

## Civil society contribution to the VNR 2023

### General

At the request of the Interministerial Conference on Sustainable Development (IMCSD), a broad participatory process was launched in autumn 2022, giving civil society organisations the opportunity to provide input into the process of drafting the Voluntary National Review (VNR). In that process, the Federal Council for Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup> played a coordinating role.

An extensive list of organisations were invited to submit their views in response to a questionnaire. More than 30 responses were received. Syntheses were made of all those responses, by societal group.<sup>2</sup> There were also interactive sessions during the SDG Forum, which took place on 4 October in Brussels.<sup>3</sup> Organisations and citizens were able to dialogue with each other on the VNR, partly based on the previously submitted reactions. The outcome of the syntheses and discussions was handed over to the IMCSD.

Civil society organisations appreciated that - compared to the 2017 VNR process - more opportunity was given to participation during the preparatory phase of drafting the VNR.<sup>4</sup> Whether this input was effectively taken into account and led to an adjustment of the report prepared by the different policy levels of Belgium is not clear. No feedback was provided by the IMCSD on what was done with civil society input.

A joint opinion was issued by several advisory councils in early 2023 on the then available draft of the VNR. This assessed, among other things, whether there was a clear progress in terms of quality of the VNR report compared to the 2017 version. The first 2017 VNR was described as a 'baseline assessment'. It was agreed that the second VNR would be much more of an assessment of policy implementation rather than a listing of intentions. Its assessment can be found in the aforementioned opinion.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter summarises civil society's own contribution and expectations of the VNR, as expressed during the participatory process in autumn 2022. The responses have been compiled by civil society group. It is based on the contributions received from the organisations and therefore does not necessarily give a complete picture of the whole of that civil society group.

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<sup>1</sup> FRDO-CFDD: <https://frdo-cfdd.be/en/>

<sup>2</sup> All contributions and syntheses have been collected on the FRDO-cfdd website: <https://frdo-cfdd.be/en/news/civil-society-contribution-to-voluntary-national-review-2023/>

<sup>3</sup> SDG Forum 2022: <https://sdgforum.be/>

<sup>4</sup> On VNR's 2017 draft, some advisory councils made an opinion: <https://frdo-cfdd.be/adviezen/advies-over-het-belgische-rapport-voor-de-voluntary-national-review-2017/>

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://frdo-cfdd.be/en/opinions/05-opinion-on-the-draft-voluntary-national-review-2023/>

## Civil society's contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda<sup>6</sup>

### Enterprises

The various organisations representing enterprises support or promote actions around all the SDGs, with some emphases.

The agricultural organisation *Boerenbond* (Farmers' Union) has a lot of concrete projects aimed at strengthening the agricultural sector in view of the major environmental, social and ecological challenges. There is a need for answers to issues of climate, energy and nature while ensuring a livable income.

The Walloon business association *UWE* has focused on raising awareness and educating businesses about the whole of the SDGs. Thus, a special website was developed for UWE members, together with the Walloon government. It lists all kinds of Walloon companies active around 63 of the 169 targets to the SDGs. Companies that want to commit to certain SDGs are guided in doing so, via a number of thematic cells.

The national business organisation *VBO-FEB* refers to its renewed mission 'Creating Value for Society' for its own contribution. The organisation wants to be the guide to guide companies through the major societal and socio-economic challenges of the future. For instance, it is working on long-term visions in various transversal areas in the field of mobility (mobility, circular economy, taxation, energy, labour market, digitalisation, etc.). This is done through studies, reports and participation in public debates. Together with all sector federations, a general future vision for our country has also been developed, entitled Horizon 2030. This explicitly refers to the SDGs as a framework and to the intention to make our country 'SDG-Proof'. The organisation also opts to raise awareness about new trends and highlight good practices. Its member sectors have also produced sustainability reports and roadmaps.

Flemish business organisation *Voka* is trying to embed the SDGs in its own operations in various ways. Central is the 'Plan Growing Together', with a strong focus on health, innovation and sustainability. Via the Voka Charter Sustainable Business, more than 300 companies are actively supported in their plans to implement the 17 SDGs. Companies can receive certificates for their efforts and Voka works together with Cifal Flanders and UNITAR to this end. In addition, for specific SDGs there are e.g. learning networks on energy and sustainable entrepreneurship, digitalisation paths, a platform on healthcare, etc.

The employers' umbrella organisation *Verso* vzw represents social enterprises. Verso has been embedding the SDGs in its daily operations for years. Through awareness-raising and information on good practices, it promotes sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation, also within social dialogue. Verso runs the 'Hand on inclusion' project for Flanders. It provides intersectoral actions and training and education initiatives on the SDGs. Through the ECOSWITCH project, it is working on action and transition of sectors on the SDGs.

Discussions during the SDG Forum showed that a lot of companies, including small businesses, are helping to achieve the SDGs, even if they do not always communicate or certify this. It was also mentioned that partnerships with NGOs can increase companies' commitment.

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<sup>6</sup> In the individual contributions of the various organisations, as found on the FRDO-CFDD website, links to the concrete initiatives mentioned can be found in each case. This chapter contains only a limited selection of all initiatives.

## Workers

The various trade union organisations pay close attention to the SDGs within their operations.

For the liberal trade union *ACLVB-CGSLB*, the emphasis here is on the P of 'People'. More specifically, it is about SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 16, SDG 17. The organisation is strongly committed to training and sensitising trade union representatives through the 'Sustatool'. With that tool, they can bring the SDGs to the workplace through social dialogue. The methodology the organisation uses to bring the SDGs to the workplace has been selected by the EU as a good practice. *ACLVB-CGSLB* has proposed its operation with the Sustatool to other European trade unions, under SDG 17 (partnerships). Through its own development cooperation NGO (BIS-MSI), there has been collaboration with partners in Africa around the SDGs. To promote SDG 8, the three Belgian trade unions supported ITUC/ETUC's 'Timefor8' campaign.

And the actions of the Christian trade union *ACV-CSC* also focus on the P of 'People', with a focus on SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 16, SDG 17. Regarding the P of 'Partnership', the organisation has developed a roadmap on sustainable development at the Walloon level. The *ACV-CSC* also supported and promoted the 'Timefor8' campaign.

## The inclusive society

Several organisations working towards a more inclusive society pay close attention to the SDGs.

For example, the *Belgian Disability Forum* (BDF) works under the principles of 'leaving no one behind', 'connectedness and indivisibility' and 'inclusiveness'. The focus is mainly on SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10 and SDG 11. Through various communication channels, the BDF provides information on how the SDGs are relevant to persons with disabilities.

The *Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion* produced an important report on sustainability and poverty. The SDGs provide the framework for this report. The Support Centre has been recognised as an SDG Voice. Important priority SDGs for its own operations are SDG 1 and SDG 10. The various activities of the Centre do address all SDGs.

For *ATD Quart Monde Belgique*, SDG 1 is central to its operations. The organisation refers to a participatory research project, in partnership with Oxford University. In that project, people in poverty, professionals and university graduates can work together. The aim of this project is to achieve better poverty reduction policies at national and international levels.

In the discussion during the SDG Forum, it emerged that transition processes in general are often not very inclusive. Not all social groups can participate fully in them. It is often the most vulnerable groups that are hit harder, including by climate change, but who have the least resources to protect themselves from it.

## NGOs

It is clear that the various NGOs pay a lot of attention to the various SDGs in all their activities. Just about all SDGs are mentioned in the contributions of the NGOs that participated in the survey. Only SDG 14 was not mentioned. The SDG mentioned most often by the different NGOs is SDG 10 (countering inequality), followed by SDG 5 (gender equality). Thus, countering forms of inequality appears to be very important for the different civil society organisations. Furthermore, some NGOs focus specifically on well-defined SDGs.

For instance, it can be said that the *Dutch-speaking Women's Council* has a lot of focus on poverty and gender equality and women's empowerment, among others. The *Flemish Youth Council* advises on all issues affecting children, young people and youth organisations, which is related to various SDGs. The institution also gave a contribution during the Belgian UPR.

The French-speaking sustainable development organisation *Associations 21* focuses mainly on SDG 4. The organisation developed a special tool, Cap 2030, which gives chance to a wide audience to have an active discussion on the SDGs.

The organisation *Habitat et Participation* works mainly around the theme of housing (SDG 11). *Luttes-Solidarités-Travail* (LST) has an operation focused on poverty and fighting inequality (SDGs 1 and 10).

The activities of the youth council of the French-speaking community, *Forum des Jeunes*, are mainly related to quality education (SDG 4). Programmes in schools and schools themselves should be better adapted to the challenges of tomorrow.

The Dutch-language umbrella organisation of development organisations *11.11.11* does awareness-raising and policy advocacy, urging Belgian governments to step up their efforts to achieve all SDGs. The organisation focuses mainly on SDG 17 and the cross-cutting theme of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD). Thematically, the focus is on: climate change and combating its impact, the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, making trade and investment policies more sustainable, equal access to the legal system for all and corporate duty of care, fiscal policy and debt relief for lower-income countries, the requirement to spend 0.7% of GDP on international cooperation by 2030, equitable migration policies, defending "civil space", strengthening civil society participation and political inclusion, partnerships for sustainable development, global citizenship education.

*Sensoa*, the centre of expertise on sexual health, is particularly committed to SDG 3, SDG 4 and SDG 5. The French-speaking environmental umbrella organisation *Canopea* is mainly concerned with 'green SDGs' 7, 11, 12, 13 and 15. The Dutch-speaking sustainable development organisation *Reset Flanders* has activities in just about all SDGs. *Trias*, aimed at strengthening entrepreneurship in the South, has integrated the People, Planet and Profit components into its core strategies. *BOS+* is committed to forest conservation and expansion and better forest management. The organisation works domestically, in Africa and in Latin America.

Like 11.11.11, the French-language umbrella of development organisations *CNCD* has a central focus on SDGs and promoting policy coherence (PCSD). The joint actions focus heavily on Central Africa and providing answers to the climate crisis. The development organisation *WSM* focuses its own activities mainly on those SDGs related to decent work and social protection. The *Be-cause Health* network focuses mainly on actions related to health, inequality, sexual and reproductive rights.

### Science and research

This category includes some organisations involved in promoting scientific research and also some advisory councils. In this sense, they probably give a limited picture of the full field of science and research.

The *Fund for Scientific Research Flanders (FWO)* mentions that in principle, by giving support to scientific knowledge building, there can be a contribution to all the SDGs. It is up to the researchers requesting support to decide what their research is about (and thus to which SDG that research is linked).

On its own initiative, the *Flemish Advisory Council for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (VARIO)* has issued a number of opinions related to the SDGs. These include: the SDGs as a compass for science, innovation and entrepreneurship policy, opportunities for Flemish companies via the SDGs, the draft of the fourth Flemish Sustainable Development Strategy. A concrete proposal in those opinions is to make all government support to companies conditional on a positive impact on the SDGs.

The *Flemish Strategic Advisory Council on Agriculture and Fisheries (SALV)* has issued several opinions on the various key Flemish strategies linked to sustainability issues. These include the implementation of the SDGs. The SALV monitors the implementation of the SDGs at the different policy levels.

The French-speaking *Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur (ARES)* is at once a federation and an administration. As a federation of educational institutions, ARES works in many ways to promote quality education (SDG 4). It participates in the work of various international organisations working on sustainable development. As an administration, ARES is taking initiatives to reduce its own footprint (SDG 13), to strive for sustainable consumption (SDG 12) and to integrate sustainability clauses in some public procurement (SDG 12). Inclusive writing is also being promoted (SDG 5).

## **Priority themes and SDGs for Belgium in implementing the 2030 Agenda**

### NGOs

- Strive for a systemic change of the prevailing economic model. This requires an integral holistic approach to the SDGs, through the 'Donut Model', to arrive at a model within planetary boundaries. (Dutch-speaking Women's Council, Associations 21, LST, Reset Flanders, BOS+)
- A priority focus on the climate and biodiversity crisis. (Dutch-speaking Women's Council, Flemish Youth Council, Associations 21, BOS+, CNCD and 11.11.11)
- Tackling poverty and inequality in all its forms. (Dutch-speaking Women's Council, Flemish Youth Council, Habitat et Participation, LST, Reset Flanders)
- An ambitious and equitable energy transition. Clear choice for renewable energy and a policy that makes the transition accessible to all social groups. (Associations 21, Habitat et Participation, LST, Canopea, Reset Flanders)
- Guarantee the right to housing for all. (Associations 21, Habitat et Participation, Reset Flanders)
- Strong social protection at home and internationally. (LST, Reset Flanders, WSM)
- Structural focus on policy coherence for sustainable development. (11.11.11, CNCD, Advisory Council on Policy Coherence for Development, Associations 21, Trias)
- Quality education. (Forum des Jeunes)
- Equitable access to responsive health services and promotion of SRHR. (Be-cause Health)
- Better services for people living with HIV and addressing HIV-related stigma and discrimination, better policies around physical and sexual integrity for the asylum and migration sector, education policies around relationships and sexuality. (Sensoa)
- Making ILO's Decent Work Agenda central to international policy. (WSM)
- Structural attention to the externalities (international) of domestic policies. (11.11.11, Trias, BOS+)

### The inclusive society

- Guaranteeing the right to housing. One way to do this is to substantially increase the number of affordable and quality housing units. (Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion, SDG Forum)

- An equitable energy transition. Including a special focus on the energy renovation of housing rented by low-income people. (Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion, ATD Quart Monde, SDG Forum)
- Increased supply of quality jobs for short-skilled people. Inclusive employment (BDF, Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion).
- Equal educational opportunities. (Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion)
- In every policy decision, ask whether persons with disabilities have access to that policy or measure. More generally, a much broader focus on 'leave no one behind'. (BDF)
- Seeing poverty as a violation of human rights and not just the result of individual responsibility of people in poverty. (ATD Quart Monde)
- The participation process for the Voluntary National Review is not fully inclusive. Many organisations or citizens cannot participate. (SDG Forum)

### Workers

- Priority focus on decent work. Greater focus on quality of work and occupational health and safety. (ACV-CSC, ACLVB-CGSLB)
- Meet the 0.7% for international cooperation. (ACLVB-CGSLB, ACV-CSC)
- Ratify ILO Convention C.190 and eliminate the gender pay gap. (ACLVB-CGSLB)
- Importance of social protection. Funding social protection in bilateral programmes with international partners. Funding of the Global Fund for Social Protection and the Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection (ILO). (ACV-CSC)
- Transition must be equitable. Climate shocks must be able to be absorbed through proper social protection. (SDG Forum)
- The need for policies with a long-term perspective. Decisions taken now (in response to the crisis) must be compatible with the SDGs. (SDG Forum)

### Enterprises

- Belgium's policy should focus on those SDGs and targets for which the score is currently not good. These include: share of renewable energy in total energy supply, female share of graduates in STEM fields at tertiary level, satisfaction with public transport, development cooperation. (UWE)
- More attention is needed on the impacts associated with imports and exports. It is important to consider the environmental and social impacts beyond our borders (e.g. electronic waste, pollution, risk of human rights violations). It is necessary to have a good understanding of the entire supply chain and customers. For this, good data is needed. (UWE)
- In the transition to a sustainable economy, the focus should be on: CO<sub>2</sub> reduction, green innovation, green mobility and promoting ESG principles. It is important to look at EU reference countries for these themes. The aim should be to do at least as well as those reference countries for those themes. (VOKA)
- Our country faces four major challenges: the trend of slowing down our economic growth and productivity growth, the ageing of our population, (global) climate change, the international trend towards deglobalisation. To respond to these, a major turnaround is needed in four major areas: digitalisation, greening, labour market, governments. (VBO-FEB)
- A special focus is needed on the agricultural sector. To integrate sustainability expectations, a correct income for farmers is a prerequisite. It is important to tackle the challenges together and

chain-wide. It is further important that healthy and sustainably produced food is consumed in a healthy diet and lifestyle. (Farmers' Union)

- Social enterprises play an important role. There is a need to capture the contribution and positive impact of different sectors through simple and transparent sustainability indicators that can be easily monitored by any enterprise. (Verso)
- There is a need for initiatives to further inform and raise awareness of the SDGs among small businesses as well. (SDG Forum)
- A key challenge lies in the area of the circular economy, including a focus on eco-design and life-cycle analysis. (SDG Forum)
- Different legislations at different policy levels are a challenge for companies. (SDG Forum)
- The energy crisis is having a severe impact on businesses. At the same time, there may also be opportunities to accelerate the energy transition, including by consuming less energy. (SDG Forum)

### Science and Research

- Climate action. Mitigation of climate change. Environment-related SDGs. (ARES, FWO)
- Socially responsible production and consumption. (ARES, FWO)
- Access to quality education. (ARES)
- Biodiversity. (ARES)
- Protection of marine and terrestrial life. Countering pollution. (ARES)
- Consideration of the social and environmental impact of its own activities. (ARES)
- Tackling the export of plastic waste and pesticides. (ARES)
- Sustained research efforts in affluent countries for all SDGs. This is important to achieve the SDGs at the global level. (FWO)
- Attention to a sustainable agriculture, horticulture and agri-food sector. A vision for a robust and sustainable food system. (SALV)
- There is a need for other indicators to support and monitor a more sustainable economic model. In developing these, scientists can play an important role. (SDG Forum)
- Scientists can help make choices and assessments in a transparent manner. (SDG Forum)
- It is important that university courses are adequately adapted to the need for a cross-cutting approach to societal challenges. (SDG Forum)

### **Need for change at European or international level**

#### Science and research

- There is a need for scientific breakthroughs in the socio-economic value chain. This requires: (1) intensifying international research and development investments in both human and institutional resources, (2) developing initiatives (worldwide) for the widest possible free access to information (open science) and for the promotion of the exchange of standardised data (open data), (3) stimulating inter- and transdisciplinary research, (4) improving and intensifying the dialogue between researchers, policy-makers and the general public, (5) continuing to invest in the training of the next generation of creative scientists and technically qualified workers. (FWO)
- Some key challenges: (1) the development of sustainable economic models that help reduce the profits of large multinationals, (2) access to quality education for all throughout life, (3) a greater commitment to reducing the carbon footprint (ARES).

- There is a need for more coherence in monitoring the SDGs by the different policy levels. Different indicators are used depending on the level (global, European, Belgian, Flemish). (VARIO)
- There is a need for a better system for internalising external costs. If this is not well organised, companies may be at a competitive disadvantage, e.g. with a CO<sub>2</sub> tax. An arrangement at supra-national level is preferable. (VARIO)
- There must be sufficient attention to the level playing field in the international market. This attention is already taking concrete form in the Commission's proposal for a CBAM under the ETS system. (VARIO)
- There is a need for more policy coherence in the EU's common agricultural and food policies. (SALV)

### Enterprises

- There is a need for proper follow-up within the EU so that all countries are assessed at the same level and the bar is set equally high. (VOKA)
- Internationally, all countries need to be on board. That way we can ensure the continent's competitiveness and prevent carbon leakage. (VOKA)
- There is a need for a different food policy. Price agreements within the chain are needed. This requires an adaptation of competition legislation. There is a need for a truly level playing field. In this context, a form of border levy (analogous to CBAM) that is WTO-compliant could be considered. (Farmers' Union)
- There is a need for measures that can normalise the current energy price situation. Climate investments should be able to take place in a favourable investment climate. (VOKA)
- The 2030 Agenda represents a new policy vision around which EU countries can unite and for which citizens can be mobilised. (UWE)

### The inclusive society

- Priority issues are: (1) developing measures, instruments and funds in function of equitable financing of climate policy, (2) stronger focus on inequality and how it can be reduced, (3) strengthening rights with regard to energy, water, mobility and internet. (Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion)
- European legislators should pay more systematic attention to inclusiveness. This includes "e-society" and digitalisation in general (BDF)
- The Social Climate Fund should reach people on low incomes, living in poorly insulated housing and in regions where there is little public transport. (ATD Quart Monde)
- There is a need to strengthen the fight against discrimination based on socio-economic status. (ATD Quart Monde)

### Workers

- Extra focus on decent work, focusing on quality of work. (ACLVB-CGSLB and ACV-CSC)
- Binding legislation around Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD). (ACLVB-CGSLB and ACV-CSC)
- Universal social protection (USP). (ACLVB-CGSLB)
- Climate and just transition. (ACLVB-CGSLB and ACV-CSC)

### NGOs



- A structural focus on policy coherence for sustainable development. (11.11.11, CNCD, Advisory Council on Policy Coherence for Development, Trias, BOS+, Be-cause Health)
- Strong international climate and biodiversity policies. (Flemish Youth Council, BOS+, CNCD, 11.11.11)
- Further develop the social dimension of the EU. (Dutch-speaking Women's Council)
- International support for social protection programmes. (WSM)
- EU should propose credible projects for exit from nuclear and fossil energy while supporting massive renewable energy development. (Canopea)
- Strong international policy against deforestation. (BOS+)
- A comprehensive approach to the SDGs and a framework for their follow-up that does not allow for 'greenwashing'. (Reset Flanders)
- Limiting lobbies that prevent structural policies, phasing out measures or (budgetary) norms that prevent sustainable investments. (Associations 21, Habitat et Participation)
- Better structural policies for Central Africa (CNCD and 11.11.11).
- Greater focus on health and gender equality within European development cooperation. (Sensoa)
- Belgium should continue to actively pursue SRHR with other countries. (Be-cause Health SRHR)

### **What should be the key messages of the VNR 2023**

#### The inclusive society

- A strong focus on 'leave no one behind'. (BDF)
- The importance of an equitable transition, with a focus on equitable financing of climate policy. (Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion)
- The importance of better monitoring of inequalities and 'Matthew effects' in our society. (Support centre for combating poverty, insecurity and social exclusion)
- A choice of ex ante and ex post analysis of policy measures, with participation of people in poverty. (Centre for the fight against poverty, insecurity and social exclusion)
- The urgency of thinking and acting in a long-term perspective. Measures for people in poverty are too often provisional. (ATD Quart Monde)
- Greater attention and recognition for the contributions of all - including those who are often ignored - to the SDGs. (ATD Quart Monde)
- Better use of the tools that already exist to act in a more participatory and coherent way. (ATD Quart Monde)

#### Science and research

- Highlighting the importance of scientific research as a mediator for global prosperity and well-being (FWO)
- The SDGs hold many opportunities for companies. SDG 8 and SDG 9 can be strengthened by engaging with the other SDGs. Profit and purpose can reinforce each other. (VARIO)
- The current growth model is not sustainable. There is a need for a 'new economy': climate-neutral, circular, inclusive, with fair chains. There is a need for a 'transformative innovation model'. The EU has already taken initiatives in this direction through the Green Deal and NextGenerationEU. (VARIO)

- Two things are really very important: (1) access to quality education for all and for all life, (2) sustainable consumption. (ARES)

### Workers

- An emphasis on the importance of decent work SDG 8 as a transformative SDG. (ACLBV-CGSLB and ACV-CSC)

### Businesses

- The business community is already strongly committed to achieving the SDGs and will continue to do so. The VOKA Charter Sustainable Business programme is innovative and unique. With this programme, our country is a frontrunner. (VOKA)
- It is very important to ensure policy coherence of public policies, and that at national and European level. This is important for accelerating the ecological transition and ensuring greater social justice. (UWE)
- Overall, it is very important to be more vigilant about the policy coherence of public policies at national, inter-federal and European levels. The structure of our Belgian economy is very open and does not allow us to engage in 'gold plating'. (VBO-FEB)
- The VNR should express appreciation for sustainable food production in Belgium and recognise that the sustainability of food production is ongoing. There is a need for a system adjustment in terms of a fair price for the producer as a condition for further sustainability. (Farmers' Union)
- From their core mission, social enterprises automatically contribute to the achievement of the various sustainability objectives. The way this civil society is organised in Belgium is unique and can be a model for other countries. (Verso)

### NGOs

- Concrete commitments to the identified challenges are needed. (Dutch-speaking Women's Council)
- It is important to recognise that different forms of struggles and challenges are linked. The climate struggle must also be a struggle for social justice. (Flemish Youth Council)
- Massive investments are needed for mental well-being. (Flemish Youth Council)
- It is important to make education for sustainable development more structural. (Associations 21)
- There is a need for stronger policies that can provide structural answers to the housing crisis (Habitat et Participation).
- The text should show that Belgium wants to make the international solidarity pledge concrete and that Belgium is an active partner in realising health and gender equality. (Sensoa)
- There is a need for a different vision on how we deal with energy. By 2030, we must massively reduce energy consumption for a credible transition to renewable energy. 'Energy sufficiency' should be central to the debate on SDG 7.(Canopea)
- Key messages: (1) focus on international solidarity, (2) a more holistic approach, especially for housing policy, (3) combine the processes for the UNR and for the National Conference on Just Transition, (4) focus on strengthening public support and democracy. (Reset Flanders)
- There is a need for a concrete interpretation of the progress made in Belgium. (Trias)
- For Central Africa policy: (1) strengthening civil society in partner countries, (2) decolonisation and equal partnership, (3) policy coherence, (4) better financing of international cooperation. (CNCD and 11.11.11)

- For climate policy: (1) draw up bilan for SDG 13 and SDG 12 (12.2), (2) clarify mutual linkage between SDG 12 (12.2) and SDG 13, through circular strategies, (3) formulate recommendations to make progress. (CNCD and 11.11.11)
- Need for explicit support for the Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection. (WSM)
- Need for a "health in all policies strategy". (Be-cause health)
- Continued support for SRHR. (Be-cause health SRHR)