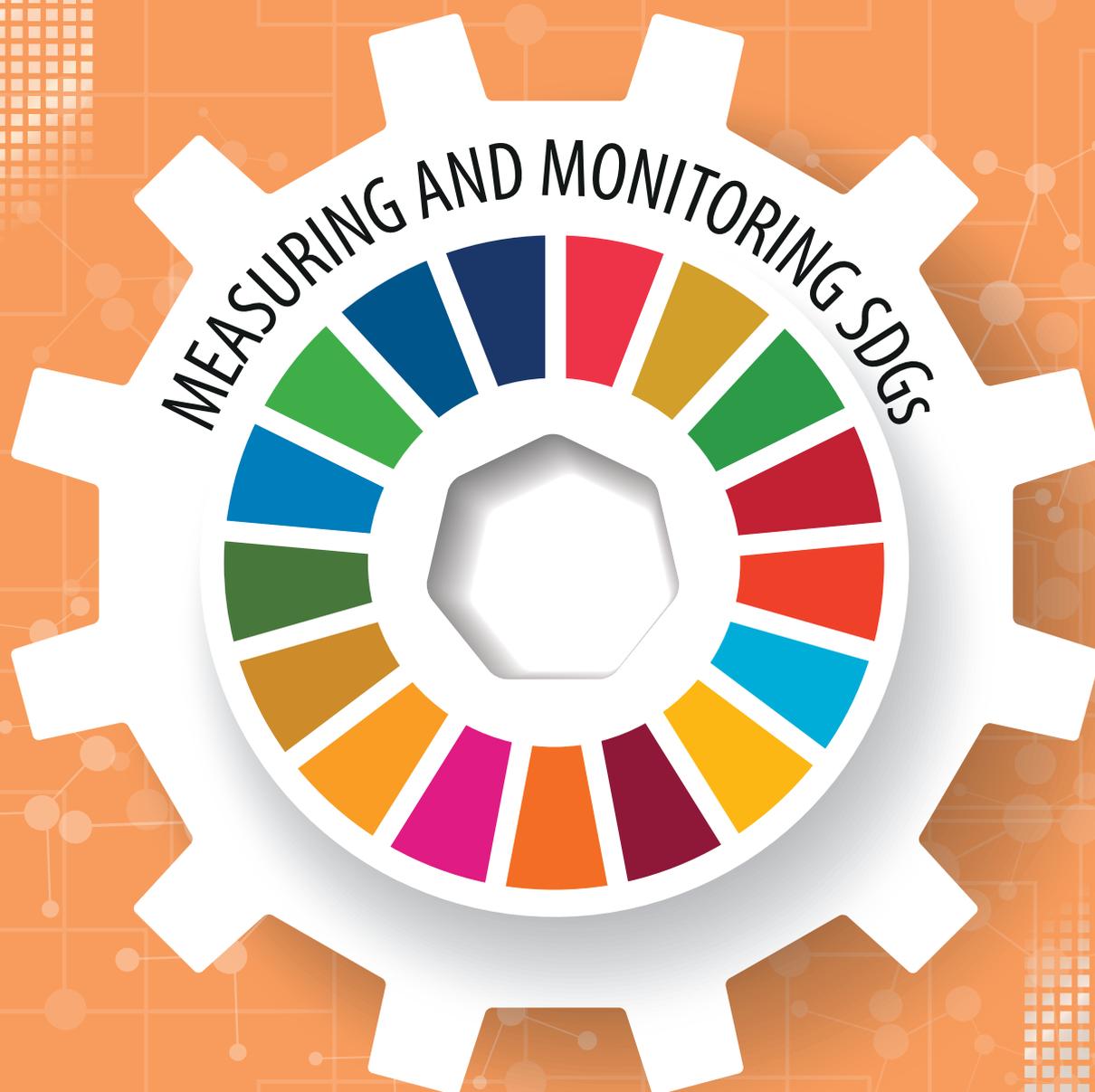


**UNECE**

# **Measuring and Monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals**



**UNITED NATIONS**



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**UNITED NATIONS**

Geneva, 2020

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# FOREWORD

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provides an ambitious and comprehensive framework that opens new perspectives for policymaking and international cooperation. While progress in its implementation is being made, current efforts are far below the scale needed to deliver the SDGs within the next 10 years. Ambitious action becomes even more important in the context of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic: the SDGs are vital for a recovery that leads to greener, more inclusive economies and stronger, more resilient countries.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) supports its member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through concrete and results-oriented activities in the areas of its eight subprogrammes: environment, transport, statistics, economic cooperation and integration, sustainable energy, trade, timber and forestry, and housing, land management and population.

This multi-sectoral structure has allowed UNECE to address SDG implementation in an integrated manner, in line with the interlinked character of the SDGs, and to adopt a new way of working that cuts across sectoral boundaries. Four nexus areas have been defined where multiple SDGs converge:

- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Sustainable and smart cities
- Sustainable mobility and smart connectivity
- Measuring and monitoring progress towards the SDGs.

In each of these areas, a cross-sectoral, inter-divisional team of UNECE experts has undertaken an in-depth substantive analysis of current and future challenges and needs of UNECE member States and identified ways and means to address them, thus assisting member States to design and implement integrated policies in these areas. The findings of these analyses and corresponding policy recommendations are set out in a series of four flagship publications.

The publication *Measuring and Monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals* examines the complex process of measuring and monitoring SDGs involving multiple actors. High-quality statistics are vital for enabling national governments, local authorities, regional and global organizations, civil society, the private sector and the general public to measure progress towards achievement of the SDGs. Moreover, the very comprehensiveness of the 2030 Agenda creates the need for an unprecedented range of statistics at different levels, including those derived from official statistical systems and from administrative and non-traditional data sources. All countries face difficulties in measurement and monitoring and a key finding of this study is that cooperation and collaboration remain a challenge, although good progress is being made at national, regional and global levels.

Further, informed decision-making in times of crisis such as during the COVID-19 pandemic requires integrated, relevant, timely and easily accessible information, robust data and indicators, and their appropriate assessment. To achieve this and to ensure that necessary measures are taken on time to protect the most vulnerable, adequate monitoring programmes, information management systems and assessment and reporting routines must be in place.

I trust that these flagship publications will offer useful guidance to governments and other stakeholders engaged in developing integrated solutions to the multifaceted challenges of our time and in building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Olga Algayerova**

Executive Secretary

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

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