

2022

Multi-Stakeholder Coordination Platforms for Agenda 2030 and the case of North Macedonia

 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



Ana Jovanovska

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1. Overview of the coordination mechanisms for the Agenda 2030

Even before the UN Agenda 2030 was adopted, the **Multi-stakeholder bodies** played an important role in advancing the sustainable development. However, after the adopting of the Agenda 2030, there is evidence that numerous countries have committed in the establishment of institutionalised mechanism to ensure long term, inclusive **multi-stakeholder engagement** for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and at the same time to support national priorities, through the national strategic documents while reporting on the progress achieved to the United Nations.

According to the “Pathways for national sustainable development advisory bodies”, the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require **formal institutional arrangement** for involvement and engagement of multiple stakeholders to ensure **whole of government and whole of society approach** and to be in line with the leading **Leave No One Behind (LNOB)** principle of the Agenda 2030¹.

Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the central, transformative principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It represents the unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole².

The **Whole of Society Approach** refers to meaningful engagement and participation of all the stakeholders, meaning that the Government engaging all stakeholders including the civil society, communities, academia, media, private sector, NGOs, other voluntary associations, families, and individuals to strengthen the resilience of communities and society as a whole to achieve the Agenda 2030³.

In September 2019, the UN Secretary-General called on all sectors of society to mobilize for a **decade of action** on three levels: global action to secure **greater leadership**, more resources and smarter solutions for the Sustainable Development Goals; **local action** embedding the needed transitions in the policies, budgets, institutions and regulatory frameworks of governments, cities and local authorities; and **people action**, including by youth, civil society, the media, the private sector, unions, academia and other stakeholders, to generate an unstoppable movement pushing for the required transformations⁴.

To achieve full integration on the indivisible approach of the sustainable development, **policy coherence** must be the core pillar of the governance of the sustainable development. The implementation of the SDGs is based on the principle that the sustainable development is “**integrative and indivisible**” for the entire society. The concept is wider than the traditional “3P” model of the sustainable development that is the synergy and intersection of the people, planet, and the profit.⁵

In the following part we are analysing the horizontal and vertical coordination of the Multi stakeholder platforms and the success factors relevant to the context of North Macedonia.

¹ Pathways for National Sustainable Development Advisory Bodies, May 2011, p.10

² <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind>

³ <http://www.partners-for-review.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Whole-of-Society-P4R-Discussion-Paper-Oct.-2018-1.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/>

⁵ OECD (2018): Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2018. Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies. OECD Publishing, Paris. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301061-en>;

2. Horizontal Coordination and key factors for success

2.1. Official mandate of the Multi-stakeholder bodies/platforms

The general mandate of the Multi Stakeholder Platforms(MSP)-advisory bodies is **to advise the Government** on consensus building and negotiation process **to balance different interest of multiple stakeholders** in achieving common goal.

There are many examples where the Multi-stakeholder bodies advise the Government on general issues, process, documents policies related to the sustainable development, which gives more active role in established processes and enhances their legitimacy at a national level. Usually, the MSP- advisory bodies have **official mandate** to contribute to process or document like National Sustainable Development Strategies, the development of national indicators that measure the progress related to the Agenda 2030, reporting on the implementation of the Agenda 2030, National Voluntary Reviews etc. To obtain successful functioning, the MSP- advisory bodies should **obtain recognition** from the executive office of the Government or the Parliament, to promote **ownership** and **rationale** for the whole of government and whole of society approach.

2.2. Central positioning

According to the OECD report on coordinating the SDGs: 'The **centre of government** has an important role to play when addressing governance challenges, in terms of clear leadership, stronger policy coherence and efficient implementation', the nature of the Agenda 2030 demands **leadership and coordination across the entire Government**.⁶ There are several ways how to position MSP-advisory bodies to be instrumental to the Government. In most of the examples, they are **positioned centrally within the government structures**. However, the advantages, disadvantages and the dynamics depend on the context -specific assessment, the positioning of the institutions and the political landscape.

It is crucial to have the MSP- advisory body close to the institution that has **coordination mandate and political influence**, in terms of overall public policy planning and implementation, in order to advance on the Agenda 2030 and due to their important role and the competence to enforce implementation and enforcement of laws and policies, while promoting the integration of the SDGs in national laws and policies and thereby encouraging policy coherence on a national level⁷.

In 13 Member States of the European Union the leadership for the implementation and the governance of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs it is in the mandate of the **Head of State and Government**, usually at the Prime minister or the Deputy Prime Minister, and their offices have the coordination function. Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia are example for this type of central leadership for the implementation of the SDGs.

2.3. Coordination Mechanisms

In few cases in the European Union member states, these coordination mechanisms are institutionalized as Councils or Commissions which can include broad groups of government actors, or even a wider spectrum of

⁶ OECD (2016): Better Policies for Sustainable Development 2016. A new framework for policy coherence. OECD Publishing, Paris. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/greengrowth/better-policies-for-sustainable-development-2016-9789264256996-en.htm>

⁷ Pathways for National Sustainable Development Advisory Bodies, May 2011, p.32

stakeholders. Ireland, Netherlands, Poland and Sweden created new coordination mechanism to specifically address **horizontal coordination and policy coherence** for the Agenda 2030.⁸

Central positioning of the leadership for the implementation of the SDGs is a signal that the Agenda 2030 is perceived as a political priority, but the **leadership needs to be accompanied by coordination mechanisms** at the working level in the Ministries.

2.3.1. Coordination Mechanisms on working level

Most of the EU Member State have coordination mechanism accompanied by a **secretariat and consequently additional capacity for coordination is made available**, even where it does not engage with all ministries. **Institutionalised, mandated and resourceful secretariat/body or Focal Point** is needed for smooth functioning of the Multi-stakeholder bodies/platforms. Most of MSP-advisory bodies have secretariats that are in charge to **draft the agenda** of the sessions of the MSPs and other **administrative support** for the functioning of the MSP-advisory body, to **write proposals** that the MSP/National Councils should consider, **liaises with the representatives from other stakeholders and regional level counterparts, encourage collaboration with other subnational council, provide analytical and technical support to the MSP, assist to the thematic expert hired for the needs of MSP, etc.**

2.4. Functioning of the Multi-stakeholder bodies/platforms

2.4.1. Budget

A **well-resourced and independent secretariat** is crucial to enhance operations and ensure effectiveness in the long run-in terms of functioning of the MSP- advisory body. The administrative costs of the MSP-advisory bodies are usually covered by the departments or institutions in which they are positioned, often in partnership with international actors. To ensure sustainability, some of the secretariats developed resource mobilisation strategies⁹.

2.4.2. Membership

To provide **clear roles** and **avoid conflicting competence**, careful consideration should be given to leadership roles, membership size, as well as credible selection processes (appointment vs. nomination vs. application). There should be very clear membership principles and requirements as well as formalisation of the tenure and independence of members.

There is no blueprint for selecting members of the MSP-advisory bodies, however they should be carefully considered in terms their time and as resources, because as members they will reflect the **legitimacy, diversity, the inclusion** and the **autonomy** of the Council.

In some countries in the European Union, such as Croatia, Malta, Poland, and Portugal, there is **no requirement for all the ministries to participate** in horizontal coordination. Coordination mechanisms which do not require all ministries to participate may allow for some parts of government to ‘opt-out’ of their responsibility to the SDGs.¹⁰

Mainly, the practice shows that the members can be selected by a high-level decision maker that will appoint the members due to their long history of expertise, an established reputation and acknowledged merits in some field of sustainability or based on an open application process or they will be just nominated without an

⁸ European Parliament: Europe's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: good practices and the way forward, February 2019

⁹ Pathways for National Sustainable Development Advisory Bodies, May 2011, p.90

¹⁰ European Parliament: Europe's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: good practices and the way forward, February 2019

application process. When it comes to other stakeholders, such as the non-governmental organizations, they should be encouraged to nominate their representatives.

According to the European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils network¹¹ there are **3 types of mandates** when it comes to the composition of the National Councils for Sustainable Development:

- *Mandates strictly representing interest groups*

The appointed members **represent the views of specific organisations**, they often have a so-called bound mandate. These members vocalize the message of the organisations they are representing. Representatives from all stakeholder groups may operate as representatives with bound mandate. In the case of scientific representation their role is however more often seen as being ‘de-polarising issues’ by focusing on fact and figures.

- *Ad personam mandates*

These Council members are usually appointed based on their **personal knowhow and position in society**. They can have a background in science, civil society the private or public sector. In practice this means that a Council member can deliberate freely, but that his/her provenance is in the back of the mind, these types of mandates are so-called “soft representation”.

- *Strictly ad personam mandates*

These members are appointed solely ad-personam. Most of them have a **background as independent experts** in one or more dimensions of sustainable development. When a Council is solely composed of this kind of member it can be regarded as a kind of expert panel. This approach was chosen in for example the U.K, Germany, and Austria¹².

In terms of the membership, it is recommendable that there should be an SDG focal point in each ministry, institution, organization that is part of the Secretariat/Technical Working Group of the MSP-advisory council. The SDG Focal Point/Points should be the members of the technical working group that is supporting MSP-advisory council. The SDG focal points have a role to monitor the implementation on a department level and act as a resource and communication mechanism for the MSP advisory body¹³.

2.4.3. Review progress

A good **national monitoring system** is composed of statistical organizations and units within a country that jointly collect, process, ensure quality and consistency and disseminate official statistics on behalf of national government.¹⁴ The monitoring mechanism consists of the national statistics office and any other institutions and administrations that produce official statistics. **Every effective and efficient national monitoring system provides regular and reliable data**; hence this is an important precondition for good policies and a crucial component of good governance.¹⁵

Most of the MSP-advisory bodies are dedicated to have extensive work to develop an appropriate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to check their work and progress against their mandate. Usually, **this activity is led by the National State Statistical Office.**

¹¹ The Role of National Sustainable Development Councils in Europe in Implementing the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals Overview and Conclusions, 2015

¹² <https://www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/en/the-council/council-members>

¹³ Pathways for National Sustainable Development Advisory Bodies, May 2011, p.65

¹⁴ OECD. <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=1726>

¹⁵ UNDP: Institutional and coordination mechanisms, Guidance Note on Facilitating Integration and Coherence for the SDG Implementation

3. Vertical Coordination

To address the principles of '**inclusiveness**' and '**leave no one behind**' of the Agenda 2030 the participation of stakeholders is integral to contribute to the implementation of the SDGs. Participation and inclusion of stakeholders in SDG governance is important to create **ownership** and **foster those policies** and targets are pursued across multiple levels of society.

Almost all Member States of the European Union have some kind of participation or coordination mechanism, so that key actors outside of the central government are able to participate in the governance and implementation of the SDGs.

There are four different kinds of mechanisms for stakeholder participation:

- 1) through a – sometimes one-off – **consultation**,
- 2) through an enhanced process of participation, as **forum** or other **informal body**,
- 3) through a **dedicated body**, either established as:
 - (a) **independent sustainable development council**,
 - (b) as **body intertwined with the government coordination structure** which also includes stakeholders in an integrated manner (e.g., 'Government Council').

For specific activities as preparation of the **Voluntary National Review** or the **High-Level Political Forum** some member states of the European Union have additional elements for participation, often in relation to a specific venue or aspect of policy.

The difference between an independent council and an integrated body is not necessarily a sign of further institutionalisation, as the difference between the designs of these two different kinds of mechanisms is often the result of contextual factors.

Half of the Member States of the European Union have **complementary mechanisms** to facilitate inclusion of diverse groups or further integration of stakeholders like Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Slovakia. Some of these mechanisms include participation in Development Cooperation councils as in Czechia, or youth participation mechanisms like in Denmark and Finland)

For example, **Czech Republic**, the participation mechanism is also highly integrated. Their main coordination is through the Government Council for Sustainable Development, this mechanism is not only the high-level mechanism for coordination agenda setting, implementation and reporting, but is also the body through which stakeholders participate. The council has eight thematic committees and stakeholders participate through these committees.

Other example for vertical coordination is the system of **Finland**. It features a bottom-up, independent participation mechanism as well as a more thoroughly integrated council.

The Finnish coordination mechanism is a multi-stakeholder body, chaired by Prime minister, with approximately 90 civil society, industry, business, labour market and educational organisations, as well as representatives of

the government, parliament, ministries, as well as local and regional organisations, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the indigenous Sámi people and other public, private and third sector stakeholders.¹⁶

3.1. Inclusion of stakeholders

Inclusion of the stakeholders is unique opportunity for the Government to link with the representatives from the civil society organizations, academia, the youth, the private sector, and other categories of vulnerable groups of citizens in institutionalized manner through one body.

In practice, these umbrella bodies include private sector networks, youth councils, trade union confederations, academic networks, the Ombudsman Office, State Audit Office etc. The **main purpose** of the MSP- advisory bodies is to find a common ground of the competing interest when it comes to the sustainable development and the national priorities, but also to create trickle-down effect of national sustainability priorities to a wide array of stakeholders across all sectors and down to the subnational level in the country.

The MSP- advisory bodies should ensure policy coherence and should create conducive ecosystem that supports legislative, budgetary, institutional changes that will provide sustainability of the policymaking and implementation on a long run. In the core of the MSP-advisory bodies is to promote **accountability** and **transparency** and to develop leadership that will facilitate effective mediation of diverse interest for common goals. The MSP- advisory bodies enable direct involvement of the other stakeholders in policy making and the inclusive process provided by the MSP- advisory bodies enhances ownership; stimulates direct interaction related to the gaps and develop solutions to overcome them while integrating the LNOB principle¹⁷.

UNDP has reflected the challenges and the opportunities that come with the inclusion of the different stakeholders¹⁸:

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<u>Parliament</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Often not involved in all stages of national development planning. ● May have limited awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ● May face conflicting interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leverage its legislative role ● Foster its advocacy role, especially for budgeting.
<u>Judicial system</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May have limited awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ● Enforcement of laws may be lacking. ● May face conflicting interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop synergies with laws related to good governance (e.g., corruption, tax evasion, illegal trade) as well as those necessary for the achievement of the SDGs
<u>Finance and planning bodies</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Linkages with sector ministries and subnational bodies may be weak. ● Addressing all three dimensions of sustainable development may not be seen as a priority for economic development and poverty reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Turn these bodies into SDG champions. ● Have them play a key role in coordinating implementation of the SDGs. ● Develop synergies with revenue collection measures (e.g., fight corruption, tax evasion).

¹⁶ European Parliament: Europe's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: good practices and the way forward, February 2019

¹⁷ Pathways for National Sustainable Development Advisory Bodies, May 2011, p.37

¹⁸ UNDP: Institutional and coordination mechanisms, Guidance Note on Facilitating Integration and Coherence for the SDG Implementation

<p><u>Civil society organizations</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacities may be weak, especially with respect to engagement in national development planning. ● Often not involved in all stages of development planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage them as SDG Champions. ● Involve them in all stages of development planning. ● Encourage them in their watchdog role (i.e., in promoting transparency and accountability) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foster their role in information collection, information-sharing and awareness-raising (from policymakers to local communities).
<p><u>Business and industry</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May perceive sustainable development (specifically environment management and legislation) as a barrier to their activities. ● Often not involved in development planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mitigate the effect of their activities that have a negative impact on sustainable development. ● Engage them in the development planning process to provide effective and innovative solutions to achieve sustainable development and reduce poverty. ● Make use of this major source for financing the SDGs.
<p><u>Academic and research institutions</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May be disconnected from the development planning process. ● Capacity to produce policy-relevant information may be weak. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leverage their innovative ideas, including new scientific approaches, to deploy sustainable solutions and appropriate technologies for achieving the SDGs. ● Work with them to enhance the sciencepolicy link to find sustainable solutions to development problems.
<p><u>Media</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May lack knowledge of and attention to sustainable development issues. ● May lack freedom of expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make use of their role in shaping the opinions of decision-makers and the general public. ● Work with them to encourage public involvement in national development planning. ● Provide them with policy-related information. ● Work to enhance their advocacy role in achieving the SDGs.

3.2. Subnational engagement

Governments need to include **subnational authorities** in the MSP- advisory bodies to obtain a clearer sense of these conflicting interests at the local level, areas where common ground can be reached and coordinated action proposed, as well as a sense of possible spill over effects and trade-offs, but also to allow the development to reach out to all the communities through the country.

3.3. International partners

The practice demonstrates that the **international organisations provide technical support to governments** in the functioning of the SDG advisory bodies and for the processes related to the Agenda 2030. Usually, at a

specific request of high-level authorities (e.g. the President's or the Prime Minister's Office), governments have worked closely with international actors. Through this a space for international exchange of experiences is created, that is also a learning opportunity from related mechanisms around the world and harmonization of good practices.

3.4. Feedback mechanisms and space for action

Law institutionalised feedback mechanisms are recommendable to ensure that governments meaningfully engage with the advice provided by MSP-advisory bodies. This mechanism is key pillar to **ensure long-term effectiveness**. Enabling non-state actors to assume leadership and decision-making roles within working groups and decision-making bodies as practice, while encouraging a sense of ownership among its members. This manner of functioning is fundamental for problem solving, innovative thinking and for consensus-building within these platforms. To obtain vertical coherence to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda 2030 MSP-advisory bodies are encouraged to collaborate with multiple stakeholders.

3.5. Regional cooperation

Various case studies show that multiple MSP-advisory bodies are actively **collaborating with their peer networks and structures on a regional level**. The focus and the added value from these types of collaboration includes capacity development, best practice sharing, peer learning and creative problem solving and information-sharing.

4. Good examples of Multi-stakeholder Platforms for coordination and implementation of Agenda 2030

4.1. Montenegro

As of December 2021, the National Council for Sustainable Development of Montenegro as **coordination mechanism** is consist of a president and 35 members. The **core mandate** as Chair of the National Council is given to the **Prime Minister** of Montenegro. The members of the National Council are appointed by the Government. The members of the National Council are the Ministers of all the line ministries, the Secretary General of the Parliament of Montenegro, Montenegro's chief negotiator with the European Union; the Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology, the Director of the Environmental Protection Fund of Montenegro, the Director of the Innovation Fund of Montenegro, the Director of the Public Enterprise for the Advancement of Maritime Assets of Montenegro; the Director of the Statistical Office; the Secretary General of the Union of Municipalities of Montenegro; one director of the registration company of employers in Montenegro; the General Secretary of a trade union organization in Montenegro; one Dean from Licensed University of Montenegro; one representative of foreign investors; one representative of the banking sector; the Director General of the National Public Broadcasting of Radio and Television of Montenegro; and three independent experts (for ecology, economics and sociology).

The National Council has a secretary. The Secretary of the National Council is the head of the organizational unit of public administration for sustainable development. The President of the National Council has a deputy appointed by the National Council from among the members on the proposal of the President of the National Council.

The National Council for Sustainable Development has the following **functions**:

1) Provide recommendations and expert opinions to the Government in order to ensure the adoption and implementation of policies and development projects in line with the principles of sustainable development.

- 2) Alignment of sectoral strategic, planning and program documents and regulations with the principles, goals and measures of sustainable development policy and providing recommendations and expert opinions in order to supplement / amend them in such a way as to ensure the integration of sustainable development principles.
- 3) To analyse and give opinion on national reports of Montenegro, of international conventions, including reports on the implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030 (including revision of the document itself), and other strategic, planning and program documents important for achieving the goals of sustainable development defined by the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030 (SDGs), the Green Agreement, the EU Climate Package, the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Conservation marine and coastal areas of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and other national and international regulations;
- 4) Improving the financing system for sustainable development in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Plan, including the mobilization of resources for the implementation of policies, regulations and strategic documents in the field of sustainable development.
- 5) Improving the communication strategy for sustainable development, in a way that further engages and informs the public, as well as encourages a broader discussion on issues related to sustainable development, including the establishment of partnerships with the media. Organizing events and meetings with different stakeholder groups on key topics and concepts of sustainable development in order to enable in-depth and current exchange on current and future (international, European, national) development, provide additional expertise and enable wider media coverage and public communication on event outcomes.
- 6) Encourages and promotes research and study visits, education, training, technology exchange and exchange of knowledge and skills relevant to sustainable development, as well as capacity building for sustainable development at the national level to enable evidence-based decision making.
- 7) Establishment and improvement of partnerships with development partners and organizations, the private sector, academia, and other relevant actors to provide support for the implementation of sustainable development policy.
- 8) Promotion of dialogue and building partnerships for sustainable development with key groups identified as key actors outside the central government, national and international community, which play an important role in the transition to sustainable development (vulnerable social groups, NGOs, local authorities, representatives, workers and trade unions, economy and industry, entrepreneurs, scientific community, youth and others);
- 9) Support for sustainable and equitable transition initiatives like leaving no one behind (green economy, innovation and technology, circular economy, blue economy, cleaner production and consumption, social responsibility, climate change, integrated coastal zone management, biodiversity conservation and biosafety, healthy lifestyles, gender equality, etc.);
- 10) Establishing own initiatives on important topics in the context of sustainable development by developing pilot projects on certain priority areas in the context of the national framework of sustainable development policy.
- 11) Other tasks entrusted to Council by the Government of Montenegro.

The National Council for Sustainable Development of Montenegro may establish permanent **sectoral working groups** for:

- monitoring the implementation of sustainable development policy.
- mitigation (mitigation) and adaptation (adaptation) to climate change.
- integrated coastal zone management of Montenegro.

- sustainable development at the local level.
- financing for sustainable development.

The National Council may form other **additional mechanism** per need.

4.2. Croatia

The government took on a leading role in coordinating and monitoring implementation of the SDGs and decided to establish a National Council for Sustainable Development (January 2018) as **coordination mechanism** that is responsible for implementing the Agenda 2030.

The **core mandate** is given to **the Prime minister**, the Council includes members of the Cabinet responsible for the Agenda 2030, a representative from the Office of the President of the Republic, as well as heads of the Government Office for Human Rights and National Minorities, the Government Office for the Civil Sector, the Government Office for Gender Equality, and the Croatian Bureau of Statistics.

The Secretariat of the Council is part of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (Directorate for Multilateral and Global Affairs), while coordination bodies dealing with each working group for specific SDGs have been established in various leading state institutions that are members of the Council.

Sectoral working groups for specific topics are established, which may include representatives from different stakeholders in an advisory capacity, including local and regional government representatives, organised civil society, academia, business and relevant bodies including the SDEPC (Sustainable Development and Environment Protection Council).

As **additional mechanism** Croatia has **SDEPC is an advisory body** with a long tradition. It is appointed by the Government and the Ministry of the Environment and Energy and it acts as a coordinating and administrative body. Pursuant to the Environmental Protection Act, it consists of members from academia and organised civil society and is expected to engage in the work of the Council.

The **functions** of the National Council for Sustainable Development of Croatia are the following:

- Adoption of national reports on SDG implementation.
- Coordination of national statements and organisation of public campaigns and other awareness-raising activities.¹⁹

4.3. Spain

Since of June 2018 the **coordination mechanism** in Spain is given to the High Committee for the 2030 Agenda and the **core mandate** is given to the **Prime Minister** office: The **functions** of the High Committee are to elaborate and develop strategies and action plans for the Agenda 2030, monitor its implementation and to drive the elaboration of statistics and information system to measure the implementation of the SDGs.

On **operational level** Spain has a High-Level Group chaired by the Vice-president and in charge of translating the SDG to the different departments, analysing plans and strategies in relation with the agenda 2030, creating working groups in relation with the SDGs and ensuring the contact with CSOs and the coherence of public policies with the Agenda 2030. Also technical Inter-ministerial Working Group has also been created with the task of coordinating the implementation of the SDGs in the different ministries. The Action Plan for the

¹⁹ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/policies/policy-areas/sustainable-development/sdgs/member-state-activity/croatia>

Implementation of Agenda 2030 specifies that each SDG has been assigned to a Ministry that will act as a focus point and coordinate the implementation of each SDG with other ministries.

Since February 2019 Congress and Senate have created a mixed **Committee for monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**.

As **additional mechanism** Spain has several **Autonomous Communities** have adopted their own SD strategies and have created regional advisory councils.²⁰

4.4. Georgia

The **coordination mechanism** for the SDG implementation in Georgia is the Sustainable Development Goals Inter-Agency Council.²¹The Council was established in 2016 with the following **functions**:

- coordinate inter-agency issues related to the implementation of SDGs,
- update and develop relevant strategies,
- make recommendations on the inclusion of SDGs into national policy,
- provide information and ensure involvement of stakeholders in the implementation,
- review and recommend projects to implement the SDGs,
- review, approve and submit a VNR report and an annual report on SDG implementation to the Government,
- make recommendations on improving statistical data.²²

The Council is composed of representatives of ministries and state agencies, representatives of local NGOs as well as mayors/deputies of municipalities (since the localization process just started, the latter are not yet systematically included into the council as of mid-2021). The **core mandate** is given to the Head of the Administration of the Government of Georgia²³ and has four thematic working groups on **operational level**:

- Social inclusion,
- Economic development,
- Sustainable energy and environmental protection,
- Democratic governance.

The **Secretariat of the Council is located in the Policy Planning Unit of the Policy Planning and Coordination Department of the Administration of the Government of Georgia**.²⁴The Secretariat provides analytical and organizational support to the Council by coordinating and monitoring the reporting of state agencies, preparing annual monitoring reports on SDG implementation, and submitting it to the Council, organising and supporting Council meetings providing relevant information to state agencies etc.

4.5. Finland

²⁰ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/policies/policy-areas/sustainable-development/sdgs/member-state-activity/spain>

²¹ Statute of the Inter-Agency Council for Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdg.gov.ge/helper/GetFile?fileStoreId=294>

²² SDG Georgia, Council, <https://sdg.gov.ge/text-page/33>

²³ Voluntary National Review, Georgia 2020 (further 2020 Georgia VNR Report), p. 12, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26390VNR_2020_Georgia_Report.pdf

²⁴ 5 Secretariat, <https://sdg.gov.ge/text-page/28>

The **core mandate** is given to the **Prime Minister** and the Prime Minister's office is responsible for coordination and acts as secretariat. Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development Coordination is the **coordination mechanism**. The coordination task is also supported by an Inter-ministerial Network Secretariat, consisting of sustainable development Focal Points from all 11-line ministries. Crucially, a whole-of-government approach is demonstrated through this mechanism, mandating that all sectors are a part of achieving the SDGs.

The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development Coordination is multi-stakeholder body, chaired by Prime minister, with approximately 90 civil society, industry, business, labour market and educational organisations, as well as representatives of the government, parliament, ministries, as well as local and regional organisations, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the indigenous Sámi people and other public, private and third sector stakeholders. The diversity and the longevity of this institution is impressive and demonstrates the legitimacy of and commit to participation in the Finnish Government. On **operational level** in relation to implementation, there is another body which provides a framework for participation in a bottom-up way. This mechanism is clearly successful in generating commitment, (with over 1,000 commitments already). Opportunities for participation are also present in the **additional mechanisms** such as those focussed on youth engagement, scientific expertise, and development cooperation.²⁵

5. The Council for Sustainable Development of North Macedonia

The National Council for Sustainable Development of Republic of Macedonia was formed in January 2010 (Government decision published in Official Gazette number 8 from 21.01.2010) as advisory body to the Government of Republic of Macedonia.

The National Council had the following competences:

- To analyse the issues in the field of sustainable development policies in the Republic Macedonia.
- To give opinion on proposals for draft documents in the field of sustainable development before their submission for further consideration and adoption by the Government of the Republic Macedonia / Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.
- To monitor and implement the National Strategy for Sustainable Development in Republic of Macedonia and other strategic documents in the field of sustainable development.
- To provide opinions on documents related to the field of economy, social development, environmental protection, agriculture, and other relevant documents through reviewing and providing opinions on sectoral documents and legislation that are related to sustainable development.
- To develop cooperation with relevant institutions in the country and abroad in relation to sustainable development issues.
- To consider of specific issues and problems related to sustainable development.

The Government decision for formation of the National Council for sustainable development was amended on 02 of October 2018. and it was published in the Official Gazette number 186 from 08.10.2018.

²⁵ European Parliament: Europe's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: good practices and the way forward, February 2019

The amendment refers to the new competence of the National Council for Sustainable Development which is adding competence to the National Council for Sustainable Development to monitor the process of integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2030 in the national strategic documents.

The amendment also includes changes in the composition of the members of the Council for Sustainable Development. With the new Government decision, the National Council for Sustainable Development consist of the following members:

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia in charge of economic issues and for coordination with economic departments, the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning, the Minister of Local Self-Government, the Minister of Economy, the Minister of Labor and Social Policy, the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, - the Minister of Finance, - the Minister of Information Society and Administration, the Minister of Transport and Communications, the Minister for External Affairs, the Minister of Education and Science, the Minister of Health, - the Minister of Justice, two Members of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, a representative of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, one representative the Chamber of Commerce of Macedonia, the Chamber of Commerce for Information and Communication Technologies, The Chamber of Commerce of Northwest Macedonia and the Union of Chambers of Commerce of Macedonia, one expert for sustainable development, two with a specialization in the field of economy, one representative with a specialization in the field of social development and one representative with a specialty in the field of animal protection environments to be selected by the following universities: University of Sv. Cyril and Methodius - Skopje, University of Sv. Kliment Ohridski - Bitola, • Goce Delchev University - Stip, State University in Tetovo - Tetovo and • University of Southeast Europe - Tetovo. “

The logistical support of the National Council for Sustainable Development will be coordinated/performed by the Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic affairs issues and for coordination with economic departments. The expert and technical support of the National Council for Sustainable Development will be carried out by the Technical Working Group of the National Council for Sustainable Development and will coordinates the Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic issues and for coordination with economic departments.²⁶

6. SWOT analysis and consultations with government officials and representatives from other stakeholder groups

Toward the end of January 2022, a 2-day consultation workshop with government officials from various ministries and representatives from other stakeholder groups was held. Here are the SWOT analysis and the proposals referring to the composition, mandate, and the competence of the National Council for Sustainable Development of North Macedonia.

²⁶ Government of Republic of Macedonia, Decision number 44-9099/1 brought on 02.10.2018, published in Official gazette number 186 on 08.10.2018

6.1. SWOT analysis and proposals by the government officials

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dedicated civil servants who have been involved in VNR and have knowledge of SDGs. -Existing baseline due to the functioning of the Council for Sustainable Development since 2010. -The Agenda 2030 is recognised by the officials at the operational level. -Good legislation enabling SDG implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of internal coordination. -There is no coordinator now. -The Council for Sustainable Development does not meet on a regular basis. -There is no Strategy for sustainable development that will be coherent and integrate the SDGs. -Undefined national framework of SDG indicators that ensures the monitoring and implementation of the Agenda 2030. -Inadequate databases in some ministries. -Lack of funds and human resources. -Limited understanding of the Agenda 2030 at the highest political level (abstraction). -The members of technical working group do not have defined mandate. -Inadequate law enforcement. -Lack of institutional memory and transfer of knowledge.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of Strategic planning units in ministries that can be linked to the SDG framework. -Strengthen role of Parliament. -Opportunity to delegate the statistical functions to the Ministries. -Include the UN agencies and international donors into the National Council for Sustainable Development. -Upgrade of the existing mechanisms. -The Covid and the energy crisis impose the sustainable development as a priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Covid pandemic affects the functionality of institutions. -Energy crisis. -Unstable political situation.

The proposals from the Government officials were in the direction that the **core mandate** for the Agenda 2030 should be given to the **Prime Minister**, in line with the practice of the member states of the European Union and a better coordination of the other relevant institutions.

The **coordination mechanism** should be channelled through the **Council for the Sustainable Development**, while on **operational level** the coordination is conducted through the **Advisors of the Prime minister Office** and **designated Focal Points in the ministries**. The **Secretariat for European Affairs** was also proposed as supporting institution on operational level, due to their capacity to ensure horizontal coordination, when it comes to monitoring the progress of the policies and reforms and due to their competence to manage the donor assistance.

Other proposals on operational level reflected:

- The need for appointment of **Focal Points/ Coordinators for Agenda2030** in the institutions to underline their **operational importance** for the implementation of the Agenda 2030. The Focal Points/Coordinators should be in charge integrate the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs in the policies of the institutions in which they are working, / they will ensure monitoring, communication, and internal coordination to support the implementation of the targets of the Agenda 2030.
- The need to form a **technical working group or committee for statistics/indicators** that would regularly meet to update the data base and the existing indicators. The technical working group or committee for statistics/indicators will be consisted of Focal Points from the ministries.
- The need to strengthen the role of the **Parliament** in the context of Agenda 2030 due to the legislative role it has and the oversight competence over the work of the Government. The RIA mechanism could

be used to incorporate the SDGs and set up an inter-party SDGs advisory group to build consensus on the topics related to the Agenda 2030.

- The **coordination of the foreign policy and obligations of North Macedonia in international bodies** need a systemic solution for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to access information from other ministries related to international obligations and reporting activities in order to strengthening the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in monitoring the implementation of the conventions

6.2. SWOT analysis and proposals from private sector and the civil society organizations

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The National Council for sustainable development is existing multi-stakeholder platform. -Through the VNR process other stakeholders were invited to participate in informal manner. -VNR process detected that there is interest from the stakeholder's interest to contribute to the Agenda2030. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of visibility and recognition for the Agenda 2030. -Many stakeholders are not included in the National Council for Sustainable Development (CSOs, local level, youth, ethnic groups, rural areas, marginalized groups). -The National Council does not have two-way communication and does not meet regularly. -Weak data collection capacity and there is no monitoring system. -Weaknesses in policy implementation. -Low proactive involvement of stakeholders. -Lack of mechanisms for two-way communication with the business sector.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Involvement of CSOs and other stakeholders. -There are existing global initiatives and groups for civil society organizations. -Options to conduct shadow reports from CSOs. -There is interest at local and other level for inclusion in thematic groups. -International organizations and donors should transparently announce plans for Agenda 2030. -Several municipalities are harmonizing and localizing SDGs. Six municipalities have conducted LNOB social mappings and integrated the needs of LNOB groups in social protection strategies (plans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Frequent changes of government. -Low awareness at a high political level for the Agenda 2030. -Covid and the energy crisis. -The Government system is too bureaucratic and inert when it comes to changes. -Lack of coordination and parallel processes.

The proposals from the representatives from the other stakeholder were in the direction that the core mandate for the Agenda 2030 should be given to the Prime Minister. The **composition, mandate, and the role** of the National Council for Sustainable Development should be reviewed. The council should **meet quarterly to discuss the challenges and the specific issues**. The other stakeholders proposed to formalize the mandate of the National Council to have binding character. It was **proposed to include all the ministries and the main donors in the country, while representatives from the Association of the Units of Local Self-Government should be included** It was proposed to **include representatives from the Ombudsman Office, representatives from the Civil Society Organizations representatives from the Youth National Council and the UN Youth Ambassador and representatives from the Media.**

7. Successful examples of contribution to the Agenda 2030

Partnerships between governments, private and public bodies bring the Agenda 2030 closer to achievement. When the different stakeholders work together towards the same goals, there is power to achieve them all. Sharing Goals means sharing a vision. Ending poverty, battling inequality and paralysing global warming are

ambitions, each an everyone should strive for. In the following part we are listing several successful stories that contributed to the Agenda 2030 and are great example of contributions from different stakeholders:

7.1. Global Shapers Skopje Hub Summer School for Financial Literacy

In the framework of the project “**Partnerships for SDGs - Leave no one behind**”, Global Shapers Skopje Hub has organized the project **Summer School for Financial Literacy**, contributing to **SDG 4 - Quality Education**.

The project focused on **strengthening young people’s skills in personal finance**, increasing their level of financial education and literacy, developing networks of partnerships with institutions, and actors from the business and civil society sector, and increasing the awareness for greater financial literacy.

More than 100 young from diverse backgrounds (32% of them came from households with a monthly revenue below 30,000 denars (around 500 euros)) from all over the country learned regarding the importance of financial literacy and personal and professional development was increased people gained or advanced their skills in financial literacy through two parts of the Summer School. The first part (4 trainings) was meant for obtaining a basic knowledge of financial literacy. The second part (9 trainings) focused on an advanced level of financial literacy.

New partnerships were developed, and the established ones were strengthened between Global Shapers Skopje Hub, the participants, and the partnering organizations and institutions

7.2. Mama Organa

Mama Organa is the **first eco-social business** in Macedonia, formed to collect food waste and by adding value to it, to produce natural fertilizers and soil substrates suitable for organic production.

Instead of creating costs and polluting the environment, their products are helping farmers and urban gardeners in growing healthy and clean, pesticide-free food.

By selling their fertilizers, Mama Organa ensures sustainability and **provides jobs for single parents**.

Their innovative social-business model contributes to **8 out of 17 SDG’s** and is recognized and awarded in the country and abroad.

Beside their core activities, they closely cooperate and create mutual projects with the civil society organizations and institutions, to create better solution to **social and environmental issues**.

The company is founded in 2017, and up until now they have managed to collect more than 200T of biowaste, directly reducing the amount of the CO2 emissions and creating revenues for 4 single-parent families.

7.3. Rural Coalition

The **Rural Coalition**, which considers **gender equality in rural areas** as a strategic priority, has taken the initiative to create the **first female rural e-market** in response to the negative effects of the Covid pandemic which has increased also online communication and digitalisation of the sector agriculture and rural development. Guided by the idea that if it cannot be sold in the markets, it can be done electronically, the Rural Coalition together with its partners and supporters as well as with women from rural areas worked on the construction of the **first rural women's e-market "Nasha tezga"**, a name that is associated with our domestic production of fruits, vegetables, milk, dairy products, honey, etc., produced exactly by women from rural areas.

Through the construction of the platform, a number of **cross-sectoral partnerships** were built, ie partnerships with the business sector, municipalities, institutions in the direction of the main goal and cause under which the construction of the market was conducted, which is "Leave no one behind". At the same time, this activity directly contributes to the **advancement of the social and economic position of women in rural areas**, but also contributes to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular **SDG 2** for Zero Hunger, **SDG 5** for gender equality and **SDG 8** which refers to economic growth and decent work for all. This only shows the importance of such a market, and increases the value of both the work of women and their products.

"Nasa tezga" has **over 100 women** members who promote domestic fresh and processing food from all **8 planning regions**, and it can be visited at the following link: <https://www.nasatezga.mk/>, where you can buy their products and directly contribute to their economic strengthening, also contribute to get out of the shadow of invisibility and informal economy, but we also support domestic food production

7.4. Safer and more secure in a pandemic

"Safer and more secure in a pandemic" is a project with the focus on the **health, prevention and health care of homeless children and children from socially disadvantaged families**, mainly Roma living on the streets. Few years ago, the Day Care Centre that provided care for these children burned to the ground, and now is the part of the outpatient clinic. This is the only centre for homeless children, serving about **100 children** and their families. Through the project the following results were achieved with direct impact on **SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 4 and SDG 11**: Improved health care of 100 members of the Roma marginalized population; Increased awareness of access to health care; Increased visibility and information about the work of the Day Centre for the potential supporters; basic hygiene items to ensure prevention from the spread of diseases and infections through the company Pharmachem and Tinex was provided, the Red Cross Chair donated masks and antiseptic gels and for healthy food products to 72 children and their families. Through this project awareness was raised for the importance of the hygiene and a special Food share **platform for Food Share** was created to connect the Day Care Centre for homeless children with farmers, industrial producers, distributors, retailer's chains.

7.5. Voluntary National Review in North Macedonia

The Republic of North Macedonia submitted its **first VNR report** in July 2020.²⁷ The preparation process of the first VNR report was inclusive and participatory including around **120 representatives from different stakeholders and international organizations**. The representatives of civil society organizations (**30 CSOs**), **international organizations, academia, chambers of commerce, and youth** were actively involved in the process through **workshops, consultations, or research projects and final approval of the narrative**.²⁸

Youth groups were involved in promotion of SDGs and in **capacity building events to increase involvement of youth in decision-making and cooperation with institutions**.²⁹

In February 2020 **Y-PEER, a youth network**, with support of UNFPA, developed questionnaire in order to collect data about **youth's perspective of the next decade**.³⁰

Representatives of youth-led organizations and other NGOs that work with youth participated in March 2020 at the "Youth Forum - Voluntary National Review for Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals"³¹. Through the inclusive process of the for the VNR preparation, the Government demonstrated their contribution to **SDG 16 and SDG 17**.

²⁷ Republic of North Macedonia, Sustainable Development Goals Voluntary National Review, 2020, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/macedoni>

²⁸ 2020 North Macedonia VNR report, p. 11; Вицепремиерката Царовска: Подготвивме национален преглед, којшто ќе ни даде насоки за борба со сиромаштијата, нееднаквоста и одржливиот развој, 2020, <https://vicepremier-ekonomija.gov.mk/?q=node/842>

²⁹ 2020 North Macedonia VNR report, p. 101

³⁰ 2020 North Macedonia VNR report, p. 103

³¹ 2020 North Macedonia VNR report, p. 104

7.6 Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals

The first initiative ‘Localisation of SDGs’ focused on the **sensitisation of municipalities and is led by the - (ZELS)** with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). In the framework of the “Localisation of SDGs”, **four social mappings have been implemented with the aim of collecting data on local LNOB groups** which identified the **unmet needs of these LNOB groups at local level**. These needs are then taken into consideration via multi-stakeholder dialogues held at the municipal level and translated into actionable policy measures as part of re-aligned local social protections strategies that reflect LNOB data and prioritized local SDGs and targets.



7.7. Partnerships for the goals

The second initiative under the ‘Whole of Society’ approach focused on the **17th goal** on Partnerships through facilitation of **cross-sectoral partnerships with the support of GIZ and CSO KONEKT**. The aim is to utilise the resources in different sectors and look for synergies on how **civil society, the private sector and academia can achieve a greater impact on the SDGs**. Four projects in total were jointly designed to address the identified challenges under Goal 4 Quality Education, SDG 8 Decent work and Economic Growth, SDG 3 Good health and Wellbeing and SDG 2 Zero Hunger. Some of the projects include the **establishment of Urban Gardens in the Municipality of Aerodrom (Skopje), building an e-platform for rural women who sell organic products, developing a training curriculum on financial literacy for youth, and education among Roma children on Covid 19 self-protection measures**.



8. Conclusions

The report provides detailed analysis of the current architectural design of the National Council on the basis of the amendment of the Government decision for formation of the National Council from 2018 as well as it provides an overview on the basis of a comparative analysis of both architectural design and practice of the Multi stakeholder bodies responsible for Agenda 2030 implementation in the European Union. As a result, in terms of institutional setup of the coordination mechanism itself, it is more than evident that there is a space for change of the mandate and the competencies of the Council especially in terms of stakeholder engagement. On operational level there is a space for change in the operational functioning of the technical working group and clear division of roles.

Moreover, important institutions and organizations among which the **Ministry of Interior, the Association of the units of local-self-government, the Civil Society, the Youth Representatives, the UN Youth Ambassador, the Ombudsman Office, the State Audit Office, the National Bank, representatives from UN and other International Organizations** are left out of the current structure of the Council. **Inclusion of all these lacking stakeholders will demonstrate the “whole of society approach” and inclusiveness by the Government of North Macedonia.**

The role of the parliament is not substantially exploited in the case of North Macedonia having into consideration that **the Parliament besides representation of constituencies, has three key roles and powers: a legislative function, budgetary power, and scrutiny and monitoring.**

The Council for Sustainable Development **lacks proper technical working group with clear division on thematic areas and roles; and a sub working group for monitoring and evaluation that would be led by the State Statistical Office and subgroup for communication that would raise awareness of the Agenda 2030 as policy framework through the line ministries and the relevant institutions.**

Unlike other Multi stakeholder platforms for sustainable development, the Macedonian **does not have budget for the planned activities.**

According to the latest SDG Tool for Forced Displacement and Statelessness in North Macedonia conducted by UNDP and UNHCR, the National Council for Sustainable Development **has not held session for a year and a half and since 2020 the Government had not prioritized SDGs³².**

This report is an attempt to propose solutions for a improved design] and functionality of the National Council for Sustainable Development in North Macedonia as the main body for coordination of development policies, and in this regard one must underline the **strong synergy and complementarily between the EU Accession Agenda and Agenda 2030.** These two agendas are mutually reinforcing processes. Nearly two-thirds of SDG targets (109 of 169 targets) have a strong link to the EU acquis chapters. Therefore, **while meeting the requirements of the EU acquis, North Macedonia will be moving closer to achieving the SDGs.** The chapters with the greatest impact on achievement of SDGs are Chapter 27 on the environment, Chapter 23 on justice and fundamental rights and Chapter 19 on social policy and employment. If EU requirements on chapter 27 are fully achieved, as many as 40 SDG targets (25 percent of the total number of SDG targets) will be addressed. This, in turn, will require significant financial investments. Chapter 23 on justice and fundamental rights is crucial for achieving the SDGs (23 targets/17 percent of the 2030 Agenda). The changes required to the Rule of law, freedom of the media and to institutions are considered transformational and, until they are closed, the process offers space for focused interventions where the targets of the SDGs can also be addressed. Chapter 19 on social policy and employment has a strong link with 11 SDGs. **In total, as many as 74 SDGs could be covered and/or are tightly linked with the achievement of the above mentioned three chapters closing benchmarks.**

³² SDG Appraisal Tool for Forced Displacement and Statelessness Contexts in North Macedonia, December 2021

Some SDGs however are not directly linked to EU integration. 60 targets (35 percent of the total) appear not to be directly linked to the EU integration agenda. These targets are mainly clustered in SDG 17 – Partnership for the Goals, SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities, and SDG 4 – Quality Education. The MAPS conclusions call for the SDG targets that are not (fully) addressed by the EU accession process to receive more attention from the Government and development partners³³

Lastly, the Government and the other stakeholders from North Macedonia should strive to transform from the **traditional dialog to transformative partnership platform** through the National Council for Sustainable Development, as multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism to implement the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The transformative partnership platforms for the SDGs go well beyond dialogue and knowledge exchange and instead they focus on supporting the catalysis and implementation of the partnership.³⁴



9. Suggested structures for multi-stakeholder mechanism for Agenda 2030 in North Macedonia

Given the examples from the Multi-stakeholder platforms European Union and other countries, the success factors relevant for North Macedonia, the SWOT analysis from the two-day consultations with government officials and representatives of other stakeholder groups we suggest the following structure of the National Council for Sustainable development for further considerations:

1.National Council chaired by the Prime minister with SDG Focal Points from the member institutions of the National Council for Sustainable Development.

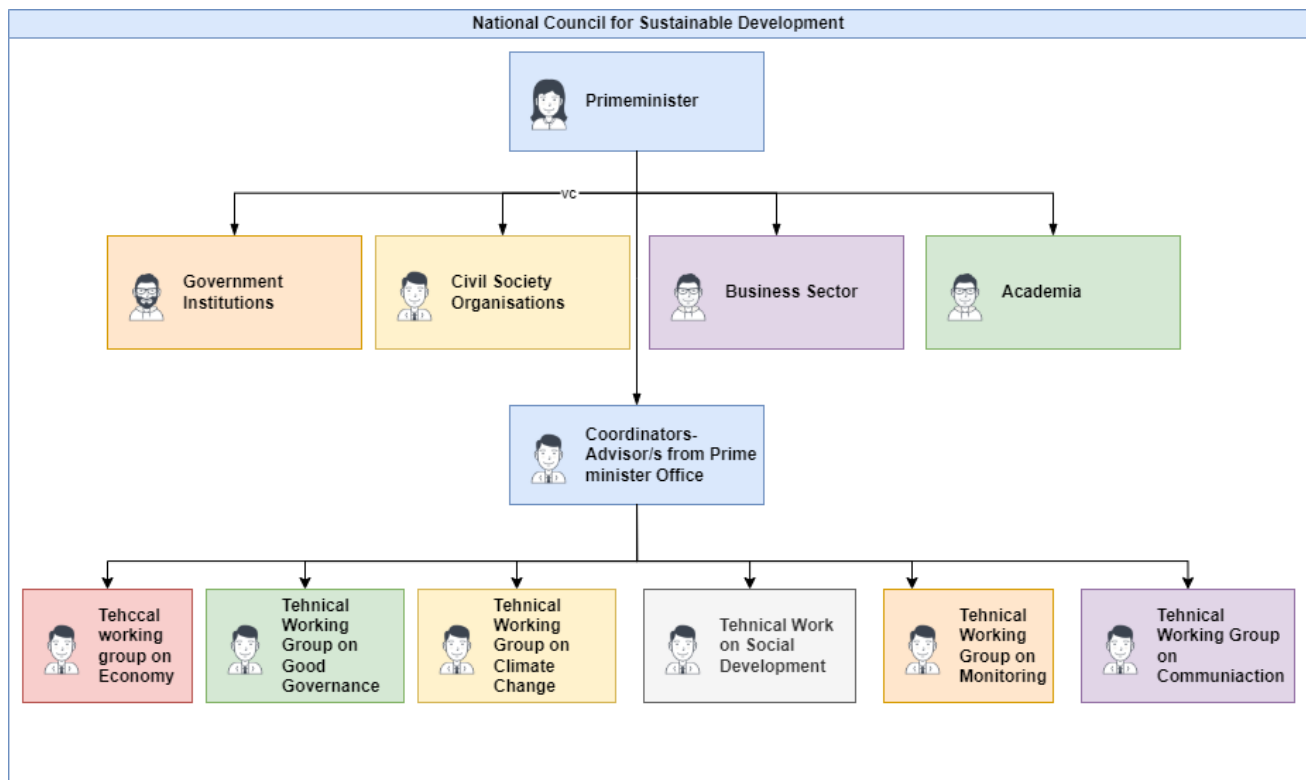
This proposal envisions the **Prime minister** to have the **core mandate** as chair of the Council for Sustainable Development that is the **coordination mechanism**. This proposal envisions amendment on the current Government decision from 2018, and besides the current members it includes Ministry of Interior, the Association of the units of local-self-government, the Civil Society, the Youth Representatives, the UN Youth Ambassador, the Ombudsman Office, the State Audit Office, the National Bank, representatives from UN and other International Organizations.

³³ Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS0 process in Montenegro: EU Accession and the Agenda 2030

³⁴ TPI-the Partnering Initiative, Partnership Platforms for the Sustainable Development Goals, 2020, p.12, p15.

The **technical working group** is coordinated by appointed **Advisor/Advisors from the Prime minister office with SDG focal points from each member institution/organization of the Council.**

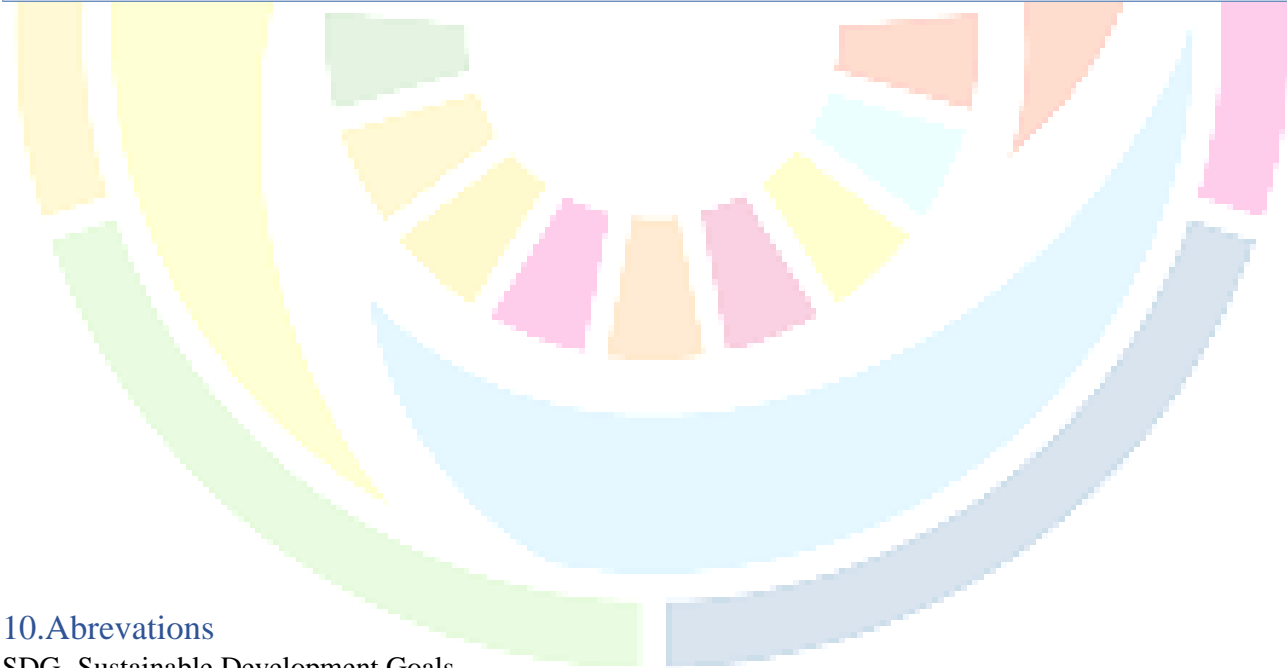
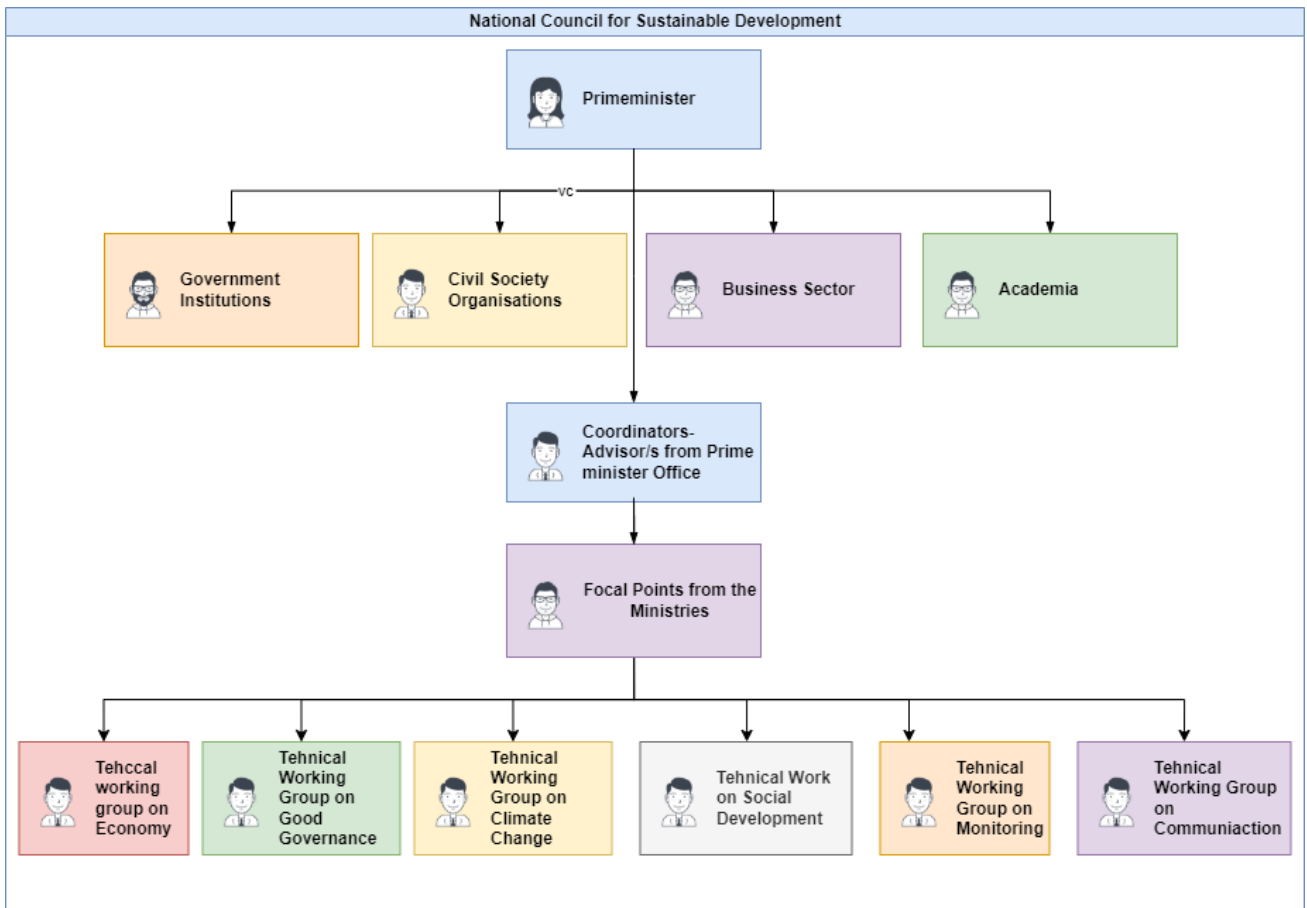
The technical working group is divided on **4 thematic areas** in line with the current United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSCDF) 2021-2025. The working groups include representatives from all the stakeholders that are part of the National Council for Sustainable Development. Additional **subgroup for monitoring and evaluation led by representative from the State Statistical Office** and **subgroup for communication that is chaired by the Communication Advisor by the Prime minister Office.**



2.National Council chaired by the Prime minister with SDG Focal points from the Advisors from the Prime minister Office.

This proposal envisions the **Prime minister** to have the **core mandate** as chair of the Council for Sustainable Development that is the **coordination mechanism**. This proposal envisions amendment on the current Government decision from 2018, and besides the current members it includes Ministry of Interior, the Association of the units of local-self-government, the Civil Society, the Youth Representatives, the UN Youth Ambassador, the Ombudsman Office, the State Audit Office, the National Bank, representatives from UN and other International Organizations.

The technical working group is coordinated by appointed Coordinator from the Advisors from the Prime minister office, this suggestion envisions each of the appointed Special Advisors in the Prime minister Office to act as SDG Focal Points and to have a mandate to call up on meetings and coordinate process related to the SDG that are in charge for, together with the institutions relevant for that SDG. The technical working group is divided on **4 thematic areas** in line with the current United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSCDF) 2021-2025. The working groups include representatives from all the stakeholders that are part of the National Council for Sustainable Development. Additional **subgroup for monitoring and evaluation led by representative from the State Statistical Office** and **subgroup for communication that is chaired by the Communication Advisor by the Prime minister Office.**



10. Abreviations

SDG- Sustainable Development Goals

LNOB-Leave No One Behind

GIZ- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH

ZELS- Local Self-Government Association