

# **Europe's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: good practices and the way forward**

Study commissioned by the European Parliament

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT &  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Earth System Governance



at



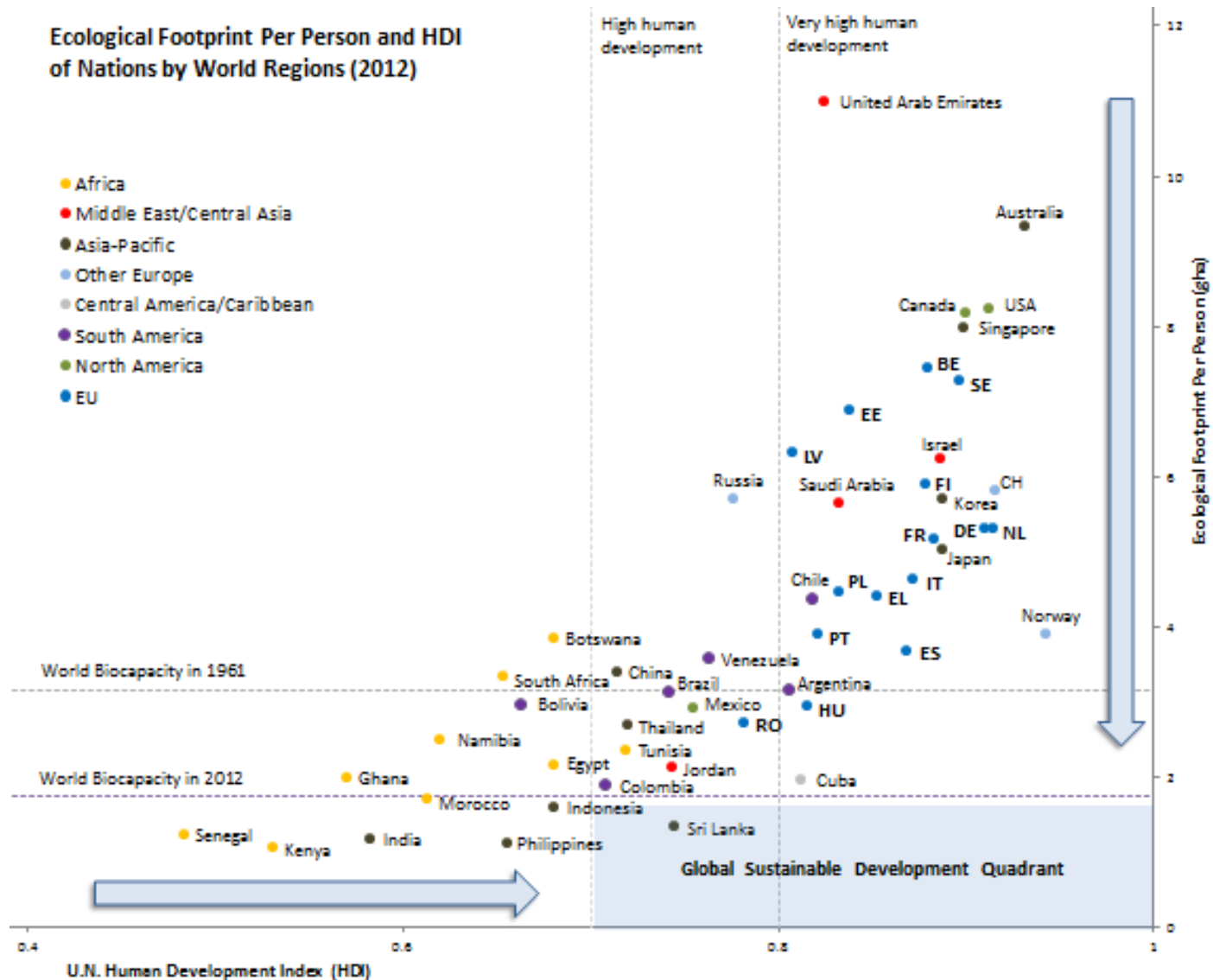
” My main message, Europe's message ..,  
is:  
**it's also *our* turn now to step out of our  
comfort zone. ...**

**Ultimately, - it's all about governance.”**

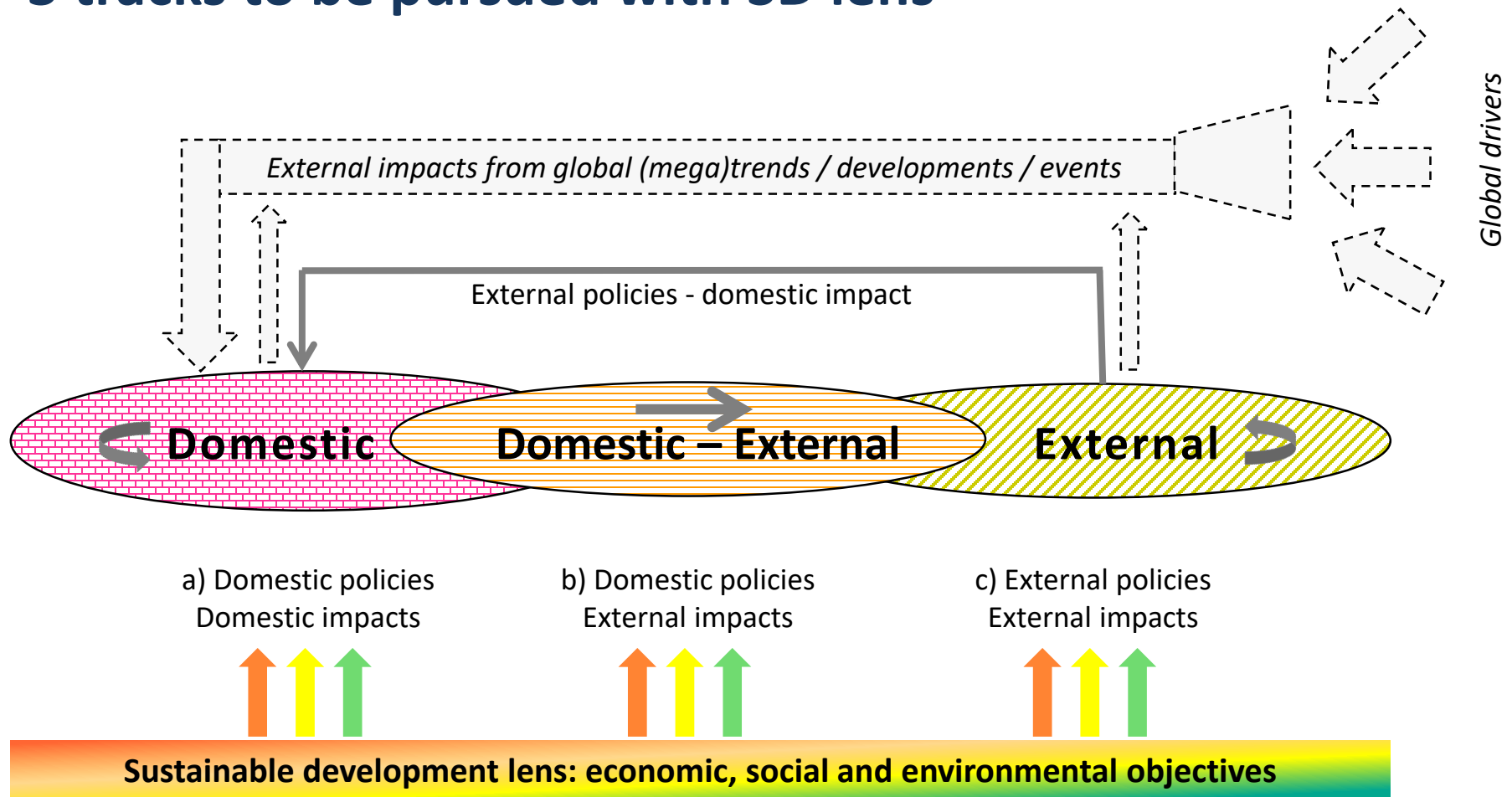
EU 1<sup>st</sup> VP Timmermans  
UN SD summit , 27.9.15

# Agenda 2030 principles:

## Universality – SDGs as framework for the different pathways

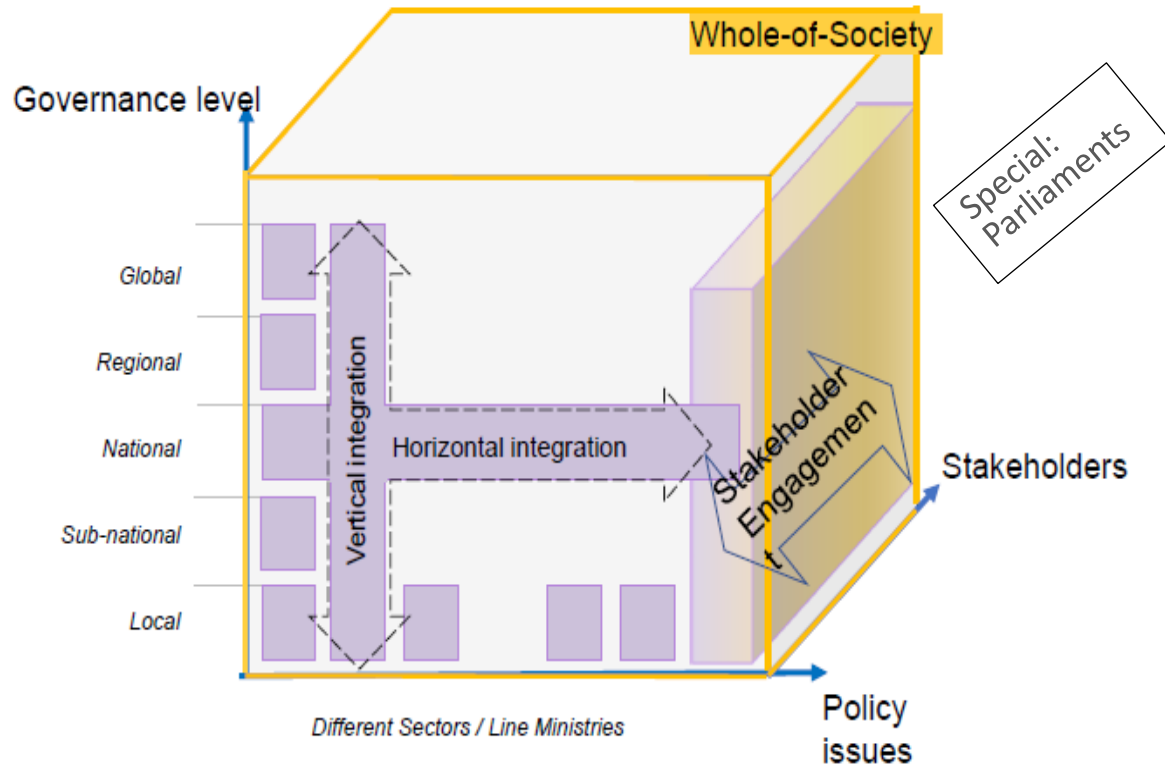


# Universality with a national/regional perspective: 3 tracks to be pursued with SD lens



# Coordinate system & objectives

1. **SDGs at Member states level**  
- all EU 28,  
incl. a light  
assessment of this  
'institutional  
response'
2. **SDGs at EU level**
3. **SDGs in Parliaments**



## Recommendations to the European Parliament

- to improve EU-wide implementation of the SDGs by the EU and its member states'
- how the European Parliament its role and cooperation with national parliaments.

# Country fiches (Annex 1)

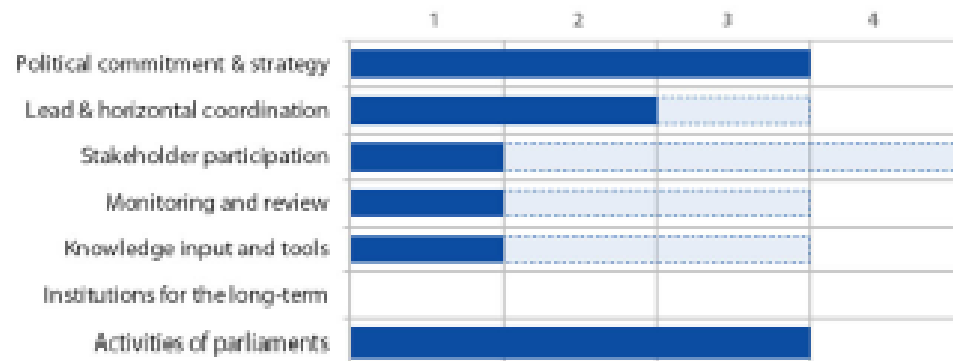
Multi-level,  
multi-sector,  
multi-actor,  
+ knowledge input /  
monitoring  
+ long-term &  
Parliaments

-> Analytical framework

## Governance elements

1. Political commitment & strategy
2. Lead & Horizontal coordination
3. Vertical coordination
4. Stakeholder Participation
5. Monitoring & Review
6. Knowledge input & tools (science-policy interface, tool use)
- 7.1 Long- term perspective: institutions
- 7.2 Activities in Parliaments

Country Data Sheet: Romania



Governance perspective	Governance arrangements	Results
<b>1. Political commitment &amp; strategy</b>  <b>EU Presidency 01/2019</b>  <b>ELECTIONS 2020</b>	Year of any commitment / SDG implementation plan	First NSDS in 1999, renewed NSDS 2008 2018 revision of the NSDS (process since Sept. 2017; adoption expected 2018)
	Year of the VNR (& schedule for next)	2018
	Type of overarching (SD) strategy or similar	<u>Was:</u> National Sustainable Development Strategy – Romania 2013-2020; National Environmental Action Plan (prior the SD strategy) Revised overarching NSDS (to be adopted 2018); an action plan will thereafter (within the government global plan)
	Coverage of which SDGs	VNR report covers, under LNOB, Health, education & culture (and 17 SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 17) The draft revised NSDS is structured along Agenda 2030 and covers all 17 SDGs
<b>2. Lead &amp; Horizontal coordination</b>	Lead organisation(s)	<u>New:</u> -Department for Sustainable Development (DSD), led by a State Counsellor Borbely under the Prime-Minister Office (decision 2017) coordinate: around Agenda 2030 implementation <a href="http://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro">http://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro</a> <u>Was:</u> Ministry of Environment

# Chapter 3: SDGs in MSs -> Aggregation of results per theme/governance element

## Q 2 Lead & horizontal coordination

	HoS level	Domestic (or if not unspecified) Lead	External Lead	Other Involved	Coordinating mechanism	Bridging external & domestic	Ass. (plan)
AT Austria	Federal Chancellery	Min Sustainability & tourism	MFA	SD focal points in each Min	SD Steering group JM WG		3
BE Belgium		IMCSD – no Ministerial lead, lead for each level gov't	MFA – Coor multi (and DGB)	All Ministers, departments; all levels.	IMCSD Other @ fed and reg level	MFA rep in IMCSD	4
BG Bulgaria		Minister of Finance	MFA	No specific SD remit	Coord Committee (chaired by Min of Finance) in Council for Development (not SDG specific)		1
HR Croatia		MFA (& European)	MFA (& European)	'all relevant'	Inter-sectoral working group;		1
CY Cyprus		MFA (Directorate of Euro, Coord, Dev)	MFA (SDGs)	"All Others"	Intergovernmental Committee & Council of Min	[rather the opposite: MFA leads SDGs also domestically]	1
CZ Czechia	Deputy PM & Gov't Office	Min Env	MFA	MFA & all ministries	Gov't Council for SD, chair by PM/DPM	Gov't Council for SD main	4
DK Denmark		Min Fin	MFA	each Min is resp. individually	WG called on ad hoc basis	Internat. unit in each line Min	3
EE Estonia	PMO ("Gov't Office")			all Ministries	JM WG		3
FI Finland	PMO	FNCSO, Chair by PM	MFA	all 11 Min in Inter-min Network Secretariat (in Coordination)	2030 Agenda Coordination Secretariat (PMO) & FNCSO	MFA and PMO in 2030 Coordination Secretariat	4
FR France		Interministerial Delegate under Prime Minister and Ministry of Environment	MFA	All responsible, focal point	Inter-minist. Delegate for SD & High Commissioner General for SD	Inter-minist. Delegate for SD & Inter-minist. Committee for Dev. Coop.	3
DE Germany	PMO	Min Env	Min Devco	all relevant Min	St. Secr. Comm., & coordinators in all rel. Ministries meet	Co-lead of Env & Devco, e.g. in EU Council WP	4
EL Greece		General Secretariat of Gov't (also Min Env)	MFA	All ministries	Inter-ministerial Coordination Network for SDGs	Min Env & MFA work together on int.	4
HU Hungary	PMO	Tech & Innov, Agri	MFA		PMO Office & SD Council (NFFT)		3
IE Ireland	PMO chairs SOG	Min Comm., Climate & Env	MFA & Trade		State Secr. Group ("SOG") and Interdep. WG	Through the SOG and IDWG	3

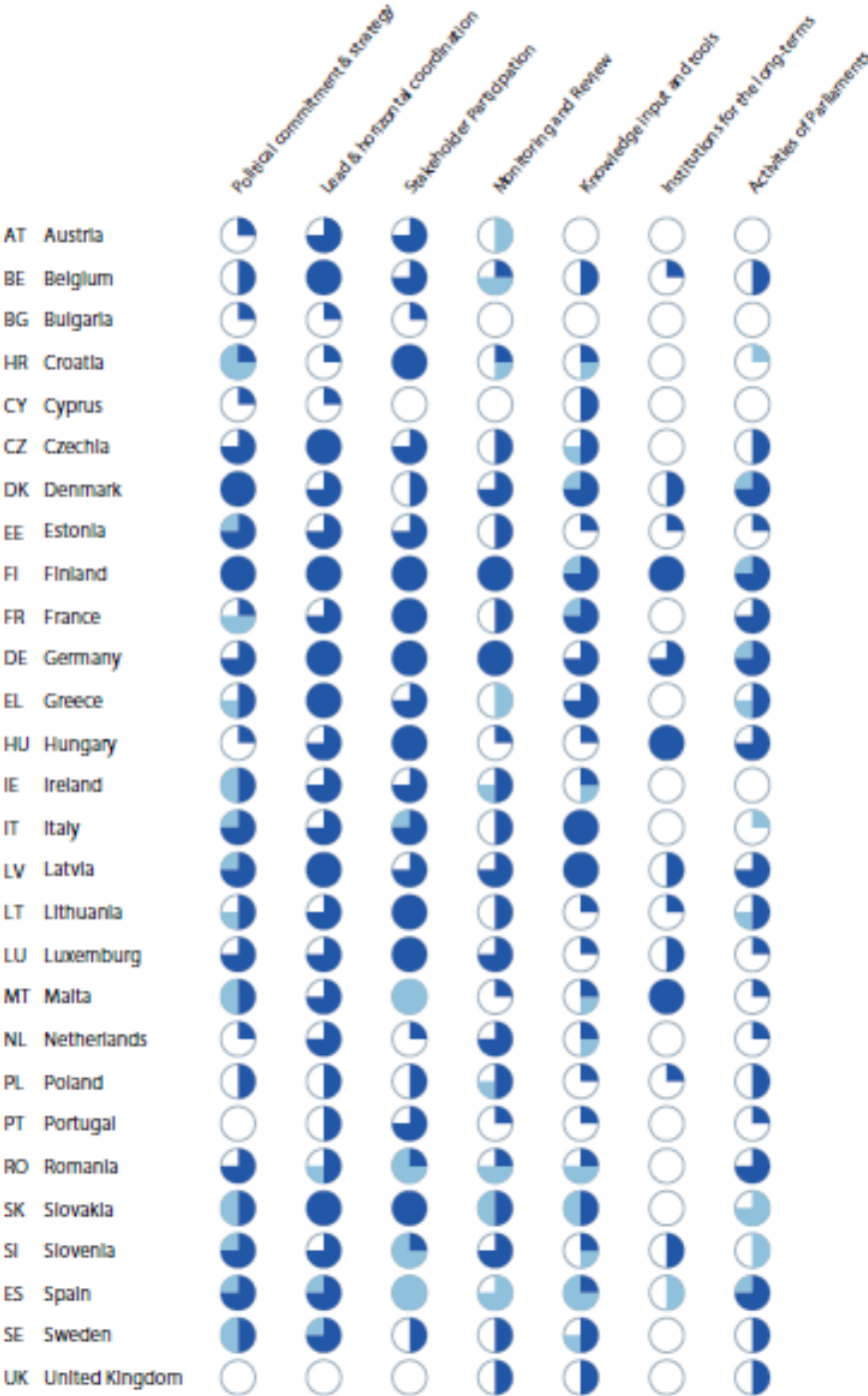


# Assessment scheme for country level assessments - Chapter 3

	1	2	3	4	Examples of toprunners
Q1. Commitment and strategy	Some cross-sectoral long term strategy <b>or</b> some NSDS but with no recent update	Overarching strategy (or action plan) for sustainable development new or updated since SDGs (adopted or work in progress)	Overarching strategy or action plan with some visible operationalisation (measures, actions ...)	Strategy linked to national budget	4: DK, FI Planned 4: EE, IT, LV, MT, SI, ES, SE
Q2. Leadership & horizontal coordination	Leadership with 1 or 2 Ministries (external and/or domestic; often continued separation of the agenda)	Leadership at the centre of government (typically Prime Minister, or Deputy PM; or Finance Minister, if cross-cutting or central lead)	Visible coordination mechanism with clear engagement across <b>all</b> departments & ministries (often with leadership at the centre of government)	Improved coordination between external and internal implementation since SDGs, with all others aspects	4: BE, CZ, FI, DE, LV SK Planned 4: ES, SI, SE
Q4. Stakeholder participation	Consultation on SDS (and/or VNR)	Enhanced process and/or regular participation/ deliberation, some kind of coordination mechanism, forum, or dialogue	Institution or mechanism for multiple stakeholders (e.g. SD council) (a), also linked/ with government (b)	All previous aspects plus additional steps (such as, stakeholder engagement w/ HLPF, speaking slots, additional bodies)	4: CZ, FI, FR, DE, HU, LT, LU, SK Planned 4: IT, MT, RO, SI, ES
Q5. Monitoring & Review	<i>regular</i> progress reports	Indicators updated since SDGs	Quantified and timebound targets, <b>or</b> Special attention to measuring spillover effects <b>and/or</b> Special attention to leave no one behind	Recent external review (e.g. recent peer review)	4: FI, DE (3: DK, LV, LU, NL, SI) Planned 4: SK (Planned 3: IE, RO, ES)
Q6. Knowledge & tools	Some light version of a tool (e.g. science involved in SD Council)	1 tool in place (SIA / SDGs integrated in IA, <b>or</b> budget check, <b>or</b> new science-policy interface mechanism)	2 tools in place	3 tools in place	(3: DE, EL) Planned 4: DK, FI, FR, LV
Q 7.1 Institutions for the long-term	Include priority, but no additional steps. (e.g. strategy for 2050), - ['Future in another frame']	A further measure about the long term but is not institutionalised (e.g. working group, strategy), - ['Future is the dominant frame, not institutionalised']	Explicit within another institution or measure (e.g. constitution/law, a special WG w/in another body), - ['Future is within another institution']	A specific institutional measure to address this: like Ombudsman for future gen., parliamentary committee, - ['The institution is for the future']	FI, HU, MT / DE
Q 7.2 Activities of parliaments for A 2030	Debate (typically in Plenary, often the VNR)	1 or 2 Cie's deal with SDGs	new institutional arrangement (a special Cie or working method)	Systematic scrutiny, sustainability check of the budget, or other tool use like SIA in law-making	



# Summary Country assessments



## SDG at Member State level – RESULTS

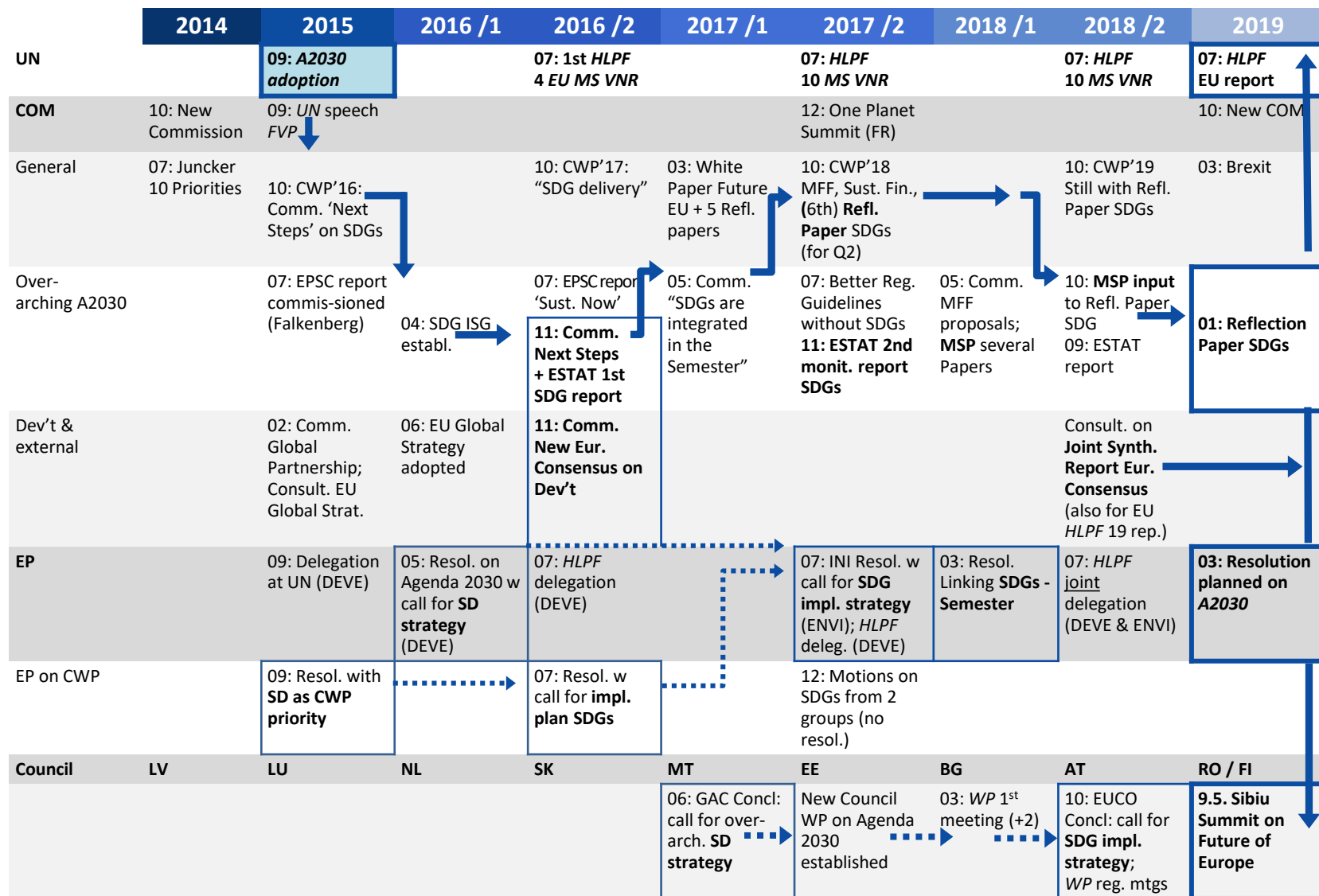
Progress 😊	Challenges ☹️
<b>Majority</b> of countries has or plans to <b>update their NDP or SD strategy with the SDGs</b> – <i>across the political spectrum</i>	These strategies are not always operational (half the cases)
<b>Half of the countries have clear coordination mechanisms between ministries</b> , often with Prime Minister leadership	Link between domestic and external dimension remains and vertical coordination remain weak
<b>Extensive efforts to improve stakeholder participation</b> in most countries	In a small minority of countries, stakeholder participation remains absent
<b>Most States have regular progress reports and indicators</b> on the SDGs	Room for improvement in the area of target setting and independent review
Several countries plan new SIA or budget checks and some are advanced	<b>Sustainability impact assessments and budget checks are still rare</b>
Increasingly parliaments have special committees or arrangements dealing with Agenda 2030	Overcoming parliamentary silos, <b>using legislative, budgetary and scrutiny role for SDG advancement</b>

# SDGs at EU level: timeline

## Agenda 2030 as taken up in the three EU institutions 2015 – 2018/2019

	2014	2015	2016 /1	2016 /2	2017 /1	2017 /2	2018 /1	2018 /2	2019
UN		09: <b>A2030 adoption</b>		07: 1st <b>HLPF 4 EU MS VNR</b>		07: <b>HLPF 10 MS VNR</b>		07: <b>HLPF 10 MS VNR</b>	07: <b>HLPF EU report</b>
COM	10: New Commission	09: UN speech <i>FVP</i>				12: One Planet Summit (FR)			10: New COM
General	07: Juncker 10 Priorities	10: CWP'16: Comm. 'Next Steps' on SDGs		10: CWP'17: "SDG delivery"	03: White Paper Future EU + 5 Refl. papers	10: CWP'18 MFF, Sust. Fin., (6th) <b>Refl. Paper</b> SDGs (for Q2)		10: CWP'19 Still with Refl. Paper SDGs	03: Brexit
Over-arching A2030		07: EPSC report commis-sioned (Falkenberg)	04: SDG ISG establ.	07: EPSC report 'Sust. Now' <b>11: Comm. Next Steps + ESTAT 1st SDG report</b>	05: Comm. "SDGs are integrated in the Semester"	07: Better Reg. Guidelines without SDGs <b>11: ESTAT 2nd monit. report SDGs</b>	05: Comm. MFF proposals; <b>MSP</b> several Papers	10: <b>MSP input</b> to Refl. Paper SDG 09: ESTAT report	<b>01: Reflection Paper SDGs</b>
Dev't & external		02: Comm. Global Partnership; Consult. EU Global Strat.	06: EU Global Strategy adopted	<b>11: Comm. New Eur. Consensus on Dev't</b>				Consult. on <b>Joint Synth. Report Eur. Consensus</b> (also for EU <i>HLPF</i> 19 rep.)	
EP		09: Delegation at UN (DEVE)	05: Resol. on Agenda 2030 w call for <b>SD strategy</b> (DEVE)	07: <i>HLPF</i> delegation (DEVE)		07: INI Resol. w call for <b>SDG impl. strategy</b> (ENVI); <i>HLPF</i> deleg. (DEVE)	03: Resol. Linking <b>SDGs - Semester</b>	07: <i>HLPF</i> <u>joint</u> delegation (DEVE & ENVI)	<b>03: Resolution planned on A2030</b>
EP on CWP		09: Resol. with <b>SD as CWP priority</b>		07: Resol. w call for <b>impl. plan SDGs</b>		12: Motions on SDGs from 2 groups (no resol.)			
Council	LV	LU	NL	SK	MT	EE	BG	AT	RO / FI
					06: GAC Concl: call for over-arch. <b>SD strategy</b>	New Council WP on Agenda 2030 established	03: <i>WP</i> 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting (+2)	10: EUCO Concl: call for <b>SDG impl. strategy</b> ; <i>WP</i> reg. mtgs	<b>9.5. Sibiu Summit on Future of Europe</b>

# Agenda 2030 in 3 EU institutions 2015 – 2018/2019 | EC kicking the ball...



## SDG at EU level – Results & Recommendations

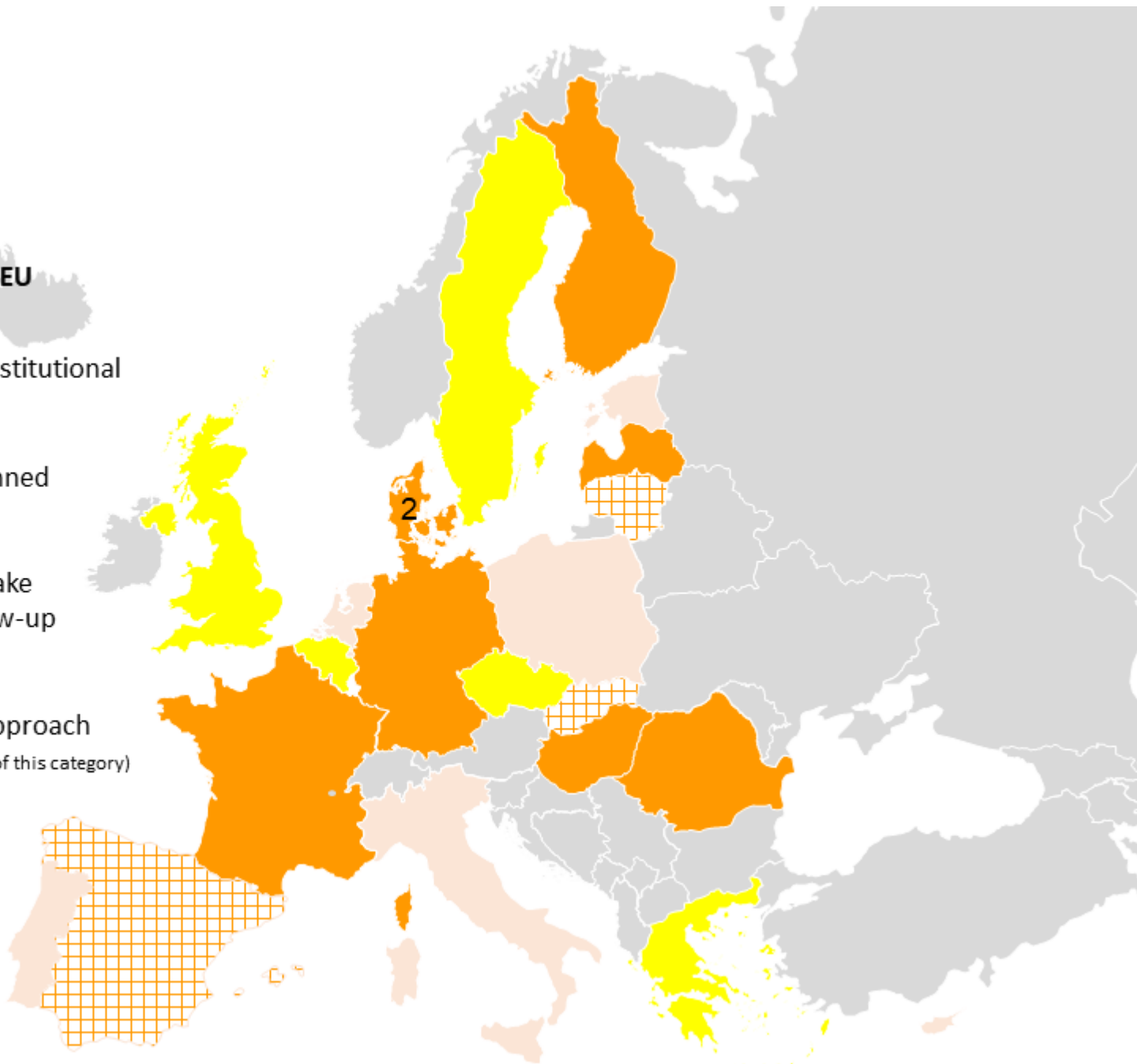
1. Commission 3 years behind in terms of strategy setting.
1. & 6. Mainstreaming the SDGs - better regulation tools, structural funds  
=> still to be done: revise the BR guidelines with Agenda 2030.
2. Rather favourable situation for improving horizontal coordination  
=> build upon and become frontrunner!
2. & 3. New Working Party for Agenda 2030 – most innovative and active  
=> improve: bring more MS action proactively to the table.
3. & 5. How to monitor? Many argue, also ENVI ... European Semester => #We too.  
Monitoring by Eurostat ... => a participatory process needs to be set up.
4. & 6. Multi-stakeholder platform – useful  
=> improve interaction & science input

=> ALL HANDS ON DECK! ... **Create a winning two-level dynamic!**  
add collaborative mechanisms to the traditional coordination

# SDGs in Parliaments

## Activities of Parliaments in EU on Agenda 2030:

-  New/specific institutional arrangements
-  New instit. planned
-  Existing Cie's take up A2030 follow-up
-  Parliaments debated nat. approach  
(LU and MT are part of this category)



## SDGs in Parliaments – RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Activities of parliaments have clearly increased since the adoption of the SDGs:**
  - Activities around Agenda 2030 in 22 national parliaments + 3 planned activities
  - Specific institutional arrangements for Agenda 2030 in 9 national parliaments, and 1 planned: -> check Denmark, Finland and Germany, ... and Hungary, Latvia, Romania and Spain
- **Overcoming the silos of the Committees & become a better scrutinizer**
  - a task for all: do more and learn from each other
  - European Parliament: was an early mover on Agenda 2030 but needs to improve on internal governance: current plans are not enough! - > the new EP to set up a focal point model, and introduce simple tools, to better mainstream and scrutinize
- **Two-level: EP to use the interparliamentary collaboration for Agenda 2030** – for cross-fertilization, and learn from good practices in national parliaments
  - **First thing to do:** hold an ICM with those Parliaments with special arrangements (and all interested)



## Summary

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

- **All: “Create a winning two-level dynamic”:** Dynamise the collaboration between the EU and the national level, – in all institutions and organisations
- **EU:** Need for comprehensive, multi-level post-2020 SDG implementation strategy.
  - Integrate the SDGs in the EU’s economic monitoring (European Semester) and budgeting processes, including in the investment priorities of MFF.
  - Build on useful governance for two-level cooperation – like the Semester, and e.g. the EIR (Environmental Implementation Review)
- **Member States:** Scale up good practice through peer learning mechanisms at all levels, improve internal – external links, get more operational with SDG strategies
- **Parliaments:** Improve internal governance to better serve mainstreaming of the SDGs in legislation and budget. Become a stronger ‘scrutinizer’ and monitor SDG implementation.
- **All:** Deliver an ambitious EU progress report to the HLPF 2019 and take a leading role at SDG Summit, international leadership needed!  
Cooperate towards “Joint Synthesis Report” (all areas, both levels)  
Collaborate on maintaining a systematic knowledge base like started herewith  
Get to a Joint Sustainability Declaration of the 3 Presidents end of 2019!