Basic information

2017/2009(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
EU action for sustainability **Subject** 3.70.20 Sustainable development	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	DANCE Seb (S&D)	01/12/2016
	Shadow rapporteur FARIA José Inácio (PPE) WIŚNIEWSKA Jadwiga (ECR) GERBRANDY Gerben-Jan (ALDE) ECK Stefan (GUE/NGL) JÁVOR Benedek (Verts/ALE) EVI Eleonora (EFDD) D'ORNANO Mireille (ENF)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
DEVE Development	SCHLEIN Elly (S&D)	03/03/2017
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	MÜLLER Ulrike (ALDE)	16/02/2017
CULT Culture and Education	NÍ RIADA Liadh (GUE/NGL)	02/02/2017

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
22/11/2016	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2016)0739	Summary

16/02/2017	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/06/2017	Vote in committee		
27/06/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0239/2017	Summary
05/07/2017	Debate in Parliament		
06/07/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0315/2017	Summary
06/07/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
06/07/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2017/2009(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/09016

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE601.046	15/03/2017	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE603.114	25/04/2017	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE601.004	15/05/2017	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE600.908	31/05/2017	
Committee opinion	DEVE	PE602.902	19/06/2017	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0239/2017	27/06/2017	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0315/2017	06/07/2017	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission document (COM)	COM(2016)0739	22/11/2016	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)619	01/12/2017	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2016)0739	27/03/2017	
Contribution	RO_CHAMBER	COM(2016)0739	05/04/2017	

EU action for sustainability

2017/2009(INI) - 06/07/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 446 to 57, with 84 abstentions, a resolution on EU action for sustainability.

Parliament recalled that climate change is not an isolated environmental issue but presents one of the greatest challenges of our time. It also indicated that the European Union and its Member States are all signatories to the Paris Agreement are committed to keeping global warming clearly below 2° C.

Taking note of the Commission's communication on EU action for sustainability, Parliament recalled that the aim of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030 is to increase the **well-being for all** and that the three pillars of sustainable development, namely social, environmental and economic development are essential for achieving the SDGs. In this regard, Members called on the Commission to check the **compatibility of all new policies and legislation** with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To achieve this, a series of measures are proposed in a range of areas.

European political vision: Parliament considered that any future vision of Europe must integrate the SDGs as a fundamental principle and that Member States must adopt **sustainable economic models** for this purpose. The role of the Union in achieving sustainable development should therefore be at the heart of the discussions launched by the Commission's White Paper on the future of Europe (COM (2017)2025). According to Members, the achievement of SDGs is fundamental to the **legacy left by Europe to future generations**.

Governance: the Commission is called upon to ensure that the multi-stakeholder platform announced in its Communication will become a model of best practice for the planning, implementation, monitoring and revision of the programme by 2030.

Agriculture and food: Parliament is aware that the **current industrial agriculture model** in the Union will **make it impossible to meet SDGs on sustainable agriculture** at EU level, reduce pollution and improving soil quality and maintain biodiversity.

In line with the 2030 Agenda, it will no longer be possible to consider food, livelihoods and the management of natural resources separately from each other. Special attention will therefore need to be paid to investments in agriculture (plants, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture) as tools to **combat poverty and hunger in the world**.

In the agri-environmental field, Parliament further called for:

- the end of 2020 incentives for the use of rapeseed, palm oil or **soybean biofuels**;
- putting in place measures to make **food supply resilient** to climate shocks and reducing the impact of the agricultural sector on land, water and climate;
- measures to promote **agro-ecological transition**, minimising the use of hazardous pesticides that are detrimental to health and the environment and developing measures to protect and support organic and biodynamic agriculture within the scope of the CAP.

Parliament also called on the Commission to examine how the CAP and sustainable farming systems can best contribute to the SDGs in order to guarantee **stable, safe and nutritious food** as well as protecting and enhancing natural resources while tackling climate change.

Innovation: Parliament stated that the **EU should be the global forerunner of the transition to a low-carbon economy** and a sustainable production-consumption system. For this reason, it invited the Commission to orient its science, technology and innovation policies towards the SDGs and to present a Communication on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development (STI4SD).

It stressed the need to encourage technology transfer in energy efficiency and clean energy, knowing that **1.2 billion people in the world do not have access to electricity**, and more than 2.7 billion people do not have access to clean cooking facilities (especially in sub-Saharan Africa).

Energy: Parliament recalled that the Commission proposal for the 2030 climate and energy framework sets three key targets for 2030: a reduction in GHG emissions of at least 40 %, at least 27 % of EU energy demand to be met with renewables and an improvement in energy efficiency of at least 30 %. It recalled the positions taken by Parliament on these targets and underlined the need to keep these targets under review and to prepare a mid-century zero emissions strategy for the EU, providing a cost-efficient pathway, by taking into account the regional and national specificities within the EU, towards reaching the **net zero emissions goals** of the Paris Agreement.

Circular economy and waste reduction: Members called on the Commission to ensure that the circular economy delivers a significant drop in the use of virgin materials, a reduction in materials waste, longer lasting products, and the use of manufacturing by-products and excess materials previously considered waste streams.

Biodiversity: Parliament recalled that about 60% of animal species and 77% of protected habitats are in less than optimal condition. The Commission and the Member States are therefore invited to intensify their efforts to fully implement the nature directives and recognising the added value of the ecosystems and biodiversity of the European environment by allocating sufficient resources.

In this regard, Parliament urged the Commission and the Member States to **bolster the Natura 2000 ecological network**, while stepping up efforts to ensure that a sufficient number of special areas of conservation (SACs) are designated as such in accordance with the Habitats Directive. It called on the EU to promote methods that build soil quality, such as **rotations including legumes and livestock.**

Decontamination: Parliament urged the Commission to address the issue of environmental decontamination as a matter of priority by proposing harmonised standards against the use and degradation of soil and by presenting the action plan against deforestation as soon as possible. It also called on the Commission to step up efforts as a global player in protecting the important ecology and environment of the Arctic and urged the Commission **not to allow any policies which incentivise the exploitation of the Arctic for fossil fuels**.

Budgetary resources to meet the challenge of decarbonisation of the economy: Parliament recommended a full integration of climate action across the EU budget to ensure that measures to reduce gas emissions are included in all investment decisions in Europe.

It stressed that efforts to limit global warming are not an obstacle to economic growth and employment, but that decarbonisation of the economy should be seen as a **key source of employment for new and sustainable economic growth and employment**.

In particular, it called for the post-2020 multi-annual financial framework to shift the EU budget towards the implementation of 2030 agenda for sustainable development, guaranteeing adequate funding for the practical implementation of the SDGs. It also called for enhanced **mainstreaming of sustainable development in all funding mechanisms and budget lines**.

Parliament also called for the drafting of a report every five years on the **EU's climate legislation**.

Migration: Plenary called on the Commission and the Member States to readjust their approach to migration with a view to adopting a migration policy in line with SDG 10 and against discrimination. It reiterated its fears that new policies and financial instruments to **address the underlying causes of irregular migration** may be implemented to the detriment of development objectives. It called for a greater role for the European Parliament in this regard.

Education and awareness-raising: Parliament stressed that properly resourced public education and training systems, accessible to all, are essential for equality and social inclusion and for meeting the targets set by SDG 4. Parliament noted that **persons with disabilities** are at very high risk of living in poverty, with inadequate access to basic rights such as education, health and employment.

Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to develop **programmes to increase public awareness** of the consequences of consumption levels for human health, the environment, food safety and climate change.

Health: Parliament urged the Commission to continue stepping up action on effective measures to tackle poor **air quality**, which is responsible for over 430 000 premature deaths in the EU every year and to ensure that new and existing legislation is enforced.

Culture: lastly, Parliament stressed the **importance of culture and cultural participation to delivering on the SDG agenda**, as well as the role played by culture in external relations and development policy.

EU action for sustainability

2017/2009(INI) - 22/11/2016 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to present a strategic approach to achieving sustainable development in Europe and the world.

BACKGROUND: world leaders adopted at the 70th UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015 a new global sustainable development framework: the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** having at its core the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the same year, the Paris Climate Agreement (COP21), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction were also adopted.

The global 2030 Agenda has now become the world's **blueprint for global sustainable development**. It represents a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 worldwide. Its aim is to eradicate poverty, strengthen peace and security.

The 17 SDGs are global in nature, universally applicable and interlinked. All countries, developed and developing alike, have a shared responsibility to achieve the SDGs. The 17 SDGs provide qualitative and quantitative objectives for the next 15 years.

The EU is fully committed to be a frontrunner in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, together with its Member States, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The 2030 Agenda will further catalyse a joined-up approach between the EU's external action and its other policies and coherence across EU financing instruments.

CONTENT: the EU's answer to the 2030 Agenda will include two work streams. The first work stream, presented in this Communication, is to **fully integrate the SDGs in the European policy framework** and current Commission priorities, assessing where we stand and identifying the most relevant sustainability concerns.

The communication sets out the most relevant **synergies between the SDGs and the ten priorities**:

- the number one priority since the start of this Commission has been to **boost jobs, growth and investment**: investments in **quality education and training and among young people** are essential to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. The investment plan for Europe aims to mobilise EUR 500 billion of additional investment in the real economy through the European Strategic Investment Fund (EFSI) by 2020. The **circular economy** encourages sustainable consumption and production patterns. The **common agricultural policy** can play an important role as it is intrinsically linked to issues such as jobs, food, air, climate change, water, soil and biodiversity;
- the **Energy Union's objective** is to ensure affordable, secure and sustainable energy for businesses and households. As a follow-up to the 2015 Paris Agreement, the EU will take measures to reduce emissions, strengthen **climate change** adaptation and disaster risk management, but also on enabling factors that accelerate public and private investment;
- an innovative approach, which is linked to several SDGs, is adopted to ensure **sustainable financing**. The Capital Markets Union sets out concrete initiatives for example on green bonds, promotion of long-term investments or the prudential aspects linked to the regulation of banks;
- the issue of inclusive and sustainable growth, employment and decent work is more topical than ever for Europe. The European Pillar of Social Rights aims at putting social fairness at the heart of EU policies. Furthermore, EU action on **social and corporate responsibility** encourages the private sector to contribute to the achievement of social and environmental objectives;
- the EU is making continuous efforts in the area of justice and fundamental rights based on mutual trust which includes continued policy efforts on **justice and gender equality**;
- in the context of the **refugee crisis**, work towards a new policy on migration is needed. A new comprehensive migration policy is needed, promoting regular channels and tackling irregular migration flows, thereby saving lives, preserving human dignity. **The European agenda on migration** and its follow-up actions, including the new partnership framework with third countries, provide such a comprehensive approach grounded in the respect of fundamental rights, trust, solidarity and mutual accountability;
- the vision of the 2030 Agenda is fully consistent with the objectives of **EU external action**: the global strategy on foreign and security policy for the European Union stresses the need for an integrated EU approach to increase the EU’s impact in responding to and **preventing violent conflicts and crises** as well as of improving coherence between the EU and its Member States. The EU advocates a **rights-based approach to development cooperation**, whose implementation is critical in delivering on the SDGs. Lastly, the EU's **humanitarian assistance** plays an important role in the provision of lifesaving assistance.

The Commission is fully committed to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda through the following key actions and governance elements:

- ensure that existing and new policies should take into account the **three pillars of sustainable development**, i.e. social, environmental and economic concerns through the use of its better regulation tools;
- take implementation of the 2030 Agenda forward with the Council and the European Parliament as the co-legislators and budgetary authority of the EU;
- launch a **multi-stakeholder Platform** with a role in the follow-up and exchange of best practices on SDG implementation across sectors;
- provide **regular reporting** of the EU's progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

EU action for sustainability

2017/2009(INI) - 27/06/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the own-initiative report by Seb DANCE (S&D, UK) on EU action for sustainability.

Members recalled that climate change is not an isolated environmental issue but presents one of the greatest challenges of our time. They also indicated that the European Union and its Member States are all signatories to the Paris Agreement are committed to keeping global warming clearly below 2 ° C.

Taking note of the Commission's communication on EU action for sustainability, Members recalled that the aim of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030 is to increase the **well-being for all** and that the three pillars of sustainable development, namely social, environmental and economic development are essential for achieving the SDGs. In this regard, they called on the Commission to check the compatibility of all new policies and legislation with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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In the agri-environmental field, Members further called for:

- the end of 2020 incentives for the use of rapeseed, palm oil or **soybean biofuels**;
- putting in place measures to make **food supply resilient** to climate shocks and reducing the impact of the agricultural sector on land, water and climate;
- **reform of the Common Agricultural Policy** (CAP) to shift from the current area-based payments towards a results-based system that supports farmers in the transition to a sustainable farming system;
- measures to promote **agro-ecological transition**, minimising the use of hazardous pesticides.

As regards meat consumption, Members pointed out that consumption of red meat and saturated fatty acids in the EU continues to exceed safe nutritional values and that reduced consumption of animal products generates less greenhouse gas and nitrogen emissions. A reduction in the production and consumption of meat in the Union would thus contribute to reaching the SDGs.

Innovation: Members stated that the **EU should be the global forerunner of the transition to a low-carbon economy** and a sustainable production-consumption system. For this reason, they invited the Commission to orient its science, technology and innovation policies towards the SDGs and to present a Communication on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development (STI4SD).

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In particular, they called for the post-2020 multi-annual financial framework to shift the EU budget towards the implementation of 2030 agenda for sustainable development, guaranteeing adequate funding for the practical implementation of the SDGs. They also called for enhanced **mainstreaming of sustainable development in all funding mechanisms and budget lines**.

Education and training: Members stressed the crucial role of education and training on setting society on the path to sustainable development. They therefore encouraged Member States to step up their efforts to implement education for sustainable development at **all levels and in all forms of education and training**. Similarly, they called for sustainability and **ecological citizenship** education to be mainstreamed across disciplines, in particular entrepreneurship education.

Culture: Members stressed the need to make culture an **integral part of the Commission's work on sustainability**. To this end, they called on the Commission to recognise that culture is one of the main drivers influencing behaviour change and the creation of environmentally-friendly attitudes, consumption patterns and sustainability-driven values.