



Cross-sectoral Coalition for Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

LAPAS Proposals for Establishment of a Coalition

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Context:

Since 2013, the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation (LAPAS) in cooperation with different partners has been implementing activities related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- defending interests by following the implementation of the SDGs and drawing up proposals;
- informing society by organising information campaigns and activities, developing methodological and informative materials;
- transfer of Latvia's experience abroad by giving presentations at international events and leading thematic training, developing international projects;
- promoting the responsibility of different groups through compiling, publishing and internationally disseminating examples of good practice - business, NGO and municipal initiatives to implement SDGs.

During these years, there has been a positive ongoing cooperation with the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre (CSCC), the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Central Statistical Bureau, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, the National Library of Latvia, the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, universities, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, youth centres, academics. Also, many members of LAPAS - Green Liberty, Education Initiative Centre, CSR Latvia and others organise activities to implement SDGs.

LAPAS, together with its partners, have implemented hundreds of events in which broad and diverse target groups have gained insight into the SDGs - schoolchildren, youngsters, entrepreneurs, social workers, municipal workers and others.

The contribution of Latvia and LAPAS in promoting the implementation of SDGs has also been internationally welcomed.

At the same time, the following challenges persist:

- there are no standing communication mechanisms to encourage all parties to cooperate in the implementation of the SDGs – this is mostly “from event to event” operation, therefore many organisations and institutions cannot take advantage of different opportunities, they simply do not find out about them or learn too late;
- it is a fragmented approach to the SDGs implementation as each institution operates in its own field, driving “own” objectives, hereby losing the overall balanced view as well as possibility of introducing systemic changes - the real essence of the SDGs;
- a number of initiatives and policy activities in the field of SDGs have been put forward at a global level, but it is necessary to allocate sufficient resources at the national level to tracking and implementation of activities and mobilising additional resources;
- many positive examples can be listed to show the introduction of SDGs in Latvia, but promotion of them internationally requires deliberate action;
- there are no formal cross-sectoral working groups, coalitions or other mechanisms in Latvia to promote targeted and focused development as well as monitoring of implementation in this area.

During the UN General Assembly, a side event on strengthening national coalitions and analogue cross-sectoral institutions was organised with representatives from Germany, Finland, Spain **emphasising the importance of setting up such institutions.**

An international network for national councils on sustainable development has also been established with 55 countries registered including Lithuania and Estonia.

In Latvia, the functions of the Sustainable Development Council were integrated into the National Development Council, which complies with the principles of good governance and policy coordination approach. However, since 2007, when the last protocols of the Sustainable Development Council were dated, systemic and substantive changes have also taken place in national development planning. ***As LAPAS have already highlighted in the NGO's Complementary Report on the introduction of SDGs, currently:***

- The National Development Council is ineffective, since its activities have been reduced to technical co-ordination of the National Development Plan (NDP) rather than discussions on development of the country. At the same time, such discussions are going on at the National Tripartite Co-operation Council including a very broad range of topics and institutionalising a narrow paradigm of economic development;
- there is a very high volume of political decision-making in the field of implementation of the NDP, therefore continued monitoring for the achievement of policy results in cross-sectoral context is very important;
- the Saeima Sustainable Development Committee has low involvement in the monitoring of the NDP, supervision is carried out on fragmentary issues and those which are priority for the Committee, not on substance;
- CSCC is responsible for integration of SDGs, but crosssectoral cooperation is informal, it is led by the institution itself, with the choice, for example, of organisations to be included in the working groups for NDP development.

In autumn 2018, LAPAS conducted a survey on the establishment of a coalition of SDGs with stakeholders participating in SDGs activities and received support for this idea.

On 31 October 2019, the Cross-sectoral Coalition for Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals was launched with participation of representatives from universities, educational institutions, private, public and non-governmental sectors, young people and experts. During this event establishment of the Coalition was supported and its activities were discussed.

Information on the introduction of SDGs in Latvia:

- The Report of Latvia to the UN, July 2018: <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/lv/LV-zinojums-ANO>
- Annex of LAPAS to the report of Latvia to the UN: <http://lapas.lv/lv/musu-darbi/aktualie-projekti/iam-projekts/>
- Examples of good practice - LAPAS Material on the introduction of SDGs in Latvia (in English): http://lapas.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Annex_10.pdf
- Examples of good practice: LAPAS Summary on how NGOs, public administration and businesses implement SDGs - three stories for each objective <http://lapas.lv/lv/globalie-merki/>