

The Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations, is the international community's response to global challenges and trends in relation to sustainable development. With the Sustainable Development Goals at its core, the agenda is a transformative political framework to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development globally. It balances the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including the key issues of governance and peaceful societies, recognising the essential interlinkages between its goals and targets. It must be implemented as a whole and not selectively. The evolution from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals reflects the changing approach to global development. This approach, based on sustainable development and human rights, is fully consistent with EU values and principles. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are key to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. The EU and its Member States are committed to a life of dignity for all that reconciles economic prosperity and efficiency, peaceful societies, social inclusion, and environmental responsibility. In doing so, efforts will be targeted towards eradicating poverty, reducing vulnerabilities, and addressing inequalities to ensure that no one is left behind. By contributing to the achievement of the Agenda, the EU and its Member States will also foster a stronger and more sustainable, inclusive, secure, and prosperous Europe. The EU and its Member States must respond to current global challenges and opportunities. They will implement the Agenda across all internal and external policies in a comprehensive and strategic approach, integrating in a balanced and coherent manner the three dimensions of sustainable development, and addressing the interlinkages between the different sustainable development goals as well as the broader impacts of their domestic actions at international and global levels. A key factor in achieving these common objectives is for the EU to act united. The EU and its Member States, therefore, are committed to working together better. Greater coherence is

required between Member States and EU institutions. The EU and its Member States must be united in diversity, using a variety of experiences and approaches, bearing in mind their respective, comparative advantages. Political dialogue is an important way to advance developmental principles and also has a preventive

dimension, aiming to ensure that EU values are upheld. The EU and its Member States will integrate the respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and gender equality into their political dialogue. This dialogue will be conducted with and beyond partner governments and will be a major platform for

action, where a shared understanding will be promoted; progress will be regularly reviewed; and appropriate supporting measures will be identified. The EU and its Member States value the participation of civil society organisations in development and encourage all aspects of society to be actively engaged. They

recognise the multiple roles that civil society organizations play as promoters of democracy and defenders of rights-holders and of the rule of law, social justice, and human rights. The EU and its Member States will promote civil-society space and enhance their support for building the capacity of civil society

organisations, so as to strengthen their voice in the development process and to advance political, social, and economic dialogue. While acknowledging the Agenda must be implemented as a whole, not selectively, the EU and its Member States will address a range of cross-cutting elements to achieve sustainable

development and accelerate transformation, such as youth, gender equality, mobility and migration, sustainable energy and climate change, investment and trade, good governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, innovative engagement with more advanced developing countries, and mobilising and using domestic

resources. Global demographic growth and demographic shifts, combined with economic, social and environmental changes, offer opportunities for and pose serious challenges to sustainable development. Responding to the educational needs of children and youth is crucial for promoting responsible citizenship,

developing sustainable and prosperous societies, and boosting youth employment. Eradicating poverty, tackling discrimination and inequalities, and leaving no one behind are at the heart of the EU development cooperation policy. Poverty is multidimensional and relates to economic, social, environmental, cultural, and political aspects. The EU and its Member States will pursue an end to hunger and all forms of malnutrition as well as promote universal health coverage, universal access to quality education and training, adequate and sustainable social protection, and decent work for all within a healthy environment.

Progress in these areas will provide a stronger foundation for sustainable development. Undernourishment and malnutrition are major obstacles to development and a lifelong burden, since they cause cognitive deficits, lower the ability of children at school, and lead to poor health and reduced economic

productivity. The EU and its Member States will work to ensure access for all to affordable, safe, sufficient, and nutritious food. They will make coordinated, accelerated, and cross-sectoral efforts to end hunger, increase the capacity for diversified local and regional food production, ensure food security and

nutrition and enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable, particularly in countries facing protracted or recurrent crises. They will continue to invest in the early development of children by addressing all forms of malnutrition, including the stunting and wasting of children, through support for basic services in

health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, and social protection. The EU and its Member States will support the poorest communities in improving access for all to land, food, water, and clean, affordable and sustainable energy, while avoiding any damaging effects on the environment. They will promote policy

initiatives and support partner countries in planning and implementing an integrated approach to concretely address the most relevant interlinkages between land, food, water and energy. The significant increase in water demand and water shortages over the coming decades will lead to major challenges, notably in

terms of adaptation to climate change. Universal access to safe drinking water is critical. Hygiene is a prerequisite for health and well-being as well as growth and productivity. Water resources are also increasingly exposed to environmental degradation, including climate change, threatening agriculture,

and food security. The EU and its Member States will support sustainable and integrated water management as well as more efficient use of water and water recycling, including a more strategic approach to regional development and integration. Health is central to people's lives and is a key element of

equitable and sustainable growth and development, including poverty eradication. The EU and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to protecting and promoting the right of everyone to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, so as to promote human dignity, well-being

and prosperity. They will continue to support partner countries in their efforts to build strong, good-quality, and resilient health systems, by providing equitable access to health services and universal health coverage. For this purpose the EU and its Member States will support developing countries in health

work-force training, recruitment, deployment, and continuous professional development. They will promote research and investment in and development of new health technologies. Ensuring access to quality education for all is a prerequisite for youth employability and long-lasting development. The EU

and its Member States will support inclusive lifelong learning and equitable quality education, particularly during early childhood and primary years. They will also promote education at secondary and tertiary levels, technical and vocational training, and work-based and adult learning, including in emergency and

crisis situations. Special attention will be paid to education and training opportunities for girls and women. The EU and its Member States will intensify their efforts to ensure everyone has the knowledge, skills, capabilities and the rights they need to enjoy a life of dignity, to be fully engaged in society as

responsible and productive adults, and to contribute to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of their communities. Children's needs, rights, and aspirations require attention. Actions with the highest economic and social return include comprehensive early childhood interventions. The EU and

its Member States will intensify their efforts to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children as an important element in fostering a healthy young population able to reach its full potential. They further recognise that every child deserves a peaceful childhood and quality education, including in

emergencies and crisis situations, to avoid the risk of being a lost generation. The EU and its Member States will work with partner countries to improve the protection of children and their participation in decisions that concern them. People with disabilities are often the poorest in their communities. The EU

and its Member States will take into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities in their development cooperation. Creating sufficient good quality jobs for young people will remain a key challenge. Targeted policies and appropriate investment are required to promote young people's rights, to

facilitate their engagement in social, civic, and economic life and to ensure their full contribution to inclusive growth and sustainable development. Young people should also participate in democratic processes and assume leadership roles. Neglecting their education, employment, social, and political needs will

undermine the achievement of the sustainable development goals and leave them vulnerable to crime and radicalisation, particularly in situations of conflict. The EU and its Member States will focus on concrete actions to meet the specific needs of youth, particularly young women and girls, by increasing

quality employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, supported by effective policies in education, vocational training, skills development, and access to digital technologies and services. The aim of this goal is to harness digital innovation capacity and create opportunities to benefit from technological progress. The

EU and its Member States will also aim to strengthen the rights of young people and their empowerment in the conduct of public affairs, by promoting their participation in local economies, societies, and decision-making, notably through youth organisations. Equality between women and men of all ages is

critical for sustainable development. It has a multiplier effect in achieving poverty eradication and is the key to unlocking the development of democratic societies based on human rights, social justice, and sustainability. Furthermore, gender equality is positively correlated with increased prosperity and stability and

better outcomes in areas such as health and education. The EU and its Member States recognise women and girls as key agents of development and change, including their role in peace-building, conflict resolution, and humanitarian response. Many women and girls still continue to be deprived of rights, resources, and

a voice. Gender inequality intersects with other forms of exclusion. Promoting women's and girls' advancement and gender equality requires working with boys, men, girls, and women to foster an understanding of rights, equality, and roles in society. This goal also requires working with key actors in

societies, such as teachers and religious and community leaders, to eradicate discrimination against girls and women. The EU and its Member States will ensure that the gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed across all policies as a key contribution to the successful achievement of the sustainable

development goals. They will accelerate their efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women by deepening multi-stakeholder partnerships, strengthening the capacity for gender-responsive budgeting, planning, and ensuring the active participation of women and women's organisations in

decision-making. Culture is both an enabler and an important component of development and may facilitate social inclusion, freedom of expression, identity-building, civil empowerment, and conflict prevention while strengthening economic growth. Emphasising the EU is guided by the universality, indivisibility,

interrelatedness and interdependence of all human rights, the EU and its Member States will promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation and cultural diversity, and will protect cultural heritage, boost the cultural and creative industries and will support cultural policies where these would help achieve

sustainable development, while taking local circumstances into account. The EU and its Member States will act to reduce inequality of outcomes and promote equal opportunities for all. By doing so, they will directly assist the poorest and most vulnerable sections of society and will also help to promote

more inclusive, sustainable growth that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Economic growth is lasting and more beneficial to the poorest when it is inclusive. To combat inequality, the EU and its Member States will also support efficient, sustainable, and equitable social

protection systems to guarantee basic income, prevent relapses into extreme poverty, and build resilience. They will assess the determinants of and trends in economic and social inequalities and will strengthen their tools and approaches to make them more effective in addressing inequality. The EU and its Member States

will mainstream the reduction of inequality in their development cooperation and support innovative social practices. The EU and its Member States will strengthen resilience, particularly of vulnerable populations, in the face of environmental and economic shocks, natural and man-made disasters, conflicts and global

threats to health. Well-managed migration and mobility can make positive contributions to inclusive growth and sustainable development. Regular migration and mobility can bring benefits through the transfer of knowledge, skills, and productive capacity to migrants themselves, their families, and the countries of

origin and destination. At the same time, irregular migration can raise major challenges and impact negatively on the countries of origin, transit, and destination. Migration has become an ever more pressing issue for both developing and developed countries. In some situations, migrant populations are being denied human

rights and access to health and education and risk becoming victims of forced labour and human trafficking. Strengthened engagement will help facilitate the safe, orderly, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

Addressing migration cuts across many policy areas, including development, good governance, security, human rights, employment, health, education, agriculture, food security, social protection, and environment, including climate change. The EU and its Member States will take a more coordinated, holistic, and structured

approach to migration, maximising the synergies and applying the necessary leverage by using all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools, including development and trade. Through development policy, the EU and its Member States will address the root causes of irregular migration and will, inter alia, contribute to the

sustainable integration of migrants in host countries and host communities and help ensure the successful socioeconomic integration of returning migrants in their countries of origin or transit. This process will include promoting investment, trade, and innovation in partner countries to boost growth and

employment opportunities. The EU and its Member States will step up efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and promote better management of migration in partner countries in all its aspects. They will consolidate migration as a key part of EU foreign-policy dialogue, including

elaboration of tailor-made responses and strengthened partnerships in a transparent and democratic manner. The EU and its Member States will promote the dignity and resilience of long-term forcibly displaced persons and their inclusion in the economic and social life of host countries and host communities,

recognising that displaced persons' capabilities are a vital, portable asset, essential for their resilience and for rebuilding their lives, as well as a contribution to their host communities. The EU and its Member States will apply a rights-based approach, paying special attention to women, accompanied and unaccompanied

minors, and highly vulnerable persons. They will protect longer term social structures, integrating persons in protracted displacement into wider development planning, including access to education and decent jobs. Human well-being and resilient societies depend on a healthy environment and functioning

ecosystems. Environmental degradation, climate change, extreme weather, and natural or man-made disasters can offset development gains and economic progress, especially for the poor. This situation can increase vulnerabilities and needs, jeopardise peace and stability and cause large-scale migration. In addition

to dedicated actions, environmental considerations need to be integrated across all sectors of development cooperation, including preventive action. The EU and its Member States will promote resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production, including the sustainable management of chemicals

and waste, with a view to decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation and enabling the transition to a circular economy. A responsible private sector and the systematic application of the 'polluter pays' principle will also be critical to success. They will help to build the capacity to

mainstream environmental sustainability, climate-change objectives, and the pursuit of green growth into national and local developmental strategies. They will also make better use of science, technology, and innovation to promote environmental sustainability and will promote the use by partners of the

comprehensive data and information available through European and international Earth observation programmes to support evidence-based decisions that take into account the state of the environment. The EU and its Member States will support the conservation and sustainable management and use of natural

resources and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems, including forests, oceans, coastal areas, river basins, and other ecosystems, for the provision of ecosystem services. In line with international commitments, they will tackle illegal logging and its associated trade, land, and

forest degradation, drought, and biodiversity loss. They will promote co-benefits from sustainable management, including enhancing climate resilience and adaptation. They will enhance the integration of sustainability in all cooperation sectors and raise the profile of environmental issues in dialogues with their

partners. The EU and its Member States will promote the use of natural capital accounting. They will support better governance and capacity building for the sustainable management of natural resources, including the prevention of illegal exploitation of forests. They will also promote the involvement of local

stakeholders and respect for the rights of all, including indigenous peoples and local communities. To achieve healthy and productive oceans, they will promote the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, the sustainable management of ocean resources and sustainable fisheries, including improved

ocean governance and the development of the blue economy. The EU and its Member States will integrate environment and climate change throughout their development cooperation strategies, by promoting a sound balance between mitigation and adaptation. They will contribute to the emergence of local climate champions and

actively disseminate and scale up best-practice projects, by supporting multi-stakeholder platforms. Energy is a critically important development enabler and is central to solutions for a sustainable planet. Developing countries need energy to promote inclusive growth and further improve their standards of living.

Investment in sustainable energy can ensure and increase access to clean water, clean cooking, education and health care, and can also create jobs and support local businesses in an environmentally friendly manner. The EU and its Member States will pursue three interlinked key objectives: addressing the lack

of energy access, increasing energy efficiency, and renewable energy generation to achieve a sustainable balance between energy. The EU and its Member States will address energy poverty by contributing universal access to energy services that are affordable, modern, reliable, and sustainable, with a strong

focus on renewable energy and energy efficiency. Clean and renewable energy can be provided through community-led, off-grid or mini-grid solutions, enabling access to energy in rural locations. The EU and its Member States will also promote the phasing-out of environmentally harmful fossil fuel subsidies,

stable and transparent energy markets, the deployment of smart grids, and the use of digital technologies for sustainable energy management. This enhanced strategy will go hand in hand with continued EU action consistent with its global leadership in tackling climate change and supporting third-world countries

to tackle climate change and transition into low-emission, climate-resilient economies. The scale of financial investment needed to bring about universal access to safe and clean-energy services requires the engagement of many actors. The EU and its Member States will increase their cooperation with all relevant

stakeholders, including the private sector, on energy-demand management, energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, and clean technology development and transfer. They will support the improvement of regulatory frameworks that are conducive to a competitive and sustainable energy sector and to leveraging

private financing. They will raise additional funds from the private sector as well as from financing initiatives and instruments. Supporting Africa and the EU's neighbourhood in this energy transition will be a part of the enabling framework for the EU's Energy Union. Creating decent jobs, particularly for

women and youth, is essential for inclusive and sustainable growth. Shared prosperity and growth are key contributors to human welfare and dignity. Inclusive, sustainable growth builds long-term resilience in partner countries by creating opportunities for vulnerable population groups and those most at

risk to participate in, and benefit from wealth and the creation of decent jobs. The EU and its Member States will promote an economic transformation that creates decent jobs, increases productive capacity, generates sufficient revenues for public services and social protection, and fosters sustainable value

chains and diversification, including sustainable industrialisation. This program includes promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns in a circular economy, including the promotion of non-toxic material cycles, resource efficiency, and the transformation to low-emission and

climate-resilient pathways. Sustainable public and private investment is a vital driver of sustainable development. It helps to diversify economies, foster growth and decent jobs, deliver innovative products and services, link developing countries' economies to regional and global value chains, promote regional

integration and trade, and meet social needs. The EU and its Member States will take action to boost investment by combining funding for sustainable development, technical assistance to develop sustainable projects and attract investors as well as measures to help improve economic governance and business

environments, fight corruption, and interact with the private sector. The EU and its Member States will also contribute to scaling-up private and public investments in the low-emission, climate-resilient, green economy. One key channel for such actions will be the European External Investment Plan, which will

include guarantees to lower the risk profile of investments in developing countries and thus leverage additional finance, particularly from the private sector. It will contribute to the attainment of the sustainable development goals, thus helping to tackle the root causes of irregular migration. The European Union

will also continue, through its trade policy, to ensure that developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, reap the benefits of inclusive growth and sustainable development from enhanced participation in regional integration and in the multilateral trading system. The EU and its Member States will

help create a more business friendly environment in developing countries that respects international human rights' standards and principles. They will contribute to improving conditions for inclusive economic activity by promoting more sustainable policies and regulatory frameworks, human rights, including core

labour standards and due-diligence requirements, more conducive business environments, new business models, and greater government capacity. They will promote broad access to financial and micro-financial services, for women, for the poor, and for micro-small and medium enterprises. They will also promote

private sector initiatives and social enterprises, cooperatives, and women and youth entrepreneurs, to boost the provision of local services as well as inclusive and green business models. They will promote sustainable and transparent public procurement to support sustainable development and facilitate micro-small and

medium enterprises access to public procurement. Public sector investment in research and innovation and cooperation in science and technology can also help unlock private-sector investment and drive inclusive sustainable growth in developing countries. The EU and its Member States will promote and facilitate trade

and investment in developing countries in support of sustainable development. The EU will continue to promote trade and regional integration as key drivers of growth and poverty reduction in developing countries. Through the implementation of the trade-for-all strategy, the EU and its Member States will

support their trading partners, including economic partnership agreements to integrate sustainable development at all levels of trade policy. In line with policy coherence for development commitments, development support will be used where appropriate to ensure the provisions in trade agreements relating to trade

and sustainable development are implemented and used effectively. The EU and its Member States will promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and help developing countries adopt growth models that take into account resource scarcity and climate-change action. This plan includes promoting sustainable

value chains and environmental and social standards. The private sector can contribute to the implementation of the Agenda. The EU and its Member States, in close cooperation with the European Investment Bank, will promote the mobilisation of private resources for development, whilst also promoting private sector

accountability, in areas with significant transformation potential for sustainable development. This program includes sustainable agriculture, safe and clean energy, integrated water resource management, resilient infrastructure, health, sustainable tourism, a green and circular economy,

telecommunications and digital technology. The EU and its Member States will work with the private sector, including employers' and workers' organisations, to promote responsible, sustainable, and effective approaches, including social dialogue. Internationally agreed-upon human rights standards` and

commitments on sustainable development, transparency and corporate social responsibility need to be built into business models, including public-private partnerships and blending, through a range of means, such as the sharing of best practices. This plan includes ensuring the sustainable management and the

use of natural resources, such as minerals and timber. The EU and its Member States will continue to support responsible business practices and responsible management of supply chains, respecting tenure rights and integrating human and labour rights, financial probity and environmental standards and accessibility. They will

work to prevent human rights abuses and promote the United Nations` Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. They will promote labour standards that ensure decent employment conditions and decent wages for workers, in particular those defined by the International Labour Organisation, both in the

normal and informal sectors, including supporting the transition from the informal to the formal economy and by combating child labour.