

The 2030 Agenda is the backbone of long-term development planning in Slovakia.

Five years after its first voluntary national review (VNR), Slovakia has made progress in integrating the 2030 Agenda into its national development framework, notably by adopting a Vision and Development Strategy until 2030. At the same time, implementation needs to be accelerated to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) until 2030. To turn this ambition into a reality, Slovakia has identified two key enablers, which are in line with the principles of policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD):¹

Integration

To better respond to circumstances at the national level, Slovakia integrated the 17 SDGs into six national priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (1. Education; 2. Knowledge-based and green economy; 3. Poverty reduction and social inclusion; 4. Sustainable settlements and countryside; 5. Rule of law, democracy and security; 6. Health). These were then associated with national priorities of regional development, paving the way for the development of Slovakia's integrated Vision and Development Strategy until 2030, adopted by Government in 2021. However, integration needs to go further than the strategic level and become a cornerstone at the programme and project levels as well.

Engagement

Horizontal and vertical coordination across government, as well as whole-of-society participation, have been built into the implementation framework of the 2030 Agenda in Slovakia. Apart from ensuring a coordinated approach, broad stakeholder participation, including civil society organisations, is an important safeguard of leaving no one behind.

Progress on individual SDGs can only be achieved by recognising their interlinkages.

In its VNR, Slovakia pays significant attention to interlinkages between SDGs, as well as to the impact of recent and ongoing crises – such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the war in Ukraine – on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The detailed analysis of interactions between the various SDG targets clearly demonstrates that the 2030 Agenda can only be achieved in an integrated manner and by acknowledging potential trade-offs, synergies and transboundary impacts.

Progress on SDGs is evaluated by using the United Nations indicator framework. For the purposes of this VNR, Slovakia has decided to focus on the five SDGs under in-depth review at the 2023 High-level Political Forum: SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17.

Slovakia demonstrates good performance on SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and considers water to be a strategic resource. The country's performance on SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) is also positive although the currently ongoing energy crisis may put progress in peril. Progress towards SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) is more uneven and requires increased attention as well as investment. The official development cooperation of the Slovak Republic is strongly underpinned by the SDGs in bilateral and multilateral relations alike.

¹ As elaborated by the OECD, [PCSD principles](#) include: (1) Political Commitment and Leadership; (2) Strategic Long-term Vision; (3) Policy Integration; (4) Whole-of-Government Coordination; (5) Subnational Engagement; (6) Stakeholder Engagement; (7) Policy and Financing Impacts; (8) Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation.

The below table provides a snapshot of the 17 SDGs in Slovakia:



Source: Sachs et al. (2022): From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond. *Sustainable Development Report 2022*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/slovak-republic>

To achieve the SDGs, systemic change is inevitable.

Apart from evaluating progress, the VNR also pinpoints persisting challenges and highlights the need to speed up 2030 Agenda implementation at the national level. Recognizing the importance of civil society organizations in Slovakia, cooperation with all relevant stakeholders needs to be an integral part of implementation efforts.

At the international level, successive global reports on the status of sustainable development have raised the alarm on severe implementation gaps across the world, which have been further exacerbated by environmental, health and security crises. The eight years that have passed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda have seen uneven progress across the goals, across territories, and across various social and population groups. Today it is evident that in addition to setting ambitious global goals and establishing worldwide monitoring mechanisms, a more intensive coordination of **implementation** at the international level is also inevitable for achieving the SDGs.