Voluntary Subnational Review

LOCALISING THE SDGs IN SWEDEN

Swedish Association
of Local Authorities
and Regions

Voluntary Subnational Review

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Preface

When the countries of the world adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, they agreed to a plan of action towards a more sustainable society. It is about ending poverty and hunger and about protecting the planet by, for instance, managing natural resources sustainably and taking acute measures to address climate change. It is also about fostering fair, peaceful and inclusive communities – free from fear and violence.

National governments are not alone in contributing to the realisation of the SDGs. All countries have regional and/or local authorities that are key actors in the transition to a more sustainable society. The solutions to the world's challenges are global and national, but they are also regional and local. To attain the SDGs, all levels of society must contribute. This is why the initiative taken by the United Cities and Local Governments in raising the importance of the local and regional level is so important. Voluntary reviews of the implementation of the SDGs highlighting the subnational level – municipalities, regions and cities – can broaden perspectives, and make the solutions more widely available.

Sweden has a decentralised welfare model in which regions and municipalities have a broad mission founded on strong local self-government. Sweden also has a long tradition of good relations between the State, regions and municipalities, as well as a well-developed structure of government agencies, who produce reliable statistics in many areas. This creates good conditions for working towards sustainable development, in Sweden and abroad.

Stockholm, June 2021

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Chair

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Summary

Localising the SDGs in Sweden

Sweden has a decentralised welfare model in which its 290 municipalities and 21 regions have a broad mission. There is a long tradition and extensive experience of local responsibility and decision-making. The model of local self-governance means that municipalities and regions have great freedom of action in carrying out their missions, coupled with great responsibility.

Municipalities and regions are important actors in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. First, their welfare provision mission is in line with the intentions of the SDGs. Second, municipalities and regions are important in the transition to a more sustainable society as democratic actors, builders of society, producers of welfare services and employers. This gives them an opportunity and a responsibility to work for sustainable development in line with the intentions of the Agenda.

Extensive work in municipalities and regions

Work on transitioning to sustainable development is having an ever greater impact in Swedish municipalities and regions. Extensive work is under way and their expertise in sustainability matters has risen. There are municipalities that have taken great steps in their endeavour to adjust their goals and work processes. Rapid progress is being made. It is positive that some municipalities and regions are able to take a lead and can show others the way, both in Sweden and abroad.

SALAR's support to its members for the implementation of the SDGs includes *Glocal Sweden – the 2030 Agenda in municipalities and regions,* a communication and training project supported by Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. This project has been of great importance for the implementation of the SDGs in municipalities and regions in Sweden. More than half of the municipalities and almost all of the regions are involved in the project, which is described in more detail further on in this report.

SALAR is also working with a focus on governance and leadership, including the use of key figures to measure effects and developments. One important part of this is the selection of indicators developed by RKA, the Council for the promotion of local government analyses, which is described in a separate section of this report. It is also important to support municipalities and regions in integrating work on sustainable development and the SDGs in their regular governance.

Moreover, SALAR is working on various initiatives alongside its members so as to promote sustainable development in their roles as democracy actors, builders of society, producers of welfare services and employers. A selection of these are presented in an annex to this report.

The importance of building a resilient society

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted many challenges and has shown us that an unequal distribution of good health in the population risks weakening our society. The fact that mortality in Sweden linked to COVID-19 has been more than ten times higher in certain areas and groups of people compared with the rest of the population shows the differences in the impact of the pandemic. The underlying causes are the same as the causes behind health inequalities, which were highlighted by Statistics Sweden in a situation report in 2019 as one of Sweden's challenges in reaching the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Municipalities and regions play important roles in the recovery after the pandemic and in the transition needed to a more sustainable society. Local self-government makes it possible to adapt this work to each local context and to the specific needs, strengths and weaknesses there.

Collaboration at local, regional, national and global level

The work of transitioning to a sustainable future requires municipalities and regions to interact with external actors and to collaborate and make common cause with others in moving in the desired direction. Municipalities and regions have long cooperated in networks to devise solutions to complex problems. With common resources and expertise, both the formulation of problems and the solutions can be improved. Collaboration involving citizens strengthens local democracy. Moreover, citizens who feel more involved take more responsibility for the development of society. Collaboration has to be part of the regular work of a municipality and region. This creates resilience in society and builds preparedness for new crises.

Sweden's municipalities and regions can also contribute by developing their international cooperation, including municipal partnerships for mutual learning, not least about how we can increase the resilience of society ahead of future crises.

The local and regional level is closest to citizens and plays a decisive role in the creation of sustainable societies. SALAR values UCLG's initiative of highlighting local and regional efforts in its reporting to the UN and looks forward to continuing to contribute to international cooperation concerning sustainable development at local and regional level.

Introduction

This is SALAR

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) is a member and employer organisation for all municipalities and regions in Sweden. By providing knowledge, advice and service, we strengthen municipalities and regions in their mission of developing welfare services for all citizens. SALAR aims to take the initiative, along with municipalities and regions, in creating the conditions for sustainable welfare provision and development throughout the country.

SALAR's support to its members for the implementation of the SDGs includes *Glocal Sweden – the 2030 Agenda in municipalities and regions*, a communication and training project supported by the Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. SALAR also works with a focus on governance and leadership, including the use of indicators to measure effects and developments. Moreover, SALAR is working on various initiatives along with its members to promote sustainable development in their roles as democracy actors, builders of society, producers of welfare services and employers.

About Swedish municipalities and regions

Sweden has a decentralised model in which its 290 municipalities and 21 regions have a broad mission. There is a long tradition of local responsibility and decision-making. The model of local self-governance means that municipalities and regions have great freedom of action in carrying out their missions, coupled with great responsibility.[1]

The responsibilities of the municipalities include social care, including care of older people, preschool, compulsory school and upper secondary school, urban and regional planning, environmental and public health protection, water supply, sewerage and waste management, rescue services, crisis preparedness and civil defence, housing, energy, library, recreation and culture services, and business sector development.

The regions are responsible for tasks common to large geographical areas. They include health care, dental care, culture, public transport, tourism and strengthening regional growth and development.

Not. 1.   The Instrument of Government (1974:152) states that the local authorities are responsible for local and regional matters of public interest on the principle of local self-government. The Local Government Act (2017:725) states that municipalities and regions may themselves attend to matters of general concern that are connected with the area of the municipality or region or with their members.

Municipalities and regions finance their activities via taxes, user charges and government grants. Compared with other EU countries, taxes account for a considerable share of their financing. Taxes are levied as a percentage of residents' income. Municipalities and regions decide their own tax rates, and the average total local tax rate is 30 %.[2]

Taken together, municipalities and regions are the largest employer in Sweden. Around 1.2 million people work for municipalities and regions in various forms of employment. This constitutes a quarter of all gainfully employed people in Sweden.

Background to this report

The 2030 Agenda was adopted by the UN in September 2015. One part of its implementation is annual follow-ups to the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF), intended to shed light on how the countries of the world are succeeding in implementing the Agenda and the sustainable development goals. On each occasion a number of countries submit a Voluntary National Review (VNR). In 2021, Sweden is set to submit a VNR. The last time Sweden presented a VNR was in 2017.[3]

In conjunction with the national reviews, it has become increasingly common for municipalities or regions to submit their own reviews to the UN to supplement the national level, in a Voluntary Local Review (VLR). This year four Swedish municipalities – Helsingborg, Malmö, Stockholm, and Uppsala – are submitting a VLR.

In recent years SALAR's global umbrella organisation United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has submitted several reports bringing together the perspectives of local and regional authorities in conjunction with the HLPF.[4] In 2020, UCLG conducted a pilot project in which Local Government Associations (LGA:s) in six countries[5] submitted a new form of report called a Voluntary Subnational Review (VSR). The purpose of a VSR is to supplement and strengthen the link between the local and national level, and ultimately to strengthen horizontal and vertical collaboration concerning the implementation of the SDGs. The report also highlights the work being done by LGA:s around the world. In 2021 LGA:s in eight countries[6] are producing a VSR, among them Sweden and SALAR through this report.

VSR method and work process

The VSR represents a country-wide, bottom-up reporting process on the localisation of SDGs. It is the result of an ongoing multi-level dialogue, in Sweden and abroad.

Based on the HLPF 2021 global theme – *Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic*[7] – the report is structured to reflect the areas highlighted by UCLG as being particularly important: conditions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at local and regional level; a status report on implementation and the use of indicators; and statistics for follow-ups.

The report is supplemented by two annexes. The first presents a selection of initiatives that SALAR is implementing along with its members to establish sustainable development throughout the country. The second annex consists of the summaries from the four Swedish Voluntary Local Reviews.

Not. 2. The municipal tax rate is around 20% and the regional tax rate is around 10 %.
Not. 3. Sweden and the 2030 Agenda 2017 (VNR 2017).
Not. 4. Localizing the SDGs: a boost to monitoring & reporting https://www.gold.uclg.org/report/localizing-sdgs-boost-monitoring-reporting
Not. 5. Benin, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Kenya, Mozambique and Nepal.
Not. 6. Cabo Verde, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Tunisia, Germany, Zimbabwe and Sweden.
Not. 7. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26932A_RES_74_298.pdf

Localising the SDGs in Sweden

Municipalities and regions are key actors

Municipalities and regions are important actors in the implementation of the SDGs. First, their welfare provision mission is in line with the intentions of the global goals. Second, municipalities and regions are important in the transition to a more sustainable society as democratic actors, builders of society, producers of welfare services, and employers. This brings a great responsibility to work for sustainable development in line with the Agenda.

In 2019 Statistics Sweden presented a national status report for the SDGs, in which Sweden's challenges were summarised in three points:[8]

1. Inequality in the economic area and regarding health, housing and exposure to violence. Inequality between groups increased in certain areas.
2. Difficulty in reaching the national environmental objectives. One of the national environmental objectives is Reduced climate impact, which deals with emissions of greenhouse gases.
3. Violence and harassment is not decreasing. More young people were subjected to bullying.

Municipalities and regions are at the forefront of adressing these challenges, as well as others. This requires tools and authority to act on a range of issues. At the same time, no one can solve the challenges on their own. Municipalities, regions, civil society, government agencies, business and academia have a joint responsibility along with individual citizens. SDG 17 is a particularly clear illustration of this. Partnership as a precondition for implementation applies just as much globally and nationally as it does regionally and locally. Global initiatives and national regulations and policies must be combined with concrete collaboration in the local community.

Not. 8.   Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Sweden Statistical review 2019, https://scb.se/contentassets/ea19f48f-f8164a408cc26aded379cef3/mi1303_2019a01_br_x41br1902.pdf Since then Statistics Sweden has published status reports in both 2020 and 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights our challenges[9]

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that an unequal distribution of good health in the population risks weakening our society. The fact that mortality in Sweden linked to COVID-19 has been more than ten times higher in certain areas and groups of people compared with the rest of the population shows the differences in the impact of the pandemic. The underlying causes are the same as the causes behind unequal health, which was highlighted in 2019 as one of Sweden's challenges. The restrictions Sweden introduced to reduce the spread of the infection have also led to very different consequences for people in different circumstances.

Many people working in the service industry have a short education or were born abroad. This industry has been hit hard, but large parts of it have also needed to operate during the pandemic, which means that its employees have been subjected to a greater risk of infection. Furthermore, the restrictions have limited the possibilities of socialising, primarily between different age groups and social groups. Those who are already lonely tend to become even more alone. Lastly, the opportunities for physical activity have been impeded and have decreased for many people, while others have been given more time for everyday exercise instead.

The priorities that health care has needed to set on account of the pandemic may lead to the already unequal health in various groups increasing in the future, something that will be particularly important to follow.

High pressure and new solutions in welfare services

Municipalities and regions were aware, early on, of the negative consequences that restrictions to reduce infection and disease may have for public health. The measures must be balanced carefully against their longer-term effects. Researchers in Sweden and internationally have pointed out that, in the long term, excessive measures may have greater health impacts than the disease itself. This awareness has been a driver for municipalities and regions in adapting in a sustainable way to reduce the negative impacts on the population's health and on the macro-economy. All municipal and regional services have developed additional digital ways of working during the pandemic. This has shone a light on the need for continued support in digitalisation but has also shown us the potential of digitalisation.

Preschools have been open during the pandemic. Preschool contributes to children's health and well-being, to learning and to development. Preschools have reorganised to minimise the spread of infection and create a good work environment for children and staff, moved outdoors and made hygiene and cleaning procedures stricter. However, during the spring the high rate of absences among children in socio-economically vulnerable areas has been worrying. Absences may mean that groups of children fall behind. Sickness absence among staff has sometimes also been high, and there has been a shortage of substitute staff.

Most girls and boys in compulsory school have had regular schooling. It has been important to keep schools open as schools are of great importance, both for pupils and for society as a whole. There has also been some remote and distance teaching, and the national tests, previously conducted physically at school, were cancelled in spring 2020. School health services maintained their procedures such as carrying out vaccinations. Students in upper secondary school have had distance teaching during various phases of the pandemic. The rapid shift to distance teaching went well on the whole. At present, it is not possible to see that the pandemic has had a negative effect on study outcomes. However, some groups of pupils are more vulnerable in the case of distance teaching. This will need to be followed up in depth in the future. School structure is important for many girls and boys, and when it is changed there is a risk that some groups will be affected more. This can involve girls and boys that live in families with poorer economic and social circumstances or that have parents or guardians who, for various reasons, are unable to support them in their school work, for instance parents or guardians who work a lot or have a limited knowledge of Swedish. For young people living in a home environment with, for example, substance misuse or honour-related violence and oppression, school is a refuge that disappears when they close and teaching takes place at a distance.

Not. 9.   Much of this section is a summary of the report For a resilient society – Lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic show the importance of good and equitable health [För ett motståndskraftigt samhälle – Lärdomar under Covid-19 synliggör vikten av en god och jämlik hälsa], SALAR 2021 https://webbutik.skr.se/sv/artiklar/for-ett-motstandskraftigt-samhalle-.html.

Services in health care, social care, and school education have been running under high pressure during the pandemic. These services have a high share of women employees who have suffered mental pressure at work, both on account of a fear of being infected and as a result of a high work tempo, with poorer opportunities for recovery.

In the care of older people there has been a spread of infection that has led to many older and frail people being infected and dying. SALAR and the municipalities have worked with support and advice to spread experience and knowledge. This has, for instance, been done in networks of directors of social services and municipal nursing officers with medical responsibility and in dialogue with care service responsibilities like the Swedish Health and Social Care Inspectorate, the National Board of Health and Welfare, and the Public Health Agency of Sweden. SALAR has also had a dialogue with industry organisations in private care and with user organisations.

Care of older people has switched to more digital ways of working, including digital participation by doctors. In general, the interest in digital solutions and tools is judged to have increased among older people. At the same time, services have been cancelled and contacts with relatives have been restricted. Day centre services for people with disabilities have also closed or had fewer visitors due to the fear of infection. This has had a negative impact as many people with disabilities already had limited social contacts and poorer health.

In social care services, social workers have been able to have digital meetings with young people. However, the restrictions make it more difficult to discover needs and to provide support for vulnerable families and children.

The new digital ways of working that have been established in the pandemic have also meant that SALAR, as a member organisation, has been able to meet members in new ways and to have a close dialogue, and easier access through, for example, regular transmissions and digital meetings with municipal and regional leaderships and professional networks.

Society's resilience needs to be strengthened

The notion that no one should be left behind is a universal principle of the 2030 Agenda. A crisis risks increasing pre-existing inequalities in circumstances and living conditions in a society. Based on experience from municipalities and regions during the pandemic, SALAR has identified six areas of great importance for people's and society's resilience to new pandemics and crises. They are participation and trust, education and training, work and unemployment, isolation and loneliness, physical activity, and health care.[10] All of these areas are to be found in the SDGs, and they are, moreover, of great importance for good health and well-being, SDG 3.

Participation and trust are fundamental in a crisis

2021 marks 100 years since universal and equal suffrage for both women and men was introduced in Sweden. A hundred years on, modern democracy requires transparency, participation and involvement. Crises make special demands on local and regional democracy. A living and democratic dialogue is vital, at the same time as accountability and follow-up must function.

Surveys show that, in general, citizens have lower trust in municipal executive boards than in the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) and the Government, and are more satisfied with democracy at national level than in the municipalities. This is a challenge. Trust in municipalities and regions as democratic organisations needs to be strengthened.

At the same time, new surveys suggest that trust in society as a whole may have changed in a positive direction during the pandemic.[11] According to the poll conducted by the SOM Institute at the University of Gothenburg in October 2020, confidence had increased in the media and in public institutions as a whole, for example municipal executive boards, schools, and health care. There are also surveys that show that Swedes' confidence in health care has increased significantly during the pandemic.[12] However, trust in decision-makers and public authorities and in media and information is changeable. The management of the pandemic can change trust in a short space of time.

Not. 10. For a resilient society – Lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic show the importance of good and equitable health [För ett motståndskraftigt samhälle – Lärdomar under Covid-19 synliggör vikten av en god och jämlik hälsa], SALAR 2021
Not. 11. SOM Institute. SOM survey about the coronavirus [SOM-undersökningen om coronaviruset]; 2020; https://www.gu.se/som-institutet/resultat-och-publikationer/som-undersokningen-om-coronaviruset#F%C3%B6rtroende-f%C3%B6r-sjukv%C3%A5rd-regering-och-andra-samh%C3%A4llsinstitutioner
Not. 12. Confidence Barometer 2021

One fundamental prerequisite for participation and influence is that people have access to correct and certain information. One challenge during the pandemic has been to reach out with information about COVID-19, about restrictions and recommendations to citizens who are not as proficient inSwedish or to people who follow other media and information platforms than the ones used by Swedish authorities in their communication.

During the pandemic, municipalities and regions have used various means to maintain possibilities for elected political representatives to perform their elected duties – despite the restrictions that have been in place. Many have had agreements about, for example, pairing and reducing the number of members attending meetings. During past years distance meetings have become more and more common, which brings to a head the question of what is legally permitted regarding digital meetings. Some testify that digital meetings are felt to be an advantage since they are more equal. At a digital meeting hierarchical placings disappear, alternate members do not sit at the table furthest away; instead everyone is seen in the same way on the screen. The chair listens in a different way and attendance has increased.

However, local democracy may also have been affected negatively when many decisions have had to be made quickly, by experts and officials in services.

Collaboration with others has been strengthened

Several municipalities and regions testify to great involvement during the pandemic; they say that both existing and new forms for horizontal partnerships have been used and developed and that cooperation has functioned well with citizens, associations and companies when it comes to addressing and preventing the consequences of the pandemic.[13] The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency reached an agreement at an early stage with SALAR and civil society organisations about help for people aged over 70 and other risk groups. The agreement was terminated in autumn 2020, but the cooperation established between municipalities and civil society organisations should be upheld and used after the crisis is over.

Increased demands for centralisation

In the wake of the pandemic, several commentators have argued for more centralisation and less self-government at local or regional level. Even though these proposals are often based on demands for equity, it is worth discussing how such a centralisation would actually be carried out and what effects it would have.

The Swedish model with multi-level governance and strong municipal and regional self-government – protected by the Constitution – means that matters affecting citizens' everyday lives, such as health care, school education and social care, are decided close to the people affected, and by political assemblies they themselves have elected. Citizens are close to the decisions and are able to exert influence and hold decision-makers to account.

Swedish municipalities and regions differ. Population size, area, urbanisation level, business sector structure, population mix, culture and political preference vary between different parts of the country. Self-government ensures that each municipality or region shapes its services in the light of local and regional circumstances and the needs and the wishes of their citizens.

Their self-government enables municipalities and regions themselves to take their own initiatives for renewal and improvement so as to, for example, try out new and creative solutions for resource allocation, organisation and methods. In this way, developments and innovations are driven when some municipalities and regions are able to take the lead in using new methods and solutions.

Local self-government has served Sweden well. As well as being necessary if democracy is to function at local level, it ensures that local circumstances are able to steer and prevents the concentration of power. It also delivers more accountability than would be possible if service provision was organised by central government.

Not. 13.   For a resilient society – Lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic show the importance of good and equitable health [För ett motståndskraftigt samhälle – Lärdomar under Covid-19 synliggör vikten av en god och jämlik hälsa], SALAR 2021

Conditions for implementing the SDGs in municipalities and regions

The national context

In 2018 the Government produced an action plan for Sweden's work with the 2030 Agenda. The plan assigns an important role to the follow-up of the goals.[14] Statistics Sweden was given the commission of coordinating the statistical follow-up and RKA, the Council for the promotion of local government analysis, was commissioned to produce indicators for municipalities and regions in consultation with Statistics Sweden and other parties. It is of great value to Sweden and to Swedish municipalities and regions that there is infrastructure to produce national, regional and local statistics that are reliable and comparable. More information about the indicators selected is presented further on in this report.

The Government has also appointed a national coordinator tasked with supporting the Government in work to implement the SDGs. The coordinator is to collaborate with municipalities, regions, government agencies and other actors, and to work for the production, when needed, of supporting information for initiatives and measures that strengthen the work of the actors and contribute to improving the attainment of objectives.[15]

In June 2020 the Government proposed a common objective for the 2030 Agenda and the policy for global development, and a single direction for implementing and following up the 2030 Agenda.[16] The objective was adopted by the Riksdag in December 2020.

Not. 14. The Action Plan highlights six focus areas: a gender-equal society with equality for all; sustainable communities; a socially beneficial, circular and bio-based economy; a stronger business sector with sustainable business; a sustainable and healthy food chain; reinforced knowledge and innovation. https://www.regeringen.se/49e20a/contentassets/60a67ba0ec8a4f27b04cc4098fa6f9fa/handlingsplan-agenda-2030.pdf

Not. 15. Kommittédirektiv En nationell samordnare för Agenda 2030 https://www.regeringen.se/4aa033/contentassets/bb3407c1084d49928ba2e9f2ac9dad70/en-nationell-samordnare-for-agenda-2030-dir.-202017

Not. 16. Sweden's implementation of the 2030 Agenda (Govt Bill 2019/20:188)

Sweden is divided into 21 counties, each of which has a county administrative board, which is a regional agency of central government and is headed by a county governor. The geographical area of the counties coincides with the geographical area of the regions. The Government has stressed that the county administrative boards have an important role in working to implement the SDGs at regional level and in contributing to the impact of national objectives in their county. The Government's appropriation directions for the county administrative boards for 2021 have made clear that this is to be done in collaboration with other actors.[17]

Implementation in municipalities and regions

Sweden's report to the HLPF in 2017 showed that local sustainability work had already had a great impact in Sweden on account of work on Agenda 21. At that time, some municipalities were in the start-up phase of linking the SDGs to their own activities, while others had included the SDGs in their management systems and governing documents. Since then the SDGs have had an even greater impact. Extensive work is under way and expertise in sustainability matters has risen.[18] Around 70 % of municipalities and regions stated in 2019 that they used SDGs in some way.[19] SALAR's impression is that each year more and more municipalities and regions strengthen their work on sustainable development, and that there are many good examples of methods and ways of working, some of which are shared in this report.

Regional development

On January 1st 2019 the last county councils became regions. In doing so, they took over responsibility for regional development from the county administrative boards. The regions have the task of producing a strategy for the development of their county in collaboration with other actors in and outside their county. Their regional development strategies build on the SDGs.

This means that regions and the state county administrative boards share responsibility for collaborating in the same geographical area on the development in their county in line with the global goals, which has created some lack of clarity about who actually has the leading role. SALAR considers that the county administrative boards should be responsible for the coordination of the 2030 Agenda work of sectoral agencies, reporting to the Government and information to municipalities and regions, while the regions should lead the dialogue with the business sector and other relevant regional actors linked to their responsibility for regional development.[20]

Great spread in work on the SDGs

At present, the SDGs are making their mark in varying ways in municipalities and regions. Many have intervoven the goals of the 2030 Agenda into their own activities. The result of this can be expressed in governing documents such as budgets and comprehensive plans. It is also increasingly common for municipalities and regions to produce additional governing documents such as a sustainability policies or strategies. There is rapid movement, and every year there are more and more municipalities and regions that increase their ambitions in the area of sustainability.

Some municipalities and regions have taken major steps and are doing a great deal of work to localise the SDGs in their context. They are adapting their services and cooperating with others in implementation. They are also working clearly to follow up, report and communicate the effect of their work. There are a number of good examples, including the four municipalities conducting VLR's this year.

Other municipalities and regions have not come as far, and have asked for more concrete tools to put the SDGs into practice.

Between 2018–2020 the Swedish Agency for Public Management, a government agency, had the commission of analysing and following up how the 2030 Agenda has affected the sustainability work of government agencies, municipali-

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Not. 17.   The Government's appropriation directions for the county administrative boards 2021 https://www.esv.se/statsliggaren/regleringsbrev/?rbid=21550

Not. 18.   The 2030 Agenda in agencies, municipalities and regions. Interim report http://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2019/201915.pdf and final report https://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2020/202015_agenda2030_slutrapport.pdf

Not. 19.   The 2030 Agenda in agencies, municipalities and regions. Interim report

Not. 20.   SALAR's consultation response - Final report of the 2030 Agenda Delegation - A world of challenges, a world of opportunities [Världens utmaning, världens möjlighet] - SOU 2019:13 reg. no 19/00571

ties and regions. The Agency noted that a majority of municipalities and regions have used the SDGs in some way in their activities. At the same time, the Agency considered that most of the activities implemented had had little effect in practice. Some of the municipalities and regions in its study saw the 2030 Agenda as an internal matter and focused mostly on environmental aspects of sustainability. Others had, however, made radical changes to their working methods and organisation. Part of this variation could, according to the Agency, be explained by municipalities and regions choosing to prioritise sustainability issues to a varying degree. The Agency also considered that structural issues had an impact. Different conditions in large cities, rural areas, suburbs and smaller communities created different capacities to implement the SDGs. In general, larger municipalities had made more progress than smaller municipalities and municipalities in rural areas.

The Agency referred to the government-appointed Municipalities Inquiry[21], which noted that the conditions for different municipalities to engage in long-term sustainability work vary. According to the Inquiry, small municipalities find it hard enough to cope with the day-to-day operations in their services, and do not have any substantial development capacity. The Swedish Agency for Public Management noted at the same time that there were good examples of small municipalities working with the SDGs in the light of their own circumstances. Several of these municipalities already had ongoing sustainability work when the 2030 Agenda was adopted.

In its final report, the Swedish Agency for Public Management proposed that the Government should make it clear that municipalities and regions have the greatest possibility of contributing to the implementation of the SDGs through their regular activities. Since municipalities and regions are autonomous, the Agency considered that the Government should take an enabling approach, in dialogue with municipalities and regions, and should also focus on ensuring that different municipalities and regions are put on a more equal footing to work with the 2030 Agenda.

Glocal Sweden – training municipalities and regions

Glocal Sweden – the 2030 Agenda in municipalities and regions is a communication and training project intended to increase knowledge of and involvement for the SDGs in municipalities and regions. It is being carried out in collaboration between SALAR, the United Nations Association of Sweden and, since 2021, the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD), and is financed by Sida.

The project started in 2018 with the participation of six municipalities and one region. In 2019, 81 municipalities and 15 regions participated, and in 2020 the project consisted of 130 municipalities and 16 regions. As of 2021, 18 regions and 163 municipalities are participating. Thus, more than half of Sweden's municipalities and regions are now part of Glocal Sweden. The project has an overview of all its participants, which facilitates exchange of experience and transfer of knowledge on its website.[22]

The target groups for Glocal Sweden are politicians and officials in municipalities and regions. Project participants receive training and support in the form of online courses, newsletters, films, exhibitions, lectures and webinars. A national conference is held each year to contribute to common learning and greater engagement. Networking and sharing experiences is an important part of the project.

Irrespective of whether the training is held face to face or digitally, its format has always been interactive. In 2019 physical regional meetings were held with regions, offering them an opportunity to share experience of work on the 2030 Agenda with the municipalities in their county. Municipalities that were not yet members of Glocal Sweden were invited, and sometimes other actors such as country administrative boards or the local business sector also took part. In 2020 the regional meetings were cancelled on account of the pandemic.

Not. 21.   Stronger municipalities – with the capacity to deliver their welfare services mission [Starkare kommuner – med kapacitet att klara välfärdsuppdraget] SOU 2020:8 https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/statens-offentliga-utredning-ar/2020/02/sou-20208/
Not. 22.   Here is a full list of the participants in Glocal Sweden. https://fn.se/glokalasverige/deltagare/

As of 2021, the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) is a new partner in Glocal Sweden. This gives Swedish municipalities and regions greater opportunities to international partnerships with municipalities in developing countries to cooperate about how the SDGs can be achieved locally to global benefit.

The Swedish Agency for Public Management noted in its reports that Glocal Sweden has been an important actor in work on the 2030 Agenda in municipalities and regions. The Agency made the assessment that the Government ought to ensure that Glocal Sweden is able to adapt its work to developments in municipalities and regions and to adjust its focus, in the long term, from enhancing knowledge to developing methods.[23]

Not. 23.   The 2030 Agenda in agencies, municipalities and regions Final report https://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets /publikationer/2020/202015_agenda2030_slutrapport.pdf

Improving sustainability governance

From awareness to active governance

SALAR has produced supporting material and a training course about how municipal and regional leaderships can work with sustainbility management and integrate the SDGs in central governance processes such as the budget process. This requires a whole-of-government approach, from strategic visioning to priority setting and implementation. In order to know what is most important, this work needs to begin with an impact assessment that describes the particular municipality or region, its own risks, weaknesses, and strengths. The assessment should include all perspectives; municipalities and regions as welfare producers, builders of society, democracy actors, and employers. It is important that the assessment is founded on facts and data, combined with multi-stakeholder dialogues.

In brief, a process of integrating the SDGs can be described in the following stages:

1. **Impact assessment**
   a. Find out where the municipality/region stands in relation to the SDGs. Where are the biggest challenges?
   b. There may not exist data to describe everything. Involve all stakeholders in the assessment – citizens, staff, politicians and other actors so as to create a broad knowledge base.
2. **Set own objectives**
   a. Start from the result of the impact assessment.
   b. Include the objectives in the municipality's/region's regular governance processes, such as the budget process.
3. **Implement and take measures**
   a. Identify objectives where the municipality/region has autonomous control, and where there is need for partnerships with other stakeholders in order to create a positive transition.
   b. Create forums for dialogue, involvement and co-creation around the SDGs.
4. **Follow up and report**
   a. Follow up and report outcomes and impacts in the regular governance process.
   b. Analyze progress and spread good practices.

Municipal sustainability management

EU rules require large companies to publish regular reports on the social and environmental impacts of their activities. However, there are no requirements that municipalities, regions or other public authorities have to produce sustainability reports or statements. On the contrary, the swedish Government recommends that sustainability issues be integrated in the regular governance and budget process, which brings budgets and annual reports into focus.[24]

In 2021, as a commission from SALAR, PwC has conducted a study of how municipalities have integrated sustainability and/or the SDGs in their process. The study[25] contains an analysis of budget documents and annual reports in 60 municipalities selected to make up a representative sample. The study focuses on 2019 since there were, at the time, no annual reports for 2020. It is likely that by 2020 and 2021 there will have been movements in a positive direction, but the study still shows several interesting results, including that:

› Around one-third of the municipalities' budget documents reported some kind of impact assessment/materiality or defined what sustainability meant for that particular municipality.
› Just over two-thirds had objectives that can be linked to all three dimensions of sustainability: environmental, social and economic sustainability.
› Of the municipalities that had defined objectives, 95 % had some form of follow-up of in their annual report.[26] The quality of the follow-up varied.

Varying maturity in governance

PwC has made an assessment of the municipalities' sustainability management by analysing their published documents. PwC has placed the municipalities in three different levels of maturity, which are "low", "medium", and "high" depending on the degree of formalisation of expressed ambitions in governing documents, clearly set objectives regarding sustainability and follow-up, and follow-up of sustainability at an overall level.

Low – 37% of the municipalities in the sample

In these municipalities there was no impact assessment and the municipality had not defined what sustainability meant for the municipality itself. There was general wording in the budget linked to sustainability, but there were no concrete objectives or indicators. Hence, there was no extensive follow-up in the annual report.

Medium – 37% of the municipalities in the sample

In these municipalities there was no impact assessment. However, there were objectives for sustainability which were followed up in the annual report. However, the objectives could be made more specific using indicators making it possible to follow up and to measure impacts. According to PwC, several municipalities placed in the medium level could improve the quality of their governance by relatively small means.

High – 25% of the municipalities in the sample

Municipalities given this assessment had included some form of impact assessment and adopted specific objectives aimed at the challenges identified. They had also broken down their overall sustainability objectives on the basis of the three dimensions into specific measurable indicators that were followed up in the annual report. Their annual report stated clearly whether developments had gone in the intended direction.

Not. 24.   Sweden's implementation of the 2030 Agenda (Govt Bill 2019/20:188)
Not. 25.   PwC Municipal sustainability governance – in the best interests of municipal residents! [Kommunal hållbarhetsstyrning – för kommuninvånarnas bästa!] 2021, https://www.pwc.se/sv/kommuner/assets/Municipal-sustainability-management-report-2021-english.pdf
Not. 26.   Additional municipalities in the sample say in the objectives and budget for 2019 that their future governance and follow-up will make clearer reference to the 2030 Agenda.

Municipal size matters – but small municipalities also house good examples

The study shows that municipal size is of importance when it comes to maturity in the sustainability governance processes. In general, large cities and municipalities had a higher degree of maturity. This is in line with the conclusions of the Swedish Agency for Public Management that structural factors have an impact on the capacity of municipalities. But PwC stresses that there were examples of small municipalities that had come far in their sustainability governance and maintained a higher degree of maturity. PwC draws the conclusion that even though circumstances differ, is possible for all municipalities to put appropriate governance in place. The municipalities that made a positive showing included:

› Arvika Municipality presented the SDGs in its budget and described its sustainability management on the basis of all three dimensions of sustainability, and gave an account of strategies needed to attain the objectives.
› Boden Municipality had broken down the concept of sustainability in its budget and described challenges and opportunities. The annual report contained indicators for measuring achievements as well as an analysis.
› Karlskrona Municipality had an analysis of its external environment in its budget. For each dimension of sustainability there were objectives and a description of how the municipality would work to achieve the objectives. The annual report contained a separate section on sustainability where the goals were followed up.

› Mjölby Municipality had described its sustainability management in the budget. There were descriptions of strategy areas linked to sustainability and objectives in the various dimensions with indicators , as well as comparisons with similar municipalities.
› Östersund Municipality had a budget in which the three dimensions of sustainability were described from the municipality's perspective. For each dimension of sustainability there were goals, many of which have indicators. This makes clear to the reader what the municipality is prioritising, how this is measured and followed up.

Lenas ABC

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo P

Jag vaknade och gick upp klockan sju.

Jag åt ägg och bröd frukost.

Local and regional SDG indicators

One fundamental step in being able to work with the SDGs at the local and regional level is to have local and regional key figures and indicators that link to the overall goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The Government's Action Plan for the 2030 Agenda for 2018–2020 included producing indicators for the 2030 Agenda that could provide support for work in municipalities and regions. RKA was commissioned to lead this work in consultation with Statistics Sweden, the 2030 Agenda Delegation, and a number of municipalities and regions. The indicators were presented in March 2019.

Work process

The process of producing a suitable selection of indicators drew inspiration from the participating municipalities and regions, Statistics Sweden, the work of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and Sweden's environmental objectives as well as from Germany's choice of SDG indicators for the local and regional level.

Building support and acceptance for the selection of indicators among municipalities and regions was an important part of the commission. RKA was supported by a working group consist-

ing of 28 municipalities and regions. A reference group consisting of representatives of various organisations and government agencies also provided support for its work.

About the SDG indicators

The selection of SDG indicators for municipalities and regions consists of around 50 indicators grouped under the different SDGs. The indicators are based on existing official statistics. Account has been taken of Statistics Sweden's choice of national indicators, in some cases with an adaptation to the local context.

The selection of indicators is different for municipalities and regions. There are two reasons here: first, differences in their missions and what is of interest to follow at the different levels and second, some indicators do not exist for both municipalities and regions.

The starting point is that the indicators are disaggregated by sex where possible; for example school results are reported for girls and boys.

Since the indicators are intended to stimulate work on the SDGs in municipalities and regions, only indicators that refer to circumstances that are real local and regional challenges have been

included. This makes it possible to focus on problems that are relevant in Sweden and that affect the local political level, but means that the selection does not provide information about all of the SDGs.

The indicators selected include both areas that municipalities and regions are able to influence directly, i.e. what they have authority over, and areas where partnerships with others (government agencies, the business sector, citizens, universities, etc.) are required to create positive transition.

Many of the indicators could be reported under several SDGs. However, the choice made is to only report each indicator under one SDG. The purpose is to limit the number of indicators and to therefore make it easier for the user to obtain an overview.

The 2030 Agenda also stresses that no one will be left behind. Where there have been alternatives, the selection includes indicators showing the municipality's or the region's population. When the indicators reflect the whole population, this captures the overall picture. In some cases, indicators are included that apply to a specific group that risks being left behind or is especially vulnerable (a specific age group, for example).

Public performance reporting for the SDGs

Public performance reporting as a method started in 2006 at the initiative of SALAR.[27] The original idea is that when municipalities and regions are transparent in reporting key figures for quality, quality development is driven forward. At the outset, there were not that many key figures for quality, and most were not reported openly. Since then RKA has been formed, and its Kolada database contains around 5 000 key figures. They can be compared for analysis, benchmarking and development.

The purpose of public performance reporting on the SDGs is to promote baseline comparisons and assessments in the transition to a sustainable future, and to increase learning and inspire municipalities and regions to work even more vigorously towards the SDGs.

The first Public performance report on the SDGs, was made by SALAR and released in September 2020. The report is based on a selection of the 50 indicators produced by RKA. The target group is leading politicians and officials in municipalities and regions.

A follow-up report will be released in 2022 at the earliest.

Network governance and partnerships for sustainability

Designing new descision-making processes

Cooperation with the local community in the form of associations, cultural life, and the business sector is an important task for municipalities and regions in their role as builders of society, as is maintaining collaboration at regional and national level. This is required by SDG 17 on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A municipality or a region can act as a catalyst so that various activities in its geographical area function together to create attractiveness, growth and sustainable development. The Swedish Agency for Public Management was able to note, in its analysis of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, that collaboration and partnerships had increased both between municipalities, regions and government agencies and between them and, for instance, businesses and associations.[28]

Partnerships, both horizontally and vertically, create opportunities to address complex social challenges. These can be unemployment, high criminality, climate impacts, etc. The barriers that must be broken through include defence of own activities, hierarchies, a lack of understanding of others, and an inability to see any common benefit. This applies both within an organisation itself and in relation to others. Elected representatives in municipalities and regions have a responsibility of trying to break down these barriers and bringing all forces to bear on solving the challenges. Network governance presupposes mutual dependence, voluntary participation and all participants having control of the forms for co-operation. Local democracy is strengthened when collaboration also involves citizens.

One starting point is that everyone has something to gain from collaborating. For example, broad action to reduce crime in an area benefits both schools and social services, as well as local business operators and housing companies. To ensure that everyone gains from collaborating, it is important to adapt and design the implementation of the work in a way that satisfies the needs and circumstances of different parties.

Not. 28. Swedish Agency for Public Management 2020 https://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2020/202015_agenda2030_slutrapport.pdf

Collaboration must be organised

There may be obstacles that must be bridged when collaboration takes place between different participants that come under different legislation, have different responsibilities and objectives for their activities, and base their actions on different logics, cultures and drivers.

To clear away obstacles and improve work on the possibilities and capabilities of different parties, it is important to formalise the collaborative effort with the aid of agreements, declarations of intent, or the like. It is about clarifying roles and responsibilities.

To achieve success in a collaborative effort, both common overall objectives and objectives for the participants must be drafted. These objectives should be trackable by being linked to expected results. It is also important to establish fixed arenas for dialogue, follow-up, and analysis: arenas providing transparency and participation for all partners.

Successful collaboration between different actors is based on a high degree of trust. The parties must each take a great responsibility for contributing to the common benefit. Time and resources must be set aside for dialogue, and exchanges of knowledge and experience that contribute to common learning. Ultimately, this is about strengthening local and regional democracy and increasing citizens' trust in their elected representatives and the democratic system.

Human rights-based approach

The 2030 Agenda is founded on democracy and human rights. All of the SDGs bear the stamp of equality. SDG 16 lays a foundation for a human rights-based approach with demands for transparent activities and accountability at all levels. Municipalities and regions must combat all forms of corruption and ensure public access to information and the protection of fundamental freedoms. SDG 16 also requires participant-based decision-making in which no one is left behind. A rights-based approach means that people have to be able to participate in processes that affect them.

A rights-based approach strengthens trust and quality in implementation since all actors then actively uphold non-discrimination and equality.

One good example is the Municipality of Huddinge which is working on leadership and governance for equality. For instance, all Huddinge's services have to measure and analyse statistics and results on the basis of gender, child and area perspectives. Unjustified differences have to be reported and addressed. Huddinge has produced a handbook for equality analysis to support this work.[29]

The Municipality of Piteå is another good example of a municipality working systematically with a rights-based approach to improve its services. In autumn 2020 Piteå designated itself as a Human Rights City. This commitment entails active work to make society a place where everyone's human rights are respected and promoted to the same extent. Rights-based work is a key in this commitment, which is about striving for equality and countering discrimination in any specific situation; about processes being transparent with a clear division of responsibilities; and about people being involved and being allowed to participate in what affects them.[30]

Good examples of collaboration

Uppsala Climate Protocol

The Uppsala Climate Protocol is a formalised network of companies, public activities, universities and associations that collaborate and inspire each other and others so as to reach Uppsala's climate objectives and contribute to a sustainable world. 42 local actors are members of the Climate Protocol and cooperate for climate-driven business and services development. Their approach has been inspired by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and contributes to the Municipality's environmental and climate objectives and to a sustainable Uppsala.[31]

Not. 29.   Handbook for Equality Analysis in Huddinge https://www.huddinge.se/globalassets/huddinge.se/organisation-och-styrning/sa-arbetar-vi-med/hallbar-utveckling/jamlikhetsanalys-print.pdf

Not. 30.   About Piteå, Human-Rights City https://www.pitea.se/Invanare/Kommun-politik/hallbar-samhallsutveckling/ett-pitea-for-alla/pitea-mr-kommun-2021/

Not. 31.   Uppsala Climate Protocol https://klimatprotokollet.uppsala.se/om-klimatprotokollet/in-english/

The new social contract

The new social contract is an arena for collaboration where the City of Västerås, the Municipality of Eskilstuna and the Regions in Västmanland och Sörmland collaborate with Mälardalen University on the basis of the 2030 Agenda.[32] Its purpose is to solve complex social challenges, create learning, promote health and spread knowledge and insight through purposeful and innovative coproduction between the parties to the Social Contract, inhabitants, civil society and business.

At present the new Social Contract is focusing on two areas: school results and local health care including welfare technology. These focus areas are being handled as complex social challenges from a systems perspective, centred on the inhabitant, and all parties affected by the challenge are invited to explore and find solutions.

Sustainable Växjö and Vision 2050

The Municipality of Växjö has long worked actively for sustainable development. In 2019 the Växjö Assembly adopted the "Sustainable Växjö 2030" programme, which is based on the 2030 Agenda and lays out a common way forward for a more sustainable Växjö by 2030. The programme was developed in dialogue with municipal employees, inhabitants and other societal actors and identifies visions and measures.

The work of the Municipality includes the Vision 2050 project. Its purpose is to find out what the Municipality's stakeholders (inhabitants, organisations, companies, etc.) think is distinctive about the Municipality of Växjö, what characterises a good society in 2050 and the path to this. Vision 2050 works together with the sustainability programme and the Municipality's main governance processes.

Not. 32.   The new Social Contract https://www.samhallskontraktet.se/

The way forward

Out of the crisis, with people at the centre

The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated and reinforced our social challenges. For instance, the inequality between different groups in society has been clarified since the consequences of the pandemic were more serious for the already vulnerable. There are also other urgent challenges. For example, a rapid transition is needed in the next decade to reduce global warming.

The 2030 Agenda is a global agenda that makes clear what responsibility all countries have for creating a sustainable society. In each country there are regional and/or local authorities that are responsible for activities where a large part of its goals are put into practice. Sweden as a country has a decentralised public organisation. Municipalities and regions play important roles as democracy actors, builders of society, producers of welfare services and employers in the recovery after the pandemic, as well as in the transition towards a more sustainable society. It is, to a great extent, at the regional and local level that the goals are realised, including in meetings with citizens. Here the focus is on the individual, and these individuals need to be involved in the solutions. No one must be left behind.

Local self-government creates opportunities

Local self-government has served Sweden well. Local self-government makes it possible to adapt to local contexts, and to specific needs, strengths and weaknesses. This is also a challenge, and all municipalities and regions have not come as far in their respective work. The studies presented in this report show how structural factors have a link to how municipalities work systematically with a transition towards sustainable development. There is a broad spread. At the same time, rapid progress is being made. It is positive that some municipalities and regions are able to take a lead and can show others the way, both in Sweden and internationally. There must, at the same time, be support so that all municipalities and regions are able to develop in this area. Here SALAR contributes by spreading successful methods, models and research findings.

The Government needs to create good and equivalent conditions for municipalities and regions in areas like finance, staff provision and digitalisation. Policy tools have to establish a balance between national equivalence and local autonomy. This can be done through:

- National objectives and general guidelines that clarify mandates while leaving scope for variations.
- Fundamental principles for what is to characterise implementation.
- General government grants to provide scope for local priorities and adaptation to local needs and circumstances.
- Interactive knowledge-based governance with cross-fertilisation between research and practical experience of local government services.

Integrated governance processes are the next step

The SDGs and Sweden's specific challenges require active work at all levels. To make progress, sustainable development and SDGs must be integrated in a clear way in regular governance in municipalities and regions. This requires the municipality or region to make a baseline assessment, set up its own objectives, and follow up the effects of its work. Governing the internal organisation requires creating scope for transition and innovation. To find solutions and ways of working that are sustainable over time, change and development needs to be possible. The leadership needs to commit to new solutions that lead to wanted long-term effects such as less waste of resources, optimised production, balance between quality and cost, changes in ways of working and methods, including the winding up of functions no longer needed.

Just as the national level should create conditions for the regional and local level, the leadership of municipalities and regions should actively create conditions enabling services to transition to sustainable development.

Collaboration at local, regional, national, and global level

The work of transitioning also requires municipalities and regions to interact with other stakeholders and to collaborate and create partnerships. There are many good examples of this kind of collaboration. Municipalities and regions have long worked with networks to devise solutions to complex problems. Network governance presupposes mutual dependence, voluntary participation, and all actors having control of the forms for cooperation. With common resources and expertise, both the formulation of problems and the solutions to them can be improved. When collaboration also involves citizens, local democracy is strengthened. Citizens who feel involved take more responsibility for the development of society. Collaboration has to be part of the regular work of a municipality and region. This creates resilience in society and builds preparedness for new crises.

Sweden's municipalities and regions can also contribute by developing their international cooperation, including in municipal partnerships, for mutual learning, not least about how we can increase the resilience of society ahead of future crises.

The local and regional level is closest to citizens and plays a decisive role in the creation of sustainable societies. SALAR values UCLG's initiative of highlighting local and regional efforts in its reporting to the UN, and looks forward to continuing to contribute to international cooperation concerning sustainable development at local and regional level.

Initiatives for sustainable development

SALAR is working along with its members to promote sustainable development in a wide range of areas. Municipalities and regions have a broad mission as democratic actors, builders of society and producers of welfare services. All these roles include various initiatives; a selection of them are presented in this annex.

Do you want to know more about SALAR's various initiatives and ongoing work?

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TABLE 1. Municipalities and regions as democracy actors

Heading	Description	More information
Work on Citizens' dialogues – including in complex issues	Trust in municipalities and regions as democratic organisations needs to be strengthened. Dialogues with citizens are being developed in many municipalities and regions as a way of developing vigorous and effective local democracy. Along with researchers and municipalities, SALAR has developed a *model for dialogue with citizens in complex issues*. Its purpose is to handle issues that create tension and conflict in the community.	Dialogues with citizens Dialogue with citizens – complex issues Publication: Dialogue with citizens – complex issues [Medborgardialog i komplexa frågor]
The HR Project	In June 2014 the Government and SALAR made an agreement to strengthen work on human rights in municipalities, county councils and regions. In 2017 the Government and SALAR made a second agreement of the same kind, with the overall objective of contributing to the realisation of the Government's objective for human rights policy and Sweden's implementation of the 2030 Agenda.	The HR Project Publication: Human rights in governance and leadership [Mänskliga rättigheter i styrning och ledning]
Work to reduce threats and hate directed at elected representatives	The situation of elected representatives is in constant change. Political decisions can lead to threats and hateful reactions with major consequences for many elected representatives. Municipalities and regions need to develop systems to enable elected representatives to operate under secure forms.	Work to reduce threats and hate directed at elected representatives
Work to prevent welfare crime and corruption	SALAR is working in a network along with municipalities and regions to prevent and counter cheating, irregularities and fraud in the welfare sector. This work aims to use the expertise available and to increase awareness of these problems.	Work to prevent welfare crime and corruption
Digital today – digital participation	SALAR is following the work of libraries on digital participation and has, for example, produced the report Action for digital skills at municipal public libraries *[Insatser för digital kompetens på folkbiblioteken]* along with the Digital participation network *[Digidelnätverket]* and the Royal Library	Digital participation

TABLE 1. Municipalities and regions as democracy actors, continued

Heading	Description	More information
Municipal partnerships, ICLD	SALAR is the organisation responsible for the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD). Municipal partnerships provide a possibility to contribute to the development of local self-government and democracy in a number of prioritised partner countries. Through action to foster democracy and by developing methods, the Municipal Partnership Programme contributes, at the same time, to the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The programme is financed by Sida and managed by the ICLD.	Local government partnerships. ICLD
Support for democratic institutions	**The role of political leaders in municipalities and regions** SALAR is working to strengthen the role that political leaders have of governing and leading a municipality or region and of developing democracy. SALAR has formulated development action on the following three parts of their role: a leadership that strengthens democracy; a leadership that makes an impact and gets results; and a leadership that is sustainable. **The tone of political conversations** The tone of political conversations is training material for elected representatives in committees, boards and council assemblies. The material consists of different situations in political life where elected representatives must choose how to act. The purpose is to foster a good and constructive climate for political conversations.	The role of political leaders in municipalities and regions The tone of political conversations
Countering extremism	SALAR is working to increase knowledge in municipalities and regions about how they can take preventive action against violent extremism. One way to do so is by spreading good examples of preventive action. In addition, work that includes training is also being done in schools and in recreation and social services.	Countering extremism Publication: Dealing with violent extremism [Att hantera våldsbejakande extremism]

TABLE 2. Municipalities and regions as builders of society

Heading	Description	More information
The 2030 Agenda – in municipal property management organisations	This project starts in October 2021. Its aim is to develop examples of how municipal property management organisations can work with the 2030 Agenda. The project will be implemented using workshops and will report in 2022.	The 2030 Agenda – in municipal property management organisations
Cooperation for a safer society	SALAR's work covers local crime prevention work, organised crime, threats and violence, violent extremism and social action teams. SALAR's partners include the Swedish Council for Crime Prevention and the Police.	Cooperation for a safer society
Procurement of good, low-cost homes	SALAR has procured a framework agreement for multi-dwelling buildings. The procurement makes it easy for municipalities and municipal housing companies to buy good homes at low costs. The buildings are constructed quickly and can be adapted to the buyer's needs.	Procurement of good, low-cost homes

TABLE 2. Municipalities and regions as builders of society, continued

Heading	Description	More information
Cycle traffic	Increased cycle commuting has many benefits such as a better environment, better health and attractive towns and cities. At the same time, it requires a cycle network that is well planned and of a good standard. SALAR is working on improving the conditions for cycle traffic. In several municipalities and regions work is under way on drafting plans, programmes and strategies.	Cycle traffic
Sustainable procurement	In spring 2021, SALAR, the National Secretariat for Sustainable Procurement and Adda are launching a digital training for sustainable procurement. The training is aimed at politicians, sustainability strategists, procurement officers and buyers/placers of call-off orders under framework agreements.	Sustainable procurement
Territorial collaboration	**Handling complex social challenges** SALAR has produced a publication intended to generate discussion and provide inspiration about how municipalities and regions can organise, govern and lead collaboration with other actors to solve complex social challenges. **Responsibility for regional development** Regional development planning is a tool in regional growth planning. Its aim is to create an overview of the region's assets and how they should be developed. Interviews are being held with politicians in municipalities and regions to create an overview of ongoing work in this area, in order to explore how SALAR can provide additional support. The results of the interviews will be presented in 2021.	Publication: Handling complex social challenges [Att hantera komplexa samhällsutmaningar] Regional development plans
GRP+ - a development project to measure sustainability	GRP+ is a measurement system that shows how regional quality of life can be enhanced, both here and now, and in the long term. How do we invest and manage natural capital, social capital, human capital and economic capital? How does what we do today affect the opportunities available to coming generations? GRP+ has been developed by the members of Reglab, a forum for learning about regional development, along with experts and is now being tested in Sweden's regions. GRP+ is able to supplement the regions' follow-ups of the 2030 Agenda and give a broad picture of quality of life and sustainability.	Reglab
Work on strengthening the regions' relations with the business sector	It is important to strengthen the local business climate and make use of the possibilities provided by the regions' responsibility for regional development. Development work starts from their circumstances in terms of geography and population, the needs of their inhabitants and the local business sector. Each year SALAR conducts a Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) measurement of service called Insight along with the Stockholm Business Alliance. Almost 200 municipalities take part and scores have gone up. Alongside this, SALAR has held a training course called "Just make it simpler". The objective is to simplify the municipalities' contacts with the business sector through good cooperation. Around 170 municipalities and some 15 000 staff members, managers and elected representatives who meet companies have completed the training. **The 2030 Agenda – the municipality's cooperation with the business sector** Starting in 2021, SALAR has begun work focusing on the municipality's cooperation with the local business sector on sustainability issues. Some municipalities have made progress and have produced climate protocols or action plans involving the business sector. Many are in their starting blocks, and around 15 municipalities have got in touch initially and asked for additional support.	The Insight survey The "Just make it simpler" training

TABLE 3. Municipalities and regions as producers of welfare services

Heading	Description	More information
Work to promote equal health and sustainability	**"Strategic skills for cross-sectoral work– equal health"** A training that is intended to enhance the skills of strategists and decision-makers in cross-sectoral cooperation for equal health. **Social sustainability meeting place** This is a forum for developing welfare services in a socially responsible way through exchanges of knowledge and experience. The meeting place is run by SALAR and the Public Health Agency of Sweden in collaboration and is open to all societal actors. **Strategy for health** Support for local and regional development work in collaboration between schools, social services, social care and health care – in work to promote health and prevent ill health throughout the population. **Drive for mental health** SALAR's initiative providing an inclusive arena for all actors in society for long-term and cross-sectoral development work for better mental health.	Equal health – skills for cross-sectoral work Social sustainability meeting place Strategy for health Drive for mental health
Work to promote equal living conditions for children and young people and their parents	**All parents should feel safe and secure – before, during and after pregnancy** An initiative in 2015–2022 for equal and improved maternity care and women's health. **Good health and start to life for all children** An initiative to strengthen the work of child health care for equal health through increased availability and through health promotion and preventive measures. Collaboration between child health care, preventive social services and dental care is an important component. **Substance misuse and dependency among young people** SALAR is arranging dialogue meetings and workshops in order to initiate implementation of SALAR's action plan against substance misuse and dependency in the 13–29 age group, as well as development work at local and regional level. **Reception of unaccompanied minors and young adults** SALAR is working to ensure that municipalities and regions will have the right conditions for sustainable reception of good quality, and to ensure that unaccompanied minors and young adults will be given the best possible introduction to Swedish society.	Equal and improved maternity care and women's health Good health and start to life for all children Substance misuse and dependency among young adults Reception of unaccompanied minors and young adults

Heading	Description	More information
Work for gender equality and the rights of the child	**SALAR's model concept for gender mainstreaming** Participating municipalities and regions develop their gender mainstreaming through systematic comparisons and mutual learning. In addition, all municipalities and regions are offered support in their gender equality work through networks, training and support about methods. **Protection of women from violence** Women and children who are subjected to violence have the right to support and assistance. This is an area where municipalities and regions have an important responsibility. SALAR support developments by municipalities and regions in the area. **Support to strengthen the rights of the child** Through networks, training and support about methods. In ever more demand since the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child became Swedish law in 2020.	SALAR's model concept for gender mainstreaming Protection of women from violence Support to strengthen children's rights
Collaboration for knowledge-based practice in various areas – at national, regional and local level	**National system for knowledge-based practice in health care** This is about developing, spreading and using the best possible knowledge in health care. The objective is equal care; that the best knowledge will be available and used in all meetings with patients. **Partnership support for knowledge-based practice in the social services** A model that SALAR, the National Board of Health and Welfare and RSS (Regional collaboration and support structure) have for long-term collaboration between the regional and national level concerning knowledge-based practice in the social services and closely related health care.	National systems for knowledge-based practice in health care Partnership support for knowledge-based practice in the social services
Local health care	The good medical outcomes of health care in Sweden need to be matched by equally good access to health care. At regional level the transition to local health and social care is a response to the changing needs of the population. Local health and social care is available when and where citizens need it, and its starting principle is that health promotion and preventive measures at a cross-sectoral level are the most effective approach for the individual and society.	Local health care
Break long-term dependence on income support	Long-term receipt of municipal income support results both in poorer quality of life for the individual and increased costs for society. SALAR provides assistance by, for instance, producing proposals for changes to systems and holding conferences. Since 2018, SALAR has been running a project in collaboration with 27 municipalities.	Break long-term dependence on income support
Health-promoting introduction for new arrivals	Health-promoting introduction is a collaborative project being run between SALAR, the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Swedish Social Insurance Agency in 2017–2021. The project is aimed at new arrivals covered by introduction activities who have some form of ill health and/or disability. The aim is to support and strengthen their path to work or studies.	Health-promoting introduction for new arrivals

TABLE 3. Municipalities and regions as producers of welfare services, continued

Heading	Description	More information
Good education for all	**IMprove** The aim of the project is to ensure that newly arrived girls and boys who were late-entrants to the school system complete their studies and enter working life. The objective is to produce a model containing effective methods that organisers and schools use to reach better results. The project is running in 2019–2021. **Governance and leadership in mathematics** The objective is to improve teaching and knowledge of mathematics in Sweden. The initiative started in 2018 with five pilot municipalities; a total of eight municipalities are participating as of 2019/2020. At present around 150 teachers are teaching more than 3 000 pupils according to the model in the junior level of compulsory school. The ambition is to double the size of this initiative as of 2020/2021. **Writing-to-learn** Writing-to-learn (WTL) is an educational model for working with the writing process in schools. During 2021 SALAR will continue to offer municipalities support regarding running their own WTL training courses. **Finishing school – getting more pupils to complete their upper secondary schooling** The purpose is to enable more concerted and sustainable national work to increase the share of pupils completing upper secondary studies. To support local and regional development, SALAR is offering a development programme focusing on preventive work. **Open preschool for language and integration** The aim is to speed up the introduction of women born abroad and to increase participation in preschool. The initiative is an agreement with the Government and is to run for three years. As part of this initiative, SALAR is mapping activities in the country and making an inventory of needs, as well as spreading instructive examples of how municipalities coordinate open preschools with language instruction and other integration measures. SALAR is also spreading information about the government grant that municipalities can apply for.	IMprove Governance and leadership in mathematics Write-to-learn Finishing school Open for language and integration Work to prevent violence in schools

Annex 2. Voluntary Local Reviews

In conjunction with the national reviews, four Swedish municipalities – Helsingborg, Malmö, Stockholm and Uppsala – are submitting Voluntary Local Reviews. Presented below are summaries from these reports.

Helsingborg

Executive summary with an open invite to H22 City Expo

In Helsingborg, we strive, we dare, and we do!

Since 2016, Helsingborg has been implementing a Quality-of-Life Programme, a city-wide instrument and steering document for the city's work relating to sustainable development, environment, and public health.

Our ambition is to create a Helsingborg where all people can enjoy a high quality of life but with a low environmental impact, ensuring an inclusive sustainable growth.

For the five years in total, Helsingborg has been awarded as Sweden's most environmentally friendly municipality. 2021 Helsingborg is ranked as number two. This is the result of a long-term initiative centred on citizens' quality of life. Helsingborg's most prominent successes are linked to how we have tackled environmental challenges associated with air, water, and noise pollution, waste management, energy efficiency and climate mitigation. The city has many concrete initiatives that are clearly linked to sustainable energy and sustainable consumption and production, and which involve the establishment of circular systems for resource use. In 2017 we updated our ecological footprint survey, which highlights one of the main challenges in our work with sustainability. If all humans on earth would live like a Helsingborg resident it would require resources equivalent to three earth globes. This is 25% less than average in Sweden but clearly exceeding the Planetary Boundaries. Many challenges remain in reducing our lifestyle's impact on the environment, and the work to do so requires close collaboration with the people who live and work in the city.

Helsingborg's primary challenges going forward are found within the realm of social sustainability. This involves reducing the health inequality between different socioeconomic groups, establishing a prioritised integration process for newcomers, and bolstering the perceived sense of safety and security in the city. Just a few years ago, the environmental discussion was more distinctly separated from discussions concerning social sustainability. Today we know better. We know that environment and public health are closely linked, and that social and environmental sustainability are a prerequisite for a sustainable economy in the long term. Our ambitions require giving those who work in the city the tools needed to measure and monitor, the methods for engaging and enabling, and the support and permission required to think and work in new ways.

Through the city's major welfare and innovation initiative H22, we are directing our focus on the sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda. Working across the city's organisation and collaborating with more than 70 official partners, we have created new arenas for citizens, civil society, academia, and businesses to participate in the co-creation of solutions to future challenges. The ambition is that this will yield results on a local level, but also that solutions can be scaled up globally.

Ongoing innovation initiatives, some of which are briefly described in this review, will be manifested during an international city expo in the summer of 2022.

With less than ten years until the challenges are supposed to be solved, the cities of the world shoulder a great responsibility in implementing the 2030 Agenda. H22 City Expo will be a forum where we focus on what is needed to achieve local transformation and sustainable urban development based on three themes:

> ❭ improving quality of life, referring to life in the city and life between the buildings
> ❭ innovative welfare and urban development solutions
> ❭ and reinventing city governance, which concerns innovative leadership and facilitation in successful urban development.

2022 is the half-way point on the road to 2030. Helsingborg will use this milestone to showcase its own, and the world's, sustainability work through organising H22 City Expo, an international 35-day event where the world is invited to explore how we can together develop the sustainable, thoughtful, and smart city of the future. In addition to the city's own initiatives and the solutions developed by our partners, we also invite other cities to share their solutions and approaches. We will never reach our common goals if we don't work together.

Malmö

Summary

Malmö, Sweden's third largest city, is situated in southern Sweden, at one end of the bridge to Copenhagen, Denmark. The city has focused intently on sustainability issues, often with innovation, for a long time. When the UN decided to adopt Agenda 2030 and the 17 Global Goals in the autumn of 2015, Malmö was the first Swedish city to commit to making the global goals its own. Seven years have passed since then, and 2030 is not far away. For Malmö, therefore, the opportunity to review the city's work on Agenda 2030 by means of what is known as a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) was welcome.

Malmö's work since 2018 has been based on *Strategi för Malmö stads långsiktiga arbete med Agenda 2030* [Strategy for the City of Malmö's long-term work on Agenda 2030], which is based on five processes:

1. Into a regular steering and management system
2. Sustainable development through business development
3. Planned communication and participation for learning and support
4. Increased awareness for conscious decisions
5. Innovative partnerships that make a difference

In this report, the emphasis has been on investigating the first sub-process – how the City of Malmö's regular steering and management system is steering towards the Global Goals. The investigation has focused on a number of city-wide steering documents that are deemed to steer towards the Global Goals, as well as an analysis of how the principle of leaving no one behind is having an impact in steering documents of various kinds. The stakeholders in the VLR process have mainly been internal, therefore, and representatives of all administrations and wholly owned companies within the City of Malmö have taken part. Many social stakeholders in Malmö are involved in the actual implementation of Agenda 2030; some of them are highlighted in the case studies of interesting initiatives and interventions that complement the text of the analysis.

Malmö has chosen in its VLR report to focus on the same nine goals that are the focus of this year's *High Level Political Forum*, the UN's annual forum for the monitoring and review of Agenda 2030. The analysis is based on *Sustainability Report 2019*, which analyses the outcome in Malmö for all Global Goals, and *Sustainability Report 2020*, which followed up goals linked with the social dimension of Agenda 2030. A brief overview of the current situation in Malmö in relation to the nine selected goals for 2020 is provided below. The analysis is limited to nine of the seventeen Global Goals, thereby losing some of the complexity and interdependence of the goals and posing a risk of providing an incomplete illustration. Large parts of the ecological dimension are missing for the most part, but the economic and social dimensions would also benefit from reporting of all the objectives. The outcome analysis is also limited by access to indicators at a local level. The conclusions must also be evaluated in this context.

Nevertheless, the overview provides an indication and an illustration of our current position on the basis of factors that we can measure. What the illustration needs to be supplemented with is discussed regularly throughout the text.

Human rights work has come a long way in the City of Malmö over the years. That said, further development work is needed so as to ensure that rights work is systematically linked to sustainability issues in relevant steering and management processes. This is important given the notion that overall sustainability work should harmonise with the intentions of the agenda as a whole, emphasising a holistic approach and the importance of leaving no one behind.

Malmö's model for integration of the Global Goals has involved considering *Malmö stads budget* [Budget for the City of Malmö], the city's top steering document, to be a local action plan for Agenda 2030. The city's goals for the City Council, which form a basis for budget priorities, have been linked to the Global Goals since 2020. Development work is in progress in the city, looking at systematic approaches in follow-up processes. This work also

includes a structure for annual follow-ups of sustainability issues. Sustainability reporting follows up on the outcome, and an approach can be formulated for the following year's priorities on the basis of these analyses. The budget, with its more short-term perspective, is complemented by longer-term programmes, regulations and legislation.

This system is predominantly deemed to be operating satisfactorily, but there is room for improvement. The following is recommended in order to develop and reinforce efforts in respect of *Strategi för Malmö stads långsiktiga arbete med Agenda 2030*:

> Further development of efforts to link sustainability and rights issues more clearly.
> Build further on the model for integration of Agenda 2030 into the City Council's budget and budget process, particularly as regards implementation and follow-up, and continue with efforts to achieve the ambition of making the budget the local Agenda 2030 plan.
> Continue with integration of sustainability in other relevant parts of the steering and management system, such as leadership, recruitment, skills, awareness and communication.
> Use content and specific proposals in this report as a basis for the City of Malmö's S*ustainability Report 2021*, and also as a basis for discussion in relevant internal fora and as part of future discussion processes involving social stakeholders.

Stockholm

Highlights – the story of Stockholm

The City of Stockholm is an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable city where people want to live, grow old and raise their children. Stockholm is a beautiful place which combines the characteristics of a vibrant city with proximity to the sea and nature. The city has actively reduced its climate impact and achieved strong economic development, and the Stockholm living environments are generally good and safe.

Sustainability plays an important role in the city's overall policy document: *Vision 2040 Stockholm – City of Opportunities*. This document outlines the city's long-term ambitions with regard to sustainable development. The vision is based on the city's three principal operational goals:

> A modern city with opportunities for everyone
> A dynamic and sustainably growing city
> A financially sustainable and innovative city

The city of Stockholm should also play a leading role in implementing the Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals at the local level. *Leaving no one behind* is the core objective of the Agenda, and this represents a key starting point in Stockholm, where everyone should have the opportunity to be economic self-sufficient and realise their dreams.

The coronavirus pandemic has dominated the past year and impacted the conditions for sustainability work even if the long-term ambitions remain the same. The pandemic has worsened the labour market outlook, especially for young people and those born abroad. In the wake of the pandemic, a more significant number of Stockholm residents need to be equipped with the relevant training to gain a foothold on the labour market. Another priority for the city is to strengthen the conditions for entrepreneurship.

A strong business community is a prerequisite for meeting welfare needs and finance climate investments for a sustainable city.

Based on international comparisons, Stockholm has made significant progress in the field of sustainable development. The fact that the city is an attractive place to live and work in is evidenced by the strong population growth seen in recent decades. Stockholm has a dynamic business community characterised by high growth. This enables a strong labour market and high employment figures. The city is also characterised by openness, tolerance and a rich cultural offering. This enables a high level of wellbeing and a good quality of life for residents.

The city of Stockholm has been conducting successful environmental work for several decades, including mitigating Greenhouse gas emissions from the city's geographic area while growing the economy and the population. The city began developing its public transport system and connecting its properties to the district heating network early on. The first environment programme was adopted in 1976, and in 2010, Stockholm was chosen as the first European Green Capital. The ambitious environmental and climate work has enabled creating an environmentally sustainable city with a healthy local environment and a high quality of life. Currently, the main challenge is making the city fossilfuel-free by 2040, with the additional aim of being climate positive. To make this a reality, the reduction of emissions needs to accelerate, particularly in the transport sector. The public sector, the business community and residents, need to join forces on this issue. Carefully considered urban planning is another important tool for increased sustainability.

Social sustainability has also been reinforced and developed. Stockholm fares well in a global comparison thanks to a high standard of living and a well-developed welfare system. The average life expectancy is increasing, and the Stockholm population is generally equal and well-educated, as reflected by its heavily knowledge-based business community and healthy labour market. Compared to other major European cities, Stockholm has a high employment level and low relative poverty figures, for example.

This has an impact on public health, which has seen positive long-term development overall. Significant efforts have also gone into increasing the safety of the city's residents.

At the same time, the sustainability work needs to consider discrepancies regarding living conditions and health between different groups in the city. The ongoing pandemic risks exacerbating these differences. These need to be tackled with force to ensure that all Stockholm residents, regardless of where in the city they live, are given equal opportunities to develop and make use of the opportunities available.

It is particularly important to ensure that all children can grow up and be educated healthily, safely and with good life chances. This represents an important basis for financially sustainable development across the entire city.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on society and economics in the past year and has highlighted society's vulnerability. The long-term effects are still unknown.

At the same time, the crisis has put the ability to adapt quickly and the power to develop in the spotlight. It has, for example, accelerated the digitalisation of schools and workplaces and influenced the day-to-day lives of a large number of people.

As society reopens in the wake of the pandemic, Stockholm's ambition is not only to recover but to come out stronger as an attractive place to live where the quality of life is high. Social crises tend to impact more heavily on already vulnerable groups within a population. This is also the case with the current pandemic. The 2030 Agenda and the global sustainable development goals represent an important tool reopening society and achieving a sustainable recovery in the wake of the pandemic.

Uppsala

This is Uppsala

The City of Uppsala is located close to Sweden's capital Stockholm. With its 230,000 inhabitants, Uppsala is the fourth-largest city in the country. By 2050, the city is expected to have 100,000 more inhabitants than today. The rate of construction is high, and growth has a focus on sustainable development. Uppsala has two universities, a well-educated population, and strong knowledge-intensive industries. Uppsala has had several distinctions for its work on sustainability: best city of the year for public health, best city in Sweden for climate adaptability, and best city for cycling, to name a few examples. Uppsala has repeatedly been acknowledged as Sweden's Climate City, and in 2018 it was designated the World Climate City by the World Wide Fund for Nature.

About the report

This is Uppsala's first Voluntary Local Review. The report illustrates how the 2030 Agenda goals have been integrated in Uppsala's governance. The city has a broad activity, which in recent years has increased sustainability in social, environmental and economic development. It is also apparent that the Uppsala is working, or has been working, on all of the targets that are relevant to the city. To facilitate learning, the report highlights some examples of what the city has done to make the development more sustainable – examples that illustrate successes, challenges and lessons learned.

Sustainable development in Uppsala
– some experiences

Together, we reach lower. The city has a partnership with local organisations from the business world, the public sector and civil society, and this has enabled it to successfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Uppsala has a high level of ambition in its climate work, and an objective to become fossil-free by 2030 and climate-positive by 2050. Emissions decreased by ten per cent in the period 2015-2018, but the work is being intensified to reduce emissions at an even faster pace.

Regional cooperation for increased inclusiveness. Uppsala is working systematically to counteract the effects of exclusion. For a few districts, the city has produced special packages of measures

to increase equality and security. The plans are implemented in partnership between organisations within the public sector, the business world and civil society, and have resulted in, among other things, the establishment of training and job centres, the improvement of meeting places, increased security, cleaning and the removal of graffiti, the development of social support and an expansion of leisure activity options.

"Leave no-one behind" as a principle of integration. Equality of opportunities is not an isolated area of policy-making, but something that permeates everything the city does. Because the city's operations include parity and equality as perspectives in what they are already doing, it is a built-in quality rather than something that exists by itself. Not all residents of the city have the same opportunities to use its services or make their voices heard. By actively reaching out and listening to groups with different requirements and needs, the city forms a basis for decisions that takes the needs of its residents into account.

Lessons learned and questions about the future

Its experiences from the sustainability work have allowed Uppsala to identify some ingredients for creating success:

1. Ambition – Create impetus for change through political vigilance.
2. Capacity – Mobilise cooperation in matters where more people have influence.
3. Knowledge – Make the differences between mapping and analysis visible.
4. Focus – Direct efforts to those areas or groups that have the greatest need.
5. Learning – Monitor and evaluate efforts to get a clearer picture of needs.
6. Integration – Make sure that the benefits of the new become part of the ordinary.

The City of Uppsala is proud of a great many things that have been put in place to create a more sustainable society than today's, but the work has only just begun. Some important questions on the future of the city are about further increasing the capacity to adapt to crises and the climate impact, being able to manage conflicts of goals and competitive perspectives, and changing its role from being a city expert to a driver of social mobilisation.

For inclusion in future reports

With the experience of this report, there are some things that can be highlighted as tips for future reports.

Be guided by what the local governance looks like. By emphasising what is "our way" of doing things, it's easier to ensure that the report is understood locally. It is also easier for an outside reader to get a feeling for what the integration looks like.

Highlight examples that show a "how". By stating more than just "that" and "what", you increase the chances that someone will grasp a method and use it in their own context.

Start early. Much of the content of the report does not rely on up-to-date information, so it's possible to start early in relation to the end date. In this way, you create time to involve more people within and outside your own organisation.

Think web rather than report. This is a classic report, with a clear-cut beginning and end. If the report is presented online instead, there are greater opportunities to click on more detailed text, videos, maps, sound clips and open data.

Voluntary Subnational Review

LOCALISING THE SDGs IN SWEDEN

In collaboration with the United Cities and Local Governments, this report presents ongoing work in Swedish municipalities and regions – of vital importance to the advancement of sustainable development.

The Voluntary Subnational Review represents a country-wide, bottom-up reporting process on the localisation of SDGs. It is the result of an continuous multi-level dialogue, in Sweden and abroad.

Ultimately, by supplementing and connecting the different levels of voluntary reporting to the High Level Political Forum, this report aims to strengthen horizontal and vertical collaboration towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**Swedish Association
of Local Authorities
and Regions**