At its third meeting, the TTCOM convened to discuss and test a new initiative, the “TTCOM Fortnights”, proposed by the Chairs. This new output proposal was presented to the group and a first “Fortnight” gathering was organised, under the topic of “SDG monitoring publications”. The results of the discussion are summarised below.

The Chairs presented the “Fortnight” initiative to the group, explaining that its aim is to promote regular informal gatherings every two weeks, about specific topics in SDG Data Comms (e.g. annual publications, VNRs, data visualisation, social media, etc). The underlying rationale of these gatherings is to approach previously discussed outputs (MS Teams, whiteboard exercise and best practices repository) from a different angle, with a view to overcoming operational challenges.

Every fortnight will start with a 10min presentation from a TTCOM member (no ppt aids needed), sharing their national practice within the topic, followed by 50min informal discussion time (questions and exchange of experiences). Participants will be asked to share links to their national practices, which will be featured in the meeting notes. The notes, recordings and all relevant documents will form the set of deliverables from this output.

The participants (AT, IE, IS, PT, PL, ZA) welcomed the initiative and took part in the 1st Fortnight, devoted to SDG monitoring publications (recording and presentation already available on Teams TTCOM space).

Mary Smyth from CSO-IE gave an overview of the Irish monitoring initiative: the SDG series of publications, which were developed by the CSO in partnership with the corresponding sectoral policy departments. This digital and interactive publication focuses on the SDG global indicators, featuring an infographic highlight for each SDG, followed by analytical and quantitative information categorised by contents (either UN topics or common thematic threads identified by the CSO). It is complemented by charts, maps with geospatial breakdown and downloadable tables, as well as info notes, highlighting specific data facts. The digital platform and imagery were developed inhouse and the infographic and progress measurement component (traffic lights system) also served the purpose of contributing to the Irish VNR, to be presented this year at the HLPF (Austria, Iceland, Poland and Portugal are also presenting this year).

The participants expressed their appreciation for the extremely comprehensive work done by CSO, highlighting the following:

1) The shift in paradigm which Ireland was able to implement: a publication being thought of as interactive and digital from the start, rather than being pdf-based.
2) The sustainability of this formula (digital, rather than pdf-based) considering the crosscutting human resource constraints faced by NSOs: CSO informed that the structure of the publication is maintained in each yearly update and there is only the need to update the charts and tables with the most recent year available, followed by the applicable adjustments in the short texts complementing each chart.
3) The communication routines established with the policy stakeholders (Data Governance Board) and the resulting increase in political accountability (especially in data sourcing and validation).
4) The geospatial focus of the publication, also achieved through inhouse solutions.
The participants have also shared their remarks on the challenges pertaining to the development of national and regional indicator lists. The group agreed on the usefulness of the global list to enable a mapping of existing information, the identification of data gaps and the beginning of progress measurement routines. However, national targets, established by the policymaking side, are also key to setting the baselines and the areas in which the monitoring effort should zoom in. Statisticians can help with the development of a national/regional indicator list but only following the SDG priority setting from policy stakeholders. For the national appropriation of the global list, Eurostat’s framework was highlighted as useful (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/key-findings) and Population and Housing Census were also underlined as a good starting point due to their coverage.

The slides, and a draft of the ‘Traffic Lights’ summary of Progress for each Goal (kindly shared by Mary Smyth) are sent in annex and are already available in the MS Teams space, together with the meeting recording.

The next Fortnight will be on 25 May (tbc) and devoted to a priority topic, to be defined as a result of the questionnaire below.

Please contribute to this peer-learning process by sharing the link to your national publications (to be featured below), and filling in the form below by 19 May, from which the next topics for the fortnights will be selected: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeNClpvaRvJ75XxnW0gyTXA2vH3tip2CW M7LV4yo90DvNPOQA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Links to national practices:

Iceland (IS): Indicators For The Sustainable Development Goals (hagstofa.is)

Ireland (IE): SDG publications

Poland (PL): SDG Report Poland on the way to SDGs 2022

Portugal (PT): 2022 Annual Publication; 2022 Infographic Publication