Sustainable Development Goals
UN Agenda 2030
SAI Belgium’s transversal SDG preparedness review

Belgian Court of Audit
What is Belgium famous for?

- Belgian chocolates
• Somewhere around 1600 actual beers in Belgium, more than 200 active breweries and dozens of small local breweries, some centuries old, some founded since the recent specialty beer fad came to town
• Belgium has obtained a world record. The government formation from 26 April 2010 to 06 December 2011 took 541 days and is the longest government formation ever recorded anywhere...

Also today we don’t have all of our new governments yet after the elections of May 26th 2019...

• Moreover, we have ...?... governments
Each level (Fed, Community, Region) own government, except Flanders: 1 government for Flemish Region and Flemish Community
The Federal Government's powers

• Public finances, army, federal police, judicial system, social security, foreign affairs as well as substantial parts of public health and home affairs.

• The obligations of Belgium and its federalized institutions towards the European Union or NATO.

• Everything that does not expressly come under the Communities or Regions. The Federal State also has powers for exemptions and restrictions on the powers of the Communities and the Regions.
The powers of the Regions

- In fields that are connected with their region or territory in the widest meaning of the term.

- Relating to the economy, employment, agriculture, water policy, housing, public works, energy, transport (except Belgian Railways), the environment, town and country planning, nature conservation, credit, foreign trade, supervision of the provinces, communes and intercommunal utility companies.

- Relating to scientific research and international relations in those fields.
The powers of the Communities

• Are based on the concept of "language".

• The Community therefore has powers for culture (theatre, libraries, audiovisual media, etc.), education, the use of languages and matters relating to the individual which concern on the one hand health policy (curative and preventive medicine) and on the other hand assistance to individuals (protection of youth, social welfare, aid to families, immigrant assistance services, etc.).

• Relating to scientific research and international relations in those fields.
A little test...!

Based on all this information,

How many Courts of Audit do you think there are in Belgium?

A. 1
B. 3
C. 7
How the BCA adapts to the structure of Belgium

1. Sector of the support directorates (D1 and D2)
2. Federal Sector (D3 - D6)
3. Sector of the communities and regions (D7 - D10)

OGD: German-speaking Community
RBC: Region of Brussels-Capital City
SAD: Senior Auditor-Director
- Until today: all audits executed in different departments within SAI Belgium, each department related to one level of governance
  + a policy that is problematic in one region does not have to be in another; rarely same priorities for performance audits
  + the different parliaments at different levels of government may have different expectations
- Government faces enormous challenges (e.g. global warming, migration, ...) in which very often coordination between the different levels of government is required. The Court of Audit has a unique overview position, because it is present at all levels of government.
European Semester: Country Report Belgium 2019 (p. 57):

“Policy coordination between the different government levels is complex and not always effective, complicating the delivery of certain policies.

... Belgium is one of the Member States that combines a high degree of fragmentation and a low level of coordination. .... Developing a consistent mobility vision within Belgium is complex as it requires coordination between the federal level, responsible for rail, and the Regions, responsible for other means of transport. ... in spite of some progress with the implementation of climate and energy policies across all levels of government, the complex and evolving division of competences undermines their effectiveness.”
“National ownership is key to achieving sustainable development.”

Actually we are working on a:

- Review of the **preparedness of the Belgian authorities** for the implementation, follow up and reporting of the UN Agenda 2030

- **Transversal** preparedness review:
  covering the federal State and the federated entities (Communities and Regions) of Belgium, as well as national SDG coordination.
Preliminary study approved in June 2019

Expected date of publication: January 2020

(→ useful for the second Voluntary National Review of Belgium)
Focus of the review:

• Strong governmental commitment to realise the SDGs, with participation of the relevant stakeholders?

• Clear allocation of responsibilities and budget, with sufficient coordination?

• Commitment translated in specific plans?

• Monitoring and reporting system in place?
The SDG preparedness review involves all levels of government. We will look “into the boxes” of the Belgian organization chart: planning, follow up, clear division of tasks & coordination … within each level of government.
But we also look at the “white spaces” between the boxes (cooperation agreements, Interfederal institute for statistics, Interministerial Conference on Sustainable Development): clear responsabilities, coordination across levels of government
Purpose of the review:

• Inform the parliaments on the preparedness level of the authorities and the status of the coordination process;

• Support the implementation of the Agenda 2030 by identifying both critical factors and good practices.
Methodology of the review:

• “7-steps model” (developed by SAI Netherlands and adopted by INTOSAI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Framework</th>
<th>Data Framework</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Political commitment and recognition of national responsibility in line with the principles of sustainable development.</td>
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<td>2 Building public awareness and encouraging dialogue with stakeholders including relevant non-governmental stakeholders.</td>
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<td>3 Allocation of responsibility at a ministerial or other level, allocation of appropriate financial means and other resources, and establishment of accountability arrangements.</td>
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<td>4 Preparation of plans to apply the SDGs including setting out the role of different stakeholders and defining how the various goals and targets are to be achieved in an integrated and coherent manner.</td>
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<td>5 Designing and establishment of the systems to measure and monitor the SDG goals and targets.</td>
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<td>6 Setting baselines — the situation at the start of the process - for the different indicators, against which to judge progress made throughout the SDG lifecycle.</td>
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<td>7 Monitoring and reporting arrangements on the progress of SDGs, involving all relevant stakeholders.</td>
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Methodology of the review:

• Auditmatrix

• Document analysis

• Standard questionary to be used by the separate audit teams (federal, Flemish and German speaking entities, Walloon region, French speaking community, Brussels)

• Interviews

• Highlight specific SDGs as best practice in the audit report (no evaluation of implementation or outcome of SDG policy)
Methodology of the review:

• Need of internal coordination is met by:
  - separate auditteams that used common audit questions and wrote a common preliminary report
  - answer matrix (based on the audit matrix)
  - dummy report (reporting structure is fixed from the start of the audit, ...)
  - steering group (regular meetings, set out and watch timelines, alignment Dutchspeaking/Frenchspeaking auditteams)

• Way of communication with the audited entities before the report is to be published: still to decide...
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**Roed nrs. Vragenlijst (vragen aan IMCCG: Nv / vragen aan ISS Sa)**

**En rouge les numéros du questionnaire (questions pour CIMOC: Nv / questions pour ISS: Sa)**

**Cadre politique**

**Politiek engagement**

**Engagement politique**

*Het REK is een langetermijnplan tot 2025 waarin ontwikkelingsdoelstellingen en -maatregelen zijn uitgewerkt. Het bevat 3 uitvoeringsfases (REK I, II en III), waarbinnen***
Audit report:

• An integrated report in Belgium's 3 official languages (Dutch, French and German) and also in English.

• Timing: January 2020
Potential Biodiversity audit

• Parallel audit
• Auditees: Flemish Region – Walloon Region
• Focus: NATURA 2000/protected areas (objectives, indicators, coverage related SDG targets)
• Possible audit questions relating to :
  - Implementation of action plans
  - Coordination
  - Stakeholder participation
  - Monitoring/follow up
Potential Biodiversity audit

• Parallel audit requires special attention to:

  - Joint questionary

  - Timing: audit has to fit into each team’s working plan

  - Audit report: separate report for own parliament (where relevant with references to the other Region); additional summary report?
Merci Pour Votre Attention