



SDGS  
FOR  
ALL

NEWSLETTER •  
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## THE 2030 AGENDA IN THE FOCUS: SERBIA'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PATH

The society-wide dialogue Platform “SDGs for All” held its third annual conference under the title **The 2030 Agenda in the Focus: Serbia’s Sustainable Development Path**, on November 15th at the Mona Plaza Hotel in Belgrade. The conference presented key achievements of the dialogue, challenges faced by the Platform, and ways to further align Serbia’s development policies with the goals and principles of sustainable development. Through discussions involving relevant stakeholders and decision-makers at the national and local levels, the conference identified the best directions and models for aligning Serbia’s development priorities with the 2030 Agenda goals for its continued path towards sustainability.



*“At today’s conference, we highlighted the key goals and imperatives of our country’s sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda provides clear guidelines, encompassing 17 sustainable development goals, and our commitment to these global goals is reflected through inclusive growth, preservation of natural resources, and care for all citizens,”* stated **Ivana Vukašinović, Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Science, Technological Development, and Innovation**, who opened the conference. She emphasized that science is crucial in achieving these goals by providing innovations and solutions to complex challenges: *“Through the joint efforts of researchers, policy makers and the private sector, we want to actively shape a sustainable future, and today’s panel discussions explore the effective use of scientific achievements, which are a necessary tool for achieving the sustainable development goals.”*

*“The recent decision of the Government of Serbia to start working on the Development Plan of the Republic of Serbia is a significant step forward, and we sincerely support it. This document is expected to shape the development orientation of Serbia. Simultaneously, it is an exceptional opportunity to more fully integrate the 2030 Agenda, which Serbia signed in 2015, into the strategic framework of the Republic of Serbia. As it is comprehensive in nature, the Development Plan offers the opportunity to systematically integrate the most relevant sustainable development goals, reflecting the needs and priorities of Serbian society and the economy as a whole,”* stated **Melina Papageorgiou, Head of the Good Governance Department at the Embassy of Switzerland in Serbia**.





**Milena Altmeyer, the project leader of “Public Finance Reform – Agenda 2030” Project**, implemented by GIZ, highlighted that the “SDGs for All” Platform has taken significant steps in aligning development policies with sustainable development goals over the years, engaging and connecting civil society and all interested stakeholders, including decision-makers at both national and local levels. She also emphasized the important role of the corporate sector in adopting responsible practices and advocating for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues on the path to sustainable development.

She concluded that the success of the Platform’s efforts requires a strong democratic system that supports social activism and affirms the diverse needs and aspirations of society, vital for inclusive public debate on sustainable development.

*“The year 2030 is approaching, and we have many challenges to overcome. As a foundation, we are fully committed to reducing poverty, working to support education, economic empowerment of women and vulnerable groups, and reducing inequality. That’s why we became part of the Platform because only through synergy and collaboration can we achieve some of the set goals. It is important to bring the concept of sustainable development goals closer to citizens, or to show how it contributes to improving life in communities,”* said **Ana Koshall, director of the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation**, who leads the Platform’s Social Pillar.



Over the past year, the Platform has initiated significant advocacy initiatives at the national level across all three pillars, involved 20 municipalities in its activities through inter-municipal exchanges and collaboration, and published its third **Monitoring Report**, comprehensively and independently monitoring the implementation of sustainable development goals.

Representatives from the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, the Ministry of European Integration, the Public Policy Secretariat,

the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, regional development agencies, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SKGO), the Swiss Embassy, GIZ, UNDP, the National Convention on the European Union, and companies Coca-Cola HBC and Delta Holding also attended the conference and took an active part at various panels.



# “SERBIA 2030: MANY CHALLENGES, LITTLE TIME: IS SERBIA SET ON ITS DEVELOPMENT PATH?” – REPORT PUBLISHED

At the conference held on November 15, the third consecutive report “Serbia 2030 – Many Challenges, Little Time: Is Serbia Set on its Development Path?” was presented. The report aims to provide the most important social actors, such as civil society, the business sector, the academic and research community, professional associations, the media, and citizens, with a space for broad social dialogue on the harmonization of Serbia’s development priorities with the goals contained in the 2030 Agenda



for Sustainable Development, as it provides a comprehensive overview of our country’s progress in achieving the desired sustainability. The 2030 Agenda was adopted in 2015, and is based on three main pillars: eradicating poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring prosperity for everyone.

The report is structured according to eight priority units identified in the report “Serbia 2030: development priorities – non-state sector report”, which was published in 2020. Within each priority unit, an assessment of progress in certain priority sub-goals was made, as well as changes in the strategic, legislative and institutional framework for the implementation of individual sustainable development goals.

***International reports show that Serbia has shown slight progress towards the fulfillment of six SDGs, and is on the way to achieving four. The most problematic situation was assessed for Goal 13 - Climate action, where Serbia is falling behind.***

Another new segment in the report is the compliance analysis of the Economic Reform Programme 2023-2025.

According to international reports, the Republic of Serbia has shown slight progress towards the fulfillment of six sustainable development goals, and is on the way to achieving four. The most problematic situation was assessed for Goal 13 – Climate action, in the realization of which Serbia is falling behind. This indicates that it is necessary to make additional efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, which primarily entails setting the sustainable development goals in the national context, by adopting the Development Plan of the Republic of Serbia.

At the conference it was again stressed that the problems in the implementation of laws and strategies are caused by the lack of capacities, especially at the local level, with lack of finances being another prominent issue. One of the essential prerequisites for contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development goals is the partnership between civil society organizations and public authorities, as without relevant data there is no meaningful decision-making process or public policies design, implementation and evaluation.

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN THE LIGHT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Panel discussion “Economic empowerment of women in the light of sustainable development – integrating a gender perspective into local economic development planning” was organised by Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation on 10 October in Novi Sad with the aim of establishing cooperation between municipalities for better planning of measures that will contribute to equal inclusion of men and women in the labor market and equal opportunities.



It was pointed out that according to the latest Gender Equality Index, Serbia shows poor progress despite the legal and strategic framework and that it is important to continue monitoring the implementation of the Gender Equality Law, and work on harmonizing other planning documents with gender equality plans. It is important to increase the efficiency of regional institutions like local economic councils. When it comes to inter-municipal cooperation, it is necessary to strengthen both this segment and inter-municipal service planning.

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## ADVOCACY INITIATIVE FOR CLARIFYING THE CONCEPT OF SINGLE PARENTS



Although the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia guarantees special protection to single parents, available data on the socio-economic position of single-parent families show that they are in a significantly less favorable position than two parent households. This raises the need to expand the definition of single parents within the national legal system, and include the category of parents who take care of children alone or mostly alone, as well as to develop measures to improve the position of this category of the population, concluded the participants of the Expert Thematic Group “Eradication of Poverty” meeting organized by The Center for Democracy Foundation.

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## CSR/ESG FORUM HELD IN BELGRADE



The responsibility for embracing all vulnerable groups in society lies with stakeholders across all sectors, but the role of companies and the business sector in this domain is invaluable, as highlighted in the CSR & ESG Forum. The event was held on December 12th and was dedicated to corporate sustainability and responsibility, and the integration of environmental, social, and governance criteria into business and investment decisions. It brought together experts in sustainable development and socially responsible business who presented current solutions and trends.

For the first time, the Responsible Business Forum and Smart kolektiv presented the Award for the Most Inclusive Employer to companies dedicated to creating a work environment where all employees have equal opportunities for advancement and feel included and accepted in all spheres of work. The event also saw the presentation of the “Champions of Sustainability”, aiming to highlight projects that directly contribute to achieving the SDGs. The main panel of the event, dedicated to the theme of diversity and inclusion, deepened the dialogue on the strategic approach to nurturing the principles of inclusion, diversity, and equality, as well as their implementation in business strategies. The panel brought together representatives from different sectors who discussed this topic from various perspectives.

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## SME100 EXPO 2023: PEOPLE ARE SUCCESS HELD IN NIŠ

Within the framework of the “SDGs for all” Platform, and in the context of achieving the sustainable development goals set by the 2030 Agenda, for over two years CEVES has been conducting a dialogue with key Serbian entrepreneurs on the needs of the development of the Serbian economy, in order to identify and launch initiatives that will contribute to the realization of this vision.

In this way, CEVES strongly contributes to the promotion of the role that leading Serbian SMEs can and should play for the sustainable development of Serbia. In order to support the further strong development of the SME sector, which has the potential to grow even faster and contribute to the sustainable development of Serbia in the next decade, CEVES pointed out the challenges faced by this sector and proposed appropriate institutional solutions. As part of these efforts, the SME100 Expo initiative was launched, within which the conference SME100 Expo: People are success was held in the Niš Science and Technology Park on November 9.

The second SME100 Expo brought together more than 100 leading domestic small and medium-sized enterprises and more than 300 participants, including representatives of state institutions, business associations, the international community, the professional public and the local community.

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## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – OUR COMMON FUTURE

An inter-municipal roundtable for the exchange of knowledge and experiences among local government units was organized on October 4, 2023, in Leskovac. This event brought together representatives from cities and municipalities in the southeastern region of Serbia. Among the attendees were representatives from 11 cities and municipalities, including Gadžin Han, Merošina, Ražanj, Svrlijig, Niš, Surdulica, Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Leskovac, Lebane, Vlasotince, and Pirot.

The goal of this gathering was to facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences in implementing the principles and objectives of sustainable development as defined in the 2030 Agenda, particularly in the creation of local policies essential for the daily lives of the citizens. Roundtable participants emphasized the crucial importance of planning at the local and republic levels. The panelists highlighted the need for greater collaboration with the civil sector in planning and monitoring the implementation of local plans, along with the pronounced problem of the lack of mechanisms for data collection and the mismatch between mid-term plans and program budgets.

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## NEW PORTABLE EU SDG PROFILE CREATOR



The application EU SDG Profile Creator uses Eurostat database feature to access database directly, through the web services that Eurostat offers free of charge to end users. Within the application users can select among one of three Eurostat database languages, SDG set year, indicators, countries (and or institutions), time period(s), and the language to translate the report to. The report (EU SDG profile) is created quickly in one of the selected languages: English, French, German (offered by Eurostat) or translated into Serbian (Cyrillic or Latin script).

The report is based on whole set of existing EU SDG data in Eurostat database.

The report itself is a comprehensive excel document that contains detailed tables, charts and descriptions (short indicators metadata), and each SDG indicator is presented on separate tab. The application is flexible enough to select between many different parameters, in order to get automatically customized final produced report. If needed, the created tables and charts can be further easily customized and then used in other reports and presentations, like Word, PowerPoint etc.

The potential users are all those that need to compare and analyse, in an easy and intuitive way, the EU SDG indicators between different countries and over the time.

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# ESG/SDG BAROMETAR

— BIZNIS NA PUTU ODRŽIVOSTI

2. izdanje  
2023.

The second edition of the ESG/SDG Barometer was published in September 2023 by Smart kolektiv. This informative publication is intended for key decision-makers in business organizations as a valuable resource for managing the changes brought about by the global sustainability wave. In addition, the publication addresses business attitudes and provides a set of recommendations to other relevant partners.

The ESG/SDG Barometer is the result of a detailed analysis of global trends and research on the attitudes of representatives of the local business community. It's available in the Serbian language only.

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