



Online workshop

How will your city look in 2030?- Localizing the SDGs and the role of SDG Voluntary Local Reviews in Eastern and Southeast Europe

Date: 8 December 2021
Time: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. CET
Platform: Zoom
Language: English

Rationale

[The first UN Forum of Mayors](#) was convened by UNECE in October 2020. The participating mayors expressed their commitment to work on localizing the SDGs and requested UNECE to provide support in facilitating the exchange of experiences and best practices as well as peer-learning. To provide such support to the cities, UNECE elaborated the Guidelines for the Development of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) in the UNECE Region which were endorsed by the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management in October 2021.

UNECE is also working on the development of an online training module to support cities in the localization of the SDGs and preparation of VLRs, in cooperation with its centres of excellence, hosted by University of Geneva, Switzerland; Trondheim Commune in Norway; and with Zofnass Programme at Harvard University, USA.

The workshop aims to discuss and take stock of local strategies and existing approaches and experiences in Eastern and Southeast Europe. Multiple cities in the UNECE region develop their VLRs and apply different methodologies; and there is a need to update the Guidelines reflecting on experiences of cities and different organizations active in the region. The workshop will contribute to updating the regional Guidelines and fine-tuning of the online training module on the VLRs.

This workshop will discuss experiences in developing VLRs with a focus on Eastern and Southeast Europe. One more workshop will be organized on 20 December 2021 which will discuss the localization of the SDGs and opportunities for preparation of VLRs in CIS countries.

Please register to participate using the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NuEzoeYZQDCIbIFWSqYMag.

Following registration, you will receive the online connection link.

For more questions regarding the workshop, please contact Gulnara Roll, Secretary to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, at email: Gulnara.Roll@un.org.

Draft programme

Moderator:

Alexandre Hedjazi, Director, Global Environmental Policy Programme, University of Geneva

11:00 **Doris Andoni**, Chair, Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, UNECE - Opening and welcome

11:05-11:35 Session 1. Regional and subregional approaches in the UNECE region

11:05-11:20 **Joel Ahlgren**, Programme Director, and **Krista Kampus**, Senior Advisor, Think Tank Global Utmaning (Global Challenge) – Key outcomes of the Global Utmaning report “Localizing SDGs in the Eastern Partnership Countries: Experiences and recommendations from Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine”

11:20-11:35 **Juan Valle Robles**, Regional Urban Consultant, UNECE – Presentation of the “Guidelines for the Development of Voluntary Local Reviews in the UNECE Region”.

11:35-12:00 Roundtable 1. Case studies of the development of VLRs in Western Europe

Moderator: Matteo Tarantino, University of Geneva

Questions to presenters:

- What are the key objectives and impacts of the development of VLRs in your city?
- How is cooperation between local and national governments organized in the process of developing the VLR and in implementing its recommendations (in case the VLR was completed)?
- What support (methodological, thematic studies and analysis, exchange of experiences etc.) could cities need for the development of the VLRs in the UNECE region?

11:35-11:45 **Kristian Mjøen**, Head, Geneva UN Charter Centre of Excellence on SDG City Transition, University City 3.0; and **Agata Kraus**, UNECE Centre of Excellence on smart sustainable cities transition, Trondheim Commune, Norway - VLRs in Practice: The case of Trondheim, Norway

11:45-11:55 **Pedro Neves**, CEO, Global Solutions, Cascais, Portugal – Experience of the development of VLR in the City of Cascais, Portugal

11:55-12:00 Questions and answers

12:00-12:05 Short break

12:05-12:30 Roundtable 2. Discussion on opportunities for developing VLRs in Eastern and Southeast Europe

Moderator: Alexandre Hedjazi, University of Geneva

Questions to presenters:

- What are the key challenges of assessing SDG progress at the local level in your context?
- What are your experiences with data sharing among institutions and scales?
- How can Voluntary National Reviews and Voluntary Local Review reinforce each other and advance sustainability agendas?

12:05-12:15 **Serhii Komnatnyi**, Chairman of the Board of the State Fund for Support of Youth Housing Construction, Ukraine

12:15-12:25 **Nino Maghradze**, Deputy Head of Economic Development Office, Tbilisi City Government, Georgia

12:25-12:35 **Zana Vokopola**, Executive Director, Urban Research Institute, Tirana, Albania.

12:35-13:00 Roundtable 3. Way forward with the development of VLRs

Moderator: Matteo Tarantino, University of Geneva

12:35-12:45 **Francine Melchiorretto**, Localization Expert, UN-Habitat – Information on UNDA project “Voluntary local reviews: evidence for greener, resilient and sustainable urban recovery in Eastern European and Central Asian countries in transition”

12:45-12:55 **Spiro Pollalis**, Head of Zofnass Programme, Harvard University, USA

12:55-13:00 Conclusions by the moderators. Closing.