



Sustainability
together

Valtiokonttori
Statskontoret
State Treasury



Cooperation to build a sustainable future

Summary and highlights from central
government sustainability reports for 2022

State Treasury supports the Sustainable Development Goals

From the authors



“In their reports for 2022, central government and other public administration organisations identified more than 200 instances in which they promoted the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals – an unbelievably great result. Thank you 242 times!”

Katri Kanerva
Head of Development



“While working with sustainability reporting and the Sustainability Network, I have discovered how much central government organisations actually do to promote sustainable development. These reports now make visible the motivation and people’s work inputs that underpin the successes.”

Netta Jakola
Sustainability Specialist



“After more than a thousand pages and several hours of reading, it feels great to see the report on sustainability work in the central government between two covers.”

Anni Toiviainen
Intern

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The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The UN member states committed to national and international cooperation in 2015.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals should be achieved by 2030.

A versatile framework for reporting on sustainability work: altogether, central government organisations promote the achievement of all 17 goals.



In a global sustainable development ranking, Finland took first place for the third year running in 2023.

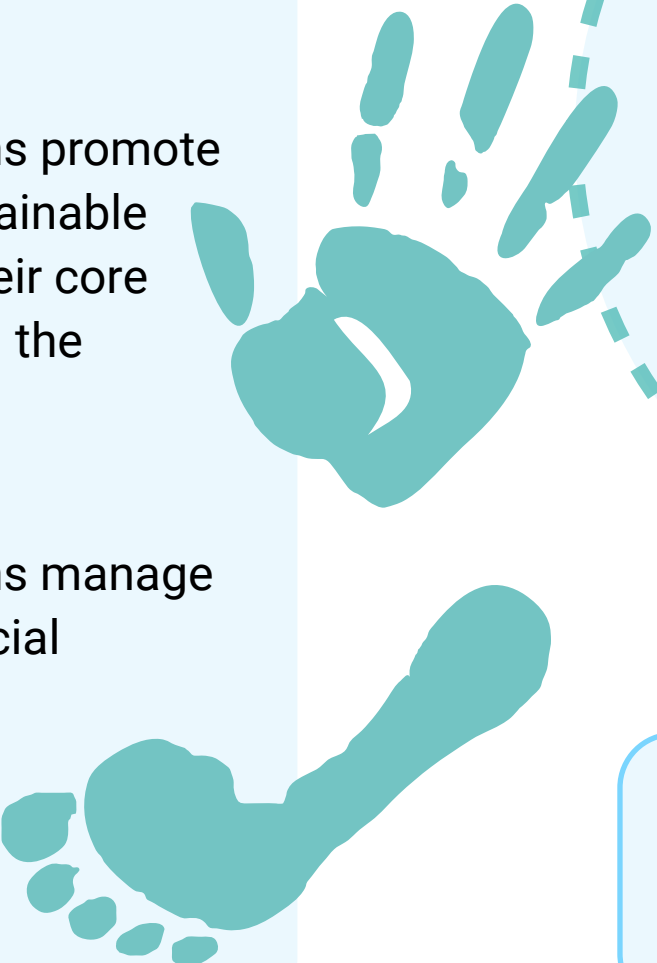
Despite this excellent achievement, Finland will be unable to attain all Sustainable Development Goals on the desired schedule with the current measures.

For more information about the 2030 Agenda, visit kestavakehitys.fi

Common framework for central government sustainability reporting

Central government organisations have been encouraged to produce sustainability reports since 2021. Their reports cover the following aspects:

- 1. HANDPRINT**
How do the organisations promote the achievement of sustainable development through their core activities in keeping with the UN 2030 Agenda?
- 2. FOOTPRINT**
How do the organisations manage the direct ecological, social and economic impacts of their activities on their environment?

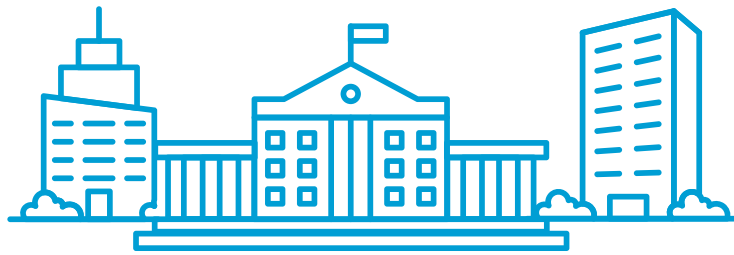


A common framework makes it possible to compare the reports of different organisations and produce a summary at central government level.
The State Treasury is responsible for maintaining the framework and preparing the summary.

Reporting will be developed and good practices will be shared in the central government's Sustainability Network, which all those involved in producing central government sustainability reports are welcome to join.

To read more about the guideline and framework for sustainability reporting, visit valtiokonttori.fi

Guidelines for sustainability work



The statutory duties of central government organisations have a broad impact on society. Organisations can take into account the impacts of their activities on sustainable development while carrying out their mission in society. **The sustainability report provides an opportunity to describe the work the organisation does to promote sustainable development.**

As central government organisations are a diverse lot, the reporting framework is flexible. The organisations have the freedom and responsibility to identify their most significant possibilities of influencing sustainable development and reporting on the work they do to make an impact.

Of central government organisations that published a report, 44% say that their sustainability work is linked to performance management.



Documents underpinning the efforts to promote Agenda2030 goal achievement

- National and organisational strategies and their implementation plans
- Performance agreements between ministries and agencies
- Government Programme
- Organisations' individual sustainability programmes, plans and strategies or documents that can be interpreted as such programmes (17)



Central government actions to promote sustainability are guided by the **National 2030 Agenda Roadmap** adopted in 2022, **Commitment2050** and the **Strategy of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development 2022–2030**.

State Treasury's reporting framework has four key goals

- 1.** Sustainability reports can be examined in parallel. Common guidelines mean that reports consistent in their structure and content are available for central government organisations and stakeholders.
- 2.** Central government level summaries are easier to produce when the organisations comply with common guidelines. By reading the summary, stakeholders can get an overview of sustainability work in central government without needing to go through individual reports.
- 3.** Organisations have better possibilities to work together. Once all organisations follow the same guidelines, different actors can offer their help and receive support for reporting both from other reporting organisations and the State Treasury.
- 4.** The **most important goal** is providing the organisations with the wherewithal for achieving the greatest possible good for society. The main emphasis of the guidelines is on recognising and enlarging the organisations' handprints. The aim is that the organisations would seize their opportunities to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Progress is described by indicators

The common framework helps to measure the central government's progress in its work for sustainable development.

The nature of the organisations' core activities and their individual remits affect the indicator selection.

The indicators used can be roughly divided into two groups:

1. Indicators that measure the organisation's activities directly.
2. Indicators that measure the organisation's activities indirectly.

Instead or in addition to indicators, the reports may also include qualitative descriptions of the activities.

68% of the reports had clearly identified indicators.
(61% in 2021)

The 2022 report was only the second one for a number of organisations. Therefore, many of them are still seeking suitable indicators and ways of reporting on their work.



Goals make the work more meaningful

The precondition for successful goal setting is having sufficient understanding and an overall idea of the organisation's work in the field of sustainability. This often requires a comprehensive current state analysis. It is likely that setting of goals and measuring their achievement will be more widespread in the future.

Setting goals relating to the direct ecological, social and economic impacts, or footprint of the activities, is often easier. As the organisation gains more experience, setting goals for enlarging the handprint also becomes less difficult.

Slightly more than one half of the sustainability reports for 2022 present clear goals set for the sustainability work and the organisation's progress in them.



For example, different annual calendars, workshops and shared events can help set goals and monitor their achievement. Many organisations have linked their sustainability goals more closely with their other targets.

Management, personnel and stakeholders support sustainability work

The senior management of central government organisations appears committed to sustainability reporting. A review, foreword or comment by the management is found in 66% of the reports. Almost all note that the management group approved and/or adopted the report.

Stakeholders support successful sustainability reporting:

- Stakeholders help draw attention to themes that have a particular impact on actors outside the organisation.
- Involving stakeholders in sustainability reporting can both motivate the organisation in its sustainability work and intensify cooperation with stakeholders.

The active participation of the **staff** is also important. Several reports explain how the staff have been engaged in the sustainability work.

In its personal appraisal discussions in 2022, **the National Archives of Finland** agreed on personal goals for promoting sustainable development with each employee.

The Social Insurance Institution introduced the concept of sustainability sessions intended for the staff in 2022.

The purpose of these sessions is to offer information on sustainability themes and support the integration of sustainability perspectives into the work.

The State Treasury collected its staff's views of how promoting the good of society and sustainable development is visible in their work.

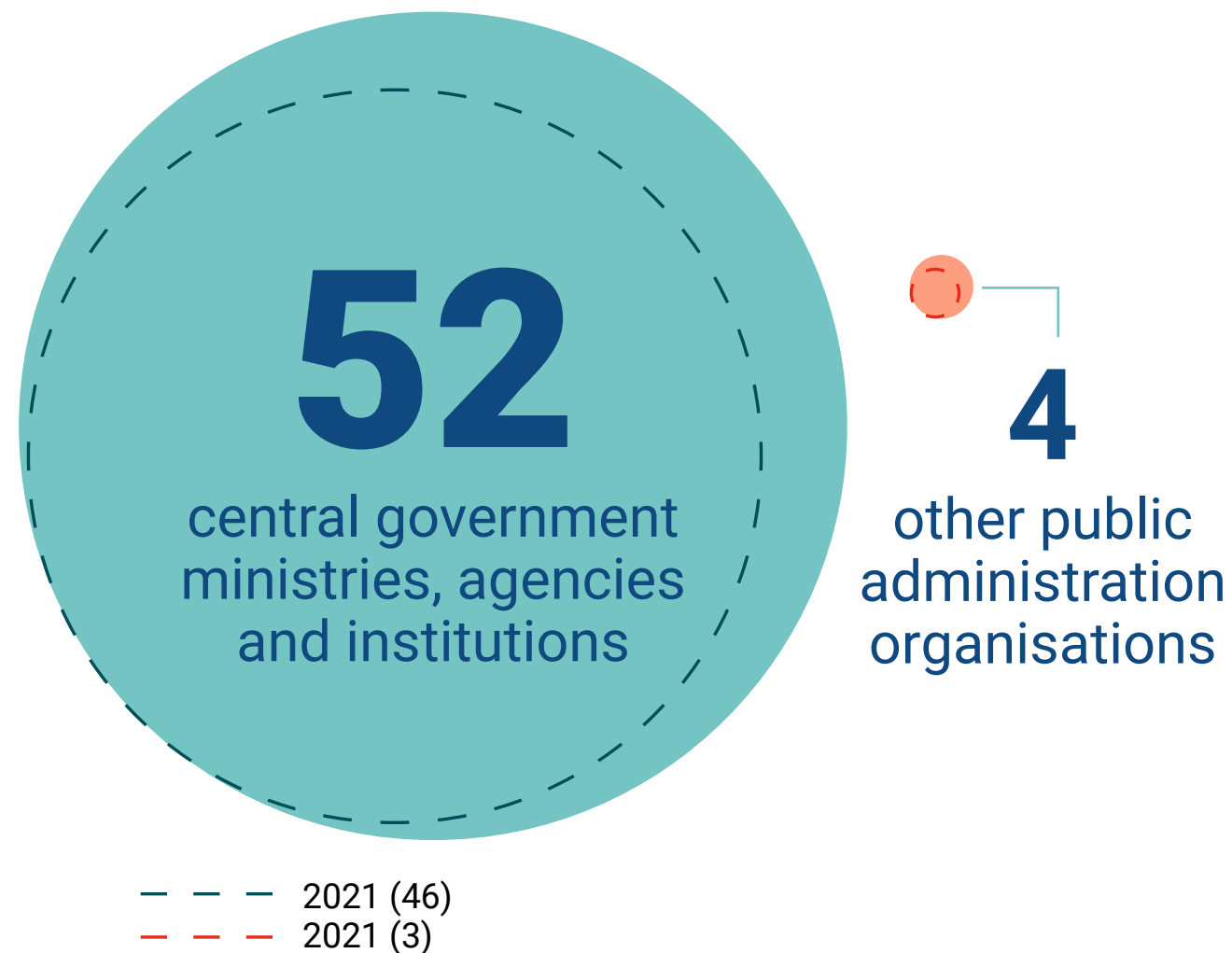
The findings of the survey and quotations from respondents' comments were also included in the State Treasury's sustainability report.

Central government handprint in Sustainable Development Goals

The following section presents the Sustainable Development Goals that central government organisations have identified as the most significant ones for their work.

Central government organisations participate in sustainability reporting across a broad front

56 organisations published their sustainability reports for 2022 in spring 2023.



Organisations that published reports

● Academy of Finland ● Accessibility Library Celia ● Arts Promotion Centre Finland ● Business Finland ● Crisis Management Centre Finland ● Emergency Response Centre Administration ● Energy Authority ● Finnish Border Guard ● Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority ● Finnish courts ● Finnish Customs ● Finnish Defence Forces ● Finnish Environment Institute ● Finnish Food Authority ● Finnish Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR ● Finnish Heritage Agency ● Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare ● Finnish Medicines Agency Fimea ● Finnish Meteorological Institute ● Finnish National Agency for Education ● Finnish Patent and Registration Office ● Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency ● Finnish Security Intelligence Service ● Finnish Transport and Communications Agency ● Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency ● Geological Survey of Finland ● Governing Body of Suomenlinna ● Government ICT Centre Valtori ● Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland ● Ministry for Foreign Affairs ● Ministry of Defence ● Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment ● Ministry of Education and Culture ● Ministry of Finance ● Ministry of Justice ● Ministry of Social Affairs and Health ● Ministry of the Environment ● Ministry of Transport and Communications ● National Archives of Finland ● National Enforcement Authority and Bankruptcy Ombudsman ● National Land Survey of Finland ● National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health ● Natural Resources Institute Finland ● Niuvanniemi Hospital ● Parliamentary Office ● Prime Minister's Office ● Prison and Probation Service of Finland ● Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority ● Regional State Administrative Agencies ● State Treasury ● Statistics Finland ● Tax Administration ● Finnish Institute of Occupational Health ● Forest Centre ● Senate Group ● Social Insurance Institution of Finland

Sustainability reports were produced in almost all administrative branches

A total of 48, or 75%, of all accounting units published a sustainability report for 2022.

Parliament of Finland

0%

(0/3 accounting units)
1 report

President of
the Republic

0%

Prime Minister's
Office

100% (1/1)

Ministry for
Foreign Affairs

100% (1/1)

Ministry of
Justice

67% (4/6)

Ministry of
the Interior

43% (3/7)

Ministry of the Interior's
accounting unit 2
reports, 4 reports in total

Ministry of
Defence

100%

1 report: joint report of the
Ministry of Defence and
Defence Forces

Ministry of
Finance

75% (9/12)

Ministry of
Education and Culture

100% (6/6)

3 reports from the Ministry of
Education and Culture's
accounting unit, 8 reports in total

Ministry of
Agriculture and Forestry

75% (3/4)

Ministry of Transport and
Communications

100% (4/4)

Ministry of Economic
Affairs and Employment

88% (7/8)

Ministry of
Social Affairs and Health

83% (5/6)

2 reports from the accounting
unit of Finnish Institute for Health
and Welfare, 6 reports in total

Ministry of
the Environment

100% (3/3)

The Social Insurance
Institution, Senate
Group, Finnish Institute
of Occupational Health
and Forest Centre also
followed the State
Treasury's guideline in
their reports.

The central government has identified that it promotes all Sustainable Development Goals

Central government organisations have identified the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whose achievement they can best contribute to. The most commonly promoted SDGs identified in the reports were Responsible Consumption, Climate Action, and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

The organisations explain in their reports what they are doing to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
Sustainable Development Goals by frequency of occurrence in the reports:



Promotion of Sustainable Development Goals by administrative branch 1/4

Branch of administration, identified SDGs and their frequency of occurrence

Parliament of Finland

Parliamentary office



Ministry of the Interior

Border Guard, Crisis Management Centre Finland, Emergency Response Centre Administration, Finnish Security and Intelligence Service



Ministry of Justice

Finnish courts, Ministry of Justice, National Enforcement Authority and Bankruptcy Ombudsman, Prison and Probation Service of Finland



Ministry of the Environment

Finnish Environment Institute, Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland, Ministry of the Environment



Promotion of Sustainable Development Goals

by administrative branch 2/4

Branch of administration, identified SDGs and their frequency of occurrence

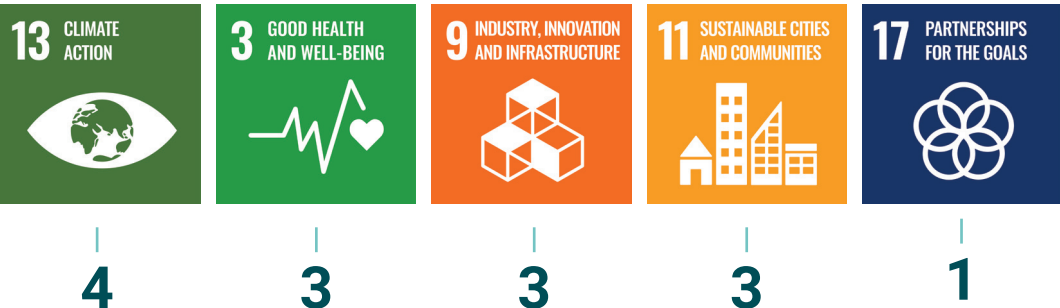
Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence and Defence Forces



Ministry of Transport and Communications

Finnish Meteorological Institute, Finnish Transport and Communications Agency (Traficom), Finnish Transport Infrastructure, Ministry of Transport and Communications



Ministry of Education and Culture

Academy of Finland, Accessibility Library Celia, Arts Promotion Centre Finland, Finnish Heritage Agency, Finnish National Agency for Education, Governing Body of Suomenlinna, Ministry of Education and Culture, National Archives of Finland



Promotion of Sustainable Development Goals by administrative branch 3/4

Branch of administration, identified SDGs and their frequency of occurrence

Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister's Office



Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Finnish Food Authority, National Land Survey of Finland, Natural Resources Institute Finland



Ministry of Finance

Customs, Financial Stability Authority, Finnish Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR Palkeet, Government ICT Centre Valtori, Ministry of Finance, Regional State Administrative Agencies, State Treasury, Statistics Finland, Tax Administration



Promotion of Sustainable Development Goals by administrative branch 4/4

Branch of administration, identified SDGs and their frequency of occurrence

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs



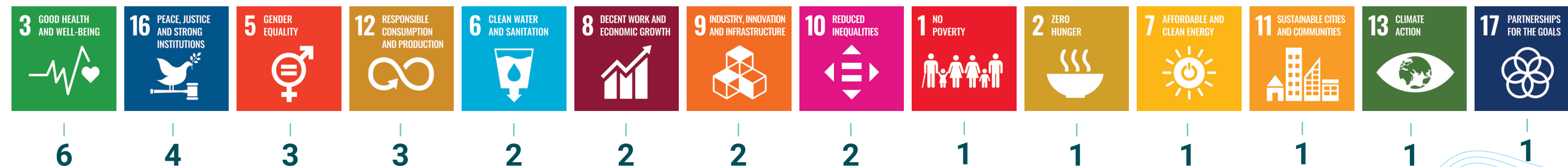
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

Business Finland, Energy Authority, Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority, Finnish Patent and Registration Office, Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency, Geological Survey of Finland, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment



Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finnish Medicines Agency Fimea, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health Valvira, Niuvanniemi Hospital, Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority



Highlights from sustainability work in organisations

The following section contains highlights from central government organisations' reports describing how they promote in their work the identified Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

- The organisations discuss in their reports the SDGs on which they can have the most significant influence through their work.
- This visualised summary contains highlights from the reported measures. For a more detailed description of the identified goals and work done to promote their achievement, see the summary report.



Sustainable development goals most frequently identified in the reports

GOAL 12	Responsible Consumption and Production (30)
GOAL 13	Climate Action (29)
GOAL 16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (27)
GOAL 8	Decent Work and Economic Growth (25)

Examples of work done to promote SDG achievement in 2022



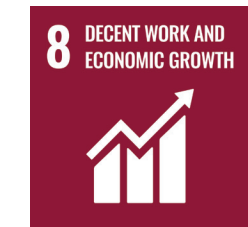
The Geological Survey of Finland produces research evidence regarding the sustainability and recyclability of minerals and metals. Progress is measured by the number of research projects that promote the achievement of this SDG, which in 2022 was 12.



The Ministry for Foreign Affairs announces that Finland has increased its inputs in funding for climate change adaptation. In 2022, a contribution of EUR 3 million was made to a fund that supports the building of weather services in countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.



The Finnish Patent and Registration Office organised an open event to discuss the Act on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing for all auditors for the first time in 2022. The goal is to organise similar events every six months. Auditors play a key role in preventing money laundering and terrorist financing.



The steering group working within **the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment** continued to implement the Strategy and Action Plan for tackling the grey economy and economic crime in 2022, among other things promoting healthy competition between companies and a fair labour market.

Less frequently identified Sustainable Development Goals

GOAL 4 Quality Education (9)
 GOAL 15 Life on Land (6)
 GOAL 6 Clean Water and Sanitation (5)
 GOAL 7 Affordable and Clean Energy (5)

GOAL 14 Life Below Water (5)
 GOAL 1 No Poverty (4)
 GOAL 2 Zero Hunger (3)

Examples of work done to promote SDG achievement in 2022



Statistics Finland

participated in the production of 15 different sets of education statistics in 2022, for example on applying for a place in education and employment after completing education.



The Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority

supervises the use and safety of nuclear energy in Finland. In 2022, the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority drafted an update of the Nuclear Energy Act



The Border Guard

ordered ten containers of marine pollution response equipment in 2022. The Border Guard's indicators for measuring the marine pollution response performance were updated in 2022.



National Nutrition Council of Finland

, which operates in conjunction with the **Finnish Food Authority**, published a website dealing with the promotion of nutritional health in 2022. This service was set up to support the municipalities' and wellbeing services counties' work.

Other identified sustainable development goals

GOAL 3	Good Health and Well-being (19)	GOAL 10	Reducing Inequalities (15)
GOAL 5	Gender Equality (18)	GOAL 17	Partnerships for the Goals (14)
GOAL 9	Industries, Innovation and Infrastructures (17)	GOAL 11	Sustainable Cities and communities (11)

Examples of work done to promote SDG achievement in 2022



The Crisis Management Centre monitors the gender ratio in both its training and recruitments. The indicator to be monitored is the gender ratio of experts sent out to crisis management missions based on a monthly list of experts deployed around the world.



The Energy Authority promotes the development of charging and refuelling station infrastructure by offering investment subsidies for public charging and refuelling stations. As the indicator, the Energy Authority has monitored the relative numbers of charging points for fully electric cars and fast charging points.



The Finnish Meteorological Institute launched a development project with the Ukrainian Hydro-meteorological Center in January 2022. The purpose of this project is to upgrade Ukraine's meteorological and warning services and improve personnel competence.



The Ministry of Transport and Communications completed a project aiming to illustrate the accessibility challenges of travel chains. Persons with different disabilities tested public transport travel chains. Their experiences will be used to improve accessibility in public transport.

What do these numbers tell us?



The common denominator for the three most frequently identified goals is that they can be promoted regardless of the organisations' field, remit or core competence.

Additionally, stakeholders may place high expectations on the organisation, especially regarding ecological sustainability goals.

It is essential to ensure fairness and good governance in central government organisations' work. Therefore, it is natural that Goal 16 is highlighted in the reports.



The common feature of the two least often identified goals probably is that expert organisations may find it difficult to see a direct link between their work and these goals.

The organisations may also interpret these goals as only aiming to reduce famine and extreme poverty.

Understood in this extreme sense, these challenges are often regarded as having been solved in Finland. It should be noted, however, that comprehensive achievement of the goals also requires work in the areas of poverty and hunger in a wider sense.

It is possible that when the year set as the deadline for Agenda2030, or 2030, approaches, the sustainability reports will increasingly emphasise those goals whose achievement is challenging and which require more comprehensive actions.

The reports account for the footprint

In central government's sustainability reporting, the footprint refers to the direct impacts of the organisation's activities and existence on the operating environment which the organisation can influence by its actions. The impacts can be classified as ecological, social and economic.

The sustainability reports indicate that organisations may find it difficult to tell the footprint and handprint of their work apart.

A likely reason for this is the fact that the handprint of one central government organisation may be part of another organisation's footprint. The definition of what the handprint and footprint contain should always be specific to a certain organisation and task.



Ecological impacts

Reported by

84%

of the organisations (2021: 67%)



Social impacts

Reported by

58%

of the organisations (2021: 37%)



Economic impacts

Reported by

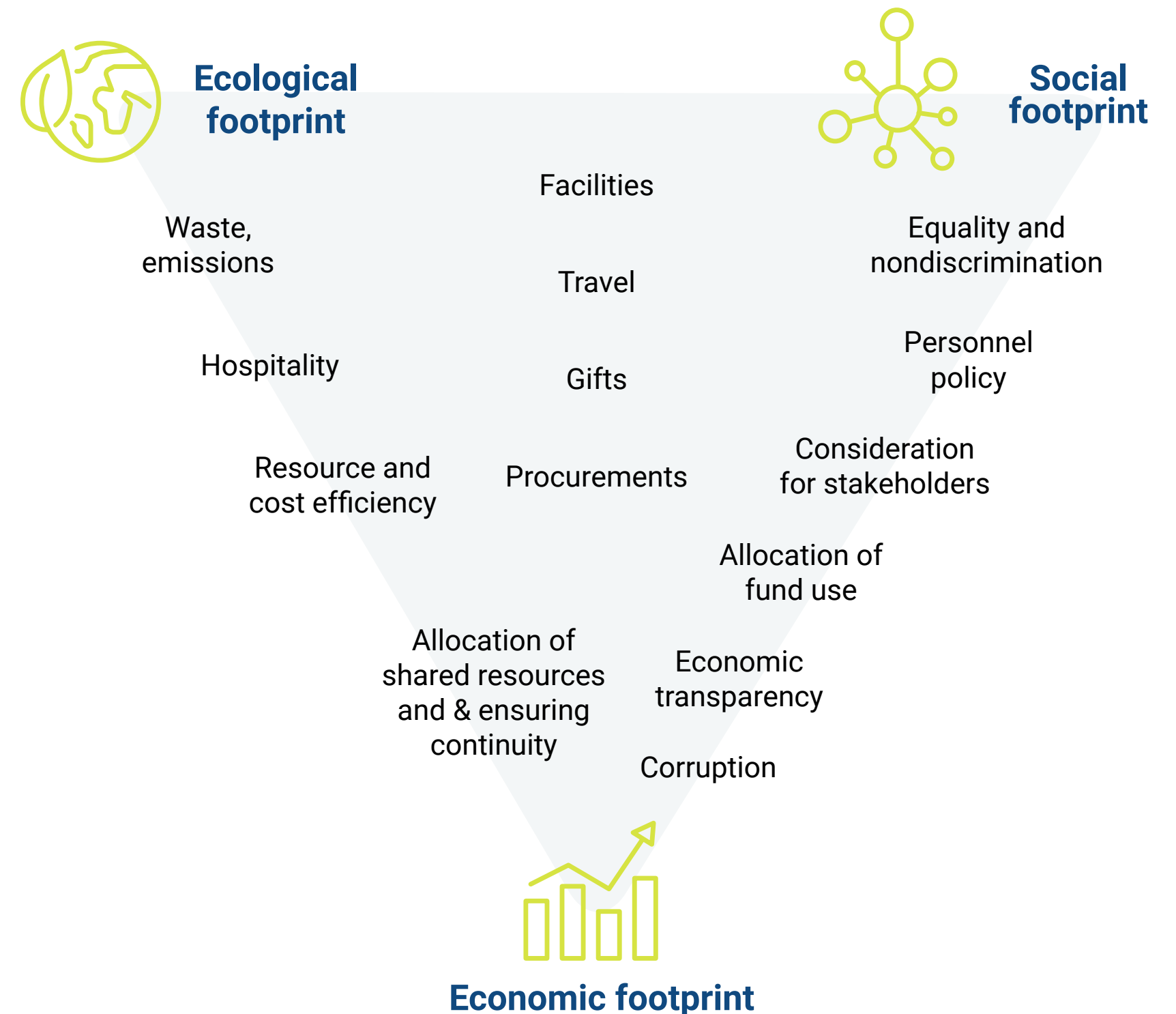
38%

of the organisations (2021: 29%)

The footprint dimensions are interlinked

When reporting on its footprint, an organisation may realise that the examined activity actually has links to many different dimensions. While facilities, for example, are usually placed under the heading of ecological footprint, the choices associated with premises often also have clear links to social and economic responsibility. While travel has traditionally been included in the ecological footprint, it is also connected to social wellbeing and, consequently, the social footprint.

The linkages between the dimensions can be examined in a three-dimensional framework which describes the interdependencies between the factors.



The footprint dimensions are interlinked



**Ecological
footprint**



**Social
footprint**

Examples of interconnections between footprint dimensions in 2022

When planning facilities for the **courts**, the functional needs of courts must be addressed, securing their independent status and citizens' access to them. The sensitivity of court hearings and special groups' needs must additionally be accounted for. The staff working facilities must be fit for purpose, also for handling secret matters.

The Ministry of the Environment describes in its report how all international meetings cannot be replaced by teleconferencing, even if this would reduce the ecological footprint. Shared understanding and trust are also created through discussions in hallways, at lunch and outside official negotiation rooms. The report explains how it is important to send enough officials to the negotiations to ensure that the attainment of Finland's and the EU's objectives can be optimally promoted.



Economic footprint

Highlights from sections describing the footprint

The State Treasury's framework guides organisations to describe in their reports how they have taken their footprint into account and how they aim to reduce it.



Valtori handed over monitors that had reached the end of their life cycle to a charity. Further use has been found for the monitors, and shared funds have been saved as the organisation avoided paying charges for recycling the devices.



Business Finland continued its work on equal pay in 2022. Based on a pay review, 50 people were identified (12 men, 38 women), whose salaries did not match their competence and experience. A separate equality increase was added to these salaries.



Work productivity in the **National Land Survey of Finland** decreased by 1.7% in 2022, as the work input increased compared to the output. The recruitment and induction of new personnel reduce work productivity until the activities are on a permanent footing.



Sustainability reporting will continue in the future

Most organisations published their sustainability reports for the first or second time in 2022. It is likely that in the early years of sustainability reporting, the report works as an instrument of scrutiny for stakeholders rather than a tool for the organisation itself. Turning the report into a genuinely useful tool takes time: shaping and establishing the structures, practices and routines required by reporting, for instance, may take several reporting rounds.

1. Sustainability reporting will yield the most benefits when:
 - Reporting continues regularly
 - Continuity of the activities is accounted for, and goals and indicators are set to support the work
 - The report serves both as a genuine tool for the reporting organisation and an instrument which stakeholders can use to examine the work carried out

2. All actors in society bear a responsibility for promoting sustainable development and responsible action. Progress can only be made on these themes when specific attention is actively paid to them.



Abbreviations and terms used in the presentation

Arts Promotion Centre Finland	Taike	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment	MEAE
Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority	KKV	Ministry of Education and Culture	MEC
Finnish Environment Institute	SYKE	Ministry of Finance	MF
Finnish Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR	Palkeet	Ministry of Justice	MJ
Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare	THL	Ministry of the Environment	ME
Finnish Medicines Agency	Fimea	Ministry of the Interior	MI
Finnish National Agency for Education	OPH	Ministry of Transport and Communications	MTC
Finnish Patent and Registration Office	PRH	National Land Survey of Finland	MML
Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency	Tukes	National library for accessible literature and publishing	Celia
Finnish Security Intelligence Service	Supo	National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health	Valvira
Finnish Transport and Communications Agency	Traficom	Natural Resources Institute Finland	Luke
Geological Survey of Finland	GTK	Prime Minister's Office	PMO
Government ICT Centre	Valtori	Prison and Probation Service of Finland	Rise
Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland	ARA	Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority	STUK
Ministry for Foreign Affairs	MFA	Regional State Administrative Agency	AVI
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	MSAH		



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