

Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region

Geneva, 21-22 March 2019

High-Level Policy Segment

Statement by the Council of Europe

By definition, our philosophy is that most, if not all, of the Council of Europe's activities contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As such, it has not been necessary for the organisation to set up new objectives, instruments or activities, but rather to align existing activities with the relevant SDGs.

Moreover, it is not often easy – if at all possible – to tidily fit any specific Council of Europe activity or instrument into one single SDG. This, however, gives rise to opportunities, namely to enable links and synergies between the different goals.

The unique added-value of the Council of Europe is a combination of:

- its pan-European membership;
- its multi-stakeholder dimension: in addition to its intergovernmental bodies, the Council of Europe's unique structure includes the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Conference of International NGOs, as well as the European Court of Human Rights;
- its standards: a comprehensive measurable normative framework which can be used as indicators/benchmarks;
- its monitoring/follow-up bodies and processes;
- its technical support provided to individual countries for capacity-building; and
- its global outreach: most of the organisation's legally-binding conventions and activities are open to participation by non-member States.

While recognising that the main responsibility for the implementation of Agenda 2030 is with the member States, we consider our role as an international organisation to be an enabling factor, to assist and facilitate our member States in their contribution to SDG implementation.

In particular, the Council of Europe, through its instruments, can contribute to the national implementation reporting by its member States.

It is with this purpose in mind that we have created a dynamic tool (website), which could serve as a best practice example, to assist member States to draw on the organisation's work in the preparation of the national reviews.

Council of Europe member States are thus encouraged to draw on the information on the website to illustrate that their participation in the organisation's work and, in particular, their accession to and respect of Council of Europe conventions contributes in a concrete and qualitatively measurable way to the implementation of Agenda 2030.

For further information about our contribution to Agenda 2030, I invite you to consult our website (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/un-agenda-2030/home>).