

## Voluntary National Review 2025

### Main Messages

Today, Finland is an equal, modern and prosperous welfare state and a leader in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Our strengths are a high level of trust, a well-functioning democracy and equal opportunities for everyone. Investing in gender equality and ensuring free high-quality education and universal healthcare have been key factors in Finland's development story.

Based on Finland's experience, it is crucial to make sure that everyone is involved: Finland aims to achieve the SDGs through strong political commitment and by involving all actors in society. Only by working together, in Finland and globally, can we achieve sustainable results. Continuous stocktaking and strategic forecasting steers us towards adaptive management, enabling us to prepare for the future.

Finland continuously monitors and reviews its progress towards sustainable development, and we have strong institutional structures and processes in place to ensure societal engagement. Preparing the VNRs highlights Finland's evidence-based systematic monitoring. This is Finland's third voluntary review (the previous ones were conducted in 2016 and 2020).

Finland considers the country reviews particularly useful as they provide an opportunity to uncover and correct potential blind spots. Based on feedback, we have strengthened our whole-of-society approach and shifted from a single-solution orientation to a more systems-based approach.

In accelerating the achievement of the SDGs, Finland is on the right track with respect to many of them but emphasises the need for continuous follow-up and corrective actions. Analysing the SDGs in focus for 2025, we see that:

- For good health and wellbeing (SDG3), Finland has e.g. succeeded in decreasing the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.
- Finland has traditionally been a leader in gender equality (SDG5). The number of women in managerial roles in economy and public life is high. Challenges still exist, including increased sexual and gender-based violence.
- The clean transition requires sustainable economic growth (SDG8), and systematic efforts are being made to secure this. Innovations, new business models and novel forms of work can be found, and both education and RDI play a key role.

- We have seen progress on life below water (SDG 14), where the target of conserving 10 per cent of Finland's total marine area has been reached. On the other hand, Finland is still far from ecological sustainability, especially when it comes to forests and other terrestrial ecosystems.
- As for SDG17, Finland has actively pursued international partnerships to advance sustainable development. At the national level, parity is extremely important for social cohesion, to ensure that all of society supports sustainability and that people feel included and are better equipped for future challenges through models such as life-long education.

Global challenges continue to increase at an accelerated pace. Tackling the interlinked challenges in a continuously changing geopolitical context requires new approaches and closer collaboration between different actors.

This VNR focuses on the following issues:

Firstly, due to the interconnectedness of the SDGs, we follow the recommendation of the framework of Global Sustainable Development Reports (2019, 2023). In the framework, **implementation takes place through transformative changes in key societal systems such as food, energy, education and consumption**, which are crucial for our wellbeing and for speeding up sustainability. This requires innovations and reliable data.

Secondly, to move forward with the framework, **we need to build it together in close collaboration between the Government, Parliament and youth, and in dialogue with e.g. academia, businesses, municipalities, CSOs and minority communities.**

Thirdly, **we are future-oriented in all our actions.** We run processes to provide foresight on what to expect and prepare for. We use independent evaluations, holistic sustainability assessments and future scenario processes while promoting imagination skills.