

Sustainable Development Goals & Voluntary Local Reviews in Finland

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The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development

- The Commission promotes co-operation in order to achieve the sustainable development goals.
- Task is to ensure that the international sustainable development goals are included in national policy, at the moment 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- It was established first time in 1993.
- The Commission is chaired by the Prime Minister.
- The members represent a broad spectrum of sectors and stakeholders in the society: Ministers, members of Parliament, representatives from ministries, local governments and the regions, market sector, as well as NGOs.



National government and local government co-operation

- The Secretariat in the Prime Minister's Office was in charge of the Voluntary National Report (VNR) in 2016 and in 2020.
- The Secretariat maintained a constructive dialogue with cities in the VNR formulation processes. Then large cities expressed their interest in producing own local reviews.
- In 2019, the capital of Finland, Helsinki, became the first city in Europe to submit own VLR **From Agenda to Action** to the UN.
- Espoo and Turku published their VLRs in 2020. After this three cities have also submitted/ preparing their reviews.



SDG Analysis Process Handbook

- The interactive workshop method for the needs of urban areas, local governments and other organisations. The main objective is to increase the SDG expertise.
- The SDG Analysis Process was developed in 2022 by six largest cities and Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities.
- Phases in process: 1: Specification of the topic, 2: Sustainable Development Goals, 3: Dimensions of the SDGs, their operating and impact environment, 4: Agenda 2030 and the role of the SDGs, 5: Role of actors and stakeholders and Phase 6: Group dialogue and next steps.



Sustainable City Programme

- The five-year Sustainable City programme (2019–2023) is coordinated by the Ministry of the Environment.
- The programme supports the sustainable development at the local level in cooperation with ministries, local authorities and other stakeholders. Government funding is EUR 4.4 million, the total budget with other contributions is about EUR 6 million.
- About 80 local governments and 50 other organisations have participated in the programme. The key themes have been carbon reduction, smart solutions, health considerations and social sustainability. Solutions are sought especially to cross-cutting themes.
- It has enhanced awareness of sustainable urban development in practice, boosted the development and created cooperation both among the cities and between cities and the state.



International activities

- The Sustainable City Programme arranged Nordic workshop on Voluntary National Review and Voluntary Local Review in 2021. The goal was to exchange experiences between Nordic countries on VLRs and linking them with the cities' strategies and development, and share views on country-and city-level monitoring.
- The partnership between Finland and UN-Habitat on localizing the SDGs is connected to the Finland's Africa Strategy and to UN-Habitat's network in Africa. It is based on the twinning project between Finnish and African cities. The project supports VLR development by sharing experiences and working methods.



Thanks!

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