

OECD Policy Coherence Scan of Portugal

Strengthening Institutional Mechanisms for Sustainable
Development



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the European Union

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**STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Foreword

The global community stands at a critical juncture, facing an array of interlinked sustainability challenges, including climate change, environmental degradation, socio-economic disparities and the need for resilient and inclusive economic growth. Unprecedented disruptions in recent years, from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to the escalating impacts of climate change and geopolitical tensions, have highlighted the need for more adaptive, responsive and integrated governance systems that can anticipate risks, mitigate negative impacts and seize opportunities for sustainable and equitable growth.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a comprehensive framework for balancing economic, social and environmental imperatives. Implementing this ambitious agenda calls for enhanced policy coherence, collaboration and innovation, both within and across nations.

Portugal has taken significant steps to this end. A series of reforms have contributed to aligning legislative and institutional structures with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and integrating the SDGs into national and local governance frameworks.

However, no country can achieve sustainable development in isolation. The interconnected nature of the SDGs means that progress – or setbacks – in one area can have cascading effects across multiple sectors, countries and regions. Collaboration and peer learning among countries are critical in a world where challenges and solutions are increasingly interdependent, requiring nations to act collectively to achieve transformative results.

This report, covering developments in Portugal from September 2023 to December 2024, highlights the country's efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda both domestically and internationally and suggests avenues for further improvement. It is an integral component of the project "Building Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) across national and local government in Portugal", which is part of a broader multi-country effort to foster PCSD. This initiative was launched at the request of the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (SGPCM). In November 2024, with the adoption of the Decree-law n.º96/2024, the responsibilities and personnel of SGPCM were integrated into various other entities, with all competences and responsibilities for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs transferred to the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP). The responsibility for overall SDG co-ordination lies with the member of the Government responsible for the area of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

The report, realised with the financial support of the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument (TSI), reflects past achievements and provides a roadmap for future action. The insights and recommendations presented are intended to guide policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders as they work together to achieve the 2030 Agenda in an integrated and inclusive manner that leaves no one behind.

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The OECD also interviewed a number of officials from various government entities at both national and local levels. Finally, a multi-stakeholder workshop in May 2025 provided a platform for discussing the findings and preliminary recommendations outlined in this report, with a view to guide the implementation of Portugal's National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030, currently under government review. The authors would like to express their appreciation to these stakeholders for their availability and insights.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AD&C	Agency for Development and Cohesion
AIL	Avaliação de impacto legislativo (Regulatory impact assessment [RIA] in English)
AMA	Agency for Administrative Modernisation
ANMP	National Association of Portuguese Municipalities
APA	Portuguese Environment Agency
Camões I.P.	Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, I.P.(Camões – Institute for Cooperation and Language, I.P.)
CCDRs	Conselho de Concertação Territorial and the Comissões de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional
CICDR	Commission for Equality and Against Racial Discrimination
CIG	Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality
CIMs	Inter-municipal communities
CIPE Portugal	Inter-Ministerial Commission on Foreign Policy
CMR	Council of Ministers Resolution
CNADS	National Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development
CONSAN	Council for Food and Nutrition Security
CSOs	Civil society organisations
DGAL	Directorate General of Local Authorities
DGE	Directorate General of Education
DGO	Directorate General of Budget
DGPE	Directorate General of Foreign Policy
DGPM	Directorate General of Marine Policy
DGRM	Directorate General of Natural Resources, Security, and Maritime Services
DGPRU	Directorate General of Regional and Urban Policy
DL	Decree-Law
ECO360	National Strategy for Green Public Procurement 2030
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
EMAAI	Multidisciplinary Team for Evaluation and Impact Analysis
ENCPE 2020	National Strategy on Green Public Procurement 2020
ENIND	National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2018-2030 “Portugal+Igual”
ENSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
ESC	Economic and Social Council

EU	European Union
FCID	Federation of Canadian Municipalities
FFM	Fact-finding mission
FSO	Federal Statistical Office
FSDS	Federal Sustainable Development Strategy
GIA	Gender impact assessment
GO	Lei das Grandes Opções (GOs) (Law of Major Options in English)
GPEARI	Office of Planning, Strategy, Evaluation and International Relations
HEIs	Higher education institutions
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
HLSC	High-Level Monitoring Committee (Monitoring Committee)
INA	National Institute of Administration
INE	Statistics Portugal
KPIs	Key performance indicators
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
NGDOs	Non-governmental development organisations
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Public administration
PACE	Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy
PAIMH	Action Plan for Equality between Women and Men
PAOIEC	Action Plan for Combating Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sexual Characteristics
PAVMVD	Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
PCSD	Policy coherence for sustainable development
PDCS	Portuguese Development Co-operation Strategy
PE	Stability Programme
PISCAP	Integrated Training Programme for Sustainability in Public Administration
PLANAPP	Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies
PNR/NRP	National Reform Programme
POENMP	National Medium-Term Budgetary-Structural Plan
PRR/RPP	Recovery and Resilience Plan
REDS	Portuguese Network for Sustainable Development
REPLAN	Rede de Serviços de Planeamento e Prospetiva da Administração Pública (Network of Planning and Foresight Services of Public Administration)
RIA	Regulatory impact assessment

RNDS 2030	Roteiro Nacional para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável 2030 (National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Strategic environmental assessment
SGPCM	General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers
SIA	Social impact assessment
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound objectives
STEAM	Science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics
TSI	Technical Support Instrument
VLR	Voluntary Local Review
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WOG	Whole-of-government

Executive summary

As the world moves rapidly towards 2030, governments around the world are faced with a confluence of pressing challenges that threaten to slow or even reverse their progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Climate change and biodiversity loss, wars and persistent socio-economic inequalities severely impact both people and the planet. Out of 169 SDG targets, only 17% are on track, according to *The United Nations Global Sustainable Development Report 2024*.

Overcoming these challenges requires immediate and integrated responses that transcend traditional policy silos and bring about transformative change. It requires urgent action at the global, national and local level. It requires policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD).

This report presents an assessment of Portugal's mechanisms to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with the OECD Council Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD, hereafter "the PCSD Recommendation"). It analyses Portugal's structures and processes according to three overarching pillars for policy coherence: political commitment and long-term vision; mechanisms to address policy interactions; and flexible tools to anticipate and address policy impacts.

Sustained political leadership and commitment to fostering an inclusive environment conducive to implementing the SDGs are critical for success. This involves crystallising priority areas, bolstering the resilience of these strategic commitments against political fluctuations, and ensuring continuity through successive governmental tenures.

In Portugal, since January 2023, the member of the Government responsible for the area of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers is competent, at the governmental level, to co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of the SDGs domestically. This is without prejudice to the competencies of those in the government responsible for foreign affairs regarding external matters and co-operation policy, as well as of the other governmental areas within the scope of sectoral implementation.

The proposed Roadmap for Sustainable Development, currently under revision by the government, provides a clear path for collective action and accelerated progress. Yet, the effective implementation of strategic plans and programmes for sustainable development needs to be underpinned by strong institutional mechanisms for managing policy interactions. This calls for co-ordination structures and processes to optimise synergies and avoid trade-offs, across both sectors and levels of government.

Resolution 5/2023 of the Council of Ministers identifies the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP) as the analytical backbone for advancing policy coherence throughout the public administration. In this capacity, PLANAPP seeks to enhance policy coherence through the alignment of national plans and policy instruments with the SDGs. PLANAPP also co-ordinates REPLAN, an important strategic network established to enhance policy development and strategic planning across the public administration. The Camões, I.P., under the remit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is responsible for the implementation of the international dimension of the 2030 Agenda regarding development co-operation. The National Institute of Administration (INA) plays a key role in building a more coherent and future-ready public administration by promoting the capacity-building of public sector employees and investing in

innovative research with impact on public policy. Subnational engagement and vertical coherence are fostered through strategies such as regional operational programmes and local-level development strategies and by mechanisms such as the Conselho de Concertação Territorial and the Comissões de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional.

Any government wishing to implement the SDGs coherently and cost-effectively must have flexible tools and data for anticipating, addressing and monitoring the impacts of its policies and actions domestically and internationally. Statistics Portugal is central to statistically monitoring progress towards the SDGs, including on global SDG indicator 17.14.1 Number of mechanisms in place to enhance PCSD, while the High-Level Monitoring Committee oversees all government actions for SDG implementation, including monitoring and reporting activities.

The above is a testament to the Portuguese government's concerted efforts to implement the SDGs and enhance policy coherence. However, challenges remain, and there is room for improvement.

This report aims to guide Portugal on its continued journey towards 2030 and beyond.

Main findings:

- There is a strong commitment to the SDGs, and the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP) seeks to drive PCSD in practice from the centre of government.
- National laws such as the Major Options Law and strategies such as Portugal 2030 foster sustainable development in the short and medium term, but not beyond 2030.
- High-level co-ordination mechanisms are identified in Resolution 5/2023, driving efforts to align national policies and instruments with the SDGs.
- Strategies and plans for local-level coherence and coherence between levels of government (vertical coherence) exist, yet a more systematic and structured approach for subnational engagement is lacking.
- Portugal is committed to global frameworks for sustainable development, but there is no systematic consideration of transboundary impacts.

Possible ways ahead:

- Adopt the National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030, including its Action Plan for Policy Coherence, which contains several measures that would address some of the gaps identified in this report.
- Drawing on PLANAPP's studies of Megatrends 2050, consider developing a longer-term vision for sustainable development in Portugal, including through multi-stakeholder engagement and consultations.
- Provide PLANAPP with clear authority and resources to oversee and implement PCSD commitments; codify the mandates and roles for enhancing PCSD within and between key co-ordinating entities and networks, e.g. PLANAPP, the Network of Planning and Foresight Services of Public Administration (REPLAN), and the High-Level Monitoring Committee (HLMC).
- Promote integrated planning processes that systematically involve all levels of government from the outset; leverage the role and function of the CCDRs (*Comissões de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional*).
- Introduce mandatory requirements to consider economic, social, gender and environmental impacts on other countries in the development of strategies and plans.

1 Overview

This introductory chapter provides an overview of Portugal's progress towards sustainable development, presenting the rationale, structure, and scope of the analysis. Underpinned by the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), it introduces the eight guiding principles of the review. The chapter offers a diagnostic foundation for understanding Portugal's alignment with international sustainability standards, and introduces the key actors, institutional shifts, and policy tools that define Portugal's commitment to the 2030 Agenda.

This Policy Coherence Scan provides the diagnostic foundation for the EU-funded project “Building Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) across national and local government in Portugal”. It assesses Portugal’s progress against the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (hereafter “the PCSD Recommendation”) (OECD, 2019^[1]). The PCSD Recommendation provides a comprehensive standard to help countries equip policymakers and key stakeholders with the necessary institutional mechanisms and policy tools to enhance policy coherence, address integrated economic, social and environmental goals, and accelerate progress on the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The PCSD Recommendation consists of eight guiding principles organised into three main pillars:

- **Pillar 1. A strategic vision** for implementing the 2030 Agenda, emphasising political commitment and leadership for enhancing PCSD. This involves building inclusive political support, defining priority areas and key performance indicators, and ensuring that commitment to PCSD is sustained across governmental changes.
- **Pillar 2. Effective and inclusive institutional mechanisms** for addressing policy interactions across sectors and aligning actions between levels of government. This includes whole-of-government co-ordination, capacity building for PCSD within public administrations and engaging sub-national levels of government in policy co-ordination for sustainable development.
- **Pillar 3. Responsive and adaptive tools** to anticipate, assess and address domestic, transboundary and long-term impacts of policies. Adherents are encouraged to introduce regular assessments, strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems and integrate policy coherence dimensions in evaluation systems to inform decision-making.

The eight guiding principles (Figure 1.1) that form the foundation of these pillars offer a structured way for governments to approach the complexity of sustainable development. They encourage an integrated approach to policymaking that transcends sectoral and territorial boundaries, aiming for a coherent approach that facilitates the achievement of the SDGs.

Figure 1.1. The OECD Council Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

I. A strategic vision for achieving the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in an integrated and coherent manner

1. Political commitment and leadership



2. Strategic long-term vision



3. Policy integration



II. Effective and inclusive institutional and governance mechanisms to address policy interactions

4. Whole-of-government co-ordination



5. Subnational engagement



6. Stakeholder engagement



III. A set of responsive and adaptive tools to anticipate, assess and address impacts of policies

7. Policy and financial impacts



8. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation



Source: OECD (2019^[1]) *Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development*, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/oecd-legal-0381>.

This report's assessment is underpinned by desk research and data acquisition from national and local governmental sources, as well as an analysis of existing policies, strategies, and institutional frameworks aimed at identifying gaps and inconsistencies in alignment with the SDGs. This includes identifying policy interactions, both synergies and trade-offs, across different sectors, as well as policy impacts “here and now”, “elsewhere”, and “in the future”.

The assessment is also informed by fact-finding interviews with government officials and other key stakeholders, including civil society, academia and the private sector, aiming to gather a wide range of perspectives and ensure inclusive participation that reflects a broad spectrum of views and needs.

Subsequently, the report presents policy options, and recommendations are proposed to address the identified gaps and challenges as well as to suggest steps for future action.

Table 1.1 provides an overview of the main findings and recommendations, organised by the three pillars of the PCSD Recommendation.

Table 1.1. Main findings and possible ways ahead

Main findings	Possible ways ahead
<i>Political commitment and long-term vision</i>	
There is a strong commitment to the SDGs, and the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP) seeks to drive PCSD in practice from the centre of government.	Provide PLANAPP with clear authority, mandates and resources to oversee and implement PCSD commitments.
National laws such as the Major Options Law and strategies such as Portugal 2030 foster sustainable development in the short and medium term, but not beyond 2030.	Use PLANAPP's studies of megatrends (Introdução às Megatendências 2050), REPLAN's first collaborative exercise, which is based on the practical application of long-term thinking through strategic foresight methodologies. Consider developing a long-term vision for sustainable development in Portugal, including through multi-stakeholder engagement and consultations.
Chapters in the 2024 and 2025 State Budgets included budget allocations by SDG. Yet, pending the use of performance budgeting for sustainable development, the government's ability to track spending on the SDGs is limited.	Take steps to implement DL 54/2023, amending Orçamento de Estado (OE) rules to allow in-depth monitoring and aligning budget execution with the 2030 Agenda, e.g. through the ongoing partnership between PLANAPP and DGO to improve the methodology for imputing the SDGs within the scope of the budgetary process.
The proposed Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030 provides a key opportunity to advance PCSD.	Adopt the National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030, including its proposed Action Plan for Policy Coherence and develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) targets and indicators to monitor its implementation and contribution to PCSD.
<i>Mechanisms to address policy interactions</i>	
High-level co-ordination mechanisms are identified in Resolution 5/2023, driving efforts to align national policies and instruments with the SDGs.	Clarify and codify the mandates and roles for enhancing PCSD within and between key co-ordinating entities and networks, e.g. PLANAPP, the Network of Planning and Foresight Services of Public Administration (REPLAN), and the High-Level Monitoring Committee (HLMC).
Training programmes (e.g. the Integrated Training Programme for Sustainability in Public Administration [PICSAP] and the National Institute of Administration [INA]) (INA, 2024 ^[2]) build capacity for sustainable development. Still, there is limited expertise among civil servants to effectively enhance PCSD, e.g. through the identification of synergies and trade-offs.	Ensure consistent and regular availability of existing training programmes across the government and expand their content to include PCSD principles.
Strategies and plans for local-level and vertical coherence exist, yet a more systematic and structured approach for sub-national engagement is lacking.	Promote integrated planning processes that systematically involve all levels of government from the outset; leverage the role and function of the CCDRs. Continue working with the Section of Municipalities for the SDGs of the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities, the LocalSDG - Municipal Platform on Sustainable Development Goals, and the Municipal Sustainability Index (ISM).

Main findings	Possible ways ahead
	Consider developing standardised templates for local and regional sustainable performance data generation, in line with the proposed Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030.
<i>Tools to anticipate, address and monitor policy impacts</i>	
Portugal employs a wide range of regulatory impact assessments in the legislative process, but their use is inconsistent across sectors.	Create a comprehensive framework with guidelines for conducting and integrating various impact assessments, ensuring all relevant sustainability dimensions are considered. Promote and incorporate the 2030 Agenda and PCSD into the legislative impact assessment and public policy evaluation process, as per the draft Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030.
Portugal is committed to global frameworks for sustainable development, but there is no systematic consideration of transboundary impacts.	Introduce mandatory requirements to consider economic, social, gender and environmental impacts on other countries, in particular developing countries, as per the draft Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030.
Existing monitoring frameworks are aligned with the SDGs and the European Semester process.	Consider developing Portuguese-specific targets and indicators for monitoring national SDG progress.

Source: Authors' elaboration.

References

- INA (2024), *Programa de Formação em Políticas Públicas*, <https://www.ina.pt/programa-de-formacao-em-politicas-publicas/>. [2]
- OECD (2019), *Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development*, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/oecd-legal-0381>, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/oecd-legal-0381>. [1]

2 Introducing Portugal's institutional mechanisms for policy coherence sustainable development

This chapter provides an overview of the institutional, legal and policy landscape for sustainable development in Portugal. It presents the mechanisms in place to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the national agenda in a coherent way. It also explores the links between Portugal's national sustainable development initiatives and the broader framework defined by the European Union, highlighting collaborative efforts towards common goals. Finally, the chapter outlines the roles and responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders and identifies their mandates, tasks and contributions towards enhanced PCSD.

The legal and strategic framework for sustainable development in Portugal

The pathway to sustainable development in Portugal can be traced back to early initiatives aimed at environmental protection and economic sustainability, laying the groundwork for integrating the SDGs into its national agenda.

2002: Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol

In 2002, Portugal ratified the Kyoto Protocol, affirming its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change. This international agreement marked a significant step in Portugal's environmental policy, setting the stage for further integration of sustainable development principles into national legislation.

2006: National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2005-2015

Portugal's *Estratégia Nacional de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ENDS)* (National Strategy for Sustainable Development) 2005-2015 (ENDS, 2006^[1]) emphasised the need for a sustainable development model to balance economic growth, social equity and environmental protection, ensuring quality of life for future generations. It integrated global visions and long-term objectives into national policies, highlighting the necessity of coherence and integration across various public policies and sectors. The Strategy's Implementation Plan (PIENDS) embodied this approach, promoting modernisation and adaptation to global contexts. These efforts were aligned with the EU Lisbon Strategy, focusing on competitiveness, social cohesion and environmental sustainability. Sectoral programmes addressing key sustainable development dimensions supported this comprehensive strategy.

2010: National Reform Programme

The National Reform Programme (PNR) (Government of Portugal, 2010^[2]), launched in 2010, aligned Portugal's economic, social and environmental policies with the Europe 2020 strategy, focusing on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The PNR established clear targets for employment, innovation, energy, education and social inclusion, creating a roadmap for sustainable development in the coming decade. Subsequently, in 2024, the National Medium-Term Budgetary-Structural Plan (POENMP) replaced the PNR and the Stability Programme (PE) under the new framework of the European Semester.

2015: Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement, an international treaty adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 2015^[3]), aims to limit global temperature rise to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels while pursuing efforts to cap it at 1.5°C. Portugal, as the first nation globally to commit to carbon neutrality by 2050, has accelerated this goal to 2045 under the European Climate Law. In alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, Portugal integrates low-carbon and sustainable development principles into its policies.

2015: Integration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by all members of the United Nations in September 2015, Portugal promptly began the process of integrating the 17 SDGs into national policy. This included establishing an inter-ministerial working group tasked with developing a coherent national strategy for SDG implementation, ensuring that all government sectors were aligned with the goals.

2015: Green Growth Commitment

Building on its dedication to sustainable development, Portugal launched the Green Growth Commitment (Government of Portugal, 2015^[4]), a national strategy designed to accelerate the transition to a greener and more inclusive economy. Officially approved through Council of Ministers Resolution No. 28/2015, the initiative sets out ambitious targets for 2020 and 2030, aiming to align economic growth with environmental sustainability, promote renewable energy, foster circular economy practices, and enhance social and territorial inclusion. To support its implementation, the strategy also established the Green Growth Coalition, an advisory body composed of public and private stakeholders.

2017: First Voluntary National Review

Portugal presented its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) (Government of Portugal, 2017^[5]) at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in 2017. The VNR provided a comprehensive assessment of Portugal's progress toward the SDGs, highlighting achievements, challenges and lessons learned. It also emphasised the role of stakeholder engagement, including civil society, the private sector and academia, in advancing the SDG agenda.

2020: Portugal 2030 Strategy

Portugal 2030's strategic framework is the Portugal 2030 Strategy, approved by Council of Ministers Resolution 98/2020 of 13 November. It is structured around four central thematic agendas for the development of Portugal's economy, society and territory in 2030:

- Thematic agenda 1: People first: A better demographic balance, greater inclusion, less inequality
- Thematic agenda 2: Digitalisation, innovation and skills as drivers of development
- Thematic agenda 3: Climate transition and resource sustainability
- Thematic agenda 4: A country that is competitive externally and cohesive internally.

2023: Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023

Published on 23 January 2023, the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[6]) defines the national co-ordination and implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Portugal. It delegates responsibility to the members of the government and calls for the drafting of the National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030. It also creates the High-Level Monitoring Commission to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SDGs.

2023: Second Voluntary National Review

In 2023, Portugal submitted its second VNR to the United Nations, demonstrating significant progress in several SDGs and acknowledging areas where further efforts were needed. The VNR highlighted innovative practices, policy initiatives and partnerships that had contributed to SDG achievement, offering a transparent and critical reflection on the path ahead (Government of Portugal, 2023^[7]).

2024-Ongoing: National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030

Currently under government review, Portugal's Roteiro Nacional para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável 2030 (RNDS 2030) aims to operationalise a set of changes to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. A working version is available at [PTSustentavel.gov.pt](https://ptsustentavel.gov.pt). (PTSUSTENTÁVEL, 2025^[8])

Linkages with the EU Framework

Portugal has actively engaged with the European Union's sustainability agenda, ensuring that its national policies align with the SDGs and contribute to the broader EU objectives for sustainable development. The European Union has set ambitious agendas for sustainability, such as the Portugal 2030 strategic framework, the European Green Deal, the Digital Single Market, and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, all of which guide Portugal's national policies.

Portugal 2030

Portugal 2030 materialises the Partnership Agreement established between Portugal and the European Commission, which sets out the main strategic objectives for the implementation, between 2021 and 2027, of the global amount of €23 billion. The initiative is guided by five EU strategic objectives: fostering innovation and competitiveness for a smarter Portugal; enhancing transportation networks for a more connected country; promoting local development for closer engagement with citizens; advancing green transition goals for a more sustainable Portugal; and improving social inclusion, education and healthcare for a more equitable society. Additionally, the initiative includes a focus on ensuring a just transition to a carbon-neutral economy. Implemented through 12 programmes, it aims to co-ordinate resources efficiently, emphasising transparency, effectiveness and partnership.

Digital Single Market strategy (launched in May 2015)

Aligning with the European Union's Digital Single Market strategy launched in May 2015, Portugal has initiated policies to promote the digitalisation of its economy and society. By integrating digital advancements with sustainability objectives, Portugal aims to create a more efficient, equitable and environmentally responsible digital economy. These policies aim to harness digital technologies for sustainable economic growth, improved public services and environmental sustainability. Portugal's efforts in this domain include significant investments in digital infrastructure, the expansion of e-government services, and initiatives to enhance digital literacy and skills among its population, mirroring the European Union's goal of a seamless digital market.

Circular Economy Action Plan (first package adopted in December 2015)

The European Union's Circular Economy Action Plan, first adopted in December 2015 and updated in March 2020, has been a key influencer of Portugal's policies on waste management, recycling, and sustainable production and consumption. Portugal's national strategy for embracing a circular economy is evident in its waste management reforms initiated in 2016 and ongoing incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices. These measures are directly aimed at achieving SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and are in line with the European Union's plan to minimise waste and make efficient use of resources.

European Green Deal (announced in December 2019)

Portugal has tailored its national sustainability strategies to support the European Green Deal, which aims to make the European Union climate neutral by 2050. Following the European Green Deal announcement in December 2019, Portugal unveiled its Green Growth Commitment in 2015, aligning with the European Union's ambitious climate targets. This commitment underscores Portugal's focus on decarbonisation, the energy transition to renewable sources and the promotion of a green economy, reflecting the European Green Deal's objectives.

EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (adopted in May 2020)

In response to the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, adopted in May 2020, Portugal has taken significant steps to protect and restore biodiversity. The National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity 2030 (Government of Portugal, 2018^[9]), published in 2018, outlines Portugal's commitments to expanding protected areas, restoring ecosystems, and integrating biodiversity considerations into agricultural, forestry and fisheries practices. This strategy aligns with the European Union's overarching goal of reversing biodiversity loss and ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources.

The Social Summit in Porto (7 May 2021)

The Social Summit, held in Porto in May 2021, marked another key moment for Portugal's active engagement with the European Union's sustainability agenda. The summit focused on aligning national and EU strategies to address climate change, digital transformation and social inclusion. Under its Presidency of the EU Council, Portugal emphasised the importance of implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights, ensuring that policies contribute to the European Union's broader goals for sustainable development. By prioritising an inclusive recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and advancing the green and digital transitions, Portugal demonstrated its commitment to the SDGs and the European Union's vision for 2030. Through this event, Portugal reaffirmed its role in ensuring that its policies align with the SDGs and support the European Union's objectives for social and environmental sustainability (European Commission, 2021^[10]).

The European Climate Law (30 June 2021)

The European Climate Law is a legislative framework that establishes the European Union's 2050 objective of being climate neutral and an intermediate aim of lowering greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 (European Parliament and Council, 2021^[11]). Portugal has the ambitious goal of advancing the target for climate neutrality to 2025, aiming to achieve climate neutrality no later than 2045, as stated in Article 18.2 of Law No. 98/2021 (Government of Portugal, 2021^[12]).

Fit for 55 Package (proposed in July 2021)

Portugal is aligning its national climate and energy policies with the European Union's Fit for 55 Package, proposed in July 2021, which aims to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. Portugal's National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030, updated considering the Fit for 55 objectives, focuses on increasing the share of renewable energy, improving energy efficiency and accelerating the decarbonisation of its economy.

The national alignment with these initiatives illustrates Portugal's proactive approach to integrating EU sustainability goals and directives into its national framework, ensuring a cohesive and comprehensive strategy towards achieving the SDGs and contributing to the European Union's collective targets for sustainable development.

Key actors, mandates and responsibilities

A number of entities make up Portugal's institutional framework, which is designed to ensure the effective co-ordination, implementation and monitoring of sustainability initiatives (Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1). This section provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the key institutions, reflecting their distinct contributions and mandates towards enhancing PCSD and achieving the SDGs.

It should be noted that, in line with Decree-Law No. 43-B/2024 and the recently enacted Decree-Law No. 96/2024 (November 28, 2024), the responsibilities and personnel of the institution that initiated this project and scan, the Secretariat-General of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (SGPCM), have been integrated into various other entities.

Table 2.1. Key actors supporting the implementation of sustainable development policies in Portugal

Name	Mandate/function relating to PCSD	Composition	Status
Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP)	PLANAPP is responsible for global coherence [CMR 5/2023 (2.c)]. As such, it plays a significant role in strategic planning and PCSD. The centre aims to support the definition and implementation of public policies and prospective analysis. Its main objective is to accompany and strengthen each of the intervention phases in the public policy cycle - anticipation and planning, design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation - promoting the creation and consolidation of methodologies and competences, both internally and within the public structure, necessary for quality public action in these areas. . PLANAPP also seeks to ensure long-term strategic goals are embedded in public administration and align with the SDGs.	PLANAPP comprises a central unit responsible for strategic planning, policy development and foresight activities. The centre includes various experts and technical staff who specialise in different aspects of planning and policy analysis. PLANAPP works collaboratively with other government departments and coordinates REPLAN (Network of Planning and Foresight Services of Public Administration) to foster an integrated approach to policymaking. PLANAPP also functions as a network hub, connecting with other public administration entities to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of governmental actions.	PLANAPP was established as part of Portugal's efforts to improve strategic planning within public administration. The centre participates in regular meetings and co-ordination sessions with various stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation and alignment of policies with strategic objectives.
Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua (Camões I.P.)	The Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, commonly known as Camões, I.P., operates under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its primary mandate is to promote the Portuguese language and culture globally and to co-ordinate Portugal's international co-operation activities. Camões, I.P. is integral to Portugal's efforts in PCSD, as it aligns educational, cultural and development co-operation policies with the SDGs. This alignment ensures that Portugal's international engagements support sustainable development initiatives effectively.	Camões, I.P. is organised into specialised departments and support units, including: • Bilateral Cooperation and Multilateral and European Cooperation – responsible for development aid, international partnerships, and multilateral coordination. • Language and Culture – focused on the global promotion of the Portuguese language and cultural initiatives. • Three transversal units – covering planning, monitoring and statistics; evaluation; and communication; and • Support services – providing administrative, financial, and logistical support. Camões, I.P. also oversees six Portuguese Cooperation Centres (CPCs) located in the PALOP and Timor-Leste. These CPCs operate in close coordination with the embassies and act as the institute's operational arms in the field, supporting the implementation, monitoring, and coordination of cooperation programmes and projects in the partner country.	Camões, I.P., operating under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is responsible for proposing and implementing Portugal's development cooperation policy. It coordinates cooperation activities carried out by other public entities and promotes the international dissemination of the Portuguese language and culture. In the context of PCSD (Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development), Camões, I.P. plays a key role by aligning development cooperation, education, and cultural diplomacy with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This ensures that Portugal's international engagements contribute effectively to global sustainable development efforts.

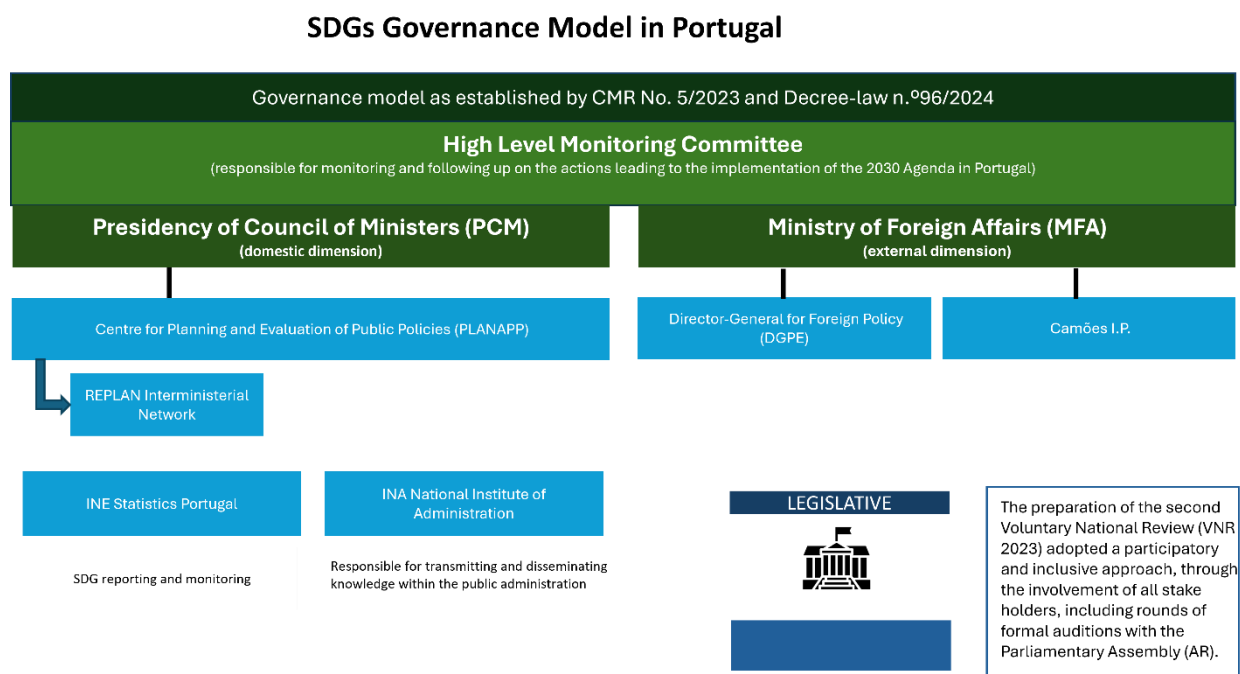
Name	Mandate/function relating to PCSD	Composition	Status
National Institute of Administration (INA)	Instituto Nacional de Administração, known as INA, has the primary mandate of promoting the development and qualification of public employees. It focuses on competency management and evaluating personnel needs in alignment with the missions and objectives. In relation to PCSD, INA contributes by ensuring that public administration personnel are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement sustainable development policies and integrate these principles into their daily operations.	INA is a public institute under the indirect administration of the State, with administrative, financial, and asset autonomy. The organisation includes departments dedicated not only to training, but also to research, innovation and development, which are crucial for the transformation of public administration and its alignment with the SDGs. The training programmes include partnerships with different stakeholders, such as governmental, international organisations and higher education institutions to ensure comprehensive training programmes.	INA I.P. is a public institute within the state's indirect administration, with its own legal personality, endowed with administrative, financial and patrimonial autonomy, under the supervision of the Minister of the Presidency. INA, I.P.'s fundamental mission is to create, transmit and disseminate knowledge in the field of Public Administration, contributing, through training, teaching, scientific research and technical advice, to the innovation and modernisation of the Public Administration and to the qualification, training and enhancement of its human resources.
Statistics Portugal (INE)	Statistics Portugal, known as INE (Instituto Nacional de Estatística), is responsible for producing and disseminating official statistical information to support decision-making in the public and private sectors. Its mandate includes collecting, analysing and publishing data on various aspects of the economy, society and environment, which aligns with PCSD by providing critical data to monitor and implement the SDGs.	INE comprises several departments that handle specific areas, such as demographic statistics, economic indicators, social statistics and environmental data. It works closely with national and international bodies, including the European Statistical System, ensuring harmonisation of methodologies and data quality. The institute also involves various technical working groups to manage specialised data and themes.	INE was established in 1935 and operates as Portugal's central authority for statistical information. It plays a vital role in providing reliable statistical data, which is essential for monitoring and achieving sustainable development objectives in Portugal.
Directorate General of Foreign Policy (DGPE)	The DGPE, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Portugal, is responsible for formulating and implementing Portugal's foreign policy. This includes maintaining diplomatic relations, managing international treaties and representing Portugal in international organisations. The DGPE's role in PCSD involves ensuring that foreign policy decisions align with the SDGs and promoting global co-operation on sustainability issues.	The DGPE is headed by a Director-General, supported by Deputy Directors-General. The organisation includes various departments focused on different geographical regions and thematic areas, such as political affairs, economic diplomacy and international organisations. This structure ensures comprehensive coverage of Portugal's foreign policy objectives and active participation in global forums.	The DGPE holds regular meetings with key stakeholders, including other government ministries, international partners and diplomatic missions.
Directorate General of Budget (DGO)	The DGO operates under the Ministry of Finance and is responsible for overseeing the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the national budget. Its primary functions include ensuring fiscal discipline, managing public finances efficiently and promoting transparency in budgetary processes. In the context of PCSD, the DGO supports the alignment of budgetary policies with the SDGs, ensuring that financial resources are allocated in a manner that supports sustainable economic growth and	The DGO is structured with various departments dedicated to different aspects of budget management, including budget preparation, fiscal policy analysis and public expenditure management. The Directorate is led by a Director-General, supported by Deputy Directors-General, and a team of specialists in public finance and budget management. This composition allows the DGO to comprehensively address all aspects of the national budget and fiscal policy.	The DGO was established as a central service within the Ministry of Finance to ensure effective budgetary governance. It conducts regular meetings and co-ordination sessions with other government departments, agencies and international organisations to review budget proposals, fiscal policies and implementation progress.

Name	Mandate/function relating to PCSD	Composition	Status
	social welfare.		
Office of Planning, Strategy, Evaluation and International Relations (GPEARI)	The GPEARI operates under the Ministry of Finance. Its mandate includes reinforcing governance support functions, such as strategic planning, policy evaluation and international relations. It plays a critical role in PCSD by ensuring that the policies formulated and implemented by the Ministry of Finance are aligned with the SDGs. This involves providing strategic and operational planning support and co-ordinating Portugal's engagement with European and multilateral institutions.	The GPEARI comprises various departments that focus on strategic planning, policy evaluation and international co-operation. It includes experts and analysts who work on developing strategic studies, evaluating policy impacts, and managing Portugal's international financial relations. The office is led by a director-general, who is supported by a team of specialised staff responsible for different areas of planning, strategy, and evaluation.	The GPEARI is an essential part of the Ministry of Finance, and it was established to enhance the ministry's strategic and evaluative capacities. The office conducts regular meetings and workshops with various stakeholders, including other government departments, international organisations and policy experts.
REPLAN	REPLAN (Rede de Planeamento e Avaliação) is part of the strategic planning network established by the Portuguese government to enhance policy development and strategic planning across public administration. It aims to address current and future challenges by supporting effective policymaking and reinforcing public trust. REPLAN's role in PCSD involves fostering a collaborative environment for sustainable governance and supporting PLANAPP in fostering the integration of the SDGs into national policies.	REPLAN comprises various public administration entities working collaboratively to improve foresight, strategic planning and evaluation. The network includes departments and experts from different sectors, all co-ordinated to ensure comprehensive and cohesive policy development. This collaborative structure is designed to enhance the capabilities of public institutions in foresight, strategic planning and policy evaluation.	REPLAN was established in 2022 as part of the modernisation efforts of the Portuguese public administration (PlanAPP, n.d. ^[13]). REPLAN operates as an integral part of the modernisation strategy of the Portuguese public administration. It holds regular meetings and workshops to discuss and develop strategic initiatives. These meetings typically occur quarterly, with additional sessions as necessary to address specific projects or urgent policy issues. The network is important for ensuring that strategic planning is continuously updated and aligned with national and international development goals.
High-Level Steering Committee (Monitoring Committee) (HLMC)	The HLMC, known as Comissão de Acompanhamento, plays a critical role in overseeing the implementation and progress of national and international commitments, including those related to the SDGs. The committee's primary function is to monitor, evaluate, and provide strategic guidance on policies and actions to ensure they align with the country's sustainable development objectives. This includes fostering co-ordination among various stakeholders, reviewing progress and making recommendations to address challenges and optimise outcomes.	The diverse composition of the committee ensures comprehensive oversight and the integration of multiple perspectives in the assessment and strategic direction of policies. According to Article 6 of the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023, the Monitoring Committee includes: a representative from the government member responsible for the presidency area, who presides; a representative from the government member responsible for the foreign affairs area; a representative from each of the regional governments; a representative from the Economic and Social Council; a representative from the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities; a representative from the National Association of Parishes; and three distinguished individuals co-opted by the other members. Representatives from civil society participate only when invited, as outlined in Article 8 of Resolution 5/2023, by order of the government members responsible for the presidency and foreign affairs areas, as well as the government	The HLMC was established in 2023 by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023. This institutional framework plays a pivotal role in addressing concerns related to the potential impacts of political changes. The inclusive composition of the Steering Committee, showcasing bipartisan commitment and consensus-building across different political spectrums, demonstrates resilience against potential disruptions following electoral outcomes.

Name	Mandate/function relating to PCSD	Composition	Status
Agency for Development and Cohesion (AD&C)	AD&C is tasked with co-ordinating regional development policies and ensuring the effective implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds. Its mandate includes programming, implementing and evaluating regional development initiatives, aligning them with national strategies such as Portugal 2020 and Portugal 2030. AD&C plays a crucial role in PCSD by integrating the SDGs into regional policies and ensuring that EU funds are utilised to promote balanced and sustainable territorial development.	member responsible for the sectoral area related to the basis of the invitation. AD&C is structured as a public institute endowed with administrative and financial autonomy. It operates under the Ministry for Territorial Cohesion and co-ordinates closely with other national managing authorities responsible for different operational programmes within the scope of EU Cohesion Policy. The agency includes various departments focused on different aspects of regional development, such as policy planning, fund management and project evaluation.	AD&C was established in 2013 to provide a more integrated and effective approach to regional development and cohesion policy in Portugal. The agency holds regular meetings to discuss and evaluate the progress of regional development projects and the utilisation of EU funds. These meetings typically occur quarterly, with additional sessions scheduled as needed to address specific issues or projects.
National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (ANMP)	The primary mandate of the ANMP is to promote, defend and represent local governments at national and international levels. It advocates for policies that enhance sustainable urban development, improve local governance and foster community well-being. The ANMP works to ensure that municipal policies align with national and international sustainability goals, particularly in areas such as smart cities, climate action, and local economic development. As such, it contributes to vertical policy coherence in Portugal. ANMP has a "Municipal Section for the Sustainable Development Goals" (ANMP, n.d. ^[14]).	The ANMP's structure includes several statutory bodies: • National Congress: The highest decision-making body, consisting of representatives from all member municipalities. • General Council: Provides strategic direction and oversight. • Governing Council: Manages day-to-day operations and implements decisions made by the National Congress. • Fiscal Council: Oversees financial management and auditing. • Advisory Council: Offers expert advice on various issues.	The ANMP was established in 1985 to represent all 308 municipalities in Portugal, including those in the Azores and Madeira. The ANMP regularly engages in meetings and workshops to discuss and address various issues affecting municipalities. The association also collaborates with national and international bodies to promote best practices and support the implementation of sustainable development policies at the local level.
Platform of NGDOs (non-governmental development organisations)	The Portuguese Platform of NGDOs (Plataforma Portuguesa das ONGD) is a private, non-profit organisation that represents approximately 60 NGDOs in Portugal. The platform's mandate includes promoting human dignity, equity and social justice through development co-operation, development education and humanitarian aid. In terms of PCSD, the platform aims to influence policymaking at national and international levels to align with the SDGs, fostering a more just, equitable and sustainable world.	The platform is structured with several governing bodies: • General Assembly: The highest decision-making body consisting of representatives from member NGDOs. • Board of Directors: Manages the day-to-day operations and strategic direction. • Advisory Board: Provides expert advice on various issues. • Working Groups: Focus on specific thematic areas such as aid watch, development education and ethics. The staff includes an Executive Director, co-ordinators for capacity building, membership, financial and administrative tasks, and communications and advocacy.	Established in March 1985, the platform was created in response to the need for a unified representation of Portuguese NGDOs. It engages in regular meetings and workshops with its members, government officials, and international organisations to discuss and develop strategies for effective development co-operation. These meetings typically occur quarterly, with additional sessions as necessary to address specific issues or initiatives. The platform also organises seminars, training sessions and public consultations to gather input and disseminate best practices in sustainable development.

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Figure 2.1. SDGs governance model in Portugal



Source: Authors' elaboration, in consultation with Portugal.

This chapter has provided an overview of Portugal's institutional, legal and policy framework for integrating the SDGs into its national agenda. Significant milestones include the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 2002, which underscored Portugal's commitment to addressing climate change. The National Strategy for Sustainable Development, launched in 2005, further laid the foundation for balancing economic, social and environmental priorities. This was followed by the launch of the National Reform Programme in 2010, all of which set the stage for Portugal's alignment with international sustainability commitments.¹

Since 2015, with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, concrete steps have been taken to incorporate the SDGs into national policymaking and structures, including establishing an inter-ministerial working group to guide the process, as outlined in Portugal's first VNR in 2017. Portugal's Green Growth Commitment in 2015 further reinforced Portugal's dedication to a green economy and sustainability. More recently, ongoing efforts to elaborate the National Roadmap for Sustainable Development seek to operationalise a set of changes that provide for an accelerated implementation of the SDGs.

Portugal's sustainable development policies also resonate with EU goals. National policies are aligned with broader EU sustainability frameworks through EU directives such as the European Green Deal, Digital Single Market, and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, as well as key EU frameworks, such as Portugal 2030, which co-ordinates significant EU funds for sustainable growth, and the European Climate Law and Fit for 55 Package, which set ambitious climate targets.

Portugal's institutional set-up supports co-ordination across sectors and levels of government. According to the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023, PLANAPP is designated as the lead institution responsible for co-ordinating efforts related to PCSD. Specifically, PLANAPP is tasked with identifying, mapping, and monitoring plans and other national public policy instruments that contribute to implementing the SDGs and their targets and ensuring their overall coherence.

In the domain of foreign policy, Portugal contributes to the EU's sustainability commitments and the 2030 Agenda through the Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy 2030 (PDCS2030), a key national

public policy instrument that promotes inclusive and equitable global development, supports climate action, and strengthens multilateral cooperation, in line with several EU and international frameworks.

The next chapter assesses Portugal's performance in all these areas against the eight principles enshrined in the PCSD Recommendation, offering insights into the effectiveness and coherence of Portugal's approach to sustainable development and possible ways ahead.

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Note

¹ As part of the merger process of the SGPCM, outlined in Decree-Law No. 43-B/2024, the recently enacted Decree-Law No. 96/2024 (28 November) establishes the integration of SGPCM's responsibilities and personnel into various entities. These include SG-Gov, ESPAP, CEJURE, IGF, GEPAC, PLANAPPPLANAPP, DGLAB, and ESTAMO, S.A., with several of these entities undergoing restructuring to align with the new framework.

3

Enhancing policy coherence in Portugal: Strengths, gaps and possible ways ahead

Framed by the PCSD Recommendation's eight principles, this chapter explores Portugal's performance across the policy cycle—from strategy formulation to implementation to evaluation. Drawing on recent reforms and innovations, the analysis highlights both institutional strengths and gaps to implement the SDGs. Through practical examples and actionable insights, this chapter outlines tangible ways forward, offering a roadmap to reinforce horizontal and vertical co-ordination, enhance data collection, and build resilience into the policy architecture.

Policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) lays the groundwork for informed policymaking, where sustainable development is integrated across all levels of government and policy areas. Organised around six simplified stages of the policy cycle (strategy formulation, planning, budgeting, engagement, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation) (Figure 3.1), this chapter highlights Portugal's current strengths and gaps in its institutional framework to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), using the OECD Council Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (hereafter “the PCSD Recommendation”) as a benchmark.

Figure 3.1. Policy coherence principles along the policy cycle



Source: Authors' elaboration.

The analysis includes possible ways ahead for Portugal to leverage its strengths and bridge the identified gaps, ultimately enhancing PCSD. These take into consideration government and stakeholder feedback on earlier drafts of this report, provided during a multi-stakeholder workshop held in Lisbon on 20 May (see also Annex A).

Strategy formulation

Strategy formulation requires governments to develop visions, plans and policies that guide decision-making and action. Considering sustainability aspects across economic, social and environmental areas at this early stage of the policy-making cycle facilitates an upstream application of PCSD principles. **Principle 1** calls for building a strong, inclusive political commitment and leadership for PCSD at the highest political level to foster whole-of-government approaches to PCSD. Among other actions, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) enhance whole-of-government approaches to PCSD by defining priority areas, time-bound action plans and key performance indicators for making progress on PCSD and communicating results to the public

- b) systematically apply a poverty, gender and human rights perspective to PCSD frameworks in line with the 2030 Agenda's ambition of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, empowering all women and girls and achieving gender equality
- c) introduce measures to promote PCSD within government structures so that commitment to PCSD outlives electoral cycles and changes in government, cabinet compositions or government programmes, including identifying a lead institution responsible for promoting, overseeing and implementing PCSD
- d) build leadership capacity in the public service to consistently formulate, implement and monitor policies coherent with sustainable development in and across sectors.

Strengths

Key strategic documents clarify responsibilities for SDG implementation and, to some degree, PCSD

Portugal has implemented a cross-cutting approach to sustainable development involving various governmental levels and sectors. The integration of the SDGs into national policies and the commitment to communicate results to the public are evidenced by the government's efforts to align national reporting mechanisms with the SDGs and its engagement in international forums on sustainable development.

The Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023 (CMR 5/2023) (Government of Portugal, 2023^[1]) establishes the national co-ordination structure for the implementation of the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development Goals in Portugal. The 2030 Agenda, with its aim to promote sustainable development globally, is integrated into national policies through the Portugal 2030 Strategy and other public policy instruments. Importantly, the resolution also announced the creation of a National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030 (RNDS 2030).

CMR 5/2023 (Article 2.c) makes the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP) responsible for PCSD in practice through its mandate to identify, map and monitor plans and other national public policy instruments that contribute to the implementation of the SDGs and their targets, with a view to ensuring their coherence. Specifically, PLANAPP is tasked with supporting the definition and implementation of public policies and prospective analysis. Its main role is to monitor and reinforce each of the intervention phases in the public policy cycle – anticipation and planning, design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation – promoting the creation and consolidation of methodologies and skills, internally and in the public structure, necessary for a quality public performance in these areas. In addition, it is tasked to provide support for political decisions; train the public administration; boost networks and partnerships; and produce and disseminate knowledge about public policies.

The Portuguese government's proposal for the Law of Great Options for 2024-28, approved by the Council of Ministers on 25 July 2024, fosters strategic investments that have the potential to enhance PCSD. The proposal outlined investments of EUR 9.4 billion (euros) for 2024, targeting six key challenges (Lusa, 2024^[2]; Pinto, 2024^[3]):¹

Table 3.1. Strategic investments to enhance PCSD

Targeting six key challenges

Investment	2024	2025-2029
A fairer and more supportive country:	1.132 billion EUR	5.703 billion EUR
A richer, more innovative and competitive country:	2.756 billion EUR	15.674 billion EUR
A more efficient state:	647 million EUR	2.424 billion EUR
A more democratic, open and transparent country:	62 million EUR	333 million EUR
A greener and more sustainable country:	4.690 billion EUR	33.353 billion EUR
A more global and humanistic country:	121 million EUR	446 million EUR

Sources: (Lusa, 2024^[2]), Grandes Opções prevêm investimentos de 9,4 mil milhões para este ano, <https://www.publico.pt/2024/07/04/economia/noticia/opcoes-preveem-investimentos-94-mil-milhoes-ano-2096312>; (Pinto, 2024^[3]), Grandes Opções do Plano. Governo prevê gastar 9,4 mil milhões de euros em novas medidas só este ano, <https://eco.sapo.pt/2024/07/03/governo-preve-gastar-94-mil-milhoes-de-euros-em-novas-medidas-so-este-ano/>.

These areas are interlinked with the need to tackle immediate and medium-to-long-term challenges posed by global crises, such as the post-COVID recovery and geopolitical tensions, notably the conflict in Ukraine. The law sets the framework for actions and budgets over multiple years and contributes to alignment with the 2030 Agenda and other international commitments.

Portugal's sustainability agenda includes a poverty, gender and human rights perspective

Echoing key principles of the 2030 Agenda, many official documents refer to the importance of social inclusion and reducing inequalities. The emphasis on education and training for all, including measures aimed at reducing gender disparities and promoting equality, reflects a commitment to these perspectives within the broader context of sustainable development.

Notable, non-exhaustive examples include:

- **National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2018-2030 "Portugal+Igual" (ENIND)**, approved in the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 61/2018 (Government of Portugal, 2018^[4]). Portugal has established frameworks to promote gender equality and non-discrimination, directly addressing poverty, gender and human rights perspectives. This strategy focuses on the elimination of gender stereotypes and the full realisation of human rights, comprising three action plans:
 - Action Plan for Equality between Women and Men (PAIMH)
 - Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (PAVMVD)
 - Action Plan for Combating Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sexual Characteristics.

The elaboration of the strategy was based on broad consultation with government departments, local authorities, experts, the private sector and organised civil society under the technical co-ordination of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG). The CIG is the public body responsible for promoting and defending the fundamental principle of equality between women and men as enshrined in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic.

- **National Child Guarantee Action Plan** aims to ensure access to a set of essential services for all children and young people in the most vulnerable situations. On 17 January, the Council of

Ministers approved, through Council of Ministers Resolution no. 3/2023², the National Child Guarantee Action Plan (PAGPI) 2022-2030 (PAGPI, n.d.^[5]).

- **National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325** (Government of Portugal, 2009^[6]): This plan focuses on women, peace, and security, incorporating a gender perspective into peace and security policies, in line with the 2030 Agenda ambition. The CiG is the institutional lead.
- **Engineers for a Day Programme**: Directed towards students at the primary and secondary education levels, aiming to deconstruct gender stereotypes associated with the most segregated areas through practical activities. Since 2017, this initiative has engaged more than 12 500 young people, involving 200 partner entities, including companies in the technology sector, municipalities, schools and higher education institutions (HEIs).
- **Incode 2030: Technovation Girls**: A worldwide programme in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) that empowers and mobilises girls aged 8-18 in technological areas, encouraging them to think, act, and create technological solutions. In 2022, an additional 270 students from 50 localities across 12 districts participated.
- **Sustainable Employment Commitment**: A transitional measure aimed at stimulating the hiring of unemployed people, especially from vulnerable groups, such as single-parent families and domestic violence survivors.
- **Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy 2030 (PDCS2030)**, adopted through Council of Ministers Resolution No. 121/2022, integrates a strong human rights, gender equality and sustainability perspective into Portugal's external action. Guided by principles such as the respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, the promotion of peace, democracy and the rule of law, and the empowerment of women and girls, the PDCS2030 reinforces the 2030 Agenda's commitment to inclusive and equitable development, particularly in partner countries.

Efforts to enhance leadership capacity for sustainable development are underway

Portugal has made efforts to enhance leadership capacity within the public service for sustainable development. The involvement of multiple government sectors in SDG implementation suggests an underlying aim to develop leadership skills that support the formulation, implementation and monitoring of coherent policies across different sectors.

Notable, non-exhaustive examples include:

- **Integrated Training Path of Capacity-Building in Sustainability for Public Administration (PICSAP)**: PICSAP reflects the National Institute of Administration's (INA) commitment to sustainability by:
 - training public administration workers and leaders in sustainability
 - encouraging research and the creation of knowledge in sustainability in public administration
 - disseminating knowledge about sustainability and good practices in public administration
 - promoting innovation among public administration workers and leaders to achieve the SDGs.
- **INA Award**, on Sustainability in the Context of Public Administration (social, economic and environmental dimensions).
- **Innovation for Sustainability: Symposium of Latin American Centre for Development Administration (CLAD)**. CLAD refers to events like the XXV International Congress of CLAD on State and Public Administration Reform. This event was co-organised by CLAD and the Government of Portugal and focused on public administration reform. It took place in Lisbon on 24-27 November 2020 and included discussions on governance and public institutions in the Americas.

- **Public Policy Training Programme:** Targets managers and senior technical staff of the public administration and results from the protocol signed between INA and PLANAPP, which aims to train the public administration in the areas of prospective, planning, design and programming, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, with a view to formulating more robust, responsible and adaptable policies to the changes in context felt in public action (INA, 2024^[7]).
- **The RNDS 2030, currently under government review, will promote training for the public administration** on an integrated sustainability training path for the public administration; training within the scope of PCSD; and training on “statistical literacy” within the scope of sustainable development. A working version of the RNDS 2030 is available at [PTSustentavel.gov.pt](https://ptsustentavel.gov.pt) (INA, 2024^[7]).

Gaps

There is scope for more structured and integrated engagement and consistent commitment to PCSD

While the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[1]) and the establishment of PLANAPP and the Rede de Serviços de Planeamento e Prospeção da Administração Pública (REPLAN, the Network of Planning and Foresight Services of Public Administration) highlight Portugal's commitment to implementing the SDGs, there is an opportunity to enhance consistent political advocacy and leadership for PCSD. Currently, it is unclear to what extent existing mechanisms can safeguard PCSD commitments across electoral cycles and government changes. Strengthening the resilience of the current structure could help ensure continuity and stability in sustainable development initiatives, regardless of political shifts.

During the workshop held within the framework of this project on 20 May in Lisbon, government officials underscored the need to “connect the dots” across existing institutional arrangements. The Government has in place key government entities to design, apply and evaluate PCSD, yet greater efforts could be made to sustain a more integrated approach to PCSD by ensuring that these government institutions work together seamlessly and on an ongoing basis.

Civil service capacity and leadership skills can be streamlined further

Training programmes like PICSAP and events such as the CLAD symposium play an important role in capacity building; however, there is an opportunity to further strengthen the integration of sustainable development principles across all public service sectors. Public awareness campaigns and educational programmes could also be expanded to foster a deeper understanding and commitment to sustainable development among public servants at all levels and within the broader public. Enhanced co-ordination and collaboration among initiatives would also reduce duplication and create synergies, ultimately maximising the impact of these activities.

Possible ways ahead

- **Provide PLANAPP with a clear mandate to drive PCSD** and ensure recognition of this mandate among other entities. The 20 May workshop encouraged PLANAPP to facilitate a more explicit multi-stakeholder approach to driving PCSD across the government
- **Strengthen political leadership and advocacy for PCSD further**, for example, by establishing a **high-profile political champion or a dedicated ministerial role**. This role could be responsible for regularly engaging with various government sectors to identify synergies and trade-offs at the early stages of the policy cycle. Workshop participants also flagged the idea of appointing SD/PCSD Focal Points in key line ministries and institutions (possibly by expanding the mandates

of existing strategic planning units in these entities) to engage systematically with REPLAN and other cross-government coordination mechanisms to drive PCSD more effectively.

- **Embed PCSD principles into legislative frameworks** to provide legal backing that ensures sustainability commitments are upheld across electoral cycles, for example, as in Finland (Box 3.1). Introduce binding regulations that mandate the consideration of the SDGs in all government policies and programmes from their inception. Additionally, the 20 May workshop suggested that PLANAPP design and distribute widely an integrated, consensus-based PCSD guidance framework for all government entities engaged in PCSD.
- **Develop more detailed action plans for PCSD**, for example, as part of the RNDS 2030, incorporating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each priority area. This would also facilitate monitoring, evaluation and reporting on PCSD, making progress more transparent and holding the responsible institutions accountable to the public.
- **Conduct regular training and capacity-building programmes for government officials at all levels** to ensure they understand and can effectively implement PCSD principles. This could be integrated into the Public Policy Training Programme (INA, 2024^[7]), which aims to train managers and senior technical staff of the public administration in the areas of planning, design, programming, monitoring and evaluation of public policies. For example:
 - Encourage the inclusion of content on the SDGs and PCSD in training programmes aimed at managerial positions and senior technical staff.
 - Develop specific modules for each SDG and promote sustainable practices.
 - Provide training for more local communities (train-the-trainer approach): deliberative groups.
 - Promote, in co-ordination with FEFAL and other relevant entities, capacity-building programmes for Regional Coordination and Development Commissions (CCDRs), Intermunicipal Communities (CIMs), and local authorities, using participatory methodologies and territorial approaches.

Box 3.1. Good practice: Whole-of-government approach to PCSD in Finland

Since the early 2000s, Finland has been recognised for its comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to sustainability and PCSD. The country seamlessly integrates the SDGs into its national budgeting, planning and legislative frameworks. This ensures that all ministries actively contribute to a cohesive national strategy for sustainable development.

A key driver of this unified effort is the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, chaired by the prime minister, reflecting the highest political commitment to sustainability. This body fosters cross-ministerial collaboration and ensures alignment across government actions.

This institutionalised approach provides resilience to political changes or shifts in government priorities and ensures that sustainable development remains a key national priority, regardless of the political landscape.

Source: Government of Finland (2020^[8]), *Voluntary National Review 2020 Finland: Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26261VNR_Report_Finland_2020.pdf.

Policy planning

Effective policy planning requires anticipating and balancing a wide range of economic, social and environmental priorities, which sometimes conflict. It requires identifying synergies and trade-offs while promoting an integrated and cohesive approach to both planning and execution. To accomplish this, clear mandates and mechanisms must be established to enable ministries and public sector agencies to align their sectoral programmes, budgets and policies with shared sustainability goals. Such alignment is essential to avoid duplication and ensure the efficient, coherent allocation of public resources.

This section outlines Portugal's strengths and challenges in relation to **Principle 2** of the PCSD Recommendation, which calls for the definition, implementation and communication of a strategic long-term vision that supports policy coherence and guides both government and stakeholders toward common sustainable development goals. In this regard, it is recommended that adherents, as appropriate:

- a) develop a strategic long-term vision that outlines desired sustainable development outcomes, scenarios and actions to ensure coherence across sectors, government levels, and between domestic and external policies that could affect developing countries
- b) use existing tools, such as strategic foresight, scenario development, and systems thinking approaches, in formulating and implementing policies to identify, prevent and mitigate actual and potential adverse impacts on the well-being and sustainable development prospects of future generations.

Strengths

The RNDS 2030 is expected to mainstream the SDGs into planning and policy frameworks

The integration of the SDGs into national planning and policy frameworks is expected to be achieved through the implementation of the forthcoming RNDS 2030. PLANAPP has prepared a revised version of the RNDS 2030, currently under government review, which outlines: 1) the government's commitment to sustainable development; and 2) a PCSD Plan. A working version of the RNDS 2030 is available at [PTSustentavel.gov.pt](https://ptsustentavel.gov.pt) (INA, 2024^[7]).

While the Portugal 2030 Strategy, approved by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 98/2020 of 13 November, includes very few references to the SDGs, it provides a medium-term planning framework structured around four thematic agendas considered crucial to the development of Portugal's economy, society and territory by 2030:

- Thematic agenda 1: People first: A better demographic balance, greater inclusion, less inequality
- Thematic agenda 2: Digitalisation, innovation and skills as drivers of development
- Thematic agenda 3: Climate transition and resource sustainability
- Thematic agenda 4: A country that is competitive externally and cohesive internally.

The strategy puts into practice the partnership agreement between Portugal and the European Commission to apply EUR 23 billion of European funds to projects that stimulate and develop the Portuguese economy between 2021 and 2027 (Portugal 2030, n.d.^[9]), around five EU strategic objectives (a smarter, greener, better-connected, more social Europe and one that is closer to its citizens). The total amount available to fund projects will be distributed through programmes organised by theme and region. Individuals, companies, local authorities, and other public bodies, co-operatives, associations, private charitable institutions, and other private entities can apply for and benefit from this fund.

Building on its domestic sustainability efforts, Portugal also seeks to ensure coherence between internal priorities and external action, particularly in areas impacting developing countries. Examples of this are the Strategic Cooperation Programmes (PECs) established with Portuguese-speaking African countries

(PALOP)³ and Timor-Leste, which contribute to sustainable development across the five pillars of the 2030 Agenda — People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership — and support these countries in advancing the SDGs. These partnerships promote mutual development while aligning with Portugal's national sustainability priorities, including clean energy, climate action, and social inclusion.

PLANAPP plays a key role in strategic foresight and scenario development

Strategic foresight in Portugal is underpinned by robust institutional support, exemplified by the establishment of PLANAPP itself. As a dedicated competence centre, it has the authority and mandate to weave foresight throughout various government levels, planning, and policymaking. PLANAPP's approach involves multiple government departments, academic institutions and civil society in the foresight process. This collaborative method is particularly evident in their approach to climate change policies, where a wide range of stakeholders contribute to forming comprehensive, future-oriented environmental policies. Strategic foresight also plays a vital role in strengthening decision-making processes. During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, foresight tools helped the government anticipate various pandemic scenarios, which enabled the formulation of proactive and effective public health responses.

Recently, the functional and organisational reform of the public administration, approved by Decree-Law No. 43-B/2024 (2 July)⁴, aimed to strengthen strategic services focused on study, planning and evaluation. Within this framework, PLANAPP underwent restructuring to enhance its role in strategic planning, foresight, monitoring and evaluation. PLANAPP also fosters inter-ministerial co-operation and collaborative work, supporting policymakers at all stages of the policy cycle with specialised and harmonised expertise to improve public policies and their outcomes in Portugal, according to Decree-Law No. 67/2024 of 8 October.⁵

The decree creating PLANAPP also establishes REPLAN as an inter-ministerial network for planning and foresight services of the public administration in its Chapter III (Articles 13-15).⁶ REPLAN aims to foster co-operation and alignment on strategies across the government, increase knowledge sharing and competencies in the administration, and further build the evidence base, involving civil society and academia. In addition to strategic planning processes, considering Decree-Law No. 67/2024 of October 8 (Government of Portugal, 2024^[10]), REPLAN is also responsible for ensuring, under the co-ordination of PLANAPP, adequate co-ordination of the activities of prospecting, planning, monitoring, evaluation and analysis of the impacts of public policies (OECD, 2023^[11]).

Additionally, PLANAPP is responsible for Lab2050 – Collaborative Foresight Laboratory, which is dedicated to collectively creating visions for a desirable and sustainable future for Portugal by 2050 (PlanAPP, n.d.^[12]). The project aims to foster a democracy where citizens understand, support and engage in the design and implementation of public policies through participatory processes. These policies are intended to be grounded in long-term strategies that contribute to building the fair and sustainable society that citizens aspire to (PlanAPP, n.d.^[12]).

Another example of long-term vision in Portugal is the Megatrends 2050 Report (PlanAPP, n.d.^[13]). This report identifies nine key megatrends expected to shape Portugal's future: worsening climate change; increasing pressure on natural resources; diversification and shifts in economic models; divergent demographic trends; a more urbanised world; a more digital world; accelerated technological development; a multipolar world; and new challenges to democracy. Strategic foresight tools help to enhance decision-making and policy development.

In Portugal, strategic foresight is applied through various tools and methodological approaches aimed at enhancing the government's decision-making processes and policy development.

The OECD Public Governance Policy Paper 2023, *Improving decision-making and policy development in Portugal: The role of PLANAPP* (OECD, 2023^[11]) highlights the following:

- **Blueprints for strategic foresight:** These provide a structured framework that guides the adoption and implementation of strategic foresight within government settings. This blueprint helps in assessing and tailoring strategic foresight interventions to meet specific governmental needs and contexts.
- **Methods and tools of strategic foresight:** A variety of methodological portfolios are employed to address policy challenges. These methods and tools are circulated and appropriated across different government sectors to ensure that foresight activities are comprehensive and inclusive.
- **Integrated policy cycle:** Strategic foresight is deeply embedded in the policy development cycle. This integration ensures that foresight activities are co-ordinated with policy planning, enhancing the responsiveness, relevance, acceptability and accessibility of these initiatives to policymakers.

A number of exercises promote systems thinking and policy coherence

The adoption of systems thinking approaches in policy design and implementation allows for a comprehensive understanding of the complex interdependencies within and across systems, ensuring that policies are designed with a holistic view of their potential impacts. Systems thinking encourages policymakers to consider the wider consequences of decisions, including unintended effects on sustainability and well-being.

Ongoing initiatives like the PLANAPP policy alignment exercise demonstrate Portugal's commitment to advancing its sustainable development agenda. These initiatives involve stakeholder engagement, literature reviews, and the development of coherence mechanisms to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the SDGs.

In addition, a recently completed project funded by the European Commission and implemented by the OECD, "Development of a strategic plan for decarbonisation, digitisation, and sustainable blue economy for the port-maritime and fisheries sectors", encourages the use of PCSD tools such as a Sustainability Check to promote the alignment of national policies with relevant SDGs, providing valuable insights into policy integration and coherence.

Gaps

A strategic long-term vision beyond 2030 could help foster PCSD

Portugal has an opportunity to enhance its sustainable development efforts by developing a strategic long-term vision that extends beyond 2030. A cohesive and comprehensive strategy that integrates all dimensions of sustainable development would strengthen the country's capacity to promote, implement and monitor progress effectively. Although the National Reform Programme (PNR) and the Stability Programme (PE) were foundational, these frameworks were replaced in 2024 by the National Medium-Term Budgetary-Structural Plan (POENMP), in alignment with the new framework of the European Semester. While the Portugal 2030 Strategy is also in place, there is scope to explicitly define sustainable development outcomes within these frameworks, enhance coherence across sectors, and consider impacts on developing countries.

To maximise the effectiveness of these strategies, fostering more inclusive engagement with a broad range of stakeholders would be beneficial. A deeper collaboration could further enrich these strategies, ensuring that they reflect diverse perspectives and comprehensively address the multifaceted challenges of sustainable development. The forthcoming RND 2030 should not be intended as an additional procedure but rather as a global framework to ensure the integration of the 2030 Agenda and PCSD into policymaking.

There is scope to enhance the strategic use of foresight tools in policymaking

Integrating foresight insights into daily policy-making processes helps ensure that foresight outcomes are regularly and effectively utilised in policy development, a goal that continues to evolve.

Achieving effective foresight requires sustained investment in skills, technologies and methodologies. However, resource allocation constraints can sometimes limit the ability to support comprehensive, ongoing foresight activities. Additionally, measuring the direct impact of foresight on policy outcomes poses unique challenges, which can make it difficult to justify continued investment and refine approaches based on past experiences. Addressing these challenges by enhancing integration, securing resource commitment, and developing improved impact measurement would enable strategic foresight to play a stronger role in Portugal's planning and decision-making processes.

Possible ways ahead

The newly established REPLAN network aims to help facilitate frequent formal and informal exchanges for strategic planning, foresight and evaluation units and experts. Success will require being intentional about the underpinning mechanisms and tools used by PLANAPP for information and data sharing and gathering and synthesising inputs to inform and co-ordinate strategic policymaking. Possible ways ahead include:

- **Create a strategic long-term vision beyond 2030:** Portugal could develop a comprehensive and forward-looking vision that extends beyond 2030, outlining clear sustainable development outcomes, scenarios and milestones. This vision would integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions, ensuring coherence across sectors and government levels, and guide decision-making for long-term sustainability.

Several opportunities lie in strengthening the roles of PLANAPP and REPLAN:

- **Strengthen PLANAPP's capacity for anticipation and foresight:** PLANAPP's core mandate includes fostering foresight analysis across all stages of the policy cycle. To further strengthen its role, PLANAPP could expand its foresight capabilities by developing more advanced and comprehensive methodologies for scenario planning and long-term forecasting. This could involve greater collaboration with international foresight institutions and increased training for governmental staff on foresight methodologies. Additionally, PLANAPP could help ensure that its foresight insights are regularly integrated into the early phases of policy design and strategic decision-making, guiding the government in preparing for future uncertainties and aligning long-term goals with national priorities.
- **Enhance the role of REPLAN in cross-sectoral alignment:** As REPLAN is responsible for co-ordinating efforts across governmental sectors, it could be further empowered by deepening its role in harmonising sectoral plans with cross-cutting strategic documents. This could be achieved through more structured, regular interactions between REPLAN and sectoral ministries, supported by a clear protocol for reviewing and adjusting sectoral strategies to fit the overarching national agenda. Additionally, REPLAN could play a critical role in the early detection of misalignments between sectoral and national plans, providing timely recommendations to ensure policy coherence.
- **Leverage multi-sectoral teams for integrated foresight and evaluation:** The multi-sectoral teams already established under REPLAN (e.g. Strategic Planning, Foresight, Monitoring and Public Policy Evaluation Teams) provide a unique opportunity to foster collaborative foresight across governmental bodies. For example, the main purpose of the Monitoring Team (where many RNDs activities will be validated) is to monitor and develop projects common to different government areas with a view to promoting a culture and systematic practice of monitoring sectoral and transversal public policies, as well as mobilising public institutions for this purpose. These

teams have been tasked with producing joint studies that reflect cross-sectoral issues, ensuring that all governmental areas contribute to a shared long-term vision. By leveraging the expertise of technicians and consultants from different sectors, these teams could further develop innovative foresight and evaluation models that are more agile and adaptable to changing national and global circumstances. The general objectives and guidelines of REPLAN in 2025, as a network and partnership operating model aiming to promote inter-ministerial co-operation, knowledge sharing, and resource sharing, include continuing to ensure, under the coordination of PLANAPP, adequate coordination of foresight, planning, monitoring, evaluation, and impact analysis activities of public policies among the different government areas. To this end, mechanisms and tools should continue to be developed to deepen and systematise collaborative work, such as guidelines, recommendations, procedure manuals, good practice guides, templates, and other standardised documents relevant to public policy management, as well as to ensure appropriate alignment and compatibility between transversal strategic planning instruments and sectoral planning instruments.

- **Improve communication channels and data sharing:** Effective co-ordination between PLANAPP and REPLAN requires robust data-sharing mechanisms. REPLAN, through its dedicated Monitoring team, could play a pivotal role in this domain by facilitating the development of a centralised digital platform. This platform would promote transparency and enable the various governmental bodies to stay aligned with the strategic plans and evaluations developed by PLANAPP. Moreover, the Data Access team could oversee the inclusion of functionalities such as real-time tracking of sectoral plan adjustments and their compatibility with broader national strategies.
- **Increase stakeholder engagement in strategic planning and foresight:** PLANAPP and REPLAN could enhance their roles by promoting greater involvement of external stakeholders, including civil society, academia and private-sector actors, in foresight and planning processes. This could be done through participatory foresight exercises, workshops and public consultations that help build a more comprehensive and inclusive vision for the future. In this regard, the RNDS 2030 foresees the creation of a National Stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development, which could serve as a platform to institutionalise and strengthen stakeholder engagement. REPLAN, in particular, could facilitate stakeholder engagement at the cross-sectoral level, ensuring that multi-sectoral perspectives are considered when developing strategic plans and evaluations.
- **Develop metrics for monitoring policy coherence and alignment:** REPLAN could strengthen its efforts in developing evaluation models and metrics that effectively measure the alignment of sectoral policies with the overarching strategic plans. One of the measures included in the RNDS 2030 is to promote the incorporation of monitoring of PCSD, specifically through implementing a Monitoring Framework for Strategic Goals of Planning Instruments. This would involve creating a PCSD metrics system to monitor and track how sectoral initiatives contribute to national and global sustainability goals. Additionally, these metrics could be used to regularly assess the effectiveness of foresight tools in improving policy coherence and responsiveness.
- **Strengthen the role of PLANAPP as a foresight hub:** To further consolidate its position, PLANAPP could act as a national hub for foresight activities, co-ordinating not only government but also external stakeholders, such as research institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This would position PLANAPP as the central body for collaborating on foresight projects, providing training and disseminating best practices. Additionally, PLANAPP could develop long-term policy scenarios that are regularly updated, serving as key reference points for all governmental sectors to adapt their strategies to future trends and challenges.

The 20 May workshop reinforced these points. In addition, workshop participants underscored the need for PLANAPP to drive greater alignment and integration of sector strategies to enhance PCSD. This could be done by strengthening common targets, performance indicators and planning horizons across sector

strategies and aligning these explicitly with SDG-related ones in the RNDS 2030. Over time, this would help to ensure that these data and indicators are aligned with SDG-framed spending targets and spending results indicators in the national budget as Portugal moves towards performance-based budgeting practices.

Box 3.2. Italy's approach to policy coherence and stakeholder engagement

Italy has made significant progress in integrating sustainable development principles into national planning, demonstrating a commitment to enhancing policy coherence early in the policy process. In 2017, Italy adopted its National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), aligning it with the 2030 Agenda. This strategy embeds the SDGs into both national and local policies, promoting a comprehensive approach that spans economic, social and environmental dimensions.

To ensure effective implementation of the NSDS, Italy established the Inter-ministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE). CIPE plays a pivotal role in co-ordinating efforts across ministries and various levels of government, fostering policy coherence and addressing the interconnections between different SDGs.

Italy also places a strong emphasis on stakeholder engagement, involving civil society, businesses and academic institutions in the development and execution of its sustainability strategy. A key example is the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development, which unites over 200 organisations to promote the SDGs across Italian society.

Source: OECD (2022^[14]), *Italy's National Action Plan for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development*, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/italy-s-national-action-plan-for-policy-coherence-for-sustainable-development_54226722-en.html.

Budgeting and policy integration

According to the 2023 Voluntary National Review (VNR), several funding instruments in Portugal are aligned with the SDGs. The VNR also highlights the need for budget programme co-ordination to provide quarterly information on actions contributing to SDG achievement. A decree-law (Government of Portugal, 2023^[15]) was approved in July 2023, amending the state's budget (Orçamento de Estado, OE) rules for 2023, allowing for in-depth monitoring and aligning budget execution with the 2030 Agenda.

PCSD **Principle 3** calls for improving policy integration to better incorporate sustainable development into policy and finance and, in that respect, capitalise on synergies and benefits across economic, social and environmental policy areas as well as between domestic and internationally recognised SDGs. To this end, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) make strategic use of policy planning mechanisms and tools, including the budget process and public procurement, to manage synergies and trade-offs and integrate sustainable development into sectoral policies
- b) incorporate a PCSD/sustainable development lens into national development plans, sustainable development strategies and financing plans and develop supporting tools, such as guidelines or regulations, as well as co-ordination mechanisms for ministries and government agencies to align their mandates, policies and sectoral objectives with broader sustainable development goals
- c) integrate regional and territorial development into sectoral policies to achieve greater synergies with long-term strategic planning for the implementation of the SDGs

- d) take a whole-of-government approach to development policy and finance to diversify the resources and linkages beyond official development assistance that support sustainable development impact, including domestic resources, private investment, remittances and philanthropic flows, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights.

Strengths

The Portuguese Directorate-General for the Budget plays a central role in integrating the SDGs into fiscal policy

The Directorate-General for the Budget (DGO) operates under the Ministry of Finance and holds significant responsibilities regarding the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the national budget. Its overarching goals are to ensure fiscal discipline, manage public finances efficiently, and promote transparency in the budgetary processes.

The DGO, by overseeing the national budget, plays a direct role in ensuring that the budgeting process and public procurement are used strategically to manage synergies and trade-offs across policies. Portugal's budget is crafted in accordance with major planning options and legal or contractual obligations. The ability to structure the budget by programmes allows for targeted allocation of resources towards specific sustainable development objectives. This programmatic approach enhances the effectiveness of financial management in achieving set goals. The execution of the budget is supervised by the Court of Auditors and the Assembly of the Republic. Following the Court's opinion, the Assembly assesses and approves the General State Account, including social security. This regular supervision ensures ongoing accountability.

The 2024 State Budget Proposal Report, presented on 10 October 2023, included, for the first time, a chapter dedicated to the SDGs. This exercise involved tagging/inputting entities to specific SDGs based on their mission and their responses to a questionnaire. It was the first time there was an effort to highlight budget allocations concerning specific SDGs, focusing on key sectors such as health, education, social security and infrastructure. The results showed that SDG 3 (Good Health) and SDG 4 (Quality Education) received the highest financial contributions, with future budgets expected to refine this methodology further.

The 2025 State Budget Proposal Report, presented on 10 October 2024, contained, for the second consecutive year, a chapter dedicated to the SDGs⁷. PLANAPP was an active part of this process in the design of the information collection instrument applicable to public administration entities covered by this financial instrument. PLANAPP also aimed to identify specific and financially measurable interventions raised for the implementation of certain SDG(s) and wrote the aforementioned chapter. As in the 2024 State Budget Proposal Report, the data presented assume, as a general principle, the allocation of the budget of central administration entities to one or more SDGs, depending on their area of intervention, and identifies interventions with investment greater than EUR 100 million, based on the questionnaire sent to entities. The total expenditure with an impact on the SDGs increased by 8.1% in the 2025 State Budget Proposal Report, compared to the 2024 State Budget Proposal Report.

In this context, the DGO's circular for the preparation of the State Budget included an SDG annex with instructions for gathering information on the SDGs. The goal is to identify measures and projects that contribute to the implementation of specific SDGs. The responses collected from entities using the provided template were analysed to determine the budget allocations for each SDG, though the methodology used goes beyond this report. Budget allocations were assigned to one or more SDGs based on each entity's area of intervention. However, certain expenses, such as transfers to local governments, government operations, and financial charges, were excluded. This exercise represents a positive step in improving transparency around the relative prioritisation of the SDGs as part of the budget process, alongside the programme-based budgeting pilots, and offers an insight into public policy priorities related to SDG implementation. This being said, there is room for future improvement.

Table 3.2 illustrates measures and projects that contribute to the implementation of specific SDGs within the State Budget. The matrix links central administration budgets to relevant SDGs (row) by government area (column). It excludes certain expenditures, such as transfers to local governments, financial assets and liabilities, and cross-cutting entities that do not directly impact any SDG.

Table 3.2. Portugal's State Budget and the SDGs

In EUR millions

	P001 Sovereign bodies	P002 Governance	P003 External Representation	P004 Finance	P006 Defence	P007 Justice	P008 Homeland Security	P009 Education	P010 Science and Innovation	P011 health	P012 Infrastructure and Housing	P013 Economy	P014 Work, Solidarity and Social Security	P015 Environment and energy	P016 Youth and modernization	P017 Agriculture and fisheries	P010 Culture	Total
SDG 1 – No poverty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10 317	0	0	0	0	10 317
ODS 2 – Zero hunger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDG 3 – Good health and well-being	0	0	0	790	113	0	0	0	0	15 458	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16 361
SDG 4 – Quality Education	0	100	31	0	0	12	0	7 433	3 709	0	304	0	309	0	0	0	39	11 937
SDG 5 – Gender equality	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	338	0	7	0	0	349
SDG 6 – Clean water and sanitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	217	0	0	0	217
SDG 7 – Affordable and clean energy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	457	0	0	0	457
SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 077	0	0	0	0	1 077
SDG 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure	0	12	0	0	89	23	0	0	609	0	1 567	2 006	0	0	175	0	0	4 481
SDG 10 – Reduce inequalities	0	111	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	961	0	188	0	17	1	0	1 278
SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities	0	405	0	17	0	0	224	12	78	0	1 910	487	0	517	0	80	488	4 218
SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	0	173	0	1 931	0	2 155
SDG 13 – Climate action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 101	15	0	714	0	0	0	2 830
SDG 14 – Life below water	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	40	87	0	0	0	2	0	141
SDG 15 – Life on land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	389	0	0	0	389
SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions	1 131	38	0	0	2 679	2 320	2 469	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8 637

	P001 Sovereign bodies	P002 Governance	P003 External Representation	P004 Finance	P006 Defence	P007 Justice	P008 Homeland Security	P009 Education	P010 Science and Innovation	P011 health	P012 Infrastructure and Housing	P013 Economy	P014 Work, Solidarity and Social Security	P015 Environment and energy	P016 Youth and modernization	P017 Agriculture and fisheries	P010 Culture	Total
SDG 17 – partnerships for the goals	0	3	126	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	130
Subtotal	1 131	673	157	807	2 893	2 355	2 693	7 445	4 396	15 458	6 883	2 646	12 229	2 467	199	2 014	527	64 974

Source: Government of Portugal (2025^[16]), *Orçamento do Estado 2025*, <https://planapp.gov.pt/orcamento-estado-2025-capitulo-ods/>.

Decree-Law No. 17/2024, which sets out the regulations for executing the 2024 State Budget, addresses in Article 32 the responsibilities and duties of budget programme co-ordinators. It specifies that "7 - The co-ordinating entities shall ensure that information is provided, quarterly, on the actions that contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals - Agenda 2030, under the terms to be defined by the DGO in the budget execution circular." The co-ordinating entities for the budget programmes are listed in Annex I of the aforementioned decree-law.

Strategic policy planning mechanisms contribute to the integration of sustainable development into sectoral policies

Portugal has employed strategic policy planning mechanisms and tools to integrate sustainable development into sectoral policies. As previously mentioned, the Major Options Law for 2024-2028 sets forth the main planning and financial priorities for Portugal. This law tags six key challenges: fostering a fairer and more supportive country; enhancing innovation and competitiveness; improving state efficiency; promoting democracy and transparency; advancing environmental sustainability; and strengthening global engagement. These priorities are interlinked with the need to address medium-to-long-term challenges, including recovery from the post-COVID era, geopolitical tensions, and alignment with the 2030 Agenda. This legislative framework embeds the SDGs into its strategic priorities, ensuring national policies support sustainable economic, social and environmental outcomes. It also provides a multi-year budgetary framework to manage synergies and trade-offs across various policy domains, facilitating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other international commitments.

Portugal's NRP⁸ integrated the SDGs into its national planning and development strategies, showcasing a comprehensive approach to sustainable development across government policies. One of the challenges underlying the development of the NRP was the alignment of policy priorities that respond to national needs and challenges with the EU policy guidelines, which together expressed the purpose of convergence and socio-economic cohesion and are associated with a set of funding programmes.

The NRP encompassed the entire public policy planning process. It provided an annual assessment of national contributions to achieving key EU objectives, including the SDGs. In 2024, the POENMP replaced the PNR and the Stability Programme (PE). The POENMP sets out budgetary commitments, national reform, and investment priorities for a four-year period, addressing the specific country recommendations directed at Portugal and aligning them with the common EU priorities. The first POENMP 2025-2028 has already been published.

Portugal's use of national and European financing instruments, such as the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), also indicates strategic use of the budget process. Moreover, Portugal is considering aligning public procurement with the SDGs. The 2017 VNR introduced the concept of incorporating environmental criteria into public procurement, emphasising its role in advancing sustainability goals. Building on this, the 2023 VNR proposed the idea of green public procurement, further aligning procurement practices with the SDGs.

Other policies, strategies and plans, some mentioned earlier, also support policy integration, for example:

- The Action Plan for Circular Economy Portugal facilitates the integration of sustainable development into sectoral policies.
- The Green Growth Commitment, through the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 28/2015 (Government of Portugal, 2015^[17]), and subsequent strategies like the National Strategy on Green Public Procurement 2020 (ENCPE 2020) (Government of Portugal, 2016^[18]) and ECO360 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[19]), aims to boost green purchasing, promote resource efficiency, advance towards a circular economy and stimulate eco-innovation.
- The Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy 2030 reflects an effort to incorporate sustainable development into a broader policy and planning framework.
- The Portugal 2030 Strategy (Estratégia Portugal 2030) and the Partnership Agreement – Portugal 2030 aim to foster regional development.
- The RNDS 2030 is meant to be an evolving instrument aimed at operationalising a set of changes to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.

Finally, Portugal is seeking to incorporate a PCSD perspective into its national development plans and strategies, with PLANAPP providing support to members of the government in the co-ordination of domestic implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The RNDS 2030, particularly, can be seen as the first manifestation of such incorporation, seeking alignment with the broader SDGs. The design and programming of financing instruments, including guidelines or regulations, might also serve as co-ordination mechanisms to ensure that ministries and agencies align with sustainable development objectives.

PLANAPP's ongoing mapping exercise supports policy integration and enhances PCSD

PLANAPP's ongoing mapping exercise shows the executive's willingness and commitment to ensure Portugal's policymaking is more integrated, systematic, and focused on achieving sustainable development outcomes. It represents a strategic effort to strengthen policy integration and coherence for sustainable development in Portugal. It addresses key challenges, develops practical tools and frameworks, and fosters institutional collaboration to ensure that Portugal's policies and strategies are aligned with the SDGs and capable of addressing the complex challenges of sustainable development.

A crucial element of the mapping exercise involves analysing policy instruments to determine their alignment with the SDGs. However, this analysis revealed that most policy instruments do not explicitly reference the SDGs they are related to, indicating a gap in policy design and evaluation that the exercise aims to address. The policy mapping exercise includes creating methodologies for assessing the alignment of policies with the SDGs, understanding the transboundary and global impacts of policies, and evaluating intergenerational impacts. This is work in progress.

Another significant aspect of the exercise is the emphasis on capacity building and knowledge sharing across government entities. PLANAPP aims to support other government bodies in developing their strategic planning capabilities, particularly in incorporating SDG alignment into their policy-making processes. This involves providing guidance, resources and training to ensure that sectoral strategies are coherent with national priorities and SDGs.

One expected outcome of the mapping exercise will be improved institutional co-ordination and collaboration (PCSD Principle 4). By clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of different entities involved in strategic planning and policy coherence, the exercise aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Portugal's approach to sustainable development.

Lastly, the mapping exercise explores mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policy coherence and alignment with the SDGs (PCSD Principle 8). This involves developing indicators and

metrics to assess progress, identify gaps and make necessary adjustments to ensure that Portugal's strategic planning efforts are on track to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

PLANAPP acknowledges the existing challenges in achieving policy coherence, such as lack of data and evidence, difficulty in quantifying resources by SDG, lack of systematic tools for analysing policy trade-offs and spillovers, and the need for more robust capacity building and technical support for policy formulation and alignment with the SDGs.

Gaps

There is scope to advance the integration of PCSD into national development plans and financing

The integration of a PCSD perspective into national development plans, strategies and financing frameworks is an area of ongoing progress. The Portugal 2030 Strategy and the RRP demonstrate limited alignment with the SDGs, with potential for a broader and more consistent application of these principles across all planning and financial instruments.

Currently, there is no formal PCSD strategy, mechanism, or set of guidelines to systematically ensure that sectoral policies align with the SDGs. This suggests that while sustainability principles are embedded within various strategies and plans, opportunities exist to strengthen the systematic incorporation of a PCSD approach across all national and sectoral frameworks. Additionally, the strategic use of the budget process to manage synergies and trade-offs between different SDGs could be further developed and consistently applied across all sectors.

Regional and territorial integration for effective SDG implementation could be made more consistent across the country

There is a recognised need and ongoing efforts to integrate regional and territorial development within sectoral policies to support SDG implementation. However, there is potential for more consistent application across all regions and local contexts. This would allow for a fuller utilisation of regional strengths and a more targeted response to specific local challenges, all within the framework of SDG targets.

The process of aligning policy objectives with financial resources is complex

Portugal currently does not have a dedicated budget specifically allocated for sustainable development initiatives. The development of performance budgeting will greatly assist the government in being able to measure the impact of spending on strategic sustainable development results. Additionally, co-ordination for measuring the impact of programme spending on composite SDGs could be strengthened to ensure more coherent tracking. This may lead to funding gaps for critical projects and a lack of prioritisation of sustainable development in the overall financial planning process.

The preparation of the VNR underscored the importance of co-ordination among budget programme entities to provide regular information on actions contributing to the SDGs. Although a decree-law was approved in July 2023 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[15]) to establish a comprehensive monitoring regime for SDG-related actions, the effectiveness of these mechanisms is still to be assessed.

Opportunities exist to improve co-ordination and integration mechanisms for development finance

While Portugal has initiated several measures to diversify resources for sustainable development, such as leveraging EU funds and focusing on renewable energy investments, the analysis in this report suggests there might be gaps in fully adopting a whole-of-government approach that encompasses a wider range of

financial and non-financial drivers, including private investment, remittances and philanthropy, as well as enhancing trade and corporate business models for sustainability.

Possible ways ahead

- **Enhance the strategic use of budgeting and public procurement processes** by explicitly linking them with sustainable development objectives, while aligning them with corresponding objectives in sectoral strategies. This would help to prioritise sustainable development projects and facilitate targeted investments towards achieving the SDGs.
- **Develop guidelines and tools that embed sustainability criteria into these processes** to manage synergies and trade-offs more effectively across sectors and levels of government.
- **Ensure regular, quarterly provision of detailed information** by co-ordinating entities of budget programmes. Consistent and accurate information sharing will enhance the monitoring and evaluation process, enabling effective tracking of progress towards SDG targets.
- **Strengthen the integration of regional and territorial development into sectoral policies** by promoting local initiatives that align with national sustainability goals. Encourage regional planning and development efforts explicitly linked to the SDGs to enhance local engagement and effectiveness in achieving sustainable outcomes.
- **Encourage innovation and collaboration across all sectors and levels of government** to amplify the impact of sustainable development efforts.
- **Foster partnerships with the private sector** for investment, leverage remittances and philanthropy and promote sustainable trade and corporate practices.

Engagement

The 2030 Agenda calls for deepened stakeholder engagement and greater involvement of parliamentarians to strengthen national ownership of development plans and budgets. Parliaments play an essential role at all levels of government by enacting laws, adopting budgets, and ensuring accountability, as well as national plans and strategies, for the effective achievement of the SDGs. They also serve as an interface between citizens and state institutions.

This section assesses the extent to which Portugal has mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and parliamentary consideration of PCSD, in line with **Principle 6** of the PCSD Recommendation, which calls for engaging stakeholders effectively to sustain broader support for PCSD and its implementation. To this end, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) engage proactively with stakeholders in different phases of the policy cycle, including through the exchange of knowledge and expertise, to develop and prioritise initiatives for enhancing PCSD, making specific efforts to reach out to the marginalised and vulnerable groups in society and to advance inclusive social and economic development, in line with the aspirations of the SDGs
- b) work with stakeholders to raise public awareness and mobilise support on sustainable development and government commitments supporting PCSD, through campaigns, policy dialogue, capacity building and information sharing.

Strengths

Portugal's parliament contributes to inclusive policymaking for sustainable development

Portugal's parliament, or Assembly of the Republic, has a well-established system to ensure compliance with the Constitution and laws. This includes various mechanisms, such as appreciation of the Government Programme, motions of confidence and censure, plenary debates, committee hearings and parliamentary inquiries. Regular debates with the prime minister and other ministers ensure continuous supervision and accountability. These debates cover a wide range of issues, including the State of the Nation and Portugal's role in the European Union, which are crucial for comprehensive policy oversight. Parliamentary committees play an active role in overseeing government activities. They conduct hearings with ministers and other relevant entities multiple times per legislative session, ensuring detailed scrutiny of policies and actions.

The Assembly of the Republic consists of a chamber of deputies representing all Portuguese citizens. It is one of the two elected sovereign bodies outlined in the Constitution, alongside the President of the Republic, and serves as the "representative assembly of all Portuguese citizens". Deputies are elected by direct and secret universal suffrage. The assembly represents all Portuguese citizens, acting on their behalf and being accountable to them, including non-voters, those who did not vote, and those who did not support the elected deputies (Assembleia da República, n.d.^[20]).

The assembly's comprehensive legislative competence allows it to incorporate sustainable development perspectives into national policies, ensuring alignment with both domestic and international parameters. This includes the ability to legislate on critical areas such as education, social security and environmental policy, which are essential for sustainable development. Also, it actively engages stakeholders in the 2030 Agenda via public hearings, inquiries and online consultations. One key tool in this process is the government's public consultation portal, ConsultaLex (Government of Portugal, n.d.^[21]). This portal, accessible to all citizens, allows for participation in the legislative and regulatory process by consulting proposed decrees and making suggestions. A dedicated working group on sustainable development analyses issues and advises the government. Furthermore, recognising the importance of localised development, parliament ensures that policies are tailored to regional and local contexts.

To align national policies with the SDGs, parliament assesses the impact of proposed laws and conducts debates on Agenda 2030 topics. As part of this process, a regulatory impact assessment (RIA) is conducted prior to the adoption of any law, decree-law or regulatory decree. This assessment quantifies the foreseeable impacts of the legislation across the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and climate action. Box 3.3 provides examples of parliamentary oversight for sustainable development in Germany and Finland.

Box 3.3. Parliamentary oversight for sustainable development in Germany and Finland

The **German** Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development has driven sustainability and sustainable development to the parliament level. Within parliament, the Advisory Council plays a monitoring role. It creates an alert when an initiative does not align with the National Sustainability Strategy. By initiating hearings and publishing position papers, the Advisory Council catalyses discussions, enriching parliamentary discourse and establishing itself as a dynamic and integral component of the legislative process.

In **Finland**, the government submits annual reports to parliament on progress towards sustainable development. The Committee for the Future prepares the parliamentary response, which includes an

assessment of compliance and suggestions for further action. In the subsequent annual reports, the government is then required to report on the measures taken to implement the parliament's position.

Source: Fetting (2021^[22]), *Parliamentary Mechanisms in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda*, https://www.esdn.eu/fileadmin/ESDN_Reports/ESDN_Report_August_2021_Parliaments_and_SDGs_Final.pdf; Deutscher Bundestag (n.d.^[23]), *Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development*, <https://www.bundestag.de/en/committees/bodies/sustainability>.

For example, in 2020, the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 53/2020 of 10 July (Government of Portugal, 2020^[24]) approved the National Energy and Climate Plan 2030 (PNEC 2030). This plan defines the goals and strategies for Portugal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, which aligns with the Paris Agreement. This plan, updated through the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 149/2024 (Government of Portugal, 2024^[25]), is a policy instrument for achieving Portugal's energy and climate goals by 2030. It determines objectives, targets and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lays the foundation for an accelerated energy transition.

Another example is the 2050 Carbon Neutrality Roadmap (RNC 2050), approved through the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 107/2019 (Government of Portugal, 2019^[26]). This is Portugal's strategic framework for achieving carbon neutrality by mid-century. While the RNC 2050 defines long-term strategies for achieving carbon neutrality, the PNEC 2030 focuses on short- and medium-term actions to ensure that the critical decade 2021-30, identified as pivotal for reducing emissions, delivers on the roadmap's ambitions. Together, these plans form a cohesive framework for Portugal's energy and climate policies.

Additionally, the assembly's supervisory role ensures that the government's actions are consistently monitored and evaluated, fostering accountability and transparency in implementing sustainable development strategies.

Stakeholder engagement occurs at various stages of the policy cycle and across different policy domains

The National Roadmap for Sustainable Development (NRSD), currently under review by the government, outlines Portugal's goals and planned actions for sustainable development, including public engagement strategies. Portugal's efforts to engage with stakeholders, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda, are characterised by including civil society and other non-governmental actors in the planning and implementation phases of sustainable development policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs spearheaded the co-ordination efforts to establish Portugal's national position during the drafting of the 2030 Agenda, suggesting an ongoing role in co-ordinating stakeholder engagement around the SDGs.

For instance, the creation of the National Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CNADS) demonstrates a structured approach to integrating diverse stakeholder perspectives into the policy-making process. It serves as a platform for dialogue and consultation, engaging a wide range of actors, including NGOs, academic institutions and representatives from vulnerable communities, and fostering regional and international co-operation to address shared challenges effectively.

Portugal's focus on education for sustainable development, as exemplified by the National Strategy for Education for Citizenship, highlights an effort to embed sustainability principles across different societal strata, including efforts to reach marginalised and vulnerable groups. By integrating these principles into education, Portugal is laying the groundwork for inclusive social and economic development that aligns with the aspirations of the SDGs.

The focus on promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, along with the emphasis on circular economy principles, represents another strategy for engaging the public and stakeholders in a dialogue about sustainable development. These initiatives are accompanied by campaigns, policy dialogues, capacity-building exercises and information-sharing efforts designed to foster a widespread understanding and commitment to sustainability goals. For example, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Action website contains information on government initiatives related to sustainable consumption, production and the circular economy.

Moreover, Portugal's active involvement in the European Union's sustainable development framework enhances policy coherence at both national and international levels. The strategic engagement of multiple stakeholders, including public, private and civil society sectors, underscores Portugal's commitment to a multidimensional and inclusive approach to sustainable development.

Engaging vulnerable and marginalised groups through the National Strategy for Combating Poverty

Portugal has taken significant steps in addressing poverty as a national priority through the National Strategy for Combating Poverty (ENCP), which emphasises participatory and inclusive approaches to policymaking. A key initiative under the ENCP is the Roadmap for Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies, developed collaboratively by PLANAPP, the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon (ICS-UL), and other partners.

The pilot project for this roadmap identified critical ENCP focus areas, such as reducing child and youth poverty, fostering youth integration into society, enhancing employment and qualifications, improving social inclusion policies, ensuring territorial cohesion, and making poverty eradication a national commitment. These efforts were supported by establishing a Consultative Forum, which included civil society organisations working closely with target populations to identify key areas for monitoring and evaluation.

Through participatory methodologies like Living Labs and multi-stakeholder dialogues, the ENCP provides a flexible and dynamic framework for engaging marginalised groups, ensuring their voices are heard in the policy-making process.

Gaps

Engaging with stakeholders can be more proactive and go beyond information sharing and consultations

Portugal's efforts to engage stakeholders, particularly NGOs, can be noted, especially in policy areas like climate change and the ocean. As previously mentioned, ConsultaLex (Government of Portugal, n.d.^[21]) allows all citizens to participate in the legislative and regulatory process. However, the engagement tends to be more reactive and oriented towards sharing information or consulting on already developed policies rather than actively co-creating policies from the outset. It primarily occurs in the later stages of the policy cycle, such as during the implementation or monitoring phases.

This reactive approach limits the potential for incorporating diverse perspectives and expertise from various stakeholders, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, at crucial early stages where their input could significantly shape policies for more inclusive and sustainable development. It also misses out on leveraging the knowledge, expertise and experiences of all stakeholders. The challenges in implementation at the local levels and among different stakeholder groups indicate a need for more structured and inclusive engagement strategies that ensure all voices are heard and considered in policymaking.

Portugal could take steps to enhance public awareness of sustainable development and PCSD to reach marginalised groups

While there are public awareness campaigns and initiatives aimed at informing citizens about sustainable development, these efforts could be more widespread and systematic and highlight timely PCSD issues. Expanding the reach of public awareness strategies and tailoring them to specific groups, including marginalised and vulnerable populations, would foster greater inclusivity and ensure no one is left behind. Strengthening public engagement and awareness strategies could also help foster broader societal support for PCSD initiatives, creating a shared understanding and commitment to sustainable development principles and goals across all sectors of society.

Although the ENCP has made notable efforts to involve vulnerable and marginalised groups through participatory approaches like the Consultative Forum and Living Labs, such initiatives could be scaled up and replicated in other policy domains to ensure comprehensive inclusion. Despite efforts to reach out to all citizens, marginalised and vulnerable groups may still be underrepresented in implementation efforts, potentially leaving these communities without a voice in the sustainable development agenda.

Additionally, recent international crises have impacted the ability to fully achieve and mobilise support for the SDGs, creating setbacks in progress, as highlighted in the VNR 2023. Continued prioritisation of targeted, inclusive initiatives like those under the ENCP could help Portugal overcome these challenges, ensuring that vulnerable groups are meaningfully included in the sustainable development process.

Possible ways ahead

- **Adopt more proactive strategies to involve a wide range of stakeholders**, including NGOs, civil society organisations, the private sector, and marginalised groups, from the initial stages of the policy cycle (Box 3.4). Planned initiatives to involve citizens in foresight activities, for example are a step in the right direction. The 20 May workshop also underlined the need for PLANAPP to adopt a more deliberate, explicit multi-stakeholder approach to pursuing government-wide PCSD, including with regional and local authorities across the country. **Set up multi-stakeholder platforms or working groups that contribute to policy formulation, implementation and evaluation**, ensuring that policies are responsive to the needs and aspirations of all societal groups.
- **Involve local and regional stakeholders to bring awareness of differences in regional attributes, strengths and challenges to the national sustainable development policy table** to ensure that policies are effectively localised and meet regional needs. A relevant mechanism that could operationalise this is the Regional Contract Programme (Government of Portugal, 2024^[27]), which could be leveraged further to align national objectives with regional implementation. This programme can strengthen regional participation in shaping and achieving development goals by establishing objectives, targets and indicators, several of which are directly related to sustainable development.
- **Implement comprehensive, ongoing public awareness campaigns** that clearly communicate the importance of sustainable development and PCSD to build broader public support.
- **Leverage various media platforms designed to resonate with different audiences**, including youth, marginalised communities and the broader public.
- **Organise capacity-building and information-sharing initiatives**, such as workshops, seminars, and online platforms that provide resources and tools to understand and implement sustainable practices so as to empower stakeholders to actively contribute to PCSD objectives. A possible way is to advance the Public Policy Training Programme by INA and PLANAPP (INA, 2024^[7]).

Box 3.4. Good practices: Stakeholder engagement and public participation

Pioneering inclusive stakeholder engagement in Finland

Finland has long been recognised for its inclusive approach to policymaking, notably through its broad engagement with stakeholders in the early phases of the policy cycle. The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, led by the prime minister, is a key platform for this, including representatives from government, businesses, NGOs, academia and civil society. This early and continuous engagement ensures that diverse perspectives are integrated from the outset. Finland also excels in raising public awareness about sustainability through educational initiatives and public campaigns. The Finnish Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development offers a framework for organisations and individuals to contribute to sustainability, facilitated by extensive communication efforts to ensure widespread participation and understanding.

Co-creation and partnership in policy development in Sweden

Sweden's approach to sustainable development is characterised by co-creation and strong partnerships between the government, civil society and the private sector. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) facilitate numerous initiatives where stakeholders actively participate in shaping and implementing sustainability policies. This collaborative approach extends to international partnerships, emphasising global responsibility. Sweden also places a strong emphasis on education and capacity building as central to its sustainability strategy. Initiatives like the Swedish Institute's leadership programmes on sustainability and the extensive resources available through government platforms ensure stakeholders are well-informed and equipped to contribute to sustainability goals.

Fostering stakeholder engagement and public participation in Germany

Germany's National Sustainable Development Strategy involves stakeholders from its inception through regular progress reviews. This includes structured dialogues, public consultations, and incorporating feedback into policy revisions, ensuring that policies reflect a wide range of perspectives. Germany has also implemented various initiatives to educate the public and raise awareness about the importance of sustainable development. This includes partnerships with educational institutions, NGOs and the media to disseminate information and engage the public in sustainability initiatives.

Sources: Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (2025^[28]) *Frontpage*, <https://kestavakehtys.fi/en/frontpage>; Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (n.d.^[29]), *Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development*, <https://kestavakehtys.fi/en/commitment2050>; SIDA (n.d.^[30]), *The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency*, <https://www.sida.se/en>; Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (n.d.^[31]), *Towards a better environment*, <https://www.naturvardsverket.se/en/>; Swedish Institute (n.d.^[32]), *SI Leadership Programmes*, <https://si.se/en/apply/si-leadership-programmes/>; Government of Sweden (2021^[33]), *Voluntary National Review 2021 Sweden: Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, <https://www.government.se/globalassets/government/dokument/regeringskansliet/agenda-2030-och-de-globala-malen-for-hallbar-utveckling/voluntary-national-review-vnr/voluntary-national-review-2021-sweden-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-2030-agenda-web.pdf>; Federal Government of Germany (2021^[34]), *German Sustainable Development Strategy Update 2021*, <https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/974430/1940716/8943e3f421a7a0d8bcd06a1cc66e92d0/2021-07-26-gsds-en-data.pdf?download=1>.

Implementation

The effective implementation of policies requires coherence both between sectors and between levels of government.

Specifically, PCSD **Principle 4** calls for ensuring whole-of-government co-ordination to identify and mitigate divergences between sectoral priorities and policies, including external and domestic policies, and

promote mutually supporting actions across sectors and institutions (e.g. horizontal coherence). To this end, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) use high-level co-ordinating mechanisms, whether located within the centre of government or a lead line ministry, as appropriate, to promote PCSD and the integration of sustainable development across central agencies, line ministries and other public institutions
- b) establish clear mandates, capacities and mobilise adequate resources, as appropriate, for PCSD to identify policy divergences and conflicts related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
- c) encourage formal governance arrangements and informal working methods that support effective communication between ministries and departments and between ministries and other public sector bodies under their aegis
- d) build capacity in public administrations for PCSD and align training strategies and programmes for public actors with the principles and integrated nature of the SDGs.

Principle 5 calls for engaging appropriately sub-national levels of government in areas where they have a role in policy co-ordination to promote co-ordinated actions and enhance coherence across levels of government for sustainable development (e.g. vertical coherence). To this end, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) promote PCSD at different levels of government and work with key stakeholders to develop tools that support local and regional governments in applying PCSD in their legal frameworks, plans and actions for localising the SDGs
- b) promote synergies among national, regional and local policies to better align with and contribute to relevant economic, social and environmental goals, including international commitments and international development co-operation objectives, within the scope of their responsibilities and in a balanced manner.

Strengths

Portugal has a structure for high-level whole-of-government co-ordination in place

The Decree-Law No. 96/2024 (Government of Portugal, 2024^[35]) dissolves the Secretariat-General of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (SGPCM) through a merger, transferring its responsibilities and competencies to various government services and entities while regulating the reassignment of its workers. It also reallocates specific responsibilities related to cultural strategy, planning and incentives for social communication to the Secretariat-General of the Government (SG-Gov) and addresses the reorganisation of several other entities, such as the Directorate-General for Books, Archives, and Libraries (DGLAB), and the Strategy, Planning, and Cultural Evaluation Office (GEPAC). Additionally, it modifies the legal frameworks for several organisational structures, ensuring an efficient integration of transferred functions and personnel.

The Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[1]) delegates the responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring the SDGs to the member of the government responsible for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This approach places the co-ordination at a high level within the government structure, ensuring that sustainable development is a central concern across all policy areas.

In line with the updated Decree-Law No. 96/2024, PLANAPP will succeed SGPCM in key areas, including supporting sectoral decision-making through strategic and prospective exercises and overseeing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The decree also outlines the transfer of responsibilities to various integrator services and entities, with some undergoing restructuring, and establishes criteria for selecting personnel to fulfil these roles within PLANAPP.

The resolution also promotes formal governance arrangements through the creation of a high-level committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SDGs. This committee includes representatives from various levels of government and sectors, facilitating formal communication across different parts of the public sector.

PLANAPP is a key actor for ensuring SDG co-ordination and driving PCSD

As previously mentioned, under Decree-Law No. 96/2024, Portugal has restructured its centre-of-government co-ordination mechanisms and PLANAPP now assumes greater responsibilities. PLANAPP is tasked with supporting sectoral decision-making by producing strategic and prospective analysis, ensuring informed decisions and leading the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This shift reflects a more integrated and co-ordinated approach to policy coherence, with various entities, such as SG-Gov, the Public Administration Shared Services Entity (ESPAP), and the State Legal Center (CEJURE), involved in the process. Additionally, personnel selection for PLANAPP will focus on expertise in innovation, strategy, and monitoring, as well as on promoting alignment with the SDGs across government operations. The restructuring process emphasises the need for greater coherence and technical support for sustainable development within government policies.

In addition, PLANAPP's competencies, according to the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[11]), include co-ordinating the promotion of societal engagement with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, ensuring active participation across all levels of government and society. It is responsible for developing a National Sustainable Development Roadmap for 2030, aligning national strategic instruments with the SDGs and other European commitments. PLANAPP also identifies, maps and monitors public policy plans that contribute to the SDGs, ensuring global coherence. Additionally, PLANAPP co-ordinates the reporting activities on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, supports the preparation of international progress reports, and facilitates collaboration among public, private and civil society sectors to evaluate the impact of SDG implementation. Furthermore, PLANAPP, in co-ordination with SGPCM, defines and implements a common communication strategy for the SDGs.

PLANAPP is also identified as the analytical backbone for advancing policy coherence. However, it faces challenges, such as the lack of data and evidence, for example, on transboundary impacts of policies and insufficient technical capacity. In response, PLANAPP has developed a comprehensive training programme for public administration professionals with INA (INA, 2024^[7]), which aims to enhance the capabilities needed to effectively integrate sustainable development into policymaking. The training programme includes a series of modules, such as "Introduction to Public Policies", "Prospective", "Planning", "Design and Programming", "Monitoring", and "Evaluation". These modules, which incorporate practical case studies, webinars, workshops and talks, focus on strengthening the public administration's ability to design more robust and adaptable policies. PLANAPP's efforts to align policy instruments with the SDGs, despite most instruments not explicitly referencing them, highlight the ongoing process of integrating sustainable development into policymaking.

PLANAPP's engagement in developing tools and frameworks for policy coherence analysis and its responsibility for the REPLAN network also underscores its role in enhancing inter-ministerial co-ordination and knowledge sharing. This network, comprising planning and foresight teams from multiple entities, facilitates the sharing of work and the co-ordination of efforts related to the 2030 Agenda and PCSD. INA ensures that this collective knowledge is transferred to capacity building programmes for all public officials, including through the Sustainability Pathway with different thematic modules under the SDGs competence framework.

For co-ordinating the external dimension of sustainable development, the Camões Institute, linked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is pivotal in promoting the Portuguese language and culture globally and in implementing international co-operation projects.

Capacity building within public administrations supports more coherent implementation

Portugal has a number of initiatives aimed at building capacity within public administrations for integrating the SDGs into policymaking and implementation processes. For instance, the development and dissemination of guidelines and tools, such as the recent Public Policy Training Programme (INA, 2024^[36]) organised by INA and PLANAPP, to assist public sector actors in aligning their activities with the SDGs, reflect Portugal's commitment to enhancing capacity for PCSD.

The aforementioned PICSAP, promoted by the INA, plays a significant role in building civil service capacity. This programme provides specialised training to develop the necessary skills for promoting sustainability, incorporating principles related to the SDGs into training programmes. By focusing on topics such as "Concepts and Principles of Sustainable Development Applied to Public Administration", "Smart Cities and Sustainability", "Agenda 2030 – From Strategy to Action: Integrating SDGs with Management Instruments", and "Leadership for Sustainability", the programme covers various strategic areas, from fundamental concepts to practical implementation strategies.

PICSAP actively promotes awareness of the SDGs, encouraging participants to adopt administrative practices aligned with the sustainability agenda. This approach strengthens individual skills and contributes to creating a more sustainable organisational culture within public administration. Interviews with innovators and sustainability experts, as well as innovation workshops, complement PICSAP, providing a holistic approach to capacity building and SDG integration.

PICSAP also organises webinars on cross-cutting issues and informal meetings like CaféINA to discuss sustainability topics. These play an important role in integrating the SDGs into INA's activities, fostering continuous dialogue and idea exchange among INA members and guests.

A number of laws, strategies and programmes foster vertical coherence

Portugal has a two-tier local and regional system. There are two autonomous regions: the Azores and Madeira. These archipelagos in the Atlantic Ocean have a significant degree of autonomy, with their own legislative assemblies and governments capable of creating laws on diverse matters. In addition, mainland Portugal is divided into 308 municipalities (*concelhos*), which are the basic units of local government. The municipalities have some administrative power but less autonomy than the Azores and Madeira.

Portugal's local and regional structure is defined by several laws, including the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, which establishes the basic principles of the local and regional system; the Statutes of the Autonomous Regions, which define the specific powers and responsibilities of each autonomous region; the Law on the Finances of the Autonomous Regions, which stipulates the fiscal and budgetary rules of these regions; and the Law on the Organisation of Local Authorities, which defines the structure and powers of municipalities.

Several key strategies and initiatives support local and regional governments in aligning their legal frameworks, plans, and actions with the SDGs. These include the development of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) by six municipalities (Mafra, Matosinhos, Cascais, Porto, Braga and Torres Vedras), the ODSlocal Platform (ODSlocal, 2022^[37]), which involves several partners, including CNADS, the Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon (OBSERVA), Universidade Nova de Lisboa (MARE), and 2adapt, for monitoring and mobilisation, ANMP's "Municipal Section for the SDGs", and initiatives to empower local authorities and communities in decision-making processes. This is further outlined in Portugal's VNR 2023 (Box 3.5).

The ODSlocal Platform, based on a broad and intense mobilisation of municipal decision-makers, technical staff, local agents and citizens around the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, aims to create a national ODSlocal movement that municipalities wish to join, mobilising other public actors and civil society in an exponential and contagious way. The platform supports a dynamic online portal that makes it possible to visualise and

monitor each municipality's contributions and progress towards the SDGs, with strict quality control of the information, extensive involvement of actors, and capacity building, along with a strong communication strategy.

Box 3.5. Strategies and programmes fostering vertical coherence in Portugal

Regional level

- **Regional operational programmes:** These programmes, part of the broader EU Cohesion Policy framework, are tailored to specific regional needs and explicitly reference the SDGs. They aim to improve regional competitiveness and increase employment while ensuring environmental sustainability and social inclusion.
- **Azores' and Madeira's sustainability plans:** Both autonomous regions have developed comprehensive strategies to become sustainable tourism destinations certified by EarthCheck. These plans include specific targets related to environmental sustainability, social inclusion and economic growth, demonstrating an integrated approach to regional development and sustainability.

Local level

- **Local development strategies:** Various municipalities have incorporated SDG targets into their local development plans. For example, Lisbon has developed initiatives focused on urban sustainability, including green infrastructure projects and sustainable mobility plans to reduce carbon emissions and improve quality of life.
- **Participatory budgeting:** Some local governments in Portugal have adopted participatory budgeting processes that allow citizens to decide on public spending projects directly. This engages local communities in decision-making processes and ensures that projects reflect sustainable development priorities, such as education, environmental protection and community health.

National to regional synergy

- **Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP):** The RRP (Government of Portugal, 2021^[38]) has been aligned with regional development strategies to ensure that investments and reforms supported by this plan address both national and regional priorities. For instance, investments in digital infrastructure and healthcare aim to benefit both the centralised national systems and regional health services, ensuring improvements in public services across multiple regions.
- **National Reform Programme (PNR):** The PNR (PlanAPP, n.d.^[39]) was a national strategy and planning document that, until 2024, was part of the European Union's economic and social governance process within the European Semester Cycle, until being replaced by the POENMP. This programme ensured national policies support regional growth and sustainability, addressing specific regional challenges and opportunities. For example, the PNR 2023 describes Portuguese public policies that respond to the country's main economic and social challenges, framed by the Major Options 2022-2026 and in line with the proposal for 2023-26.
- **National Medium-Term Budgetary-Structural Plan (POENMP):** In 2024, the POENMP (PlanAPP, n.d.^[39]) replaced the PNR and the Stability Programme (PE). The POENMP sets out budgetary commitments, national reform, and investment priorities for a four-year period, addressing the specific country recommendations directed at Portugal and aligning them with the common EU priorities. It is part of the European Union's economic governance process, known as the European Semester Cycle. The first POENMP for 2024-28 is designed and

presented by the Government of Portugal to the European Commission. Subsequently, the POENMP will be monitored by the Annual Progress Report (RAP) for the next four years until a new plan is developed in 2028. The RAP will be submitted to the European Commission by 30 April each year, following the institutional calendar of the European Semester, ensuring the alignment of public policies across Member States with EU guidelines and policies.

Regional-to-local synergy

- **Azores' Sustainability Plan:** This plan involves local stakeholders in developing and implementing sustainability projects, such as renewable energy installations and waste management systems. The Azores ensure that local actions contribute to broader environmental and social targets by aligning these projects with regional and national sustainability goals.
- **Madeira's Smart Island Strategy:** This strategy includes initiatives for smart mobility, energy efficiency, and digital transformation, which have been developed in co-operation with local municipalities and private stakeholders. It exemplifies how regional strategies can drive local development while remaining aligned with national objectives for sustainable and smart development.

Cross-level co-ordination

- **Inter-municipal communities (CIMs):** These entities, which consist of groups of municipalities, facilitate co-ordinated regional development initiatives. They serve as a platform for aligning local development plans with regional and national strategies, ensuring that local initiatives, such as tourism development, infrastructure projects, and environmental conservation efforts, are synchronised with larger-scale goals.
- **Local agendas for sustainability:** Several municipalities have developed local sustainability agendas that directly reference and incorporate objectives from the national 2030 Strategy and the European Green Deal. These agendas co-ordinate local actions, such as enhancing public transport, increasing green spaces, and improving waste recycling within the broader national and European context.

Source: Government of Portugal (2023^[40]), *2023 Voluntary National Review Portugal*, https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/Portugal_VNR_Report.pdf.

Mechanisms to engage regions, cities and municipalities on national sustainable development strategies and plans exist

Portugal has established several mechanisms to engage regions, cities and municipalities in formulating and implementing national sustainable development strategies and plans. These mechanisms are designed to enhance the integration and effectiveness of regional development initiatives in line with national sustainability goals.

For example, the Conselho de Concertação Territorial (CCT) serves as a high-level political platform for consultation and co-ordination between the government and various regional and sub-regional entities. It aims to facilitate the alignment of national and local development strategies and to ensure that local perspectives are integrated into national planning processes. The CCT is instrumental in debating issues with territorial dimensions and in analysing matters requiring co-ordination between different levels of territorial administration.

The Comissões de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional (CCDRs), in turn, have been restructured and converted into public institutes with special regimes tasked with co-ordinating regional development

and integrating public policies across regions. The Regional Contract Programme (Government of Portugal, 2024^[27]) is a significant mechanism in this regard, establishing objectives, targets, and indicators – many of which are directly related to sustainable development. These commissions play a crucial role in linking national policy objectives with regional implementation, ensuring that local needs and conditions are considered in national planning frameworks. The CCDRs are responsible for defining and executing regional development strategies, integrating territorially essential public policies, and managing cohesion policy within regional programming frameworks.

These mechanisms reflect a structured approach to ensuring that regional, city and municipal governments are actively involved in shaping and implementing sustainable development policies. They highlight Portugal's commitment to decentralised governance and the integration of local and regional dimensions into broader national development agendas.

Gaps

Communication and capacity building for effective PCSD implementation could be strengthened further

While formal and informal mechanisms exist to promote horizontal co-ordination and coherence, there is an opportunity to establish more structured, consistent and efficient communication channels between ministries and other public sector bodies. Strengthening these channels would help prevent misalignments and enhance the efficiency of sustainable development policy implementation, maximising opportunities for synergy and collaborative problem solving across sectors.

Capacity building within public administration for PCSD is essential, yet it could be further strengthened. Challenges remain in embedding strategic foresight into planning processes and advancing results-based monitoring and evaluation. Expanding training and skill development in these areas would better equip governmental agencies to implement PCSD effectively.

Regional and local initiatives, capacities and resources differ across the country

Sub-national engagement indicates discrepancies in regional and local capacity, with varying levels of involvement across different regions of Portugal, as evidenced by the Municipal Sustainability Index (ISM) (CESOP Local, n.d.^[41]).

While regional plans in areas like the Azores and Madeira demonstrate strong alignment with sustainability goals, other regions may benefit from more comprehensive strategies that integrate national SDG priorities, resulting in varied implementation of the 2030 Agenda across the country. For instance, out of 308 municipalities, only 83 are members of the Municipalities Section for Sustainable Development Goals, established by the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (ANMP) (ANMP, 2023^[42]).

Portugal's regions and municipalities also display significant differences in resources and capabilities for implementing and monitoring SDG-aligned policies. Smaller or less economically robust municipalities often face challenges executing complex sustainability projects requiring advanced technical skills and substantial financial investment. These disparities in funding for sustainability initiatives contribute to uneven development and can hinder the efficient implementation of SDG-related policies, particularly in less developed areas where investment in infrastructure and services is crucial.

Additionally, establishing a consistent system for data collection and monitoring across all levels of government remains challenging. This inconsistency complicates accurate progress measurement and limits the ability to adapt policies effectively across different regions and municipalities.

The participation of local communities in policy-making processes can be strengthened

Engagement in policymaking at the local level remains limited. Although participatory budgeting and other inclusive practices are in place, there is an opportunity to adopt more systemic and structured approaches to actively involve citizens and local communities in the policy-making process, particularly for sustainability initiatives.

Additionally, public awareness and understanding of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda at the local level could be strengthened. Increasing community engagement and fostering grassroots initiatives aligned with national goals would further support sustainable development efforts and enhance the collective impact of local contributions.

Possible ways ahead

With regard to horizontal coherence:

- Portugal could **establish a dedicated co-ordination mechanism for PCSD**, with clear mandates and resource allocation.

Moreover, the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 5/2023 (Government of Portugal, 2023^[1]) emphasises co-ordination roles but does not explicitly address resource allocation for these activities, which could be a key factor in fully achieving PCSD objectives. To this end, Portugal could:

- **Complement PLANAPP's new and strengthened role with an explicit PCSD mandate and dedicated resources** to further enhance its capacity to ensure comprehensive alignment of policies with sustainable development objectives and foster stronger accountability and co-ordination across government sectors. Currently, PLANAPP's role in policy coherence is integrated within its wider responsibilities, and it might not have the exclusive authority or resources needed to systematically resolve intersectoral conflicts or address the transboundary impacts of national policies.
- **Define the roles and responsibilities of each department or agency in promoting PCSD and streamline processes**, address overlaps and fill gaps if/where these exist to enhance efficiency and coherence.
- **Initiate regular meetings between relevant departments**, using, for example, existing networks such as REPLAN, to identify synergies and trade-offs and to discuss progress, challenges and opportunities for collaborating on PCSD and ensuring alignment with the 2030 Agenda.
- **Create a resource allocation plan specifically earmarked for PCSD initiatives**, ensuring that resources are directed where they are most needed. Mobilising both financial and human resources, including securing funding and providing training, will enhance the capacity of staff involved in PCSD efforts.
- **Complement existing training strategies and programmes with targeted modules on PCSD that align with the SDGs' principles and integrated nature**. These modules could be conducted in workshops, online courses and mentoring programmes.

Box 3.6. Good practices: Enhancing horizontal coherence in Denmark and Sweden

High-level co-ordination and clear mandates for PCSD in Denmark

Denmark has established a high-level co-ordinating mechanism for sustainable development, led by the Danish Council for Sustainable Development. This council advises the government and co-ordinates across various ministries to ensure that sustainability is integrated into all areas of policymaking.

In addition, clear mandates and resources for PCSD were identified thanks to the establishment of the Danish 2030 Panel, which was established in 2018 and tasked with integrating the SDGs into Danish society and economy. The panel works closely with businesses, organisations and the public sector to promote sustainable practices that align with the SDGs.

Comprehensive governance arrangements for SDG integration in Sweden

Sweden has adopted comprehensive governance arrangements to ensure that the 2030 Agenda is implemented across all levels of government. The Swedish Delegation for the 2030 Agenda, composed of representatives from various sectors, plays a critical role in this by fostering dialogue and collaboration across government entities, civil society and the private sector.

In addition, Sweden has invested heavily in capacity building within its public administration for SDG integration. The government offers extensive training programmes and has developed a guide for integrating the SDGs into municipal and regional planning and operations, thereby strengthening the capacity of local governments to contribute to national SDG efforts.

Sources: Government of Denmark (2021^[43]), *Voluntary National Review 2021 Denmark*, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279532021_VNR_Report_Denmark.pdf; Government of Sweden (2021^[33]), *Voluntary National Review 2021 Sweden: Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, <https://www.government.se/globalassets/government/dokument/regeringskansliet/agenda-2030-och-de-globala-malen-for-hallbar-utveckling/voluntary-national-review-vnr/voluntary-national-review-2021-sweden-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-2030-agenda-web.pdf>.

With regard to local-level and vertical coherence (Box 3.7 provides inspiration from other countries):

- **Enhance sub-national engagement through strengthened co-ordination mechanisms, integrated planning and the provision of tools and resources.** Build on existing initiatives such as the Section of Municipalities for the SDGs of the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities, the LocalSDG - Municipal Platform on Sustainable Development Goals (odslocal.pt), and the Municipal Sustainability Index (ISM) (CESOP Local, n.d.^[41]) to ensure a more balanced level of engagement across all regions.
- **Create and disseminate practical tools, guidelines and resources to support local and regional governments in applying PCSD principles.** This could involve training programmes, best practice guides and technical support for localising the SDGs.
- **Implement formalised structures for regular dialogue and co-ordination between national, regional and local governments.** This could include intergovernmental committees or working groups focused on sustainable development and PCSD.
- **Promote structures for regular dialogue and integrated planning processes that involve all levels of government from the outset.** This will also require the allocation of financial resources to support the implementation and viability of regional sustainable development projects.

- **Work towards better alignment of national, regional and local policies with economic, social and environmental goals.** This could be achieved by adopting a holistic view of policy impacts and seeking to balance different objectives within and across policy areas, as well as establishing clear targets and indicators aligned with the SDGs for regional development projects.
- **Enhance the engagement of all relevant stakeholders in the policy-making process, including at the regional and local levels.** This includes government entities, civil society, the private sector, and local communities. By fostering a more inclusive approach, policies are more likely to be effective, equitable and sustainable.
- **Provide guidance and support to integrate the SDGs into regional development initiatives, ensuring that regional performance data can be effectively generated and seamlessly integrated into national sustainable development strategies.** This could include the development of a standardised national template for local and regional sustainable development performance data generation, ensuring consistency and comparability across regions.

Participants in the 20 May workshop stressed the importance of these points related to both horizontal and vertical coordination. In particular, they pointed to the need to strengthen SDG localisation capacity through more robust vertical coordination efforts and suggested, for example, that PLANAPP engages more formally and deliberately with the CCDRs. To this end, PLANAPPs enabling legislation and mandate could be assessed with a view to ensure that it can effectively drive PCSD at both the national and local levels.

Box 3.7. Good practices: Enhancing vertical coherence

Integrating the SDGs at all levels of government in Sweden

Sweden has established formal co-ordination mechanisms that facilitate dialogue and collaboration across national, regional and local governments. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions plays a critical role in this, supporting municipalities and regions in integrating the SDGs into their strategic planning and operations. Moreover, Sweden encourages integrated planning processes through its National Strategy for Sustainable Development and the VLR process, where municipalities and regions assess their SDG progress. This approach ensures coherence between national priorities and local action.

Supporting local and regional governments in SDG implementation in Canada

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) provides local governments with tools, resources and funding to support their sustainable development initiatives. The FCM's initiatives, such as the Green Municipal Fund, offer municipalities financial support and technical assistance for projects that advance the SDGs. Canada promotes synergies between different levels of government through its Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, which is aligned with the SDGs. The strategy encourages collaboration across federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments, ensuring that efforts are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Enhancing sub-national engagement in sustainable development in Germany

Germany's National Sustainable Development Strategy outlines the roles of different government levels in achieving the SDGs. The strategy emphasises the importance of co-ordination between the federal government, *Länder* (states) and municipalities, supported by the German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE), which advises on policy coherence and engagement strategies. Germany also supports integrated planning by encouraging *Länder* and municipalities to develop their own sustainability strategies that align with national goals. The German government also facilitates peer

learning and the exchange of best practices among sub-national entities through workshops and conferences.

Fostering local action and participation for SDGs in Finland

Finland has taken significant steps to involve local and regional governments in sustainable development through the VLRs, inspired by the VNRs at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum. Cities like Helsinki have led the way in conducting VLRs, which serve as a comprehensive review of SDG progress at the local level, fostering greater transparency, accountability and stakeholder participation. In addition, the Finnish government supports local and regional governments with guidelines, training and digital platforms dedicated to SDG implementation, facilitating the sharing of resources and best practices across different government levels.

Sources: Government of Sweden (2017^[44]), *Sweden and the 2030 Agenda: Report to the UN High-Level Political Forum 2017 on Sustainable Development*, <https://www.government.se/contentassets/400a118a14b94750a61e42b620a9def9/sweden-and-the-2030-agenda-report-to-the-un-high-level-political-forum-2017-on-sustainable-development.pdf>; Government of Sweden (2021^[33]), *Voluntary National Review 2021 Sweden: Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, <https://www.government.se/globalassets/government/dokument/regeringskansliet/agenda-2030-och-de-globala-malen-for-hallbar-utveckling/voluntary-national-review-vnr/voluntary-national-review-2021-sweden-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-2030-agenda-web.pdf>; FCM (2024^[45]), *Federation of Canadian Municipalities*, <https://fcm.ca/en>; Government of Canada (2024^[46]), *2022 to 2026 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*, <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/federal-sustainable-development-strategy.html>; Federal Government of Germany (2022^[47]), *Germany's Sustainable Development Strategy*, <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/issues/sustainability/germany-s-sustainable-development-strategy-354566>; Federal Government of Germany (2021^[34]), *German Sustainable Development Strategy Update 2021*, <https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/974430/1940716/8943e3f421a7a0d8bcd06a1cc66e92d0/2021-07-26-gsds-en-data.pdf?download=1>; Government of Finland (2020^[8]), *Voluntary National Review 2020 Finland: Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26261VNR_Report_Finland_2020.pdf.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

This section analyses Portugal's mechanisms to address policy and financial impacts as per Principle 7 of the PCSD Recommendation and its monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems as per Principle 8.

Specifically, **Principle 7** calls for analysing and assessing policy and financing impact to inform decision-making, increase positive impacts and avoid potential negative impacts on the sustainable development prospects of other countries, particularly developing countries. To this end, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) introduce, where possible, regular assessments to identify and assess potential positive and negative impacts on sustainable development, building on any existing tools such as regulatory, environmental, gender and social impact and strategic assessments
- b) adopt *ex ante* and *ex post* impact assessment practices that take into account transboundary impacts, paying particular attention to the economic, social, gender and environmental impacts on developing countries as well as the promotion and protection of human rights.

Principle 8 calls for strengthening monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems to collect qualitative and quantitative evidence on the impact of policies and financing and reporting progress on PCSD. To this end, adherents should, as appropriate:

- a) monitor and report back on policy and financing impacts, drawing on national, regional and local sources, where available, and publish regular reports about progress on PCSD, outlining progress made on addressing impacts on sustainable development at home and abroad
- b) identify existing reliable and timely data, indicators and information that can help better capture economic, social and environmental externalities imposed beyond national borders (transboundary impacts); and understand the country's contribution towards global efforts for implementing Agenda 2030

- c) report regularly on PCSD and, where needed, build capacity and skills to strengthen data collection, management, storage, and reporting processes
- d) embed a policy coherence dimension in evaluation systems to inform decision-making regarding the linkages and potential trade-offs between sectoral policies, as well as transboundary impacts.

Strengths

Structures for monitoring and reporting on SDG progress exist

In Portugal, the responsibility for monitoring and reporting on sustainable development and strengthening data collection, management, storage, and reporting processes lies with several key entities, notably the High-Level Monitoring Committee (HLMC), which oversees the overall implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Portugal. This committee includes representatives from the presidency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, regional governments and local authorities. Statistics Portugal (INE), in turn, plays a central role in the statistical monitoring and reporting on SDG progress, while INA ensures the dissemination of knowledge within the public administration.

Portugal reports on global SDG indicator 17.14.1 Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance PCSD

The majority of UN member states have not yet reported on global SDG indicator 17.14.1 *Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development*. Portugal's reporting on this indicator in 2022 is thus encouraging and reflects a tangible commitment to PCSD. According to data submitted to UNEP in 2022, Portugal scored 42.5% on the composite scale, placing it above many non-reporting countries, but below the benchmark of full institutional maturity. This score was based on a self-assessment completed by the Portuguese Ministry of Finance.

Although the UNEP methodology foresees biennial reporting starting in 2020, Portugal has only reported once - missing the expected submissions in 2020 and 2024. As a result, the 2022 data may no longer accurately reflect the current institutional landscape, including potential improvements or innovations introduced since 2022.

Portugal employs a RIAs in the legislative process

PLANAPP, established by Decree-Law No. 21/2021, plays an important role in supporting the government in RIA, including the technical analysis of impact studies conducted by the European Commission and the preparation of studies and reports for evaluating legislative and regulatory acts. This work is relevant in estimating the benefits and burdens on citizens, businesses and public services, thus significantly contributing to the formulation and monitoring of public policies. Within this framework, the Multidisciplinary Team for Evaluation and Impact Analysis (EMAAI; previously named Multidisciplinary Team for Policy and Legislative Impact Assessment, EMAPIL) is responsible for promoting the evaluation of public policies and planning instruments, focusing on their effects and results, and ensuring the efficient use of resources. EMAAI's duties encompass the preparation of reports to estimate the preliminary impact of legislative acts, the analysis of RIAs from the European Commission, capacity building in policy evaluation, collaboration with relevant entities, and support in identifying and quantifying economic, social and environmental impacts. Additionally, EMAA assists in analysing and validating direct costs arising from legislative proposals and other normative acts.

Portugal has integrated RIAs into its legislative process to evaluate new laws and regulations' potential economic, social and environmental impacts. This tool is crucial for ensuring that new policies contribute positively to the SDGs. For example, the VNR mentions the use of RIA in the context of developing

legislation, which is used to assess the impacts of legislative proposals on various sectors and stakeholders.

Portugal has also developed national strategies on key issues such as climate change, with specific actions aimed at mitigation and adaptation. These strategies often involve assessments to understand their potential impacts on sustainable development, ensuring that efforts contribute positively to both national and global sustainability goals.

There is a commitment to global frameworks and implicit consideration of transboundary impacts

While Portugal does not explicitly detail practices regarding RIA and *ex post* evaluation impact assessments focusing on transboundary impacts, there is a commitment to global frameworks, and the government's active role in international co-operation suggests a broader consideration of the impacts of its policies beyond its borders. The focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as engagement in international environmental agreements, indicates an awareness of the global nature of many sustainability challenges.

The Council of Ministers Resolution No. 121/2022 of 9 December (Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy, PDCS 2030), as the reference framework for the implementation of public policy on international development co-operation, outlines an ambitious and geopolitical vision to respond to the main challenges at international level and for the sustainable development of partner countries, providing national and international coherence to these efforts and reinforcing political commitment in this matter.

In this line, Portugal demonstrates its commitment to global frameworks and the implicit consideration of transboundary impacts through its Portuguese Co-operation Strategy 2030 (ECP 2030). This guiding instrument for international development co-operation aligns with the principles of the 2030 Agenda, emphasising poverty eradication, reducing inequalities, promoting sustainable, inclusive growth and leaving no one behind. Its first strategic objective, "Affirming the centrality of Portuguese co-operation", highlights the importance of strengthening the relevance and visibility of co-operation within public policies. Specific Objective 1.1 further underlines the goal of integrating co-operation into public policies, ensuring coherence, and enhancing the impact and recognition of Portugal's development initiatives at both national and international levels.

PDCS 2030 also responds to global development challenges and international co-operation dynamics in this context, with Portuguese development co-operation contributing to three key political commitments at the international level: 1) the 2030 Agenda; 2) the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; and 3) the Paris Agreement.

Lastly, sectoral priorities are organised according to the "5 Ps" of the 2030 Agenda and substantiate the contribution of each priority to the SDGs. Human development is the central thematic focus of the PDCS 2030, therefore guiding all actions to be carried out in the priority sectors.

Statistical infrastructure and innovative data collection methods facilitate SDG monitoring

Portugal's statistical system, particularly through INE, plays a crucial role in collecting, managing and disseminating data relevant to the SDGs. This contributes to an enhanced understanding of economic, social and environmental externalities, both domestically and internationally. Portugal's investment in statistical infrastructure and the adoption of innovative data collection methods, such as satellite accounts for the environment, are further strengths.

Robust data collection and management infrastructure underpin Portugal's approach to sustainable development reporting. The establishment of dedicated platforms and frameworks for sustainable

development reporting – with the increase of SDG monitoring platforms – reflects a commitment to regular reporting.

In this regard, the ODSlocal Platform, highlighted in the VNR 2023, which involves several partners, including CNADS, OBSERVA, MARE, and 2adapt, aims to engage municipalities, local stakeholders and citizens with the SDGs. It makes it possible to visualise and monitor projects and progress related to the 2030 Agenda for each council. ODSlocal was created with private funding and under the patronage of the Portuguese president. The involvement of multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, academia and civil society, in developing and reviewing sustainability reports ensures a comprehensive and inclusive reporting process.

Dedicated platforms support reporting on sustainable development

Portugal's approach to reporting on sustainable development is underpinned by its robust data collection and management infrastructure. The establishment of dedicated platforms and frameworks for sustainable development reporting, such as the SDG monitoring platform, reflects the country's commitment to regular reporting. In this regard, the ODSlocal Platform aims to engage municipalities, local stakeholders and citizens with the SDGs (Box 3.8).

Box 3.8. The establishment of the SDGs Observatory in Portuguese companies

The SDGs Observatory aims to monitor and report on the implementation of the SDGs within Portuguese companies, integrating data and indicators across various sectors. This initiative aims to understand, monitor and enhance the adoption of the SDGs by Portuguese businesses, thereby boosting their capacity, efficiency and potential contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

The Observatory is a research project by the Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics, launched in September 2021, with the support and funding of BPI and the "la Caixa" Foundation. It monitors a group of 61 large companies and over 100 small and medium-sized enterprises in Portugal. The project involves collaboration with national and international entities, including civil society organisations, academia and private-sector representatives. It serves as a platform for regular consultations and data collection, aiming to promote a clear understanding of corporate engagement with the SDGs, showcase best practices in SDG implementation, and foster a business community that is knowledgeable and proactive in contributing to Portugal's sustainable development agenda.

Source: Government of Portugal (2023^[40]), 2023 Voluntary National Review Portugal, https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/Portugal_VNR_Report.pdf.

Gaps

There is a need for comprehensive institutional frameworks that mandate and standardise RIA across sectors

Inconsistencies exist in the application of impact assessments across different sectors. While EIAs are regularly conducted for environmental policies, other types of assessments, such as social and gender impact assessments, may not be applied as systematically. This variability may result from a lack of comprehensive institutional frameworks that mandate and standardise these assessments across all government actions, potentially leading to uneven assessment of policy impacts on sustainable development.

A positive step in the right direction is the introduction of RIA 2, which includes an SIA module. This module evaluates social impacts in key areas such as gender, poverty, disability, and the risks of fraud, corruption, and related offences (PlanAPP, n.d.^[48]). While RIA 2 represents an important advancement towards a more structured and inclusive impact assessment framework, it is still a relatively new initiative, and its full implementation and effectiveness in practice have yet to be tested. Ensuring its consistent application across policies will be crucial for achieving its intended benefits.

Furthermore, there is an opportunity to enhance the integration and co-ordination among various types of impact assessments. Assessments such as RIAs, EIAs and GIAs are often carried out independently, without a unified framework to account for their interdependencies. Addressing this gap through more integrated planning and assessment tools would support a holistic approach to evaluating policy impacts and strengthen institutional mechanisms for sustainable development.

Portugal could take steps to assess transboundary impacts more systematically

There are currently no dedicated mechanisms to assess the transboundary impacts of policies, particularly those with implications for developing countries. This is relevant to areas such as trade, environmental protection, and foreign aid and suggests an institutional gap in the systematic incorporation of global responsibilities into national policy assessments. Developing guidelines that explicitly mandate transboundary impact considerations could help address this need.

Additionally, there is an opportunity to integrate human rights considerations more systematically into both RIA and *ex post* evaluation. While human rights are referenced in specific policy areas, a consistent approach to embedding human rights into all impact assessments is not yet fully realised. This highlights a broader institutional opportunity to ensure that human rights are foundational across policy evaluations, potentially through a more integrated approach within existing legal and policy frameworks.

The 2023 VNR also notes that although RIAs are increasingly utilised, *ex post* evaluations – which are essential for assessing actual policy impacts and making adjustments – are not yet conducted on a systematic basis. Establishing institutional mechanisms that mandate and support regular *ex post* evaluations would strengthen the ability to verify that policies achieve their intended sustainable development outcomes and to make data-driven improvements based on these evaluations.

Capacities for data collection, monitoring and reporting on sustainable development can be strengthened and complemented by efforts focused on PCSD

Since 2018, INE has published annual statistical reports on the SDGs, providing a valuable overview of progress and highlighting areas that require further attention. These reports play a key role in assessing the impact of policies and financing on sustainable development, supporting informed decision-making. They also underscore the need for SDG indicators better tailored to Portugal's national context.

While collaboration with entities like INE for data and statistics is positive, a more integrated system would enhance monitoring. Currently, no comprehensive framework captures both domestic and international impacts, and SDG indicators often do not fully align with national needs. Additionally, there are capacity and skills gaps in data management and reporting, particularly in relation to PCSD. Existing evaluation systems lack a policy coherence dimension, which is critical for understanding sectoral linkages and potential trade-offs, suggesting the need for a more integrated evaluation approach.

Portugal could benefit from developing a more comprehensive monitoring and reporting framework that includes regular assessments of the domestic and transboundary impacts of policies and financing. This framework would enable transparent and consistent reporting on progress towards PCSD. Expanding the range and depth of data and indicators – disaggregated by factors such as sex, age, race, ethnicity and geographic location – would improve insights into how policies impact diverse groups, leading to more informed policymaking. Indicators on performance information could be useful. Tailoring SDG indicators to

better reflect national challenges would also address current limitations in the use of global indicators, which may not fully capture Portugal's unique context.

Possible ways ahead

- **Develop harmonised guidelines for conducting and integrating various impact assessments**, ensuring all relevant sustainability dimensions are considered. These guidelines could incorporate OECD recommendations for RIAs, which emphasise the importance of assessing the direct and indirect impacts of regulations on economic, social and environmental factors. Portugal's current RIA exercise does not account for indirect effects or the adaptive behaviours of economic agents not directly targeted by the regulation, which would be essential for a complete assessment of costs and benefits (PlanAPP, 2024^[49]).

The need for an explicit framework to integrate various impact assessment tools currently being applied across the government was also stressed by participants in the 20 May workshop. They suggested that a committee comprised of relevant institutions (e.g. the Budget Office of the General Inspectorate of Finance, the Tribunal of Accounts and INE) and chaired by PLANAPP could be tasked to prepare such a framework and advise on its application to ensure objectivity and neutrality in conducting RIA and ex-post evaluations, including with regard to the impact of spending decisions on sustainable development.

- Enhance the capabilities of institutions like PLANAPP to support government bodies in applying integrated impact assessments and monitoring the long-term effects of policies. Training could include not only technical aspects and methodologies for conducting effective RIAs but also the broader strategic importance of RIAs in achieving the SDGs.
- Mandate the systematic consideration of economic, social, gender and environmental impacts on developing countries and human rights implications for all relevant policies. The 20 May workshop proposed that PLANAPP, in collaboration with other government institutions such as Camões I.P., develop a pilot project with a small country (e.g. Cabo Verde and/or Guinea Bissau) to assess the transboundary impacts of domestic policies. This would also entail ensuring that the partner country has the functional and institutional capacity to engage effectively with in the pilot project.
- Strengthen both RIA and *ex post* evaluation practices to ensure that policies are planned with foresight and reviewed retrospectively to gauge their effectiveness and impact. This will help to continuously improve policy-making processes and adapt to new information or changing circumstances.
- Improve data infrastructure to enhance the quality and accessibility of data related to PCSD and develop and implement a more comprehensive monitoring and reporting framework that includes regular assessments of the domestic and transboundary impacts of policies and financing.
- Ensure regular reporting on global SDG indicator 17.14.1 and address the gaps identified in the 2022 self-assessment of this indicator.
- Consider tailoring the global SDG indicators to the national level and ensure that these indicators reflect regional and local differences.
- Modify evaluation systems to explicitly include a policy coherence dimension to assess the interlinkages and potential trade-offs between sectoral policies, as well as their domestic and international impacts, to inform more coherent decision-making.

Box 3.9. The Sustainability Check tool in Luxembourg

The Sustainability Check (Nothaltegkeetscheck) is a tool for supporting and self-assessing draft legislation in light of its impact on sustainable development in Luxembourg. It enables ministries and administrations to take greater ownership of general sustainable development policy and, in particular, of Luxembourg's National Plan for Sustainable Development (PNDD). Its introduction into the legislative procedure was carried out as part of the implementation of the 2018-2023 government programme and constitutes an implementation of the PNDD adopted by the government in December 2019.

The Government of Luxembourg has decided to integrate the Sustainability Check into the legislative procedure and add it to existing annexes to draft legislation, with the aim of rethinking the way legislation is made and clarifying trade-offs in increasingly complex contexts. Introducing it at an early stage in drafting legislation not only advances the cross-cutting theme of sustainable development but also ensures greater policy coherence and better quality of legislation, considering the long-term challenges facing society, such as climate change and an ageing population.

To facilitate this exercise, the Sustainability Report is accompanied by guidance points and documentation on the ten action areas, enabling the bill's author to familiarise themselves with the policy issues addressed. In addition, a website (www.nohalteg.lu) has been set up on which all bills relating to sustainable development can be consulted.

Since the official introduction of the Nothaltegkeetscheck, all bills have indeed been accompanied by a completed control form. Participants have also evaluated the training sessions positively, stressing that they have acquired a better understanding of sustainable development, what it means in the context of their field(s) of work, and the impact that the policies implemented by their ministry or administration can have on other policies.

Source: ESDN (2024^[50]), *Luxembourg's Sustainability Check*, <https://www.esdn.eu/newsflash/detail/luxembourgs-sustainability-check>; Government of Luxembourg (n.d.^[51]), *Contrôle de la durabilité ou Nothaltegkeetscheck – documentation*, <https://nohalteg.public.lu/dam-assets/ctie/assets/nohaltegkeets-check/nohaltegkeetscheck-documentation.pdf>.

Box 3.10. Performance monitoring in Austria

RIA has been mandatory for all primary laws and subordinate regulations in Austria since 2013. The information on performance monitoring in Austria is available in digital form on an interactive website maintained by the Federal Chancellery. The Federal Performance Management Office has developed an impact assessment monitoring tool to graphically display the evaluation results from the annual reports for individual departments and subdivisions at a glance. This interactive tool provides an overview of the linkages between all budgetary bodies and their corresponding chapters, outcome objectives, outputs and specific projects. Despite recommending further improvements to user-friendliness and easy accessibility, this website is a good example of the innovative presentation of performance data.

Source: OECD (2020^[52]), *Regulatory Impact Assessment and Regulatory Oversight in Austria*, <https://oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/556756-RIA-in-Austria-web.pdf>.

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Notes

¹ See the Law of Great Options, Table 2, at <https://bit.ly/44qptum>.

² See <https://www.garantiainfancia.gov.pt/documents/37502/0/Resolu%C3%A7%C3%A3o+n%C2%BA3+2023/f842a69f-3f90-471a-b6d2-57b7d34c7c0c>.

³ Under the mandate of Camões I.P., the PALOP and Timor-Leste-EU co-operation is intended to strengthen the relationship between the Portuguese-speaking African countries and East Timor and the EU Member States. It has been active since 1992, having been extended to East Timor in 2007 (Camões I.P., 2016^[64]).

⁴ See <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto-lei/43-b-2024-870757938>.

⁵ See <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto-lei/67-2024-890194534>.

⁶ See <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto-lei/21-2021-159432384>.

⁷ See 2.5. State Budget and the Sustainable Development Goals Sustainable Development; pages 76-79, https://www.dgo.gov.pt/politicaorcamental/OrcamentodeEstado/2025/Proposta%20Orcamento/Documentos%20do%20OE/OE2025_doc16_Relatorio.pdf.

⁸ The NRP was a national strategy and planning instrument that was part of the political process of economic and social governance of the European Union. It was drafted and presented annually by the government of each country, following the European Semester institutional calendar, which was created and designed to guarantee the co-ordination of different Member States' public policies with the guidelines and policies pursued in the European framework. It was replaced by POENMP (PlanAPP, 2024^[65]).

4 Conclusion

This concluding chapter offers a clear-sighted summary of Portugal's strengths, areas for improvements and possible ways ahead towards enhanced policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD). It reinforces the importance of implementing PCSD approaches over time, across sectors, at all levels of government, and in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders, with a view to support more integrated, responsive, and forward-looking governance. The chapter, and the report in its entirety, aims to equip policymakers with a shared reference point and a practical basis for collective action towards a more sustainable and inclusive future in Portugal.

Strengths

Portugal's national context for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the result of early initiatives like the National Strategy for Sustainable Development in 1995 and more recent developments, such as the Green Growth Commitment in 2015, and updates to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development in 2022. The integration of the SDGs into national policies is well-aligned with EU frameworks, including the Circular Economy Action Plan, the European Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and the Fit for 55 Package.

Key actors within Portugal's institutional framework – e.g. the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP), the Camões IP (Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, IP) and the National Institute of Administration (INA) – play important roles in co-ordinating, analysing, and implementing sustainable development initiatives that seek to adhere to OECD principles on policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD).

Portugal exhibits political commitment and leadership by integrating the SDGs into national policies and engaging in international forums, enhancing whole-of-government approaches. The government also shows dedication to policy integration through ongoing mapping exercises, budget initiatives and capacity building, ensuring alignment with sustainable development goals across sectors and levels of government.

Co-ordinating mechanisms and networks such as REPLAN, and capacity-building efforts within public administrations contribute to whole-of-government co-ordination, fostering mutually supporting actions across sectors. The promotion of PCSD at all levels of government and the synergies among national, regional, and local policies underscore Portugal's commitment to sub-national engagement. The country proactively engages stakeholders, involving civil society and non-governmental actors in policy-making processes to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered.

Regular impact assessments, investment in statistical infrastructure, and adherence to international standards demonstrate Portugal's commitment to assessing policy and financing impacts, contributing positively both domestically and internationally. Finally, Portugal's monitoring frameworks, statistical system, and commitment to regular SDG reporting underpin evidence-informed decision-making. In this context, Portugal's initial reporting on global SDG indicator 17.14.1 *Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance PCSD*, with the involvement of the Ministry of Finance, provides an important foundation for advancing and tracking progress on PCSD.

Areas for improvement

While Portugal shows an overarching commitment to sustainable development, the country has not identified specific priority areas, limiting its ability to set clear goals for PCSD and benchmarks for progress. The proposed National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030 (RNDS 2030), currently under government review, holds significant promise for improvements.

Leadership and clarity in mandates, particularly in strategically aligning the SDGs with national policies, could be strengthened through a clear prioritisation strategy for the SDGs. Moreover, a long-term vision beyond 2030 could help to future-proof policies that impact on coherence across sectors and countries. There is also potential for more systematic use of strategic foresight, scenario development and systems thinking in policymaking processes.

In terms of policy integration, a more regular dialogue on PCSD could help ensure alignment of sectoral policies with the SDGs, while targeted efforts could support regional and territorial development integration. Whole-of-government co-ordination could be strengthened to explicitly address PCSD across different government sectors and institutions. Sub-national engagement shows some discrepancies in regional and local capacity and suggests limited engagement in policymaking and awareness of PCSD at the local level.

Stakeholder engagement could be more proactive to strengthen the potential for diverse perspectives and expertise incorporation at crucial early stages of policymaking. Portugal could also complement its SDG monitoring and reporting system by reporting a second time on global SDG indicator 17.14.1.

Looking ahead

To strengthen political commitment and leadership for PCSD, Portugal could develop detailed action plans with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives, integrate poverty, gender, and human rights perspectives into all policy frameworks, and invest in capacity building and public awareness campaigns.

Establishing a strategic long-term vision requires Portugal to detail how its strategies contribute to sustainable development outcomes and enhance institutional arrangements for better co-ordination and mandate clarification. Policy integration can be improved by linking budget processes and public procurement with sustainable development objectives, strengthening regional development integration, and adopting a whole-of-government approach. Whole-of-government co-ordination would benefit from enhanced formal governance arrangements, clarified mandates and broader stakeholder engagement.

Portugal could also strengthen capacity building for data collection and management and modify evaluation systems to include a policy coherence dimension.

Portugal's draft RNDS 2030, currently under government review, would provide an important vehicle for catalysing coherent policymaking towards 2030 (PTSUSTENTÁVEL, 2025^[10]).

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Annex A. Key legal and strategic frameworks for SDG integration in Portugal

1987: Bases of Environmental Policy

This law established the foundation for Portugal's environmental protection policies, leading to the subsequent development of key sustainable development initiatives.

1993: National Network of Protected Areas

This framework aimed to safeguard Portugal's biodiversity by establishing protected areas nationwide.

1995: National Environmental Policy Plan

Focused on co-ordinating efforts between various sectors to promote sustainable environmental practices.

1999: Natura 2000 Network

Portugal became part of the European Union's Natura 2000, a co-ordinated network of protected areas aimed at conserving Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

2001: Designation of the National Focal Point for ISDR

Portugal designated the National Civil Protection Authority as the National Focal Point for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), marking its commitment to enhancing disaster resilience.

2001: National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity

This strategy was aimed at protecting natural ecosystems and promoting biodiversity.

2002: Kyoto Protocol Implementation

Portugal ratified the Kyoto Protocol and committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with international climate action goals.

2004: National Climate Change Programme

This initiative was part of Portugal's commitment to international agreements on climate change, setting national goals for reducing emissions and transitioning to renewable energy sources.

2005: Water Law

The law focused on sustainable water management, safeguarding this critical natural resource for future generations.

2006: National Forest Fire Defence Plan

This was part of a comprehensive national strategy to mitigate the impact of wildfires, a significant risk in Portugal.

2007: National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2015 (ENDS)

Portugal's ENDS aims to integrate sustainable development across all sectors, incorporating environmental, social and economic dimensions into public policy.

2010: Establishment of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (PNRRC)

Created within the National Civil Protection Commission, this platform was aligned with the Hyogo Framework for Action and marked a step towards strengthening community resilience.

2016: National Action Plan for a Circular Economy

The plan supports the transition to a circular economy by promoting sustainable consumption, waste reduction and resource efficiency.

Annex B. Workshop proceedings: PCSD actions in the RNDS 2030 for the Sustainable Development Goals

Purpose

This document presents the key results of discussions, including insights and next steps, that emerged from the OECD-facilitated workshop held on 20 May 2025 in Lisbon, Portugal, as part of the EU-funded project 23PT39 – *Building Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) across national and local government in Portugal*.

The workshop aimed to support Portugal in operationalising its forthcoming *National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030 (RNDS 2030)* by providing analysis and recommendations for enhancing PCSD to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It forms part of a broader multi-country initiative implemented by the OECD with support from the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument (TSI), and in close collaboration with PLANAPP.

Grounded in the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (the “PCSD Recommendation”) and informed by the project's diagnostic analysis—the *Policy Coherence Scan of Portugal*—the mission brought together national and local actors, along with international peers from Belgium, Ireland and Poland, and OECD experts, to engage in mutual learning, identify entry points for institutional and administrative improvements, and co-develop practical pathways to strengthen the use of PCSD in policymaking and implementation government-wide.

The document gives an overview of the main takeaways from these exchanges and provide a foundation for informed decision-making and sustained action on PCSD. It contributes to the wider OECD and EU agenda of fostering coherent, whole-of-government approaches to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Context and National Process for Elaborating the RNDS 2030 in Portugal

Portugal's National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030 (RNDS 2030), currently under government review, represents a comprehensive and strategic tool aimed at accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and facilitating measurable progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Rather than being a mere policy document, the RNDS 2030 embodies a transformational approach grounded in systemic thinking and structured participation in SD policymaking from both government and civil society.

Strategic Context and Origins

The RNDS 2030 builds on insights from Portugal's 2023 Voluntary National Review (VNR), which served as an evidence-based identification of the country's structural challenges in SDG implementation. This

review also revealed policy gaps and inconsistencies, emphasising the need for better alignment and coherence across public sector initiatives.

In response, the RNDS 2030 was developed to address these shortcomings and formalise Portugal's long-term commitment to sustainable development. It serves a dual purpose: first, by presenting a clear governmental commitment structured through six thematic transformations; and second, by promoting Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) through a detailed action plan aimed at improving policy integration, stakeholder participation, and SDG monitoring.

Two Pillars of the RNDS 2030

The RNDS 2030 is organised within two interdependent components:

1. Government Commitment to Sustainable Development

This component articulates six key transformations that embody Portugal's vision for sustainable development. Each transformation is driven by three strategic priorities, framed by relevant planning instruments, national targets, and public policy measures. These transformations cover areas such as climate action, digital innovation, education, inclusive communities, and biodiversity. They collectively represent an integrated governmental response to the challenges identified in the VNR and aim to serve as a guiding framework for public action until 2030.

2. Action Plan for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD)

The second component operationalises the principles of policy coherence by outlining specific measures and activities to internalise the 2030 Agenda within public institutions. It aims to strengthen SDG monitoring systems, promote inclusive participation, and build institutional capacity. Notably, it introduces mechanisms such as the creation of a National Forum for Sustainable Development, which will bring together representatives from various segments of society to review and discuss the results stemming from the implementation of the RNDS 2030 with ideas, strategies, and practices for promoting sustainable development being shared.

Governance and Whole-of-Society

The RNDS 2030 adopts a dual framework of governance: a Whole-of-Government (WoG) and a Whole-of-Society (WoS) approach. While the WoG approach emphasises inter-ministerial coordination and policy integration, the WoS perspective seeks to broaden the base of support and action, enabling societal ownership of the SDGs.

To support implementation, the Centre for Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies (PLANAPP) is tasked with coordinating the monitoring and communication efforts. PLANAPP will regularly publish progress reports and lead dissemination initiatives to ensure that both pillars of the RNDS 2030 are effectively tracked and publicly accountable.

Furthermore, the roadmap aligns with Portugal's international commitments, particularly the "Pact for the Future" adopted at the United Nations Future Summit in September 2024. This pact outlines actions in areas like sustainable development, peace, digital cooperation, youth, and global governance—expanding on the SDGs and adjusting to the evolving global context since 2015.

Monitoring Progress and Adapting to National Realities

The successful implementation of RNDS 2030 will need to be underpinned by a robust system for monitoring progress on the SDGs. While Portugal relies on the United Nations Global SDG Indicator Framework, challenges remain in adapting these metrics to the national context. To address this, the

RNDS 2030 includes plans to develop a nationally tailored set of goals and indicators, providing a more accurate and actionable assessment of progress at regional and local levels. This includes ongoing actions to elaborate a panel of sustainability targets and indicators adapted to Portugal.

The RNDS 2030 is more than a roadmap—it is a political and societal commitment to transformative change. Its success depends on integrating sustainability principles into all sectors of governance, maintaining transparency through data-driven monitoring, and fostering collective ownership across society.

Portugal's approach is pragmatic, forward-looking, and aligned with both national priorities and international obligations. By embedding the 2030 Agenda within its domestic policy framework and involving all sectors of society, Portugal aims to not only meet the SDGs but to shape a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future for all.

Methodology

This document builds on a two-pronged methodological approach, combining an Institutional Scan with an OECD-facilitated stakeholder workshop to ensure the recommendations are both evidence-based and validated through an inclusive consultation process.

Institutional Scan

The **Institutional Scan** provided an assessment of Portugal's existing policy coherence mechanisms and institutional arrangements for sustainable development at the National and Local level. Conducted through desk research, structured interviews, and a review of key policy documents, the scan aimed to:

- Identify strengths and gaps in Portugal's current approach to **Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD)**.
- Assess institutional coordination mechanisms and their effectiveness in integrating sustainability objectives across federal policies.
- Benchmark Portugal's performance against international best practices.

The findings from this scan formed the analytical foundation for the recommendations proposed in this guidance.

Stakeholder Workshop

To complement the Institutional Scan, an OECD-facilitated workshop was organised and held on 20 May 2025 in Lisbon, bringing together key government stakeholders to discuss findings, validate key challenges, and co-develop practical recommendations for integrating PCSD into national strategies. The workshops aimed to:

- **Engage stakeholders** from across ministries and civil society to foster a shared understanding of policy coherence challenges and opportunities.
- **Validate findings** from the Institutional Scan by gathering insights from policymakers and practitioners.
- **Co-create solutions** by discussing practical tools, mechanisms, and governance arrangements that could enhance policy coherence in Portugal.
- **Facilitate peer learning** through the participation of international experts and representatives from other countries implementing PCSD strategies.

The workshop was structured to facilitate an in-depth exploration of policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) through a dynamic and participatory format. There were three thematic sessions (explained in more detail in Chapter 4) which were designed to identify a cluster of administrative and functional tools, mechanisms, and practices that Portugal could consider integrating into its approach to PCSD in SDG implementation. Plenary sessions set the stage with insights from the OECD Institutional Scan, highlighting key issues, recommendations, and international best practices relevant to each pillar. In the breakout groups, participants engaged in targeted discussions guided by OECD experts, focusing on practical initiatives to enhance PCSD within the framework of RNDS 2030.

This structure ensured that discussions were not only reflective of the OECD Council Recommendation on PCSD but also directly linked to Portugal's policy context. The workshop's concluding session consolidated key findings, with rapporteurs presenting outcomes and OECD facilitators synthesising insights into actionable recommendations. These takeaways, compiled into this final Guidance, aim to offer structured input to align the RNDS more explicitly with PCSD principles, reinforcing Portugal's commitment to sustainable and coherent policymaking.

The combination of the **Institutional Scan** and the **Stakeholder Workshops** aims to help to ensure that the guidance is not only rooted in robust analysis but also reflects current realities and priorities of Portugal's national and local institutions.

Actions to enhance PCSD

The May 20, 2025, workshop identified a set of strategic and operational measures to enhance policy coherence across government levels, sectors, and actors, grounded in the OECD PCSD Recommendation (2019) and structured around three main pillars. The discussions reflected a strong consensus on the importance of embedding the SDGs systematically throughout Portugal's governance and implementation systems, from visioning and leadership to stakeholder engagement and monitoring.

The PCSD Recommendation consists of eight guiding principles, structured around three main pillars:

- **Pillar 1.** A Strategic Vision for implementing the 2030 Agenda, emphasising political commitment and leadership for enhancing PCSD. This involves building inclusive political support, defining priority areas and key performance indicators, and ensuring that commitment to PCSD is sustained across governmental changes.
- **Pillar 2.** Effective and Inclusive Institutional Mechanisms for addressing policy interactions across sectors and aligning actions between levels of government. This includes whole-of-government coordination, capacity building for PCSD within public administrations, and engaging sub-national levels of government in policy coordination for sustainable development.
- **Pillar 3.** Responsive and Adaptive Tools to anticipate, assess, and address domestic, transboundary, and long-term impacts of policies. Adherents are encouraged to introduce regular assessments, strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems, and integrate policy coherence dimensions in evaluation systems to inform decision-making.

Building on these three pillars, the following presents an overview of the key insights and considerations that emerged from the stakeholder workshops. The observations and recommendations summarised here were raised directly by workshop participants—representatives from public institutions, planning authorities, and implementation agencies—who play a critical role in shaping, coordinating, and delivering on SDG-related policies and actions within the national context.

Pillar 1: A Strategic Vision for Implementing the 2030 Agenda

Institutional Leadership and Legal Foundations

There is a broad consensus on the need for a clearly mandated entity to lead and coordinate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. While entities such as PLANAPP and the REPLAN network are increasingly recognised as coordinators, their authority is often limited, especially when sectoral ministries retain autonomy over planning. Legal frameworks are necessary but not sufficient: even when legislation exists (e.g., Decree-Law 67/2024), implementation is not guaranteed unless mandates are binding. Political will and institutionalised, transparent follow-up mechanisms are thus critical to ensure that existing laws are effectively implemented and operationalised.

Roadmaps and Long-Term Strategic Vision

The National Roadmap for Sustainable Development is seen as a key tool for aligning actions with the 2030 Agenda and beyond. Participants suggested that effective roadmaps need to contain targets and time-bound activities; serve as a bridge between high-level goals and operational tools; and should be approved and integrated into existing governance frameworks to be actionable. There is optimism around RNDS 2030 approval, and recognition that it can be a practical matching tool between national policies and SDG targets.

Coherence Across Planning Instruments

Portugal faces persistent challenges in aligning short-term programming and budgeting cycles with long-term strategic objectives. There is a widely recognised need to strengthen the overall ecosystem of long-term, transversal, strategic, national, and other planning instruments by enhancing internal coherence and alignment. In particular, participants highlighted the importance of harmonising key elements such as indicators, targets, and time horizons across different strategies, frameworks, and policy instruments. This would help ensure consistency in goal-setting, facilitate monitoring, and enable better coordination between long-term visions and short-term implementation cycles. A key question raised by participants is how to improve this coherence without a formal mandate. Suggested approaches include: sharing good practices, issuing targeted recommendations and creating guidance tools and soft coordination mechanisms along with voluntary government-wide communities of practice to enable the sharing of good practices relating to coordination and driving greater coherence across policy areas and administrative silos.

Multilevel Governance and Localisation

Workshop participants emphasised that effective implementation of the SDGs in the national context requires a robust multilevel governance approach. This should include ensuring greater visibility and recognition for the role of municipalities and regional actors, generating and using robust regional performance data, as well as enhancing the participation of local governments in national planning and decision-making processes. Stakeholders highlighted platforms such as ODS local, already in place, and the foreseen National Sustainable Development Forum as valuable mechanisms for fostering dialogue and coordination across levels of government and sectors, and for supporting more integrated, place-based approaches to sustainable development.

Capacity Building and Institutional Readiness

Participants across Portugal's key government institutions present in the workshop highlighted limited institutional capacity—particularly at the operational level—as a persistent barrier to effective SDG implementation. Civil servants often face challenges in applying SDG-related tools and instruments within day-to-day planning and budgeting processes. To address this, stakeholders in the workshop emphasised the need for sustained capacity-building efforts that go beyond high-level strategy and focus on strengthening operational, procedural and practical skills. Such efforts should be targeted across

government levels and functions, including civil servants and budget officers, and be fully integrated into existing sustainability policy training and professional development frameworks. In this context, the ongoing revision of the Kit for Sustainability Policy Development for public administration was welcomed as a critical support mechanism for enhancing institutional readiness and coherence.

Summary Key Challenges Identified

- Insufficient integration of local and regional authorities in national-level decision; insufficient generation and integration of regional data into national SD decision-making.
- Absence of legally binding mandates for SDG integration in planning frameworks.
- Difficulty in aligning programming and budget cycles.
- Technical staff often lack the tools and training to operationalise the SDGs.
- Insufficient use of coordination platforms.
- Political and institutional silos.

Proposed Actions

- **Strengthen coherence of planning frameworks:**
Promote harmonisation of indicators, targets, and timeframes across national, sectoral, and subnational strategies. Use non-binding tools such as guidance notes, good practice case studies, and soft coordination mechanisms to foster alignment where legal mandates are absent.
- **Support legal and policy alignment:**
Encourage the integration of SDG-related provisions into legislative and regulatory frameworks. Ensure that key strategic documents include enforceable, time-bound commitments linked to budget processes.
- **Institutionalise multilevel governance:**
Provide formal mechanisms for the inclusion of local and regional authorities in national planning and implementation. Strengthen regional data generation and uptake; strengthen the visibility of municipalities by showcasing their contributions through national reporting or recognition schemes.
- **Empower coordinating bodies (e.g., PLANAPP):**
Clarify mandates and strengthen institutional authority to ensure enhance PCSD, particularly in planning (not only monitoring). Equip coordinating bodies with both the mandate and capacity to influence inter-ministerial planning processes.
- **Invest in capacity-building at all levels:**
Integrate SDG-related content into sustainability policy training for civil servants. Prioritise practical, hands-on skills at procedural and operational levels (e.g., budget alignment, monitoring frameworks). Promote the use of national toolkits for SDG integration and ensure they are widely disseminated and updated.
- **Leverage coordination platforms and reporting tools:**
Create forums such as the National Sustainable Development Forum to foster stakeholder dialogue. Use national SDG reports strategically to reinforce alignment and shared accountability across institutions.

Pillar 2: Effective and Inclusive Institutional Mechanisms

Training and Capacity Systems

A key challenge identified by stakeholders participating in the May 20, 2025, workshop was the lack of structured and transversal training systems for SDG implementation. Training is often fragmented, not systematically delivered across levels of government, and insufficiently tailored to the operational needs of civil servants—especially at the local level, such as Municipal Councils and Parish Councils. Participants emphasised the need for dedicated training programmes that promote practical application of the SDGs in planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, as well as tools.

Institutions such as INA and PLANAPP were seen as well-positioned to co-lead the development of national training curricula, including certified modules, focused both on high-level awareness and procedural knowledge. These efforts should be supported by a centralised repository of tools, curricula, and best practices. There is a shared recognition that training must not be limited to formal sessions but embedded into public administration frameworks, including sustainability policy toolkits currently under revision (e.g. the Kit for Sustainability Policy Development).

Mandates and Coordination Roles

Participants highlighted a lack of clarity in institutional mandates for ensuring coherence for sustainable development. While PLANAPP has a recognised role in coordinating internal policy coherence, its mandate does not yet formally extend to policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD). This distinction limits its ability to lead whole-of-government approaches aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

Additionally, coordination structures such as the country's five regional CCDRs and the national REPLAN working groups are active but require further definition of competences with regard to PCSD. Their roles in SDG planning, training dissemination, and monitoring should be embedded in institutional mandates to ensure sustained engagement and avoid dependence on voluntary participation or temporary initiatives.

Knowledge Networks and Data Systems

Workshop discussions pointed to the dispersal of SDG-related knowledge and data across multiple unconnected platforms. While numerous training courses, reports, and thematic platforms exist, they remain scattered and difficult to navigate for practitioners. This fragmentation hampers knowledge transfer, learning, and institutional memory.

Stakeholders recommended the creation of a unified knowledge platform to consolidate tools, training materials, and data related to SDG implementation at both national and local levels. This could be developed and managed by a central coordination entity, with linkages to existing networks such as REPLAN and CCDRs and the foreseen National Sustainable Development Forum.

Local Engagement and Multi-level Coordination

Effective SDG implementation depends on the full involvement of local and regional actors. Stakeholders emphasised the need to elevate the role of CCDRs in linking national planning frameworks with local realities. This includes enabling CCDRs to lead or co-lead working groups, facilitate knowledge exchange between municipalities, and support the localisation of SDG targets.

A critical point raised was the need for formal mechanisms—not just informal networks—to ensure the systematic generation and integration into national SD decision-making of robust regional performance data, and that municipal best-practice contributions are reflected in national policy and monitoring. Incentivising professional mobility, increasing municipal reporting on SDG progress, and establishing common planning templates for local and regional strategies were cited as actionable approaches.

Focal Points and Monitoring Structures

Participants underscored the need for a dynamic, government-wide network of SDG focal points across all ministries and public institutions. Identifying responsible individuals for SDG implementation at the sectoral level would enable more regular, coordinated action—especially in preparing for milestones such as the next Voluntary National Review (VNR 2027).

The newly established multidisciplinary monitoring team under REPLAN was highlighted as a promising step. Its current priorities—mapping SDG targets against national planning targets and identifying focal points across ministries—are seen as critical foundations for more coherent, cross-sectoral implementation and monitoring.

Summary of Key Challenges Identified

- Fragmented training efforts and lack of procedural-level capacity across government levels.
- Limited mandate of PLANAPP for PCSD.
- Coordination bodies such as the five regional CCDRs and the national REPLAN lack formalised roles and responsibilities on SDG implementation.
- Scattered knowledge platforms and poor consolidation of training and data tools at both the regional and national levels.
- Insufficient local-national coordination and recognition of municipal contributions/best-practices.
- Absence of clear focal points for SDG implementation within ministries.
- Weak institutional preparation for upcoming monitoring cycles (e.g., VNR 2027).

Proposed Actions

- **Establish a transversal national SDG training system:**
Co-develop certified training curricula with INA and PLANAPP. Ensure content targets civil servants at all levels and includes hands-on tools for planning, budgeting, and monitoring. Link these programmes to sustainability toolkits and policy training frameworks to integrate them in the civil servants' tasks.
- **Clarify and extend institutional mandates:**
Formally extend PLANAPP's mandate to cover coherence for sustainable development. Define the coordination roles of CCDRs and REPLAN working groups in SDG planning and monitoring processes. Use Branding and Communication Strategically: Leverage the SDG logo and visual identity to build public recognition and legitimacy around local and national initiatives. Develop a national communications campaign to re-energise the agenda.
- **Create a unified knowledge platform:**
Develop a centralised digital hub to collect, organise, and disseminate SDG-related resources, training materials, planning templates, and good practices. Link this platform to existing networks (e.g., CCDRs, REPLAN and the foreseen National Sustainable Development Forum).
- **Formalise CCDRs' coordination role:**
Institutionalise CCDRs as connectors between national and local levels, with responsibilities in capacity building, policy alignment, and SDG data collection. Encourage their leadership in inter-municipal working groups such as the Working Group on the SDGs of the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities and knowledge-sharing initiatives. Launch Citizens' Assemblies on the SDGs: Modelled on Portugal's successful biodiversity and climate assemblies, this would foster public deliberation on trade-offs and priorities and generate bottom-up legitimacy.

- **Strengthen focal point networks and monitoring mechanisms:**
Identify and activate SDG focal points across all ministries. Build regular engagement channels through REPLAN and support their work in aligning national planning targets with SDG targets. Ensure focal points are known and recognised across institutions.

Pillar 3: Responsive and Adaptive Tools for Policy Coherence

Impact Assessment and Regulatory Frameworks

Participants widely acknowledged that existing regulatory impact assessment (RIA) frameworks in Portugal—while having evolved over time—remain too narrow in scope. Currently, RIAs apply mostly to legislative and regulatory proposals, but not to broader government decisions such as strategic plans or budget allocations. This limits the government’s ability to fully assess the implications of policy choices and spending decisions on the pursuit of the country’s sustainable development objectives.

Stakeholders emphasised the need to expand the scope of impact assessments beyond ex-ante legislative evaluations to include ex-post evaluations and non-regulatory decision-making. They also highlighted the importance of integrating economic, social, environmental, and gender dimensions into a unified RIA process, rather than developing parallel assessment mechanisms.

They also mention the “Custa quanto?”¹, a tool for assessing the impact of new laws before they are passed. It follows international best practices and aims to support better lawmaking by providing evidence-based information. It evaluates how proposed laws might affect people, businesses, and public administration. This tool was developed by the Legislative Impact Assessment Unit (UTAIL), part of PLANAPP, to improve decision-making and the quality of legislation.

Portugal’s experience with the “Custa quanto?” pilot project and subsequent development of technical guidelines shows progress. However, there was consensus that a next phase is needed—one that includes broader institutional buy-in, clearer roles, and a methodology that allows for cross-sectoral and transboundary impact consideration.

Monitoring and Indicators

There is an ongoing effort to strengthen national sustainable development indicator frameworks, with approximately 180 global UN SDG indicators already tracked by the national statistical office. These efforts align with the European Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) and the UN SDG framework. However, participants pointed to inconsistencies in existing reporting and noted the lack of consolidated, accessible outputs.

Stakeholders suggested revisiting the current indicator set, in consultation with REPLAN and sectoral focal points, to develop Portuguese-specific targets and enhance the relevance and usability of the UN SDG monitoring system. The process should ensure alignment between SDG targets and indicators and national planning instruments. This work is ongoing and coordinated by PLANAPP.

Structures and Institutional Fragmentation

The multiplicity of institutions responsible for evaluation—both within and outside government—creates a fragmented landscape. Independent bodies conduct valuable assessments, but often in isolation, without a common methodology or institutional coordination.

Participants proposed the establishment of a steering committee involving PLANAPP, Camões, INA, Court of Auditors, the IGF (Inspectorate-general of Finance) and key line ministries, to oversee the development of a shared evaluation framework. This would enhance consistency, reduce duplication, and promote a whole-of-government approach to evaluation and accountability.

Additionally, there is a recognised gap between monitoring and evaluation: while monitoring is relatively more advanced (supported by INE and other national statistical efforts), evaluation—especially impact evaluation—remains underdeveloped. Bridging this gap will be essential for capturing lessons learned and improving policy effectiveness over time.

Transboundary and International Considerations

Participants agreed that transboundary impacts are rarely considered in impact assessments. Given Portugal's international partnerships—e.g., with Lusophone countries—there is a need to better account for how domestic policies may influence or be influenced by external dynamics.

Stakeholders suggested piloting small-scale, international impact assessments to build experience and capacity before scaling up. Camões and other international cooperation entities could support these pilots, drawing on existing bilateral cooperation mechanisms.

Summary of Key Challenges Identified

- Narrow scope of current regulatory impact assessment frameworks, limited to legislation.
- Fragmentation of evaluation responsibilities across multiple institutions without coordination.
- Limited experience with ex-post evaluation and non-regulatory policy impact assessment.
- Inconsistencies in monitoring outputs and indicator reporting.
- Absence of guidance for transboundary or international impact assessment.
- Lack of unified methodology for evaluating SDG-related policies across sectors.
- Gap between monitoring and evaluation processes.

Proposed Actions

- **Broaden the scope of regulatory impact assessments (RIA):**
Expand RIA frameworks to include non-legislative decisions, budget allocations, and strategic policy actions. Ensure assessments consider economic, social, environmental, and gender impacts in an integrated manner, avoiding parallel processes.
- **Enhance evaluation coordination through a steering committee:**
Establish an inter-institutional committee involving PLANAPP, Camões, INA, the Court of Auditors, IGF and relevant ministries to draft shared methodologies and frameworks for evaluation and impact assessments.
- **Strengthen monitoring systems and data use:**
Revisit the current SDG indicator set with the involvement of REPLAN and national statistical authorities. Develop Portuguese-specific sustainable development targets aligned with national planning targets and improve the consistency and accessibility of monitoring outputs.
- **Bridge the monitoring–evaluation gap:**
Build capacities and institutional mechanisms to complement existing monitoring with structured, ex-post evaluations. Integrate evaluation findings into planning cycles to enhance adaptive learning and policy improvement.
- **Pilot international/transboundary impact assessments:**
Launch small-scale pilot projects (e.g., with Lusophone partner countries) to assess cross-border effects of domestic policies. Use results to develop methodologies for broader application.
- **Build awareness and technical capacity on evaluation tools:**
Promote awareness of existing evaluation guidance and support capacity-building efforts across

government levels. Encourage use of tools such as the national evaluation agenda, RIA guidance, and lessons from past audit practices.

Strategic take-aways

Pillar 1 – From Vision to Execution: Empowering Leadership and Roadmap Delivery

Strong Expectations for PLANAPP

PLANAPP is viewed by stakeholders as the central institutional actor to lead the 2030 Agenda implementation. There is widespread trust in PLANAPP, but also a clear expectation that it be properly resourced, both in terms of institutional mandate and technical capacity, to meet these demands. Its leadership role must be clearly defined and continuously reviewed to match evolving responsibilities.

Roadmap Implementation Requires Vigilance

Participants have confidence that the RNDS 2030 will be adopted, therefore the OECD emphasised the need to carefully monitor its approval process under the new government. Once adopted, its content, implementation timeline, and monitoring mechanisms must reflect stakeholder priorities and align with SDG objectives.

Pillar 2 – Strengthening Institutional Coordination Across Levels and Sectors

REPLAN: Underused but Promising

The REPLAN network is an existing institutional coordination mechanism that is currently underutilised for advancing SDG coherence.

- It should be strategically positioned to:
 - Convene focal points from different institutions.
 - Act as a coherence-driving platform, linking strategic planning and SDG implementation.

CCDRs: Strengthen Vertical and Horizontal Coordination

There are five CCDRs in Portugal (Commissions for Coordination and Regional Development - Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional)², each covering a specific region: North, Centre, Lisbon and Tagus Valley, Alentejo, and Algarve. These five CCDRs are decentralised government bodies under the Ministry of Territorial Cohesion, with administrative and financial autonomy but no legal personality. They are responsible for coordinating regional policies in their respective region, implementing environmental and spatial planning measures, supporting local authorities, and managing EU funding programs. The five CCDRs have the potential to act as a hinge between central and local government.

- Two strategic functions were highlighted:
 - Knowledge brokering: Serving as a clearinghouse for regional best practices and lessons learned.
 - Vertical coordination: Connecting national strategy with local implementation and stakeholder engagement, especially through platforms like ODS local.

Pillar 3 – Unifying Evaluation Practices for Strategic Impact

Need for an Organising Framework for all-encompassing strategic impact assessments

Portugal has many instruments for evaluation and monitoring, but they lack coherence and integration. A common methodological framework is needed to align existing tools (e.g., RIA, ex post evaluations,

sectoral audits) and promote whole-of-government impact assessment on any and all strategic decision-making, whether using legislation, strategic policy or spending as the tool to implement the decision.

Proposal for an Evaluation Steering Committee

A dedicated inter-institutional body could be established—potentially composed of:

- Tribunal de Contas (Court of Auditors)
- IGF (Inspectorate-General of Finance)
- Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics (DGEEC) or Statistics Portugal
- Camões (for external cooperation)
- PLANAPP
- Ministry of Finance

This group could design the government-wide impact-assessment methodological framework, and could coordinate work on strategic evaluations of legislative, policy and budget decision-making, covering both ex-ante and ex-post phases.

Transboundary Impacts: Pilot Project Recommended

Stakeholders acknowledged the absence of systematic transboundary impact assessments. A pilot project with a Lusophone partner country was proposed as Portugal has ongoing projects there, with Camões possibly taking the lead. However, the institutional capacity/readiness of partner countries should be assessed to ensure feasibility.

Next Steps

The discussions held during the OECD PCSD workshop in Lisbon confirmed that Portugal is broadly aligned with international good practices in promoting policy coherence for sustainable development. The country has made significant progress in building institutional foundations, developing planning frameworks, and engaging stakeholders across levels of government. In particular, finalising the formulation and securing formal approval of the National Roadmap for Sustainable Development (RNDS), along with the growing institutional role of PLANAPP as the central institution that steers and coordinates its pursuit, have positioned Portugal on a strong trajectory toward effective 2030 Agenda implementation.

At the same time, participants and facilitators alike acknowledged that the next phase of work must focus not only on vision-setting, but on implementation. Strategic plans and coordination platforms are in place, but their success will depend on how effectively they are deployed. This includes reinforcing cross-sectoral and multi-level coordination, making better use of existing mechanisms such as REPLAN and CCDRs, and ensuring the strategic integration of diverse monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment tools.

As Portugal continues to advance, the priority will be on consolidating its institutional efforts, enhancing vertical and horizontal coherence, and translating frameworks into practice through clear mandates, adequate resources, and inclusive engagement. The momentum is there—what is needed now is continuity, coordination, and a pragmatic focus on delivery.

Immediate Deliverables

Several concrete outputs are planned for the weeks following the workshop. Ongoing finalisation of the three country scans, as part of this OECD PCSD multicountry project —Portugal, Belgium, and Ireland—each of which will be revised to reflect the latest exchanges and feedback. These scans are scheduled for joint publication in July 2025, offering a comparative view of policy coherence practices and challenges across the participating countries.

Medium-Term Engagement

Living Labs

Looking ahead, the next major milestone in this OECD PCSD multicounty project will be the organisation of a Living Lab, bringing together key stakeholders from Portugal, Belgium, and Ireland for an in-depth, in-person exchange. Originally planned for June but now scheduled for after the summer, this session will focus on a core shared challenge: how to strengthen coherence between sectoral planning frameworks and sustainable development objectives.

The Living Lab will serve as a dynamic, participatory forum for peer learning, collaborative problem-solving, and alignment of policy approaches across countries. It will also offer an opportunity to discuss the transferability of tools, share practical examples of integrated planning, and explore how institutional mechanisms can be made more fit-for-purpose.

Closing Conference

A closing conference is envisaged, likely to take place back-to-back with the Living Lab. This final event will provide a space to consolidate project findings, reflect on progress made, and identify priority areas for continued collaboration.

Going forward, Portugal's experience and leadership can serve as a valuable reference for other countries working to embed policy coherence more deeply into their governance systems and planning practices. Sustained engagement with PLANAPP and other institutional partners will be key to supporting the implementation of the RNDS and advancing the recommendations developed under the PCSD framework.

Notes

¹ [Ferramenta "Custa quanto?" - Vídeo.](#)

² [CCDR \(Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional\) | DR.](#)

OECD Policy Coherence Scan of Portugal

Strengthening Institutional Mechanisms for Sustainable Development

As only 17% of global SDG targets are on track, governments must act fast—and effectively. This OECD Policy Coherence Scan takes a close look at Portugal's approach to delivering on the 2030 Agenda, focusing on how different government structures, policies and plans are aligning to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. The report assesses Portugal's progress through the lens of the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development, highlighting strong legal and planning frameworks and high-level co-ordination mechanisms. It also identifies challenges, including the need for a more systematic approach to transboundary impacts and vertical coherence across levels of government. With Portugal's National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030 currently under government review, the report provides timely insights to support more integrated, forward-looking policies. From strategic foresight to capacity-building and data monitoring, Portugal's experience offers practical lessons for governments aiming to break down silos and build sustainable futures.



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