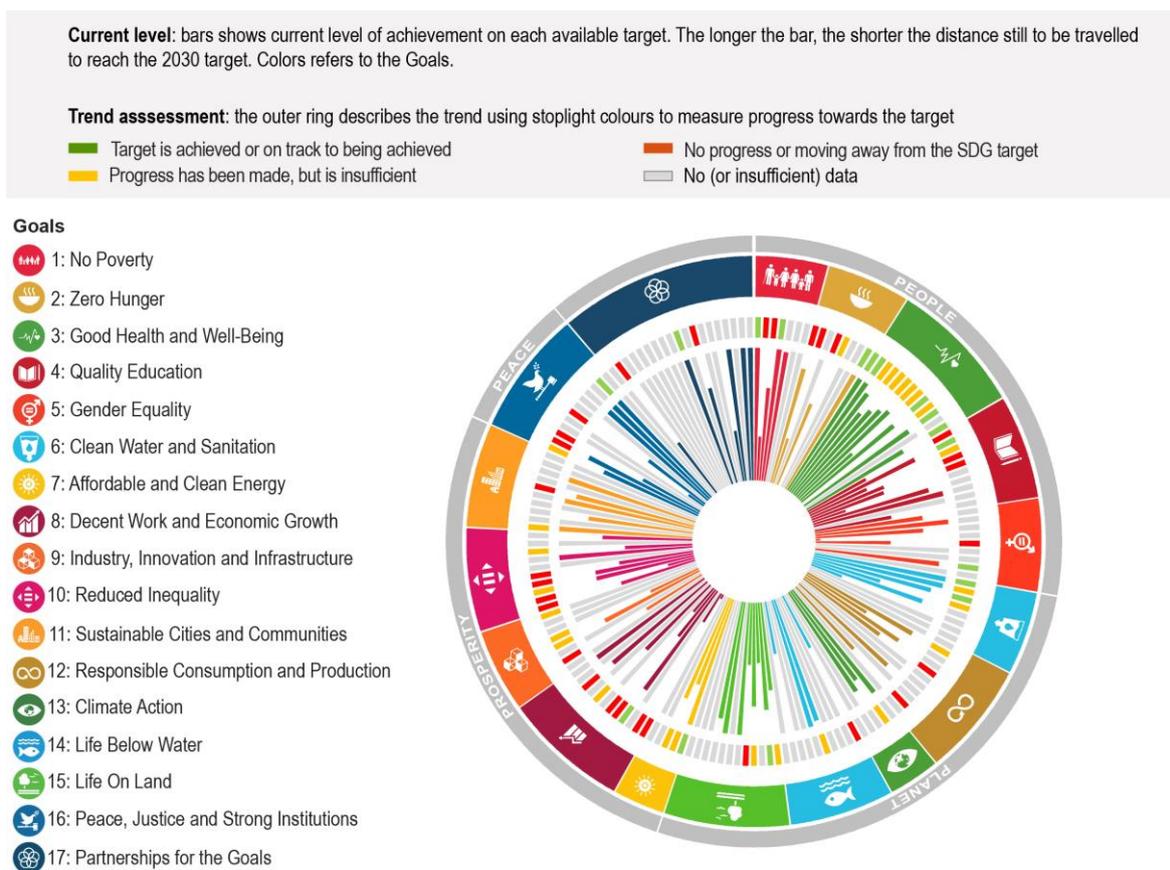


Measuring distance to the SDG targets – Spain

Spain has already achieved 21 of the 131 SDG targets for which comparable data are available and, based on most recent trends, is expected to meet 9 additional targets by 2030 (Figure 1). As virtually all OECD countries, Spain has already met (or is close to meeting) most targets related to securing basic needs and implementing the policy tools and frameworks mentioned in the 2030 Agenda (see details in Table 1). In particular, Spain outperforms other OECD countries on many targets pertaining Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 3 on health and Goal 6 on clean water. Yet, challenges remain. Spain faces persistent structural problems, and the environment still bears significant pressures.

This country profile provides a high-level overview of some of Spain’s strengths and challenges in performance across the SDG Targets. As such, it differs in nature from Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) or other reporting processes. To ensure international comparability, this assessment draws on the global indicator framework and relies on data sourced from the *SDG Global Database* and OECD databases. VNRs typically use national indicators that reflect national circumstances and are more up-to-date (See section How to read this country profile that provides some methodological details on country profiles).

Figure 1. Spain's distance from achieving SDG targets included in this report



Source: All data is taken and adapted from UNDESA (2021), *SDG Global Database*, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg> and OECD (2021), *OECD.Stat*, <https://stats.oecd.org/> (accessed on 29 October 2021).

Main strengths

Spain had been very active to combat gender differences. Across OECD countries, Spain has one of the most comprehensive legal frameworks to foster gender equality (Targets 5.1 and 5.3). In addition, national parliament is close to gender parity (Targets 5.5 and 16.7) and the proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months is among the lowest of the OECD (Target 5.2). Yet, latest available data suggest that women still bear the lion share of unpaid care and housework (Target 5.4) and that they remain underrepresented in economic spheres (Target 5.5) – according to data sourced from the *SDG Global Database*, in 2019, only a third of managerial positions were held by women. Beyond gender, Spain also performs well on some other targets aiming at fostering inclusion. Spain meets the requirements to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration (Target 10.7) and more than 80% of the population believe that Spain is a good place to live for racial and ethnic minorities (Target 10.3). Beyond national borders, while Official Development Assistance is only a third of the 0.7% of GNI international target (Target 17.2), Spain features low transactions costs to send migrants' remittances (Target 10.c).

Spain outperforms the OECD average on many targets relating to health. As virtually all OECD countries, Spain already met Target 3.1 and 3.2 and neonatal and maternal mortality. Yet, Spain is also close to target level (and ahead the OECD average) on Target 3.3 on combatting communicable diseases (including Tuberculosis, HIV and Hepatitis B), Target 3.5 on prevention of substance abuse, Target 3.6 on deaths from road traffic accidents, Target 3.9 on deaths and illness from pollution and Target 3.b on vaccination coverage. With one in five adult smoking daily, Target 3.a focusing tobacco consumption is the only target where Spain lags behind the OECD average. Yet, on all of them, Spain has achieved significant progress.

While pressures on the environment remain important, Spain also shows short distances on some environmental targets. CO₂ emissions per capita have been decreasing (Target 13.2), energy efficiency improving (Target 7.3), air pollution is below WHO targets (Target 11.6), material use decoupled from economic and population growth (Targets 8.4 and 12.2) and protected natural areas (14.5 and 15.1) have been rising. While water stress is high in Spain (Target 6.4), water resources are deemed to be well managed (Target 6.5). Virtually everyone has access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation services (Targets 6.1 and 6.2), still 10% of the population is not connected to public sewage treatment (Target 6.3). Spain is also close to meeting targets on education to sustainable development (Targets 4.7, 12.8 and 13.3) and has already implemented many policy instruments listed in the 2030 Agenda such as commitments and obligations in transmitting information on hazardous waste (Target 12.4), on the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources (Target 15.6) or on the prevention of invasive alien species (Target 15.8).

Main challenges

On economic growth and employment, Spain faces persistent structural challenges. In the years that followed the global financial crisis and until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Spain experienced a robust job-rich recovery. Yet, as in most OECD countries, Spain's long-term growth of GDP and labour productivity have been low (Targets 8.1 and 8.2) – and both were hit hard by the pandemic. On the employment front, while average wages are relatively high, in 2020, the unemployment rate was more than twice the OECD average (Target 8.5) and one in five young adult was not in education, employment or training (Target 8.6). Beyond the main macro-economic indicators, the share of R&D expenditure in GDP and researcher density are low (but on a positive trends) compared to OECD peers (Target 9.5) while the relative size of manufacturing value added is low and decreasing (Target 9.2).

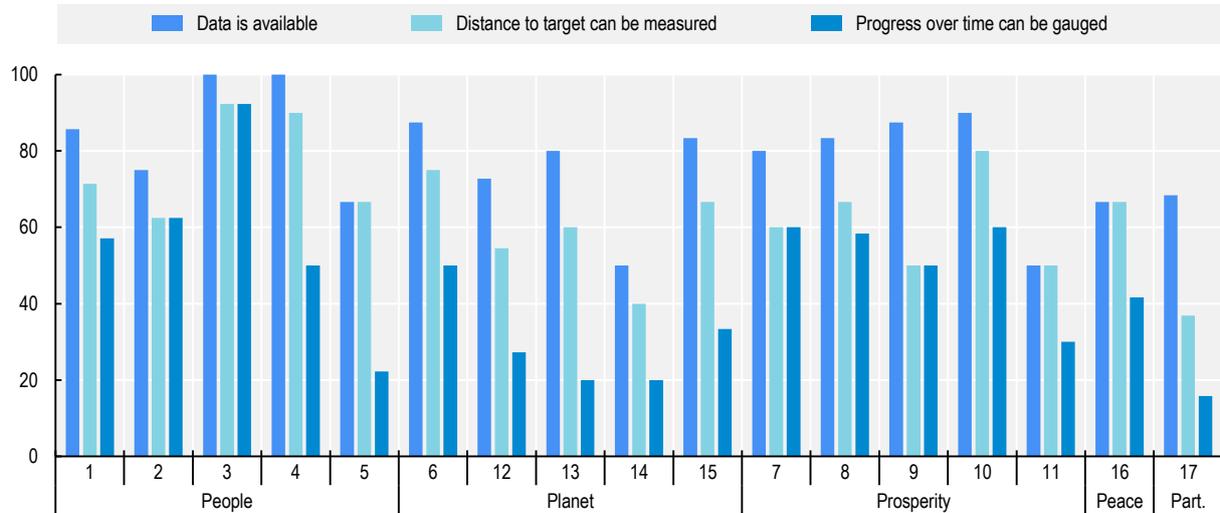
Significant pressures weigh on the environment and biodiversity. Despite some important improvements in many aspects of environmental performance, environmental pressures remain important, driven by land conversion during the construction boom of the early 2000s and the rise in population, which has been significant in some coastal areas. Overall, degraded land accounts for almost one fifth of Spain's total land area (Target 15.3), beach litter density is above the OECD average (Target 14.1) and the water quality of lakes is low (Target 6.6 on water-related ecosystems). Direct measures of biodiversity highlight the significant extinction risk for major species groups (Target 15.5) and local breeds (2.5).

Spain also confronts structural challenges when it comes to the “People” and “Peace” categories. Despite improvements in recent years, income inequality and poverty are high (Targets 1.2, 10.1 and 10.2). On education, while Spain has achieved near universal attendance in pre-primary education (Target 4.2), it remains far from reaching Target 4.1 on primary and secondary education outcomes. In 2019, only 65% of children in primary school were achieving a minimum proficiency level in mathematics. Spain also reports levels of adults' literacy and numeracy skills 7 to 8 percentage points below the OECD average (Targets 4.6) while only 43% of adults participate in formal and non-formal education (Target 4.3). On Peace, citizen's confidence with the judicial system is low (Target 16.6), while unofficial data from the World Justice Project suggest that there is scope for improvement on civil justice (Target 16.3). Diversity of the central government workforce also appears to be limited (Target 16.7).

Statistical gaps

Like in many other OECD countries, data availability remains a challenge when measuring distances to targets (see the Overview chapter for details). For Spain, available data on the level of the different indicators allow covering 131 of the 169 targets. As shown in Figure 2 below, indicator coverage is uneven across the 17 goals. While ten goals (mostly within the People, Planet and Prosperity categories) have most of their targets covered (the indicator coverage exceeds 80%), coverage is lower for Goals 11 on cities and 14 on life below water, with only half of their targets covered. Data gaps become starker when focusing on performance indicators, i.e. excluding those providing contextual information. In this case, coverage exceeds 80% for only three goals, i.e. Goals 3 on health, 4 on education and 10 on inequalities. Moreover, for seven goals, mostly within the Planet category (Goals 12, 13, 14 and 15) but also in Goals 5 on gender equality, 11 on cities and 17 on partnerships, data are lacking to monitor changes over time for more than two in three targets.

Figure 2. Spain's share of the 2030 Agenda's targets covered by at least one indicator, by goal



Note: The figure represents Spain's share of targets covered by at least one indicator for each SDG. Numbers from 1 to 17 stand for the goals: 1 No poverty, 2 Zero hunger, 3 Good health and well-being, 4 Quality education, 5 Gender equality, 6 Clean water and sanitation, 7 Affordable and clean energy, 8 Decent work and economic growth, 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure, 10 Reduced inequalities, 11 Sustainable cities and communities, 12 Responsible consumption and production, 13 Climate action, 14 Life below water, 15 Life on land, 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions and 17 Partnerships for the goals. These goals are grouped under five broad themes (the "5Ps"): People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. Beyond data availability, other statistical gaps such as timeliness or granularity also need to be considered. For instance, given the lag in available data, the effects of the pandemic on current distance and trajectories may not be reflected in the estimates.

Source: All data is taken and adapted from UNDESA (2021), *SDG Global Database*, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg> and OECD (2021), *OECD.Stat*, <https://stats.oecd.org/> (accessed on 29 October 2021).

Detailed information

While some SDG Targets are, on average, close to being met, performance is very uneven across the 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Table 1 presents an overview of Spain's progress towards targets based on available data for each of the 17 Goals. It shows that distances to Targets and trends over time differ significantly even when considering a specific goal.

Table 1. Spain distances to targets and recent trends

| Goal | Target | Short Label | Distance to Target (s.u.) | Trend Assessment | OECD Average distance (s.u.) | OECD Trend Assessment |
|------|--------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 1.1 | Extreme poverty | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 1 | 1.2 | Poverty in all its dimensions | 2.01 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.41 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 1 | 1.3 | Social protection coverage | 0.90 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.80 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 1 | 1.4 | Access to basic services | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 1 | 1.5 | Resilience to shocks | 0.04 | n.a. | 1.00 | n.a. |
| 2 | 2.1 | Hunger | 0.32 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.28 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 2 | 2.2 | Malnutrition | 1.93 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 2.46 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |

| Goal | Target | Short Label | Distance to Target (s.u.) | Trend Assessment | OECD Average distance (s.u.) | OECD Trend Assessment |
|------|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| 2 | 2.4 | Sustainable production | 1.02 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.34 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 2 | 2.5 | Diversity of seeds and livestock* | 3.03 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 3.59 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 2 | 2.c | Food prices anomalies | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 3 | 3.1 | Maternal mortality | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 3 | 3.2 | Death of newborns and children | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 3 | 3.3 | Communicable diseases | 0.18 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.56 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.4 | Premature mortality | 0.63 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 1.26 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.5 | Prevention of Substance abuse | 0.44 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.63 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.6 | Road traffic accidents* | 0.29 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.78 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.7 | Access to sexual health-care | 0.17 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.58 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.8 | Health coverage | 1.42 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 1.79 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.9 | Deaths and illness from pollution | 0.30 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.55 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 3 | 3.a | Tobacco consumption | 3.18 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 2.65 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 3 | 3.b | Vaccination | 0.11 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.37 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 3 | 3.d | Health emergency preparedness | 0.46 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 1.19 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 4 | 4.1 | Primary and secondary education | 1.51 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.17 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 4 | 4.2 | Pre-primary education | 0.33 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.24 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 4 | 4.3 | Lifelong learning | 1.59 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 1.25 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 4 | 4.4 | Skills for employment | 1.22 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.23 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 4 | 4.5 | Disparities in education | 1.27 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.49 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 4 | 4.6 | Adults' literacy and numeracy | 2.21 | n.a. | 1.57 | n.a. |
| 4 | 4.7 | Skills for sustainable development | 0.29 | n.a. | 1.04 | n.a. |
| 4 | 4.a | Education facilities | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.05 | n.a. |
| 4 | 4.c | Qualification of teachers | 1.25 | n.a. | 0.60 | n.a. |
| 5 | 5.1 | Discrimination against women | 0.56 | n.a. | 1.32 | n.a. |

| Goal | Target | Short Label | Distance to Target (s.u.) | Trend Assessment | OECD Average distance (s.u.) | OECD Trend Assessment |
|------|--------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| 5 | 5.2 | Violence against women | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.89 | n.a. |
| 5 | 5.3 | Harmful practices | 0.58 | n.a. | 1.37 | n.a. |
| 5 | 5.4 | Unpaid care and domestic work | 2.89 | n.a. | 1.79 | n.a. |
| 5 | 5.5 | Women's participation | 1.31 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.89 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 5 | 5.b | Women's empowerment | 0.20 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.53 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 6 | 6.1 | Access to drinking water | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.15 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 6 | 6.2 | Waste water treatment | 0.03 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.35 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 6 | 6.3 | Water quality | 0.29 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.68 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 6 | 6.4 | Water-use efficiency | 1.41 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.54 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 6 | 6.5 | Water resources management | 0.37 | n.a. | 0.98 | n.a. |
| 6 | 6.6 | Water-related ecosystems* | 2.30 | n.a. | 2.18 | n.a. |
| 7 | 7.1 | Access to energy | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 7 | 7.2 | Clean energy | 0.92 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.62 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 7 | 7.3 | Energy efficiency | 0.52 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.98 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 8 | 8.1 | GDP growth | 2.89 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.89 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 8 | 8.2 | Productivity | 2.24 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.77 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 8 | 8.4 | Material footprint | 0.24 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.82 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 8 | 8.5 | Employment | 1.65 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.97 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 8 | 8.6 | NEET | 2.30 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.69 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 8 | 8.8 | Labour rights | 0.95 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.80 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 8 | 8.10 | Financial institutions | 0.20 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.45 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 8 | 8.b | Strategy for youth employment | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.45 | n.a. |
| 9 | 9.2 | Sustainable industry | 1.54 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.95 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 9 | 9.4 | Environmental impact | 0.59 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.87 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 9 | 9.5 | Research and development | 1.81 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 1.06 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |

| Goal | Target | Short Label | Distance to Target (s.u.) | Trend Assessment | OECD Average distance (s.u.) | OECD Trend Assessment |
|------|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| 9 | 9.c | ICT | 0.38 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.36 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 10 | 10.1 | Income distribution | 1.26 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.23 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 10 | 10.2 | Social inclusion | 2.38 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.54 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 10 | 10.3 | Inequalities of outcome | 0.75 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 1.27 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 10 | 10.4 | Redistribution | 0.76 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.12 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 10 | 10.5 | Financial markets | 1.32 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.90 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 10 | 10.7 | Migration | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.69 | n.a. |
| 10 | 10.a | Tariff-lines | 1.49 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.93 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 10 | 10.c | Remittances | 0.98 | n.a. | 2.21 | n.a. |
| 11 | 11.1 | Housing | 0.00 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.80 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 11 | 11.3 | Urbanization | 0.63 | n.a. | 1.19 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 11 | 11.5 | Impact of disasters | 0.04 | n.a. | 1.19 | n.a. |
| 11 | 11.6 | Environmental impact of cities | 0.27 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.49 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 11 | 11.a | Urban policies | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.23 | n.a. |
| 12 | 12.2 | Efficient use of natural resources | 0.27 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.87 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 12 | 12.3 | Food waste | 1.40 | n.a. | 1.36 | n.a. |
| 12 | 12.4 | Chemical and hazardous waste* | 0.44 | n.a. | 1.02 | n.a. |
| 12 | 12.5 | Waste generation | 0.87 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.66 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 12 | 12.8 | Education for sustainability | 0.29 | n.a. | 1.04 | n.a. |
| 12 | 12.b | Tourism sustainability | 1.08 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.87 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 13 | 13.1 | Resilience to climate events | 0.04 | n.a. | 0.73 | n.a. |
| 13 | 13.2 | Greenhouse gas emissions | 0.50 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 1.15 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 13 | 13.3 | Education for sustainability | 0.29 | n.a. | 1.04 | n.a. |
| 14 | 14.1 | Marine pollution** | 1.66 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.84 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 14 | 14.5 | Protected marine areas* | 0.10 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.38 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 14 | 14.6 | Harmful subsidies to fisheries* | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.36 | n.a. |
| 14 | 14.b | Small-scale fisheries | 1.80 | n.a. | 1.64 | n.a. |

| Goal | Target | Short Label | Distance to Target (s.u.) | Trend Assessment | OECD Average distance (s.u.) | OECD Trend Assessment |
|------|--------|---|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| 15 | 15.1 | Ecosystem protection* | 1.00 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.74 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 15 | 15.2 | Sustainable use of forest* | 0.57 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.60 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 15 | 15.3 | Desertification | 1.63 | n.a. | 1.04 | n.a. |
| 15 | 15.4 | Mountain ecosystems | 0.65 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.73 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 15 | 15.5 | Threatened species* | 1.59 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 1.20 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 15 | 15.6 | Benefits from genetic resources | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.78 | n.a. |
| 15 | 15.8 | Invasive alien species* | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.30 | n.a. |
| 15 | 15.9 | National and local planning* | 0.32 | n.a. | 0.54 | n.a. |
| 16 | 16.1 | Violence and related deaths | 0.67 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target | 0.66 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 16 | 16.2 | Violence against children | 0.22 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.65 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 16 | 16.3 | Rule of law | 1.53 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 2.33 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 16 | 16.6 | Accountable institutions | 2.58 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 2.26 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 16 | 16.7 | Inclusive decision-making | 1.40 | n.a. | 1.85 | n.a. |
| 16 | 16.9 | Legal identity for all | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.00 | n.a. |
| 16 | 16.10 | Access to information | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.00 | n.a. |
| 16 | 16.a | National institutions | 0.00 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.54 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 17 | 17.2 | Official Development Assistance | 1.58 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.94 | Progress has been made, but is insufficient to meet the target |
| 17 | 17.10 | Multilateral trading system | 0.01 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved | 0.45 | Target is achieved or on track to being achieved |
| 17 | 17.12 | Market access for least developed countries | 0.78 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target | 0.72 | No progress or moving away from the SDG target |
| 17 | 17.15 | National leadership to implement policies for poverty eradication | 1.85 | n.a. | 2.32 | n.a. |
| 17 | 17.16 | Global Partnership for Sustainable Development | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.89 | n.a. |
| 17 | 17.18 | Statistical capacity | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.09 | n.a. |
| 17 | 17.19 | Statistical capacity-building | 0.00 | n.a. | 0.11 | n.a. |

Note: * refers to targets with a 2020 deadline. ** refers to targets with a 2025 deadline. The OECD average is measured as the simple average across OECD countries with available data.

Source: All data is taken and adapted from UNDESA (2021), *SDG Global Database*, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg> and OECD (2021), *OECD.Stat*, <https://stats.oecd.org/> (accessed on 29 October 2021).

How to read this country profile

The OECD report *The Short and Winding Road to 2030: Measuring Distance to the SDG Targets* evaluates the distance that OECD countries need to travel to meet SDG targets for which data are currently available. It also looks at whether countries have been moving towards or away from these targets, and how likely they are to meet their commitments by 2030, based on an analysis of recent trends and the observed volatility in the different indicators.

As most authors and international organisations, this report adopts a rather simple geometric growth model for assessing the direction and pace of recent changes in the context of the SDGs. Yet, instead of making direct estimates of the value of the indicator by 2030, it models the likelihood of achieving a specific level using Monte Carlo simulations.

While the report provides an overview of where OECD countries, taken as a whole, currently stand, country profiles provide details of the performance and data availability of individual OECD countries.

How to read the OECD SDG Wheel?

Progress on SDGs requires a granular understanding of countries' strengths and weaknesses based on the consideration of the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda. Figure 1 shows both **current achievements** (in the inner circle; the longer the bar, the smaller the distance remaining to be travelled) **as well as whether OECD countries are on track** (or are at least making progress) to meet their commitments by 2030 (in the outer circle).

The length of each bar shows current level of achievement on each target. As detailed in the Methodological Annex, countries' distance to target is measured as the "standardised difference" between a country's current position and the target end-value. For each indicator, the standardised measurement unit (s.u.) is the standard deviation observed among OECD countries in the reference year (i.e. the year closest to 2015). Therefore, the longer the bar, the shorter the distance still to be travelled to reach the target by 2030. The colours of the bars applied to the various targets refer to the goals they pertain to.

The outer ring shows how OECD countries are performing over time and how likely they are to meet the different targets by 2030 based on the observed trends of the various indicators. It uses stoplight colours to classify the progress towards the target:

- green is used to indicate those countries that (based on the change in the different indicators over a recent period) should meet the target in 2030 just by maintaining their current pace of progress (i.e. more than 75% of (randomised) projections meet the target);
- yellow for those countries whose current pace of progress is insufficient to meet the target by 2030 (i.e. less than 75% of randomised projections meet the target, while the correlation coefficient between the indicator and the year is high and statistically significant, implying that a significant trend could be detected); and
- red for those countries whose recent changes have been stagnating or moving them further away from the target (i.e. less than 75% of randomised projections meet the target and the correlation coefficient between the indicator and the year is low or statistically insignificant, implying that no statistical trend could be identified).

How to read the Strength and Challenges sections?

With the aim of helping its member countries in navigating the 2030 Agenda and in setting their own priorities for action, this report relies on a unique methodology for measuring the distance that OECD countries have to travel to achieve SDG targets. The identification of the main strengths and challenges proposed in this report relies on current performances only:

- A target is considered to be a strength when the distance to the target end-value is lower than 0.5 s.u. (i.e. the distance is deemed to be small) or when the country is closer to the target than the OECD average. For instance, while Korea's distance to Target 2.2 on malnutrition is 1.4 s.u. (i.e. classified as medium distance), the average OECD distance is 2.5 s.u. Therefore, Target 2.2 is categorised as being a strength for Korea.
- A target is considered to be a challenge when the distance to target is greater than 1.5 s.u. (i.e. distance is deemed to be long) or when the country is further away from the target than the OECD average. For instance, Estonia's distance to Target 4.2 on pre-primary education is 1.1 s.u. (i.e. medium distance), which is higher than the 0.24 s.u. distance for the OECD average. Target 4.2 is therefore classified as a weakness for Estonia.

While the lack of consistent time series often prevents an exhaustive assessment of trends, they are discussed when available and relevant in nuancing the assessment of current performance.

How to read the Statistical Gaps section?

In total, this report relies on 537 data series supporting 183 of the 247 indicators listed in the global indicator framework (or for close proxies of these indicators). These indicators cover 134 of the 169 SDG targets. Yet, target coverage is uneven across the 17 goals and among OECD member countries.

Figure 2 summarises data availability:

- darker blue bars indicate the share of *targets* for which at least one indicator (including indicators providing context information) is available
- lighter blue bars indicate the share of *targets* for which the available indicator(s) include those having a clear normative direction (i.e. allowing to distinguish between good and bad performance), which are the only ones used to measure distances to target levels.
- medium blue bars indicate the share of *targets* for which progress over time can be gauged (i.e. at least three observations are available over a five-year period).

All methods and concepts are further detailed in the Methodological Annex.