

Involving all Partners in Implementation and Review Perspectives from Parliament and Civil Society (Germany)

Side-Event at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 19 July 2016,

6:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Input (3 minutes): Ansgar Klinger, Trade union for Education, Member of the German Federation of Trade Unions

Assessment of the sustainable development strategies resp. implementation plans of the federal government from a trade union perspective

Introduction

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) consider ecological, economic and social aspects of sustainability in equal measure. This triad of sustainability targets is the reason why the SDGs are of great importance in industrialized countries and for trade unions.

In order to implement the SDGs balanced transitions and transformations are required, for example, a low-carbon economy. Decent work and a good environment, i.e. social, economic and environmental sustainability, can only be realized together in such a process.

If the implementation of the SDGs is to be seriously operated by the government, we also have to think about creating or upgrading existing institutions, such as the Sustainability Council or the Parliamentary Council for Sustainable Development. We need national indicators for the implementation of the SDGs, which must also be evaluated in short time intervals and with the participation of the civil society.

Now I would like to refer to specific goals or politics.

End poverty in all its forms everywhere

It has been analyzed, that a sufficient income to live on is still one of the best means against poverty. Nevertheless, there is serious poverty in a rich country like Germany, too. Also poverty among old people will increase in the forthcoming years.

Decent work is also an issue in Germany. Although the situation in Germany is not comparable to that of many other countries in the world, the following question is important: "How will all groups in the labor market benefit equally from development, or are the risks of the labor market focussed on special groups?" Thus the current Agenda 2030 is also of relevance for the Federal government.

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The SDG 4 is a big challenge for the Federal Republic. Apart from the promotion of education for sustainable development and the support of the Global Campaign for

Education it is above all important to involve "stakeholders" in the implementation of SDGs, as well as the "Länder" in Germany with respect to the educational goal. They are responsible for education in the German federal system. This applies to the development of early childhood education as well as to the necessary improvements in school education, the transition from school to vocational training and the adaptation of the capacity of universities to meet the increased demand. Federal and state governments are prompted to promote basic education and lifelong learning in a regulated, for example legal framework.

Social responsibility

The indicator "Number of members of the Textile Alliance, that comply with social and environmental standards" is a first step in the right direction. However, there is a variety of other value chains, where no similar efforts are being made. In this context, social factors such as the freedom of association and the prohibition of child labor must be included.

Brake on Debt, national deficit

Exaggerated budget consolidation is the opposite of a sustainable fiscal policy. At the European level, it has led to a break-in and a long-term weakening of economic performance. In Germany, too, it is accompanied by a public austerity policy (in the sustainability strategy it is called "fiscal discipline"), preventing necessary **public** investments in education, infrastructure and ecological modernization. Thus the policy breaking even endangers not only the economy's long-term competitiveness, it is also associated with a poorer quality of living for future generations. More investments would ultimately yield social and economic returns.

Sustainable industrialization

The trade unions support the Federal Government in strengthening the industry and renewing the terms of sustainability. Sustainable industrial policy should attach great importance to good working conditions, a high qualification and motivation of employees, social partnership and participation.

Thank you for your attention.