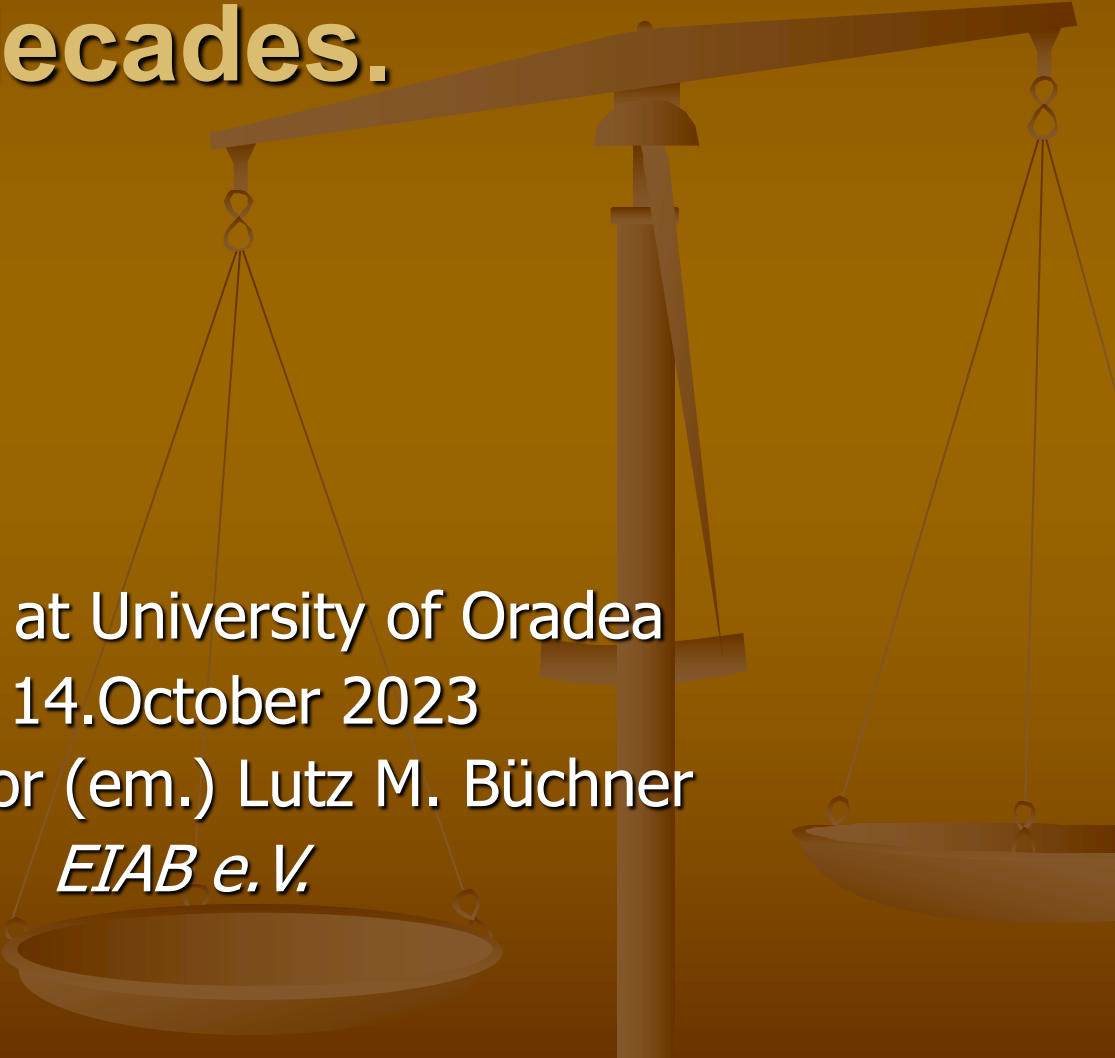


Sustainability in Europe. Political activities in the last decades.

Conference at University of Oradea
11.- 14.October 2023
PhD Professor (em.) Lutz M. Büchner
EIAB e.V.



European Institute for Labour and Industrial Relations

The Institute is a non-profit organization since 1994 (www.eiab.de)

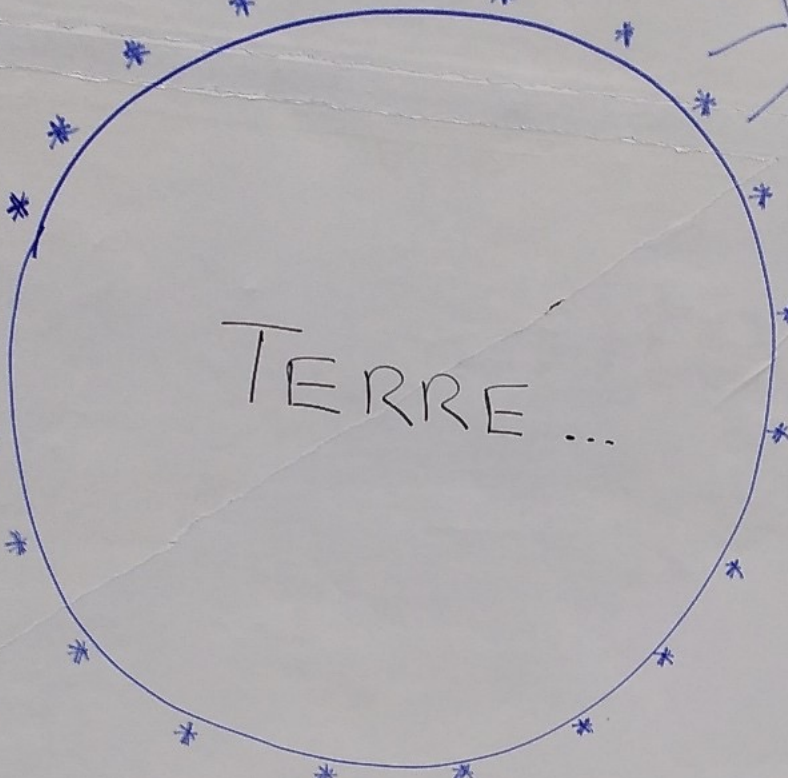
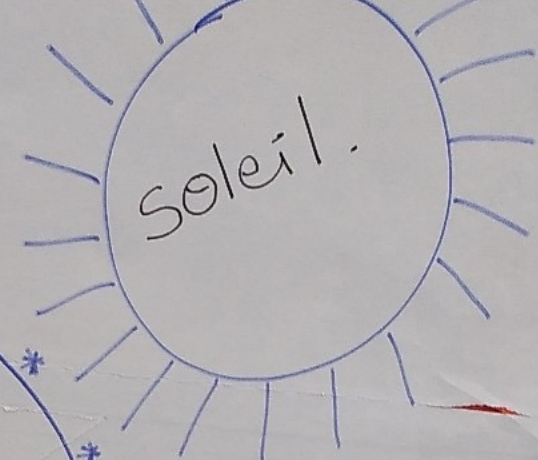
> Main fields of our activities:

- Sustainable Topics such as <https://verantwortung-fuer-morgen.de> – in German language
- Sustainability at work
- Involved in different Erasmus programs (actually: “Inclusive Design Thinking as an engine of ICT oriented high level education for building an inclusive society” eduIDT) www.eduidt.eu

Agenda

- Starting with: Sustainability what does it mean in general?
- Treaty of Amsterdam (1997)
- The European Sustainable Development Strategy (2001)
- The Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015))
- The Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030)
- The European Green Deal (2019-2030 [2050])
- The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (2022)
- The Corporate sustainability due diligence directive (2022)
- The Nature Restoration Law (2023)

Lune



* PROTÉGÉ moi et penser
à moi ne suis belle est ont
me fait pas attention à moi!

Amour

Even the EU understands....
our world is suffering!

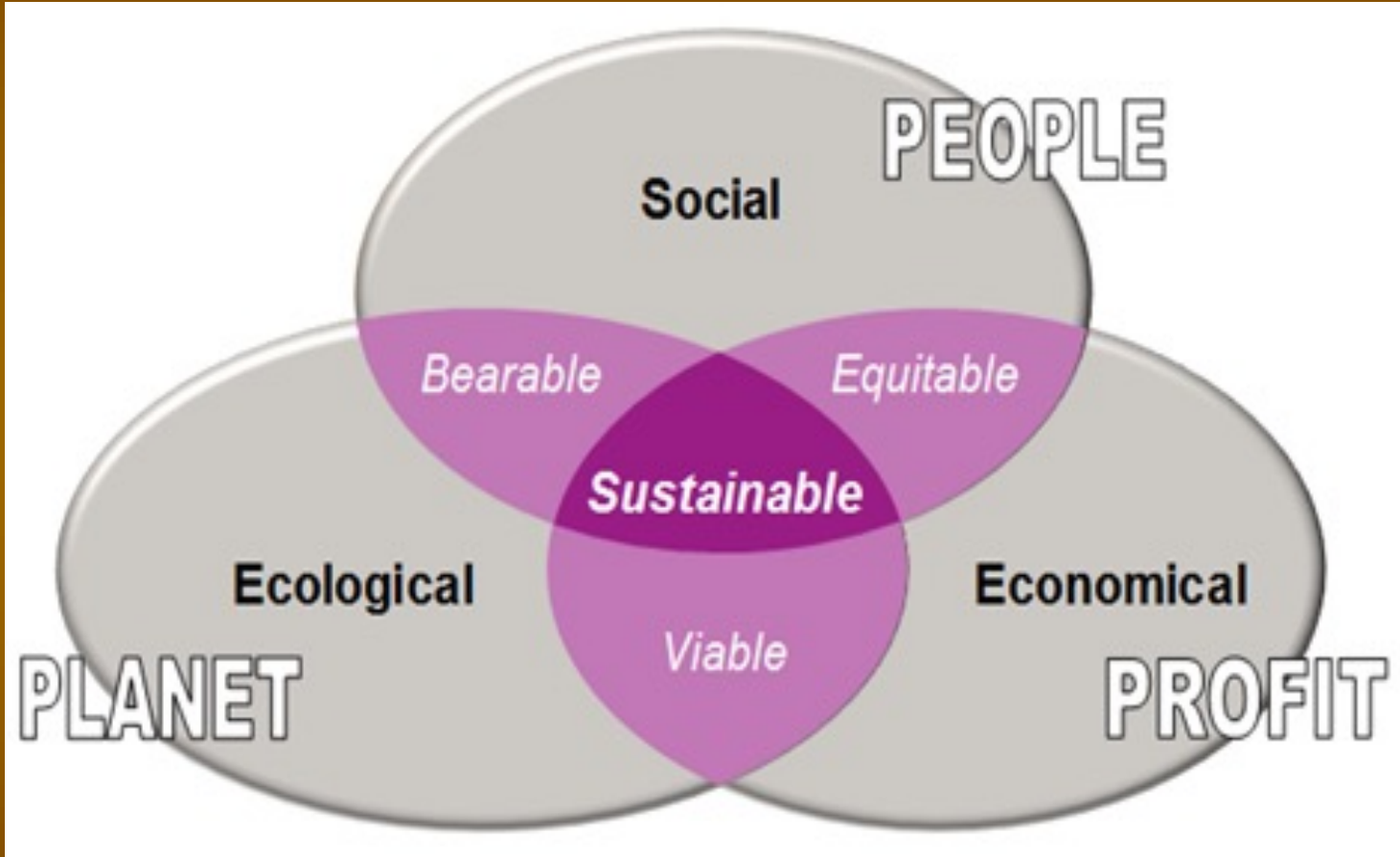


Starting key Question

- ***How can the present generation meet its needs in ways that are not only economically viable, environmentally sound and socially equitable but that also allow future generations to do the same” ?***

United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (The Brundtland Commission), Our Common Future, 1987

What are we talking about?




Starting Point in Europe

- With the Treaty of Amsterdam 1997, the EU adopted a “three-pillar” model of sustainability at the Copenhagen Summit. The model links sustainability to ecological, economic, and social issues. It ties the preservation of nature to the well-being of future generations, economic achievements, and social institutions.

The European Sustainable Development Strategy

- The EU Strategy for Sustainable Development (EU SDS) of 2001, which was renewed in June 2006, aims to achieve continuous improvement of quality of life both for the present and for future Generations
- The EU Sustainable Development Strategy represents a cross-sectoral approach where business and social policy makers work hand in hand with environmental policy makers.

The key priority challenges

- Climate change and clean energy
 - Sustainable transport
 - Sustainable consumption and sustainable production
 - Conservation and management of natural resources
 - Public health
 - Global challenges posed by poverty and sustainable development
 - Social inclusion, demography and migration
- 

Millennium Development Goals (MDG) from 2000 to 2015



The 8 MDG

- *MDG 1 – Reduce Severe Poverty*
- *MDG 2 – Achieve universal primary education*
- *MDG 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*
- *MDG 4 – Reduce Child Mortality*
- *MDG 5 – Improve Maternal Health*
- *MDG 6 – Combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and Other Diseases*
- *MDG 7 – Ensure Environmental Sustainability*
- *MDG 8 – Develop Global Partnerships for Development*

MDG Progress

Achieving these goals through sustainable growth and advances in key areas such as health, gender equality, education, and environmental sustainability is recognised as a challenge for developed and developing countries alike. Still, there has been some progress on some MDGs in many countries, including: decreased extreme poverty; increased primary school enrolment; and improved access to clean water.

The EU and the MDG

- The European Union (EU) made specific commitments to achieve these goals by 2015. The EU was the largest aid donor (55 % of global ODA). For the EU's contribution to the UN Summit in September 2005 and with a view to speeding up progress towards the MDGs, the Council asked the Commission to draw up ambitious proposals for the 2015 target date, emphasising financing for development, policy coherence for development and the focus on Africa.
- The Commission set new intermediate targets for growth in official aid budgets by 2010 with a view to achieving the overall target of 0.7 % of gross national income (GNI) by 2015;
- The Commission did rethink the way that the EU, through its own model of sustainable development and its internal and external policies, influences the conditions for development;
- The EU ensured that Africa is the number one beneficiary of these new approaches and seize new opportunities for partnership between the two continents.

Summary MDG in Romania

“The synergy between the targets of the MDGs and those of the EU-2020 are evident, as the country has successfully laid the foundations for future growth and development processes, even as Romania began to work on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)”.

Romania and the MDG

- *MDG 1 – Reduce Severe Poverty = - 85,7%*
- *MDG 2 – Achieve universal primary education = 23% no education, 27% only primary school*
- *MDG 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women = working-age population, the proportion increased from 8.1 to 21.6 percent*
- *MDG 4 – Reduce Child Mortality = child mortality for kids between 1 and 4 years dropped by 37.5 percent*
- *MDG 5 – Improve Maternal Health = The incidence of maternal mortality decreased from 34 per 100,000 live-births to 21.2*
- *MDG 6 – Combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and Other Diseases = already achieved*
- *MDG 7 – Ensure Environmental Sustainability = increase total forest surface and reduction of reenhouse emissions by 35 percent*
- *MDG 8 – Develop Global Partnerships for Development = remarkable advancement in ICT*

The Sustainable development Goals (SDG) – Agenda 2030



The EU and the SDGs

- The EU approach towards implementing the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development together with its Member States is a holistic one.
- Engagement of the civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders in the national implementation of the SDGs.
- Eurostat reports on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an EU context.

SDG – European Data

- Compared with the developing and emerging countries the European countries made greater progress.
- Due to the Covid-19 Pandemie the overall global speed of improvement slowed down but actually is accelerating a bit (UN summit 20.9.2023: only 15% of targets are achieved)
- In 2022 Eurostat published the “Europe Sustainable Development Report. Achiving the SDGs: Europ’s Compass in a Multipolar World”. It includes the SDG Index for the European Union, its members, and partner countries (39)
- Key finding for the EU: the EU made progress towards most goals, on average, over the respective last 5 years.
- Finland and Sweden are ranking on No 1 & 2

GERMANY

Western Europe

Overall Performance

Index score

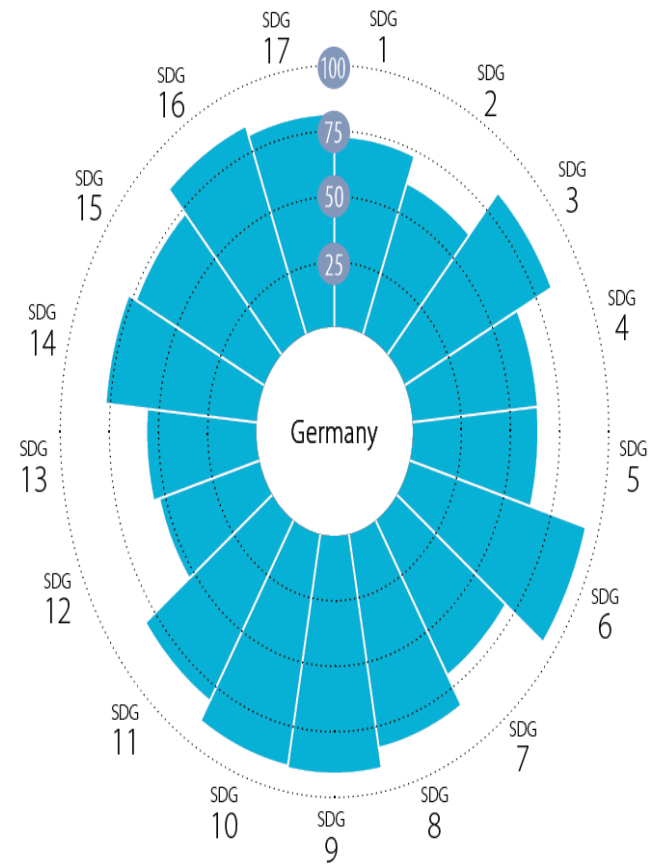


Index Rank

Germany

6

Performance by SDG



SDG Dashboards and Trends



ROMANIA

Central and Eastern Europe

Overall Performance

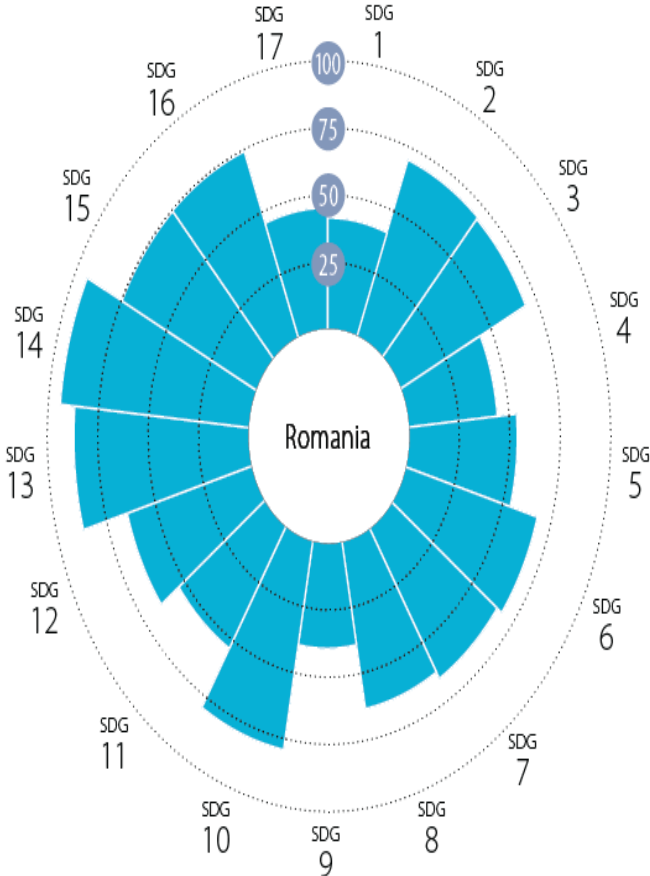
Index score



Index Rank

Romania
29

Performance by SDG



SDG Dashboards and Trends



Indicator	Value	Year	Rating	Trend	Indicator	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
SDG1 – No Poverty					SDG8 – (continued)				
People at risk of income poverty after social transfers (%)	22.6	2021	●	↗	Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.1	2018	●	↓
Severely materially deprived people (%)	15.2	2020	●	↑	Victims of modern slavery embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	30.6	2018	●	●
Poverty headcount ratio at \$5.50/day (%)	8.3	2022	●	↑	SDG9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure				
SDG2 – Zero Hunger					Gross domestic expenditure on R&D (% of GDP)	0.5	2020	●	↓
Prevalence of obesity, BMI ≥ 30 (% of adult population)	10.9	2019	●	↓	R&D personnel (% of active population)	0.4	2020	●	→
Human Trophic Level (best 2–3 worst)	2.34	2019	●	↓	Patent applications to the European Patent Office (per 1,000,000 population)	1.6	2021	●	→
Yield gap closure (%)	40.3	2018	●	●	Households with broadband access (%)	89	2021	●	↑
Gross nitrogen balance on agricultural land (kg/hectare)	-24.9	2019	●	↑	Gap in internet access, urban vs rural areas (p.p.)	10	2021	●	↑
Ammonia emissions from agriculture (kg/hectare)	11.5	2019	●	↑	Population with at least basic digital skills (%)	28	2021	●	→
Exports of pesticides banned in the EU (kg per 1,000 population)	0.0	2019	●	●	Logistics performance index: Quality of trade and transport-related infrastructure (worst 1–5 best)	2.9	2018	●	↑
SDG3 – Good Health and Well-Being					The Times Higher Education Universities Ranking: Average score of top 3 universities (worst 0–100 best)	31.3	2022	●	↑
Life expectancy at birth (years)	72.9	2021	●	↓	Articles published in academic journals (per 1,000 population)	0.9	2021	●	↑
Gap in life expectancy at birth among regions (years)	2.2	2020	●	↑	SDG10 – Reduced Inequalities				
Population with good or very good perceived health (% of population aged 16 or over)	72.8	2021	●	↑	Gini Coefficient	34.3	2021	●	↑
Gap in self-reported health, by income (p.p.)	20.2	2021	●	↓	Palma ratio	1.30	2019	●	↗
Gap in self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care, by income (p.p.)	9.3	2021	●	↓	SDG11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities				
New reported cases of tuberculosis (per 100,000 population)	64.0	2020	●	↗	Urban population without access to green urban areas in their neighbourhood (%)	19.0	2018	●	→
Standardised preventable and treatable mortality (per 100,000 persons aged less than 75)	504.1	2019	●	→	Overcrowding rate among people living with below 60% of median equivalized income (%)	48.9	2021	●	↑
Suicide rate (per 100,000 population)	9.0	2019	●	↑	Recycling rate of municipal waste (%)	13.7	2020	●	→
Age-standardised death rate attributable to household air pollution and ambient air pollution (per 100,000 population)	68	2019	●	●	Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames or floor (%)	10.0	2020	●	↑
Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)	6.9	2020	●	↑	Housing cost overburden rate (%)	7.5	2021	●	↑
People killed in road accidents (per 100,000 population)	8.5	2020	●	↑	Exposure to air pollution: PM2.5 in urban areas (µg/m ³)	16.4	2019	●	→

Surviving infants who received 2 WHO-recommended vaccines (%)	86	2021	●	→
Population engaging in heavy, episodic drinking at least once a week (%)	11.1	2019	●	↓
Smoking prevalence (%)	30	2020	●	↓
People covered by health insurance for a core set of services (%)	NA	NA	●	●
Share of total health spending financed by out-of-pocket payments (%)	19.0	2020	●	↑
Subjective Wellbeing (average ladder score, worst 0–10 best)	6.5	2021	●	↑
Individuals that use the internet to make appointments with a practitioner(%)	5	2020	●	→

SDG4 – Quality Education

Participation in early childhood education (% of children between age of 3 and starting age of compulsory primary education)	78.2	2020	●	↓
Early leavers from education and training (% of population aged 18 to 24)	15.3	2021	●	↑
PISA score (worst 0–600 best)	427.8	2018	●	↓
Underachievers in science (% of population aged 15)	43.9	2018	●	↓
Variation in science performance explained by students' socio-economic status (%)	13.8	2015	●	●
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25 to 34)	23.3	2021	●	↓
Adult participation in learning (%)	4.9	2021	●	↗

SDG5 – Gender Equality

Unadjusted gender pay gap (% of gross male earnings)	2.4	2020	●	↑
Gender employment gap (p.p.)	20.1	2021	●	↓
Population inactive due to caring responsibilities (% of population aged 20 to 64)	23.4	2021	●	↓
Seats held by women in national parliaments (%)	20.0	2021	●	↗
Positions held by women in senior management positions (%)	17.5	2021	●	↗
Proportion of ICT specialists that are women (%)	26.0	2021	●	↓

SDG6 – Clean Water and Sanitation

Population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household (%)	21.2	2020	●	↗
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SDG12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

Circular material use rate (%)	1.3	2020	●	↓
Gross value added in environmental goods and services sector (% of GDP)	2.8	2019	●	↓
Production-based SO ₂ emissions (kg/capita)	17.0	2018	●	●
Imported SO ₂ emissions (kg/capita)	2.8	2018	●	●
Production-based emissions of reactive nitrogen (kg/capita)	20.2	2015	●	↓
Imported emissions of reactive nitrogen (kg/capita)	2.9	2015	●	→
Exports of plastic waste (kg/capita)	1.7	2021	●	→

SDG13 – Climate Action

CO ₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion and cement production (tCO ₂ /capita)	3.7	2020	●	→
CO ₂ emissions embodied in imports (tCO ₂ /capita)	0.8	2018	●	↓
CO ₂ emissions embodied in fossil fuel exports (kg/capita)	10.0	2020	●	●

SDG14 – Life Below Water

Bathing sites of excellent quality (%)	84.0	2021	●	↑
Fish caught from overexploited or collapsed stocks (% of total catch)	NA	NA	●	●
Fish caught by bottom trawling or dredging (%)	2.3	2012	●	●
Fish caught that are then discarded (%)	0.1	2018	●	→
Marine biodiversity threats embodied in imports (per million population)	0.0	2018	●	●
Mean area that is protected in marine sites important to biodiversity (%)	88.6	2021	●	→

SDG15 – Life on Land

Mean area that is protected in terrestrial sites important to biodiversity (%)	76.0	2021	●	→
Mean area that is protected in freshwater sites important to biodiversity (%)	60.8	2021	●	→
Biochemical oxygen demand in rivers (mg O ₂ /litre)	3.6	2019	●	↗
Nitrate in groundwater (mg NO ₃ /litre)	NA	NA	●	●
Red List Index of species survival (worst 0–1 best)	0.87	2022	●	→
Terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity threats embodied in imports (per million population)	0.5	2018	●	●

Population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment (%)	51.8	2020	● ↗
Freshwater abstraction (% of long-term average available water)	4.4	2017	● →
Scarce water consumption embodied in imports (m ³ /capita)	1948.6	2018	● ●
Population using safely managed water services (%)	82.0	2020	● →
Population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	83.1	2020	● ↑

SDG7 – Affordable and Clean Energy

Population unable to keep home adequately warm (%)	10.1	2021	● ↗
Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption (%)	24.5	2020	● ↓
CO ₂ emissions from fuel combustion per electricity output (MtCO ₂ /TWh)	1.2	2019	● →

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Protection of fundamental labour rights (worst 0–1 best)	0.73	2020	● →
Gross disposable income (€/capita)	NA	NA	● ●
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	20.3	2021	● →
Unemployment Rate (% labour force)	5.0	2020	● ↑
People killed in accidents at work (per 100,000 workers)	3.0	2019	● ↑
In work at-risk-of-poverty rate (%)	15.6	2021	● ↗

SDG16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Death rate due to homicide (per 100,000 population)	1.4	2019	● ↑
Population reporting crime in their area (%)	8.8	2020	● ↑
Gap in population reporting crime in their area, by income (p.p.)	1.2	2020	● ↑
Access to justice (worst 0–1 best)	0.58	2020	● ↑
Timeliness of administrative proceedings (worst 0–1 best)	0.54	2020	● ↗
Constraints on government power (worst 0–1 best)	0.61	2020	● ↓
Corruption Perceptions Index (worst 0–100 best)	45	2021	● ↓
Unsented detainees (% of prison population)	7.7	2019	● →
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant 1990 million USD per 100,000 population)	0.00	2021	● ●
Press Freedom Index (worst 0–100 best)	68.5	2022	● ↓

SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Official development assistance (% of GNI)	0.12	2021	● →
Shifted profits of multinationals (billion USD)	NA	NA	● ●
Corporate Tax Haven Score (best 0–100 worst)	62	2021	● ●
Statistical Performance Index (worst 0–100 best)	77.5	2019	● ●

The European Green Deal

The future of (not only) Europe depends
on a “healthy” planet.



The European Green Deal (1)

The Green Deal from 2019 has to be understood as the European strategy to achieve the goals of the Horizon 2050 long-term strategy.

The main goals:

- > Becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 net zero greenhouse gas emissions for EU countries.
- > “Fit for 55” refers to the EU’s target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% already by 2030 compared to 1990 level. The proposed package aims to bring EU legislation in line with the 2030 goal.
- > 3 billion additional trees to be planted in the EU by 2030
- ◆ are anchored in the European Climate Law Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of 30.06.2021 and “Fit for 55” in 2030 package (EU Emissions Trading System, ETS)

The EU's emission trading system (EU ETS) is one of the world's largest carbon markets and the EU's key tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions



The European Green Deal (2)

- In April and September 2023 EU Parliament adopted now further key laws to reach 2030 climate targets

They consist in particular:

1. In a reform of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) to further reduce industrial emissions and invest more in climate friendly technologies including road transport, buildings and ship traffic.
2. An EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism to combat climate change and prevent carbon leakage (mainly protection of the rain forest).
3. A Social Climate Fund to combat energy and mobility poverty.
4. Binding targets to expand renewable energy faster this decade (42,4% instead of 32% by 2030).

EU-Taxonomy for sustainable activities

- The EU-Taxonomy shall implement the EU-Green Deal
- It is a classification system, establishing a list of environmentally sustainable economic activities, understood as a classification tool.
- With this tool certain activities of companies should be classified as “green”.
- Classification as “green” depends on how it makes a contribution on it.
- This guide shall help foremost investors but also companies and political decision makers to judge whether the company they are investing in are working in a sustainable way.
- 6 criteria: (1) climate change, (2) climate protection, (3) sustainable use and protection of water and sea, (4) circular economy, (5) environmental pollution, (6) biodiversity

The EU Commission classifies atomic industry and natural gas as sustainable. Lawsuits are pending before European courts (D,A,L).

Does the aviation industry (only intra-European air traffic) acts sustainable?

The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive contributes to extending the European Green Deal across all sectors and existing regulation, which means

- The EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) amends the already existing Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD).
- The scope of the directive is considerably extended to apply to more European and non-European companies listed and operating in the EU regulated markets.
- Companies start reporting, under the CSRD, from 2024 in line with mandatory EU sustainability reporting standards and alongside an external assurance of sustainability reporting.

(by 1.8.2022)

Corporate sustainability

Due Diligence Directive (CSDD)

- European Parliament has voted on June 1st in favor of a new '*groundbreaking*' draft rules requiring companies to take responsibility for the impact of their operations and value chains on human rights, the environment, and climate change.
- The directive requires large companies to include due diligence in their policies, identify and address any negative impacts on human rights and the environment, and take steps to prevent or lessen these effects. It applies not only to the companies themselves, but also to their subsidiaries and supply chains.

(Sustainable future news, June 2023)

- This vote however has to be confirmed by the vote of the EU Council of ministers. There is a risk that this version of the directive will be diluted in the course of the negotiations with the influence of the different lobby associations

Nature Restoration Law

- In July this year the European Parliament adopted EU-positions for negotiations with the Council of the European Union (Negotiates and adopts EU laws)
- The reason for the close voting was due to the refusal of the conservative parties to accept the template of the EU Commission
- Following this draft the EU must have restoration measures in place by 2030 covering at least 20% of its land and sea areas

Overall Summary



- Since the Treaty of Amsterdam 1997 the sensibility and the pressure building on the Brundtland commission report of 1987.
- EU institutions started to develop strategies step by step.
- Actual goal is to achieve a climate neutral Europe from 2050 on. Trends of acceleration.
- The supply chain on an European level are moving forward, after some different national laws.
- But the final key question remains:

Is Europe the navel of the world?



Thank you for your attention

Q & A