

Switzerland's Country Report 2018

Summary (main messages)



Sustainable development in Switzerland and the 2030 Agenda

Since its adoption in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has driven Switzerland's commitment to sustainable development, nationally and internationally. It thus underpins the engagement for environmentally sound economic development within planetary boundaries, as well as for peace, respect for humanitarian law and human rights, with which sustainable development is inextricably linked.

From the outset, Switzerland was a driving force behind the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Switzerland advocated for a robust mechanism for follow-up and review, including Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and review of SDG implementation at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Since 1997 the Federal Council has defined its priorities for implementing sustainable development nationally in a quadrennial strategy; the current strategy is valid until 2019. A comprehensive system for monitoring sustainable development at the national level was put in place in 2003, with currently 73 indicators which are regularly updated.

Immediately after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, the Federal Council commissioned a comprehensive baseline assessment and gap analysis of the implementation status at federal level. The analysis concerned all 169 targets and covered both Switzerland's domestic and international contributions.

Based on the existing national-level system, monitoring was expanded for the 2030 Agenda. The gap analysis indicates that among the chosen 85 indicators 39 show a positive trend, 12 show no significant evolution, 14 show a negative trend, while for 20 no assessment was possible.

Switzerland is already at an advanced stage in achieving various SDGs and has already fulfilled a number of targets. For example, Switzerland is free from extreme poverty (target 1.1), and there is no hunger (target 2.1). Education (target 4.1) is free, compulsory and of good quality.

However, the baseline assessment identifies areas where efforts at national and international level beyond existing policies are needed in order to achieve the SDGs. Consumption of natural resources (SDG 12), for example, is increasing overall. Use of resources from within Switzerland for consumption by its population is decreasing, but use of resources from abroad is increasing in an unsustainable way.

Other areas call for continued strong engagement so that the SDGs can be achieved. With regard to the principle to 'Leave no one behind', Switzerland is also committed to enabling disadvantaged groups – for example people with disabilities – to benefit from the country's prosperity.

Next steps for implementation

The analysis provides a good starting point for tackling the challenges in a targeted and focused manner. The challenges will mainly be addressed within the framework of existing sectoral policies which exploit synergies where possible, observing the principles of effectiveness and efficiency, both nationally and internationally.

The 2030 Agenda is implemented at the federal, cantonal and communal levels, taking into account current obligations, competencies and established division of tasks. Many cantons and communes have defined their own strategies for sustainable development. The federal government will intensify the dialogue with the cantons and communes and support them in implementing the 2030 Agenda, for example through platforms for exchange and networks.

Switzerland's private sector, NGOs and scientific community have also been committed to sustainable development for a long time. An advisory group composed of interested non-state actors has identified what it considers to be Switzerland's priority challenges. This group provides a platform for further



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dialogue with the federal government and for partnerships for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Parliament is to be more closely involved in future.

The 2030 Agenda is an important reference framework for Switzerland's international cooperation, which aligns its activities with the SDGs. It will continue to support partner countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda and in achieving the SDGs globally. For example, Switzerland contributes to achieving SDG 17 by strengthening domestic resource mobilisation and capacity building, and by promoting a universal, rules-based, multilateral trading system.

Achieving the SDGs by 2030

Switzerland will continue to support the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, which has become an important element of Switzerland's strategic cycle on sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda is ambitious and challenging. Switzerland is committed to helping to achieve the SDGs by 2030.