

A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Viken, Norway

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Preface

The OECD and the county of Viken, Norway are delighted to introduce the results of the policy dialogue that was conducted over 2 years with more than 100 stakeholders to strengthen a territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Viken, Norway.

In today's highly uncertain policy environment, the SDGs are more relevant than ever. In shaping long-term recovery measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SDGs offer a valuable framework to build a more sustainable and resilient society in a shared responsibility across levels of government. Climate change, spatial inequalities and uneven growth, and demographic pressures on urban and rural areas are exacerbating regional and local development challenges in Viken and require a holistic approach to policymaking.

Through its *Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024*, the county of Viken, Norway, formally formed in January 2020, has endorsed the SDGs as a holistic framework for the strategic planning and future development of the newly created region. The SDGs provide a catalyst for governmental transformation, developing the region within planetary boundaries, that is promoting social and economic development while preserving the environment, and drawing on the best available knowledge and indicators. Civil society engagement and youth councils are key features in the county's efforts in advancing the SDGs and making all parts of Viken attractive places to live and work.

The OECD report *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Viken, Norway* provides policy guidance on how to use the SDGs to implement a functional approach to ensure balanced regional development across urban and rural areas, and address challenges such as institutional fragmentation. It helped Viken authorities build the narrative and future roadmap for sustainable development, and set priorities for investing in smart low-carbon mobility to reduce car dependence and increase connectivity, as well as creating job opportunities in low density and rural areas through R&D and cluster policies.

Throughout the policy dialogue underlying this report, we shared our experience with a wide variety of stakeholders in Viken and learned from peer policymakers from the municipality of Kópavogur (Iceland) and the region of Southern Denmark (Denmark). The OECD and the county of Viken worked with numerous municipalities and institutions from the public, private and non-profit sectors to build consensus, discuss the policy recommendations and scale up success stories.

Both institutions are proud of this journey and the results achieved and look forward to continued collaboration to support the implementation of the policy recommendations in the future.



Lamia Kamal-Chaoui,
Director, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs,
Regions and Cities



Tonje Brenna,
Chair of the County Government
of Viken, Norway

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This report was prepared by the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE) led by Lamia Kamal-Chaoui, Director, as part of the Programme of Work and Budget of the Regional Development Policy Committee (RDPC). It is the result of a two-year policy dialogue with more than 100 stakeholders from public, private and non-profit sectors across all levels of government in Viken, Norway.

The report was drafted by a core team of OECD policy analysts comprised of Stina Heikkilä and Lorenz Gross of the CFE, and co-ordinated by Stefano Marta, Co-ordinator of the OECD Programme on A Territorial Approach to the SDGs, under the supervision of Aziza Akhmouch, Head of the Cities, Urban Policies and Sustainable Development Division in the CFE. The report benefitted from the support of Marcos Díaz Ramírez, Statistician, for the analysis of the local SDG data for the county of Viken, Norway.

The OECD Secretariat is grateful for the high-level political impetus and commitment from Tonje Brenna Chair of the County Government of Viken, Norway and Roger Ryberg, Mayor of the county of Viken, Norway. Special thanks are herein conveyed to the excellent local team, which was directed by Gunn Nygard, and was composed of Charlott Sandor Johansen, Jon Moxnes, Linda Duffy, Line Begby, Espen Nedland Hansen, Gørill Elisabeth Brodahl, Trond Myrland, Hilde Reine, Bente Bjerknes, Kristian Thowsen, and several other colleagues. The Secretariat is also grateful to the peer reviewers who contributed their valuable expertise and experience, participated in missions and provided international best practices as well as guidance on the report, namely Auður Finnbogadóttir, project manager of strategy from the municipality of Kópavogur, Iceland, Johanna Lundström, former chief analyst and Rikke Stamp Thorsen, analyst from the region of Southern Denmark.

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François Iglesias and Pilar Philip in the CFE prepared the report for publication, and Eleonore Morena edited and formatted it.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ASviS	Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (<i>Alleanza Italiana per lo</i>
BUFT	Buskerud youth council (<i>Buskerud Ungdommens Fylkesting</i>)
CFE	OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities
CNCPS	National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies Argentina (<i>Consejo Nacional Coordinación de Políticas Sociales</i>)
CSO	Civil society organisation
CIE	Centre for Industrial Electronics
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
ForUM	Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment
FUA	Functional urban area
GDP	Gross Domestic product
GSDR	Global Sustainable Development Report
GPS	Green Planet Strategy
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
ICSU	International Council for Science
IN	Intermediate
KMD	Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (<i>Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet</i>)
KS	Association of Norwegian Local and Regional Authorities
KWh	Kilowatt-hours
LAU	Local administrative unit
MDA	Metropolitan Development Area
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NHO	Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (<i>Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon</i>)

NOK	Norwegian Krone
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PM 2.5	Particulate matter 2.5
PR	Predominantly rural
PRC	Predominantly rural regions close to a city
PRR	Predominantly rural remote regions
PU	Predominantly urban
R&D	Research and development
RCE	Regional Centre of Expertise
RDPC	Regional Development Policy Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIVA	Industrial Development Corporation of Norway (<i>Selskapet for industrivekst</i>)
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNA	United Nations Association
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
USD	United States Dollar
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VVSG	Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (<i>Vereniging van Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten</i>)
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive summary

Viken, Norway was officially formed as a new county on 1 January 2020, merging the previous counties of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold. The newly elected county government has endorsed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a holistic framework for implementing the territorial reform and for strategic planning of the region, recognising the planetary boundaries as a concept within which long-term sustainability can be achieved. A Territorial Approach to the SDGs can help implement the Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024, within a complex governance landscape with multiple authorities spanning across administrative boundaries. Viken's sustainable development challenges and opportunities vary across its 51 municipalities, and between highly urbanised and largely rural areas. A functional approach will help maximise the assets and strengths of all territories of the county and promote better access to economic development opportunities, labour market, skills and education across the county where disparities are witnessed between rural areas and urban centres. The impact of the economic downturn following the COVID-19 crisis also highlights the need to create opportunities for people to re-skill and to ensure affordable housing for a growing population.

Key findings

Viken performs very well in many social, economic and environmental dimensions of the SDGs

Viken belongs to the top 25% of OECD regions in more than half of the indicators considered for SDGs related to poverty, health, education, unemployment, pollution levels and renewable energy.

- **Viken is within the top 3% of OECD regions in terms of the share of its population (9.4%) living below the 60% threshold of the national median disposable income.**
- **Around 41% of the county's population aged between 25 and 66 had successfully completed tertiary education in 2018** (44% if also considering vocational tertiary education), around 10 percentage points higher than the corresponding average of OECD regions.
- **In 2017, air pollution levels were considerably lower than the World Health Organization (WHO) Air Quality Guideline value** and among the top 25% of OECD regions with the lowest PM2.5 exposure (8.0 µg/m³ in Viken compared to WHO guideline value of 10 µg/m³ average annual exposure).
- **In 2019, one hundred percent of Viken's electricity production came from renewable sources** (mainly hydropower), thus outperforming the average of OECD regions (42%).

Uneven growth and spatial inequality threaten the long-term sustainability

- **Viken's labour market, functionally integrated with Oslo, faces some challenges.** Remote areas from Oslo show weaker performance than those located closer, with for example, in 2019, employment rates in Østfold (72.7%) and Buskerud (76.7%) lower than Akershus (81.7%). A

significant gender gap in part-time employment – 39.1 percentage points in 2013 – is another challenge for Viken.

- **Viken’s natural environment, subject to the growth pressure, is less protected.** In 2019, around 10.7% of the area of Viken had a protected status, such as national park or nature reserve, compared to the national average (17.3%) and the average of OECD regions (19.2%). In addition, pressures from demographic growth and expansion of built-up areas represent a challenge to the preservation of biodiversity.
- **Car dependence is also a significant issue,** with a number of privately owned motor road vehicles (56 motor road vehicles per 100 people in 2018) considerably above the average of the country (52) and OECD regions (40).

The Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 provides a holistic framework to address identified challenges

- **The development of the strategy constitutes a departure from traditional sector-based planning, with a focus on a few interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral regional plans for its implementation.** Key priority areas include quality of life, well-being and equal opportunities; sustainable and just economic systems; sustainable land use, food production and nutrition; reduced greenhouse gas emissions and energy decarbonisation; holistic urban and local development; environment, ecosystem and biodiversity.
- **Viken takes a knowledge-based approach to the regional planning process by developing an SDG baseline for Viken – the “Knowledge Base”.** The Knowledge Base provides an opportunity for Viken to set quantified targets related to the SDGs that can be monitored over time.
- **Viken recognises the concept of “planetary boundaries” to guide policymaking and priorities** in promoting regional economic growth and development while at the same time maintaining ecological systems intact and using natural resources sustainably.

The SDGs provide a common framework for strengthening multi-level governance in Norway

- **The national government has taken steps to strengthen horizontal and vertical co-ordination to implement the SDGs.** These include an action plan, a Coherence Forum and a State Secretary Committee to promote political co-ordination and participation to advance the SDGs. Guidance issued by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (KMD) further urges counties and municipalities to integrate the SDGs in their strategic planning.
- **The SDGs can reinforce the value of a functional approach to sustainable development, which can help Viken address spatial inequality and institutional fragmentation.** Urban development pressures linked to the core-periphery dynamics around the capital Oslo is a central question for Viken’s long-term sustainable development. For example, taking functional urban areas (FUAs) as the appropriate scale for spatial development dynamics can help improve public transport and balanced regional development outside the Oslo area.
- **Counties and municipalities need to upscale their efforts in implementing the SDGs.** While some counties and municipalities are proactively incorporating the SDGs in their local policies and strategies, others have limited capacity to work with the goals strategically and systematically. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation can play a key role by understanding local needs, as well as providing guidance and raising awareness about the resources and support available at national level.

Further steps can be taken to raise awareness of the SDGs and foster a “whole-of-society” approach

- **Youth and civil society have a central role to play in the 2030 Agenda in Viken** to influence local policymaking in areas particularly relevant to youth, such as advocating for public transport and availability of internship opportunities. In addition, civil society organisations like UNA Norway and umbrella organisations like ForUM can act as multipliers to increase public awareness of the SDGs.
- **Existing tools to support business development (e.g. cluster policies) and public procurement could play a larger role in implementing the SDGs.** For example, high risks and costs associated with some innovations, for instance, health-innovative companies, risks losing these companies which relocate overseas to develop their products, removing this innovative potential from Norway. Improved support to innovation, research and development (R&D) in Viken including through cluster support policies, public procurement, and partnerships with education providers could address this challenge, and provide skilled labour to local industries.

Policy recommendations

To fully leverage a territorial approach to the SDGs in Viken, the following eight policy recommendations should be considered:

- **Use the Knowledge Base and its datasets to advance the narrative and future roadmap for sustainable development of Viken.** The Knowledge Base provides a tool for policy dialogue on the Regional Planning Strategy, its implementation and ultimately towards achieving the SDGs. The Knowledge Base should also be used as one of the building blocks for creating the narrative for Viken, engaging the wider public through, for example, an open data portal, while drawing on narratives created by local and regional actors across Viken.
- **Promote a functional approach to address Viken’s key development challenges related to public transport, housing and industry cluster policies, and to ensure balanced regional development.** For example:
 - Invest in smart low-carbon mobility to reduce car dependence and increase connectivity without compromising long-term sustainability.
 - Promote development not only in areas immediately connected to Oslo but also in less dense and rural areas, through for instance, R&D and cluster policies to create job opportunities in Østfold’s manufacturing-dominated economy, as well as in the forestry and aquaculture sectors.
 - Raise awareness of the importance of inter-municipal collaboration for strategic planning to align policies in responding to key challenges such as carbon emissions from private cars and access to education.
- **Secure adequate convening power and resources to the newly created SDG co-ordination mechanisms for the implementation of the SDGs in Viken.** Centres of government, Chief of Government offices and other leading departments are valuable catalysts to drive the SDGs implementation throughout Viken.
- **Engage in dialogues with the national government, as well as with other Norwegian counties, to advance the SDGs in Norway.** As a pioneer of the SDGs in Norway, Viken can play an active role in strengthening Norway’s multi-level governance for the SDGs through existing regional planning fora.
- **Work further with the national government to mainstream local action into the national SDGs implementation framework.** The formulation of a national action plan for the SDGs

provides a new impetus to strengthen the involvement of counties and municipalities in policy dialogue with the national level, through mapping local and regional governments' needs, and communicating resources and support available to localise the SDGs.

- **Based on its Knowledge Base, Viken should analyse synergies and trade-offs across SDGs targets to make the most of the holistic and transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda.** Decision-making around synergies (e.g. R&D and climate action), trade-offs (e.g. protected areas vs. urban development) and conflicts (e.g. expansion of infrastructure vs. environmental impact of the construction sector) at local and regional levels should stem from a participatory process with territorial stakeholders to ensure their understanding and buy-in.
- **Raise further awareness among civil society and the general public to operationalise the planning strategy, develop new regional plans and promote continued engagement.** The county government should involve the Viken Youth Council, the Council for elderly, and the Council for people with reduced physical functionalities in strategic discussions. Viken should contribute to the toolkit for municipalities planned to be developed by the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and UNA Norway, allowing municipalities to broaden the base of the regional planning strategy, including by sharing lessons learnt from using the SDGs as a framework for stakeholder engagement.
- **Mobilise the private sector on the SDGs through public procurement and clusters policy.** For example, these tools can be used to leverage the key role of companies in de-carbonising the economy and promoting social inclusion. The role of social enterprises as employers can also be harnessed to enhance social inclusion in the labour market. The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise and industry associations can be key partners in communicating the needs of the private sector and co-designing solutions.

1 The SDGs as a tool to implement territorial reforms in Viken, Norway

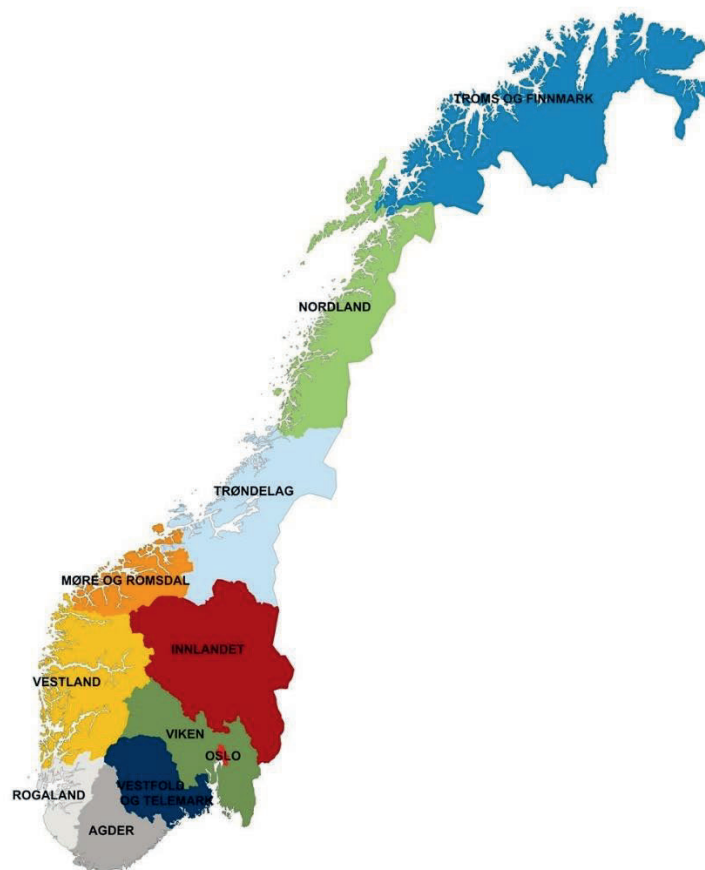
Viken was formally formed as a new county on the first of January 2020, merging the previous counties of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold. Viken is the most populous county in Norway, with varied development dynamics across its territory. The county government for Viken elected in 2019 endorsed the SDGs as a holistic framework for the strategic planning and future development of the region, focusing on i) utilising the framework for governmental transformation; ii) drawing on the best available knowledge and indicators for the county; and iii) developing the region within planetary boundaries. The Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 incorporates this vision. While some municipalities have started to work on integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in their local plans, many more could use the SDGs as a tool for governmental transformation processes.

Viken: The most populous new county in Norway

Following a reform by the Norwegian government that reduced the number of counties from 19 to 11 by merging existing ones into new, larger counties, Viken was formally formed as a new county (*Fylkeskommune*) in January 2020, merging the previous counties of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold (Figure 1.1). Oslo remains a separate county at the geographical centre of Viken.

With more than 1.2 million inhabitants, the new county of Viken is the most populous in Norway, accounting for 23.4% of Norway's total population. Among the former counties, Akershus was the most populous, with 624 055 inhabitants in 2019, followed by Østfold (297 520) and Buskerud (283 148). While all counties have experienced population growth in the past 5 years, the rate has been the fastest growing in Akershus: 8% compared to around 4% in the other counties since 2014 (Statistics Norway, 2019^[1]). The overall population density in Viken was around 50 people per km² in 2019, which is high compared to the national average of 17.2 people per km² but low in comparison to most peer regions in Europe.

Figure 1.1. The new counties in Norway following the territorial reform effective first of January 2020



Note: This map does not include the municipalities of Jevnaker and Lunner, which joined the county of Viken after the original map was produced.

Source: Government of Norway (2019^[2]), *Nye fylker (New Counties)*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/kommuner-og-regioner/regionreform/regionreform/nye-fylker/id2548426/> (accessed on 4 September 2020).

Akershus ranks highest out of the three counties on several key development indicators, while comparatively weaker performance in Østfold – the most rural of the three – highlights the need for

balanced regional development in the new county. The estimated regional gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in the 3 counties in 2016 was USD 47 836 for Akershus, USD 44 371 for Buskerud and USD 36 260 for Østfold, compared to the national average of USD 59 719 and USD 88 358 for Oslo (OECD, 2020^[3]). Akershus further shows best outcomes on many other indicators in the OECD regional well-being framework (Table 1.1), while Østfold generally has lower levels of income, employment and economic growth than in Norway overall (OECD, 2018^[4]).

Table 1.1. Selected indicators for OECD regional well-being in Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold, compared to the Oslo region and the Norwegian national average

Regional well-being dimension	Jobs	Jobs	Safety	Health	Environment	Civic Engagement
Indicator	Employment rate (% of working-age population)	Unemployment (% of the labour force)	Homicide rate (per 100-000 people)	Life expectancy (number of years)	Air pollution (level of PM2.5, µg/m ³)	Voter turnout (% participation in latest general elections)
Year	2019	2016	2019	2008	2012	2017
Akershus	81.2	4	0.5	81.4	6.2	81.2
Buskerud	76.7	4.9	1.1	80.4	5.5	77.3
Østfold	72.7	5.6	0.0	79.9	6.9	75
Oslo (TL3)	79	5.2	0.4	80.3	5.5	80.2
National average	75.3	4.8	0.5	80.8 (2008) 82.7 (2017)	7.6 (2012) 6.6 (2016)	78.2

Note: Based on data available for OECD Territorial Level 3 regions (Fylker), latest year available in the OECD database. The data section in Chapter 2 provides a comparison among OECD TL2 regions.

Source: OECD (2020^[3]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>; Statistics Norway (2020^[5]), *StatBank Norway*, <https://www.ssb.no/en/statbank> (accessed on 3 June 2020).

Regional well-being indicators in the Norwegian geographic regions (*Landsdeler*) further capture some data that is unavailable at the county level in the OECD regional database. Overall, all geographic regions in Norway are in the highest-ranking OECD peers for most regional well-being indicators (OECD, 2016^[6]). People living in South-Eastern Norway (including the former counties Buskerud, Østfold, Telemark and Vestfold) have a slightly higher sense of community than the Oslo region (including Akershus and Oslo): 95% compared to 93.8% perceive to have a social network support. People also have more space per person in terms of housing in South-Eastern Norway (2.1 rooms compared to 1.8) and better air quality (5.4 µg/m³ compared to 5.6 µg/m³ mean annual exposure to particulate matter PM2.5). However, this is not the case looking at Buskerud and Østfold alone (Table 1.1).

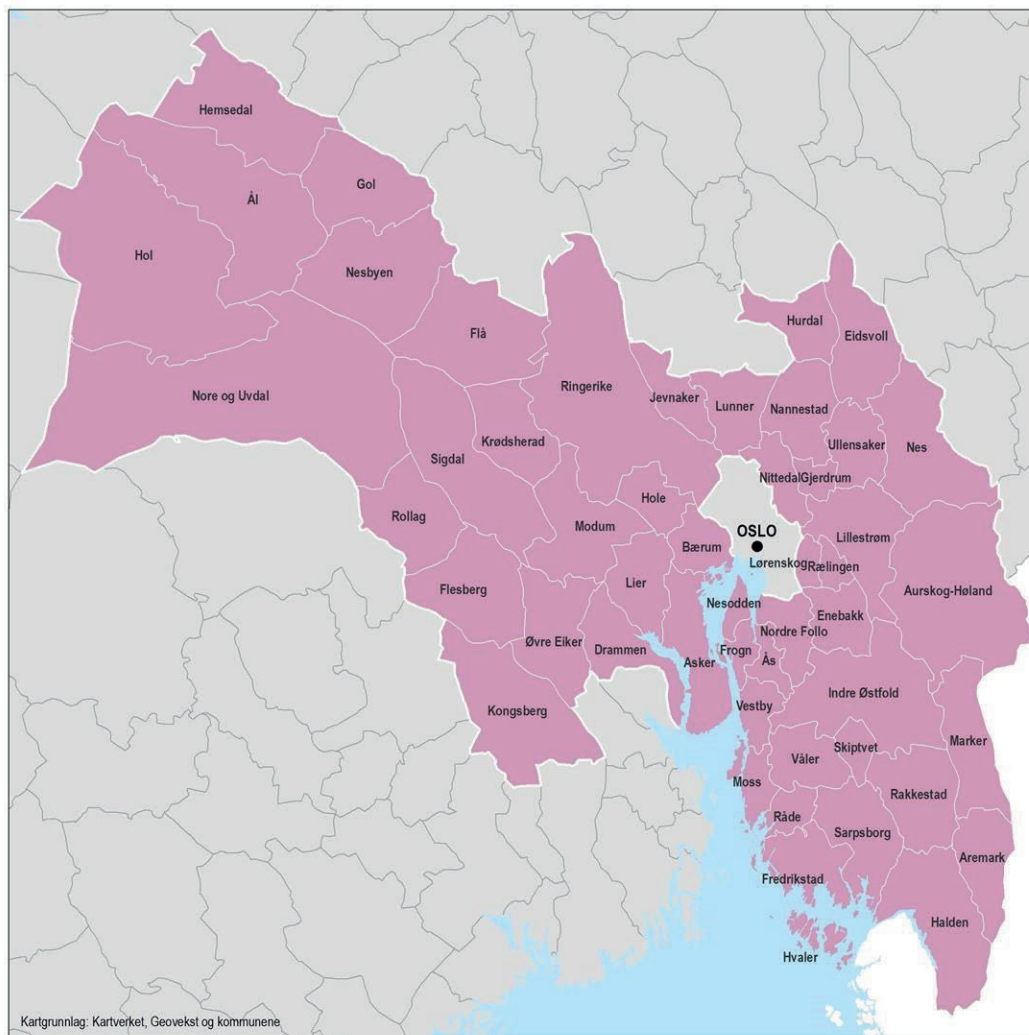
Viken is the largest agricultural county in Norway. Its 9.5% of cultivated land area represents 20% of the national total area. For wheat and oat crops, 60% of Norway's cultivated land area is in Viken. It further has large grazing areas. Due to its varied topography and geographic landscape, Viken is also rich in biodiversity, with over 80% of Norway's terrestrial species represented in the county. Nonetheless, pressures from demographic growth and expansion of built-up areas represent a challenge to the preservation of biodiversity (County of Viken, 2020^[7]).

Yet primary industries account for only 1.3% of employment in 2018 in Viken against 2.2% for the country as a whole. The dominating industry in Viken is the service sector, with 42% of the jobs in retail, hospitality industry, transport, financial services, business services and real estate. 21% of the workforce employed in the health sector, while public administration and education sectors account for 13% of employment (County of Viken, 2020^[7]).

As a business location, Akershus scored 4th on the 2018 Business Sector Index for counties in Norway, while Buskerud scored 6th and Østfold 14th (Telemarksforskning, 2018^[8]). The Business Sector Index measures business development according to productivity, profitability, new start-ups, employment growth and the relative size of the business sector. Employment growth (measured in percentage increase of the number of workplaces) was strongest in Akershus among the 3 former counties: 3.3% increase in 2018 compared to 1.9% in Buskerud and 1.3% in Østfold. In Akershus and Buskerud, the majority of new workplaces were in the private sector, while Østfold saw a larger increase in public sector employment in 2018.

Viken's 51 municipalities are diverse in both size and characteristics, ranging from municipalities in the metropolitan area surrounding Oslo to rural areas in the west (formerly Buskerud) and the south-eastern interior (formerly Østfold). Sixteen municipalities have less than 5 000 inhabitants, while the largest (Bærum) has over 128 000. As part of the territorial reform, 18 municipalities merged to form 6 new municipalities¹ (Figure 1.2). The diverse nature of municipalities is a key challenge when it comes ensuring balanced development in Viken.

Figure 1.2. Municipalities of the county of Viken following the territorial reform



Source: County of Viken (2020^[9]), *Kart over Viken (Map of Viken)*, <https://viken.no/tjenester/planlegging/analyse-statistikk-og-kart/karttjenester/kart-over-viken.20488.aspx> (accessed on 8 October 2020).

Policies and strategies for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Viken

Political commitment to the 2030 Agenda

Pending the new county government of Viken elected in September 2019, a joint political board with political representatives from all three merging counties was set up in December 2017 to decide on the implementation of the territorial reform in Viken. In addition, a Viken project team was formed with representatives from all county administrations, tasked with preparing for the establishment of the new county. Following local elections in September 2019, which took place as if the mergers between the former counties had already come into effect, the new county government was formed based on a parliamentary model.

Early in 2018, the Joint Board of Viken used the SDGs as a basis of regional development in Viken. In March 2019, the Board integrated the SDGs holistically and adopted a new county organisation aiming for: i) the development of a planning and steering system, with the SDGs as guiding principle; ii) incorporating the SDGs as a management responsibility; iii) connecting the SDGs to internal culture building; and iv) involving staff from communication, human resources and budget steering into a dialogue.

The main motivation for adopting the SDGs as the framework for the development of Viken was related to the expectation that the counties should be enabled to take a stronger, more strategic and holistic role in regional development as part of the territorial reform. Taking this role, counties could function as “bridge builders” between policy sectors at the national level and diversified local needs, with more strategic regional development providing a potential solution to complex societal challenges, such as long-term sustainable development. The initiative to use the SDGs on the local and regional levels was further strengthened through the national government’s *Expectation Document for Regional and Local Planning*, published in May 2019.

The responsibilities of the new county of Viken cover many areas essential to the SDGs. These include: business development and business-oriented research (R&D); agriculture; transport; education; skills and integration; culture; public health; environment and climate. In addition, requirements for holistic governance that are embedded in the regional reform match the transformative nature and ambitions of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. While the three traditional dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are already well-rooted in the three counties that formed Viken, the SDGs constitute an opportunity to further raise awareness and amplify results towards sustainable development.

Box 1.1. Why a territorial approach to the SDGs?

The 2030 Agenda was not designed specifically for cities and regions but they play a crucial role to achieve the SDGs. The OECD estimates that at least 105 of the 169 targets underlying the 17 SDGs will not be reached without proper engagement and co-ordination with local and regional governments as cities and regions have core responsibilities that are central to sustainable development and well-being (e.g. water services, housing or transport). They also discharge a significant share of public investment (60% in OECD countries), which is critical to channel the required funding to meet the SDGs. Although the SDGs provide a global framework, the opportunities and challenges for sustainable development vary significantly across and within countries, regions and cities. However, they are also an integral part of the solution as the varying nature of sustainable development challenges therefore calls for place-based solutions tailored to territorial specificities, needs and capacities. Place-based policies incorporate a set of co-ordinated actions specifically designed for a particular city or region and stress the need to shift from a sectoral to a multi-sectoral approach, from one-size-fits-all to context-

specific measures and from a top-down to a bottom-up approach to policymaking. Based on the idea of policy co-ordination across sectors and multi-level governance, whereby all levels of government and non-state actors should play a role in the policy process, they consider and analyse functional territories, build on the endogenous development potential of each territory and use a wide range of actions (OECD, 2019^[10]).

The SDGs can help to advance conceptually the shift towards a new regional development policy paradigm and provide a framework to implement it because:

- The 2030 Agenda provides a long-term vision for strategies and policies with a common milestone in 2030, while acknowledging that targeted action is needed in different places since their exposure to challenges and risk vary widely as does their capacity to cope with them.
- The interconnected SDGs framework allows the promotion of policy complementarities and the management of trade-offs across goals. Indeed, the SDGs enable policymakers to address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development concomitantly, building on the synergies and taking interlinkages into account.
- The SDGs allow to better implement the concept of functional territories, a common framework that neighbouring municipalities can use to strengthen collaborations and to co-ordinate actions.
- The SDGs can be used to promote multi-level governance and partnerships, including the engagement of various stakeholders in the policymaking process.

The OECD analytical framework for *A Territorial Approach to the SDGs*

The OECD has identified four critical megatrends influencing the achievement of the SDGs in cities and regions: i) demographic changes, in particular urbanisation, ageing and migration; ii) climate change and the need to transition to a low-carbon economy; iii) technological changes, such as digitalisation and the emergence of artificial intelligence; and iv) globalisation and the related geography of discontent. The SDGs provide a framework for cities and regions to respond systemically to such global megatrends. The proposed OECD framework foresees three key areas, policies and strategies, actors and tools, for cities and regions to implement a territorial approach to the SDGs.

Policies and strategies

Cities and regions can use the SDGs as a means to shift from a sectoral to a multi-sectoral approach, both in the design and implementation of their policies. The SDGs can help to bring various departments of a local administration together to strengthen the collaboration in policy implementation. Regional policy aims to effectively address the diversity of economic, social, demographic, institutional and geographic conditions across cities and regions. It also ensures that sectoral policies are co-ordinated with each other and meet the specific needs of different regions and provides the tools that traditional structural policies often lack in order to address region-specific factors that cause economic and social stagnation (OECD, 2019^[10]).

Tools

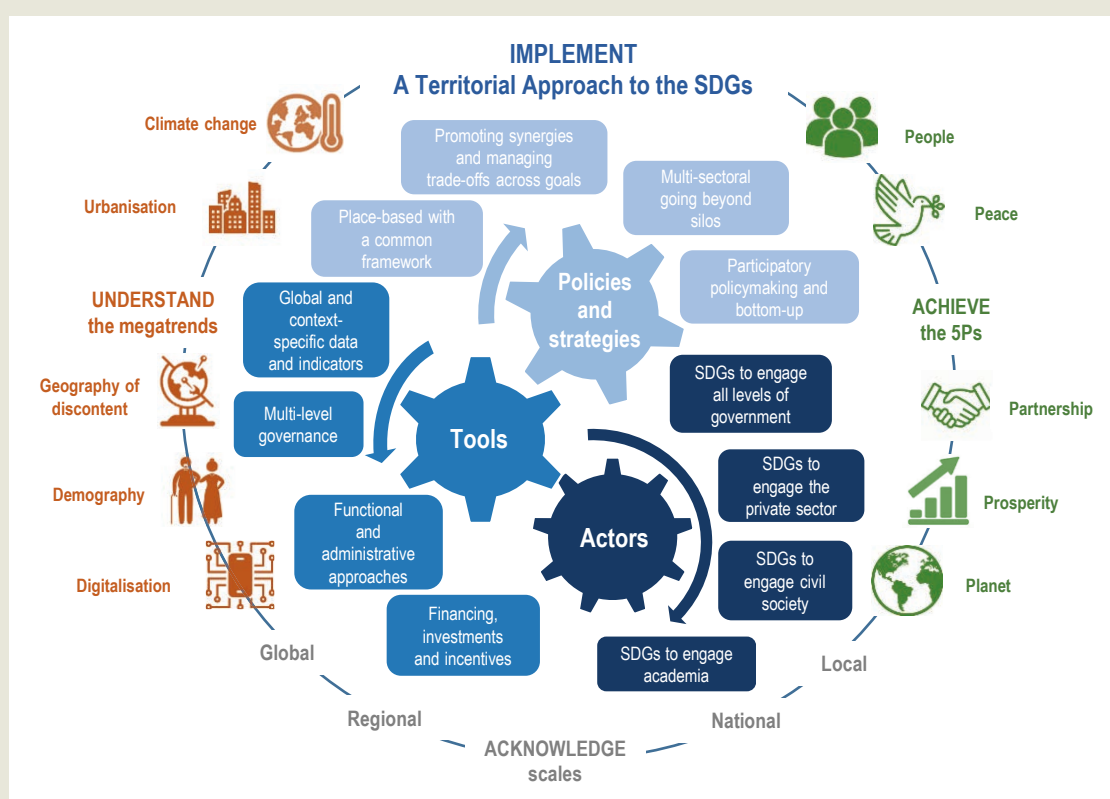
The effective implementation of a territorial approach to the SDGs implies the combined use of a variety of tools. These span from a solid multi-level governance system to global and context-specific data for evidence-based policies. They also consist of combining functional and administrative approaches to address territorial challenges and opportunities beyond borders, as well as investment and incentives, in particular for the private sector to contribute. Multi-level governance represents a key tool to promote vertical co-ordination (across levels of government) and horizontal co-ordination (across ministries and departments) – both within the local, regional and national government and between the government and other key stakeholders. National governments can also use the SDGs as a framework to promote

policy coherence across levels of government, align priorities and rethink sustainable development through a bottom-up approach.

Actors

Participatory policymaking and a bottom-up process are one of the core elements of a territorial approach to the SDGs. Shifting from a top-down and hierarchical to a bottom-up and participatory approach to policymaking and implementation is key for the achievement of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda requires a more transparent and inclusive model that involves the public as well as non-state actors to co-design and jointly implement local development strategies and policies. The SDGs provide cities and regions with a tool to effectively engage in multi-stakeholder dialogues with actors from the private sector, civil society, as well as schools and academia.

Figure 1.3. OECD's analytical framework for A Territorial Approach to the SDGs



Source (figure): OECD (2020^[11]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>.

Source (box): OECD (2019^[10]), *OECD Regional Outlook 2019: Leveraging Megatrends for Cities and Rural Areas*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264312838-en>.

A Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024

Regional planning: Process and principles

The work with the SDGs in Viken is driven by two major process-developments: the regional planning strategy and a new planning and steering system for the county administration. First, as an overarching strategy, Viken's regional planning strategy – A Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 – sets the ambition level for the county, while subsequent plans will operationalise efforts to achieve its targets. As such, it serves as a “leverage point” for working with the SDGs holistically through subsequently developed plans, within the framework of the Norwegian planning system (Box 1.2 and Table 1.2). The final draft was made available for public consultation from June 2020 until September 2020.

The strategy further outlines the principles for regional planning in Viken, namely that:

- The planning system shall be based on the UN's sustainability goals and have a clear link to long-term development goals and goals for the focus areas.
- The planning system shall promote a holistic and interdisciplinary perspective, including the interaction between and across levels of government and interests.
- Regional planning must be knowledge-based.
- The planning system must be partnership-based.
- The planning system must take into account regional differences and advantages.

Box 1.2. The Norwegian Planning System

The Planning and Building Act (2008) defines responsibilities and decision-making powers by the national government and county and municipal governments concerning societal and land use planning. In 2008, the Norwegian Planning and Building Act was revised to include provisions for the development of planning strategies at the county and municipal levels. These are to be prepared at the start of each electoral term.

Through the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (KMD), the government develops and disseminates national expectation documents, guidelines and provisions, in accordance with which counties and municipalities develop their plans. Regional and municipal plans are thus tools to co-ordinate policy sectors and government levels and must be developed in consultation with central government expert agencies, civil society, the private sector and the local population. Any objections to municipal master and land use plans are referred to KMD as the supreme authority.

Every four years, the national government issues its overall expectations regarding regional and municipal planning, providing overall strategic directions. National planning guidelines focus on specific geographic areas (e.g. shore areas, river banks) or topics (e.g. climate and energy, children and youth involvement), while national planning provisions are legally binding and may indicate that some developments can only take place in designated geographic areas (e.g. shopping malls). In exceptional circumstances, for example due to conservation or social concerns that are deemed to be unmet by ordinary planning, the national government can issue national land use plans. In its latest *Expectation Document for 2019-2023*, the government expects all counties and municipalities to use the SDGs in their strategic plans, both with respect to physical/land use planning and social planning (KMD, 2019^[12]).

While the elected county councils are responsible for the regional planning strategies and for guiding municipalities to prepare their plans, county governors represent the national government at the county

level and are responsible for following up and supervising county and municipal planning functions (see Figure 1.2).

Table 1.2. Overview of planning authorities and planning instruments for regional and local development in Norway

Authority	Planning instruments and roles
Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National expectations regarding regional and municipal planning • Statements of regional plans • Statements of objections
Regional government (county councils)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning strategy • Regional plans • Objections • Information
County governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of objections • Legality in planning • Management of complaints • Supervision of local governments
Local governments (municipal councils)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning strategy • Municipal plans • Zoning plans • Complaints about plans • Exemptions from land use plans

Source (table): Kristjánsdóttir, S. (ed.) (2017^[13]), *Nordic Experiences of Sustainable Planning: Policy and Practice*, Routledge.
 Source (box): KMD (2019^[12]), *Nasjonale forventninger til regional og kommunal planlegging 2019–2023 (National Expectations for Regional and Municipal Planning 2019-2023)*, <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/cc2c53c65af24b8ea560c0156d885703/nasjonale-forventninger-2019-bm.pdf>.

Key features and focus areas of Viken's regional planning strategy

A Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 outlines Viken's efforts towards the 2030 Agenda along five long-term goals and a matrix with six entry points and four levers (Figure 1.4, Table 1.3 and Figure 1.5). The matrix has been adapted from the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019 and the expert panel's focus areas and tools for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Likewise, the regional administration puts a strong emphasis on the 2030 Agenda as a holistic framework, with the SDGs constituting an indivisible whole.

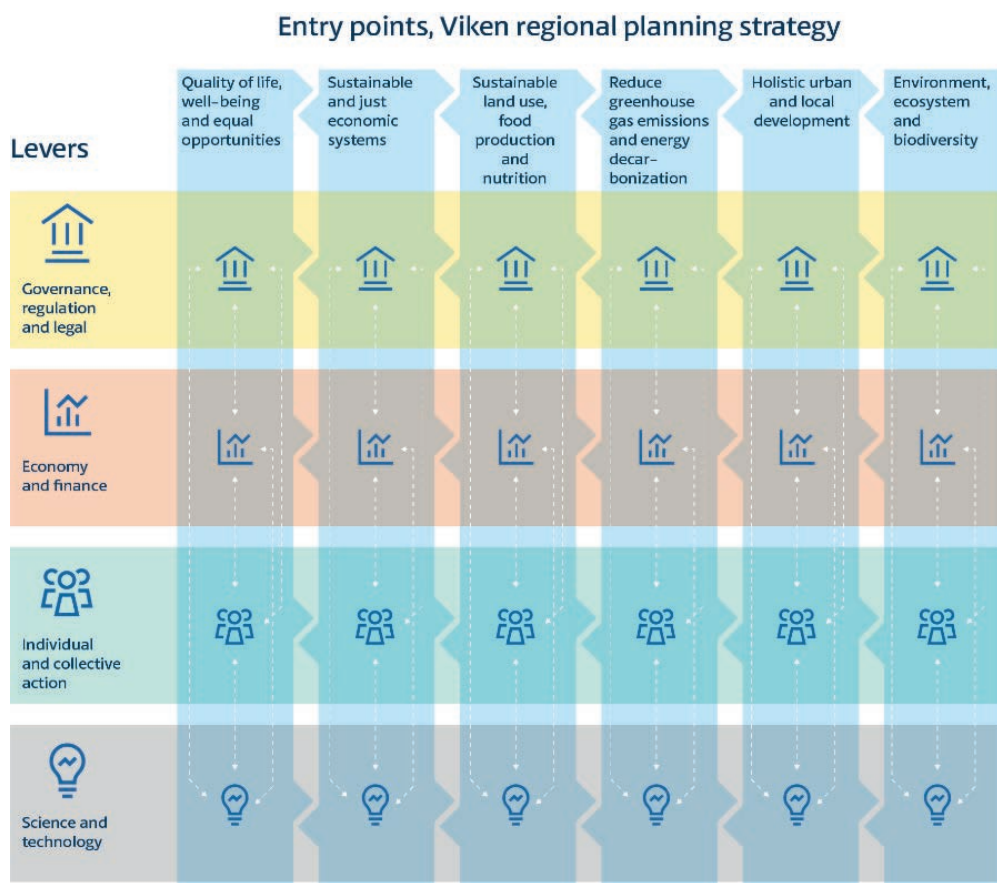
Table 1.3. Five goals to achieve by 2030 formulated in Viken's regional planning strategy

Goal	Description
Nature, climate and planetary boundaries	In 2030, consideration for nature and planetary boundaries is fundamental for all social development in Viken. Viken is a sustainable and climate-smart, low-emission society, with good knowledge of our ecosystems, taking care of biological diversity, natural areas and productive soils in Viken. We emphasise preparedness, climate adaptation and food security, and manage our natural resources long-term, efficiently and innovatively. The result is good living conditions and a good basis for living for today's and tomorrow's inhabitants.
Good quality of life and equal opportunities	In 2030, all people in Viken will live dignified and meaningful lives. Inhabitants have safe jobs and access to relevant education. The county is characterised by good, varied residential areas with lively meeting places. Cultural life is rich and we can cultivate our nature and outdoor interests. The Viken community is open, diverse and inclusive.
Green and fair value creation	In 2030, Viken is an innovative, internationally competitive and diverse business region leading in the green transition. We have attractive private and public workplaces, well-functioning markets, leading research and competency environments and high employment. We have a fair and decent labour market. Viken shows the

Goal	Description
	way in the development of a circular economy. Growth and value creation in Viken take place based on consideration for nature, safeguard social security and preparedness, and create welfare and good quality of life for its inhabitants.
Transformation and trust	In 2030, Viken is a strong and safe society, which can meet both known and unforeseen challenges and transformations. In Viken, we have the tools we need to turn challenges into opportunities. The Viken community is well prepared for both acute and long-term consequences of climate and environmental change. Businesses have a good ability to handle and utilise evolutions in technology, skill needs and financial prerequisites. In 2030, many inhabitants will participate in the development of Viken and have confidence in how the county is governed. The inhabitants have faith in the future and experience a high degree of security, quality of life, belonging, freedom and trust.
Together we create Viken	In 2030, Viken has a strong culture for collaboration and knowledge sharing. It has strong and binding partnerships in which public actors, businesses, civil society, research and academia and individuals participate. Collaboration takes place across geography and management levels. Viken actively participates in national and international work, acquiring knowledge, competency and impact to achieve the goals set for the county.

Source: OECD elaboration based on County of Viken (2020^[7]), *Veien til et bærekraftig Viken: Regional planstrategi 2020-2024 (A Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 - Consultation Draft 25 June 2020)*, <https://viken.no/f/p1/i34d0f3a8-2ec8-4725-8bf2-c6cc04e6e50b/horingsutkast-til-regional-planstrategi-2020-2024-veien-til-et-barekraftig-viken.pdf>.

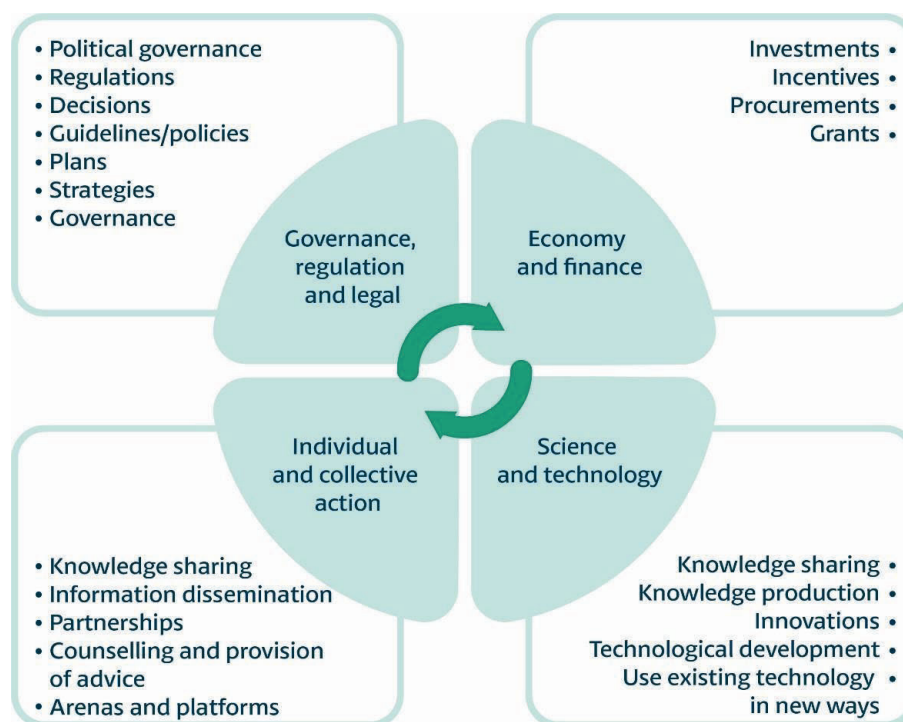
Figure 1.4. Matrix with six entry points and four levers to achieve the 2030 Agenda in Viken’s regional planning strategy



Note: Translated by the county of Viken.

Source: County of Viken (2020^[7]), *Veien til et bærekraftig Viken: Regional planstrategi 2020-2024 (A Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 - Consultation Draft 25 June 2020)*, <https://viken.no/f/p1/i34d0f3a8-2ec8-4725-8bf2-c6cc04e6e50b/horingsutkast-til-regional-planstrategi-2020-2024-veien-til-et-barekraftig-viken.pdf>.

Figure 1.5. Description of the four levers included in Viken’s regional planning strategy



Source: County of Viken (2020^[9]), *Kart over Viken (Map of Viken)*, <https://viken.no/tjenester/planlegging/analyse-statistikk-og-kart/karttjenester/kart-over-viken.20488.aspx> (accessed on 8 October 2020).

All entry points address multiple SDGs and have specific targets to be reached by 2030. The inter-generational dimension is highlighted in the preface to the areas of intervention, underscoring the fact that the goals represent the state in which the region must be left for future generations.

- **Under the first entry point, *Quality of life, well-being and equal opportunities*, the strategy brings forward the importance of creating a society in which everyone can participate and feel part of.** In light of inequalities in access to opportunities across the region, the need to provide infrastructures – both digital and transport – to allow people to access services and recreational outdoor spaces is highlighted. Considering the impact of the economic downturn following the COVID-19 crisis, the need to create opportunities for people to re-skill is also brought up, as well as the need to ensure affordable housing for its growing population.
- **The second entry point, *Sustainable and just economic systems*, highlights the need to take the social and environmental costs of traditional production into account when considering economic growth.** Focus is thus placed on green transition within planetary boundaries and on fostering innovation, investment and partnerships to develop a low-carbon emission society. The so-called “five-factor model” contributes to this vision, namely: R&D and competency, capital, contractors, clusters and policy incentives. Further on the economic development agenda is the need to address access to economic development opportunities, access to the labour market, skills and education across the county where disparities are witnessed between rural areas and urban centres with high growth pressure. The need for closer collaboration between educational institutes, labour market services and businesses is highlighted to develop the competencies needed for the green transition in all parts of Viken.
- **As Norway’s largest agricultural county, the third entry point in the regional planning strategy – *Sustainable land use, food production and nutrition* – highlights long-term sustainability and public health in the county as intrinsically linked to the ability to provide**

safe and healthy food produced locally. While competing for land use resulting from population growth, economic expansion and infrastructure projects constitute a threat to both agricultural land and other natural resources, the potential for Viken to be entirely self-sufficient in terms of food production is envisaged. By leveraging on technology for both smart mobility solutions and for expanding agricultural and aquaculture production, the trade-offs between economic prosperity, food security and preservation of land is sought to be avoided.

- **Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and energy decarbonisation outlines Viken’s vision to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 80% by 2030.** With transport contributing to 42.2% of total GHG emissions in Viken in 2017 and private cars constituting 55% of these, the need to promote sustainable means of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking, as well as switching to low-carbon vehicles, is underlined. Measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption, including in industry and agriculture and from heating, are also part of this priority area.
- **The role of regional planning in achieving sustainable development and land use in all parts of the region is one element highlighted in the entry point *Holistic urban and local development*.** Acknowledging that growth dynamics and pressure look very different in different parts of the region, the need to favour urban density rather than sprawl is stressed, particularly to create optimal public transport solutions and preserve natural, open areas both for recreational purposes, agricultural use, biodiversity preservation and to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, with increased risks of floods resulting from a wetter climate.
- **Preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity is further stressed in the last entry point: *Environment, ecosystem and biodiversity*.** With over half of the 100-metre “beach zones” built up, there is concern that development threatens valuable natural areas around the Oslo Fjord further, large parts of which have been already built up. Re-allocation of land for either development or pasture areas is highlighted as a key threat to Viken’s long-term sustainability, with 3 600 acres being re-allocated from forest to such usages between 2010 and 2015. This further makes the county more vulnerable to the invasion of external species, risking displacing native flora and fauna. Viken’s green and blue natural areas constitute valuable assets for the county, which need to be more closely tied to the economic and social realities and assets. This means that both urban and local development must take into account maintaining biodiversity and recreational areas for inhabitants, while a closer connection between business development, and for example innovation in agriculture and forestry, can benefit the county.

The development of A Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 constitutes a departure from traditional sector-based planning. Stakeholders involved in the process expressed the desire to focus on a few interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral regional plans in its implementation of the strategy. Accordingly, in developing a set of regional plans focused on specific issues under the umbrella of the regional planning strategy, the focus was put on identifying positive synergies between areas of intervention, as well as following three cross-cutting themes of climate and environment, public health and collaboration. This resulted in three thematic plans that will contribute to achieving the goals of the strategy, namely: i) increased quality of life, participation and equality; ii) competence and value creation, and; iii) land use and mobility.

Box 1.3. The Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: “Levers” and “entry points”

Transformations for sustainable development

The GSDR 2019 looks at the potential for transformative change from a systems perspective, acknowledging that focusing on single goals and targets could jeopardise the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and that some cross-cutting trends impacting all goals – like climate change, biodiversity loss and inequalities – are actually moving in the wrong direction. The report thus identifies “entry points” and “levers” that relate more to the underlying systems enabling the 2030 Agenda than any clusters of goals and targets. These entry points and levers are derived using growing scientific evidence about the crucial interlinkages between the goals and targets and make up potential pathways that could break negative patterns.

The selected entry points are:

- Human well-being and capabilities.
- Sustainable and just economies.
- Food systems and nutrition patterns.
- Energy decarbonisation with universal access.
- Urban and peri-urban development.
- Global environmental commons.

The levers are:

- Governance.
- Economy and finance.
- Individual and collective action.
- Science and technology.

The levers are also construed to work best through context-dependent combinations rather than working independently, urging decision-makers to act based on the best current knowledge and understanding of socio-environmental-economic systems.

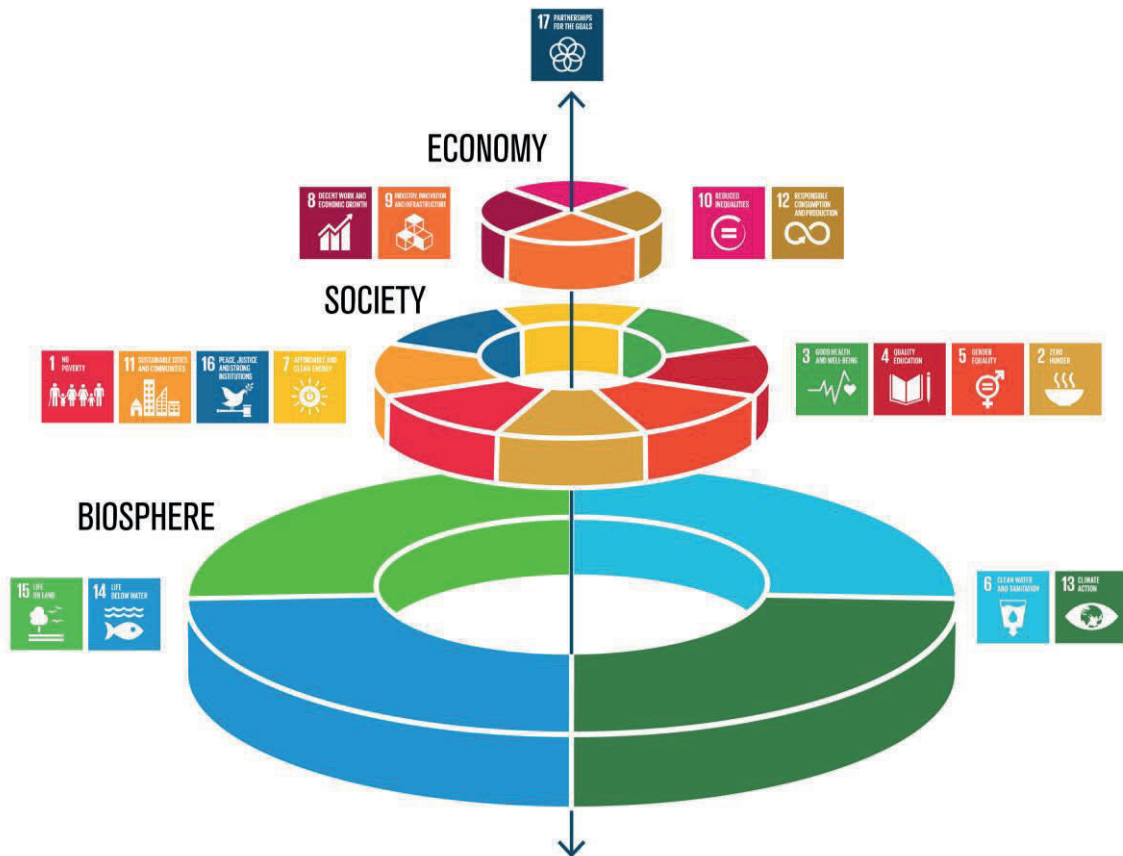
Source: Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General (2019^[14]), *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now - Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24797GSDR_report_2019.pdf.

Developing targets within planetary boundaries

Viken uses the “wedding cake” model developed by the Stockholm Resilience Centre to illustrate the fundamental importance of the environmental dimension of the SDGs to ensure sustainable development. The model shows how social and economic development are embedded parts of the biosphere and thus cannot be achieved without environmental goals like SDGs 6, 13, 14 and 15. For example, increased GDP growth (SDG 8) can only be achieved if significant decarbonisation of the economy takes place concurrently. Without decarbonisation, regional economic growth (SDG 8) will be incompatible with efforts to reduce the carbon footprint to achieve SDG 13. The targets for growth and decarbonisation must thus be set together (Figure 1.6) (Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2016^[15]) (Griggs et al., 2014^[16]). The model also means that benchmarking progress only *vis-à-vis* national or other averages is not sufficient to fully understand whether regional development is taking place within planetary boundaries, without natural resources being depleted or used unsustainably. Inspired by the “wedding cake” model, the working group

for the Knowledge Base (Figure 1.6) explored how to reflect the relation between socio-economic development and planetary boundaries in Viken. This proved to be a challenging endeavour that will be further explored.

Figure 1.6. The Stockholm Resilience Centre’s SDG “Wedding Cake” model



Note: Photo credit: Azote Images for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University.

Source: Stockholm Resilience Centre (2016^[15]), *How Food Connects All the SDGs*, <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/images/18.36c25848153d54bdba33ec9b/1465905797608/sdgs-food-azote.jpg>.

Creating a culture for holistic implementation of the SDGs in the new county government and administration

The SDGs are used as an opportunity for Viken to better link overarching strategic goals with the four-year regional financial plan, annual budgets and operational planning. This was a weak or “missing link” in former regional planning practices. Based on the introduction of a model for comprehensive planning and management, a system will be set up whereby the SDGs are implemented from an overarching strategic level by the regional planning strategy and through to other regional plans and action plans, then added to the four-year financial plan, annual budgets and operational planning. This process will be followed up by thorough reporting and follow-up research to be able to adjust the plan and targets, as necessary.

Since its inception on 1st January 2020, the Viken county government has undertaken several steps to include and institutionalise the work of the SDGs as an integral part of its activities. For example, the Chief of Government Office, the Department of Finance and Administration and the Department of Planning, Climate and Environment have a special responsibility to drive the SDGs work through various processes.

This includes, among other things, the regional planning strategy and the budget processes. A dedicated position for a Special Adviser for the SDGs has been established in the Department for Development and Cross-Sectoral Collaboration, which is part of the Chief of Government office. The special advisor is responsible for co-ordinating the internal Sustainability Network.

The Sustainability Network currently consists of 30 representatives from various parts of the organisation and aims to include members from all departments. The network is mandated to:

- Be an entity for collaboration and development of the government's holistic work on the SDGs.
- Support the inclusion of the SDGs in all plans, strategies, decisions and events.
- Ensure the SDG inclusion in systems, routines and programmes.
- Establish knowledge about the SDGs in the organisation, how they relate to the organisation's responsibility to develop the region and link them to holistic use of instruments.
- Develop and implement models for collaboration around the SDGs.
- Create awareness and engagement in the Viken community, and co-ordinate support and initiatives on prioritised sustainability areas.
- Ensure that the county government can support municipalities in planning and implementing SDG work.

The SDGs are also included as a distinct managerial responsibility and are already part of some training provided to managers, employees and elected politicians. The SDGs will also be reflected in all systems, templates and routines. As the Viken organisation is settling in, different areas of competency need to be further included in additional training to ensure that everyone is knowledgeable about how to integrate the SDGs in their daily work.

The Knowledge Base: An SDG baseline for Viken

As a first step in the regional planning strategy development, the Joint Board of Viken decided that a Knowledge Base should be developed using the SDGs as the overall framework, with the goal of creating an SDG baseline for Viken. While the future reporting on the SDGs is under elaboration as of late 2020, the baseline helps the county to understand where it stands *vis-à-vis* the SDGs. Just like the holistic focus in the regional strategy, the Knowledge Base includes indicators showing societal development trends that relate to *all* SDGs, rather than selected ones deemed most relevant to the county.

Some explicit requirements for the Knowledge Base made by the Joint Board of Viken were to:

- Provide an overview of the current state of affairs in the county.
- Describe the opportunities and challenges in the county and provide the basis for seeing development opportunities and needs (e.g. for smart specialisation).
- Satisfy the requirements of the Public Health Act.²
- Constitute one common knowledge base for the three former counties.

Finally, the Knowledge Base provides information and data that are applicable to each of the inter-municipal political boards in Viken (see Chapter 3 on multi-level governance).

To create the Knowledge Base, Viken identified over 70 relevant basic datasets that provide an overview of the current state of affairs in the region, using the SDGs as a framework. Each data set enables the potential disaggregation of indicators, for example by gender, age and different low-income definitions. A preliminary list of datasets was published in early 2019,³ while a publication describing the regional development trends in Viken related to the SDGs was released in November 2019.⁴ The latter provides a detailed picture for the former counties and for Viken with regards to the SDGs, including in relation to global and national level progress and by using maps and other illustrations to highlight key data points.

For example, water quality and occurrence of red-listed species are mapped, showing variations across the county. The publication further highlights areas where data at the regional and local levels is scarce (County of Viken, 2019^[17]).

Overall, data availability at the county and municipal levels is rather well developed in Norway. Readily available datasets include those collected through the municipal database KOSTRA and key data on public health at the municipal level, as required by the Public Health Act 2012. These datasets provide data for many socio-economic indicators used to describe progress on the SDGs.

Yet, data challenges encountered in the initial phase of developing the Knowledge Base relate mainly to the targets of SDGs 7, 12, 14 and 15. For instance, waste generation and management in other sectors than private households are not available at the regional or local levels, while the construction sector is estimated to make up 25% of total waste in the county. Lack of data on SDG 12 complicates the understanding of the environmental footprint of consumption and production in the region. At the same time, the footprint of unsustainable production and consumption habits are particularly difficult to understand within administrative borders and must be seen in a wider functional context – both nationally and internationally. Another data challenge related to SDG 7 is that Statistics Norway ceased producing energy production and consumption statistics at the local level in 2012. This makes the development of energy indicators for Viken more difficult. Finally, data gaps for SDGs 16 and 17 relate mainly to the territorial reform process, where future partnerships remain uncertain and for which the baseline is still to be determined.

To overcome some of the data challenges, geospatial data complement official statistics in the Knowledge Base, like for example in the case of SDGs 14 and 15. Through geospatial analysis of water quality and land use for example, the Knowledge Base captures information that cannot be summed up in any single indicators or index. This highlights not only the importance of using different types of data and information to provide a detailed picture of progress towards the SDGs but also the challenge in monitoring SDGs 14 and 15 and to make the information easily understood.

Incorporating the SDGs in municipal planning: A mixed picture

Knowledge and competencies to work with the SDGs among municipalities in Viken – like in Norway at large – vary. A study from 2018 including 51 Norwegian municipalities found that while 84% of the municipalities find the SDGs “important” or “very important”, only 1 in 4 have so far put in place a plan for the implementation of the SDGs. Respondents point out to be familiar with SDG themes like education, health and urban planning, as well as having plans in place for issues like marine pollution, green growth and integration. About 50% of the surveyed municipalities see the SDGs as favouring public sector innovation. At the same time, many small- and mid-sized municipalities perceive the lack of resources, capabilities and available time to focus on the SDGs as a key barrier (Deloitte, 2018^[18]). A survey commissioned by KMD in 2020 further shows that the work with SDGs in municipalities and counties was little advanced before 2019 (Lundberg et al., 2020^[19]).

Awareness of the synergies and trade-offs across SDGs, beyond traditional environmental or socio-economic narratives, is not strongly emerging by municipalities. In a survey conducted by Association of Norwegian Local and Regional Authorities (KS) in 2019, results from a sample of 38 municipalities show that the concept of sustainability is well-rooted as an overarching goal for subnational governments and that many planning documents focus on reducing GHG emissions and improve energy efficiency, including through urban densification and regional planning (KS, 2019^[20]). KMD’s mapping of efforts by municipalities and counties to implement the SDGs from 2020 further highlights that many local authorities tend to focus on the three dimensions of sustainable development, rather than the SDG framework holistically. The mapping also identified the need to further develop clear guidance on how to incorporate the SDGs in local planning in the Norwegian context (Lundberg et al., 2020^[19]). These national findings were further reflected in the proceedings from a consultation workshop held in Viken in October 2019,

where few municipalities reported having used the SDGs as a tool in their governmental transformation processes.

Some local and regional governments are more advanced when it comes to SDG implementation, with approaches ranging from using the SDGs as a basis for planning or sustainability reporting to prioritising goals most relevant for the local or regional authority. Asker for instance – a new municipality based on the merging of Asker, Hurum and Røyken – has been pioneering new approaches to municipal planning based on the SDGs, serving as inspiration for other municipalities (Box 1.4). The new municipality of Nordre Follo (merging Oppegård and Ski) has also used the SDGs in the development of the municipal master plan, budget and action plan and in the assessment of zoning plans. Nordre Follo found that the SDGs helped the merging of two political and administrative cultures of Oppegård and Ski as well as for working on “real” challenges (e.g. climate, equality) rather than sector policies. While the municipality chooses to move slowly, important actions are taken for example to engage with citizens in workshops under the overall umbrella “What do the SDGs mean for me?”. Asker and Nordre Follo can serve as inspiration but how smaller municipalities can deal with the SDGs remains challenging and the lack of overall co-ordination for the development of local plans is a key concern for municipalities.

Lunner is another municipality using the SDGs as a useful framework for including sustainability in municipal planning, since the goals encompass all topics of the municipal budget. Yet, there is often a missing link between master plans, action plans and budget allocation. Being part of the Oslo labour market, with high commuting rates to the capital, Lunner is transitioning to be part of the county of Viken, as part of the territorial reforms. Being a part of Viken involves, in part, a possibility to adopt indicators developed by the county of Viken to measure progress within the SDG framework. One key challenge in Lunner related to CO₂ emissions are high levels of traffic passing through the municipality rather than originating in Lunner itself. This points to the need to look at functional approaches in the context of Viken, namely consider where people work and live rather than mere administrative perimeters.

A common challenge identified by municipalities in Viken is that SDG indicators suited for local and regional governments in Norway are not yet readily available. Small municipalities do not have the same resources for incorporating the SDGs into their planning and monitoring and with different indicators emerging both at the global (e.g. UN-Habitat), regional and national levels, a national standard for municipalities would help navigate the increasing amount of available SDG indicators that can be overwhelming for municipalities. The Knowledge Base aims to help to improve this area.

Box 1.4. Asker – An SDG-proof Master Plan for a new municipality

Similar to Viken, Asker has decided to use the SDGs as a framework for the new municipal masterplan that will be developed following the merging of Asker, Hurum and Røyken. The joint executive council of New Asker saw the value of using the SDGs to integrate the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development and to ensure that its current development does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It further allows them to put their own policies and priorities in an international perspective, building Asker on “next practice” rather than “best practice”.

The method developed by the New Asker project consisted in identifying the opportunities and challenges relevant for Asker *vis-à-vis* the SDGs and to carry out a materiality assessment cross-analysing Asker’s political priorities and ability to influence the targets, before entering the phase of planning in accordance with the Norwegian planning system. This analysis was carried out using a matrix with three levels: i) global targets and municipal significance; ii) opportunities and challenges for achieving global targets (based on local conditions); and iii) development of the new municipality of Asker (including services and societal development). Thereafter, the ability to influence progress

directly was analysed, as well as areas where the municipality is or should take direct responsibility. This involved cross-sectoral thinking engaging different political parties as a new way of co-creating the foundation of the municipal master plan, before working on the statutory requirements. The prioritisation of SDGs to be elaborated in the municipal master plan was a political exercise, resulting in SDGs 2, 4, 9, 11, 13 and 17 as preliminary priorities. One of the weaknesses in this planning process was the lack of engagement with the wider public beyond a citizen panel.

The New Asker project put a strong emphasis on monitoring progress towards the priority SDGs and targets and is currently in the process of identifying suitable indicators, drawing on Eurostat, Statistics Norway and work by the Association of Norwegian Local and Regional Authorities (KS). The Asker project team classifies the indicators based on whether they are input, output or outcome indicators, so as to monitor change along the results chain. If the indicators they select for Asker are very different from the global ones, this is noted down for transparency, accountability and “loyalty” to the original framework.

Finally, youth participation is an important feature of planning in Asker. One example is the Asker youth conference organised together with UN-Habitat, where youth defined questions that matter to them in their municipality. This input will feed into the master plan formulation. In addition, SDGs are taught in all primary and secondary schools of three municipalities that will form Asker, while events like the Innovation Camp for 8th-Grade students and Asker celebration of the UN day help to raise awareness in the local community. Local businesses have already been inspired to take own action on the SDGs and have published a magazine showcasing what the business community is doing for the different SDGs.

Source: Municipality of Asker (2019^[21]), “The new Asker municipality is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals”, https://www.asker.kommune.no/globalassets/samfunnsutvikling/fns-barekraftsmal/dokumenter/engelske-tekster/2018_08_15-rapport_nye_asker_fn_barekraftmal_engelsk-kortversjon.pdf.

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Notes

¹ The new municipalities formed consist of: Indre Østfold (merging Askim, Eidsberg, Hobøl, Spydeberg and Trøgstad); Lillestrøm (merging Fet, Skedsmo and Sørum); Nordre Folle (merging Oppegård and Ski); Moss (merging Moss and Rygge); Drammen (merging Drammen, Nedre Eiker and Svelvik); Nye Asker (merging Asker, Hurum and Røyken).

² The Public Health Act is a national law that aims to address equity in public health, including by promoting health in all policies and integrate in as a long-term goal in local planning. This law, put in place in 2012, has led to good data availability when it comes to public health outcomes.

³ The data is available on the following website (in Norwegian): <https://statistikk.akershus-fk.no/webview/>.

⁴ The Knowledge base (in Norwegian), published in November 2019: <https://viken.no/f/p1/i4f0b8206-d207-4524-b400-9200b65ae0f9/kunnskapsgrunnlag-regional-planstrategi-viken-vi-i-viken.pdf>.

2 Sustainable development challenges and opportunities in Viken, Norway

Viken performs well across most Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) compared to OECD regions. A well-educated population, low mortality and unemployment rates, good air quality and high levels of clean electricity production are among some of Viken's highlights with regards to the SDGs. Some remaining challenges include overrepresentation of women in part-time employment and the uneven population growth in the county resulting in the need to carefully consider environmental protection and a green transport system. These are vital components in the county's ambitious effort to develop within the planetary boundaries, while making sure that social inequality does not widen. Applying a functional lens is useful to shine a light on challenges and opportunities of Viken's territorial development, particularly for transportation and labour market integration, which are key to achieve long-term sustainability in Viken.

Measuring the distance to the SDGs in Viken, Norway

Building on the OECD localised indicator framework for the SDGs, this section provides an overview of the performance of Viken compared to around 400 OECD regions.¹ The structure of the section follows the five critical dimensions or “Ps” of the 2030 Agenda: People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnerships. The five Ps correspond to groups of specific SDGs: the dimension People refers to SDGs 1 to 5; Planet encompasses SDGs 6, 12, 13, 14 and 15; Prosperity refers to SDGs 7 to 11; Peace to SDG 16; and Partnerships to SDG 17 (Figure 2.1). The data provided in the section is based on a selection of 29 indicators distributed across 13 SDGs that are part of the OECD localised indicator framework. Viken’s results were calculated based on data from StatBank Norway², the OECD Environmental Database and the OECD Regional Statistics Database. Further information on the methodology of the assessment can be found in Box 2.1.

Figure 2.1. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals



Source: UN (2020^[1]), *Sustainable Development Goals*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>.

Box 2.1. OECD methodology for measuring cities' and regions' distance to achieving the SDGs

The OECD has developed a framework to localise the SDG targets and indicators and measure the distance of regions and cities to each of the 17 SDGs. This consensual, comparable and standardised framework allows to benchmark performances within countries and across regions and cities to support public action across levels of government.

In the context of OECD countries, around 105 out of the 169 SDG targets have been identified as very relevant for regions and cities. Through an extensive literature review and expert consultation, the 169 SDG targets from the United Nations (UN) indicator framework have been classified by their level of relevance for subnational levels of government (place-relevant) and advanced economies (OECD-

relevant). Subsequently, a subset of these SDG targets has been selected based on its applicability to the context and specificities of OECD countries. The result is a selection of 105 SDG targets and 135 indicators for OECD regions and cities (also referred to as the “subnational SDG targets”).

With its 135 indicators, the OECD localised framework covers at least 1 aspect of each of the 17 SDGs for both regions and cities. Nevertheless, the coverage in terms of indicators and targets is higher for regions than for cities. Moreover, although the set of indicators aims to cover the broad spectrum of all 17 SDGs, the coverage in terms of indicators also varies widely across SDGs.

The OECD localised framework defines end values to shed light on the global trends in OECD regions and cities working towards the SDGs, based on available indicators and with the objective of providing technical guidance for governments on a possible way to use the SDG indicator framework as a tool to advance local development plans and sustain evidence-based policies. By defining end values for 2030, regions and cities can assess where they stand today and seize how much distance they have to travel in order to reach the intended end value. When end values are not inferable from the UN framework, the OECD defines suggested end values for indicators based on the knowledge of experts in the field or, alternatively, based on the best performance of regions and cities in that indicator. The OECD localised indicator framework attributes end values to 88% of its indicators, of which 65% are defined using the criteria of “best performers”.

Selection of indicators used to assess Viken’s achievements towards the SDGs

The analysis takes into account a total of 26 indicators. These indicators have been selected on the basis of available data in the database of Statistics Norway, the OECD Environmental Database and the OECD Regional Statistics Database. The main criterion for the selection of these indicators was that the data allowed the calculation of indicators that are consistent with the OECD localised indicator framework and therefore made it possible to compare Viken’s performance with other OECD regions including Norwegian regions (Agder and Rogaland, Hedmark and Oppland, Oslo Region, North, South-East, Trøndelag and West).

The new county of Viken was formed by merging the previous counties of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold as well as the three municipalities of Jevnaker and Lunner, formerly part of the county of Oppland, and the municipality of Svelvik, formerly part of Vestfold county. The indicators calculated for the analysis consider both the three former counties and the three municipalities if data at both levels was available. In some cases, however, when no data for Jevnaker, Lunner and Svelvik was available, the results for Viken were calculated only based on the three former counties of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold. As of 2019, they accounted for 98.2% of Viken’s population and 97.7% of the county’s area. A full list of the indicators that only cover the former counties as a proxy for Viken can be found in the endnotes.³

Source: OECD (2020_[2]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>; OECD (2020_[3]) OECD Regional Statistics (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Overall, Viken exhibits very positive results in SDGs related to health, education, unemployment, pollution levels and electricity coming from renewable sources. Key strengths of the county include its low share of relative poverty (SDG 1), low mortality rates (infant, children, traffic-related) (SDG 3), 100% of its electricity production coming from renewable sources (SDG 7), low unemployment rates (SDG 8), low levels of air pollution measured through exposure to particulate matter (PM) 2.5 (SDG 11) and safety (SDG 16). Some challenges remain regarding its gender gap in part-time employment (SDG 5) and its number of motor road vehicles per 100 people (SDG 12). Viken has further potential to catch up with other OECD regions when it comes to the share of research and development (R&D) employment and its high share of part-time employment. Nevertheless, Viken outperforms the vast majority of OECD regions in most of the

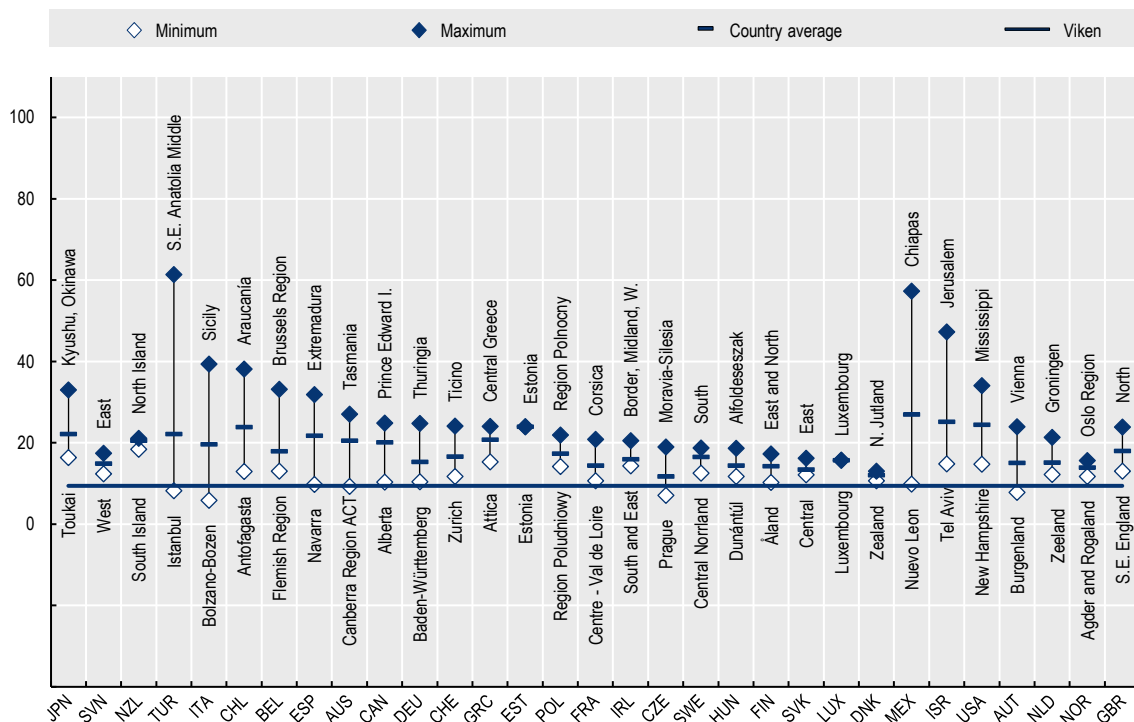
indicators, belonging to the top 25% of OECD regions in more than 50% of the indicators considered in the analysis.

People: Good public health, a high educational attainment and low relative poverty are strong assets of Viken

In Viken, the share of the population living below 60% of the national median disposable income is less than half the average rate of OECD regions. Poverty reduction is one of the main goals of the 2030 Agenda as expressed through SDG 1. In the context of OECD countries, where absolute poverty tends to be low, looking at poverty rates relative to the national median income can be an alternative way to monitor progress towards SDG 1. In Viken, around 9.4% of households had an annual disposable income per consumption unit below 60% of the median income in 2018. This is less than half of the average of OECD regions (20.4%) (Figure 2.2). Overall, only 3% of OECD regions exhibit a lower share of its population living below the 60% threshold of the national median disposable income. However, this proportion has increased slightly since 2007, when it was still below 8%, before stabilising around the current value since 2014.

Figure 2.2. Relative poverty rate: Comparison across OECD regions relative to Viken, 2013





Percentage of the population living below 60% of the national median disposable income



Note: Japan (2009); Slovenia (2010); New Zealand (2011); Austria, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, United States (2014); United Kingdom (2015). Value for Viken (2018).

Source: OECD (2020^[3]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>; Value for Viken calculated based on StatBank Norway data: Statistics Norway (2020^[4]), *StatBank Norway*, <https://www.ssb.no/en/statbank>.

Table 2.1. OECD indicators used to assess the dimension People in the county of Viken

SDG	Indicator	Source
	Percentage of population living below 60% of the national median disposable income	StatBank Norway
	Mortality rates for the 0-4 year-old population	StatBank Norway
	Infant mortality rate (number of deaths of children 1-year-old or younger per 1 000 live births)	StatBank Norway
	Active physicians rate (active physicians per 1 000 people)	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Hospital beds rate (hospital beds per 10 000 people)	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Transport-related mortality rates (deaths per 100 000 people)	StatBank Norway
	Percentage of the population from 25 to 64 years old with at least tertiary education	StatBank Norway
	Gender gap in tertiary education (percentage points)	StatBank Norway
	Gender gap in part-time employment incidence (female-male, percentage points)	OECD Regional Statistics Database

Source: OECD (2020^[2]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>; OECD (2020^[5]), *Measuring the Distance to the SDGs in Regions and Cities (visualisation tool)*, <http://www.oecd-local-sdgs.org/> (accessed on 15 July 2020).

In Viken, mortality rates for infants and children are low compared to the average of OECD regions and similar or lower than the average of Norway. SDG 3 has the objective to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. One of its targets is to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age. Viken is on a good path to reach that target. While the mortality rates for the 0-4 year-old population reaches 11.8 deaths per 1 000 children (in the same age range) in OECD regions on average, the corresponding value in Viken is lower, at 4.7 deaths per 1 000 children aged 0 to 4 in 2019. By comparison, Viken's child mortality rate is lower than in more than 90% of OECD regions. It is also below the average of regions in Norway (5.4 deaths per 1 000 children aged 0 to 4). Narrowing the perspective down to infant mortality rates shows a similar picture. Viken's average infant mortality between 2011 and 2015 (number of deaths of children 1-year-old or younger per 1 000 live births) of 2.3 is considerably lower than the average of OECD regions (5.9 deaths). Only about 13% of OECD regions exhibit lower infant mortality rates than the county of Viken. In comparison with other regions in Norway, the infant mortality rate in Viken equals the national average (2.3 deaths).

Transport-related mortality in Viken is among the lowest 3% of OECD regions. In addition to reducing the mortality of newborns and young children, SDG 3 also has the target to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents. In Viken, transport-related mortality is already comparatively low. In 2012, the latest year where data was available, Viken registered 3.1 transport-related deaths per 100 000 people. This figure is particularly striking when compared with the average of OECD regions, which is more than 3 times higher (9.4 transport-related deaths per 100 000 persons). Only 10 among 350 OECD regions, where data was available, registered lower traffic-related mortality rates than Viken. This result is in line with the average transport mortality in Norwegian regions, which reached 3.5 deaths per 100 000 persons in 2016.

Viken also performs better than the average of OECD regions when it comes to the active physicians rate. An important factor that contributes to good health and the achievement of SDG 3 is access to healthcare facilities and doctors. In 2018, Viken counted 4.3 active physicians per 1 000 people living in the county. Viken thus has a higher physician rate than the majority of OECD regions. On average, there are 2.8 active physicians per 1 000 people in OECD regions. Only about 15% of OECD regions exhibit higher rates of active physicians than Viken. In contrast to the above-average physicians rate among OECD regions,

Viken is slightly lagging behind other Norwegian regions. In Norway, the average physicians rate in 2018 was 4.8 with North Norway being the top-performer (5.6 physicians per 1 000 people).

Viken has a lower per capita hospital beds rate than the average of OECD regions. Another indicator that plays an important role in the area of public health is the number of available hospital beds per person as currently shown by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Viken, there were about 32 hospital beds per 10 000 people living in the region in 2018. In other OECD regions, the hospital bed rate is higher on average (41 hospital beds per 10 000 people). The same is the case for Norwegian regions where about the average is 35 hospital beds per 10 000 people. While Viken has a higher hospital bed rate than around 54% of OECD regions, these values, however, indicate a potential to catch up with the national average and top-performing OECD regions.

Life expectancy in Viken is high compared to most OECD regions. In line with its performance in the various health-related indicators, life expectancy is also higher in the county than in two thirds of OECD regions. Viken's life expectancy at birth as an average of 15 years (2004-2018) reached 81.6 years with women having an average life expectancy of 83.6 years compared to men with 79.6 years; 79.6 is also the average life expectancy for people (men and women) in OECD regions overall.

More than 40% of Viken's population between 25 and 66 years of age has successfully completed tertiary education. This indicates a strong performance on SDG 4, which has the objective to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. One of the targets to reach that objective is to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university. Tertiary education is already prevalent in Viken as it is in most Norwegian regions. In 2018, around 41% of the county's population aged between 25 and 66 had successfully completed tertiary education (44% if also considering vocational tertiary education) similar to Norway's national average of 44%. Viken's share of tertiary degrees among its working-age population is about 10 percentage points higher than the corresponding average of OECD regions (31.1% of the population from 25 to 64 years old with at least tertiary education),⁴ which puts Viken among the top quarter of OECD regions in terms of the share of tertiary education degrees. In that context, it is also worth noting that the share of women with tertiary degrees is about 5 percentage points higher than for men.




Part-time employment incidences in Viken are much more common among women than men. Although women account for a larger share of tertiary degrees than men in Viken, there are other areas of SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, where Viken is lagging. This is for instance the case for part-time employment incidences. In 2013, the gender difference (female-male) in part-time employment incidences in Viken was around 39 percentage points. In the former county of Østfold, it exceeded 50 percentage points. Despite having reduced gender gap in part-time employment incidences in the county since the beginning of the 2000s when it was still above 50 percentage points, there is still a strong potential for improvement, in particular, towards the suggested end value of a 0 percentage point gap in order to achieve gender parity in part-time employment between women and men. As a comparison, the average gender gap in part-time employment incidences in OECD regions is only 17.3 percentage points.

Planet: Viken is rich in tree cover and water bodies but motor road vehicles and waste generation remain challenges

Viken has a high share of water bodies compared to other OECD regions. Water is the prerequisite of human life and its management is therefore of great importance for sustainable development. SDG 6 has the objective to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. In Viken, around 7.5% of the county's area is inland waters, covering around 1 850 km². This share is more than twice the average of water bodies in OECD regions (3.1%) providing Viken with good prerequisites for recreational opportunities but also a great responsibility towards flora and fauna in these areas. As part of its localised indicator framework for measuring cities' and regions' distance to achieving the SDGs, the

OECD usually measures the change in water bodies between 1992 and 2015 in order to capture part of Target 6.6 of the 2030 Agenda to protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes. While no data is available for Viken over the specific time span from 1992 to 2015, its area covered by water bodies has increased by 0.66% between 2011 and 2019, which indicates a positive development.

Table 2.2. OECD indicators used to assess the dimension Planet in the county of Viken

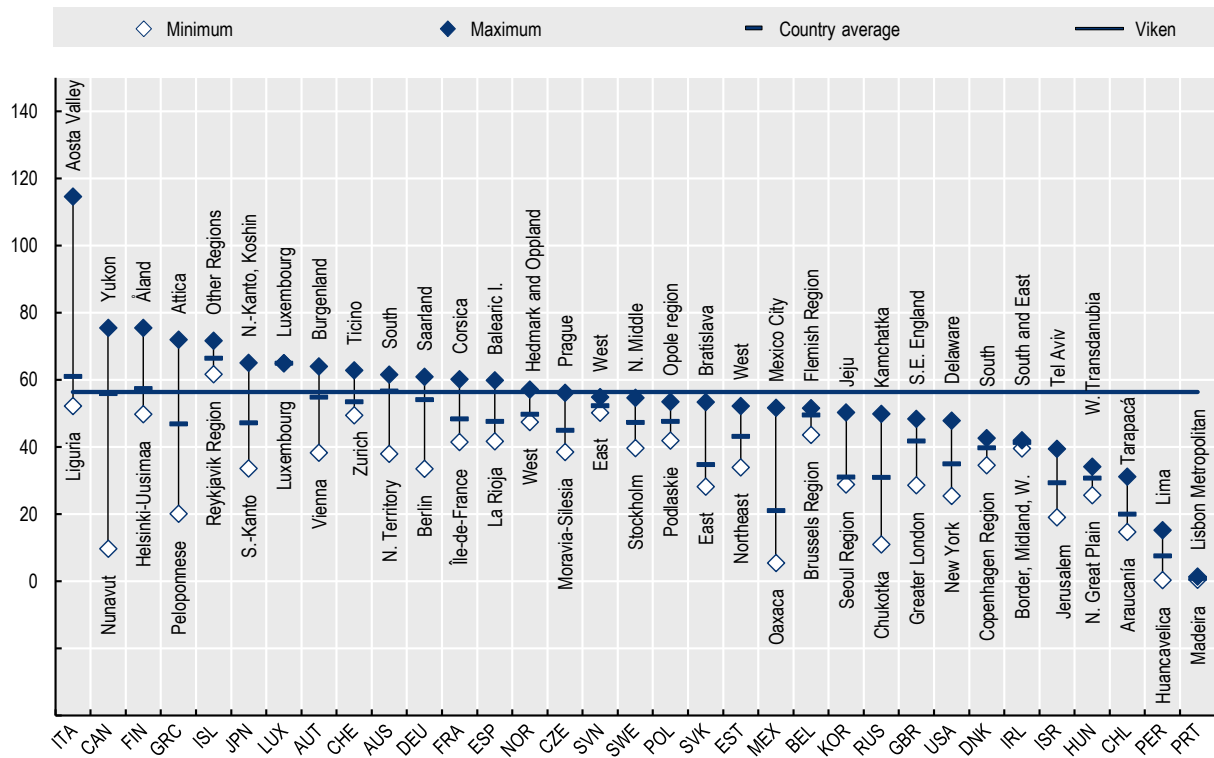
SDG	Indicator	Source
	Water bodies as a percentage of total area in 2015	StatBank Norway
	Change in water bodies	StatBank Norway
	Number of motor road vehicles per 100 people	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Municipal waste rate (kilos per capita)	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Tree cover as a percentage of total area in 2015	StatBank Norway
	Terrestrial protected areas as a percentage of total area	StatBank Norway

Source: OECD (2020^[2]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>; OECD (2020^[5]), *Measuring the Distance to the SDGs in Regions and Cities (visualisation tool)*, <http://www.oecd-local-sdgs.org/> (accessed on 15 July 2020).

Viken is characterised by a high rate of motor road vehicles. This negatively affects performance on SDG 12, which aims at ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. In the light of modern-day transport patterns and mobility, the usage of private cars has become an often-debated topic (not the least in Viken), particularly against the background of an increase in electric cars. In 2018, the county of Viken had around 56 motor road vehicles registered per 100 people (Figure 2.3). Around 9% were electric cars, while the vast majority of them (86%) was still running on petrol or diesel. In comparison, the OECD average is only around 40 motor road vehicles per 100 people, while the Norwegian average was around 52 in 2018. Viken's high car ownership rate underlines the car dependency of its residents, which comes with environmental and health issues such as air pollution and carbon emission.

Figure 2.3. Motor vehicles rate: Comparison across OECD regions relative to Viken, 2014

Number of motor road vehicles per 100 people



Note: Canada (2002); France, Spain (2010); Estonia, Ireland, Poland, Slovenia (2011); Colombia, Luxembourg, United States (2012); Finland, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Slovak Republic, United Kingdom (2013); Russia (2018).

Source: OECD (2020^[3]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Municipalities in Viken generate more waste per capita than the majority of OECD regions. Modern consumption patterns in many parts of the world also come with the problem of excessive waste generation. Regions in the OECD for instance annually produce around 410 kg of municipal waste per capita. The UN, therefore, advocates to substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse. This target also concerns Viken, where the per capita amount of municipal waste produced exceeded 470 kg in 2010.⁵ Among OECD regions, only one-third of the regions exhibit higher municipal waste rates, indicating the need for a further reflection on consumption and production patterns. On a positive note, recycling is already widespread in Norway. More than 80% of municipal waste in Norwegian regions get recycled.





Large areas of Viken are covered by forests. Modern production and consumption patterns tend to have a negative impact on the natural environment, an area, which is captured by SDG 15. There are different possibilities to counteract those impacts and protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage the forest and halt biodiversity loss, which are objectives of SDG 15. In Viken, around 57% of the area falls under the category of forest, compared to 38% on average among OECD regions (2015 value). Overall, Viken ranks among the quarter of OECD regions with the highest share of forests as a percentage of total area, which provides the county with a valuable asset considering that the restoration of trees is one of the most effective strategies for climate change mitigation (Bastin et al., 2019^[6]). Forests are also the home to different types of wildlife, which can contribute to biodiversity in the county.

The degree of terrestrial protection in Viken is lower than in the majority of OECD regions, stressing the urban growth pressure in the region. SDG Target 15.5 demands taking urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitat, halt the loss of biodiversity and prevent the extinction of threatened species. One of the measures that could contribute to that target is the establishment of national parks or natural reserves. In the case of Viken, around 10.7% of the county's area had a protected status such as national park or nature reserve in 2019 compared to the national average of 17.3% and the average of OECD regions, which reached 19.2%. More than 60% of the regions in the OECD, where data was available, exhibited a higher degree of terrestrial protection than Viken. In order to reach the suggested end value of 37.6% based on the best-performing regions, Viken would need to increase the share of protected areas by around 27 percentage points. In that context, however, it has to be considered that the prerequisites and geographical conditions differ, which has an impact on the extent to which areas within different regions fall under the status of protected areas. In Viken, terrestrial protected areas include the Spålen-Katnosa Nature Reserve around the municipalities of Jevnaker and Lunner as well as parts of Hallingskarvet National Park and Hardangervidda National Park, Norway's largest national park.

Prosperity: Viken benefits from low unemployment rates and air pollution, while 100% of its electricity comes from renewable sources

Viken's entire electricity production comes from renewable sources. In a world of steadily increasing demand for energy, the achievement of SDG 7 to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all is of great importance for sustainable development. One important factor in that context is the production of electricity. In Viken, the total electricity production per capita (in kilowatt-hours (kWh) per person) is similar to the average of OECD regions. In 2018, around 13 100 kWh of electricity per capita were produced in Viken, while the average OECD region generated about 9 800 kWh. With its per capita electricity production, the county of Viken ranks among the quarter of OECD regions with the highest per capita rates of electricity production. In contrast to many other regions in the OECD that rely on coal or fossil fuels to produce electricity, Viken only uses renewable sources, mainly hydropower (Figure 2.4). It thus outperforms the average of OECD regions that produce electricity, whose average share of electricity from renewable sources is about 41%. As a consequence of its renewable energy sources, Viken does not use coal nor fossil fuels for its own electricity production, thus reaching the 2 end values for these 2 types of energy sources that are set at 0%. Moreover, Viken does not use nuclear power to produce its energy. Nevertheless, this data must be read within the wider context of Norway's unusual GHG emission profile, being a large producer and exporter of fossil fuels while producing most of its own electricity from renewable sources. Achieving SDG 7 not only requires internal consumption of clean energy, but also supporting clean electricity consumption abroad (e.g. exporting only clean energy).

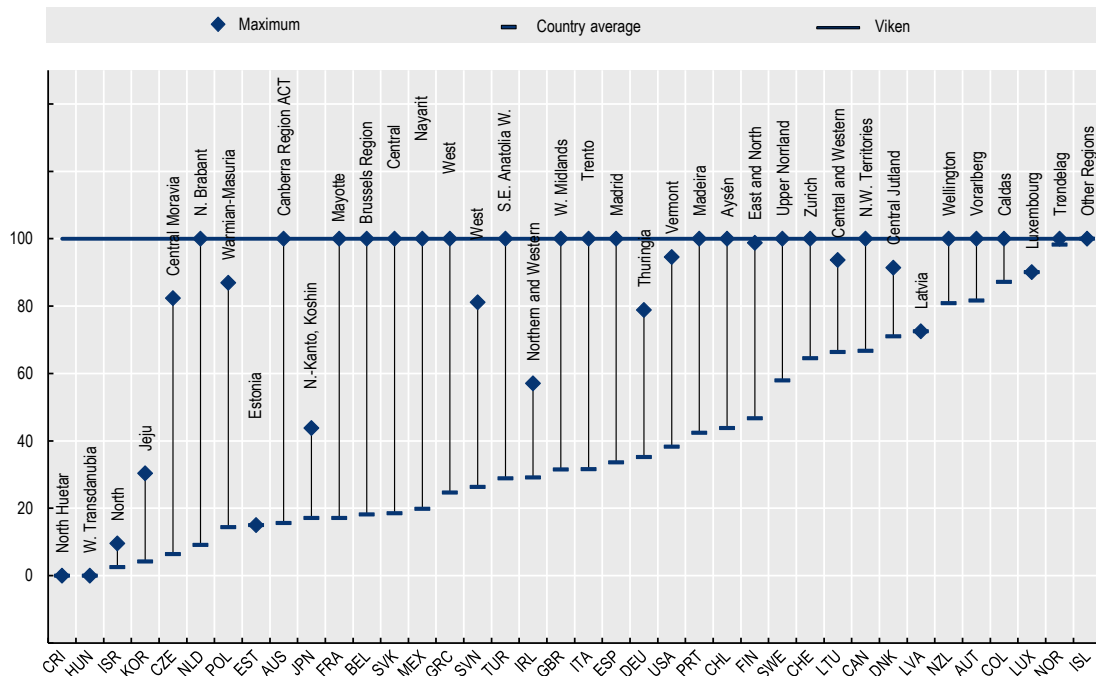
Table 2.3. OECD indicators used to assess the dimension Prosperity in the county of Viken

SDG	Indicator	Source
	Total electricity production per capita (in kWh)	StatBank Norway
	Percentage of total electricity production that comes from renewable sources	StatBank Norway
	Percentage of total electricity production that comes from coal	StatBank Norway
	Percentage of total electricity production that comes from fossil fuels (natural gas and oil, excluding coal)	StatBank Norway
	Percentage of total electricity production that comes from nuclear power	StatBank Norway
	Employment rate (%)	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Unemployment rate (%)	StatBank Norway/OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Gender gap in the unemployment rate (percentage points)	StatBank Norway
	Part-time employment incidence (%)	StatBank Norway
	R&D personnel as a share of total employment	StatBank Norway
	Exposure to PM2.5 in µg/m³, population-weighted (micrograms per cubic metre)	OECD Environmental Database

Source: OECD (2020^[2]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>; OECD (2020^[5]), *Measuring the Distance to the SDGs in Regions and Cities (visualisation tool)*, <http://www.oecd-local-sdgs.org/> (accessed on 15 July 2020).

Figure 2.4. Electricity production from renewable sources: Comparison across OECD regions relative to Viken, 2017

Percentage of total electricity production that comes from renewable sources



Note: For some countries data on electricity production does not cover the total amount of electricity produced. This is the case for the following countries: Austria (83% of the country's electricity production is covered), Czech Republic (93%), Denmark (95%), Hungary (89%), Italy (93%), Netherlands (91%), Slovakia (90%) and Switzerland (90%).

Source: OECD (2020^[3]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>; Value for Viken calculated based on StatBank Norway data: Statistics Norway (2020^[4]), *StatBank Norway*, <https://www.ssb.no/en/statbank>.

Viken's economy benefits from low unemployment rates contributing positively to SDG 8, which aims to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Overall, the employment rate of Viken's working-age population reached close to 80% in 2019, a value above the national average (75%). In addition, Viken's share of unemployed persons (aged 15 to 74) registered at the employment office in November 2019, the latest date when data was available, ranged from 1.9% in the former county of Akershus to 3.2% in the former county of Østfold. When looking at the unemployment rate according to the OECD definition (percentage of unemployed over labour force 15-64 years old), Viken's result points in a similar direction. In 2016, the latest data available, the average unemployment rate in Viken was at a low 4.6%. In comparison, the average unemployment rate in OECD regions in 2017 was around 7.6%. In the national context, Viken performs similarly to the average of Norwegian regions (4.3%), whose unemployment rate ranged from 2.9% in Hedmark and Oppland to 5.3% in Agder and Rogaland.

The gender gap in unemployment rate is close to zero in Viken. Unemployment rates are very similar between women and men in the different regions within Viken. Overall, the gender gap is very close to zero. In 2019, the average unemployment rate of women was -0.04 percentage points lower than the unemployment rate for men. One can therefore state that Viken has reached the end value of having closed the gender gap in unemployment between men and women while the average gender gap in unemployment rates in OECD regions is around two percentage points.

Twenty percent of Viken's residents work part-time. In order to capture a part of SDG Target 8.5 to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, the OECD uses the indicator of part-time employment incidences in its localised indicator framework. In terms of this indicator, Viken's performance is below the average of OECD regions: 20.4% of people in Viken worked less than 80% of full-time equivalent working hours in 2019. As a comparison, the corresponding average of OECD regions⁶ of 17.9% and the suggested end value of 15.4% based on the best-performing regions have thus not yet been reached by Viken. However, the proportion of people working part-time has been decreasing over the past years indicating a positive development in Viken and it is also lower than the average of Norwegian regions (27%).



The share of R&D employment is slightly higher than the average in OECD regions. SDG Target 9.5 pursues the goal to enhance scientific research, encourage innovation substantially increase the number of R&D workers as well as public and private R&D spending. As of 2018, around 7 900 out of the 500 000 employees in Viken were employed in the field of R&D, which corresponds to a share of about 1.6% of overall employment. This value is similar to the average of OECD regions of around 1.5%. Despite exhibiting a higher share of R&D employment than around 60% of OECD regions, Viken still has a certain distance to close with respect to the Norwegian average of 2% and the top-performing regions in Norway for this indicator such as Trøndelag, where R&D jobs account for more than 5% of total employment.

Air pollution in Viken is below the limit recommended by the WHO. Air pollution has a key role to play towards the SDGs (United Nations, 2020^[7]), particularly in cities, where the higher concentration of people and economic activity make them more exposed to air pollution. Data from the OECD Environmental Database indicates that air pollution levels in Viken are comparatively low. In 2017, the average annual exposure to small particulate matter of 2.5 microns or less in diameter (PM_{2.5}), which can cause cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as well as cancers, was 8.0 µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic metre, population weighted). Air pollution levels in Viken were thus considerably lower than the WHO Air Quality Guideline value of 10 µg/m³ at which the end value for 2030 is set (WHO, 2018^[8]). In fact, Viken is among the 25% of OECD regions with the lowest PM_{2.5} exposure, which is remarkable, particularly considering its high rate of motor road vehicles but also partially related to its low population density. The average exposure to air pollution PM_{2.5} of OECD regions (13.3 µg/m³) is more than twice as large as Viken's value.

Peace and Partnership: Viken is a safe place to live, characterised by high voter turnout and broadband Internet access

Viken is a very safe place to live. With a homicide rate of around 0.5 murderers per 100 000 persons (in 2019), Viken is one of the safest regions in OECD countries (Figure 2.5). This contributes to the promotion of peaceful societies for sustainable development (SDG 16) as also expressed through Target 16.1 to significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death everywhere. Only around 15% of OECD regions exhibit a lower rate of intentional homicides. As a comparison, the average homicide rate in OECD regions is around 5.3 intentional homicides per 100 000 people. Viken’s result is also consistent with the low homicide rate in Norway overall. On average, regions in the country only registered 0.5 cases of intentional homicides per 100 000 in 2019.

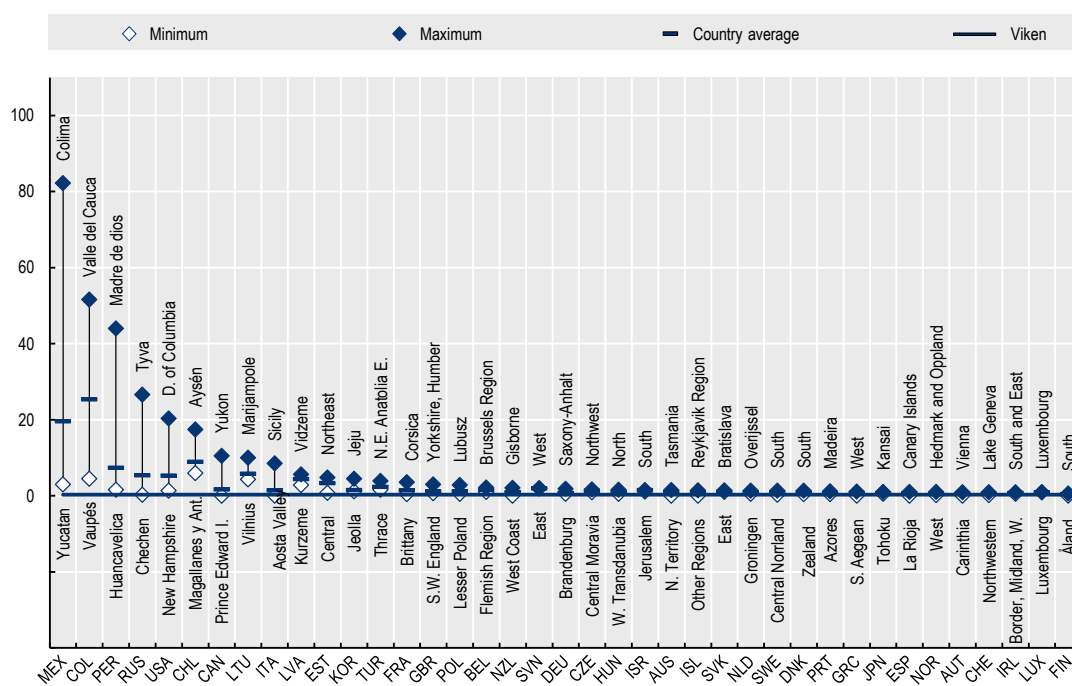
Table 2.4. OECD indicators used to assess the dimensions Peace and Partnership in the county of Viken

SDG	Indicator	Source
	Homicides per 100 000 persons	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Voter turnout	OECD Regional Statistics Database
	Percentage of households with broadband Internet access	OECD Regional Statistics Database

Source: OECD (2020^[2]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>; OECD (2020^[5]), *Measuring the Distance to the SDGs in Regions and Cities (visualisation tool)*, <http://www.oecd-local-sdgs.org/> (accessed on 15 July 2020).

Figure 2.5. Homicides: Comparison across OECD regions relative to Viken, 2016

Homicides per 100 000 persons



Note: Netherlands (2009); Slovenia (2012); Italy, Turkey (2013); New Zealand, Peru, Sweden (2014); Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania (2015); Germany, Russia (2018).

Source: OECD (2020^[3]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

The voter turnout in Viken in the last national election was higher than the average of OECD regions. Beyond the promotion of peaceful societies, SDG 16 also advocates for responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Voter turnout can be used as a proxy to measure the performance regarding this target. 77.1% of people in Viken participated in the last general parliamentary election in 2017, which is a marginally lower turnout in comparison to the national Norwegian average of 78.1% but higher than the average of OECD regions (72.5%). With close to four out of five residents of Viken participating in the national election, the county thus shows comparatively satisfactory results for this indicator.

More than eight of ten households in Viken have access to broadband Internet. Connectivity is a helpful asset when it comes to the global partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17). SDG Target 17.8 therefore aims to enhance the use of enabling technologies, in particular information and communications technology. The OECD localised indicator uses the accessibility of broadband Internet as a proxy to measure the achievement of this target. In this indicator, Viken shows above-average results compared to the majority of OECD regions. Following a sharp increase in broadband connections in the past years, the county's rate of 88% of households connected to the Internet via broadband in 2018 is significantly higher than the average of OECD regions (74%) and slightly higher than the average among regions in Norway (87%). However, there are around 20% of OECD regions, where the share of broadband connections is higher than in Viken, which reveals the further potential for improvement considering Norway's high level of development.

Using the SDGs to implement an integrated approach to address territorial disparities in environmental, economic and social performance in Viken, Norway

Viken shows strong performance on the majority of the SDGs, especially from an OECD regional comparison perspective, yet territorial disparities among different areas of Viken call for closer attention to the possible pitfalls of continuing the current development path. Rural and urban areas have different challenges and opportunities when it comes to sustainable development. Analysing the interlinkages and trade-offs between the goals and applying a functional approach can help to understand how to foster long-term sustainability in the region (see Annex 2.A for an overview of methodologies). For example, while poverty rates are low for the region overall (SDG 1), a territorial approach to the SDGs warrants a closer look at the intra-regional differences (SDG 10), as partly highlighted in Chapter 1 and in the Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024.

Within the newly formed Viken county, Akershus is a predominantly urban region, while Buskerud and Østfold are intermediate regions, with Østfold showing relatively more rural characteristics.⁷ Broadly speaking, the classification means that at least 15% of the population in Buskerud and Østfold live in rural areas, while less than 15% of Akershus' population is rural. Looking at further demographic trends, population growth has been slower in Buskerud and Østfold compared to Akershus in the last five years. In all 3 counties, the share of the population aged 65 or above has grown by 3% between 2009 and 2010, and ranges from 16% of the total population of Akershus to 18% in Buskerud and 19% Østfold in 2019 (Statistics Norway, 2020^[9]), making the trend of ageing slightly more accentuated in Østfold.

Østfold's slower population growth is likely due to its relatively small labour markets, which concentrate in the manufacturing sector. As highlighted in the regional planning strategy, making both education (SDG 4) and job opportunities (SDG 8) accessible everywhere in the region is a priority, while the OECD has underscored the continued need for structural transformation into higher value-added activities (SDG 9) needed to create new jobs and attract people to the area (OECD, 2018^[10]). Employment and education outcomes were also among key challenges addressed in Østfold county's previous regional planning strategy (County of Østfold, 2018^[11]). At the same time, Norway had the lowest share of R&D expenditure in the manufacturing industry among all Scandinavian countries in 2013, pointing to a potential policy gap at the national level (OECD, 2018^[10]). While the data analysis in this chapter only includes employment in

R&D activities overall in Viken (higher than OECD average), attention to spatial inequalities and sub-regional specificities in this regard is needed. Investing in rural industries like forestry and aquaculture – part of Østfold's local assets – can also help exploit synergies between People- and Prosperity-related SDGs (e.g. SDGs 8 and 9) with Planet SDGs (e.g. SDGs 13, 14 and 15).

Intraregional challenges related to employment and social inclusion have also been identified in Viken. For example, an increased risk of people falling into poverty has been estimated in the former county of Buskerud. Prior to becoming part of Viken, the share of households with below 60% of the median national income grew from 8.1% to 9.9% between 2010 and 2018, compared to the 9.4% average for Viken. A wage gap between native and foreign-born workers had further been identified in Buskerud (County of Buskerud, 2018^[12]). Such data show the value of looking at data from an intra-regional perspective and with a more granular view, to spot potential threats to long-term sustainability.

Annex 2.A. Methodological frameworks for mapping SDG interlinkages of SDGs and targets

Annex Table 2.A.1. Non-exhaustive overview of methodological frameworks for mapping SDG interlinkages of SDGs and targets

Methodological framework	Key approach(es)	Tools and methods	Main purpose and use
“The SDGs as a network of targets” (Le Blanc, 2015 ^[13])	Mapping of SDGs based on the wording of the targets (i.e. what other goals are specifically referred to)	Two-mode network analysis	Forward global debate on integrated policymaking and implementation of the SDGs
A Guide to SDG Interactions: From Science to Implementation (International Council for Science, 2017 ^[14])	Scoring approach combined with analysis based on evidence from the literature	Scoring criteria based on a 7-point scale from -3 to 3, guiding questions for the key dimensions of the interaction	Understanding interactions and guide implementation
Integrated Approaches for Sustainable Development Goals Planning (UN ESCAP, 2016 ^[15])	Systems thinking approach: analysis of causal loop interactions combined with the theory of leverage points	3 primary system tools: Matrix, 12-leverage point framework; Kumu online tool for system visualisation	Planning and prioritising: identifying effective and impactful interventions at the policy level
“Implementing the SDGs - Responding to the challenges of interconnectivity and balance” (Niles and Fernando, 2017 ^[16])	Assessing public policies based on interconnectivity (relation to SDG targets) and balance (relation to the three sustainable development pillars)	Network analysis is utilised to visualise both the interconnectivity and the balance (Fusion Tables, free software powered by Google)	Implementation and policymaking; illustrates the strongest links and their relationships as well as missing links
Integrated global target equation (Griggs et al., 2014 ^[17])	Calculating the critical trade-off between biophysical and socio-economic objectives	Based on Global Sustainability Objectives (GSOs) (planetary “must-haves”) to define critical trade-off values	Providing scientific evidence of biophysical boundaries for defining socially determined targets

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Notes

¹ The OECD defines large regions (TL2) as the first administrative tier of subnational governments. TL2 regions also include “administrative cities” that belong to the first administrative tier of subnational government.

² See <https://www.ssb.no/en/statbank>.

³ The following indicators only consider data from the 3 former counties: infant mortality rate (number of deaths of children 1-year-old or younger per 1 000 live births), mortality rates for the 0-4 year-old population, active physicians rate (active physicians per 1 000 people), hospital bed rate (hospital beds per 10 000 people), percentage of population 25 to 64 years old with at least tertiary education, tree cover as a percentage of total area in 2015, terrestrial protected areas as a percentage of total area, gender gap in part-time employment incidence (female-male, percentage points), homicides per 100 000 population, percentage of households with broadband Internet access, research and development personnel as a share of total employment, number of motor road vehicles per 100 people, transport-related mortality rates (deaths per 100 000 people), municipal waste rate (kilos per capita), total electricity production per capita (in kWh), percentage of total electricity production that comes from renewable sources, percentage of total electricity production that comes from coal, percentage of total electricity production that comes from fossil fuels (natural gas and oil, excluding coal), percentage of total electricity production that comes from nuclear power, unemployment rate (%), water bodies as percentage of total area in 2015, change in water bodies, and exposure to PM2.5 in $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, population-weighted (micrograms per cubic metre).

⁴ The OECD indicator measures the share of population 25 to 64 years old with at least tertiary education, while the value for Viken also encompasses people aged 65 or 66 years.

⁵ Data for Norwegian TL3 regions for the indicator “municipal waste rate (kilos per capita)” is only available until 2010 in the OECD Regional Statistics Database.

⁶ The OECD defines part-time employment as people in employment (whether employees or self-employed) who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. Employed people are those aged 15 and over who report that they have worked in gainful employment for at least 1 hour in the previous week or who had a job but were absent from work during the reference week while having a formal job attachment. The value for Viken considers the contractual percentage of full-time equivalent, i.e. people who work less than 80% of full time equivalent working hours.

⁷ The OECD has classified TL3 regions as predominantly urban (PU), intermediate (IN) or predominantly rural (PR) regions. This typology is mainly based on population density in each local unit, combined with the existence of urban centres where at least one-quarter of the regional population reside. An extended regional typology has been adopted to distinguish between rural regions that are located close to larger urban centres and those that are not. The result is a four-fold classification of TL3 regions: predominantly urban (PU), intermediate regions (IN), predominantly rural regions close to a city (PRC) and predominantly rural remote regions (PRR). The distance from urban centres is measured by the driving time necessary for a certain share of the regional population to reach an urban centre with at least 50 000 people.

3

The SDGs to strengthen the multi-level governance for sustainability

The national government of Norway recently took steps to strengthen vertical and horizontal co-ordination for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including through an action plan, a Coherence Forum and a State Secretary Committee. Guidance issued by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation further urges counties and municipalities to integrate the SDGs in their strategic planning. Using the SDGs as a common framework, with a functional lens, is helpful to address countywide challenges and define the future development of Viken, in coordination with other levels of government. Continued engagement with civil society, youth councils and the business community will also be decisive for the county's efforts in advancing the SDGs, making all parts of Viken attractive places in which to live and work.

The evolving landscape of multi-level governance to implement the SDGs

National government's horizontal and vertical co-ordination and multi-level dialogue for the SDGs

In early 2020, the national government of Norway took steps to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at domestic and international level. One is a National Action Plan for the SDGs to be completed in spring 2021 as a report to the Parliament (*Storting*) to ensure broad support. The plan is led by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (KMD), with the engagement of civil society, business, academia and public enterprises. The goal of the action plan is to concretise the work with the SDGs and adapt them to Norwegian conditions and challenges.

Previously, the Norwegian government integrated the SDGs in its budget processes and documents presented each year to the Parliament for approval. Responsibility for the various SDGs is assigned to different ministries according to their main mandate. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for summarising the yearly progress and new budget proposal presented to Parliament, while the Ministry for Local Government and Modernisation co-ordinates the work on the SDGs.

Other new measures proposed by the national government in 2020 to accelerate action towards the SDGs include:

- Developing national indicators for the sustainability goals where possible.
- Expanding and updating the role of the Coherence Forum (*Samstemthetsforumet*) to ensure wider participation. The forum will be chaired by Secretaries of State from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and KMD, contributing to bringing policy areas and development objectives closer together.
- Establishing a separate State Secretary Committee to strengthen the political co-ordination of the work on the sustainability goals. The State Secretary Committee shall receive inputs from the Coherence Forum.
- Ensuring that all strategies, action plans, reports to the Parliament and propositions from the government discuss the effect on the sustainability goals.
- Initiating a sustainability conference to bring together a wide range of actors in Norway, with the goal of sharing best practices.

These new measures draw on previous efforts by the MFA to promote policy coherence and horizontal co-ordination at the national level, including an inter-ministerial working group that considered the potential challenges and consequences of the SDGs for both foreign and domestic policies. The ministry is also responsible, through the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), for compiling the Voluntary National Review (VNR) in co-ordination with all ministries. Norway was one of the first countries to present a VNR to the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2016. While the VNR process previously helped to enhance horizontal co-ordination among ministries, regional and local level governments had not been directly involved or consulted beyond their representation through the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS). The 2016 VNR describes how the national government engages with subnational level governments through regular channels (Government of Norway, 2016^[1]).

The MFA also publishes a yearly “One Year Closer” report to outline Norway’s progress on the 2030 Agenda. The 2017 report did not include any reference to the subnational level while, in 2019, the report put a strong emphasis on civil society engagement and partnerships, albeit not highlighting the role of regional and local governments to any great extent. The section on SDG 11 of the 2019 One Year Closer report mentions that several counties and municipalities are implementing the SDGs in their regional and local planning and that the national government is promoting urban growth agreements to tackle CO₂ emissions in cities (Government of Norway, 2019^[2]).

Being the authorised authority to collect data and produce statistics nationwide, Statistics Norway's role in the development of comparable subnational indicators for the SDGs is essential; yet its preliminary assessment on the availability of national data on the global SDG indicators made in 2018 did not prioritise local and regional level indicators. It showed that around half of the 232 UN indicators can be measured using existing sources available in Norway but that several available indicators need further development or calculations adapted to the description of the global indicator (Statistics Norway, 2018^[3]). In 2020, Statistics Norway made the available performance data on the SDGs targets at national level publicly accessible (Statistics Norway, 2020^[4]). While there is no official collaboration between Viken and Statistics Norway at this stage, the development of the Knowledge Base in Viken can help to identify data gaps at the county and municipal levels. This can be useful for the expansion of a national indicator framework for the local and regional levels.

In its 2020 report to the Parliament, KMD highlighted the interest among municipalities to gain strengthened support in implementing the SDGs, especially for building a relevant data and knowledge base at the local level. KMD is thus collaborating with Statistics Norway and the Norwegian Mapping Authority on statistical improvements. KMD's work on the development of "area profiles", descriptive statistics of 24 key indicators, will further contribute to giving municipalities a better knowledge base than they have today.

The SDGs in regional and local planning

The national framework for regional and local planning provides one mechanism to strengthen SDGs implementation at the subnational level. As the national authority supervising regional and local planning, KMD published an Expectation Document in 2019 that emphasises that all counties and municipalities are supposed to use the SDGs in their planning processes. It further urges them to use regional planning fora to strengthen multi-level co-ordination. The Expectation Document also highlights the national government's role in contributing to capacity building and sharing of experiences across counties and municipalities working on the SDGs. Also, KMD intends to continue working on the development of indicators adapted to regional and local conditions (KMD, 2019^[5]). This may help to provide further momentum towards a local and regional indicator system that can be used by all counties and municipalities.

KMD aims to further support localising the SDGs, however, there is a reluctance to impose any additional burden on local and regional authorities and specific needs need to be better mapped. Many counties and municipalities are not aware of the channels through which to reach out to KMD to express their needs. A kind of "lock-in" situation thus results, calling for stronger multi-level dialogue and better mapping of needs among local authorities.

The Association for Norwegian Local and Regional Authorities (KS) has been supporting its members in incorporating the SDGs in local plans and activities since October 2018 and is helping to map the needs of local and regional governments, bridging the above-mentioned gap. By convening its members to "fact-finding" meetings, conducting surveys and engaging in political dialogue with members and national government actors, the association acts as a crucial link in the vertical co-ordination for the SDGs in Norway.

The FUA of Oslo reflects that the city of Oslo and some municipalities in Viken are strongly linked via their economic function, with a large share of their population working in the Oslo FUA. On the other hand, municipalities outside of the Oslo FUA have less than 15% of people commuting into the city of Oslo and are thus less directly connected to the employment opportunities and growth dynamics of the capital's productive and knowledge-intensive business service sector. This is reflected in the different growth dynamics seen in the former counties, with Akershus performing better than the other two on a number of socio-economic indicators.

Box 3.1. EC-OECD Definition of functional urban areas (FUAs)

The EC-OECD definition of FUAs is based on the estimates of population density and commuting data and are “economic units characterised by a city (or core) and a commuting zone that is functionally interconnected to the city” (OECD, 2019^[9]). The city in the FUA is a local administrative unit (LAU) with at least 50% of its population living in an urban centre with at least 1 500 inhabitants per km² and at least 50 000 inhabitants overall. The commuting zone is defined by areas surrounding the city, where at least 15% of the population commute to the city. The OECD has classified FUAs according to four different sizes:

- Small FUAs, with a population of between 50 000 and 100 000 inhabitants.
- Medium-sized FUAs, with a population of between 100 000 and 250 000 inhabitants.
- Metropolitan FUAs, with a population of between 250 000 and 1.5 million inhabitants.
- Large metropolitan FUAs, with a population of above 1.5 million inhabitants.

In Norway, based on consultation with European national statistical institutes and OECD delegates from the Working Party on Territorial Indicators, the list of FUAs are: Bergen (metropolitan); Kristiansand (medium-sized); Oslo (metropolitan); Stavanger (metropolitan); Tromsø (small) and Trondheim (metropolitan).

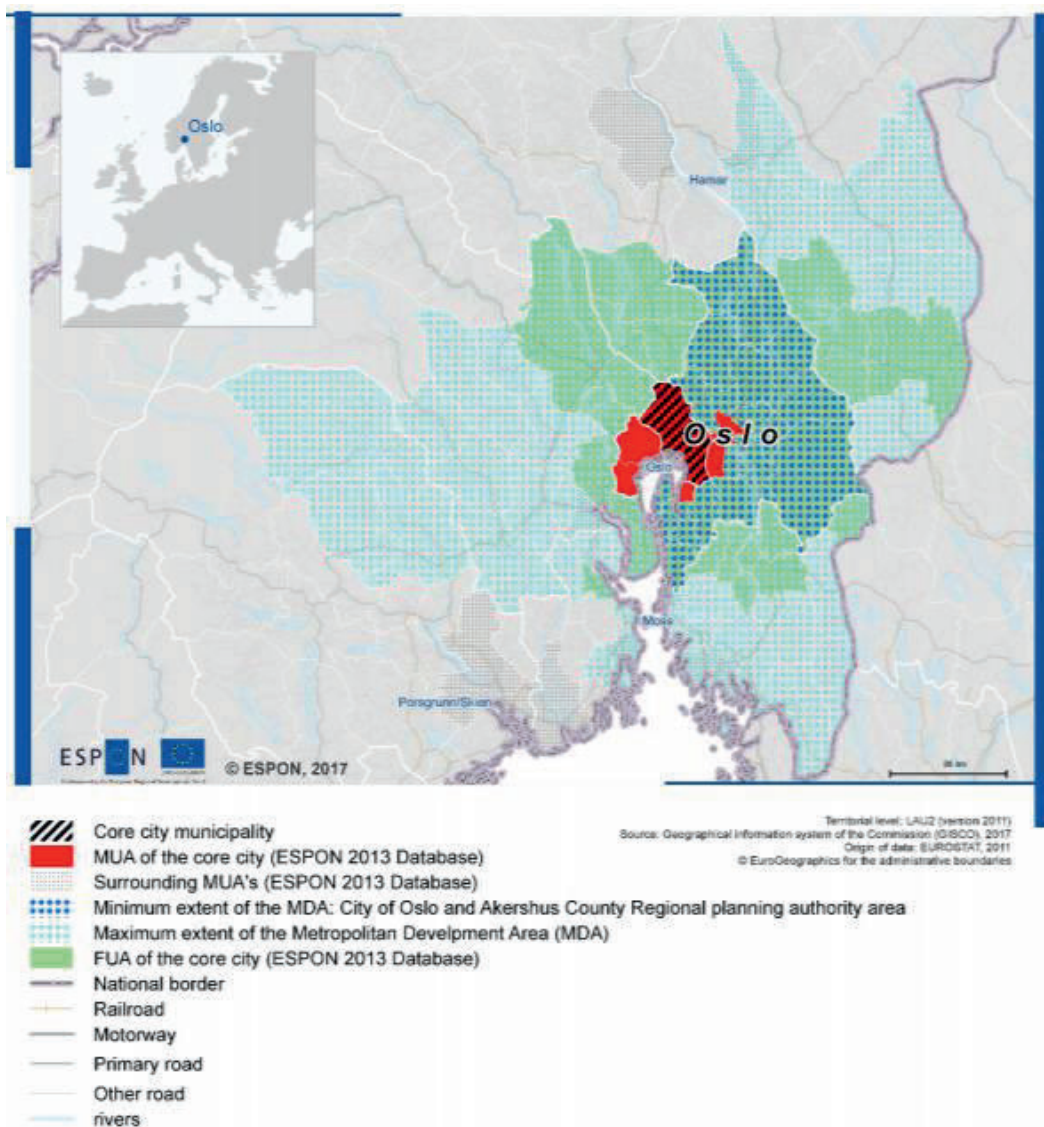
Source: OECD (2019^[9]), *Functional Urban Areas in OECD Countries*, OECD, Paris.

Providing further nuance, a spatial analysis of the Oslo-Akershus Metropolitan Development Area (MDA)¹ shows a polycentric development pattern larger than the Oslo FUA. Besides Oslo, other key agglomerations that provide opportunities for further polycentric urban development in Viken include Drammen in former Buskerud and Fredrikstad/Sarpsborg in former Østfold. Yet, the MDA analysis also finds that the strongest growth in recent years has been in areas within about 45 minutes' travel distance from Oslo city centre, underlining the core-periphery dynamics. It further finds that businesses that value parking space are located in a doughnut shape around Oslo city centre, due to more affordable land prices in the fringe areas. Favouring a polycentric development pattern is thus a key strategic element to avoid overdependence on Oslo and meet the uneven growth challenges of Viken (van der Griff-Simenova et al., 2018^[6]).

Ensuring sustainable transport patterns as well as inclusive labour market are key stakes for the future of Viken and for achieving the SDGs, as highlighted in the Regional Planning Strategy. Viken's high car ownership highlighted in Chapter 2 impedes progress on SDGs 12 and 11 for example. Moreover, the use of public transport is not well spread and mainly concentrated within the city centre of Oslo and to some degree *into* the city centre. Hence, public transport is more widespread in the central part of Viken, while public transport provision is less developed in other parts. Yet, availability does not seem to be the only influencing factor, since the main means of transport in the Oslo-Akershus area remains a private car. Improving accessibility while at the same time promoting sustainable habits is therefore key. Reducing the

number of vehicles on the roads overall could help to completely eradicate mortality rates from traffic accidents (SDG 3). In parallel to public transport, transitioning into low-carbon vehicles can also help to counter CO₂ emissions caused by increasing commuting into Oslo and other urban centres. A shift towards electric cars can be witnessed in Norway, with the government reporting that 76.6% of cars sold in Oslo in March 2019 were electric (Government of Norway, 2019^[2]).

Figure 3.2. Metropolitan Development Area of Oslo-Akershus



Note: The Oslo-Akershus MDA is shown in relation to its “maximum” and “minimum” scenarios, as well as compared to the Oslo FUA, morphological urban area (MUA) and local administrative unit (the Municipality of Oslo). The maximum MDA shows that development of the MDA happens along three main corridors, forming an upside-down Y-shape around the Oslo Fjord. In the north, urban development is limited because of the protected Marka forest area.

Source: van der Grift-Simenova, V. et al. (2018^[6]), *SPIMA – Spatial Dynamics and Strategic Planning in Metropolitan Areas*, <https://www.espon.eu/metropolitan-areas>.

With regards to addressing labour market challenges in Østfold, enhancing its connectedness to Oslo-Akershus is key, while also prioritising initiatives that support skills development and structural transformation of its local labour markets. Focusing on labour markets around the cities of

Fredrikstad/Sarpsborg and Halden on the one hand and improving transport links with Oslo-Akershus to integrate its labour market on the other is a possible way forward to better connect this part of Viken to its positive growth dynamics at the core of the FUA.

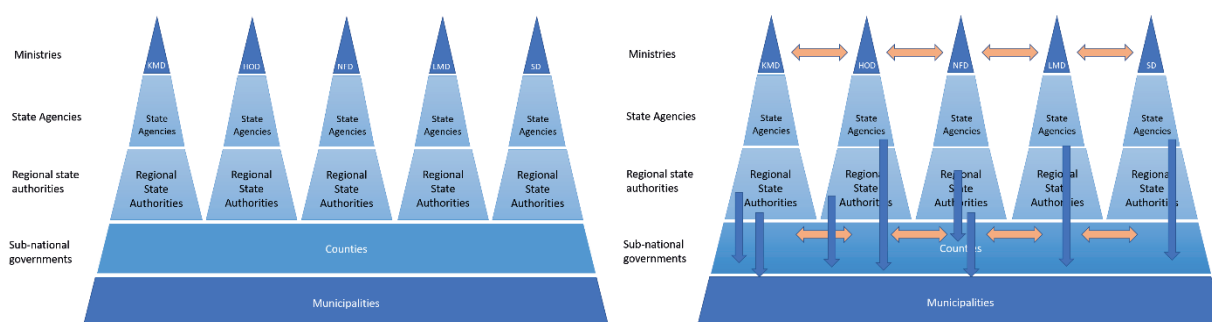
Addressing “mismatches” and co-ordination challenges in territorial governance in Viken and Norway

Applying a functional lens helps Viken understand spatial development dynamics within Viken, as well as in relation to the city of Oslo, and design policies at the appropriate spatial scale for the county. Nevertheless, to make the most of a functional approach, political will and commitment to regional planning by a range of stakeholders are needed. The lack of a shared vision and political commitment to a functional approach by all municipalities concerned risks undermining strategic plans, leading to continued urban sprawl in places that are unconnected to strategic public transport hubs (van der Grift-Simenova et al., 2018[6]). In support of regional strategic planning, the SDGs can provide a common language and framework, helping to support stronger vertical and horizontal co-ordination among territorial stakeholders in Viken. In turn, the framework can help break policy silos and strengthen policy coherence in urban sustainable development, including promoting a polycentric development.

As highlighted above, urban development pressures linked to the core-periphery dynamics around the capital Oslo are a central question for Viken’s long-term sustainable development. Put differently, “the challenge is to ensure that growth occurs in strategic locations, while at the same time balancing growth across the metropolitan area according to different local assets and spatial functions” (van der Grift-Simenova et al., 2018[6]). This is currently challenging in the context of the decentralised planning system in Norway, where municipalities are sometimes reluctant to adhere to regional plans and where geographic “mismatch” and the risk of fragmentation lead to additional co-ordination bottlenecks across and between government levels (OECD, 2018[7]).

Geographical “mismatch” appears vertically between the administrative boundaries of counties and municipalities on the one hand and the spatial coverage of regional state authorities on the other. Regional state authorities are responsible for service delivery in geographic areas that are not always aligned with counties and municipality borders, like for example those of the transport and food safety authorities. Viken alone is involved with over 50 different regional state authorities; a co-ordination burden that has not been fully addressed by the territorial reform (Vinsand and Salte Flatval, 2019[10]). The result is an overlapping, multi-layered institutional framework that relies on ad hoc collaboration and partnership, which have not always been able to deliver co-ordinated policy responses (see Figure 3.3) (Hanssen, 2019[11]).

Figure 3.3. Institutional fragmentation at the national and regional levels in Norway



Note: OECD Elaboration. KMD: Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation; HOD: Ministry of Health and Care Services; NFD: Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries; LMD: Ministry of Agriculture and Food; SD: Ministry of Transport

Source: Hanssen, S. (2019[11]), “OECD Workshop - Context and challenges”, Presentation given during OECD consultative workshop, 27 March 2019, Oslo Metropolitan University.

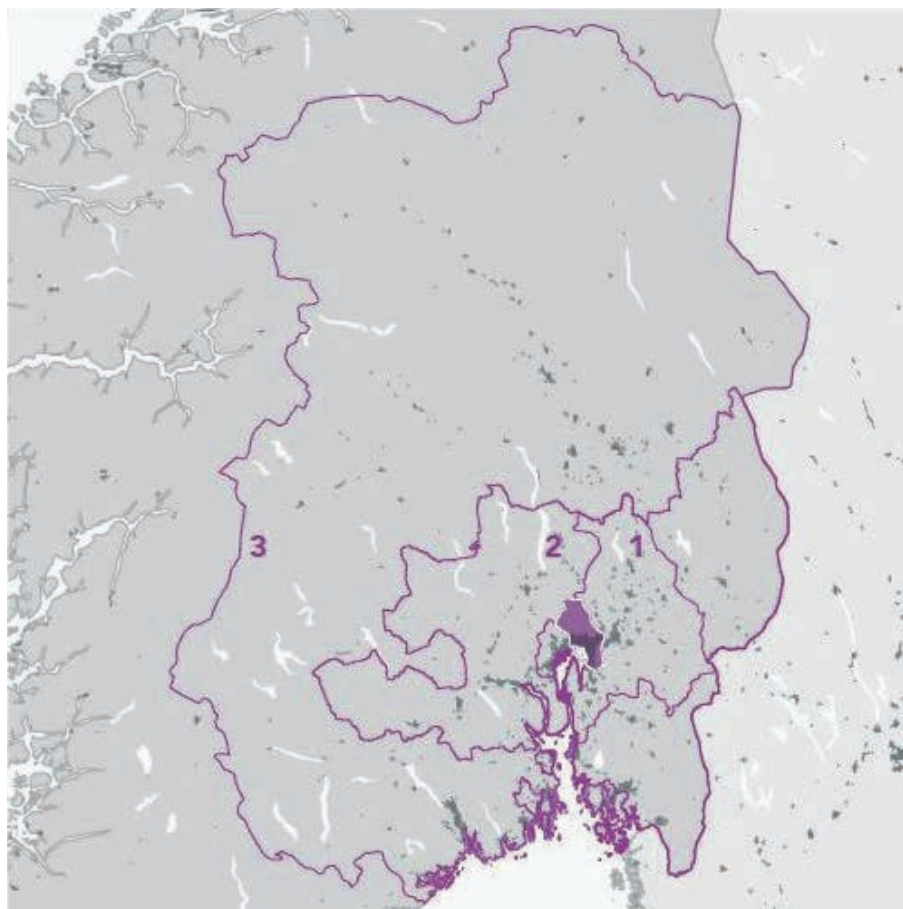
Another co-ordination challenge in Viken is to ensure strategic alignment around key regional policy issues and planning, avoiding fragmentation. For example, promoting innovation and agglomeration economies for the whole Viken area will be important to achieve a balanced development across the county, by a coherent rather than fragmented set of policies. While Viken benefits overall from the proximity to the capital and its knowledge-intensive industries, fragmentation in the area of entrepreneurship and innovation policies calls for improved co-ordination of cluster policies at the regional level (OECD, 2018^[7]). An analysis including Akershus, Oslo and Østfold found that while the Industrial Development Corporation of Norway (SIVA) and Innovation Norway (owned by 51% by the national government and 49% by the counties) are key players supporting the national government's innovation policy, each county still develops its own regional vision for investment in economic development and innovation initiatives. As a result, a project-based approach developed over time that has led to a multitude of local clusters that sometimes compete for the same resources. To overcome this, Akershus and Oslo had previously developed a shared strategy for entrepreneurship and innovation; however, implementation was challenged by insufficient co-ordination and collaboration. Enhanced collaboration and co-ordination between municipalities and counties are thus needed, such as through shared funding platforms (OECD, 2018^[7]). The establishment of a joint innovation office of Oslo-Viken is welcome in this regard and the merging of the three counties is also likely to improve this fragmentation over time. This will be key to perform well across many SDGs, including SDGs 9 and 17. Finally, the fact that regional planning strategies are not legally binding means that fragmentation can be a key issue also between municipalities of varying sizes, the latter of which is dealt with in different ways outlined below.

Inter-regional collaboration: Opportunities to build on existing efforts

Multiple inter-regional collaboration platforms and agreements exist within the geography of Viken, on the one hand adding to the complex governance landscape, while also providing opportunities to address shared strategic issues. Figure 3.4 shows three historically important regional partnerships in Viken, namely: i) the Oslo-Akershus metropolitan area; ii) the Oslo Region Alliance; and iii) the Eastern Norway County Network. The Oslo Region Alliance is a political membership organisation established in 2004, including 5 county councils and 83 municipalities. It aims to provide a joint platform to create a competitive metropolitan region at the European level, as well as jointly tackling climate change and environmental protection through for example shared transport and land use solutions (ESPON, 2016^[12]).

While constituting an additional co-ordination burden, regional collaboration is also helping to shape solutions to common issues. For example, the Oslo Region Alliance produced a joint transport strategy for the area of Oslo and Akershus, which subsequently served to inform the development of a joint regional plan for land use and transport (in 2015) (Box 3.2). This latter was requested by the national government to deal with the growth-related challenges of the Norwegian capital region. Some of the key principles of the plan were to promote polycentric development across Oslo and surrounding municipalities, including densification around public transport hubs. The plan specifies principles for land use, namely: densification, polycentric development and protection of existing green areas. The transport system is further to be developed to help this structure and to reduce car dependence in the region. Many of these concepts are reflected in Viken's regional planning strategy and are relevant to many SDGs, including SDGs 11, 13, 14 and 17. The plan also aims to make Oslo a sustainable and competitive region at the European level, thus international transport links are also highlighted in the plan. To operationalise it, municipalities in the urban agglomeration of Oslo-Akershus must focus 90% of their growth in the densification zone, when making their municipal land use plans, while 80% applies for municipalities outside the agglomeration. As of late 2020, most of the 22 municipalities located in former Akershus have revised, or are in the process of revising, their municipal plans according to the regional one, while Oslo had already done so.

Figure 3.4. Spatial coverage of regional collaboration in South-Eastern Norway

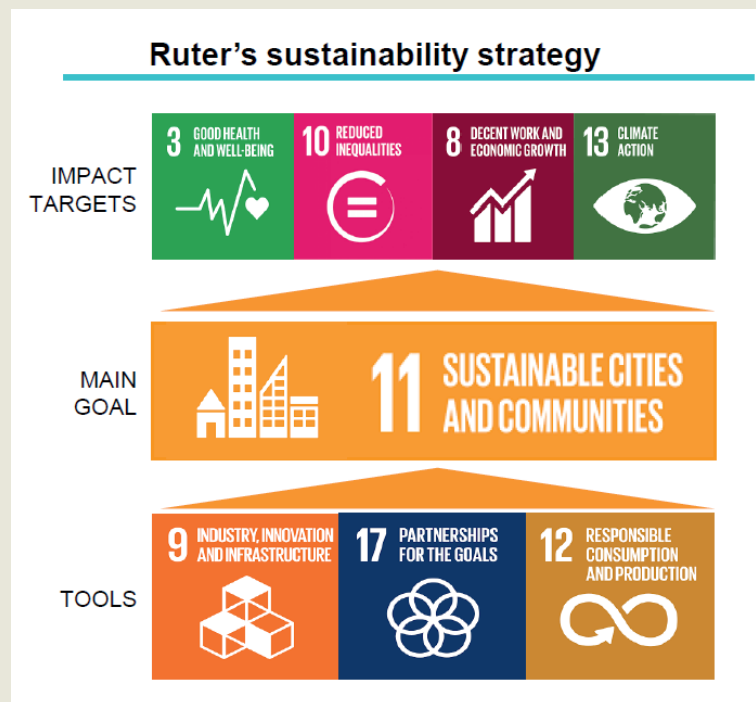


Note: 1. Collaboration between Akershus and Oslo Counties; 2. The Oslo Region Alliance; 3. Eastern Norway County Network.
Source: ESPON (2016^[12]), *Polycentric Territorial Structures and Territorial Cooperation*.

Box 3.2. “Sustainable Freedom of Mobility” by Ruter

Akershus and Oslo have a long tradition of collaboration when it comes to planning for public transport. Their first joint public company (together with the national government) was formed in 1974 and is today called Ruter. Ruter is owned 60% by Oslo and 40% by Viken and represents 38% of the public transport market in Oslo and former Akershus. The company has the ambition to provide seamless public transport to its customers under the motto “Sustainable Freedom of Mobility”, combining public transport, walking and cycling into an integrated system. Ruter aims to become fossil-fuel-free by 2020 and emissions-neutral by 2028. To achieve this goal, the company has integrated the SDGs in its new sustainability strategy, framing its priority goals in the context of public transport provision (Figure 3.5). Some key challenges encountered in this work are the lack of market availability of adequate bus types, contract duration with existing service providers operating on behalf of the company, financial viability and change processes in light of the territorial reforms.

Figure 3.5. The SDGs in Ruter's sustainability strategy



Source: Ruter (2019^[13]), "How Ruter contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals", Presentation given during OECD stakeholder interview, March 2019, Ruter Headquarters, Oslo.

Finally, the Eastern Norway County Network has also contributed to regional development in parts of Viken (see Figure 3.4). Started in 1996, the network of eight counties has created an arena for regional and sub-regional dialogue and successfully lobbied for transportation investments by the national government in co-ordination with the Oslo Region Alliance. The counties have also collaborated on international co-operation, skills development, regional innovation and culture.

City packages, growth agreements and inter-municipal boards

To commit all levels of government to strategic regional planning, urban growth agreements and "city packages" for transport infrastructure investment are being promoted by the national government. Examples of city packages that have been brought forward from the previous counties to Viken include the Oslo Package 3 (*Oslopakke 3*), which was formed to co-fund transport and roads in the Oslo-Akershus area (Box 3.2). The Buskerud Package 2 (*Buskerudbypakke 2*) is a collaboration between the county, nine municipalities and regional state authorities in the former county of Buskerud to improve the public transport network, aiming for zero growth in car use in the county. Providing matching funding from road tolls (*bompenger*), the national government co-funds urban packages. Consequently, these have been met with some controversy, with lively debate and protests among local residents around the use of road tolls (Vinsand and Salte Flatval, 2019^[10]).

Urban growth agreements seek to combine land use and transport planning. While the goal is hence to ensure functional urban growth, critiques around equity and questions around "who is allowed to grow" feature in the debate, especially among municipalities that might not be along the transport hubs identified as key strategic nodes in urban agreements (Hanssen, 2019^[11]). The resistance to both urban growth agreements and road tolls showcase the need to look at the SDGs as an indivisible whole and to assess

both synergies and trade-offs between the goals. In the 2019 annual progress report on the SDGs by the Norwegian government, urban growth agreements are mentioned as means to reduce car emissions and congestion (Government of Norway, 2019^[2]).

Inter-municipal political boards are mechanisms to co-ordinate service delivery horizontally across municipalities. These agreements are designed to be complementary structures to counties and municipalities, to make municipal services more efficient and of scale. Areas covered range from involvement in spatial and societal planning, co-ordination of regional initiatives such as management of water resources, culture and transport. Inter-municipal political boards, also referred to as “Regional councils”, typically have both political and administrative functions and can involve municipalities from different counties. In Viken, the inter-municipal political boards have been reformed both geographically and operationally as of 2020, following the new Municipal Act. According to the act, the inter-municipal political boards are not allowed to take over any competencies held by the counties.

Collaboration around the SDGs and effective service delivery are identified as key opportunities for continued, strong inter-municipal political boards in Viken. An independent assessment commissioned by Viken in the preparation for the territorial reform supported the use of the SDG baseline (the Knowledge Base) as a basis for regional planning and inter-municipal collaboration. The so-called “Buskerud model” is highlighted in the report as a good example of structured dialogue for partnership-based collaboration between inter-municipal boards and the county. At the same time, different levels of collaboration are possible, considering the autonomy of municipal governments. The assessment also suggests reducing the number of inter-municipal political boards in Viken to allow for more balanced regional development, as well as continued dialogue with Oslo for the long-term development of the capital area. In this regard, it stresses the need for enhanced co-ordination between municipal plans and those of the inter-municipal political boards, favouring planning of FUAs with common housing and labour market areas (Vinsand and Salte Flatval, 2019^[10]). Regarding the implementation of the SDGs, the new boards can further help to pool resources among small municipalities to deal with issues such as building competency for measuring progress on the SDGs and formulating shared policy goals and targets (developing SDG indicators has been identified as a key bottleneck for small-sized municipalities, as outlined in Chapter 1).

Key actors in Viken to achieve the 2030 Agenda

Leveraging the role of businesses in the SDGs in Viken

The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) is Norway’s largest organisation for employers and the leading business lobbyist, with over 25 600 members across Norway and around 8 000 in the Viken Oslo branch. NHO has witnessed many of its members starting to work with the SDGs and a generally good co-operation between the private sector, public sector, civil society and academia. Nonetheless, some bottlenecks need to be resolved in order to seize the full potential of such partnerships.

NHO identifies the need for more risk-reducing and incentive schemes from the public sector for companies to address complex social and climate-related challenges, as well as better education and information about the SDGs, as key areas to improve the engagement of the private sector with the SDGs. For instance, due to high risks and costs related to innovations – in health for example – innovative companies risk going abroad to develop their products and thus withdraw innovative potential from the Norwegian context. The NHO Viken Oslo branch makes the case for stronger support for business development in regional and local planning, pointing to the need to focus not only on urban areas but everywhere in the country in order to leverage the potential of businesses to contribute to sustainable regions. In a recent message directed to the Committee for Territorial Private Sector Development (*Distriktnæringsutvalget*, an ad hoc committee set up by the national government to produce a report on best practices to promote private sector development in municipalities and counties in Norway) NHO Viken Oslo points out that in

small municipalities, 70% of employment is in the private sector, highlighting the important role business development has to play in regional development. The organisation further highlights some recent cases where plans to expand businesses in Viken were rejected due to lack of land, calling political attention to this issue in order to prevent businesses relocating abroad or elsewhere in the country. The local NHO Viken Oslo branch further highlights the importance of using innovative procurement practices as an important engine for business innovation and the need to develop partnerships with education providers in order to provide skilled labour to local industries (NHO Viken Oslo, 2020^[14]).

NHO has direct experience in working with local and regional governments to enhance policy support to business innovation and development, such as through the Green Planet Strategy (GPS) pilot initiative with Agder County in the geographic region of southern Norway for example, which is also being brought to the Oslo-Viken area (Box 3.3).

Box 3.3. The Green Planet Strategy

The Green Planet Strategy (GPS) is a research and capacity development programme operated by the NHO, aiming to provide companies with tools and competencies to work towards increased competitiveness through sustainability. Research-based, it focuses on sustainability solutions found in innovation, technology and new markets and how these can contribute to an improved competitiveness for businesses, based on their own needs and potential.

The programme was piloted in Agder in 2018 and resulted in 5 concrete projects mobilising over NOK 100 million of investment. Based on the lessons learned and positive outcome of the first round, the programme hopes to bring similar results in Oslo and Viken. It further draws on extensive research by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and is delivered by FutureFrog – a "do-tank" for more sustainable business.

Each participant will get a grant of NOK 75 000, including 6 one-day workshops and 12 hours of individual coaching, as well as access to material and tools to support the companies' strategic work.

Source: NHO (2019^[15]), "Informasjonsmøte: Prosjekt Green Planet Strategy (GPS) (Information meeting: Project Green Planet Strategy)", <https://www.nho.no/regionkontor/nho-viken-oslo/kurs-og-arrangementer/informasjonsmote-prosjekt-green-planet-strategy-gps/> (accessed on 28 April 2020).

In September 2019, the UN Global Compact (UNGC) opened its Norwegian Local Network and set the foundations for the launch of an SDG accelerator in Viken. Companies participating in the UNGC platform are interested in reporting and compliance linked to the SDGs, seeking to understand their baseline with regards to sustainability, where to direct the future of their business and where financial investors should place their capital.

Social enterprises, which inherently address societal problems through their commercial activities, are also starting to use the SDGs in their business strategies in Norway. One example is Kompass & Co, which works on the labour market integration of the long-term unemployed and marginalised groups using a triple-bottom-line model (people-planet-profit). The SDGs act as a key motivation for their employees, giving a broader sense of meaning to their work, which involves catering services using surplus food from restaurants and supermarkets that would otherwise go to waste.

Civil society and youth participation for the SDGs in Viken

The regional planning process for Viken is designed for the involvement and participation of civil society and the population at large, as set out in the Norwegian Planning Act. This strategy is developed in parallel

to the other steps of the planning process and will be featured throughout. Citizen engagement is deemed to be favourable in the context of Norway where many civil society organisations (CSOs) are already interacting with counties and municipalities to build awareness of the 2030 Agenda; yet a more prominent role for academia and the educational system at large, the private sector and civil society is called for in the vertical co-ordination of SDGs. Another challenge identified is finding the right mechanisms to engage with the working-age population.

As part of this work, the Viken administration has started an ambitious stakeholder consultation process. Using the “entry points” and “levers” for transformation from the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019 as a framework to collect multi-stakeholder input from across the region on the planning strategy, the new planning division has been travelling around Viken by bus to meet people and collect their views on what a sustainable society in Viken should look like. In addition to this, the region has hosted two large conferences to meet mayors, the regional state authorities and different societal groups. In total, the engagement campaign has so far involved over 1 000 people through physical encounters and a website was launched to collect input from people unable to join any of the live events. The input will be used to organise the region’s future plans operationalising the regional planning strategy, in a way that fosters transversal work, breaks down policy silos and promotes holistic, sustainable and participatory policymaking and planning. This process is the first of its kind in Norway and closely relates to the means of implementation under SDG 17, yet with a stronger focus on different actors’ roles in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Young people have a strong voice in advocating for and contributing towards achieving the SDGs in Viken and are already active change agents in this regard. One institutional mechanism for youth participation in local policy-making are the youth councils, which have been consultative bodies to the county councils of Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold. In 2020, the three youth councils merged to form the Viken Youth Council using the SDGs to guide this process. One ambition of the new council is to have a large youth conference every year where attendees engage in a dialogue between youth, politicians and the administration. As of 2020, each municipality is legally requested to set a youth council, which will strengthen the engagement of youth in the county’s work on the SDGs even further, allowing for greater dissemination of information to and from the local level.

One key strength is that the youth councils have direct access and can share their suggestions to policy-makers and politicians. This includes expressing concerns like public transport, since most students rely on these services for their everyday needs, and which were identified as a key challenge for Viken. Another example of youth-related challenge is to ensure that sufficient number of internships and entry level jobs are available for young people in Viken, to avoid an outflow from the region to the capital.

The youth councils are pro-actively seeking to raise awareness, for example to help the county reach out to the youth and inform them about the SDGs, including through social media platforms and by holding information sessions in schools. Previously, the Buskerud youth council, BUFT included the SDGs in their annual action plan from 2017 onwards. In addition, the council carried out various activities to raise awareness about sustainable development and social justice among youth in Buskerud, including the participation in School Strikes for Climate and the Pride Parade. Buskerud’s county mayor accepted the invitation to join the Pride together with BUFT in 2018. They also successfully advocated for the implementation of Eco-Lighthouse certification scheme² in Buskerud’s high-school cafeterias, an initiative set to be continued in Viken.

International cooperation is a key focus for youth. In 2019, BUFT and the Buskerud County Council jointly participated in the EU-funded Erasmus+ project called Youth Explorer - a spin-off project from Human Explorer – which is a three-day youth policy meeting with the youth council in Flanders, Belgium, and the umbrella organisation *De Ambrassade*. The main topics in the meeting were sustainable transport, urban development, and sustainable consumption (SDGs 11 and 12). Youth from the youth councils in Akershus and Østfold were invited to participate in the project, creating a common platform for continued work in

Viken. Politicians and representatives from the administrations from the two regions simulated cases based on real challenges visible in their regions. The youth sought to jointly find solutions, shared best practices and learned from each other. The proposals were presented as a part of the main project Human Explorer at BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels, for politicians and other decision-makers in September 2019.

Education is a key focus for UNA Norway and the organisation has been supporting the integration of the SDGs into the national curriculum. UNA Norway started developing new education material about the SDGs for all grades within the school sector, while the new curriculum in 2020 integrates the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs for all grades. The SDGs, compared to the MDGs that largely focused on developing countries, are more directly applicable to the reality of children and youth in Norway. This helps to engage students in learning for example about sustainable municipalities more directly. The SDGs provided momentum for addressing sustainable development more thoroughly in the curriculum revision.

UNA Norway has witnessed great interest from municipalities to work on the SDGs and has given many information sessions. An important Civil Society Organisation working with the SDGs in Norway (and Viken) is UNA Norway. Established in 1946, it is part of a federation of over 100 UNAs worldwide and has 6 offices across Norway. Through its website, which is translated into all Scandinavian languages, UNA Norway reach around 3 million people yearly. The organisation is further planning to develop a toolkit with learning modules for municipalities, together with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities and in dialogue with the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG), whose tools have been found relevant for the Norwegian context. The SDGs prove to be an opportunity to break silo-thinking in municipalities.

Regarding other CSOs, UNA Norway has also organised information sessions and debates with labour organisations. At the national level, the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM) connects CSOs in Norway and abroad. For example, through the Global CSO Partnership in 2016, ForUM supported CSO representatives from the global south to participate in internal fora, including the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

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Notes

¹ The spatial analysis was carried out as part of the ESPON Programme 2020. The analysis focuses on the development dynamics of Oslo-Akershus MDA, drawing on the EC-OECD definition of functional urban areas (FUAs) alongside stakeholder consultations to define the wider MDA. The main purpose of the study is to inform strategic planning for sustainable metropolitan development, taking into account territorial dynamics like commuting patterns, urban sprawl and institutional context.

² The Eco-Lighthouse certification is a certification for organisations and companies that work to improve their environmental practices and impact, such as through energy efficiency. For more information, please see: <https://eco-lighthouse.org/>

4 Policy recommendations and Action Plan

This chapter presents policy recommendations to enhance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) using a territorial approach in the county of Viken, Norway. The policy recommendations are accompanied by an action plan that provides concrete and practical steps for implementation as well as inspiration from international practices. While Viken has taken concrete steps to create a holistic, knowledge-based regional planning strategy based on the SDGs, different growth pressures and challenges within the county call for applying a functional approach that needs to be sensitive to local contexts across the county. While benefitting from proximity to the capital of Oslo is a key strength for Viken, developing the potential of peripheral areas to thrive is equally crucial for the long-term sustainability of the county. The SDGs can be used as the “missing key” to provide a common language and framework for promoting synergies across administrative boundaries.

Policy recommendations and Action Plan

The county of Viken is working on implementing the SDGs through (*inter alia*) a Regional Planning Strategy for a Sustainable Viken 2020-2024 and other action-oriented plans and initiatives that will operationalise the work towards achieving the SDGs in a holistic manner. Continuing this process, the policy recommendations and action plan herein proposed – developed through policy dialogue with a wide range of local and national stakeholders – could help accelerate further ongoing efforts across the county, municipalities and other stakeholders for a “whole-of-society” approach in implementing the SDGs. Importantly, while Viken’s robust knowledge-based approach to regional development is well advanced, the need to create awareness of the SDGs as a broad set of policy goals, rather than as a checklist of indicators to be monitored and improved, is central to ensuring that each level of government uses the 2030 Agenda to guide their work towards improving the well-being of Norwegian citizen regardless of where they live.

Box 4.1. The OECD Checklist for Public Action to facilitate the uptake and implementation of the SDGs in cities and regions

The OECD Checklist for Public Action is directed to governments at all levels to facilitate the implementation of a territorial approach to the SDGs. The checklist provides action-oriented recommendations around five main categories:

- **Planning, policies and strategies:** Use the SDGs to define and shape local and regional development visions, strategies, plans, and re-orient existing ones. Cities and regions should use the SDGs to address local challenges that require a holistic approach, such as clean forms of urban mobility, affordable housing, gender equality, access to green spaces, balanced urban development, clean water and sanitation, air quality, solid waste management, territorial inequalities or service deliveries.
- **Multi-level governance:** Use the SDGs as a framework to align policy priorities, incentives, objectives across all levels of governments as well as to manage trade-offs and promote synergies across policy areas. In particular, regions and cities should be engaged in the process of Voluntary National Reviews to reflect progress at the subnational level and address regional disparities. Voluntary Local Reviews can also drive better multi-level governance of the SDGs and shed light on local initiatives.
- **Financing and budgeting:** Mainstream the SDGs in budgeting processes to ensure adequate resources are allocated for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to foster policy continuity across political cycles. Governments should allocate financial resources based on the identified place-based policy priorities and local challenges, and use the SDGs framework to foster multi-sectoral programmes and priorities.
- **Data and information:** Leverage SDG data and localised indicator systems to guide policies and actions for better people’s lives, and to showcase the performance and positive stories of cities and regions. In particular, for more comprehensive assessment and policy responses, cities and regions should combine data and indicators at different scales, including administrative boundaries (unit for political and administrative action) and functional approaches (economic geography of where people live and work).
- **Engagement:** Use the SDGs as a vehicle to enhance accountability and transparency through engaging all territorial stakeholders, including civil society, citizens, youth, academia and private companies, in the policymaking process. Cities and regions should use a combination of various tools to engage local stakeholders, such as awareness-raising campaigns, networking

opportunities but also de-risking investments in SDG solutions through grants or loans, as well as fiscal incentives for innovative solutions towards sustainability.

Source: (OECD, 2020^[1]), A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report, OECD Urban Policy Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en>.

Box 4.2. The OECD Action Plan for A Territorial Approach to the SDGs in Viken

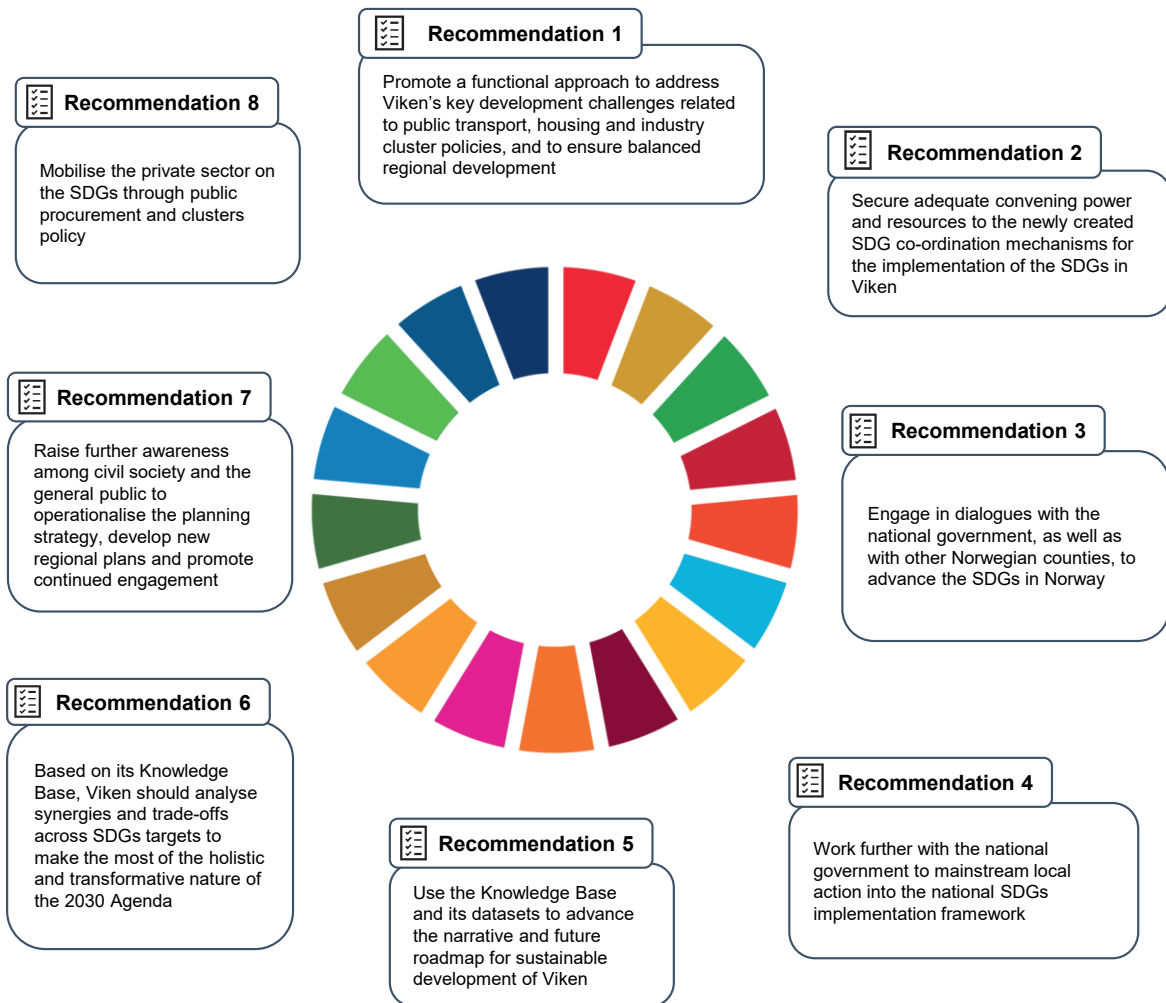
The main objective of the action plan is to provide Viken with a menu of options for the implementation of the OECD recommendations contained in the SDG draft pilot case. The action plan sets out a series of specific actions aiming at supporting Viken's implementation of the SDGs. In particular, it identifies:

- **Objectives:** The action plan presents a number of objectives for each of the recommendations, in terms of expected outcomes.
- **Practical steps:** The action plan includes a set of actions that can be useful in advancing towards the achievement of the objectives.
- **Possible champions and partners:** This section refers to the stakeholders, institutions or organisations that can play a (leading) role in the execution of the actions.
- **International experiences:** These experiences include relevant practices carried out in the field of the localising the SDGs by cities, regions and national governments as well as international organisations that can serve as inspiration. These experiences are not expected to be implemented as such but to provide the region/municipality with a set of examples for the design and development of the suggested actions.
- **Timeline:** In order to implement the recommendations efficiently, it is necessary to prioritise the recommendations within the short, medium and long terms. These time scales are indicative and should be updated as actions are being implemented.

It is important to note that:

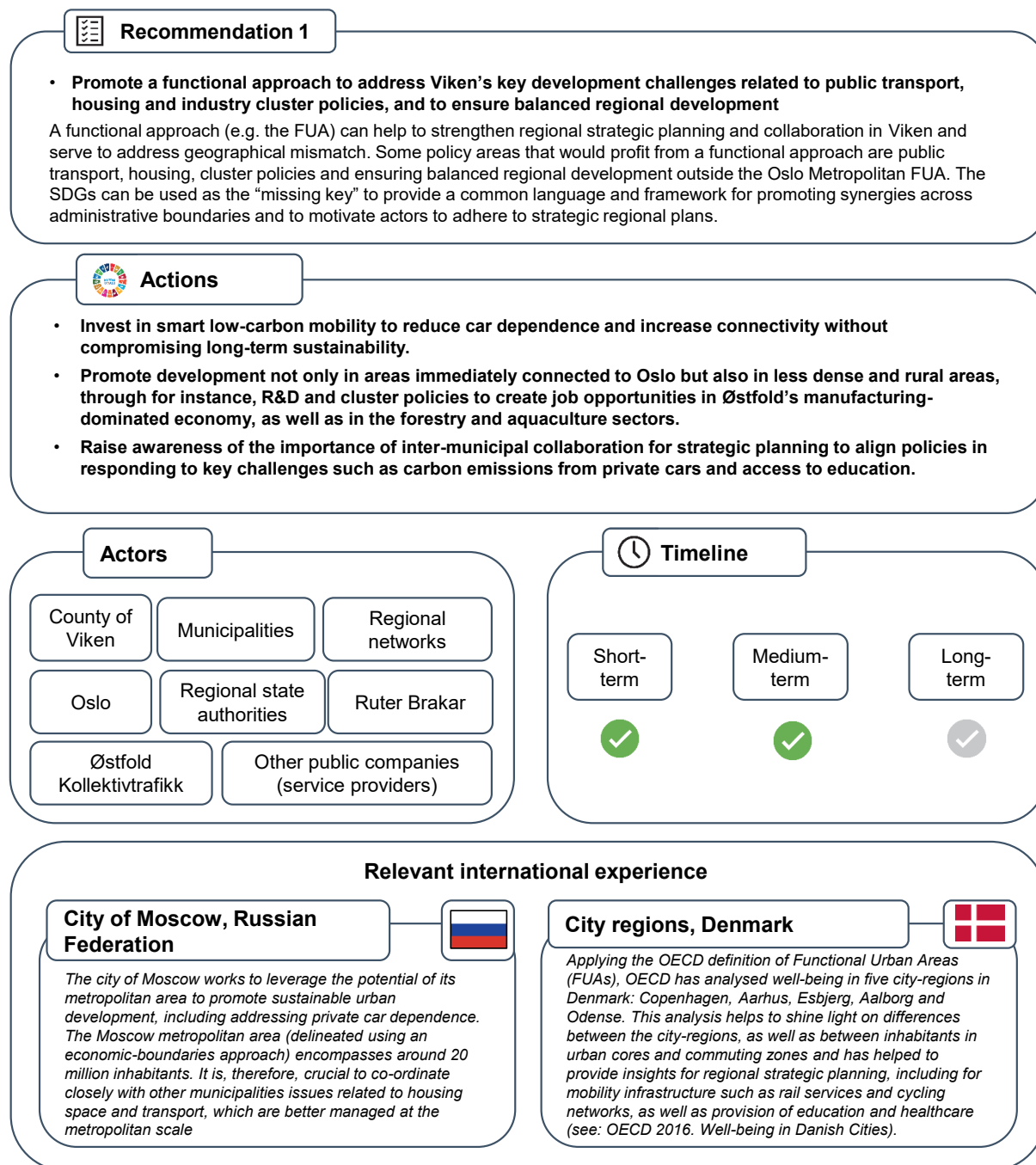
- *Actions are not compulsory or binding:* Identified actions address a variety of ways in which recommendations can be implemented and objectives achieved. They represent suggestions, whose adequacy and feasibility should be carefully evaluated by Viken in an inclusive manner, involving stakeholders as appropriate. In turn, the combination of more than one action can be explored, if necessary.
- *Resources for implementation should be assessed:* The implementation of these actions will require human, technical and financial resources. When prioritising and assessing the adequacy and feasibility of the suggested actions, the resources needed to implement them should be carefully evaluated, as well as the role of stakeholders that can contribute to the implementation phase.
- *The action plan is a dynamic tool:* It needs to be updated as new potential steps and objectives may emerge as actions start to be implemented.

Figure 4.1. Eight key recommendations for a territorial approach to the SDGs in Viken



Planning, policies and strategies

Figure 4.2. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 1 to promote a functional approach to address Viken's key development challenges and to ensure balanced regional development



Multi-level governance

Figure 4.3. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 2 to secure adequate convening power and resources to the newly created SDG co-ordination mechanisms in Viken

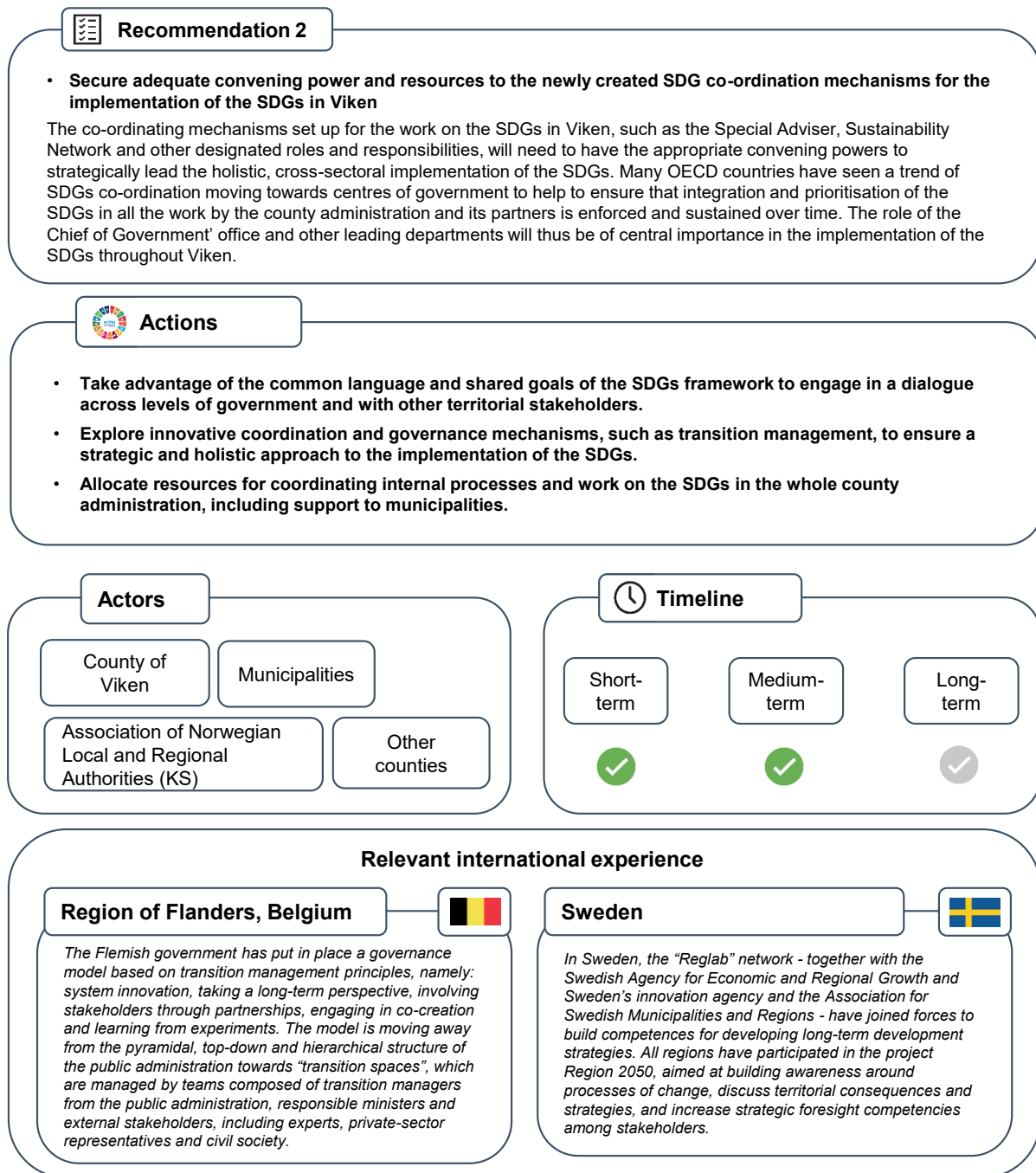


Figure 4.4. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 3 to engage in dialogues with the national government, as well as with other Norwegian counties, to advance the SDGs in Norway

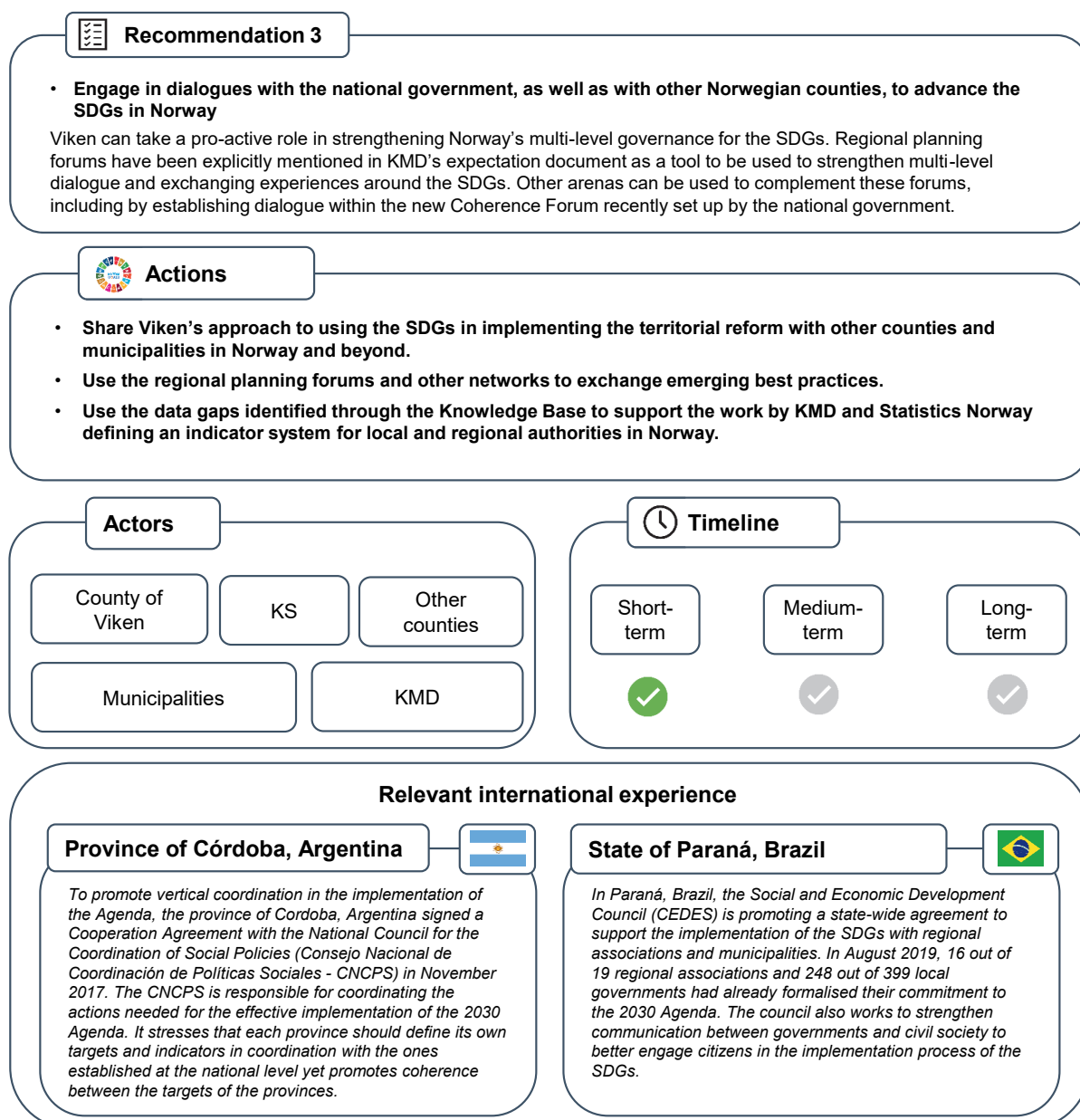
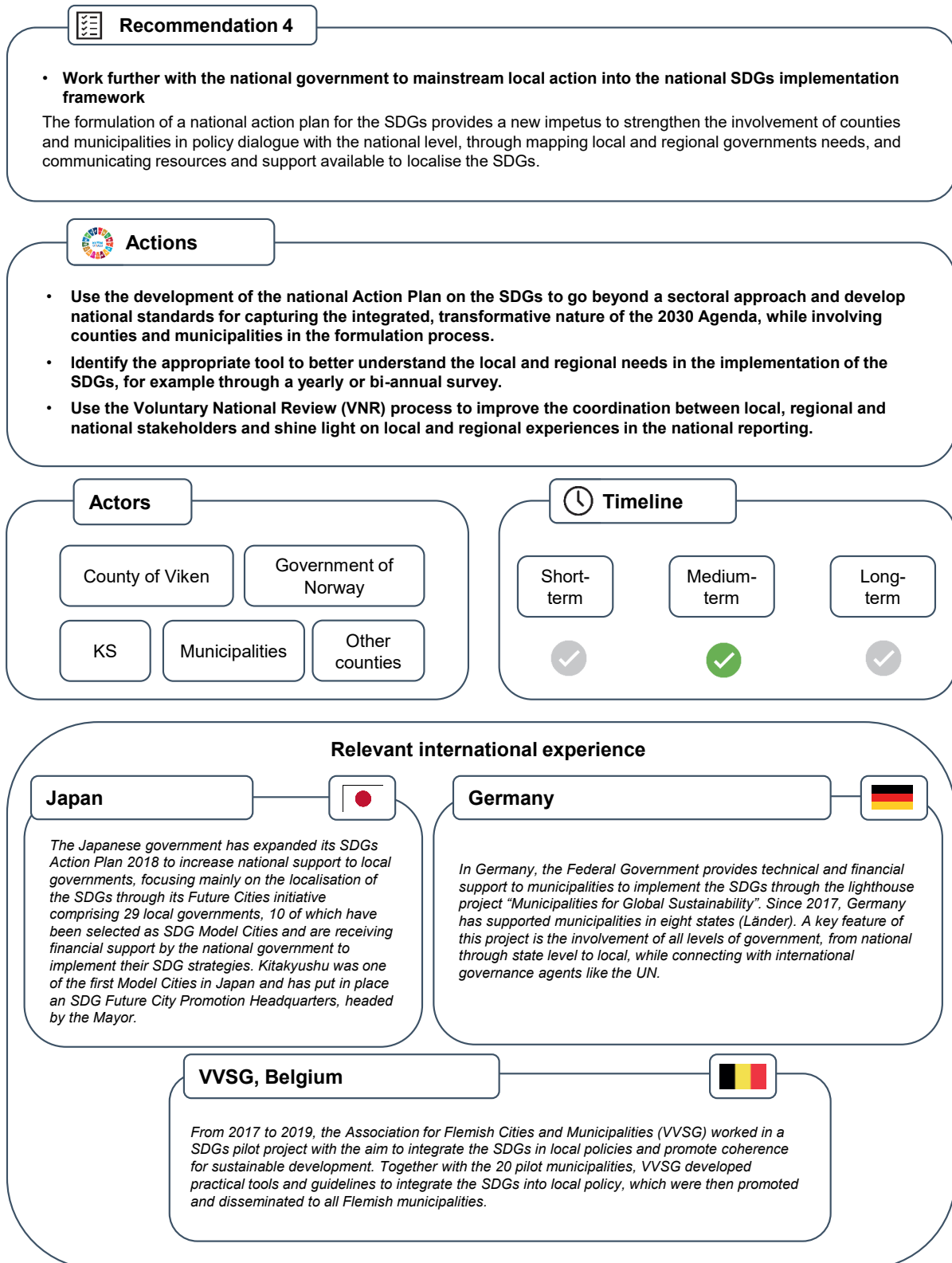


Figure 4.5. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 4 to work further with the national government to mainstream local action into the national SDGs implementation framework



Data and information

Figure 4.6. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 5 to use the Knowledge Base and its datasets to advance the narrative and future roadmap for sustainable development of Viken

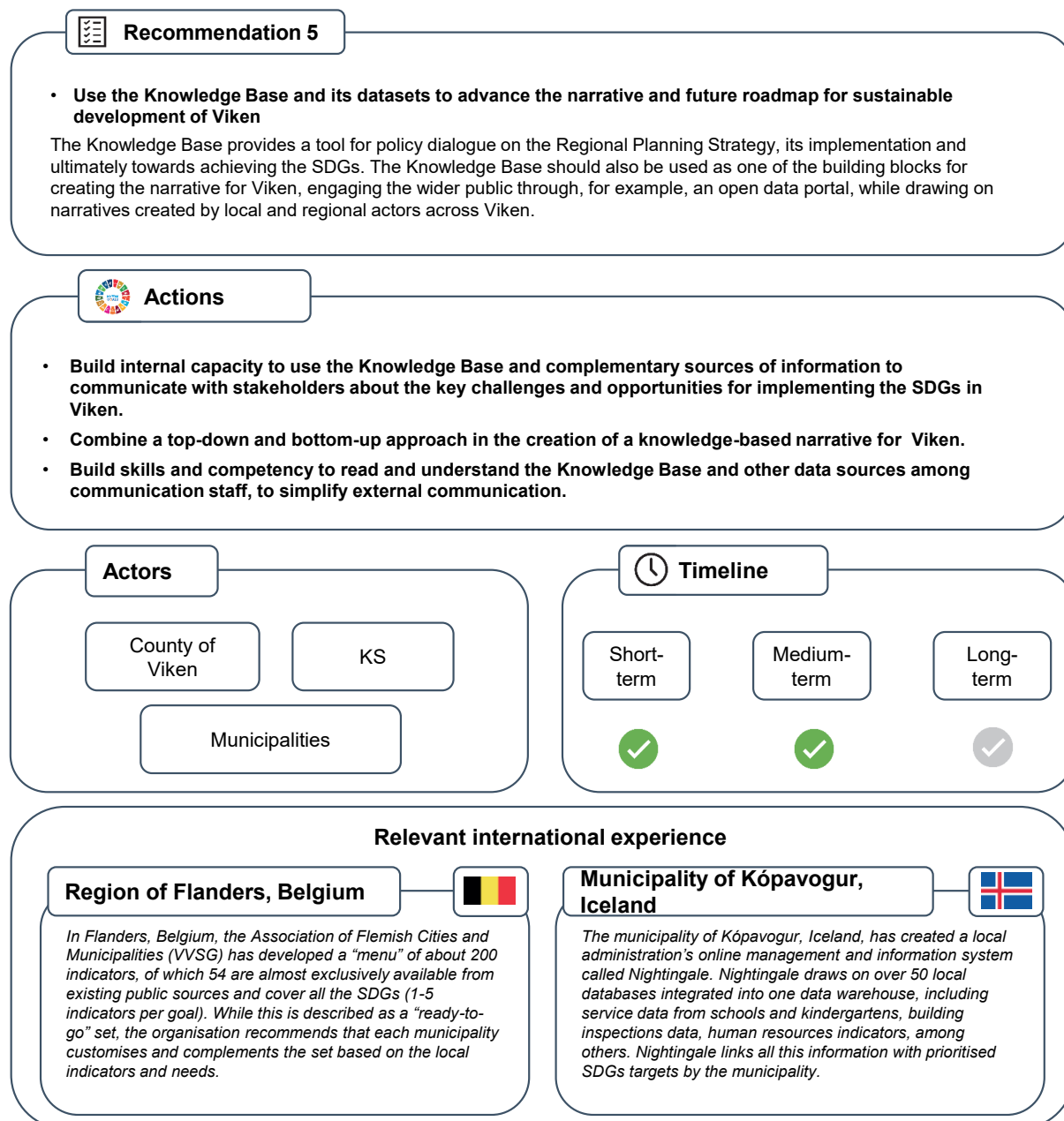
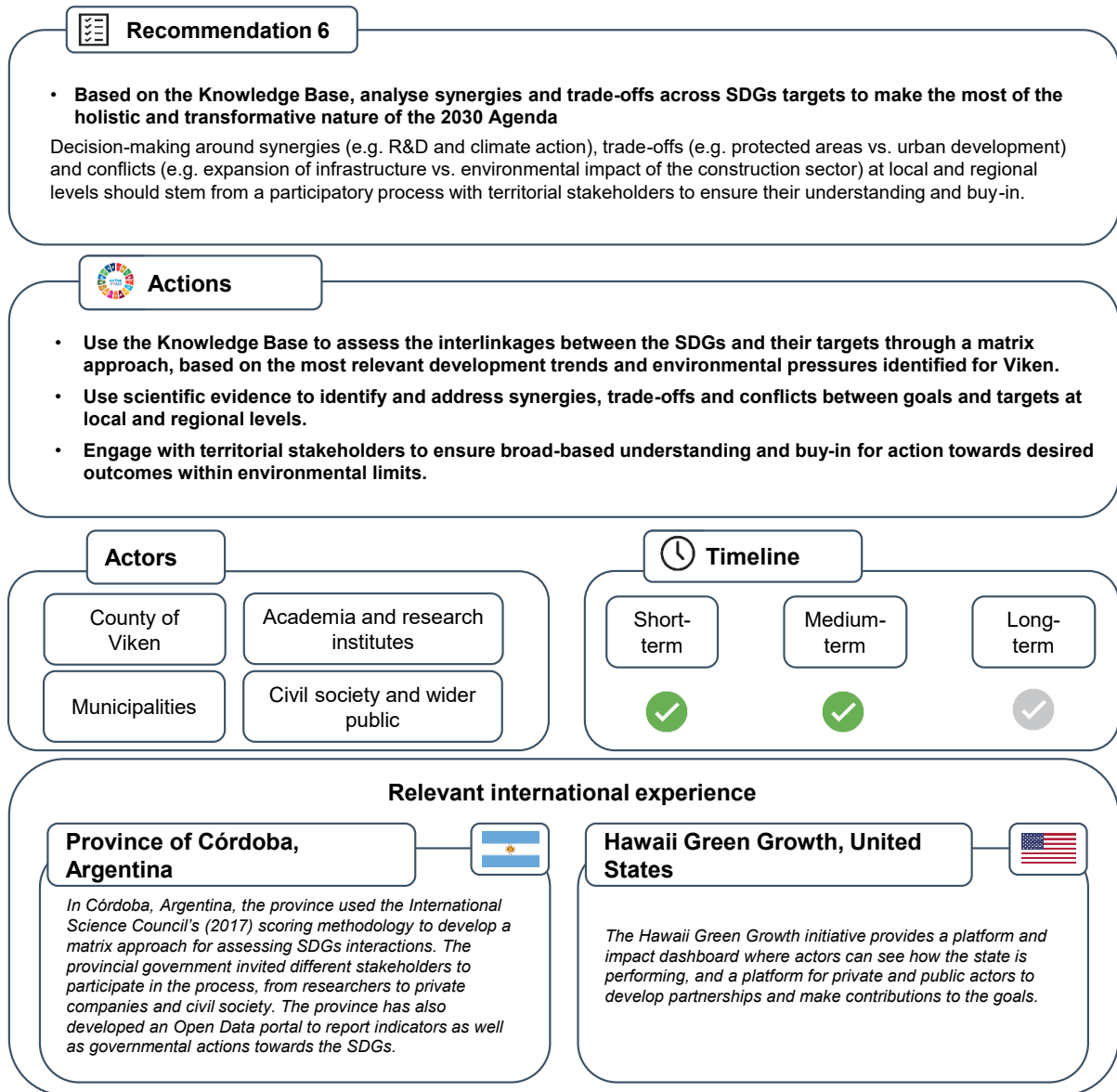


Figure 4.7. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 6 to analyse synergies and trade-offs across SDGs targets based on Viken’s knowledge base



Engagement

Figure 4.8. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 7 to raise further awareness among civil society and the general public to operationalise the planning strategy

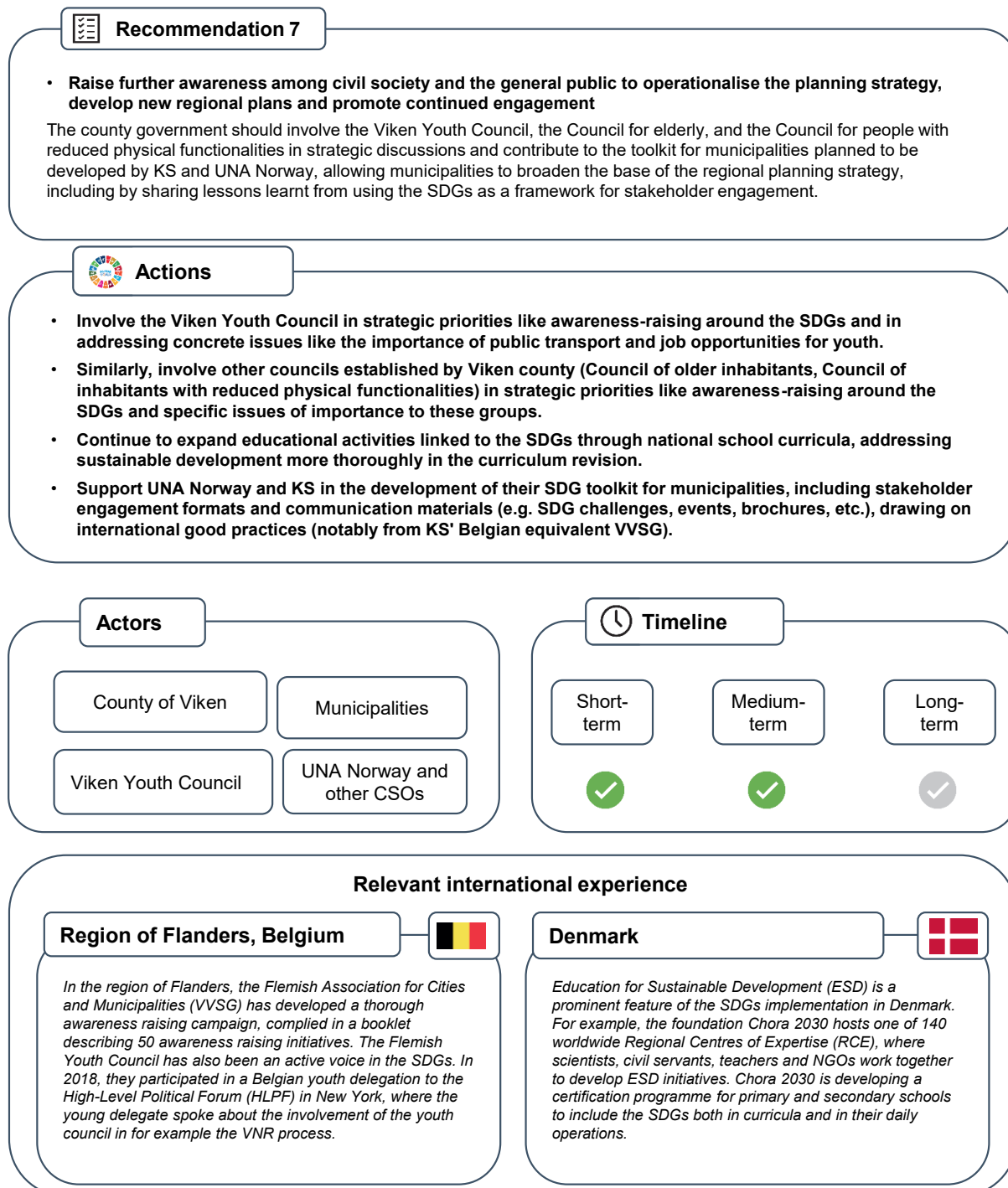
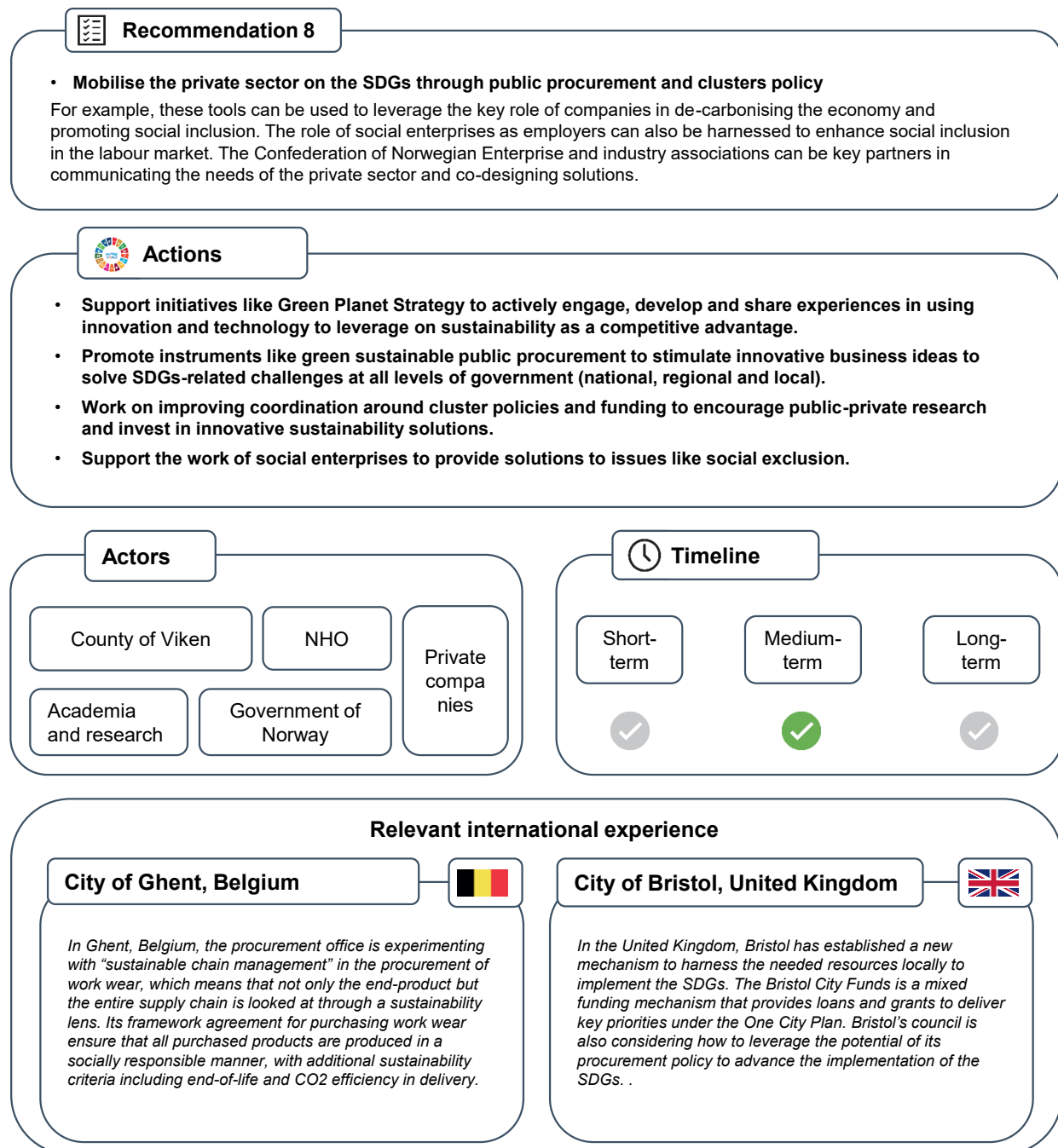


Figure 4.9. Action Plan to implement OECD Recommendation 8 to mobilise the private sector on the SDGs through public procurement and clusters policy



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