# Transport and
# Voluntary National Reviews 2022

## The Race to Fulfil Our Commitment
## for People and Planet

SLOCAT

**Partnership on Sustainable,
Low Carbon Transport**

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# Voluntary National Reviews 2022

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### About the report

The SLOCAT Report on Transport and 2022 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) analyses in detail how countries are reporting transport measures in their 2022 reviews about the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This eighth edition of the SLOCAT flagship analysis is showing that a number of 2022 VNRs highlight sustainable transport actions in the context of COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the urgent transition to renewables from fossil fuels. However, most 2022 VNRs only describe the adverse impacts of the ongoing crises instead of presenting concrete policy measures. And when they do, the measures do not fully address the urgent systemic transformations necessary to enable equitable access to transport and mobility for all. The report concludes with four recommendations for countries to optimise the use of transport and mobility measures in support of the implementation of the SDGs at the national and sub-national levels.

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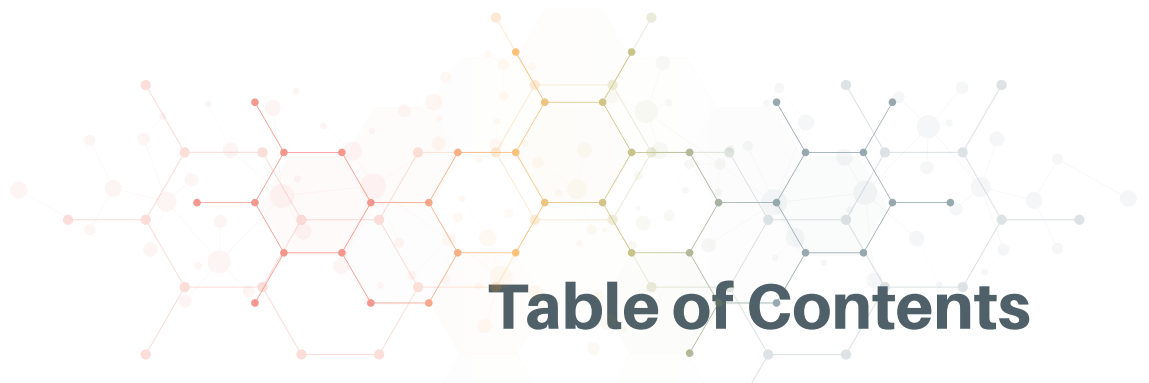### This report should be cited as:

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### Disclaimer

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# Section 1. Transport actions for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

## 1.1. Transport and the SDGs

**Sustainable, low carbon mobility is a powerful driver for positive, systemic transformation of our societies.** This transformation is outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the global 'blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030'. The 2030 Agenda was designed to be a cross-cutting and interconnected agenda, with the achievement of one SDG often dependent on the achievement of a series of others. While sustainable, low carbon transport and mobility is not represented by a stand-alone SDG, its successful implementation supports the achievement of almost every SDG.

### 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in September 2015 by Heads of State and Government at the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Summit. The Agenda includes 17 SDGs and 169 targets and is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 world-wide, ensuring that no one is left behind. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda was a landmark achievement, providing for a shared global vision towards sustainable development for all.

The 2030 Agenda states that 'sustainable transport systems, along with universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services, quality and resilient infrastructure, and other policies that increase productive capacities and build strong economic foundations for all countries'.[1]



Enabling sustainable, low carbon transport and mobility worldwide has explicit as well as implicit implications for the success of the entire 2030 Agenda, with social, environmental and economic 'multiplier effects' that go well beyond the scale of financial investment. Some areas where transport has the greatest positive impacts include: ending poverty (SDG 1); ending hunger (SDG 2); promoting healthy lifestyles and well-being (SDG 3); empowering women and girls (SDG 5); ensuring sustainable and modern energy (SDG 7); building resilient infrastructure (SDG 9); making cities sustainable (SDG 11) and taking action to combat climate change and its impacts (SDG 13).

In 2016, the first edition of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs was developed to capture the interlinkages between transport and the SDGs. In 2020, SLOCAT released the Second Edition of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs, which identifies four cross-cutting themes — Equitable, Healthy, Green and Resilient — to present these interactions. Under each theme, fundamental notions related to socio-economic and environmental systems on which sustainable, low carbon transport can affect positive change are highlighted.

The analysis is complemented by a detailed list of targets (Figure 2) across all SDGs for which action on sustainable, low carbon transport and mobility has the strongest impact. It also includes the **transport-relevant indicators** (Figure 3) used to assess advancement towards some of these targets in the framework of official 2030 Agenda monitoring efforts.



Figure 1: SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs (click to enlarge)



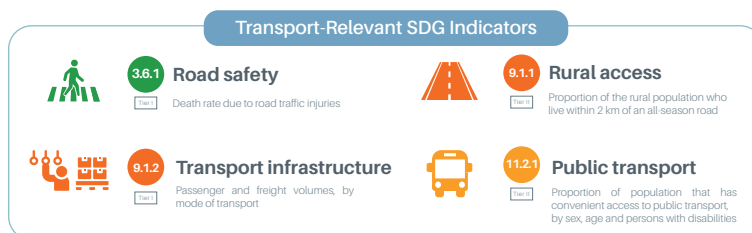Figure 2: Detailed list of transport-related SDG targets (click to enlarge)



Figure 3: Transport-relevant SDG indicators

## SDGs review mechanism

The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is the UN's apex body on sustainable development. It has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at the global level. The Forum has been convening annually under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2016, and every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly; last time in 2019.

The 2030 Agenda encourages UN member states to 'conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven'.[2] This mechanism, known as the Voluntary National Review (VNR), aims to facilitate the sharing of experiences among countries, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

VNRs are not the only element of a country's implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Countries are encouraged to adopt National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS), as to inform planning and action around the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). While the official process for gathering NSDS at the global level has come to a halt (as VNRs have become the primary mechanism for highlighting progress), national action can be extrapolated from existing material submitted by countries under review. Within these plans, transport often plays a central role in long-term planning related to sustainability and decarbonisation.[3]

Since the inaugural HLPF in 2016, SLOCAT has been assessing transport references in the VNRs.[4] Over the past years, our assessments found that countries have been reporting on transport as a vital sector to implement the SDGs, showcasing on-the-ground implementation and best practices. Through the VNRs, countries have contributed leverage and momentum for the transport sector to move along a more sustainable path.

SLOCAT Analyses on Transport and VNRs (2016 - 2021)

# 1.2. Ongoing challenges to SDGs implementation in the transport sector

Multiple research works have shown that **the world has been struggling to make meaningful progress on the SDGs since the COVID-19 pandemic started in late 2019**. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, said in a consultation session for 'Our Common Agenda' in August 2022 that the impacts of the pandemic, geopolitical conflicts and the 'triple planetary crisis' of climate change, air pollution, and biodiversity loss are throwing SDGs implementation 'further off course', particularly in the Global South, which he said 'are being squeezed dry'.[5]

A recent report by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network shows that the pandemic has inflicted 'massive humanitarian costs'.[6] Coupled with geopolitical conflicts, including the war in Ukraine, this has resulted in significant setbacks in SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and 'crowd out space for long-term thinking and investments'.[7] Under the SDG Index, there has been a slight decrease in the average national performance on SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). Average national performance on SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) has been particularly poor.[8]

The 2022 International Spillover Index also shows that rich countries generate negative socioeconomic and environmental spillovers, including through unsustainable trade, overconsumption and inefficient supply chains, where the transport sector plays a critical role.[9] The premise is that the actions of each country can have positive or negative effects on other countries' abilities to achieve the SDGs. The Spillover Index assesses such spillovers along three dimensions: environmental and social impacts embodied in trade, economy and finance, and security. A higher score means that a country causes more positive and fewer negative spillover effects.

In 2022, another piece of research found that the SDGs have had 'only limited transformative political impact' thus far and that 'profound normative and institutional impact,' such as legislative action and changing resource allocation, remains rare.[10]

**While the world is addressing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and grappling with the impact of fossil fuels dependency and geopolitical instability, the transformation of transport systems as a way to achieve the SDGs is faced with a number of weaknesses and threats, for example:**[11]

**Road traffic injury is the leading killer for children and youth worldwide and the number of road traffic deaths has reached 1.35 million annually.**[12] The burden is disproportionately borne by pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, in particular those living in the Global South. Pedestrians are the main victims of road crashes in cities. Africa has the highest level of road fatalities, where more than 80,000 pedestrians are subject to road casualties every day.

The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2020 with the ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030.[13] The Global Plan for the Decade of Action calls on continued improvements in the design of roads and vehicles; enhancement of laws and law enforcement; and provision of timely, life-saving emergency care for the injured.[14] While proven measures exist to address this dire issue, there is much work remaining to put these measures in place.

**Fossil fuel subsidies nearly doubled in 2021 and the war in Ukraine has driven energy prices higher while eroding energy security and geopolitical stability.**[15] Governments face challenges in removing subsidies during periods of high energy prices. Only a rapid increase in renewable energy investment can help to address the rising trajectories of energy prices and transport emissions.

**Financing has not kept pace with the growing need for sustainable, low carbon transport in most cities and countries.** Sustainable, low carbon transport spending has been overshadowed by 'brown investments' in highways and other carbon-intensive transport infrastructure, with over 80% of infrastructure investments in OECD countries going to road transport in 2019.[16]

**In the rapidly urbanising areas of the Global South, access to transport and mobility services is inequitable.** More than half of the urban residents of the Global South must travel at least 60 minutes to access jobs and services.[17] 80% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa rely exclusively on disconnected, poorly regulated informal transport services and 61% of the urban population in Asia still lack access to modern forms of public transport.[18]

**Electric vehicles are not a silver bullet for ensuring equitable access to decarbonised transport. They must be anchored in holistic planning and financing based on the *Avoid-Shift-Improve* Framework.** The combination of public transport based on clean technologies, walking and cycling hold the key to many of the solutions needed to achieve our goals through a just transition. Still, these are under-prioritised aspects of the sustainability agenda, from a policy and funding perspective. All over the world, decades of car-centric cities and transport planning have had negative impacts on people and the planet - from rocketing emissions, poor air quality and dangerous roads, to plans and policies that leave the poorest behind.

Most attention to electric vehicles is focused on private vehicles, and many of the current narratives fail to consider realities in the Global South.[19] Around the world, electric vehicles accounted for more than 20% of motorised two- and three-wheeler vehicle sales, 14% of bus sales and 8.6% of private passenger car sales in 2021.[20] Electric mobility has limited potential in aviation, shipping and heavy-duty trucking and it will only fully decarbonise transport if it is powered with renewable energy. Ultimately, electric mobility requires differentiated strategies by region and a greater focus on shared fleets (including electric buses, mini-buses, and two- and three-wheeled vehicles); otherwise, its expansion will simply lead to cleaner congestion.

**Transport CO2 emission trends – in most countries and regions – are not moving in the right direction.** In 2019, transport was the top or second-highest $CO_2$-emitting sector in more than three-quarters of the world's countries. From 2010 to 2019, total transport emissions decreased in only a fifth of countries. High-income countries contributed half of the transport emissions during this time, with per capita emissions nearly 15 times above the 2050 Paris Agreement targets. Compared to other sectors, the transport sector experienced the sharpest $CO_2$ emissions rebound from 2020 to 2021, driven by rising automobile use and plummeting public transport ridership due to the pandemic.

**Transport resilience to climate change impacts is not receiving the attention required in country plans.** As of December 2021, 43% of all Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change include transport adaptation measures, a significant improvement over the first-generation NDCs where transport adaptation was covered in just 22%.[21] However, only six second-generation NDCs have transport adaptation targets. Transport adaptation measures are also not widely reported in VNRs. Similar to the NDCs, adaptation content reported in VNRs is very general and the majority is limited to road infrastructure resilience. Actions on transport adaptation rarely specify the type of transport activity they aim to address.

## Spotlight - Lessons learned from enhancing transport dimension in the national reporting process under the Paris Agreement

The SLOCAT Report on *Climate Strategies for Transport: An Analysis of Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies* analyses trends in the transport decarbonisation ambition, targets and actions in the climate strategies submitted by countries in the framework of the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the analysis focuses on Long-Term Strategies (LTS) starting from 2016 and on NDCs starting from 2019. On the basis of the analysis, the report seeks to establish to what extent climate action in transport by countries is on track to deliver on the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming below 1.5 °C. The report also identifies gaps and shortcomings in the transport dimension of these national climate strategies; while it provides recommendations on how to enhance it. The analysis is based on the *Tracker of Climate Strategies for Transport*, jointly developed by the Advancing Transport Climate Strategies in Rapidly Motorising Countries (TraCS) project by GIZ and SLOCAT Secretariat.
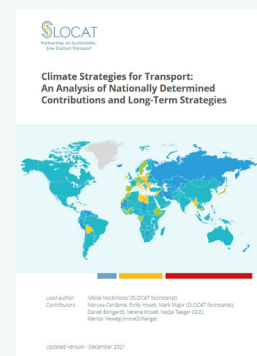
The *NDCs Hall of Fame by SLOCAT* puts the spotlight on the major transport strengths and issues in the second generation of NDCs. By doing this, we aim to illustrate how countries can enhance the transport dimension of their NDCs and hence enable passenger and freight transport systems for equitable, decarbonised, resilient pathways.

**Do NDCs include ambitious measures that support passenger and freight transport systems for equitable, decarbonised, resilient pathways?**

- GHG Mitigation Targets
- Mitigation & Adaptation
- Freight
- *Avoid-Shift-Improve* Strategies
- Public transport, Walking & Cycling
- Transport Electrification

### NDCs Hall of Fame
### Final Awards

## Best NDCs on Transport
slocat.net/ndcs-hall-of-fame  I  #TransportinNDCs #COP27

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ⭐⭐⭐⭐ Colombia | Guinea | Seychelles | Sri Lanka |
| ⭐⭐⭐ Bangladesh | Burkina Faso | Samoa | South Sudan |
| ⭐⭐ Cabo Verde | El Salvador | Jordan | Liberia |
| ⭐ Albania | Barbados | Nepal | United Arab Emirates |

Read more at https://slocat.net/ndcs-hall-of-fame

In 2022, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the acute geopolitical instability are underscoring the need to take bold steps to address the catastrophic impacts on transport and mobility systems. Current global issues, including high commodity prices and in particular fuel prices, have drawn the attention of leaders around the world to **reduce dependency on fossil fuels for transport in an equitable and just transition**.

A number of 2022 VNRs submitted by countries **highlight sustainable transport actions in the context of pandemic recovery and the urgent transition to renewables from fossil fuels** (Table 1). **However, most 2022 VNRs only describe the adverse impacts of these crises (the 'situation') without presenting concrete policy measures**; and when they do, the measures **do not fully address the urgent systemic transformations necessary** to enable equitable access to transport and mobility for all.

**Table 1: Selected examples of 2022 VNRs references on sustainable transport actions in the context of pandemic recovery and energy transition from fossil fuels**

**Jordan** expanded the Takaful Programme to support informal workers and poor and vulnerable communities by transferring emergency cash and providing transport subsidies.

**Pakistan** initiated the 'Langar on Wheels' programme which delivers food aid through special trucks to the most vulnerable (particularly labourers and daily wagers) across cities.

**Andorra** reduced the price of school transport and promoted free public transport to counter the rising costs inflicted by the pandemic.

**Luxembourg** is working towards a renewable hydrogen market and a cross-border hydrogen ecosystem in Benelux for the entire value chain (production, transportation and consumption), with a specific focus on transport and steel industries. The ecosystem is expected to reduce more than 980,000 tonnes of $CO_2$ emissions per year by 2030.

**Greece** reduced the VAT for all passenger transport in 2020 and 2021 to protect employment and disposable income.

**Japan** launched the Sustainable Transport and Renewable Energy-Powered Electric Mobility Project to improve technology transition in the transport and energy sectors in the context of SDG indicator 12.a.1 on renewable energy-generating capacity.

**Kazakhstan** accelerated digital technologies development in transport logistics. The country has initiated a transition to paperless document management and banned paper permits since 2020.

**Uruguay** is reducing fossil fuel subsidies and redirecting them to the electrification of public transport in cities.

In the context of counter-pandemic measures, **The Philippines** accelerated investment in public transport, freight, walking and cycling projects, including the EDSA Busway System, the Public Utility Vehicle Service Contracting Programme and the Metropolitan Bike Lane Networks Project.

## Side Event on Supporting an Integrated Approach to Safe and Sustainable Transport for Women and Girls | 5 July 2022

At the 2022 session of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development , SLOCAT co-organised a side event with the Blue Diamond Society, FIA Foundation, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, Safetipin and the Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The event explored how COVID-19 has created profound shocks to transport and mobility worldwide, with especially pronounced impacts on women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons. Despite the growing initiatives to include more women in the sector and better gender perspectives in transport services, much work remains. As cities and countries respond to a health pandemic and rethink mobility policies, transport systems and public spaces, it is the perfect time to capitalise on gender-responsive sustainable mobility. Watch the recording.

## Additional Resources

- SLOCAT Transport and Climate Change Global Status Report - 2nd edition

- Spotlight about the Impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic on Travel Behaviour

- Transport Systems that Protect Health and Climate

- Transport in COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Strategies: A Joint Analysis by IsDB and SLOCAT for Member Countries

- Regional Infographics about COVID-19 impacts on Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbeans and Middle East and North Africa

- Global Transport Knowledge Partnership (gTKP) COVID-19 Repository

# Section 2. Transport dimension in 2022 Voluntary National Reviews of the SDGs

## 2.1. General overview

42 countries presented their VNRs at the 2022 session of the HLPF,[22] out of which 10 countries were first-timers. 36 of these VNRs include transport references, representing 86% of all 2022 VNRs, the lowest percentage since 2017 (Figure 5).[23]

**How many VNRs have included transport references since 2016?**

- VNRs with transport references
- VNRs with no transport references

| No. of submissions | 22 | 43 | 47 | 44 | 47 | 40 | 42 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 73% | 98% | 94% | 95% | 91% | 100% | 86% |
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |

**Total no. of 2022 VNR submissions: 42**

Africa: 20
Asia: 6
Europe: 9
Latin America and the Caribbean: 7
Oceania: 0
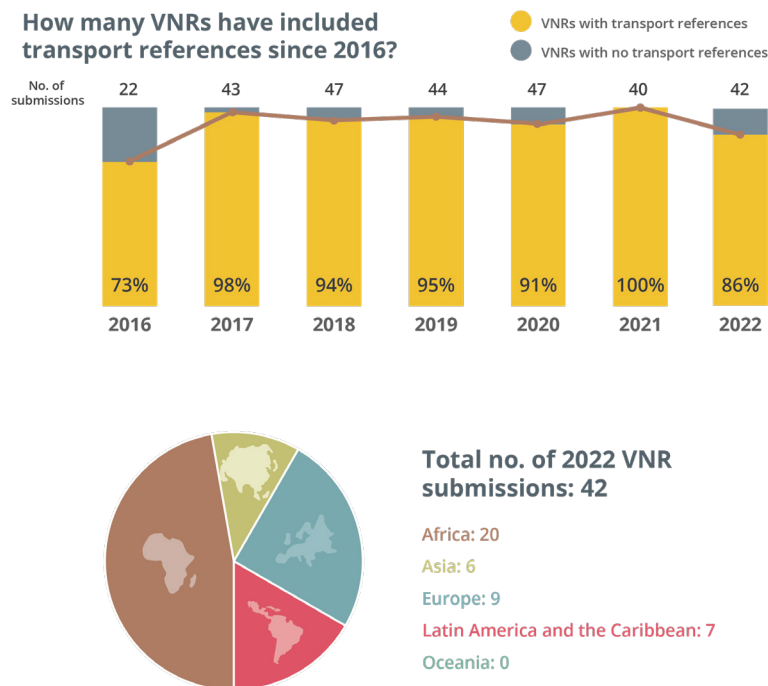
**Figure 5: Percentage of 2022 VNRs with transport references (2016 - 2022)**

The percentage of transport references was generally above 90% between 2017 and 2020 and reached 100% in 2021. While the number alone should not be considered a major indicator of transport dimension in the VNRs, it begs for further interrogation. Possible factors that may have contributed to the decrease in transport references in 2022 include:

- **Lack of reporting on SDGs that have the most transport relevance** (e.g. SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure and SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities) in a number of 2022 VNRs because they were not in focus at HLPF 2022.

- A possible and persisting **gap in incorporating green and equitable recovery strategies for transport systems in pandemic responses**.

- **Severely limited data collection** for transport infrastructure and services development due to the pandemic, especially in countries from the Global South.

- **Pandemic-related budgetary cuts** in national strategies and programmes for the transport sector.

As presented in the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and SDGs, sustainable transport is a powerful driver to achieve various SDGs and a number of specific targets (see Section 1.1). Figure 6 shows how the 2022 VNRs connect transport infrastructure and services to different SDGs.

# % of 2022 VNRs connecting transport with different SDGs
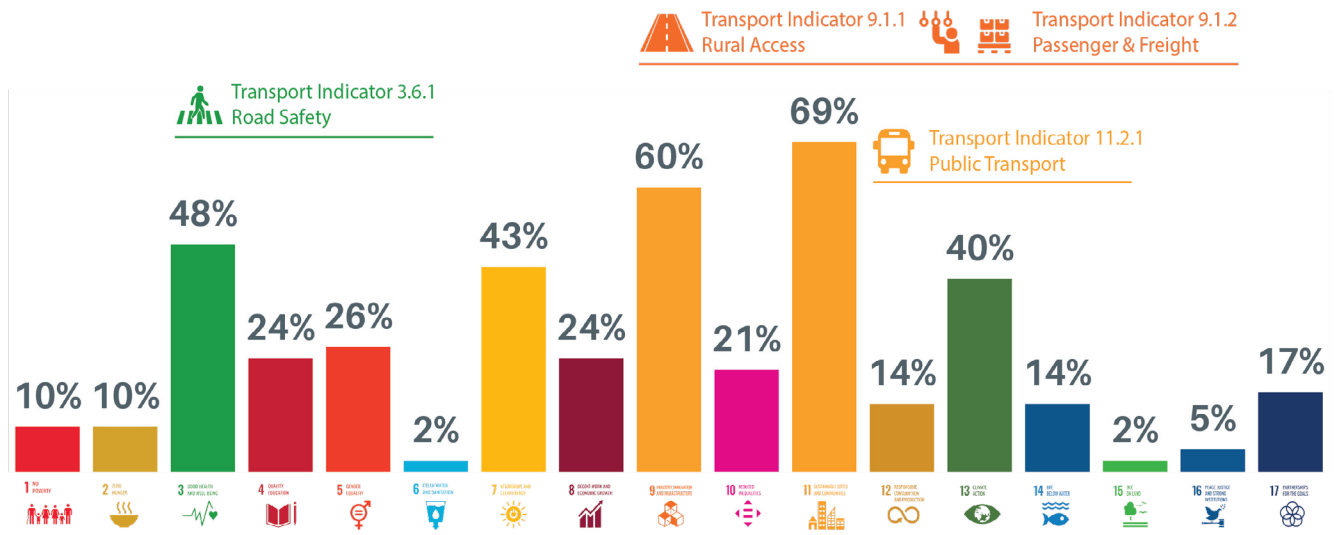


Figure 6: Percentage of 2022 VNRs connecting transport with different SDGs

In 2022 VNRs, **the majority of references focus on transport infrastructure development** in the context of:

**Passenger and freight activities**
(SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)

**All-season rural roads**
(SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)

**Public transport systems**
(SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities)

## Significant attention is also given to:

Reducing **traffic fatalities and injuries**
(SDG 3 - Good Health and Well Being)

Increasing **renewable energy** and reducing final **energy consumption** in the transport sector
(SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy)

Curbing mobile-source **green-house gas (GHG) emissions**
(SDG 13 - Climate Action)

This is likely due to the transport-relevant targets and indicators under all the six SDGs mentioned above.

Among other SDGs, attention is also given to the role of transport in:

Increasing school enrollment through subsidy schemes
(SDG 4 - Quality Education)

Ensuring safety of women and girls in transport and gender-neutral transport policies
(SDG 5 - Gender Equality)

Facilitating better access to jobs and economic opportunities
(SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth)

Compared to previous years, **there is a slight increase among 2022 VNRs in gender-sensitive transport policies (SDG 5), possibly because SDG 5 was in focus at HLPF 2022.**

*Argentina and Eswatini enforced laws to prohibit sexual and gender-based violence that is widely prevalent in transport and public spaces.*

Only a handful of 2022 VNRs, mostly submitted by countries from the Global South, report pro-poor, food security and market access measures related to transport. (SDG 1 and SDG 2).

*Cameroon, Ghana and Kazakhstan introduced schemes to provide cash and low transport costs for the poor.*

*Equatorial Guinea, Pakistan and Sudan initiated transport infrastructure projects to improve connectivity of farmers to markets, which is often plagued with long transportation time and costs that have been further exacerbated by the climate shocks and the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Compared to previous years, relatively fewer 2022 VNRs report measures on phasing out fossil fuel subsidies (SDG 12) and curbing of mobile-source GHG emissions (SDG 13) - despite 40% of 2022 VNRs spelling out connections with SDG13. This decrease is likely due to, among other reasons, the lack of low carbon targets for transport in the SDGs; the increased transport demand brought about by pandemic recovery and the failure to progress renewables in transport.[24] Ongoing geopolitical tensions, including the war in Ukraine, have multiplied these concerns with rising prices for fuel, fertilisers and food. There are still major concerns among many Global South countries that climate mitigation actions impose costs, and that quantitative targets for emissions reduction will adversely affect economic development.

**% of 2022 VNRs with references to transport sub-sectors**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29% | 31% | 36% | 43% | 45% | 64% |
| Walking & Cycling | Rural Transport | Shipping | Railway | Aviation | Urban Transport |

Figure 7: Percentage of 2022 VNRs with references to transport sub-sector

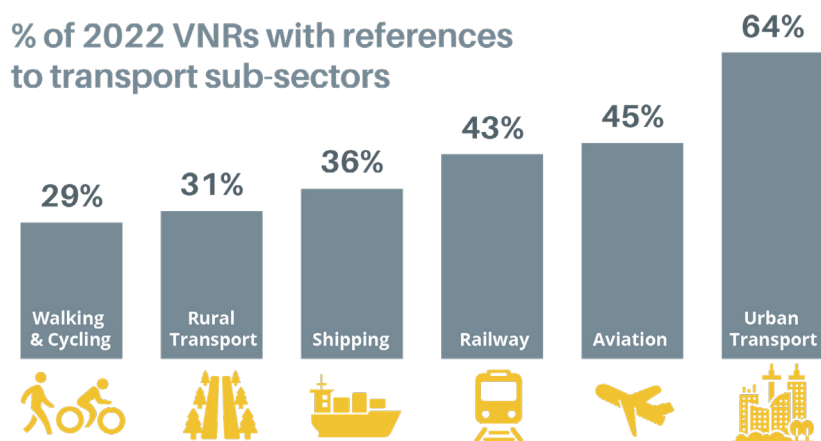On the basis of the transport-relevant indicator 11.2.1 (public transport), **there is ample attention to urban transport measures in 2022 VNRs** (Figure 7). **However, there are very few references to rural access** (indicator 9.1.1). In 2020 VNRs, both urban and rural transport received similar levels of attention, while in 2022 VNRs, **the gap between references on urban and rural transport is wide**. A possible reason could be the lack of capacity, data and technical expertise for effective rural transport policy in the Global South further constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Similar to previous years, walking and cycling solutions are still largely overlooked in 2022 VNRs** (Figure 7). However, walking and cycling offer the most reliable journey times, represent the best value for money of all transport modes and do not impose high external costs on society at large.[25] These modes have also proven to be the most resilient forms of transport and have been integral to mobility responses in the face of natural disasters and health crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic.[26] The combination of public transport based on clean technologies, walking and cycling hold the key to many of the solutions needed to achieve our goals through a just transition. Still, these are under-prioritised aspects of the sustainability agenda, from a policy and funding perspective. All over the world, decades of car-centric cities and transport planning have had negative impacts on people and the planet - from rocketing emissions, poor air quality and dangerous roads, to plans and policies that leave the poorest behind. The historical lack of attention to these modes in VNRs shows that there is still a significant gap in measuring and reporting the wider sustainability impacts of walking and cycling.

As regards the **high-volume transport modes** (e.g. maritime, rail and aviation), **in 2022, many countries report on railway and aviation transport measures in the context of enhancing regional and cross-border connectivity and facilitating trade development.** Since 2020, rail-related measures have featured prominently in VNRs, showing the emerging positive sign that rail is considered a solution in building a resilient, green economy. The increase in aviation references could be caused by rebound effects in air travel after COVID-10 pandemic peak (Figure 7). From 2016 to 2019, there was a general balance in VNRs with references on the high-volume transport modes. But since 2020, maritime transport has been receiving less attention, likely due to the unprecedented disruption of COVID-19 to maritime transport operations, impacting the smooth functioning of global supply chains.

## Spotlight - Six actions to enable walking, cycling and public transport for people and planet: A call to action by SLOCAT

In order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the 1.5°C target of the Paris Agreement to provide equitable access to transport and mobility for all, the urgent transformation of transport is necessary. Much more needs to be done to not only bring emissions from transport systems down to zero and scale up their resilience, but also to guarantee equitable access to transport and mobility systems that truly leave no one and no place behind. Walking, cycling and public transport hold the key to many of the solutions needed to achieve these goals through a just transition. Still, they are under-prioritised aspects of the climate and sustainability agenda, from a policy and funding perspective.

At the upcoming COP27 (November 2022) and SDG Summit (September 2023), governments at all levels, multilateral organisations, international financial institutions and national development banks must act to meaningfully scale up walking, cycling and public transport systems, particularly in the Global South.

The SLOCAT Partnership calls on these stakeholders to enable walking, cycling and public transport solutions as core elements of their climate action for transport by specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based action in six areas:

1. Prioritising the promotion, support and scale up of walking, cycling and public transport, as well as the decoupling of economic growth and private car use, with tailored educational, policy and funding measures.

2. Investing in infrastructure that enables walking, cycling and public transport, by, among other actions, reallocating existing funding from fossil fuel subsidies.

3. Implementing integrated land and transport design and planning, with robust safeguards for healthy, gender sensitive, pro-poor and disabilities-conscious impacts so these modes effectively become the most convenient options for most trips.

4. Involving multidisciplinary health experts in the development and implementation of walking, cycling and public transport policy.

5. Enhancing coordination among different tiers of government, as well as the technical and financial capacities of sub-national and local governments to help cities and communities realise this shift in design, planning, funding and implementation.

6. Applying an integrated and balanced mix of *Avoid–Shift–Improve* transport strategies to reduce emissions and increase equitable access to resilient transport systems.

**Read more at** www.slocat.net/actions-to-enable-walking-cycling-and-public-transport

# 2.2. Specific transport targets reported in 2022 VNRs

**In 2022, 21% of the VNRs report specific transport targets** (Figure 8), in continuity with the incremental trend over the past three years (17% in 2019, 18% in 2022 and 20% in 2021).



**No. of specific transport targets reported in 2022 VNRs**

- Andorra
- Argentina
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan
- Latvia
- Liberia
- Luxembourg
- Pakistan
- Togo

Road Safety | 1
Renewables/Energy | 2
Electrification | 4
Access | 2
Freight | 2
Emissions Reduction | 2
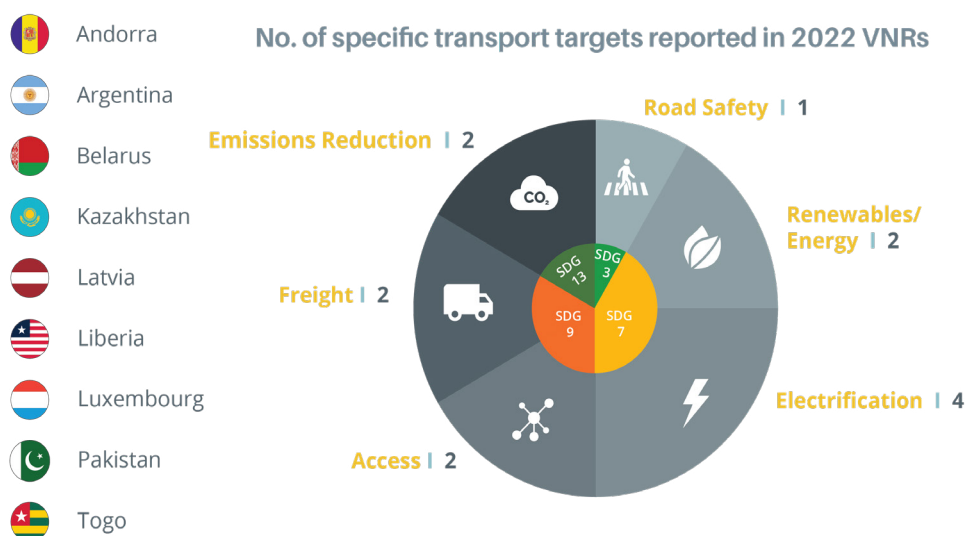
Figure 8: Number of 2022 VNRs with specific transport targets

Table 2: Specific transport targets reported in 2022 VNRs

| Countries | Topic | Targets |
|---|---|---|
| Andorra | ⚡ | Increase the share of electric vehicles to 20% by 2030 and become one of the five European countries with the highest share of electric vehicle sales. |
| Argentina | 🚚 | Increase the share of freight transported by rail to 9% by 2025. |
| | 🚚 | Increase the share of freight carried by rail to 11% by 2030. |
| | 🚶 | Reduce the rate of fatalities due to road accidents per 100,000 inhabitants to 8.2% by 2030. |
| Belarus | ✴ | Have 100% of the rural population living within two kilometres of a year-round road by 2021 (already fulfilled). |
| Kazakhstan | ✴ | Upgrade 100% of national roads to normal conditions and improve up to 95% of local roads by 2025. |
| | 🍃 | Switch all urban passenger transport to environmentally friendly fuels by 2030. |
| Latvia | 🍃 | Increase the Renewable Energy System share in the transport sector to 7% by 2030. |
| Liberia | $CO_2$ | Reduce transport $CO_2$ emissions by 15% by 2030. |
| Luxembourg | ⚡ | Increase the share of electric and plug-in hybrid cars to 49% by 2030. |
| | $CO_2$ | Reduce transport CO2 emissions by 57% by 2030. |
| Pakistan | ⚡ | Achieve a 30% shift to electric vehicles by 2030. |
| Togo | ⚡ | Increase the share of electric vehicles in newly sold vehicles in the country to 3% by 2025. |

# 2.3. References to transport sustainability impacts in 2022 VNRs

About half of the 2022 VNRs include explicit references to transport sustainability impacts. Figure 9 shows the percentage of VNRs that report how transport is related to the four themes on transport and sustainability of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs (Equitable, Green, Healthy and Resilient).

Figure 9: % of 2022 VNRs with references to the four themes on transport and sustainability of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs

**% of 2022 VNRs with references to the four themes on transport and sustainability**

Read more: SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and SDGs

| Equitable | Healthy | Green | Resilient |
|-----------|---------|-------|-----------|
| 52% | 45% | 38% | 14% |
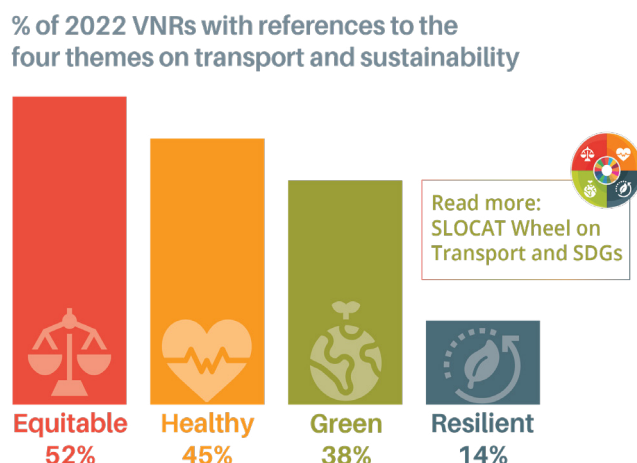
Since 2020, VNRs have placed growing attention to overall transport sustainability impacts, with around 50% of 2022 VNRs including these kinds of references compared to only 30% in 2019. From 2022 to 2022, **countries reported more impacts related to *Equity* and than to *Green*, *Healthy* and *Resilient* communities** (Figure 10). This can be read as proof of a general consensus on the contribution of transport planning, infrastructure, finance and innovations to equitable universal access to socioeconomic opportunities, gender empowerment, poverty alleviation and economic productivity. It also signifies a general understanding on the interface between transport, environment, safety and security and circular economy.

**% change in VNRs with references to the four themes on transport and sustainability (2020-2022)**

Legend: 2020, 2021, 2022

Equitable: 18% ↓
Healthy: 13% ↑, 22% ↓
Green: 5% ↑, 3% ↓
Resilient: 9% ↑, 18% ↓
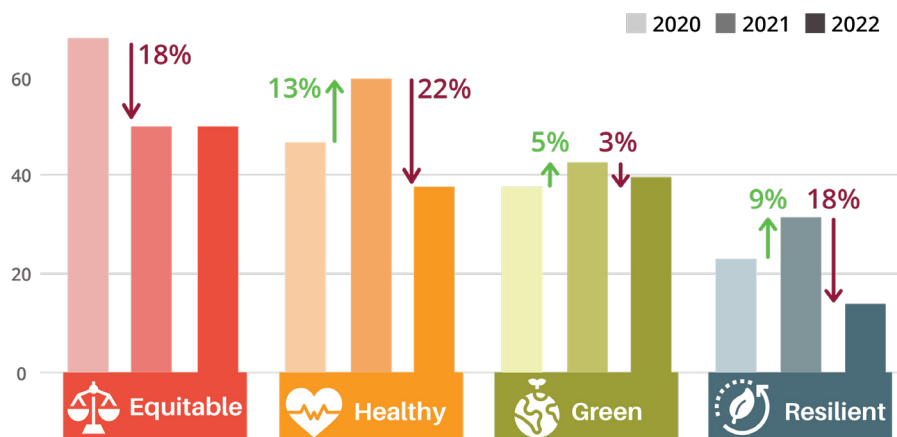
Figure 10: % change in VNRs with references to the four themes on transport and sustainability of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs (2020-2022)[27]

The relatively less references to *Health* measures in connection to transport shows that there is still an awareness gap on the interface between transport and the wide notion of planetary and human health. **References on health in VNRs over the past three years are largely related to road safety issues (SDG Target 3.6), hence missing the wider scope that countries should consider.** Whether it is curbing emissions, reducing deaths and injuries in road crashes, enabling healthy lifestyles with walking and cycling, supporting mental health with reclaimed streets for community life or better integrating urban spatial and transport planning for place-making; the nexus across transport-air pollu-health is a multiplier.

The fluctuating number of transport references in connection to *Resilience* measures exposes the lack of awareness of transport and mobility services as a vital piece to the resilience of communities and livelihoods to global shocks and climate change. In 2022, more than 20 VNRs discuss how the transport sector has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, specific policy measures and actions to enhance transport systems resilience are not sufficiently reported. The early months of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed many vulnerabilities in transport systems. Over time, many countries across geographies have evolved new transport measures and learned important lessons to adapt transport planning and management. **Countries should focus on reporting these lessons learned and actions instead of merely focusing on describing the negative impacts.**

Table 3 shows selected examples of 2022 VNRs to the four themes of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs, organised by regions.

# ⚖️ Equitable

**Djibouti** set up a job creation programme with opportunities to earn immediate income in ports and transport infrastructure.

**Ghana** provided transport subsidies to the poor and vulnerable groups under its Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme.

**Togo**'s Société de transport de Lomé renewed its vehicle fleet and adopted a social pricing policy which contributed to equitable access to public transport for all.

**Kazakhstan** launched the Guaranteed Social Package initiative to offer fare discounts of urban public transport for children from low-income households.

**Pakistan** launched an extensive learning programme with transport facilities provisions for more than 16,000 girls to improve access to education.

**Andorra** provided full-year public transport subsidies for youth and additional public transport subsidies to decentralise population from urban city centres to small towns.

**Belarus** conducted wide multi-stakeholder consultations to enhance accessibility design of transport infrastructure facilities and road network.

**Greece** reduced commute expenses and freight costs of remote Greek Island inhabitants to lower the gap in access and transport inequality.

**Greece**, **Andorra** and **Latvia** launched schemes with public transport subsidies for old persons and persons with disabilities.

**Latvia** modernised its passenger railway infrastructure, upgraded 28 train stations in 2019 and installed new platforms with better accessibility design. The renovations improved passenger and operation safety; service quality and comfort; while reducing emissions of the rail system.

**Jamaica** established the Disabilities Rights Tribunal and other legislative protocols to improve accessibility of public transport. It also provided transport subsidies to students in rural areas.

**Suriname** provided free school transport services for 21,130 school children and 1,618 teachers in 2021.

**Argentina** set up a network of transport entities to consult women and members of the LGBTI+ community who suffer from gender violence. More than 14,000 people were assisted in Buenos Aires in 2021.

# 🌍 Green

**Ethiopia** constructed the fully electric Addis Ababa light rail and the Addis Ababa–Djibouti railway line, powered by renewable energy. It contributed to ease urban traffic congestion, reduce GHG emissions and shift road freight to rail. As a result, freight volume transported by rail increased by 42% within a year in 2021.

**Pakistan** adopted its first Electrical Vehicle Policy (2020-2025) with massive tax exemptions for vehicles and the public transport fleet. It initiated multiple projects to ease traffic congestion and improve air pollution, e.g. metro services in Lahore, eco-friendly buses in Punjab, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in Peshawar and Karachi.

**The United Arab Emirates (UAE)** partnered with Siemens to explore how solar power can make hydrogen production more economical in order to accelerate the uptake of clean energy in the transport sector. UAE also launched the Dubai Urban Plan 2040 with ambitious sustainable mobility plans. The Dubai Expo 2020 showcased sustainable transport and clean energy solutions.

**Andorra** ran a pilot test for 100% electric public buses in 2022 as the first step to the electrification of its national public transport system.

**Greece** launched a project to accelerate vehicle electrification and increase the (renewable) energy autonomy of remote islands. It upgraded existing railway infrastructure and is constructing seven additional systems in Athens, Thessaloniki and other key cities.

**Luxembourg** plans to double its national network of cycling paths by 2023 and connect to key destinations of necessities (transport stations and work centres).

**Argentina** launched an intelligent transport programme with a community of practice to improve energy efficiency in transport, lower logistics cost and reduce GHG emissions.

**Uruguay** launched its second energy transition plan which includes reconversion of the hydrocarbon matrix used for transport and incentives for investments in electric vehicles.

# Healthy

**Eritrea** plans to expand infrastructure to historically under-served regions, with a key focus on improving mobility of inhabitants to access emergency health services.

**Eswatini** passed the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act to prohibit all forms of physical and sexual violence to women and girls in urban spaces and public transport.

**Togo** adopted a national road safety policy with the construction of a land transport observatory and a training centre for road transport workers.

**Kazakhstan** upgraded its public transport fleet and increased cycling infrastructures and bike rental stations. It also designed locations of social and leisure centres and public services within walking distance to reduce private transport trips.

**The Philippines** launched public transport, freight, walking and cycling projects with enhanced parameters for passenger safety and security.

**Belarus**'s policy measures to prevent road traffic accidents resulted in a 8% decrease in the death rate per 100,000 people due to road traffic accidents from 2020 to 2021.

**Greece** introduced the Road Traffic Code for micromobility, walking and cycling. It includes traffic signals, new road signs and more severe sanctions to protect vulnerable road users (cyclists and pedestrians).

**Jamaica** formed a National Pedestrian Safety Committee and aligned its goals with the UN Second Decade of Action 2021-2030.

# Resilient

**Ethiopia** increased investments in the rail sector to build a more resilient economy. The newly completed Addis Ababa–Djibouti Railway connects major ports with industrial parks and second-tier cities.

In **Cameroon**, the government is working with farm managers to lower transport costs as a pandemic recovery measure.

**Jordan** provided transport subsidies to poor and vulnerable communities during the pandemic.

**Greece** invested heavily in the digitalisation of public infrastructure (airports, ports, rail network, public transport) to improve competitiveness of the transport and tourism sectors.

## 2.4. References to the *Avoid-Shift-Improve* Framework

Applying *Avoid-Shift-Improve (A-S-I)* measures through integrated, inter-modal and balanced approaches is critical to unleash the full benefits of sustainable, low-carbon transport (Figure 11).[28] The A-S-I approach helps reduce environmental impact, improve access to socio-economic opportunities, increase logistics efficiency, reduce congestion, improve air quality and increase road safety.

*Shift* and *Improve* measures – and the overall decarbonisation of the transport sector – are most effective when combined with *Avoid* measures. *Avoid* measures allow cities to limit vehicle traffic to within the capacity of roadways, and they reward travellers who use transport modes that are resource, space and energy efficient. Many *Avoid* measures aim to actively manage transport demand, with approaches such as congestion charging, carbon pricing for all transport modes, and incentives for behavioural modifications leading to wide-scale changes.



**Avoid** and reduce the need for motorised travel
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Circular Economy
- Digital Services

**Shift** to more sustainable modes
- Home-based Services
- Access to Primary Services
- Parking Management
- Fair Pricing
- Intermodal Freight Transport
- Shared Economy

**Improve** transport modes
- Public Transport
- Active Mobility
- Access Regulation
- Renewable Energy
- Vehicle Design
- Operational Efficiency

*The A-S-I diagramme presents a non-exhaustive list of measures for illustrative purposes only.

Figure 11: *Avoid-Shift-Improve* Framework[29]

Traditionally (with the exception of 2021 VNRs), very few VNRs reported on *Avoid* measures and most attention was given to Shift and Improve measures (Figure 11). Among the 2022 VNRs:

🚌🚋     60% include references on public transport (Shift-Improve);

⏱️     36% include references on vehicle design (Improve);

⚡     33% include references on renewable energy and electric mobility (Improve);

⚛️     31% include references on access to primary services (Avoid-Shift).

Compared to previous years, there is an overall positive increase of references to the above four measures and growing attention to cross-cutting measures that combine them (e.g. bus and rail electrification, vehicle efficiency labelling system for public fleet, incentives to upgrade informal transport vehicles).

## % of 2022 VNRs with references to transport measures
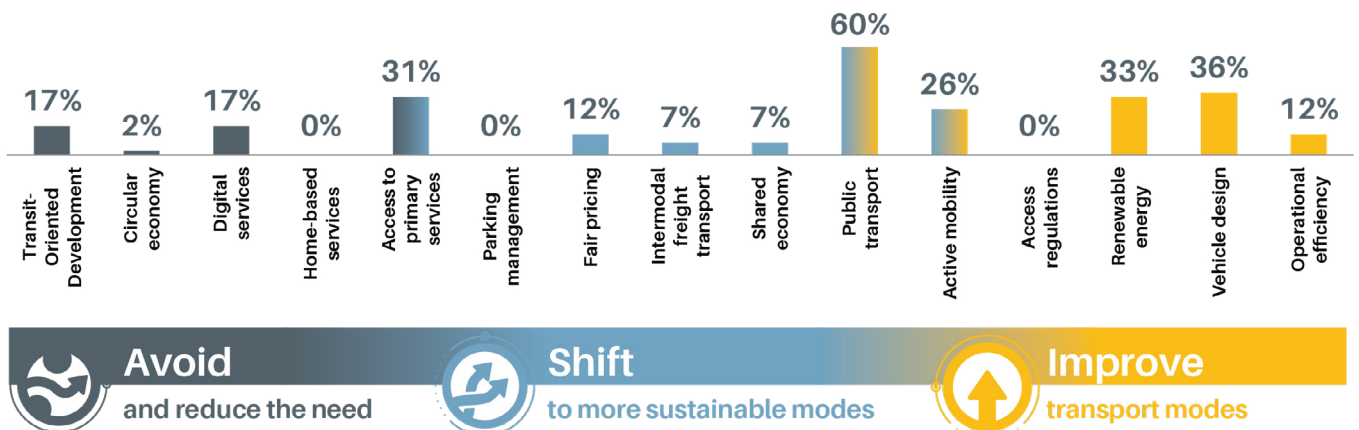


Figure 12: % of 2022 VNRs with references to A-S-I transport measures

Among other A-S-I measures, **there is a positive increase of references to digital tools for passenger and freight** transport services as countries adopted innovations and new technologies for transport and logistics during the pandemic. However, **several key *Avoid* and *Shift*-related measures remain in the shadows**. Only 7% of 2022 VNRs include measures on **intermodal freight transport** (e.g. use of delivery lockers, cargo e-bikes or dollies) and **shared economy** (e.g. bike sharing systems or car clubs). No reference is found on **access regulations** (e.g. congestion charges, low, ultra-low or zero emission zones), **home-based services** (e.g. use of telework or remote meetings to avoid travel) and **parking management** measures. **This shows that the transport measures reported in the VNRs remain the 'usual suspects' and do not collectively present a diverse and systemic range of solutions.**

Table 4 shows selected examples of A-S-I measures from 2022 VNRs.

| A-S-I | Illustrative measures | Selected examples of A-S-I references from 2022 VNRs |
|---|---|---|
| | **Transit-oriented development** | **Andorra** adopted a policy to reduce GHG emissions of professional travel of large public entities and companies workers.<br><br>**Florence, Italy** launched an integrated pricing system to maximise access to local public transport services as part of its Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP). |
| | **Circular economy** | **UAE** plans to transition to a more circular transport sector by reducing energy demand and raw materials used in the production, use and disposal of vehicles; reducing the amount of waste, GHG emissions, and other negative externalities associated with transport; and reducing congestion and travel times. |
| | **Digital services** | **Togo** launched a digital transformation strategy (Togo Digital 2025) with incubators such as Nunya Lab, Tilitu Lab and Banm Lab to encourage innovation in transport services and other sectors.<br><br>**Kazakhstan** initiated a transition to paperless document management in transport logistics and banned paper permits from 2020.<br><br>**Belarus** launched the Smart Cities of Belarus project, including the use of IT solutions in transport infrastructure, the design of a traffic control centre and other components of an intelligent transport system.<br><br>**Greece** launched the Digital Decalogue with smart management of parking, municipal fleets and smart urban transport systems. |
| | **Home-based services** | No reference |
| | **Access to primary services** | **Eritrea** improved provisions of public transport services and bicycles to enhance travelling to school, especially those from marginalised groups.<br><br>**Montenegro** supported children from poor households to have equal access to education with transport services provisions, distance learning equipment, Internet services and individual support to children with disabilities. |
| | **Parking management** | No reference |
| | **Fair pricing** | **Switzerland** increased $CO_2$ levy per tonne of $CO_2$ by 25% to achieve its national emissions target.<br><br>**Uruguay** introduced a $CO_2$ levy in 2022 and will allocate a percentage of the collected tax to finance policies that promote sustainable transport. It is reducing fossil fuel subsidies and redirecting them to electric units in urban public transport. |
| | **Intermodal freight transport** | **Argentina** adopted measures to shift freight from road to rail transport with better data collection and a rail freight plan. |
| | **Shared economy** | **Luxembourg** launched a multimodal trip planner app, Mobiliteit.lu, which helps users to take integrated trips (buses, trains, trams, shared cars, bicycles and walking) on a regional scale with visualisation of the ecological degree of the journeys. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Public transport** | **Cote d'Ivoire**'s Abidjan Transport Company upgraded its fleet with 950 buses; as a result, it transported 42% more passengers at the end of 2020 compared to 2018. 450 more new buses per year will be added from 2022.<br><br>**Eritrea** substantially improved the availability of public transport, having increased buses in rural areas by 6.5 times since 1991. 85% of all cities and villages now have access to public transport.<br><br>In 2021, **Ethiopia** increased the share of public transport in cities by 34% and reduced transport waiting time in Addis Ababa by 38%.<br><br>**Amman, Jordan** launched a BRT system which has had more than 25,000 passengers within the first year of launch. It aimed to increase the use of public transport from 13% to 20% during the first year of its operation.<br><br>**Luxembourg** provided free public transport throughout the country, including for cross-border workers and visitors, from March 2020. In January 2022, a pilot project was launched to extend free access on a cross-border bus line. |
| | **Active mobility** | **Greece** established a National EuroVelo Coordination Centre to research and coordinate projects for the European cycling network and inform users on routes.<br><br>**The Netherlands** launched plans to link all municipalities with additional cycle paths and green corridors. |
| | **Access regulations** | **No reference.** |
| | **Renewable energy** | **Latvia** improved energy efficiency and promoted the use of renewables in transport and other sectors through a 'green tax' scheme.<br><br>**Luxembourg** completed electrification of almost all of its railway network and supplied it exclusively by electricity from renewable sources. |
| | **Vehicle design** | **Andorra** provided subsidies for scrapping old vehicles and purchasing energy efficient vehicles under a EUR 5.6 million programme.<br><br>**Belarus** supported local production and use of electric vehicles and has increased the share of electric vehicles in urban passenger transport to 30%.<br><br>**Kazakhstan** produced electric buses locally from the plant of SaryarkaAvtoprom LLP in Kostanai from August 2018.<br><br>**UAE** launched new incentive packages for the electrification of the transport sector. The number of registered electric cars is expected to increase by 61.5% from 2022 to 2030. 482 charging stations have been installed in all emirates of the country as of 2021. |
| | **Operational efficiency** | **Andorra** adopted an incentive scheme to finance 35% of a new fully electric vehicle (car, van or motorcycle) or plug-in hybrid (car or van). 81 electric vehicles and 34 hybrids were financed in 2021. |

# Section 3.Takeaways and recommendations: The race to fulfil our commitment for people and the planet

The transport dimension of the VNRs reported in the second VNR reporting cycle so far (2020-2022) shows a general consensus that transport is a key contributing factor to SDGs implementation, **largely following a similar pattern of the first reporting cycle (2016-2019)**. In 2022, we see a decrease in VNRs including transport references (86%), yet more VNRs report specific targets and include explicit references to the four themes on transport and sustainability of the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs.

SLOCAT's assessment on the first VNR reporting cycle (2016-2019) showed the general consensus abou transport a key contributing factor to SDGs implementation.[30] In the 2016 to 2019 period, 92% of VNRs highlighted progress made in the transport sector. 18% of the VNRs reported specific targets covering 12 areas in sustainable transport. The majority of targets were short-to-medium term targets (2020 and 2030), with only five countries setting long-term targets for 2050. Read more

## Takeaways from 2022 VNRs analysis through the transport and mobility lens

- A number of 2022 VNRs highlight sustainable transport actions in the context of COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the urgent transition to renewables from fossil fuels. However, most 2022 VNRs only describe the adverse impacts of these crises without presenting concrete policy measures; and when they do, the measures **do not fully address the urgent systemic transformations necessary** to enable equitable access to transport and mobility for all.

- Over the years, there is **incremental growth of transport targets reported**, with **growing attention devoted to reporting transport sustainability impacts with 50% VNRs doing so in 2022** (compared to only 30% in 2019). Among them, there are more references to Equity and Green measures in connection to transport than to Health and Resilience measures (Refer to the SLOCAT Wheel on Transport and the SDGs).

- Clear linkages between transport and SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) are reported, with most policy actions reported around road safety, energy, infrastructure development, and public transport. **Growing attention is given to the social dimension of sustainable transport related to SDGs 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**, which rests a strong case on the contribution of transport to poverty alleviation, social equity and 'Leaving No One Behind'; overarching goals of the 2030 Agenda. Compared with VNRs from previous years, **relatively fewer 2022 VNRs report transport measures related to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action)**.

  **Compared to previous years, relatively fewer 2022 VNRs report measures on phasing out fossil fuel subsidies (SDG 12) and curbing of mobile-source GHG emissions (SDG 13) - despite 40% of 2022 VNRs spelling out connections between transport and SDG13 (Climate).**

- **Walking and cycling measures have been largely overlooked** over previous years and 2022 is no exception. There is **ample attention to urban transport and high-volume transport modes**, like rail and aviation. **However, there are very few references to rural access.**

- **Transport measures** reported in 2022 VNRs **remain the 'usual suspects' and do not collectively present a diverse and systemic range of solutions.**

- In terms of the *Avoid-Shift-Improve* Framework, **very few 2022 VNRs reported on *Avoid* measures, with most attention paid to *Shift* and *Improve* measures.** Some key *Avoid* and *Shift*-related measures remain in the shadows.

## 4 recommendations through the transport and mobility lens

In light of the takeaways from 2022 VNRs analysis, and building on our analysis of VNRs since 2016, SLOCAT is urging attention to the following 4 recommendations:

1 While the world is addressing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and grappling with the impact of fossil fuels dependency, **the transformation of transport systems as a way to achieve the SDGs remains faced with a number of weaknesses and threats**. With the war in Ukraine driving energy prices higher and eroding energy security and geopolitical stability, **it is more important than ever to ensure access to transport and mobility for all, and to phase out fossil fuels and increase the share of renewables in transport.**

2 Less than eight years are left until the target year of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **Countries need to optimise the use of transport and mobility measures in support of the implementation of the SDGs at the national and sub-national levels. The level of ambition, the concreteness and the systemic approach in transport measures need to drastically increase** in the remaining years of the ongoing second VNRs reporting cycle of 2020-2023 and in the upcoming third VNRs reporting cycle for 2024 - 2027.

3 **The wider sustainability aspects of transport interventions must be better understood as an important driver for national and local prosperity.** This will help to achieve buy-in and mainstream them into existing national and local economic development policies, hence enabling passenger and freight transport systems for equitable, decarbonised, resilient pathways.

4 **There is much need to ensure robust coordination and support from SDG-lead agencies to maximise the contribution of transport systems to national development frameworks** for short-, medium- and long-term sustainability solutions. Establishing a common vision or strategy around defined targets can significantly accelerate the uptake and integration of sustainability measures by the transport sector. The vision for the transport sector's transformation must be aligned with the sustainability vision, targets and strategic planning at the national and subnational levels.

## The Way Forward in SDGs Review and Implementation

As we enter into the second part of the second quadrennial cycle of VNR reporting (2020-2023), only five countries have yet to present their first VNRs.[31] While the high level of participation and reporting commitment from countries should be considered a general success, there are still significant steps to be taken to improve VNR reporting:[32]

- Many countries develop VNRs with **little adherence to the building blocks and structure recommended in the VNR Handbook**.[33] A number of countries are also selective in the SDGs they report on, instead of reporting on all 17 SDGs. This causes difficulties in the coherent, systematic analysis of SDGs progress in the transport sector.

- Countries have been somewhat reluctant to use non-official data, which exposes the **lack of stakeholder involvement in preparation processes and the subsequent information gap**.

- There is often **little or no information on the VNR preparation process** and lessons learned by the variou governmental entities and stakeholders involved, which is detrimental to the peer-learning objective of the VNR mechanism.

- Countries often resort to **reporting on 'situations' instead of policy actions and procedures**. This approach is especially common in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. As the world enters into the third year since the pandemic emerged, there are many policy actions being taken to alleviate and adapt. However, countries do not always present in-depth analysis on how specific (transport) policy actions were taken in the context of pandemic recovery.

In August 2022, H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations, was elected ECOSOC President for the upcoming 2023 session. In her inaugural statement, she highlighted the priorities to ensure that the upcoming 'ECOSOC session and the HLPF 2023 would provide "solid, evidence-based, innovative and actionable policy guidance" to curb the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SDGs'.[34] With the 'Twin Summits' on the horizon in 2023 - the second SDG Summit and Summit of the Future - the planning has already begun in HLPF 2022.[35] Member States were challenged to be 'disruptive' and to embrace the opportunity these Summits may present for getting back on track.[36]

### The Twin Summits in September 2023

The second SDG Summit and the Summit of the Future are expected to 'forge a new global consensus on what our future should look like, and how we can secure it'.[37]

The **second SDG Summit** will mark the midpoint in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Heads of State and Government will comprehensively review progress in SDGs implementation, provide political guidance for the way forward and discuss new science-based solutions for accelerating the full implementation of the SDGs at the national, regional and global levels in the remaining years towards 2030. António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, indicated that the SDG Summit will adopt 'an ambitious, action-oriented, future-oriented and tangible outcome document with a view to improving global governance.'[38]

The **Summit of the Future** will focus on four overarching themes:[39]

- Peace and security (with a 'New Agenda for Peace');
- Human rights in the digital world (with a 'Global Digital Compact');
- Peaceful and sustainable use of outer space;
- Management of future shocks and crises.

The Summit will call for better multi-stakeholder partnerships and an emergency platform to better prepare for global crises, with stronger global health security and the potential creation of a 'Futures Lab'. This lab would work with partners, including governments, academia, civil society, and the private sector, to issue regular reports on megatrends and catastrophic risks.

## SLOCAT Key Transformations for Sustainable, Low Carbon Land Transport

In order to reach the 1.5°C target of the Paris Agreement and provide equitable access to transport and mobility for all, the urgent transformation of transport is necessary. This SLOCAT messaging framework articulates the 11 key transformations necessary to enable sustainable, low carbon land transport; especially considering the availability of solutions and the urgency with which action must be taken. Under each of the 11 key transformations, connections with ongoing wider socio-economic transformations towards a sustainable, low carbon future are outlined.

### The key transformations for sustainable, low carbon land transport: What needs to change

**I** Transport connects people and prosperous societies; and works for them as a system of multiple modes and services.

**II** Cities are compact and managed to maximise access to socio-economic opportunities, as well as health and equity for all.

**III** Rural and interurban mobility services are low in emissions and focus on the needs of users in order to improve access.

**IV** Walking, cycling and public transport get priority.

**V** Well-managed transport demand reduces kilometers and car use.

**VI** Electrification drives low carbon land transport and puts the most sustainable modes first.

**VII** Digital technologies increase access and transport efficiency.

**VIII** Pricing and fiscal policy guide market forces; and, together with finance, channel public and private funds towards the most sustainable transport services.

**IX** Freight systems efficiently combine different low carbon modes, share capacities and rely on sustainable first and last mile delivery.

**X** Industry, trade and transport are shaped to support circular economies and local value creation; as well as short and resilient logistic chains.

**XI** Transport systems and services are fit to be resilient in extreme weather events and other shocks.

These 11 key transformations focus on land transport with a geographic footprint targeted at the Global South, in alignment with SLOCAT's mission and focus. Yet these transformations are also relevant to other geographies and the focus on land transport does not imply that the world can afford to disregard the impact of maritime transport and aviation towards sustainable, low carbon development goals. SLOCAT champions frameworks that primarily aim to avoid unnecessary transport, while at the same time shift to low carbon modes and improve vehicle design, fuel efficiency, and energy sources.

Explore the portal for:

- Facts and figures, supporting visuals and resources by SLOCAT Partners.

- A series of Overarching Approaches to apply across transport modes and sub-sectors over time are provided.

- A Toolkit of Catalytic Measures outlining a non-exhaustive list of measures that are catalytic to deliver on the SLOCAT Key Transformations for Sustainable Low Carbon Land Transport.

**Read more at** https://slocat.net/key-transformations/transport

# Endnotes

1.  United Nations, (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Transport. Available at: https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

2.  United Nations (2015), "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Transport", https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

3.  Selected examples of transport references from National Sustainable Development Strategies can found in the 2021 VNR Analysis.

4.  Previous assessments conducted by SLOCAT on the VNRs are available at: www.slocat.net/vnr

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6.  Sachs, J.D. et. al (2022), "Sustainable Development Report 2022: From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond", https://bit.ly/3qtgdQT

7.  ibid.

8.  ibid.

9.  The spillover performance of all 193 UN Member States is available at https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings/spillovers

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16. OECD (2022), "Data warehouse", OECD.Stat (database), https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00900-en (accessed on 06 October 2022).

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18. ibid.

19. United Nations Environment Programme (2020), "Used Vehicles and the Environment – A Global Overview of Used Light Duty Vehicles: Flow, Scale and Regulation, Nairobi", https://bit.ly/3U3KK5y.

20. International Energy Agency (2022), "Global EV Outlook 2022", https://www.iea.org/reports/global-ev-outlook-2022.

21. SLOCAT (2021). Climate Strategies for Transport: An analysis of Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies. www.slocat.net/ndcs

22. VNRs are accessible on the official VNR database: https://hlpf.un.org/vnrs. Initially, Gambia and Tuvalu expressed interest to submit VNRs in 2022 but no reports can be found from the database as of September 2022. Also, Saint Kitts and Nevis have formally deferred their report to 2023.

23. SLOCAT has compiled all the transport references of 2022 VNRs. This compilation is available upon request to Alice Yiu, Director, Policy Outreach and Strategic Communications, SLOCAT Partnership (alice.yiu@slocatpartnership.org).

24. The transport sector is 97% fossil fuel-powered and is the least diversified of all energy end-use sectors, remaining far from being fuelled primarily by renewable sources. SLOCAT (2021), "Tracking Trends in a Time of Change: The Need for Radical Action Towards Sustainable Transport Decarbonisation", Transport and Climate Change Global Status Report – 2nd edition, www.tcc-gsr.com.

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