

CIVIL SOCIETY'S ASSESSMENTS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS TO NORWAY'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2021



Norwegian Forum
for Development
and Environment

Voluntary National Review

As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven" (paragraph 79). These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the high-level political forum (HLPF), meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC. As stipulated in paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda, regular reviews by the HLPF are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders.

The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

(Source: [Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform](#))

We would like to thank all contributors to these assessments, especially the working group coordinators in UNICEF Norway, Caritas Norway, FORUT, the United Nations Association of Norway, IPPF Norway, Norwegian People's Aid and Spire.

About Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM)

Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM) is a network of 50 Norwegian organizations within development, environment, peace and human rights. Our vision is a democratic and peaceful world based on fair distribution, solidarity, human rights and sustainability. Our main area of work (2013-2020) is on the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Preface

With less than ten years left to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), all countries should have ambitious and holistic plans for how to meet Agenda 2030. In the process of finding effective measures to solve the problems we are facing, follow-up and review mechanisms play an important part. Sharing experiences aid us in identifying best practices that can be used in other countries, as well as areas where more action is needed. This year, Norway presents its second Voluntary National Review (VNR), assessing the efforts to meet the SDGs so far, as well as Norway's challenges in the start of the Decade of Action.

In the official Norwegian VNR report, civil society was given the opportunity to contribute with assessments of each of the 17 SDGs. Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development, a network of over 50 organisations working on development, environment, human rights and peace, was given the task to coordinate the contributions.

More than 80 civil society actors participated in one or more of the 17 working groups responsible for co-writing the assessment of each goal. Using our network to engage organisations, we managed to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders despite a tight time frame. However, the short deadlines were a barrier for participation, and we acknowledge that we should strive for an even broader and more diverse group of civil society organisations in future joint civil society initiatives regarding Agenda 2030.

Norwegian civil society benefits from a strong tradition of engagement of non-state actors in decision-making processes. Broad engagement of stakeholders is crucial for achieving the SDGs, as well as building trust between the government and civil society. This process has demonstrated how governments can actively engage non-state actors in reporting processes and has given us useful experiences on how we can further strengthen stakeholder engagement and build trust between different stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

The engagement in this VNR process is also a testament to the value of sharing experiences across borders. The model of stakeholder engagement in the VNR process that the Finnish CSO Fingo developed in cooperation with the Finnish government last year, inspired the Norwegian government to include civil society's assessments in the

official report. This enabled us to shift our focus from advocating for being included in the process, to start discussing how we can make the inclusion meaningful.

Norway has made considerable efforts to meet the SDGs, but as this VNR report shows, there are also great challenges ahead of us. Even though some progress has been made in reducing climate emissions, Norway still searches for new oil and gas ventures and is lagging behind in the transition to a greener and more sustainable society. None of the Aichi-targets, the global biodiversity goals, were met by 2020. The economic inequalities are increasing, and Norway is struggling to make the economy circular and ensuring responsible production and consumption. The Government should also address the dilemmas Norway is facing in Agenda 2030 and ensure policy coherence for sustainable development.

In Norway's National Action Plan for implementation of Agenda 2030, we need ambitious goals to ensure a just transition to a sustainable society, as well as strong mechanisms for inclusion, participation and accountability. Civil society, academia and business must have a seat at the table both in planning, implementation and revisions of our road map to meet Agenda 2030. Together, we can find the solutions we need to meet the SDGs by 2030.

Kathrine Sund-Henriksen
Director
Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment



SDG 1: No poverty

Trend: Negative

Organisations participating in this assessment: UNICEF Norway, Strømme Foundation, the Salvation Army Norway, the Development Fund Norway, YGlobal, SOS Children's Villages Norway and the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).

Norway has succeeded in that poverty levels remain low in Norway. Extreme poverty is virtually non-existent. In 2018, the estimated ratio of people in Norway living on less than PPP \$1.90 a day was 0.3 per cent. However, challenges remain pertaining to relative, multi-dimensional poverty.

Internationally, Norway has maintained Official Development Assistance (ODA) levels at a commendable yearly average of around 1.04 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI) in the 2016-2020 period, surpassing the 0.7 per cent ODA/GNI target. In 2020, ODA peaked at a record 1.11 per cent of GNI. The share of Norwegian ODA targeting least developed and low-income countries has grown from 48 per cent (2016) to 56 per cent (2020).

Norway's challenge is that too many people in Norway still suffer adverse health and social outcomes related to economic, social and material deprivation, including social exclusion and psychological trauma. In 2019, 24 per cent of people aged 16 and over reported not being able to afford an unexpected expense of approximately \$2,045 (NOK 18,000). Five per cent reported not being able to afford dental care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the situation for the poor, and has substantially increased the number of people at risk of poverty. Norway has had a steady increase in the proportion of children growing up in households with persistently low incomes. From a rate of around 7.7 per cent in 2011, the rate increased to 11.7 per cent in 2019. This is particularly troubling, seeing as deprivation in childhood not only threatens children's rights, but may feed a cycle of poverty, affecting individuals' future health and well-being. There were 115,000 children living in low-income households in 2019. Over half of these children had immigrant backgrounds. Statistics Norway highlights weak attachment to the labour market as the main risk factor for households.

Unemployment rates more than doubled when the pandemic hit. Subsequently, unemployment has decreased to around 205,800 persons registered in mid-March 2021. This translates to approximately 7 per cent of the workforce; an increase compared to 2016, when the rate was approximately 4.8 per cent. At-risk groups (e.g. persons with immigrant backgrounds) are overrepresented. A total of 9.2 per cent of immigrants were registered as unemployed in Q4 2020.

Even if Norwegian ODA is contributing cross-sectorally to combating poverty, the share of development assistance aimed at protecting the most vulnerable against future shocks through climate adaptation is still relatively low, despite ambitious plans.

Norway must:

- re-integrate and include more people in the labour market, including persons with immigrant backgrounds;
- strengthen comprehensive, inclusive and universal social protection and welfare systems for all inhabitants, minimising geographical and other disparities;
- expand child-sensitive social protection programmes, including universal cash benefits for children. Child benefits should be index-linked, and should not entail deductions from other necessary welfare benefits for recipients;
- maintain support for significant and enhanced ODA commitments to accelerate implementation of the 2030 agenda. Norway must continue to commit at least 1 per cent of GNI to ODA, and should commit to further ODA increases in light of post-pandemic challenges;
- through development policies, promote universal welfare solutions that reach everyone, including universal health coverage and education;
- enhance post-pandemic efforts to support resilient livelihoods for the extremely poor and those most vulnerable to conflicts, climate change and natural resource depletion.



SDG 2: Zero hunger

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Agrarian Association, Caritas Norway, FIAN Norway, the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), the Norwegian Grandparents Climate Campaign, the Royal Norwegian Society for Development, Norwegian Church Aid (member of ACT Alliance), Spire and the Development Fund Norway.

Norway has already succeeded in securing food for many generations, and hunger is eradicated in Norway. The farmers' unions and the Government have signed agreements to secure the multi-functionality in agriculture. Norway has committed to implementing the 4 per 1000 Initiative in order to increase the soil carbon stocks. Farmers' organisations have made plans to cut GHG emissions. Norway has increased the political focus on the importance of small-scale food producers (farmers, fishermen, pastoralists, gatherers) as key actors for ensuring food security (food from agriculture and sea, fresh waters) in development policy. Together with developing countries, Norway holds and promotes a clear and strong position on farmers' rights to seeds in order to ensure food security and climate adaptation. Norway supports research on sustainable food production systems both nationally and internationally. The Government, farmers' organisations and the food industry have made an agreement to reduce food loss. Production of biogas from food waste is increasing.

Norway's challenges include that a third of elderly people in Norwegian hospitals and municipal health-care services are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition. Meanwhile, the obesity rate for children in Norway is 15 to 20 per cent, and Norway has the most obese population among the Nordic countries. The self-sufficiency ratio for food produced in Norway is only 40 per cent. The grocery retail market is dominated by only three grocery retail chains, which in combination hold a 98 per cent market share. In relation to Norway's contribution to SDG 2 internationally, the country's main challenge is to follow up its Action Plan for Sustainable Food Systems with an increase in Norwegian development aid to support food security and agriculture. Only 6 per cent (2017) of the Norwegian development aid is used to support these areas. Small-scale food producers need predictable support and long-term perspectives. A key challenge is to raise the discussion on food in relation to other SDGs and how these are influenced by what we eat, how food is produced, where it is produced and how it is used (food loss).

Norway must:

- develop a plan for each municipality for the realisation of rights to food and health according to the concluding observations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- mitigate risks stemming from the limited number of food retail chains (3) in Norway;
- promote sustainable food systems that address control over feed and food production and natural resources, increase self-sufficiency and the population's need for a healthy and sustainable diet, fair trade and investments;
- shift subsidy schemes from volume production to area production in order to safeguard self-sufficiency, the social mission of agriculture, cultural landscape and the world's resource base;
- support the genetic diversity of plants and seeds and local communities' rights to harvest and share these in international fora and through own trade agreements;
- increase support for small-scale producers, through improved access to financial support and support for cooperatives and extension services;
- double foreign development aid in food security and agriculture (excluding humanitarian assistance) and recalibrate the support in response to COVID-19;
- acknowledge that the Paris Agreement defines support for climate adaptation in developing countries to protect the most vulnerable, which is equally important to mitigating efforts, and increase Norway's support for adaptation to 50 per cent of all climate finance;
- promote and finance a human rights approach that takes into account minimum living conditions. A useful tool is the Human Rights Measurement Initiative;
- provide information and background for relevant discussions and decision-making processes connected to food in a global perspective.



SDG 3: Good health and well-being

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: FORUT – Campaign for Development and Solidarity, the Norwegian Medical Students’ Association (NMSA-Norway), SOS Children’s Villages Norway, UNICEF, Save the Children Norway, IPPF-Norway, the Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations, the Norwegian Trekking Association, the Norwegian Cancer Society, Unio (the Confederation of Unions for Professionals) and Poly Norway.

Norway has succeeded in having a well-developed health system and a population in general good health. The goal of reducing premature deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by 25 per cent by 2025 has been achieved, and was adjusted to a reduction by a third by 2030. Important factors are recognising voluntary work as an important role in good public health, as well as maintaining one of the world’s strictest tobacco policies. Norway has succeeded in playing a leading role within global health. Norway has contributed heavily in financial terms to GAVI, CEPI and COVAX. Norway’s development policy has advocated for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and has helped raise awareness of harmful traditional practices.

Norway’s challenge is the lack of political follow-up of goals and measures, especially goals related to physical activity, diet, overweight and obesity, and social inequalities in health. The UN has criticised Norway for not giving the same health rights to undocumented migrants. Higher education adds 5-6 years to a person’s life, compared to those with low levels of education. The mortality rate of drug-related deaths is high compared to other countries. Access to services connected to SRHR in Norway is undemocratic and unequal, especially when it comes to the Sámi population and other minorities. Sex workers are also excluded from universal sexual and reproductive health-care services, especially in the wake of COVID. Norway’s challenge is that studies by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health show levels of heavy metals, arsenic and mineral manganese, measured in maternal blood during pregnancy, associated with increased risk of ADHD and/or autism. Diseases caused by climate change, environmental toxins and antibiotic resistance are in danger of increasing and must be monitored.

Norway has launched an NCD strategy and an action plan, in which mental health has been included as a factor for early death for the first time. However, Norway has yet to prioritise NCDs in Norwegian development policies even though they represent one of the greatest threats to achieving the SDGs.

Norway must:

- implement economic incentives on health-damaging products such as alcohol, various foods, tobacco and drugs;
- make health-promoting goods more available for the whole population;
- involve the voluntary sector as a key player in preventive and health-promoting work;
- introduce one hour of daily physical activity in schools, and ensure good-quality outdoor areas in school, pre-school and nursery facilities;
- give nature a higher priority in spatial planning and introduce a national goal of a maximum of 500 metres to the nearest walking trail or nature area;
- recognise nature as a tool in preventing mental health issues, and prioritise health-promoting work related to mental health and well-being;
- in line with UN drug conventions, focus on prevention, holistic treatment and rehabilitation programmes to replace incarceration and fines as a reaction to minor drug offences;
- implement an equitable health system that includes dignified follow-up for asylum seekers and stateless persons;
- lead the international effort to integrate NCDs into the development agenda, especially in relation to mental health, and include civil society in its implementation;
- increase its support for the SAFER initiative to assist low- to middle-income countries;
- take the international lead to shape and coordinate an improved system for pandemic preparedness and response, including fair and equitable development of medicines and vaccines.



SDG 4: Quality education

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: the United Nations Association of Norway, UNICEF Norway, Junior Achievement, the Strømme Foundation, the Norwegian Library Association, ADRA Norway, SAIH, the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) Norway, the Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations, Save the Children Norway, the Salvation Army, IPPF Norway, the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association, CISV, the Norwegian Forum of Disabled Peoples' Organizations SAFO, Dyslexia Norway, the National Union of Students in Norway, NITO, CCL, the RORG network, Unio (the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and SOS Children's Villages).

Norway has succeeded in building a very good and robust educational system, which guarantees all children equal access to free, standardised education. In 2020, Norway integrated Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into the general curriculum by creating three cross-disciplinary school subjects; 'Sustainable Development', 'Democracy and Citizenship' and 'Public Health and Life Skills'.

Internationally, Norway has increased education aid for low-income countries and strengthened the Tax for Development programme that enables development countries to improve domestic financing for education. Norway also participates in various student exchange programmes with universities across the world.

Norway's challenge is a shortage of qualified school teachers and kindergarten employees. While sustainable development is anchored in the new curriculum, teacher education programmes do not include specific training for teaching sustainable development. Without proper training on social, economic and environmental sustainability, teachers could not be expected to take ownership of ESD. This would, in turn, limit the momentum of the new curriculum. The teacher education programmes also lack sufficient training in Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).

As we see more nationalist and isolationist sentiments across Europe, more focus is also needed on global citizenship education. The PISA 2018 survey shows that one in five Norwegian 15-year-olds are 'low-performing' readers. Systematic use of school libraries in education would have a positive impact. It is also important to identify reading difficulties at an earlier stage, especially among ethnic minorities. Translating and adapting teaching material to Sámi languages is still a challenge.

The extent to which pupils with disabilities are included in schools is not satisfactory. This challenge increases with age, and at present, only 30 per cent continue to upper secondary school alongside their peers. Another

challenge is the high percentage of dropouts at the upper secondary school level, which is worst among boys and in vocational training programmes.

Norway must:

- integrate ESD as part of the teachers' education and provide schools with the necessary tools to ensure active-based learning for all pupils so they acquire the knowledge and skills needed for sustainable development;
- implement valid indicators for measuring, evaluating and reporting on target 4.7, that includes non-formal sectors;
- strengthen the efforts to recover learning losses and physical as well as psychological impacts of COVID-19 nationally and globally;
- introduce more inclusive, formal and non-formal child and youth-centred quality education with a focus on individuality, diverse practices, creative activities and a more flexible transition from lower to upper secondary school;
- ensure satisfactory outdoor areas for daily physical activities and outdoor teaching;
- use laws, regulations and earmarked funds to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities at all levels of their education;
- strengthen anti-bullying efforts, especially regarding cyber-bullying;
- provide flexible digital learning nationally, and extend these same opportunities globally;
- earmark 15 per cent of development aid to education and increase support to relevant education funds and partnerships, UN organisations and civil society actors. Stop all ODA funding to for-profit schools. Providing free, inclusive, public, quality education should be the cornerstone of Norwegian development aid, in line with human rights, SDG 4 and our domestic education policy;
- continue its global leadership role for the right to quality education, systematically promoting equality and accessibility in quality education, and safe schools, globally and at home.



SDG 5: Gender equality

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: IPPF Norway, Bibi Amka Woman Wake Up, FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development, FRI, KFUK-KFUM Global, KUN Centre for Equality and Diversity, the Centre for Equality, LO Norway – the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, the Royal Norwegian Society for Development, the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association, Plan International Norway, Poly Norway, Save the Children, the Sámi Women’s Network, the Norwegian Youth Network for Sexual Politics, the Centre for Gender and Equality, Sex and Society, Unio (the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Soroptimist Norway).

Norway has succeeded in strengthening active equality efforts, and as of 2020, employers must make systematic efforts to promote gender equality and prevent discrimination. A legislative update on hate crime from 2021 is also now providing necessary legal protection for trans women. The Action Plan to Combat Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation was launched in 2017.

Norway is a strong international advocate for gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), with a particular focus on eliminating harmful practices. Norway has actively contributed to putting sexual violence in humanitarian crises on the international agenda. A development programme against modern slavery was established in 2020.

Norway’s challenges are systematic inequalities between men and women in economy, politics and business. In employment, the gender-segregated labour market, part-time working and the gender pay gap are all still issues. Minority women are especially vulnerable. Shrinking civic space, hate speech, discrimination and online harassment are barriers to girls’ and women’s free speech and democratic participation. The new Norwegian Climate Action Plan is gender blind, even though climate change has clear gendered effects. Access to SRHR services in Norway is undemocratic and unequal, partly because of geographical distances. In 2019, the Norwegian abortion law was tightened, and foetal reduction in cases of multiple pregnancies now needs approval as opposed to being ‘on demand’. Pupils are calling for more comprehensive sexuality education. Increased competence on gender equality, diversity and norm-critical pedagogy in kindergartens and schools is needed. Police, education and health institutions do not use existing knowledge from minority and Sámi communities. Direct cooperation with the communities, Sámi Parliament and scholars is needed to make information and services available in all relevant languages.

At a global level, the COVID-19 pandemic has serious negative effects on women’s rights and gender equality. Violence against women has increased. Economic uncertainty and unemployment are hitting women hard, especially women in rural areas.

Norway must:

- continue nationally and internationally to strengthen efforts to combat all forms of violence against women and girls, including digital forms;
- follow up the Istanbul Convention;
- launch a new action plan against domestic violence;
- prohibit sexual actions without consent in criminal law;
- ratify the ILO Convention against Violence and Harassment and adopt ILO recommendation no. 206;
- ensure a strong gender perspective in post-pandemic politics, nationally and internationally, including an active policy to create new jobs, ensuring strong workers’ rights and reducing income inequalities;
- strengthen the intersectional approach in all work to achieve gender equality, and not limit gender equality policies and efforts to a binary model;
- follow up the Norwegian Official Report NOU 2019: 19 on gender equality challenges for children and youth, including substantial investments to counteract the gender divide in the choice of educational programmes and vocational training;
- fulfil the commitment to increase bilateral development assistance that has women’s rights and gender equality as a primary or significant goal to 50 per cent;
- develop a feminist foreign policy, for Norwegian development aid to truly become gender transformative.



SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: UNICEF Norway, Sabima, the Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations, the Norwegian Hunters' and Anglers' Association, WWF Norway, the Norwegian Trekking Association, Friends of the Earth Norway.

Norway has succeeded in providing safe drinking water and good sanitary conditions domestically. Norway is on the right path in terms of implementing integrated water management through implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. This ensures a higher degree of public participation and a transparent process. The work has improved the level of knowledge on the management of freshwater and coastal resources, and is receiving more attention and resources from the Government, albeit at a very slow pace. A small but important improvement for protecting freshwater ecosystems is the recent prohibition of agricultural conversion of mires and boglands.

Norway's challenge include insufficient investment in the maintenance of drinking water and sewage network. Leakage from the drinking water supply system is estimated to be 30 per cent. This is not just a waste of clean water and energy, but also poses a risk of contaminating the drinking water supply.

Integrated water management goes beyond preventing water ecosystems from deterioration, and also encompasses ecological restoration of degraded lakes, rivers and wetlands. Implementation of integrated water management is slow, underfinanced and characterised by strong sectoral division. Norway has a long way to go to fully meet its obligations under the EU Water Framework Directive. Norway is not investing enough in restoring contaminated or physically degraded freshwater ecosystems. Thirty-five per cent of the lake and river water bodies are subject to various types of degradation and in need of environmental measures, while 12 per cent of the freshwater water bodies are categorised as heavily modified and will not meet general environmental objectives. In general, the surveillance of chemical water and the quality of freshwater resources are weak.

The municipalities play a critical role in Norwegian water management, but often lack the necessary resources and competence. Norwegian legislation gives municipalities a large margin of discretion to exempt projects from rules that are meant to preclude environmental

degradation. Hence, Norwegian freshwater ecosystems are under threat from the phenomenon known as 'piece-meal degradation', where allowances are given without reference to the accumulated and often synergetic ecosystem degradation.

Norway's negative footprint on aquatic ecosystems globally should be reduced. This includes the 'outsourced' environmental impact on water ecosystems, such as water use, ecotoxicity, eutrophication as well as physical degradation of water bodies. Assessing Norway's total water footprint would allow a holistic systemic approach to developing and implementing more responsible regulations and policies in accordance with SDGs 8 and 12. While UN-Water has called for increases in aid commitments to meet growing demands and extend WASH services to the most vulnerable populations, Norway's commitments earmarked for this sector have remained at around 0.4 per cent of the annual ODA budget.

Norway must:

- increase its efforts to meet its goal of restoring 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems by 2025, including water-related ecosystems. If more effort is not made, Norway is unlikely to meet this 2025 target, as was also the case for the target set for 2020;
- strengthen the implementation and the transparency of the Government Pension Fund Global's expectation document on water management and introduce exclusion criteria based on excessive water consumption;
- set numerical requirements for more efficient water use for Norwegian companies operating in water-intensive sectors, and in countries where access to water is limited. Companies must report on water footprint and measures for water efficiency in their annual reports;
- introduce labelling of imported goods' water usage;
- increase aid commitments and strengthen investment in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) humanitarian work.



SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: Friends of the Earth Norway, WWF Norway and the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).

Norway has succeeded in developing an electricity sector fully based on renewable energy (except for offshore industry and on the island of Svalbard). Norway has taken important steps in electrification. Fossil fuels have been phased out in the building sector/space heating and are currently being phased out in the transport sector. More than 50 per cent of all new cars are electric and only electric cars will be sold from 2025. The Government has announced steep increases in the CO₂ tax level to 200 EUR/tonne in 2030.

Norway has universal access to modern, reliable and affordable energy and practically no energy poverty. Norway's development aid for energy has been reduced since earlier periods but is still at a high level due to investment in renewable energy. The Government Pension Fund Global has made its first investment in renewable energy infrastructure in Europe.

Norway's challenge is its high per capita energy consumption. Despite a high share of renewable energy in mainland Norway's energy consumption, the total share of renewable energy use, including energy use in offshore oil and gas production, is only 51 per cent. Almost 100 per cent of Norway's electricity production is renewable. The most significant renewable sources: hydropower and wind power, have a negative influence on nature, and further development will undermine other SDGs, including SDGs 14 and 15.

Norway's prospecting for new oil and gas reserves will increase emissions from production as well as the need for renewable energy for electrification of offshore installations (diverting renewable energy from other uses), and will add to the already too high consumption of fossil fuels worldwide.

Norway continues to develop transport infrastructure facilitating high speed and increased use of passenger cars and freight trucks, without regard for the increase in energy consumption that will follow.

Norway's existing building stock has huge potential for efficiency gains. There are no action plan or measures in place to meet the efficiency target for the sector set by the Government. Energy efficiency is often highlighted as the most important measure to reach SDG 7 without compromising SDGs 13, 14 and 15. Norway's efforts to meet target 7.3 to double the improvement rate of energy efficiency have slowed down, and Norway has no comprehensive policy in place to address the energy efficiency target.

Norway must:

- set an energy efficiency target and develop strategies to meet target 7.3 on energy efficiency;
- stop new licences for oil and gas drilling and phase out the use of fossil energy by 2040, cf. the IPCC's call for a 90 per cent reduction in oil production by 2050;
- increase the focus on basic access to modern, reliable and affordable energy services for households in development aid and international cooperation;
- use the most environmentally friendly measures for new renewable energy production, which is positive for the phasing out of fossil energy use, for the climate and biodiversity;
- assess current and future energy production no longer only on the basis of economic profitability, jobs, market interests and isolated climate gains, but to a much greater extent build on the real importance and value of intact ecosystem services, rich biodiversity, and large contiguous land areas for society as a whole;
- utilise the energy we already produce in a more efficient way before we consider new area-intensive energy developments. Among other things, it is crucial to increase financial support for energy efficiency in buildings;
- realise energy and climate measures that safeguard ecosystems, such as wetlands, as the most cost-effective solution for storing and increasing carbon uptake.



SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (Forum), the Salvation Army Norway, Lightup Norway, the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, the Christian Council of Norway, the Royal Norwegian Society for Development, Norwegian People's Aid, Plan International Norway, Unio (the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Save the Children Norway).

Norway has succeeded in proposing a due diligence law that would require all larger companies to disclose information about their due diligence assessments to prevent negative impacts on human and workers' rights. The proposal also suggests companies disclose information on incidents and about their value chains on request. If implemented, the proposed law would give Norway one of the strongest due diligence frameworks in the world.

In general, Norway has a strong framework for workers and several government agencies to ensure workers' rights are not violated. However, vulnerable groups such as immigrant workers often face the risk of exploitation due to low unionisation rates and lack of coverage in the labour welfare system and collective agreements.

Norway's challenge is the lack of coherence between different policies related to SDG 8. For instance, Norway has created an aid programme to combat anti-slavery, but it does not include any measures to combat sexual exploitation. There is also great concern that human rights, workers' rights and environmental rights repeatedly lose out to trade interests when Norway negotiates trade agreements with countries where these rights are at serious risk.

Nationally, there are vulnerable groups in Norwegian society who face exploitation in the job market. Government agencies have limited resources to supervise businesses or regulate the market, creating opportunities for rogue actors to violate workers' rights in order to maximise profits. The risk has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused a strong rise in unemployment in Norway, increasing the risk of exploitation of vulnerable groups.

Norway must:

- strengthen its focus on the economic empowerment of marginalised youth, especially young women, in its development policies. Gender equality and inclusion of minority groups, the freedom of association, collective negotiations and living wages must form an integral part

of Norwegian development assistance to private sector development and job creation;

- be a driving force in promoting a strategy for the prevention of digital sexual exploitation of vulnerable children and young people internationally;
- enact ambitious corporate responsibility legislation with due diligence in mandatory and gender-responsive human rights. Due diligence legislation should also include environmental risks, and the duty to inform consumers and any other enquirers on value chains and production sites;
- implement specific, long-term measures to prevent sexual exploitation, including digital forms of exploitation, and include youth, women and faith-based actors in this work;
- ensure protection, legal rights and remedies for survivors of sexual exploitation;
- enact appropriate requirements for employers to ensure that all employees, including foreign workers, enjoy Norwegian standards of workers' rights;
- employ concrete measures to increase the unionisation rate of workers, such as increasing the union fee tax deduction and strengthening the regulatory framework in order to restrict exploitative and anti-union work practices;
- increase funding of governmental agencies, such as the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, to ensure that workers' rights are respected and prevent worker exploitation;
- implement stricter sustainability requirements for the Government Pension Fund Global's investment policy, ensuring that companies breaching core ILO conventions are excluded from the fund;
- include environmental sustainability standards and adherence to ILO core conventions in trade treaties.



SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac Norway, the Norwegian Medical Association (NMA), the Norwegian Seafarer's Union, the Norwegian Union of Railway Workers (NJF) and Norwegian Church Aid (member of ACT Alliance).

Norway has succeeded in launching a white paper on digitalisation in development policy, recognising the digital divide and the importance of digitalisation in societal development. Grant schemes facilitating business engagement in innovation and development projects are a positive initiative for engaging businesses in the 2030 Agenda.

Norway's challenge is that the long-term transportation plan proposed by the Government, Nasjonal Transportplan (NTP), lacks focus on building a sustainable transportation sector - both when it comes to building the infrastructure in itself and how the new infrastructure affects the transport patterns in Norway. To reduce climate change and the destruction of nature, it is vitally important to make a modal shift from road to sea or railway in freight transport in Norway. Investment in existing harbours could make sea freight more efficient and reduce the need to build new roads. Improving railways and terminals would enable freight transport capacity on the rail system to be increased by 40 per cent without building new tracks.

Norway is dependent on importing medical specialists. One in five newly approved specialists in Norway has received their specialty training in other Nordic countries or the EU. This is not sustainable in the long run, and Norway should take greater responsibility in educating the medical specialists we need. Norway is highly dependent on importing essential medical supplies from foreign medical companies in emergencies, and lacks adequate production capacity to help meet the current need for increased vaccine production. There is also a need for more focus on medical research, innovation and investment in addressing women's health. Internationally, Norway does not support regulations that facilitate technology transfer in the e-commerce negotiations currently taking place in the WTO. Depriving countries in the global south of the opportunity to transfer knowledge and technology from the multi-national technology companies operating in these countries impedes the development of poor countries' own digital industry.

Grant schemes financing innovation projects for sustainable development should not be used as a tool for promoting Norwegian business abroad, but rather place emphasis on promoting innovation and transfer of competence to developing countries. Strict commercial requirements for Norwegian businesses in these schemes are a barrier to engaging companies in projects with considerable socio-economic benefits in developing countries.

Norway must:

- change mode of freight transport from road to sea or rail by investing in the existing rail infrastructure and existing harbours to increase the capacity for freight transport and make it more efficient;
- increase support to programmes developing new ships that are fully electric, hybrid or have hydrogen propulsion with strongly reduced climate emissions;
- ensure better framework conditions for medical research and professional development, to ensure better quality and safety in the health services provided;
- build competence and domestic production capacity of critical medicines, infection control equipment and medical equipment, as well as strengthen Nordic and international cooperation to ensure better access;
- focus on exporting the infrastructure and expertise we can offer to help the world's poorest countries to benefit from new technology, such as broadband, cloud storage and server capacity, as well as supporting regional data centres;
- support regulations in international trade agreements that facilitate technology transfers to developing countries. Countries should have access to demand local storage of data collected domestically and leeway for regulation of their digital development;
- adapt grant schemes for innovation and development projects to facilitate businesses' engagement in sustainable development projects in partnership with NGOs.



SDG 10: Reducing inequality

Trend: Negative

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), Norwegian People's Aid, Unio (the Confederation of Unions for Professionals, YGlobal, Norwegian Medical Students' Association, Salvation Army Norway, LO Norway, Norwegian Library Association and the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations.

Norway has succeeded in being among the top countries in the world when it comes to economic and social equality. Norway is one of the highest achievers in reducing income inequality, which is linked to its high unionisation rate and largely coordinated wage formation. There are fewer inequalities among certain groups in Norway compared to other countries, and recent research has also shown greater social mobility. Norway has increased funding for the Tax for Development programme, which is an important contribution to strengthening the capacity of tax administrations in developing countries. Norway has also doubled its global support to strengthen national universal primary education systems in developing countries.

Norway's challenge is that social and economic inequalities in Norway have increased since the 1980s. Despite having a national universal health-care system, Norway has greater social inequalities in health than many other European countries, and this is particularly reflected in the attainment gap and the gender gap. The poverty level among children is also worrying, with currently 11.7 per cent of Norwegian children living below the national poverty line.

The current pandemic has intensified inequalities. The risk of long-term unemployment and exclusion from employment has increased, a higher proportion of the population is at risk of a persistent low income and a whole generation of youth have lost education and employment opportunities. Concurrently, the economic space for curbing inequalities has become more restricted. Over the last 10 years, real earnings in certain sectors with a low unionisation rate have remained at a standstill, while the general increase elsewhere is 10-15 per cent. In the same parts of the labour market, the learning opportunities and job security are weaker than elsewhere. In addition, social mobility related to education attainment is less than economic mobility across generations.

At the global level, the pandemic has revealed a need for urgent action to curb global inequality and ensure

effective in-country redistribution systems. Financial secrecy, tax havens and weak international regulations are among the drivers of economic, social and political inequality in the world. Most industrialised countries have reduced corporate taxation since 2007, which has led to an increased tax burden on individual citizens.

Norway must:

- protect and enhance crucial institutions in the Nordic model, such as coordinated wage formation, universal welfare and a high unionisation rate. The social dialogue between the Government, employers' organisations and trade unions must be strengthened locally, regionally and nationally;
- integrate the inequality dimension in all major policy areas;
- strengthen universal welfare services in education and health care, and increase the universal child benefit;
- continuously strengthen and secure access to libraries to enable all citizens to empower themselves through free access to information, cultural integration and social inclusion;
- disabled persons must have the same opportunities as others to choose their place of residence, where they live and with whom;
- increase support for the decent work agenda globally, and the capacity, establishment and protection of trade unions;
- take a leading role in pushing for the implementation of the recommendations of the FACTI report, including working for a UN tax convention, an intergovernmental tax body under the UN and a global minimum corporate tax;
- support country-by-country reporting (ECBCR), which will be an important contribution to tackling strategic tax planning and tax havens;
- Norway should actively fight discrimination based on gender, disability, caste or sexual, religious or other minority status, and support groups who promote equal rights.



SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

Trend: Negative

Organisations participating in this assessment: Spire, the Norwegian Forum of Disabled Peoples' Organizations SAFO, the Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations, the Norwegian Federation of Cultural Heritage Organisations, Sustainable Living Norway and the Church of Norway.

Norway has succeeded in customising the SDGs to a local context in some cities. Examples are Oslo with cycle paths, public transport and efforts regarding a circular economy, and Hurdal, which developed an urban eco-village. Norway has also succeeded in the use of digital tools to make it easier for people (including children) to participate in urban planning processes.

Norway's challenges are related to divided sectors both at the national and local levels. There is no holistic approach and a lack of understanding of the connection between the different SDGs. The Government has recently delegated a number of tasks to the municipalities without sufficient funding or guidance. This has, inter alia, contributed to the degradation of nature, outdoor areas and green structures in and around the cities. There is also a need to strengthen the efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

The Government recently presented the national transport plan for the period 2022-2033, but there is a lack of investment in sustainable transport systems and public transportation despite the benefits this would bring for the local and global environment, people's health and mobility.

Social and economic inequalities within cities is another challenge in Norway. An inaccessible and unregulated housing market (both for ownership and renting) with prohibitively expensive housing of poor quality or insufficient space (SSB 2020) is one such example. This reinforces social and economic inequalities. Housing is built without access to, for example, green areas or without proper bedrooms. There are also barriers in the built environment that exclude disabled people from being fully included in society.

Furthermore, Norway is neglecting the urban challenges and projects in international aid programmes. The two last deposit reports do not even mention urbanisation,

and only about 5 per cent of development aid is directed towards urban areas. The global aspect is also overlooked at the local level, as municipalities are not sufficiently aware of the global implications of how their actions influence social and environmental aspects.

Norway must:

- ensure sufficient investments in more sustainable transport systems and public transport;
- strengthen the municipalities' knowledge of nature values. This can be done by developing ecosystem accounting for the municipalities;
- ensure better access to green spaces and meet target 11.7;
- support cities in implementing holistic strategies based on a circular economy (like a doughnut economy) to create sustainable cities to secure good lives for their inhabitants within the earth's limitations;
- increase the efforts to protect natural and cultural heritage;
- support urban development projects, and direct more aid funds toward urban areas;
- support Neighbourhood Houses, which creates local social meeting arenas across social groups;
- support a third housing sector, giving more people access to decent accommodation;
- include all social groups in urban planning and real participation processes;
- specify clear deadlines for universal design in laws and regulations. Sanctions for non-fulfilment of obligations must be included.



SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production

Trend: Negative

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), the Norwegian Grandparents Climate Campaign, the Norwegian Consumer Council, the Salvation Army Norway, the Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, the Royal Norwegian Society for Development and Spire.

Norway has succeeded in recycling a high share of metals, glass and brown paper, and has achieved a good collection rate of plastic bottles and cans. This is a good starting point for increased circularity of plastic and metal use. Furthermore, Norway has managed to reduce food waste through voluntary commitments by actors across the food value chain. However, our assessment is that the ‘low hanging fruits’ may already have been picked, and in order to reach the 50 per cent target, we need legally binding measures. Additionally, Norway has so far chosen a minimum level response to the EU’s single use plastics directive.

Norway is at the forefront in Europe when it comes to regulatory changes and restrictions in the use of the most harmful chemicals. However, the only consumer-facing information site, erdetfarlig.no, was taken down in 2019, with no alternative source of official information on chemicals in everyday products put in place.

Norway’s main challenge is that we have one of the world’s highest consumptions per capita, consuming 44 tonnes of natural resources each year. Norway’s overshoot day this year was 12 April, meaning that it would take 3.2 Earths if everyone had the same consumption as Norwegians.

Scientists at SINTEF conclude that the main cause of our high and growing consumption is that we replace products long before their technical lifetime is over. Norway lacks policies that ensure the right to repair, access to spare parts and to easily accessible and affordable repair services. This also applies to policies to incentivise second-hand markets and improve the utilisation of resources that have already entered the economy, such as leasing and renting.

Additionally, Norway is lagging far behind in the process towards a more circular economy, where resources are repaired, reused and recycled. According to the Circularity Gap Report, Norway’s circularity is 2.4 per cent, which means Norway has one of the lowest circularities in Europe.

Finally, the political focus in Norway is almost exclusively on reducing national emissions, and a holistic strategy to addressing imported emissions and established consumption patterns is lacking.

Norway must:

- prepare a concrete and holistic plan for transitioning from a linear to a circular economy. Policy measures that ensure change in consumption patterns must be an integral part of such a plan;
- account for consumption-based emissions, through relevant indicators to be adopted alongside more traditional economic indicators such as the GDP;
- move from voluntary to legally binding measures to reduce food waste;
- ensure that consumer information is provided on chemicals in consumer products;
- review the tax system to see how taxes can be used in a fair and efficient way to make a shift towards more circular consumption;
- phase out subsidies that encourage overconsumption and subsidise businesses that extend product lifetime;
- strengthen consumer rights by demanding that companies produce higher quality products with an extended product lifetime, including the right to repair;
- promote public procurement practices that are sustainable in a social, economic and environmental perspective.



SDG 13: Climate action

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Medical Students Association, WWF Norway, Sustainable Living Norway, the Norwegian Grandparents Climate Campaign, the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), Norwegian Church Aid (member of ACT Alliance), Spire, Caritas Norway, Save the Children Norway, the Development Fund Norway, Friends of the Earth Norway and Unio (the Confederation of Unions for Professionals).

Norway has succeeded in raising CO₂ taxes and creating some incentives for the public to make green choices, like significant tax discounts and other advantages for electric vehicles and recycling systems. Climate targets have been upgraded and enshrined in the Climate Change Act. Public funding for organisations that are working to implement SDG 13 increases the opportunities for civil society to influence and strengthen policies.

Norway's challenge is to have coherent policies. As a significant producer and exporter of oil and gas, Norway is a major contributor to climate change, with both high domestic and exported emissions. With emissions reduced just 2.4 per cent since 1990, the 50-55 per cent emissions reduction target for 2030 remains a long way off. To succeed in cutting emissions, an action plan is needed for rapidly phasing out the oil and gas industry in a manner that safeguards jobs, pensions and the welfare state.

There is a need to create a child-friendly version of the Norwegian action plan for the SDGs. Children and youth need to be empowered to take action on climate change. Children will bear the burden of climate change and must be acknowledged as equal stakeholders and be given opportunities to exercise their right to meaningful participation at all levels.

Natural solutions must be applied in an eco-friendly way. Natural capture must not be at the expense of undisturbed nature and utilisation of Norway's natural resources. A larger share of the national budget and Norway's sovereign wealth fund must be allocated to investments in sustainable development. Climate finance should include mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage in accordance with the Paris Agreement. The transition to a low-emission society must be just and coherent, and not be detrimental to other SDGs.

Norway must:

- meet the 2030 emission target through real domestic emission reductions, and not emissions trading, while also pledging Norway's fair share of support for climate action in countries in the global South;
- increase climate finance to low-income countries to a fair level, given Norway's oil and gas-based wealth and disproportionately high historical contribution to global warming;
- incorporate climate change and sustainability awareness and innovation into education at all levels;
- introduce an annual climate budget, quantifying the state budget's impact on national emissions;
- introduce a goal for increased natural carbon capture in the climate law, securing the carbon stock and uptake in ecosystems additional to forests. This carbon capture must be counted as zero in the climate law;
- promote new and sustainable industries. Investments must be moved from oil and gas to renewable energy and energy efficiency;
- immediately stop oil and gas exploration and change the gas and oil tax system. Generous subsidies and tax exemptions that incentivise the opening of unprofitable oil and gas fields must be reviewed immediately;
- change the food production system and consumption practices in order to lower emissions and reduce other environmental impacts in Norway and globally;
- increase investments in public transport, and rail infrastructure in particular must be scaled up.



SDG 14: Life below water

Trend: Negative

Organisations participating in this assessment: Friends of the Earth Norway, WWF Norway, the Norwegian Biodiversity Network (Sabima), Spire and legg til Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).

Norway has succeeded in developing ocean management plans for the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the North Sea, and has identified important areas for biodiversity (SVO). Several of the commercially exploited fish stocks in Norwegian waters are sustainably managed. Internationally, Norway plays an important role in the work to create a global agreement on marine litter, as well as support for initiatives to clean up ocean debris. The Fish for Development Programme and the support for SIDS Norway makes a substantial contribution to knowledge transfer between Norway and selected developing countries. Norway has ratified the Nagoya protocol and will be implementing it soon.

Norway's challenges include the insufficient integration of biodiversity and ecosystem values into development strategies, both at national and local levels. Ocean management plans are not ecosystem-based and rely on sector-based management measures prioritising commercial species. There are no national plans or significant initiatives to restore damaged coastal or marine habitats, and there is limited knowledge of the relationship between species (especially non-commercial) and their habitats. Bycatch in fisheries, including endangered species, is a major challenge. Norway lacks a protection plan for seabirds and has not met the national target for sustainable and robust seabird populations.

Norway lacks a legal instrument for establishing Marine Protected Areas (MPA) within the EEZ outside 12 nm. MPAs make up well below the 2020 target of 10 per cent (3.7 per cent within 12nm, and 0.5 per cent within EEZ). MPAs are not representative, nor fully protected (from bottom trawling). There are virtually no no-fishing zones. Norway has over-reported the protection achieved in its MPAs. Only a small proportion of known coral reefs have any kind of protection, and only from bottom-trawling. The important and biologically valuable ice edge zone has been opened to petroleum activities.

Harmful subsidies, for example, in the petroleum and forest industries, harm coastal and marine ecosystems.

Pollution of coastal waters from industry, transport and urban areas remains a major challenge. Despite several measures, nutrient run-off from agriculture remains a challenge. There is limited control of the aquaculture industry and its negative impacts on the marine environment remain significant, with the continuously increasing discharge of nutrients and use of chemical pesticides to tackle salmon lice. Fisheries and aquaculture remain major sources of plastic pollution. Large-scale dumping of tiles and waste from mining has been authorised in several Norwegian fjords in recent years, destroying benthic ecosystems and increasing local marine pollution. Norway remains positive to deep-sea mining.

Norway must:

- revise its Nature Diversity Act to enable designation of MPAs and protection of SVOs within the EEZ outside 12 nm;
- ensure the advice of environmental experts is used in management decisions;
- strengthen the capacity and competence of municipalities in assessing nature risk;
- increase restoration of destroyed and degraded marine and coastal nature;
- phase out subsidies that are detrimental to the marine and coastal environment;
- prioritise implementation of a national marine protection plan to meet the new target of 30 per cent by 2030, and ensure that currently planned/proposed MPAs are quickly finalised and enforced;
- develop and implement a nature-based spatial accounting system for coastal and marine areas;
- halt the current opening of deep seabed mining on the Norwegian continental shelf and Norwegian support for deep-sea mining internationally.



SDG 15: Life on land

Trend: Negative

Organisations participating in this assessment: Friends of the Earth Norway, the Rainforest Foundation Norway, WWF Norway, the Norwegian Biodiversity Network (Sabima), Spire, the Norwegian Trekking Association, the Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations and legg til Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).

Norway's successes include some progress on protecting land areas, although these are not representative and often not enforced in accordance with international agreements. There is now more knowledge available about species and ecosystems than before, and some good strategy documents have been developed. Norway has maintained its commitment to and financing for international rainforest protection.

Norway's challenges include a failure to prioritise biodiversity and ecosystems ahead of resource exploitation. Norway has failed to meet the SDG restoration targets and is not on track for meeting them. Furthermore, the target of ecosystem protection is far from met, and the ecosystem components that do have some degree of protection are not representative.

The Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which are the basis for several of the SDG 15 targets, expired in 2020. Hence, several of the targets under this goal should already have been met. However, as the report State of the Nature 2020 revealed, Norway had not met any of the Aichi targets by 2020.

Sustainable use of nature and integration of biodiversity and ecosystem values into all sectors of society is another area in which Norway has failed. Several current policies are harmful to nature and ecosystems, including subsidies to harmful practices in the forestry sector. Furthermore, the authorities have been criticised for not taking biodiversity and ecosystems into account when planning infrastructure development and for weakening the legal framework in connection with such development.

Norway must:

- let the consideration for nature and biodiversity weigh significantly heavier than is currently the case;
- avoid large-scale infrastructure development in intact nature. Where such projects in nature are deemed absolutely necessary, land use neutrality principles must apply (i.e. restoration of habitat of at least the same size and quality);

- ensure sufficient funding for the implementation of national strategies and international obligations for nature and biodiversity protection;
- ensure that Norwegian legislation safeguards nature and recreational values in a satisfactory manner, making it possible to meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and achieve the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity to which Norway has committed. Existing legislation must therefore be tightened and strengthened in several areas, not liberalised and weakened;
- ensure that there is sufficient funding for appropriate environmental expertise and capacity in the municipalities. This is a prerequisite for being able to make local plans that safeguard nature;
- develop and introduce national, regional and municipal spatial accounting systems. It is important to know what we have and what we are destroying, losing or diminishing;
- ensure sufficient and representative protection of Norway's land areas, in line with the proposed 30 per cent target from the UN;
- Manage, protect and facilitate nature-based solutions for climate adaptation in the face of the more extreme weather conditions expected due to climate change, to prevent loss and damage of species and habitats;
- prioritise and expedite the process of meeting the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and SDG targets;
- ensure that species conservation in Norway follows international commitments and national legislation, and is driven by solid scientific principles rather than short-term political decisions (for example regarding large carnivore management);
- step up funding for the Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative, which is Norway's most important climate and nature initiative internationally;
- ensure that indigenous peoples and environmental defenders become a central target group in Norwegian development aid policies and practices, as they are crucial for protecting vulnerable nature and ecosystems;
- ensure that Norway is tropical deforestation free by 2025.



SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), the United Nations Association of Norway, UNICEF Norway, Norwegian People's Aid, Save the Children, Digni, the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association, Changemaker, CISV, Oslove Noereh, the Norwegian Medical Students' Association, the Norwegian Forum of Disabled Peoples' Organizations SAFO and the Norwegian Children and Youth Council.

Norway has succeeded in building a viable, egalitarian and democratic society. The civil society comprises a diverse community of actors organised across sectors within different interests. There is robust cooperation between the Government and non-governmental actors on many levels.

Internationally, Norway has a long history of facilitating peace and reconciliation processes to end conflicts around the world. Norway has contributed to nation-building programmes through the UN system and through development aid. Strengthening civil society is a development goal.

Norway's challenge is preventing discrimination and reducing hate speech, racism and polarisation. Violence and abuse of children has gone up, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. There has also been an increase in violence against women and in the number of female murder victims over the last couple of years. In addition, there have been cases of human rights violations in Norway. In 2019, for example, the European Court of Human Rights found the Norwegian Child Welfare Services guilty of violating the UN Convention on Rights of the Child. There have also been complaints about issues related to the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, on investments made by the Government Pension Fund Global, and on the treatment of psychiatric patients. It is worth pointing out that Norway does not have a clear definition of statelessness in its legislation, nor a procedure for granting stateless persons a residence permit, which violates the UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Norway faces challenges related to international organised crime. In 2018, approximately 9,000 victims of human trafficking were living in Norway under conditions that could be described as modern-day slavery. Norwegian banks are often the target of foreign and domestic white-washing schemes and illicit financial activities. Norwegian police have singled out tax evasion as one of the biggest threats to the Norwegian welfare state.

Norway's reputation as a champion for peace is under pressure because of its involvement in the weapons industry and military operations abroad. Ten years after the 2011 military intervention, the humanitarian crisis in Libya is worse than ever. The income of the Norwegian arms industry increased by almost 50 per cent from 2019 to 2020.

Norway must:

- implement the UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security;
- increase support to democratic institutions through the Norwegian Development Cooperation programmes, and increase funding of civil society organisations in countries where human rights are under pressure;
- be an advocate for the rights of civil society actors; promote increased political space for trade unions and women's organisations, and active engagement of children and youth in civic actions everywhere;
- universally defend fundamental human rights like freedom of speech, freedom of religion or belief, and the rights of women and the LGBTQ community;
- condemn laws that limit democratic rights and impede participation in civic duties, including restrictions on NGOs and the use of anti-terrorism laws to stifle civil society;
- adopt independent Norwegian legislation for sanctions against individuals responsible for human rights violations;
- legislate for stateless persons' right to social services and necessary health care;
- substitute the current Guardianship Act with a law on decision support;
- sign the UN's Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
- increase the participation of civil society, academia, professionals and the private sector in the 2030 Agenda and in the national action plan as well as its future revisions.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals

Trend: Stagnant

Organisations participating in this assessment: the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), Debt Justice Norway, Save the Children, the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU), the Rainforest Foundation Norway, the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations, CISV, the Norwegian Federation of Cultural Heritage Organisations, the United Nations Association of Norway, Sustainable Living Norway, Norwegian Church Aid (member of ACT Alliance) and Norwegian People's Aid.

Norway has succeeded in achieving a high level of trust between citizens, organizations and authorities, and there is a strong voluntary sector. Norway has maintained a high level of development aid and has strengthened programmes to help increase national resource mobilisation in developing countries. The forthcoming National Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda is a sign of the improved efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Norway's challenges include weak coordination between different ministries. There is a need to integrate policies across sectors to achieve policy coherence for sustainable development. The Office of the Auditor General's investigation of the management and review of the national follow-up of the SDGs shows that the progress has been insufficient and that coordination between different policy areas is weak. The lack of a comprehensive plan for implementation of the SDGs has also slowed down the progress to achieve the SDGs, across several levels and sectors. Norway has not satisfactorily involved Statistics Norway to work with the SDGs. On the national level, there is too little funding for and access to useful exchanges of knowledge between civil society, academia, business and authorities.

All over the world, we are now seeing that progress towards achieving the UN's SDGs is slowing down. In all probability, we are now on the cusp of a long-term economic downturn that will particularly impact on the most vulnerable. It is not time to lower our ambitions for development policy and we hope the Government will continue its high level of Norwegian development assistance. There is also a need for more investment in developing countries.

Norway's engagement in meeting target 17.4 has lost headway. There is still a need to strengthen the global systems in order to ensure responsible sovereign lending and borrowing and the orderly, equitable and efficient resolution of sovereign debt crises.

Norway must:

- maintain 1 per cent of the gross national income (GNI) as aid for developing countries;
- ensure policy coherence for sustainable development on all levels of government, as well as harmonise all laws with the SDGs;
- place the overall responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the SDGs at the Prime Minister's office;
- share and communicate public data relevant to work on the SDGs more efficiently with organisations and citizens;
- support developing countries' institutional capacity and improve tax systems, including continuing to build the Tax for Development programme, in order to strengthen systems for education, health and social safety nets. Norway should work for the establishment of an intergovernmental tax body in the UN;
- introduce extended country-by-country reporting legislation to help disclose illicit capital flight and increase domestic resource mobilisation;
- re-engage in UN discussions on how to strengthen global debt architecture to secure sovereign debt sustainability and show leadership in the process towards global consensus on responsible lending and borrowing;
- strengthen the partnership between the public, private and civil society in Norway and enhance global partnership on all levels abroad, especially within the UN framework.

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