

**RESULTS REPORT
OF THE REGIONAL
COLLABORATIVE
PLATFORM
FOR EUROPE AND
CENTRAL ASIA
2024**



**UNITED NATIONS
REGIONAL
COLLABORATIVE
PLATFORM**



**EUROPE AND
CENTRAL ASIA**

Table of Contents

I. Introduction and regional development context

II. Highlights of system-wide results at the regional level

A. Policy support

Support in transition areas

1. Environment and Climate Change
2. Sustainable Food Systems
3. Digital Transformation
4. Social Protection

Support in other crucial policy areas

5. Gender Equality
6. Health and Well-being
7. Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience
8. Adolescents and Youth
9. Data and Statistics
10. Regional efficiencies
11. Peer Support Group

B. Engagement in regional and global processes

III. Conclusion



I. Introduction and regional development context

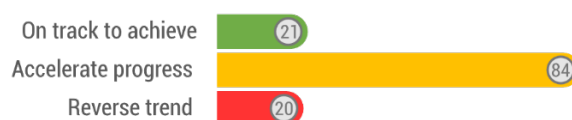
1. The Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP) unites all UN entities working on sustainable development to ensure full collaboration and coordination of UN assets in addressing key challenges that transcend country borders. The RCP provides policy support and access to expertise to deliver for the specific needs and priorities of each region and in support of the work of Resident Coordinators and UN country teams at the country level.
2. In 2024, the RCP for Europe and Central Asia RCP-ECA intensified its collaborative efforts to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Key focus areas included responding to multiple crises, an ongoing war, and pressing human rights challenges, while aligning actions with global and regional policy priorities. The RCP focused on strengthening the alignment between the supply and demand for policy support, ensuring that assistance was strategic, tailored to the specific needs of countries and territories in the region¹.
3. The RCP directed regional tools and expertise towards advancing SDG acceleration through a transitions/systems thinking approach in critical policy areas such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, sustainable food systems, jobs and social protection, and digital connectivity. Strategic opportunities were identified to provide policy, technical, and operational support at regional, subregional, and country levels. Efforts were made to leverage the outcomes of the SDG Summit and the preparatory process for the Summit of the Future in 2024, reinforcing global commitments to SDG acceleration and sustainable transformative action.

¹ For profiles of IBCs and groups and their membership, terms of reference, areas of work, menu of support services, knowledge products and events, see the regional knowledge management hub at uneuropecentralasia.org.

4. The joint efforts of the UN development system were carried out in a challenging regional context, marked by ongoing conflicts and economic uncertainties. The ongoing war against Ukraine continued to create significant humanitarian and reconstruction needs, with uncertain prospects heavily dependent on international financing. Amid ongoing challenges to political and social human rights, the region struggled with the burdens of a cost-of-living crisis—marked by rising food and energy costs—and the growing issue of human displacement.

5. In ECA, growth is projected to slow to 2.5% in 2025 before rising to 2.7% in 2026, with the war in Ukraine and other crises driving much of this deceleration. Despite these headwinds, resilience emerges through a dynamic youth population, expanding digital innovation, green transitions, and ongoing EU accession efforts. Inflation, though easing to 3.6% in 2024 from 4.6% in 2023, remains above pre-pandemic levels, while fiscal adjustments have largely been deferred amid rising public expenditures. Central Asia experienced a growth of 4.3% in 2024, a decrease from 5.6% from the previous year. Meanwhile, the Western Balkans sees growth accelerating from 0.7% in 2023 to 3.3% in 2024, driven by stronger incomes and fiscal support. Climate change further compounds regional vulnerabilities, with water scarcity in Central Asia and severe flooding in the Western Balkans underscoring the urgency of proactive adaptation strategies.

6. Overall, progress towards the SDGs continued to be insufficient and reflects the negative impacts of multiple crises. According to the 2025 UNECE SDG Progress Report², the region will achieve 21 targets by 2030 if the current path is followed. This is 17 per cent of the assessed targets, which is the same as estimated for the previous year. For 84 targets (67 per cent), progress must accelerate, and for 20 targets (16 per cent), the current trend be reversed. Enhanced data availability has enabled the assessment of 125 out of 169 SDG targets—an increase of 8 targets compared to last year and of 36 targets compared to four years ago, marking a continuous improvement in tracking SDG progress.



7. While the ECA region as a whole includes the member states of the European Union (EU) and other high-income Western and Northern European countries, support to the country level was targeted to the 17 countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia with UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) present,³ as well as to Kosovo⁴.

² UNECE, [Sustainable Development in the UNECE Region: More data, persistent challenges](#), Geneva, 2025. See also snapshot of SDG progress in the UNECE region in the annex, figure 1. The representation of the status of SDGs and targets throughout the text is drawn from this source.

³ Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

⁴ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999).



II. Highlights of system-wide results at the regional level

8. In the 2024 reporting period, the RCP addressed the acceleration opportunities mainly through its Issue-based Coalitions (IBC) and other regional interagency groups in support of both member States and UN entities at country-level. These have evolved since 2016 and have been empowered and repositioned in line with the UN development system (UNDS) reform and country needs and priorities. They are covering cross-cutting issues in which joint action and the pooling of expertise and knowledge is most effective due to the complementarity of mandates and profiles of a critical mass of regional UN development system entities. Currently, the IBCs and groups respond to regional priorities that are key to deliver on the SDGs⁵: environment and climate change; sustainable food systems; digital transformation; and social protection.

9. The RCP delivered targeted and demand-driven support on other critical enablers and accelerators of sustainable development: gender equality; large movements of people, displacement and resilience; youth and adolescents; health and well-being; and data and statistics. In addition, support and quality assurance to Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (Cooperation Frameworks) has been provided by the Peer Support Group (PSG), and the regional efficiency agenda has been pursued by the Regional Operations Management Team (R-OMT).

10. Support requests from RCs and UNCTs to the regional level (64 in 2024) have been collected through a survey in a systematic manner and have been responded to in the course of 2024. They represented an important part of the overall RCP support provided to the UNCTs throughout the year, which complemented the policy and advocacy regional-level work conducted by the IBCs and other regional groups. The following chapters will focus on specific areas of support requested.

⁵ See UNSDG, [Six transitions](#): Investment pathways to deliver the SDGs, New York 2023.

A. Policy support

Support to SDG acceleration through sustainable transition areas

1) Environment and Climate Change

11. While there is still considerable progress to be made, the region made progress in accelerating the goals related to climate change, environment and energy (SDGs 6, 7, 12-15). 4 out of 51 targets in this cluster are on track, while for eight targets the trend must be reversed, including on water quality, transboundary water cooperation, fossil fuel subsidies, desertification and land degradation, and loss of biodiversity:

Targets  1 On track to achieve 3 Accelerate progress 2 Reverse trend 2 Cannot be assessed	Targets  1 On track to achieve 3 Accelerate progress 0 Reverse trend 1 Cannot be assessed	Targets  0 On track to achieve 5 Accelerate progress 2 Reverse trend 4 Cannot be assessed	Targets  0 On track to achieve 2 Accelerate progress 0 Reverse trend 3 Cannot be assessed	Targets  2 On track to achieve 2 Accelerate progress 2 Reverse trend 4 Cannot be assessed	Targets  0 On track to achieve 9 Accelerate progress 2 Reverse trend 1 Cannot be assessed
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12. Throughout 2024, the IBC on Environment and Climate Change continued to provide tailored technical support to UNCTs and RCs, responding to pressing needs related to environmental sustainability and climate resilience. Key priorities included policy dialogues and knowledge products on integrated water management, just transitions, biodiversity, and gender-climate nexus.

13. Recognizing the critical importance of water management in the region, the IBC provided analytical support⁶ to UNCTs on recent initiatives in the field of water governance across the South Caucasus and Central Asia. These analytical studies examined ongoing programmes implemented by UN and non-UN development partners, identified challenges and opportunities, and provided policy and programmatic entry points for enhanced UN engagement at country, transboundary, and subregional levels. By leveraging the integrated expertise of the RCP, the reports helped UNCTs navigate complex water governance issues and explore opportunities for joint action. Notably, findings from the South Caucasus study directly contributed to the subregional CCA and informed discussions for the upcoming Cooperation Framework cycle.

14. The IBC provided support for mainstreaming biodiversity into national planning processes and sharing of best practices and actionable steps for integrating biodiversity into the Cooperation Frameworks through an online webinar in November 2024 in collaboration with the UN Environment Management Group. The discussion with RCO and UNCT participants provided new insights to the designing of the biodiversity-specific regional advocacy messages and guidance for mainstreaming biodiversity, to be finalized in 2025.

15. The peer learning round table on SDG 13: *[“Solving the Rubik’s cube of the planetary crisis: lining up policy solutions for climate risks and biodiversity loss.”](#)* organized by the IBC at the 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD), underscored the need to strengthen preparedness and manage risks from climate extremes through multi-hazard early warning systems, while acknowledging children’s unique vulnerabilities. Discussions highlighted the interconnected challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, emphasizing the need for science-based, integrated policies, participatory approaches and inclusive decision-making, as well as the role of advanced information-gathering tools and state-of-the-art models in understanding the links between nature, climate, human well-being and rights. The event featured several policy examples from programme countries and resulted in concrete lessons learned on preparedness and climate risk management that Member States can apply.

16. Over the past year, the IBC supported the mainstreaming of global environmental agendas into national development policies by providing guidance to UNCTs and sharing best practices. Through a webinar attended by over 50 participants, the IBC showcased the practical application of the *[“Guidance on Integrating the Environment and Climate Change in Cooperation Framework processes”](#)*. Participants explored how global environmental goals can be

⁶ [UN initiatives on water management in the South Caucasus and potential entry points](#); [UN initiatives on water management in Central Asia and potential entry points](#)

translated into actionable national policies, with a key takeaway being the need for cross-sectoral collaboration to address challenges like biodiversity loss, pollution and climate resilience.

17. Furthermore, the IBC joined forces with the UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) alliance and convened diverse stakeholders including governments, workers, employers and climate actors, to discuss integrating social equity into climate policies at COP29 through a side event in Baku: [“From Vision to Practice for a Just Transition for All.”](#) Key outcomes included the creation of a regional multi-stakeholder technical working group and the promotion of policies supporting green jobs, sustainable finance and circular economy practices. These discussions underscored the importance of labour rights, gender-responsive approaches and cross-regional collaboration for a just climate transition.

18. To complement the policy guidance and knowledge products developed sub-regionally, the IBC has also provided tailored technical

19. support directly to individual UNCTs in 2024: **Kazakhstan** on just transitions from mining and fossil fuels to a green economy; **Republic of Moldova** on sustainable forest management; **Tajikistan** on strengthening integration and coherence across the Cooperation Framework (common approach to inclusive green economic growth, climate and environment); **Turkmenistan** on human mobility in the context of climate change and just transition; **Uzbekistan** on integrating a gender perspective into water and climate change projects and programmes; and **North Macedonia** on air pollution.

2) Sustainable Food Systems

20. On SDG 2 on hunger and food security, no target is on track in the region as a whole. Access to sufficient and nutritious food and food security is not universal in the UNECE region:

GOAL 2	ZERO HUNGER
2.1	Undernourishment and food security
2.2	Malnutrition
2.3	Small-scale food producers
2.4	Sustainable agriculture
2.5	Genetic resources for agriculture
2.a	Investment in agriculture
2.b	Agricultural export subsidies
2.c	Food price anomalies

21. In 2024, the IBC-SFS is increasingly recognized by UNCTs as a regional platform for cross-agency learning and exchange, with regular requests and timely support provided to UNCTs. The IBC on Sustainable Food Systems (IBC-SFS) continued its role as a key regional link to the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) Hub on the follow up to the first UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2 and the preparatory work ahead of the UNFSS+4, providing updates, facilitating regional meetings with National Convenors, and supporting the Convergence Initiative through an inception workshop and the drafting and release of a blueprint document for Kazakhstan, Türkiye. Uzbekistan has now also joined the CI as an additional participating country.

22. Advocacy for high-level political commitment to sustainable food systems was advanced through multi-sectoral approaches. The IBC strengthened the RC and UNCT capacities in support of national development priorities, by sharing knowledge, analytical tools, and best practices, notably through workshops and trainings such as the Operationalizing a Holistic Approach to Food Systems Transformation webinar, and a keynote at the International Conference on Cooperation in Food Security and Climate Change in Turkmenistan, outlining key priorities for agrifood system transformation.

23. Cross-agency collaboration coordinated by the IBC progressed through joint knowledge products like the [2024 Regional Overview on Food Security and Nutrition: Managing Water Resources Sustainably for Food Security, the Regional State of Food Security and Nutrition, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at centre of regional forum, and the School Feeding Landscape Analysis that includes a baseline assessment in selected countries](#) with contributions from FAO, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. The analysis includes a rapid review of school

feeding resources, an agreed methodology for country-level data collection, data analysis and ongoing stakeholder consultations.

24. To facilitate cross-agency integration and engagement with external experts, the IBC-SFS held its first in-person retreat in Copenhagen, bringing together its membership, the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and the representatives of the Copenhagen Municipality. The retreat explored modalities to enhance the IBC's relevance and impact within the complex food systems landscape as well as its ties with the IBCs on Health and Environment and Climate Change. An internal evaluation was carried out prior to the retreat to gather perspectives from external partners and stakeholders to inform discussion among members on the IBC-SFS on its relevance in the institutional landscape of food systems, focus on realistic, high-impact initiatives based on the comparative strengths of its member agencies. The retreat also helped shape the UN system's coordinated engagement in the lead-up to the UN Food Systems Summit +4 (UNFSS+4), taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27–29 July 2025, reinforcing momentum around system-wide contributions to sustainable food systems.

25. Throughout 2024, the IBC-SFS provided technical advice and expertise through a variety of specialised regional events such as the [Regional Meeting of ECA National Convenors](#), [RFSD SDG 2 Roundtable on Healthy and Sustainable Diets](#), [RFSD side event on Food Systems Transformation as an SDG Accelerator](#), and UNFSS Convergence Initiative Workshops⁷ in Kazakhstan and Türkiye.

26. In addition to the policy guidance and knowledge products developed, the IBC has also provided tailored support directly to individual UNCTs in 2024, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, and Uzbekistan. Such support included sharing tools and best practices to enhance systemic understanding of food systems and cross-sectoral collaboration, introducing analytical frameworks for measuring food system interactions and impacts (e.g., Food Systems Countdown Initiative) showcasing country-level progress on sustainable dietary patterns and supporting Belarus UNCT in the Cooperation Framework process.

27. In 2024, the IBC on Sustainable Food Systems (IBC-SFS) advanced its strategic communication and advocacy efforts to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through key communication products. A new video, “Enhancing the Sustainability of Food Systems in the Face of Climate Impacts: Initiatives from ECA,” was launched at the IBC-SFS Roundtable on Healthy and Sustainable Diets, highlighting regional actions to build climate-resilient food systems. The IBC-SFS played a visible role at the 2024 UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, organizing a National Convenors meeting and hosting a side event on healthy diets with stories and news published. The 6th Food Systems Talk spotlighted Finland's journey toward sustainable food systems through a dialogue with its National Convenor, contributing to cross-country learning and visibility.

3) Digital Transformation

28. To harness its full potential—and avoid new digital divides—the RCP is working with country teams to embed ethical, inclusive AI principles in the programmes under the Cooperation Framework, investing in region-wide data-governance standards, and coordinating programmes to strengthen public-sector capacity to use AI to support SDG acceleration. Access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the internet is widespread in the region, and the related target 9.c is on track:

 9.c Access to ICT & the Internet

29. In 2024, the UN Regional Digital Transformation Group focused on developing knowledge products, providing capacity-building support and organising regional events in supporting UNCTs to harness digital transformation for SDG acceleration throughout the region.

30. An important highlight of the group's work was the digital skills support provided to all UNCTs in the region, which showcased successful initiatives, shared best practices, and addressed challenges in digital transformation processes. Insights from the [digital skills compendium](#) and a webinar will inform future assessments and training

⁷ [Convergence Initiative Inception workshop in Türkiye](#); [Convergence Initiative in Kazakhstan](#)

programs, with a focus on vulnerable groups, contributing to progress on SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth.

31. Support was also provided to the UNCTs in Ukraine and the UN team in Kosovo⁸, through the preparation of the Digital Development Country Profiles. These profiles aim to map the digital landscape, highlight gaps and opportunities, and guide efforts toward fostering inclusive and sustainable digital development.

32. At the 2024 RFSD, the IBC organized three events, including the [SDG 17 Roundtable: Building Effective Partnerships for Digital Transformation](#), and two side events, the [Human-Centric Approach to Digital Transformation](#) and the [Launch of Guidelines for Pre-Accession Countries on Meeting EU Digital Agriculture Requirements](#), which collectively advanced regional cooperation and actionable guidance on digital priorities.

4) Social Protection and Jobs

33. While the region has strong social protection coverage overall, key gaps persist- most notably in support for the unemployed, with fewer than 40 per cent receiving benefits. This shortfall, alongside limited coverage for informal workers and other vulnerable groups in some countries continues to hinder progress towards the social protection target 1.3.

1.3 Social protection

34. In 2024, the IBC on Social Protection and Jobs refined its strategic focus to better align its work with the key sustainable transitions and the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, emphasizing social protection and jobs as key drivers for accelerating SDG implementation.

35. The IBC contributed to advancing knowledge-sharing through organising a peer learning round table at the 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development on ["Preparing Social Protection Systems to Respond to the Poverty Impacts of the Climate Crisis and Green Transitions."](#) The event featured insights from Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Albania. The session's findings highlighted the urgency of equipping social protection systems to address multiple, overlapping crises—including displacement, natural disasters, and rising living costs.

36. Furthermore, the IBC supported selected UNCTs in strengthening their interactions with the Global Accelerator. Such support was provided, e.g., to **Bosnia and Herzegovina** UNCT to better understand the mandate of and the engagement mechanism with the Accelerator, as well as to the **Albania** and **Uzbekistan** UNCTs by providing technical reviews of the Accelerator and [M-GA](#) (the World Bank Multi-trust fund for the Global accelerator) proposals to enhance national planning and implementation.

Support in other crucial policy areas

5) Gender Equality

37. Progress on gender equality (SDG 5) can only be measured for less than half of the targets due to data gaps and measurement challenges. Moreover, improvements continue to be slow in several areas, with large variation in progress between countries within the region:

⁸ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999).

GOAL 5	GENDER EQUALITY
5.b	Technology for women's empowerment
5.1	Discrimination against women & girls
5.4	Unpaid care and domestic work
5.5	Women in leadership
5.2	Violence against women & girls
5.3	Early marriage
5.6	Reproductive health access & rights
5.a	Equal economic rights
5.c	Gender equality policies

38. In 2024, the IBC on Gender Equality (IBC-GE) strengthened UN system-wide accountability for gender equality by providing targeted support to UNCTs and Gender Theme Groups (GTGs/GRGs), upon their request to increase their capacities to integrate gender perspectives into the Cooperation Frameworks. The sessions attracted nearly 230 participants from all UNCTs in the region, with 59% identifying as GTG members, demonstrating strong engagement in gender coordination mechanisms.

39. Additionally, the IBC-GE collaborated with UNSSC, UNFPA, UNEP, and DCO-ECA in the workshop on *Fostering a Shift Towards Systems Thinking and Innovative Approaches in the Development of Cooperation Frameworks*, in which over 50 representatives from UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNDRR, OHCHR, and UN Women attended. The IBC-GE played a pivotal role in ensuring gender mainstreaming and a women's rights focus, responding to the high demand for capacity-building in Cooperation Framework development.

40. In terms of policy and advocacy work, the IBC-GE contributed to agenda-setting, technical guidance, and a unified approach to addressing gender equality and women's empowerment challenges in the *Regional Beijing+30 Review*, including facilitating the contribution of a range of UN entities to [parliamentary documents](#) which enriched the deliberations of Member States - in line with the emphasis in the UN system-wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan on working with Member States to uphold normative gains on gender equality in all intergovernmental spaces. The IBC-GE also successfully secured funding from the *Joint SDG Fund* for a regional initiative to enhance SDG 5 data reporting. This programme —the first of its kind—will be implemented in 2025 by the two co-chairs of the IBC-GE (UNFPA and UN Women) in collaboration with DCO and with inputs from other individual members of the IBC-GE. The project will improve the capacity of national statistical systems to collect, analyze, and disseminate data for SDG 5 indicators, mainstream gender into statistical processes and institutionalize gender-related data practices- ultimately supporting more effective monitoring, policymaking and accountability for gender equality across the region.

6) Health and Well-being

41. On health and well-being (SDG 3), progress assessment is possible for all the 13 targets. The region is set to achieve targets on the reduction of maternal and child mortality as well as mortality from non-communicable diseases (targets 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), however progress remains uneven across countries and population groups. Moderate progress is observed on non-communicable diseases and mental health, substance abuse, road traffic accidents, sexual and reproductive health, and universal health coverage (targets 3.4 to 3.8), while significant challenges persist in health financing and workforce development, management of health risks, and tobacco control (targets 3.c, 3.d, and 3.a):

GOAL 3	GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
3.1	Maternal mortality
3.2	Child mortality
3.4	NCD & mental health
3.3	Communicable diseases
3.5	Substance abuse
3.6	Road traffic accidents
3.7	Sexual & reproductive health
3.8	Universal health coverage
3.9	Health impact of pollution
3.a	Tobacco control
3.b	R&D for health
3.c	Health financing & workforce
3.d	Management of health risks

42. In 2024, the IBC on Health and Wellbeing developed knowledge products offering analytical services to UNCTs throughout the region, organised capacity-building and advocacy events, and provided technical support at country level. Thus, in terms of knowledge products and analytical support, the IBC developed: a guidance note on "[Elevating Health and Well-being in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework](#)", providing RCs and UNCTs with advice on how to integrate a health perspective in Cooperation Frameworks, how health and well-being intersect with the sustainable transition areas and how prioritizing health can accelerate progress across other SDGs; three initiatives on ageing policies including a stock-taking exercise on national ageing policies under the Joint Programme on Ageing; a Guide for National Media Assessment on Ageism and a country situation analysis on older persons in Uzbekistan.

43. In terms of capacity-building and advocacy events, the IBC contributed to the Second Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration led by UNECE, which included a roundtable discussion on access to basic services; actively participated in IBC Food Systems webinars, focusing on capacity-building for food system transformation from a health perspective; and participated in the Subregional Conference on Demographic Resilience, addressing demographic change challenges. Additionally, the IBC organized multiple side events at the RFSD, including discussions on addressing poverty, food security, climate change through a One Health approach, and violence against older people in the context of SDG 16.

44. In terms of technical support, following the launch of the EU4Health Migration project funded by the European Commission/DG SANTE, the IBC supported IOM and WHO in the implementation of healthcare access initiatives addressed to Ukrainian refugees across ten participating countries,

7) Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience

45. Faster progress is needed in the UNECE region to achieve safe migration and mobility (target 10.7), which aims to facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration through well-managed migration policies. While many countries in the region have adopted national migration strategies and strengthened legal frameworks, challenges remain in ensuring rights-based approaches, protecting migrant workers, and addressing vulnerabilities faced by refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants. Data gaps persist, particularly in tracking the implementation of migration governance frameworks and migrant access to essential services. Recent geopolitical developments, including conflict-driven displacement and tightening border controls, have further underscored the need for coordinated, inclusive, and evidence-based migration policies that align with international standards.

10.7 Safe migration & mobility

46. In 2024, the IBC on Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience (IBC LMPDR) and the Regional UN Network on Migration (UNNM)—embedded in the IBC LMPDR—supported UNCTs by providing capacity-building assistance, developing knowledge products, advancing human mobility policies and promoting the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) at the regional level. As such the IBC responded to capacity-building requests from the UNCTs in Serbia, Türkiye and in Kosovo⁹ on human mobility issues by means of delivering a workshop focused on strengthening the UN system's ability to mainstream migration and the GCM into CCAs and Cooperation Frameworks.

47. The [second GCM Regional Review](#) which was led by UNNM took place on 11 March 2024, as an intergovernmental conference preceded by a multi-stakeholder hearing. The Conference provided Member States and relevant stakeholders with a platform to discuss, present and review progress on the GCM. The GCM Regional Review for the UNECE Region saw the participation of almost 300 delegates, representing 53 Member States; various EU agencies including the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission, DG-HOME and DG-NEAR; and 76 Non-governmental stakeholders, including 11 UN agencies. The UNNM/IBC continued to promote good practice sharing and support Country Networks in the Region.

⁹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999).

48. In terms of analysis and knowledge products, the IBC LMPDR, under the lead of IOM, UNDP and UNHCR, launched a joint study on [the impact of the war against Ukraine on human mobility patterns in the region](#), contributing valuable insights into migration dynamics.

49. On human mobility policy, the work of the UNNM continued to advance with the development of a draft pilot proposal on the Route Based Approach for the Global Compact on Migration implementation, aimed at exploring new strategies for addressing migration challenges in the region. More specifically the UNNM proposed to pilot a route-based-approach in the mobility corridor that originates in the UN Statistical Division Region of Southern Asia, moves through Western Asia, including Gulf countries, continues through the Eastern European Route, including Türkiye, and transits through countries in Southern Europe, specifically the Western Balkans, concluding with destination countries in the EU. The proposal is under consultation with the IBC/UNNM members to be submitted to the Migration MPTF Call for Proposals.

8) Adolescents and Youth

50. Most countries in the region have enacted dedicated strategies for youth employment, and this target is on track to be achieved (target 8.b). Nonetheless, the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training is not declining at a sufficient pace and its increase in ten countries would need to be reversed (target 8.6). The share of both youth and adults with information and communications technology skills is increasing slowly (indicator 4.4.1).

	8.b	Strategy for youth employment
	8.6	Youth NEET
	4.4	Skills for employment

51. In 2024, the IBC on Youth and Adolescents reviewed its Terms of Reference and streamlined its efforts, focusing mostly on adolescent and youth participation in intergovernmental processes and mechanisms, creating stronger synergies and breaking down silos, ensuring that youth from the region are well represented.

52. In this context, the IBC facilitated the participation of youth from the region in high-level events such as the Summit of The Future, COP29 in Azerbaijan, RFSD, Beijing +30 Regional Review and International Conference on Population and Development 30 (ICPD30), among others.

Throughout the Summit of the Future, youth activists from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, representing Y-Peer (Youth Peer Education Network) actively participated in key discussions, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, and UN Women panel “*Local Women, Global Impact: Advancing WPS through the Pact for the Future*,” the launch of the EU-UN initiative “*Advocacy, Coalition Building and Transformative Feminist Action*,” and the Population Council event on the “*Climate Crisis’ Impact on Gender Equality and Health Equality Goal*.” Another initiative the IBC facilitated youth participation in a Summit of the Future [side event](#) on empowering youth for sustainable futures focusing on intergenerational responsibility and skills for a just transition, encouraging youth participation in policymaking through the [Green Jobs for Youth Pact](#). Key outcomes included commitments from member states to integrate green education and support sustainable initiatives, as well as private sector pledges to train young people.

53. Through relevant partner regional youth networks, the IBC ensured engagement of youth from the region in the drafting of the [Global Youth Statement](#), coordinated by YOUNGO and presented at COP29. Furthermore, the IBC organized thematic youth consultations and multiple side events at COP29, with and for young people showcasing young people’s role as agents of change in climate action across the region.

54. The IBC also ensured youth engagement in the 2024 RFSD, organizing online consultations with about 200 youth participants from across the region, providing speakers and participants for all RFSD segments and roundtables. As an outcome of the RFSD, the [Youth Report on SDGs under review \(1, 2, 13, 16, 17\)](#) was developed, including specific recommendations for the Governments, UN Agencies and Civil Society.

55. In preparation for the Beijing+30 process, the IBC facilitated consultations with over 100 young leaders from 15 countries across the region, providing a platform for youth to engage and develop actionable, policy-oriented recommendations that were presented at the Beijing+30 Regional Review Meeting in anticipation of the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The consultations were entirely youth-driven, with young leaders taking the lead in designing agendas, facilitating discussions, and steering dialogues toward meaningful and impactful outcomes.

56. At the ICPD30 Global Youth Dialogue, the IBC supported participation of 27 young activists (19 women and 8 men), including from the most marginalized communities in the region. The youth delegates' active engagement brought the regional perspective to the Global Dialogue, assessing progress, identifying challenges and reimagining the ICPD Programme of Action for new generations, helping position the region in this global discourse, and developing a Youth Action Agenda.

57. In 2024, the joint work of three IBC members (UNFPA, UNESCO and WHO) resulted in the development of several key knowledge products, including the SERAT Reports, which assessed the progress of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova. These reports provided valuable insights for decision-making and programming at the country level, alongside an overview of the CSE status in the region, including in Tajikistan.¹⁰

58. The IBC directly assisted UNCTs in **Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Uzbekistan**, addressing their specific requests. In **Kazakhstan**, the IBC supported the development of the Terms of Reference for the UN Youth Advisory Board; in **Moldova**, the IBC organized a webinar for the UN Youth Working Group to enhance its capacity, focusing on youth engagement in social cohesion; and in **Uzbekistan**, the IBC, in collaboration with the Regional Joint Team on AIDS, provided technical assistance on youth and HIV, offering country examples and best practices for integrating HIV into a broader, multi-sectoral approach.

9) Data and Statistics

59. To step up the coordination and collaboration on data and statistics, the Regional Coordination Group on Data and Statistics for ECA was established in 2020, in response to the UN Secretary General's recommendation on regional United Nations sustainable development system reform.

60. In 2024, in efforts to review data gaps by SDG across the region, two pilot SDGs were selected: SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production. Task teams were established to focus on selected goals and targets under the two SDGs, requiring different approaches for different types of data gaps. The aim of such efforts is to assess lessons learned from the pilot exercise and scale it up for other SDGs in the region.

10) Regional efficiencies

61. In 2024, the R-OMT continued to ensure full compliance of the region with UN corporate requirements for the Regional Business Operations Strategy 2.0. As part of the bi-annual review of the regional strategy, the OMT agencies identified key service areas for collaboration, including Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, ICT, and Administration/Facilities and have been particularly successful in implementing two specific services related to finance and ICT services, i.e., data management for common financial services and greening the ICT equipment disposal process.

62. As the Istanbul duty station attracts more Agencies to set up regional and global presence, a main priority for the regional efficiency agenda is to complete an agreement with the Government of Türkiye for a UN House in Istanbul. Efficiencies to be gained are financial as well as relational and programmatic, ensuring co-location of most regional UN entities.

¹⁰ [CSE in Georgia](#), [CSE in Kyrgyzstan](#), [CSE in Moldova](#), [Overview of Comprehensive Sexuality Education Status in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan](#)

11) Peer Support Group

63. Throughout the year, the PSG provided strategic planning support for CCA and Cooperation Framework cycles, ensuring the development of high-quality roadmaps and frameworks. PSG members offered support to UNCTs in Cooperation Framework design and facilitated Strategic Priority Reviews (SPRs), with targeted support for the UNCT in Belarus and the UN team in Kosovo¹¹. Additionally, the PSG closely engaged with the IBCs in joint quality reviews and responded to UNCT requests for support identified through a Joint RCP Secretariat survey. The PSG's capacity was bolstered in 2024 by senior-level engagement from WMO, UNHCR, UNDP, UNEP, UN Women, and OHCHR.

64. Additionally, twelve Cooperation Framework roadmaps were reviewed, with management responses provided. By the end of 2024, six CCAs (Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, North Macedonia, Türkiye, Uzbekistan) as well as the Common Kosovo¹² Analysis had been reviewed, with Serbia, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Belarus and Georgia scheduled for early 2025. Ongoing support and guidance to the twelve Cooperation Frameworks roll-out countries in the region through PSG focal points Interactive sessions with RCs took place before Cooperation Framework roadmap submissions, while training sessions on CCAs were held for Heads of RCOs and Economists. A comprehensive quality review of Ukraine's Cooperation Framework Results Framework was also conducted.

65. The PSG conducted quality reviews for Joint Work Plans (JWPs) in Albania, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan and developed a comparative analysis to identify trends over previous years. Also, the PSG reviewed six Annual Results Reports including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Tajikistan.

66. To enhance knowledge-sharing, the PSG distributed quarterly newsletters to RCP. Furthermore, it contributed to the System-wide evaluation on progress towards a 'new generation of United Nations country teams. Inputs/comments to the inception report and final report were provided, and discussion sessions with the Evaluation team were organized.

67. To strengthen its own capacities, the PSG, among others, developed a package of Cooperation Framework-related guidelines and tools and offered Foresight Training to selected PSG members and RCOs, through DCO and UN Global Pulse.

Additionally, the annual PSG Retreat in Copenhagen offered a platform for strategic review and learning, directly interacting with RCs and the Regional Collaborative Platform. The results of the mapping of PSG capacities served to discuss areas where the PSG can strengthen engagement and support at country level. The retreat ensured that the PSG remains fit for purpose in the evolving regional context and continues to provide quality support to RCs and UNCTs in developing and implementing their Cooperation Frameworks for SDG achievement.

B. Engagement in regional and global processes

68. The RCP was actively engaged in positioning regional priorities and processes at the global level as well as in breaking down global priorities to the regional level.

69. IBCs and RCP interagency groups, co-organized various sessions at the , playing a key role in shaping the region's collective voice and policy priorities for the 2024 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Through substantive discussions and multi-stakeholder engagement, the RFSD served as a key platform for surfacing regional trends, challenges, and innovations, which directly informed the global deliberations at the HLPF. As noted earlier, the IBC-SFS was instrumental in the RFSD SDG 2 Roundtable on Healthy and Sustainable Diets and the side event on Food Systems Transformation as an SDG Accelerator, providing valuable technical expertise and guidance. Similarly, the IBC on Health led multiple side events addressing key issues such as poverty, food security, climate change, and violence against older persons within the framework of SDG 16. The Digital Transformation group facilitated discussions on partnerships, human-centric

¹¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999).

¹² References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999).

technology, and digital agriculture, promoting inclusive digital development. IBC-GE facilitated various inputs from UN agencies to the Beijing +30 Regional Review, which fed into the Commission on the Status of Women in 2025.

70. As highlighted in paragraphs 50, 53, and 54, the IBC on Youth contributed to COP29 discussions in Baku on just transitions, social equity in climate policies, and green job creation, in collaboration with PAGE. It also ensured that youth voices were central to regional and global processes including the Summit of the Future and Beijing+30.

III. Conclusion

71. In 2024, the RCP effectively delivered impactful policy support to the country level as well as voiced regional priorities at the global level, despite resource constraints. The momentum around the 2024 Summit of the Future will continue to bolster acceleration action at the regional level.

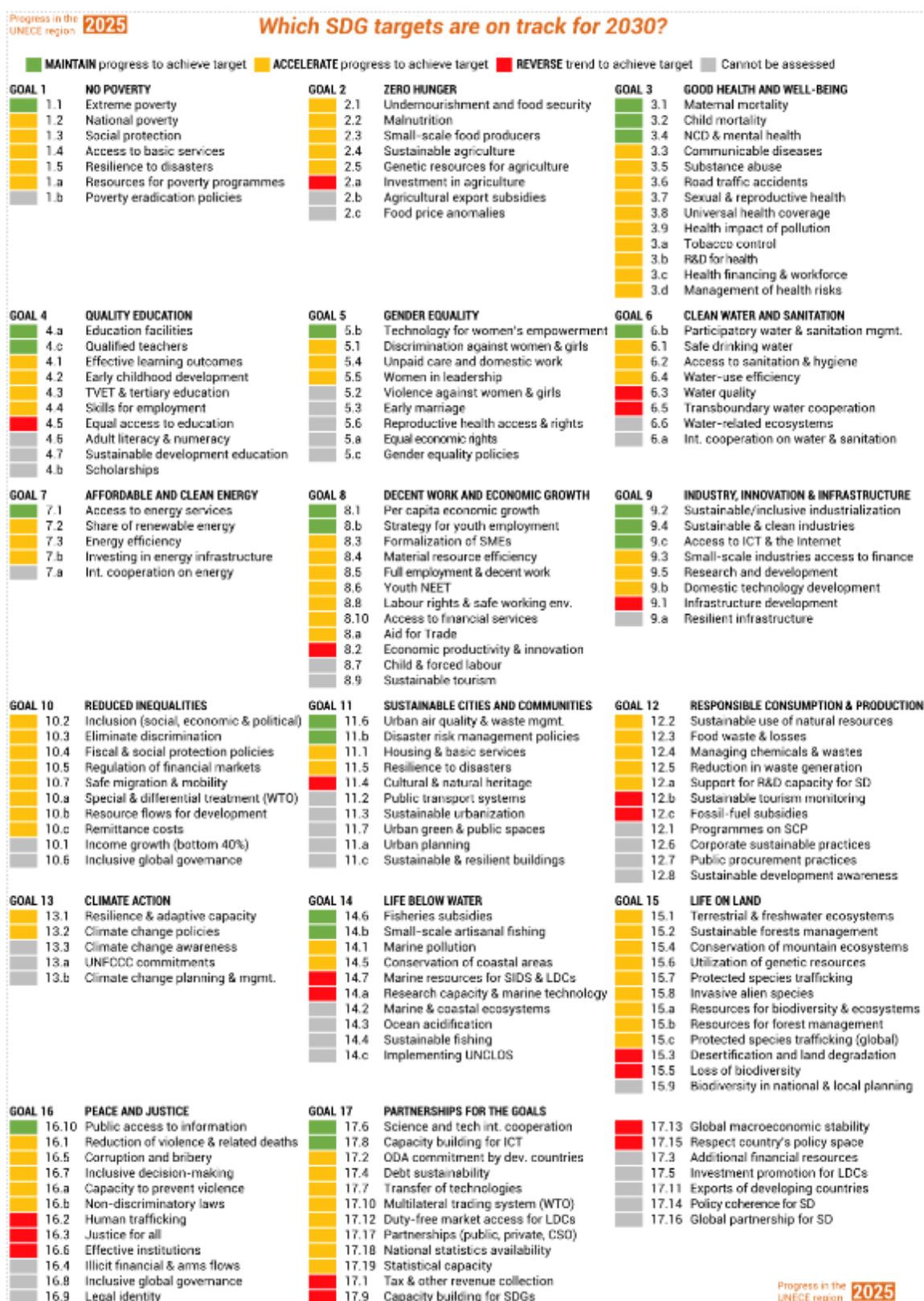
72. Looking ahead to 2025, regional support modalities will be further strengthened to enhance coordination, responsiveness, and impact. A total of 37 country-level support requests have been submitted by RCs and UNCTs across the region, with all IBCs and Groups engaged. Key areas of focus include advancing sustainable food systems, environment and climate change, social protection and jobs, health, women and youth empowerment, advancing digital transformation, reducing data gaps in the region and responding to the refugee and internal displacement crises resulting from the war in Ukraine. By aligning regional expertise with country-level priorities, the UN's engagement in 2025 will deliver more strategic, inclusive, and resilient development outcomes across the region.

73. The IBCs engaged as co-organizers in the 2025 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, particularly on SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

74. The ongoing development of 12 new Cooperation Frameworks, to enter into effect in 2026, presents a strategic opportunity to inject regional expertise into country-level dynamics, including on the outcomes of global summits taking place in 2025, from financing for sustainable development to social development and beyond. At the same time, the IBCs and groups continue the process of thematic and structural refinement in their work, including to advance key sustainable transition areas and contribute to other global and regional processes.

ANNEX

Figure 1: Snapshot of SDG Progress in the UNECE Region



Source: UNECE, Sustainable Development in the UNECE Region: More data, persisting challenges, Geneva, 2025 (forthcoming)



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