other countries in their implementation efforts. It will be an opportunity to present and discuss the findings of the Reflection Paper, the first Joint Synthesis Report on the European Consensus on Development, the 2019 Eurostat monitoring report and the 2019 report on Policy Coherence for Development.

Date & Venue

18 July 2019 | 1.15 – 2.30 PM
Conference Room 12 in the UN Conference Building

Organising Partners and Co-organisers

Organised by the European Commission and the Government of Finland.

Format of the event

The side-event will last 75 minutes. It will consist of an opening segment, two high-level interactive panel discussions and a closing segment.

The event will encourage discussion between EU, partner country government representatives from various levels of government, the United Nations, civil society, the private sector and academia. It will explore the success stories, challenges and lessons learned, and consider ways to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda when moving forward.

References

- Reflection Paper ‘Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030’ presented in January 2019 europa.eu/!FY48YJ
- Sustainable development in the European Union. Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context. 2018 edition: europa.eu/!wU38NT
- Joint Synthesis Report on the implementation of the European Consensus on Development europa.eu/!DK97qc