

# THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE SDGs

**Enrico Giovannini**

*Spokesman of the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development*

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# ASviS – A unique experience worldwide

- **ASviS was established on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016** with the aim of increasing the awareness of the Italian society about the importance of the 2030 Agenda, and to mobilize them in order to achieve the SDGs.
- It is the largest coalition ever established in Italy, with **more than 180 members**.
- **A small secretariat, 20** working groups, **300** experts.
- Daily updated **website**, weekly and monthly **newsletter**.
- **A wide range of activities:** education, advocacy, research, policy recommendations, etc.



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**NIBILE**

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# The Festival of Sustainable Development ...

**2017**



**2018**



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# ... to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development

## Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

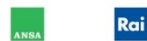
- 17 goals
- 169 targets
- 240+ indicators



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# SDGs: A Universal Agenda

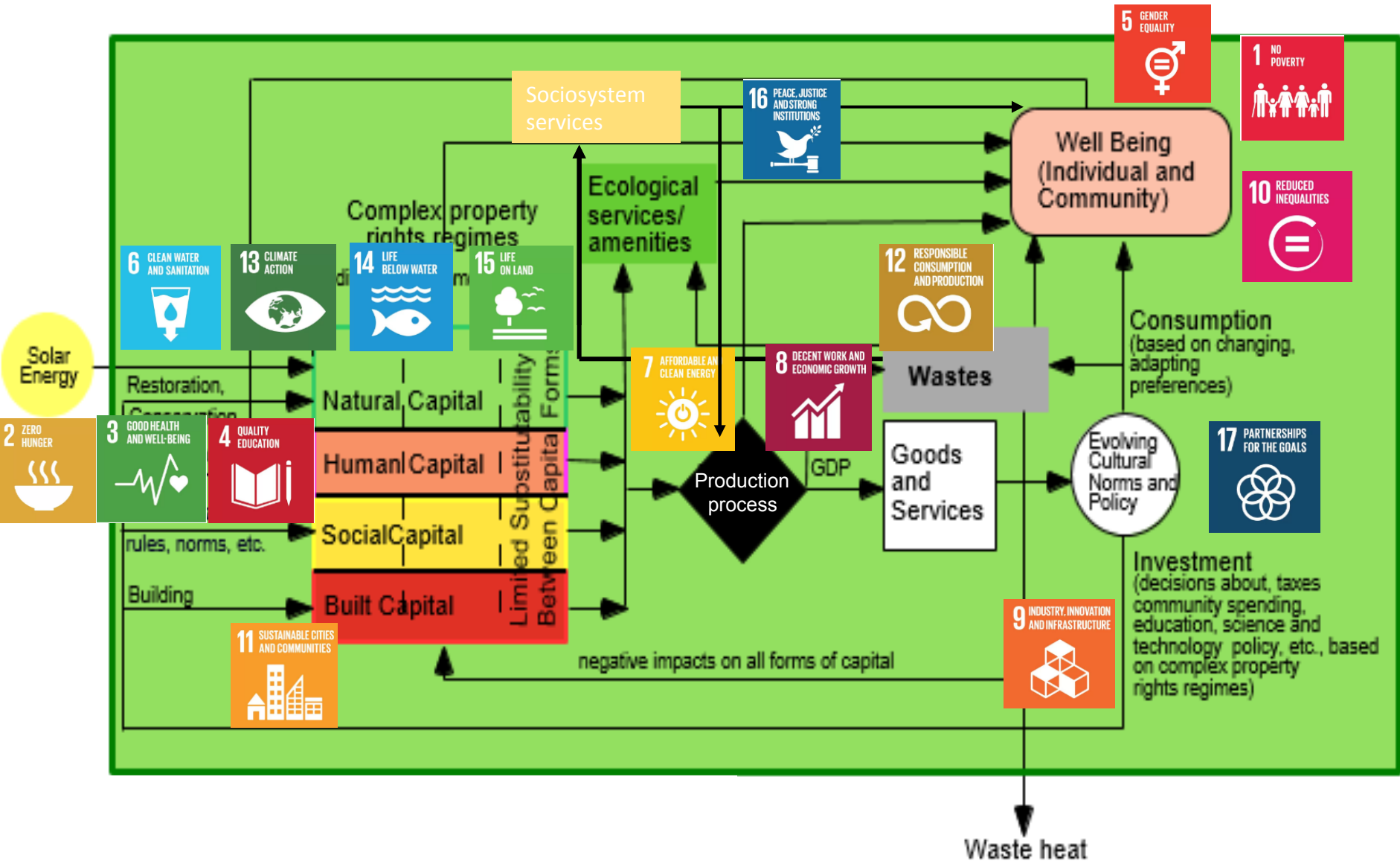
Finally a fully integrated vision of sustainable development, based on four pillars:

- Economy
- Society
- Environment
- Institutions

Three principles:

- Integration
- Universality
- Participation

# A new development paradigm



# People are scared

Automation

Climate change



Globalisation

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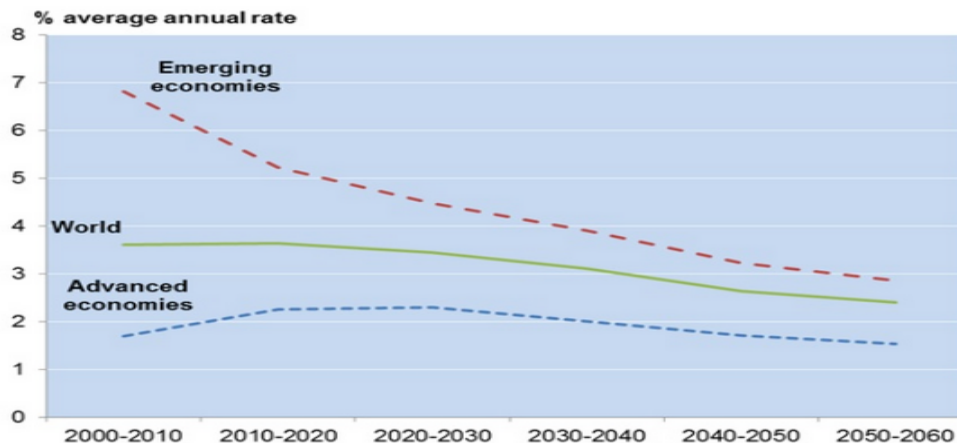


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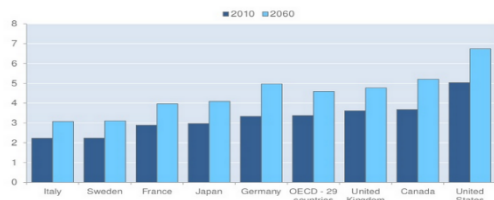


## Secular stagnation



## Growing inequalities

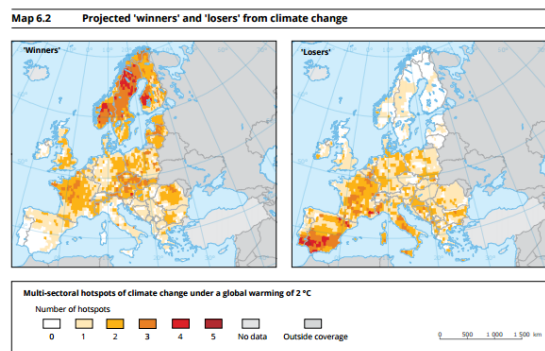
Ratio of gross wages of the top 10% to the bottom 10% percentile



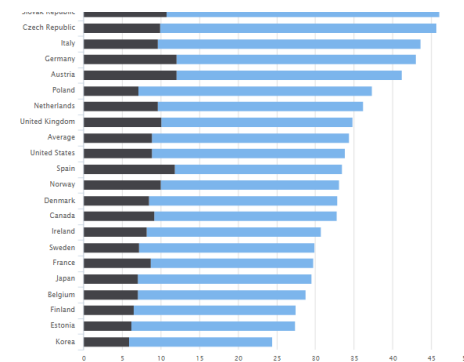
Rising wages for high-skilled workers

Incomes of low-skilled in advanced economies fall behind

## Climate change



## Technological shocks



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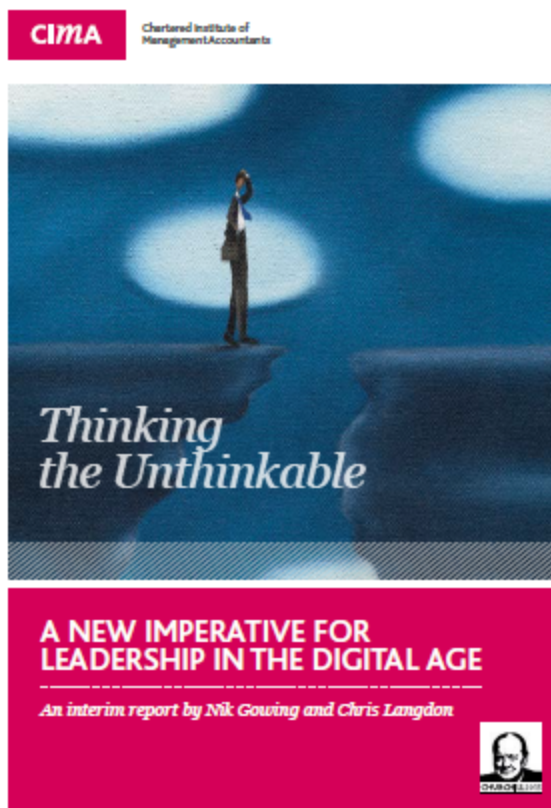


# The ESPAS 2016 Conference: key messages

“Non-linearities  
become

“Imag

“Thin



“Economic shocks are  
normal”

“Inevitable”

“Unavoidable”

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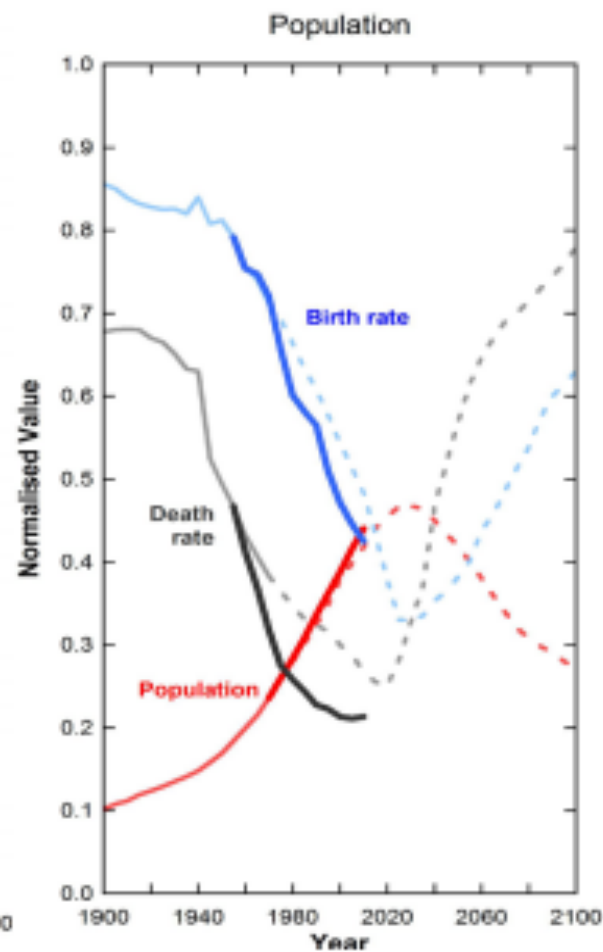
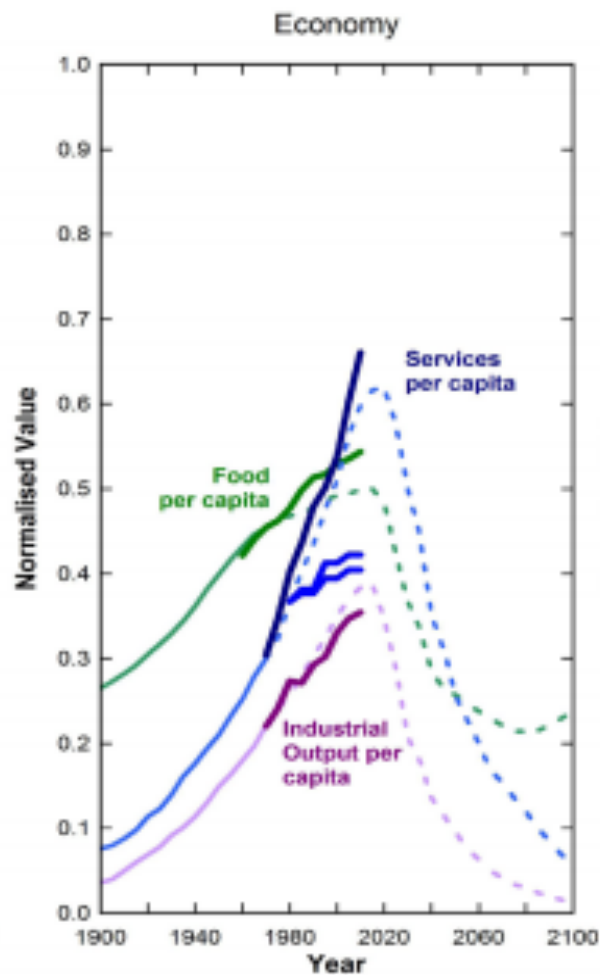
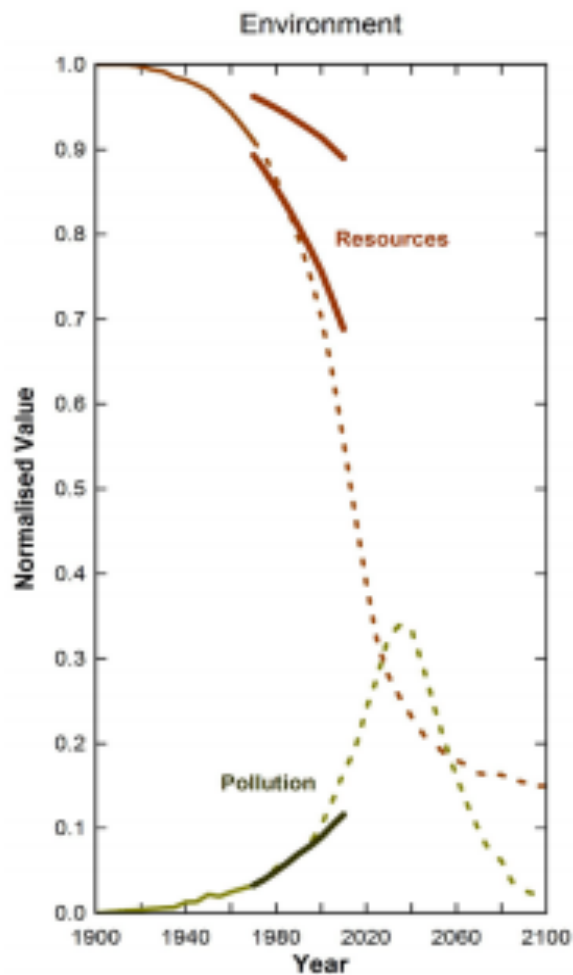
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# Thinking the unthinkable: is the collapse imminent?



# The Global Risk Landscape 2018

“Our brains play tricks that make some risks appear to be more or less likely than they are in reality ... Organizations across the private and public sectors need to take a fresh look at how and why individuals and groups assess and act on risks in the way they do. We cannot ignore the cognitive and behavioural factors in risk management if we are to avoid both black swans and grey rhinos. Individuals and organizations must work to overcome biases, make better decisions, create warning-signal systems and act cohesively when red flags are raised”.

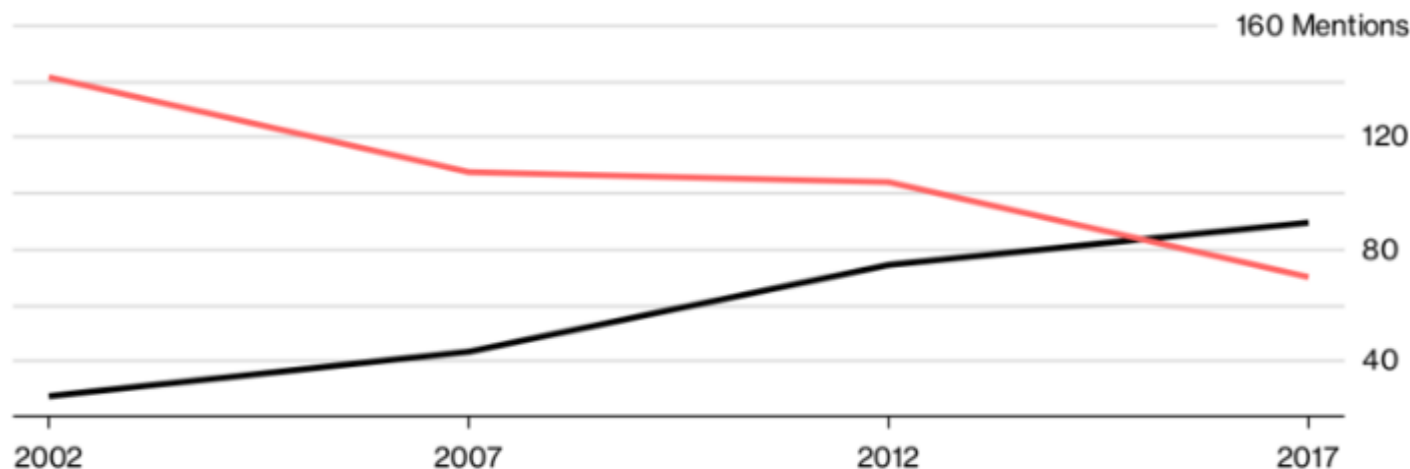


# China: the new leader of sustainable development?

## Xi's China Green Dream

Mentions of the environment in party congress speeches growing vs. the economy

■ Environment ■ Economy



Note: Environmental references include 'environment,' 'environmental protection,' 'green,' and 'ecosystem.'

Source: Bloomberg Intelligence

Bloomberg

# The EU and the SDGs

- Today ASviS releases the Report on SDGs composite indicators for EU countries
- A unique dataset to monitor the progress towards the SDGs for European countries and the EU as a whole
- Based on 66 elementary indicators released by Eurostat



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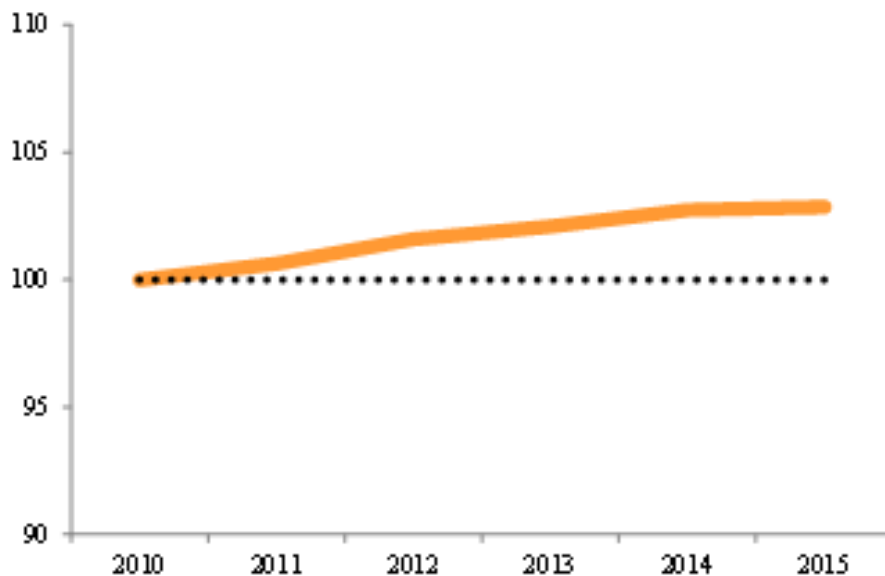


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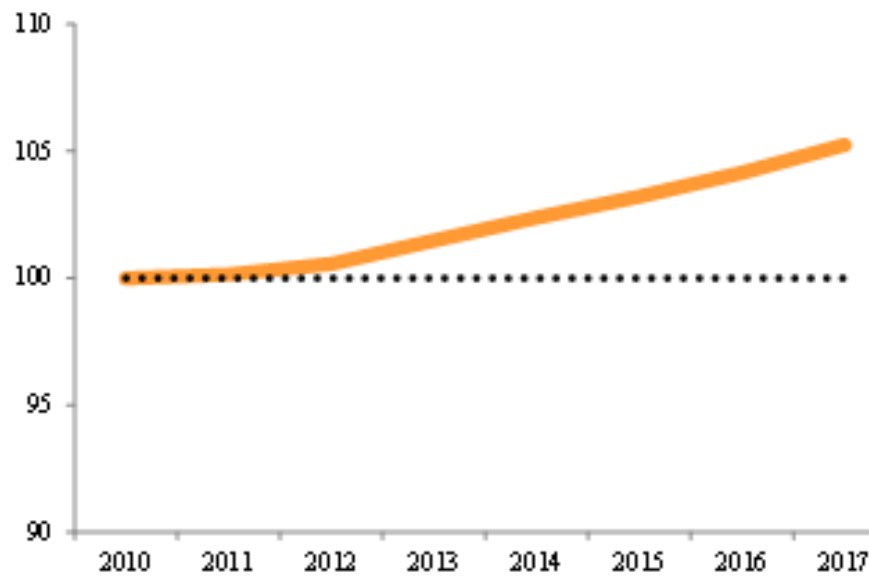


# Positive trend for EU-28

**Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.**



**Goal 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**



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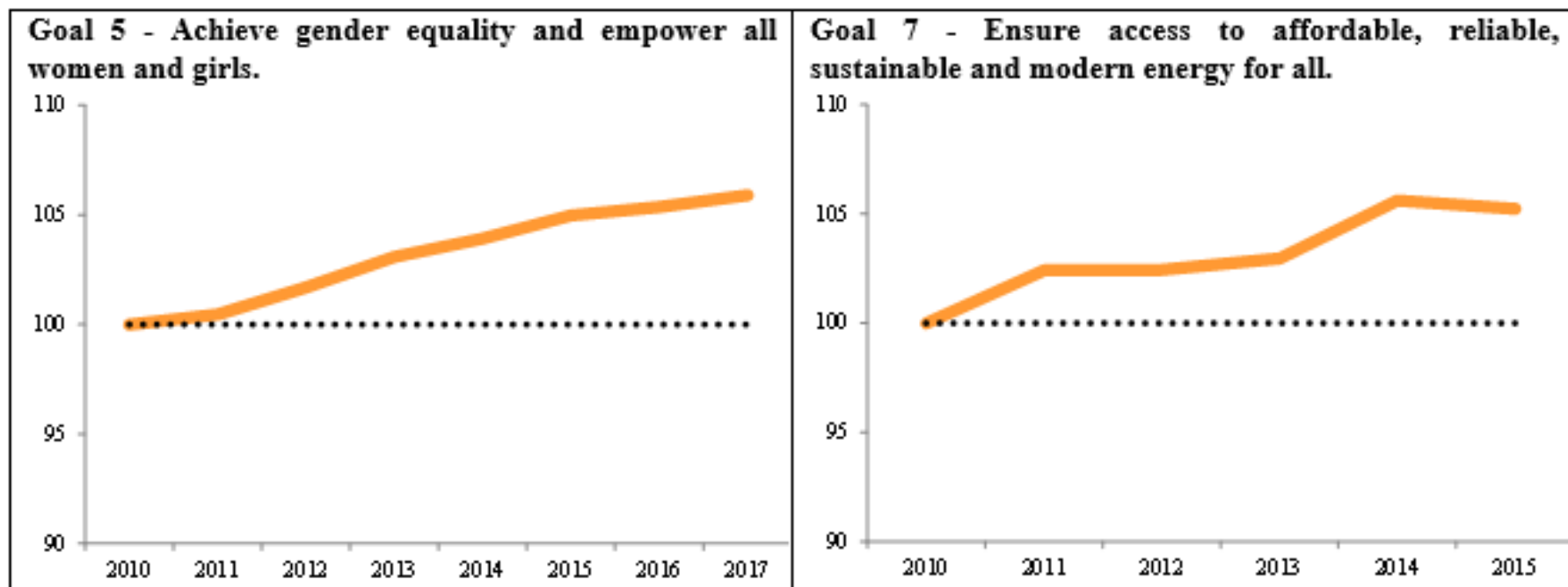
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# Positive trend for EU-28



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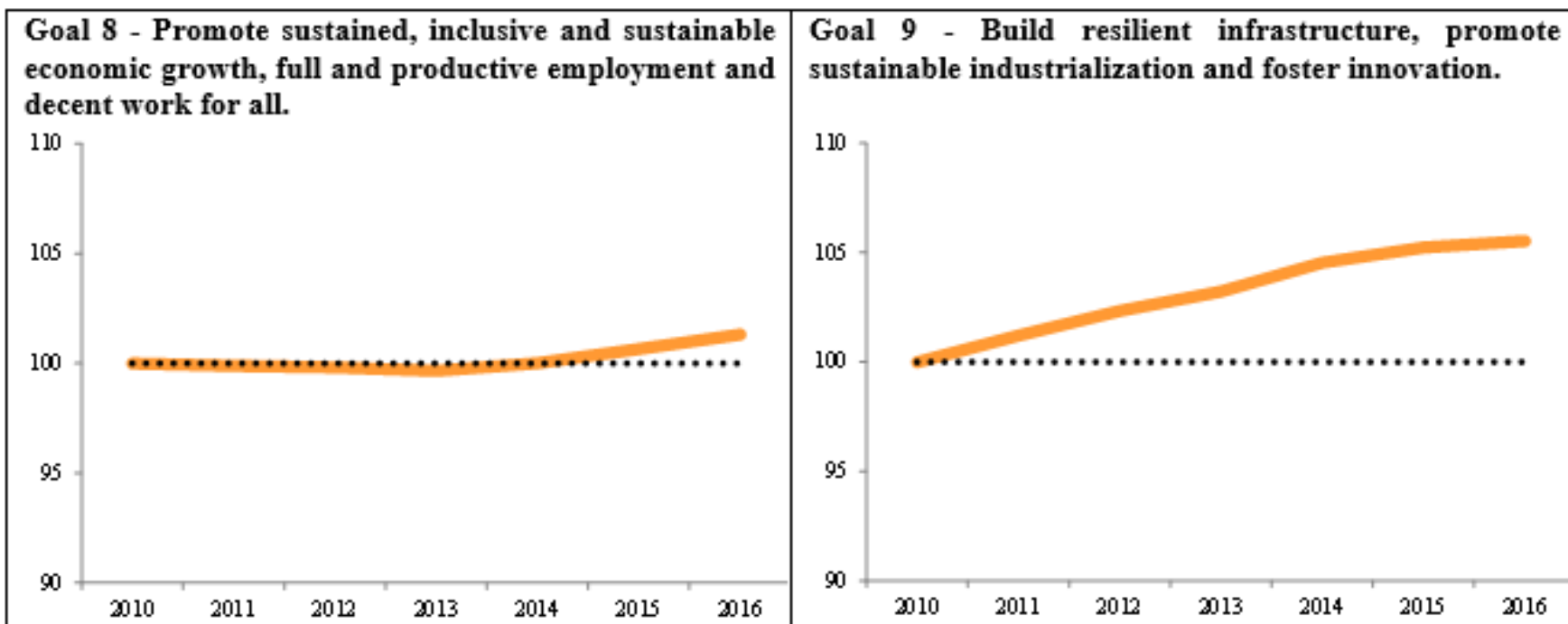


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# Positive trend for EU-28



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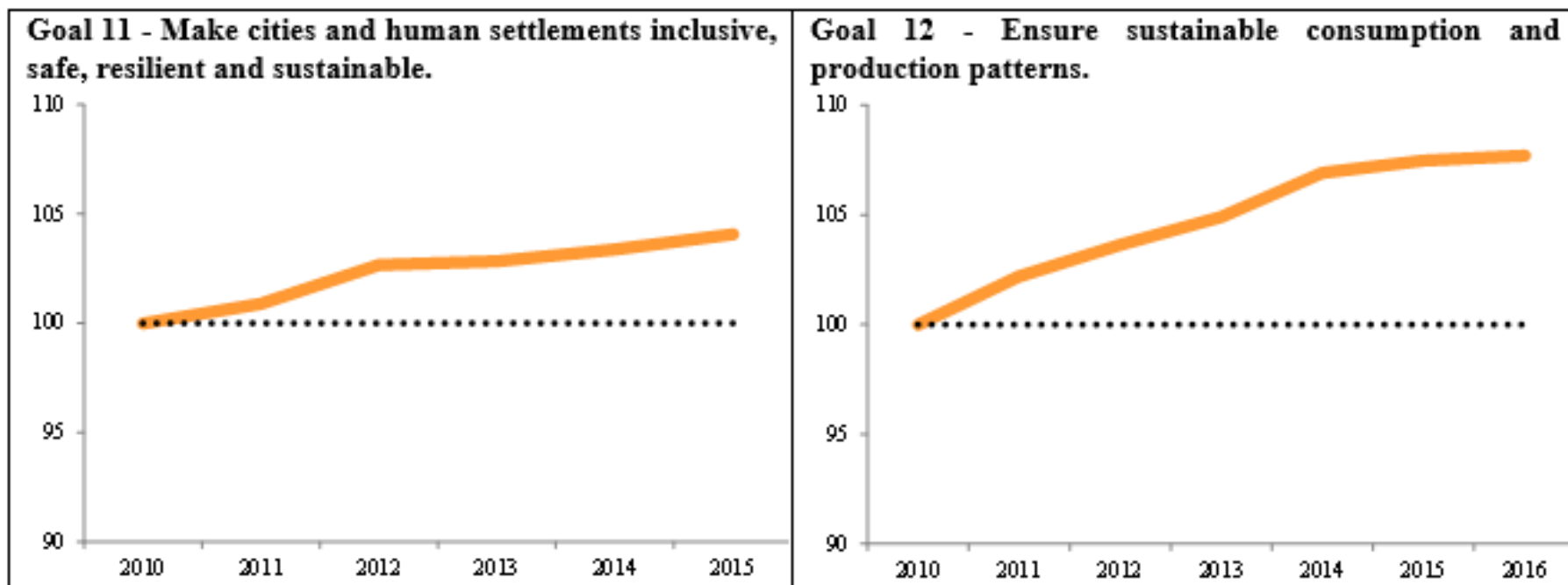
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# Positive trend for EU-28



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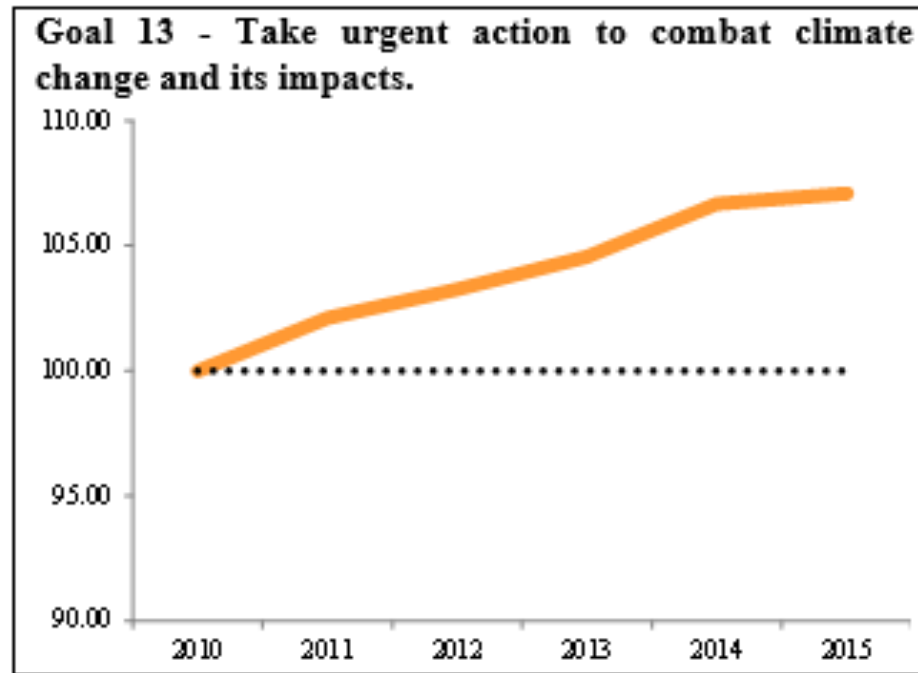
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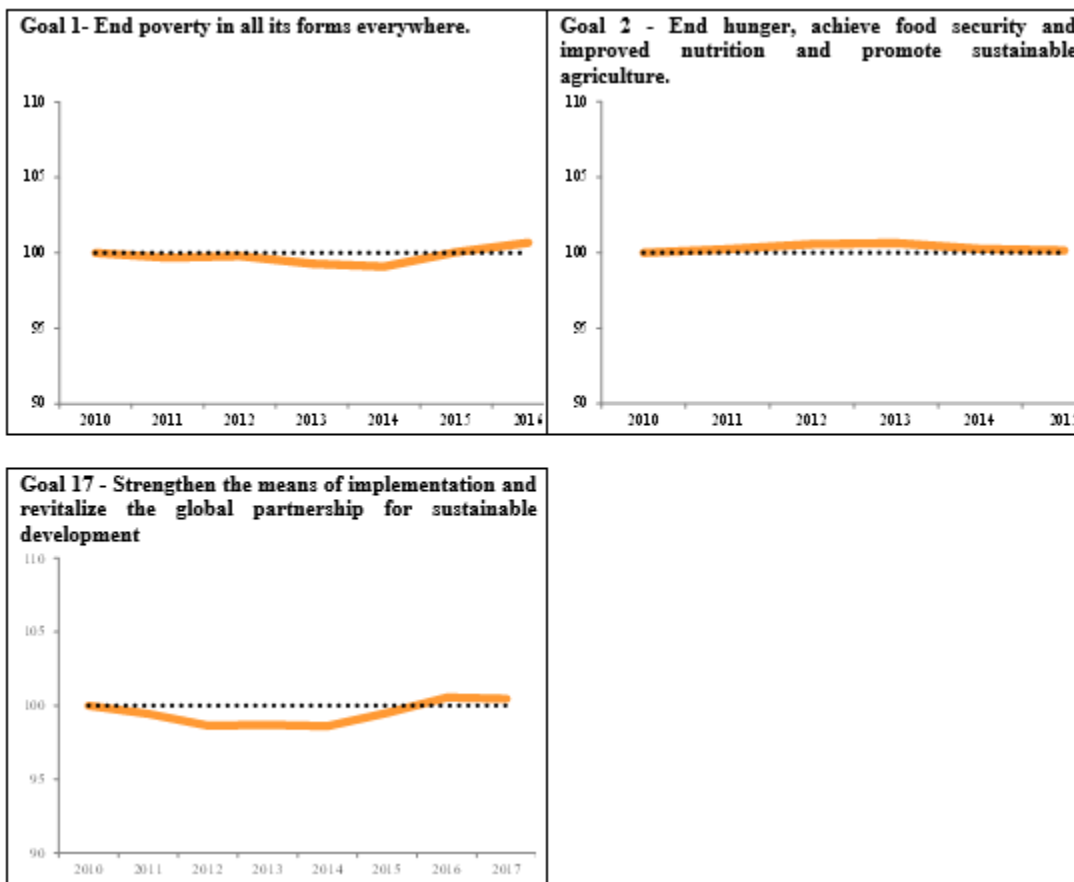
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# No trend for EU-28



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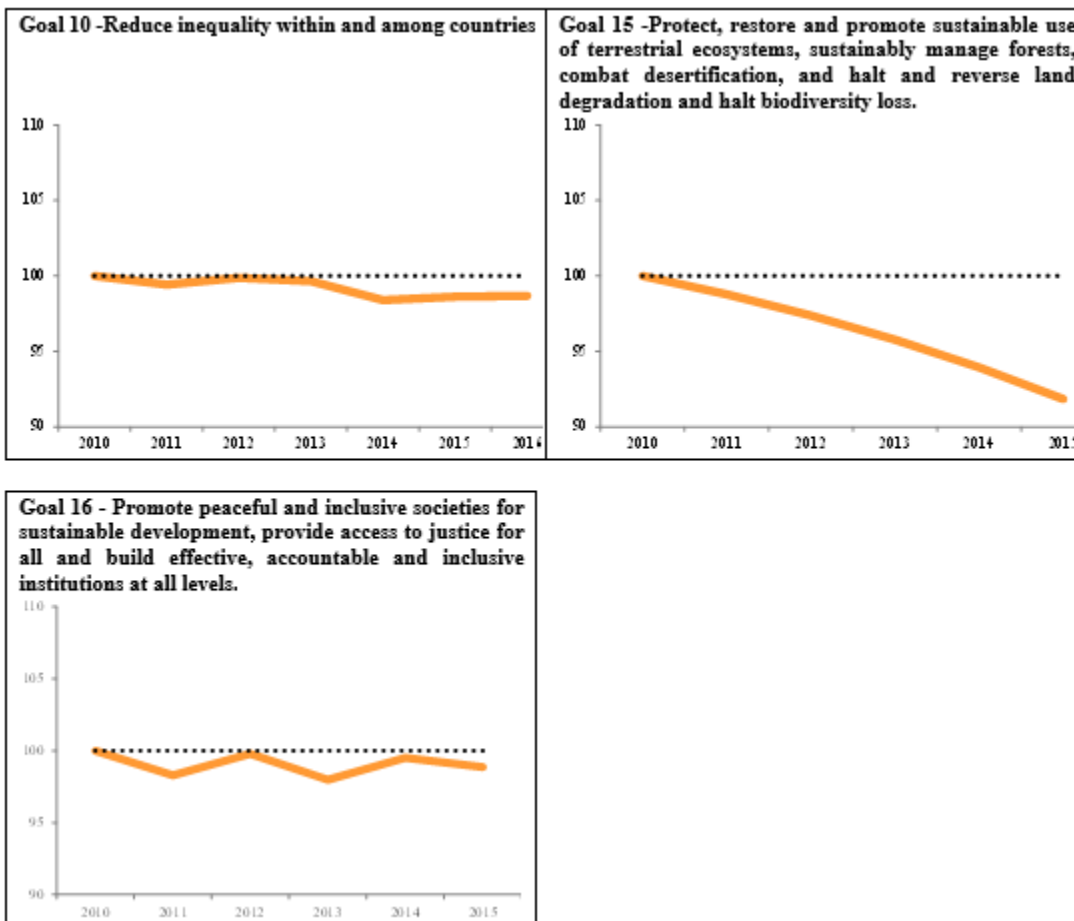
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# Negative trend for EU-28



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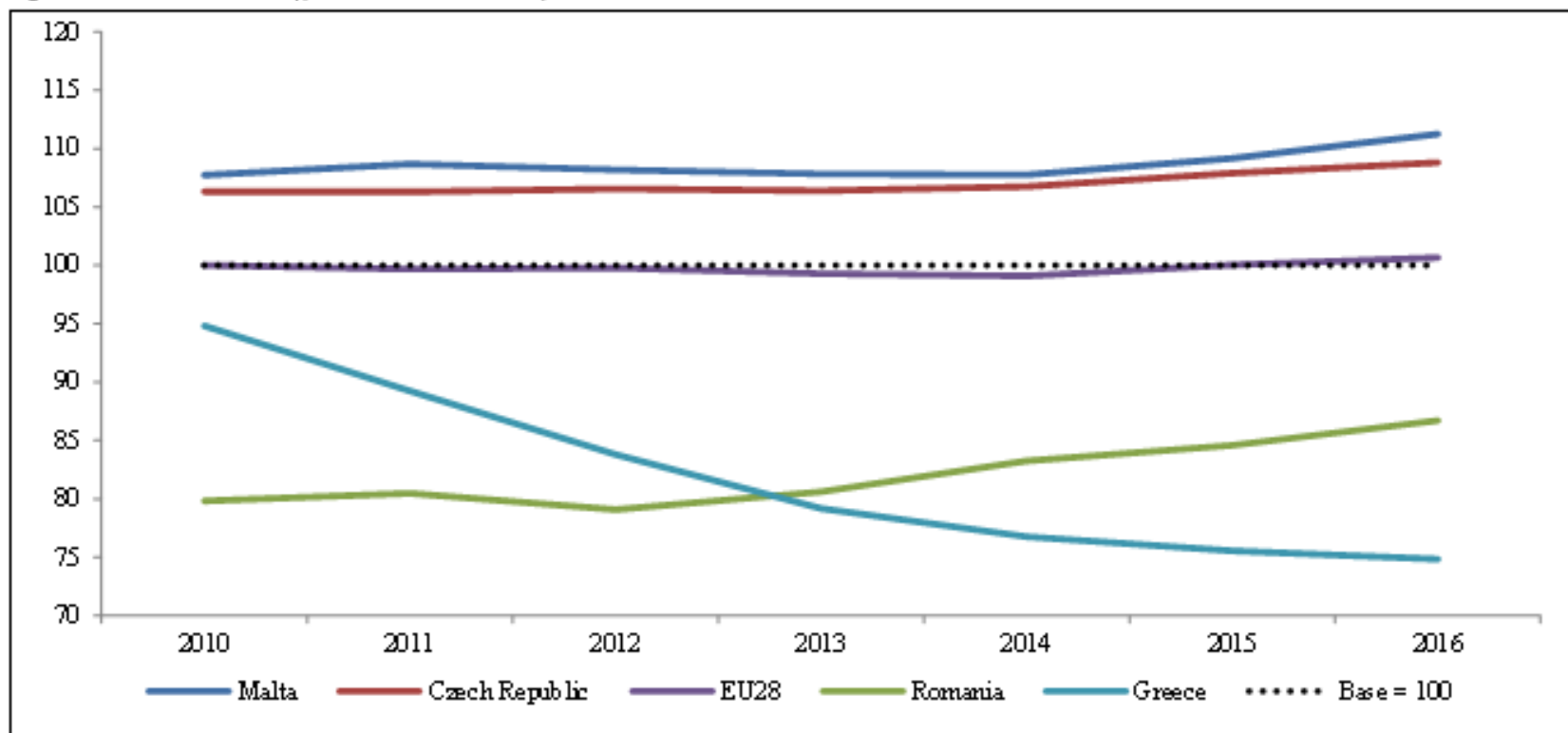


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# Upward convergence?

Fig. 1.1 – Composite indicators of SDG 1. EU28 average, best performers (Malta, Czech Republic) and worst performers in 2016 (Romania, Greece). Base EU28 2010=100



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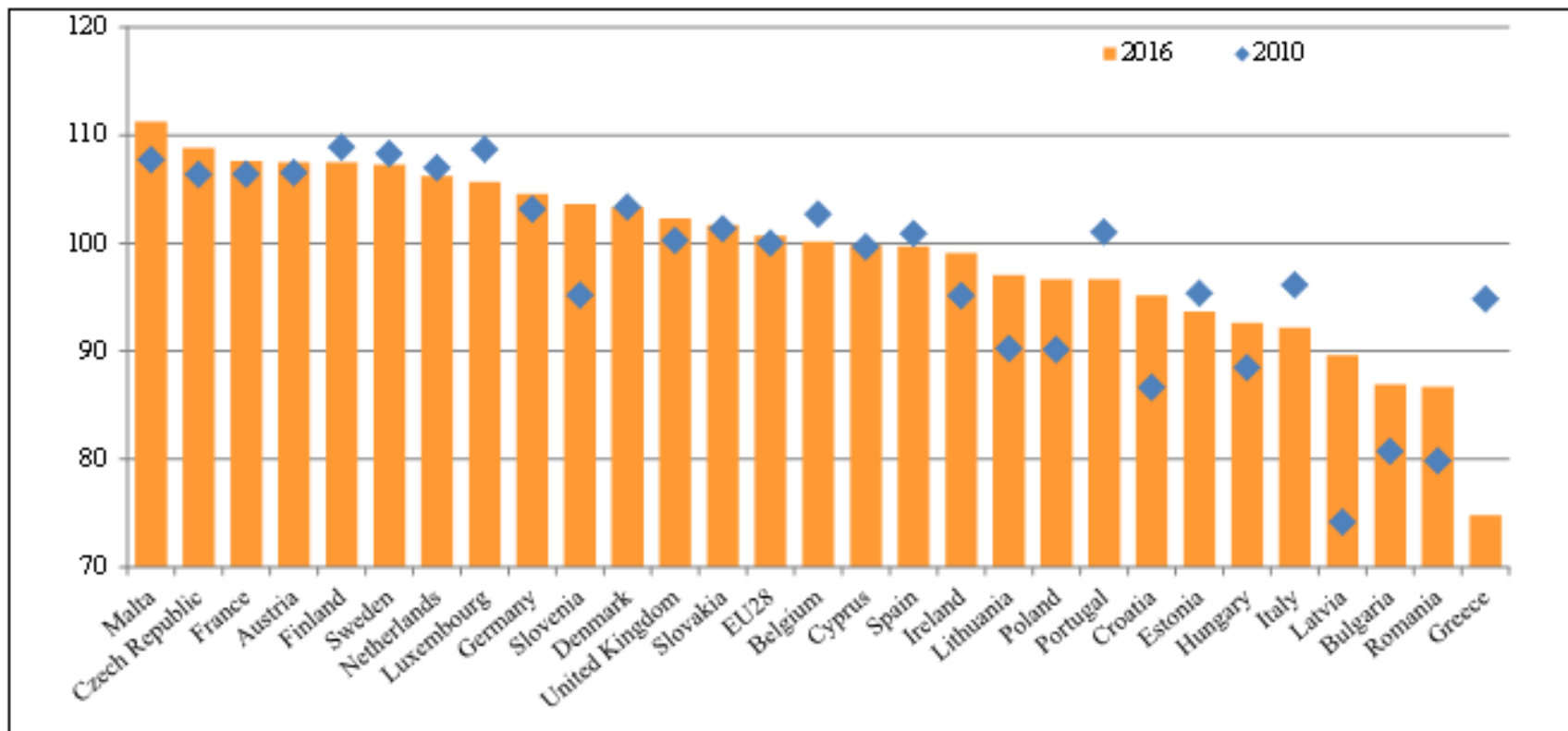


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# Upward convergence?

**Fig. 1.2 – SDG1 composite indicator scores for EU28 countries, years 2010 and 2016. Base EU28 2010=100**



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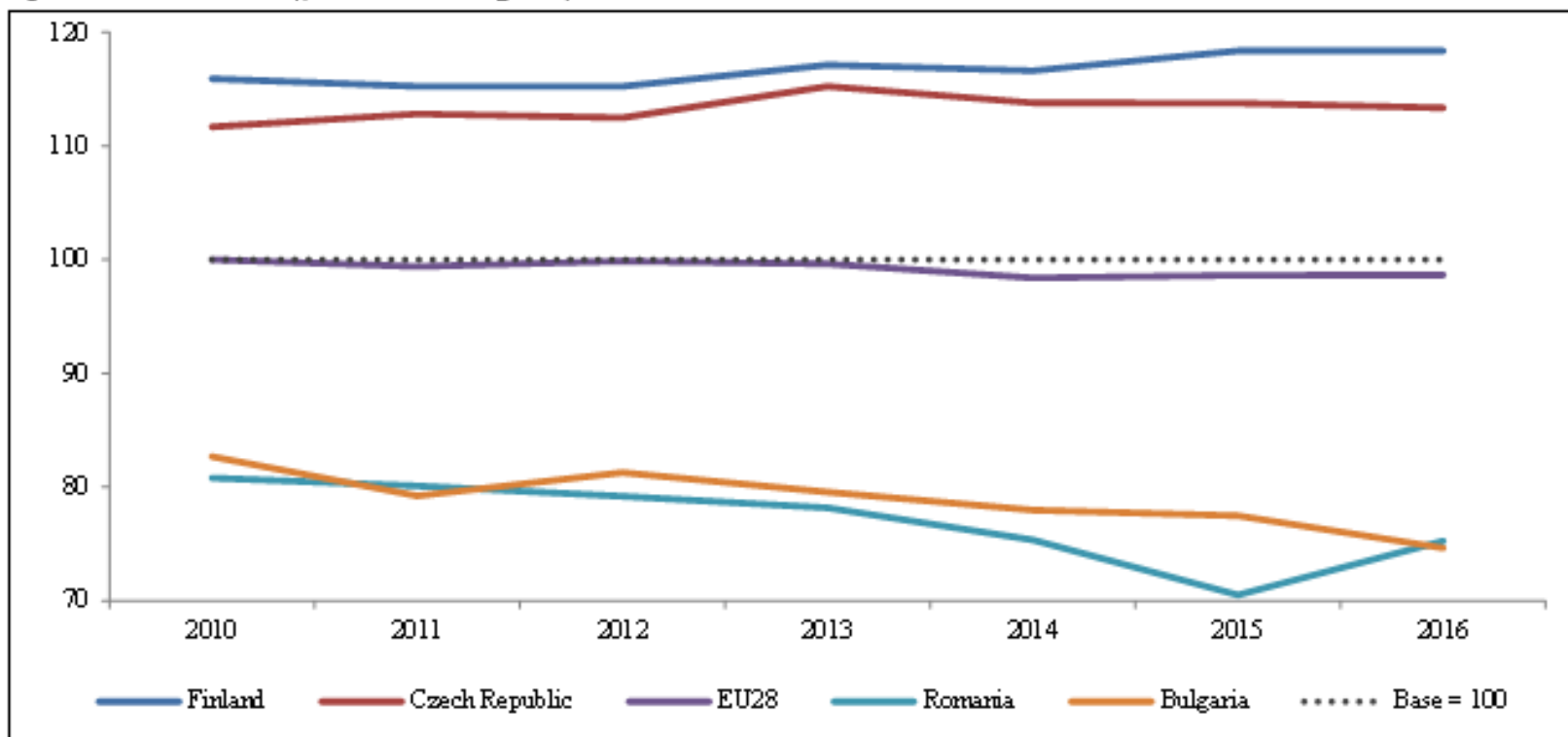


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# Upward convergence?

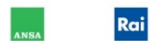
Fig. 10.1 – Composite indicators, SDG 10. EU28 average, best performers (Netherlands, Belgium) and worst performers in 2016 (Romania, Bulgaria). Base EU28 2010=100.



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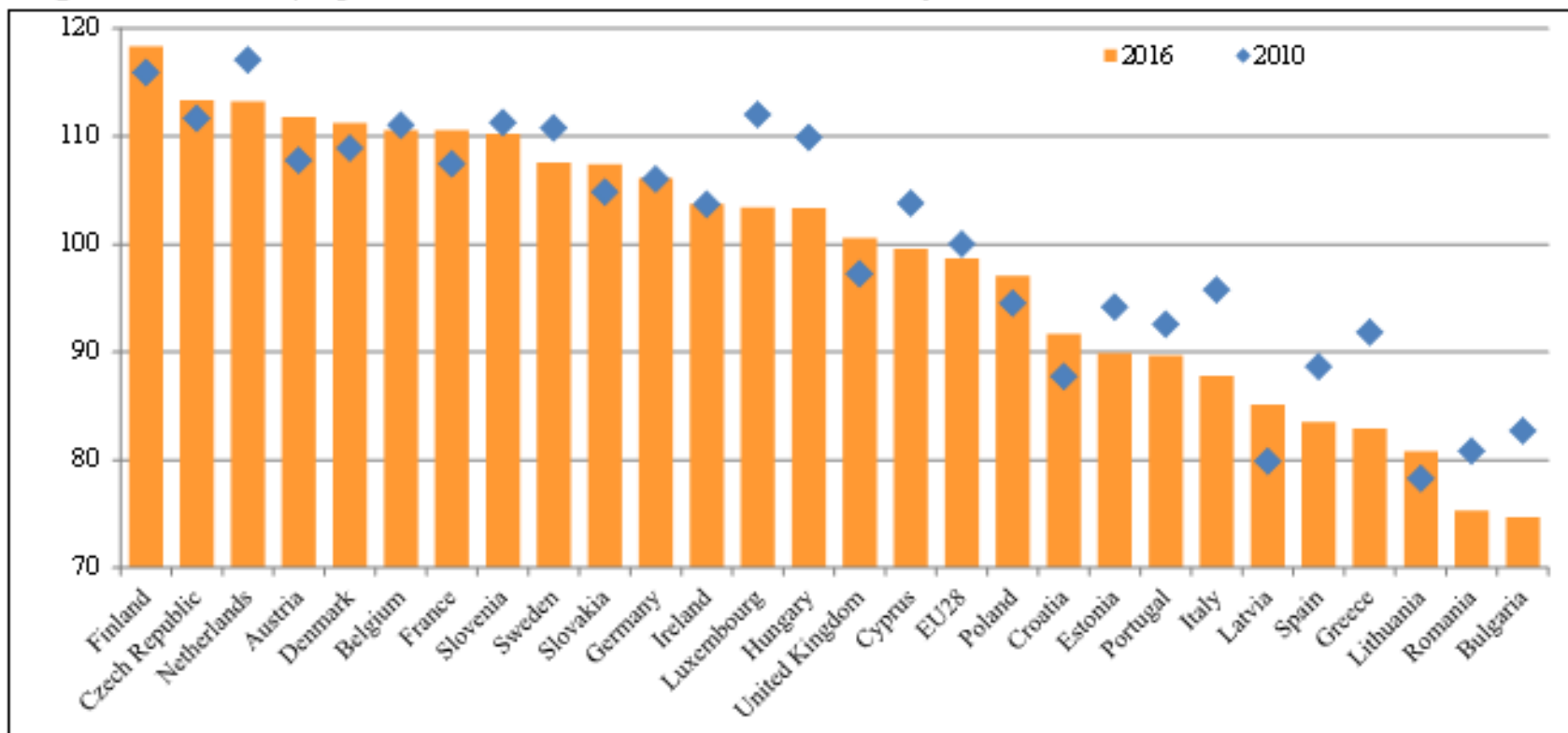
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# Upward convergence?

**Fig. 10.2 – SDG10 composite indicator scores for EU28 countries, years 2010 and 2016. Base EU28 2010=100**



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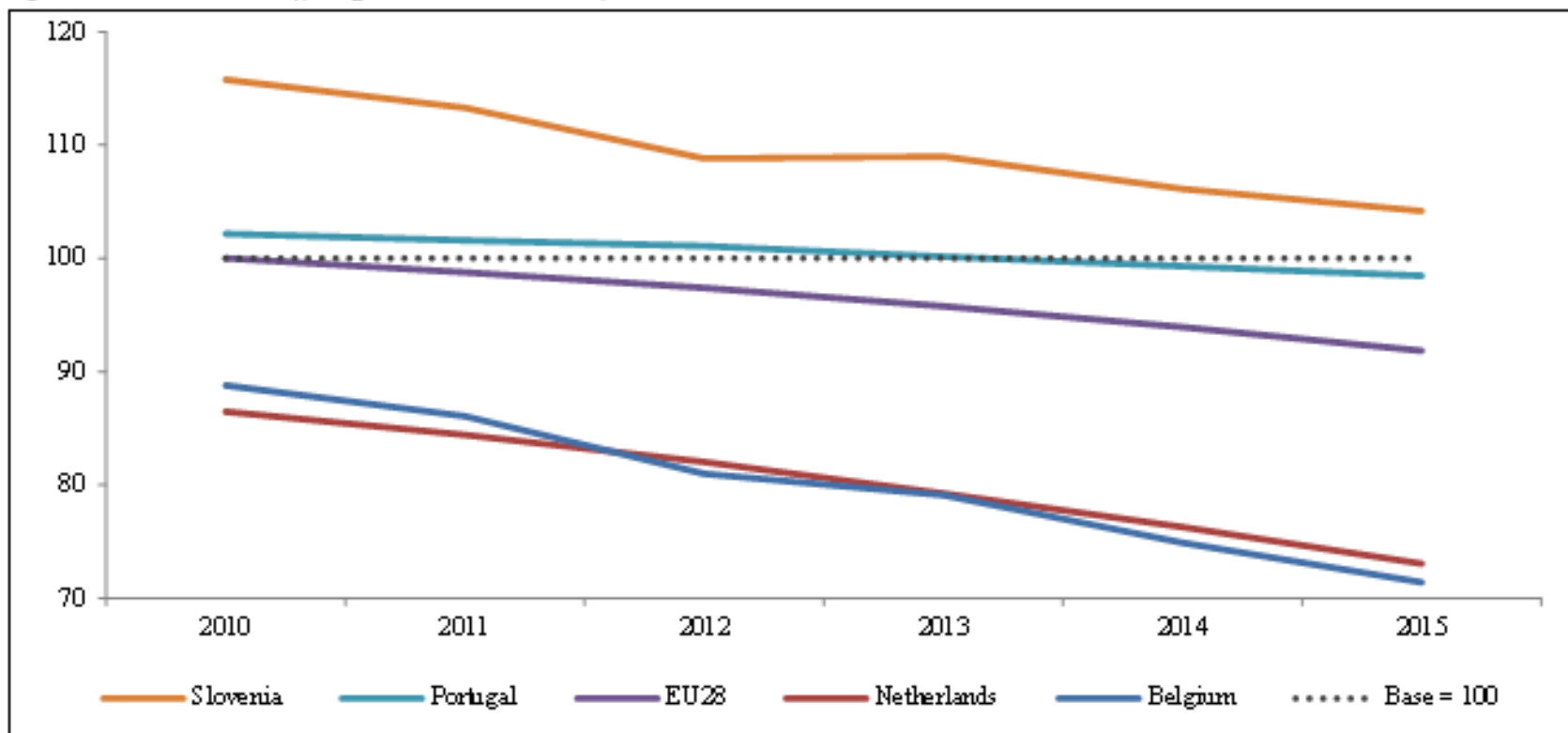


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# Upward convergence?

Fig. 15.1 – Composite indicators of SDG 15. EU28 average, best performers (Slovakia, Portugal) and worst performers in 2015 (Belgium, Netherlands). Base EU28 2010=100



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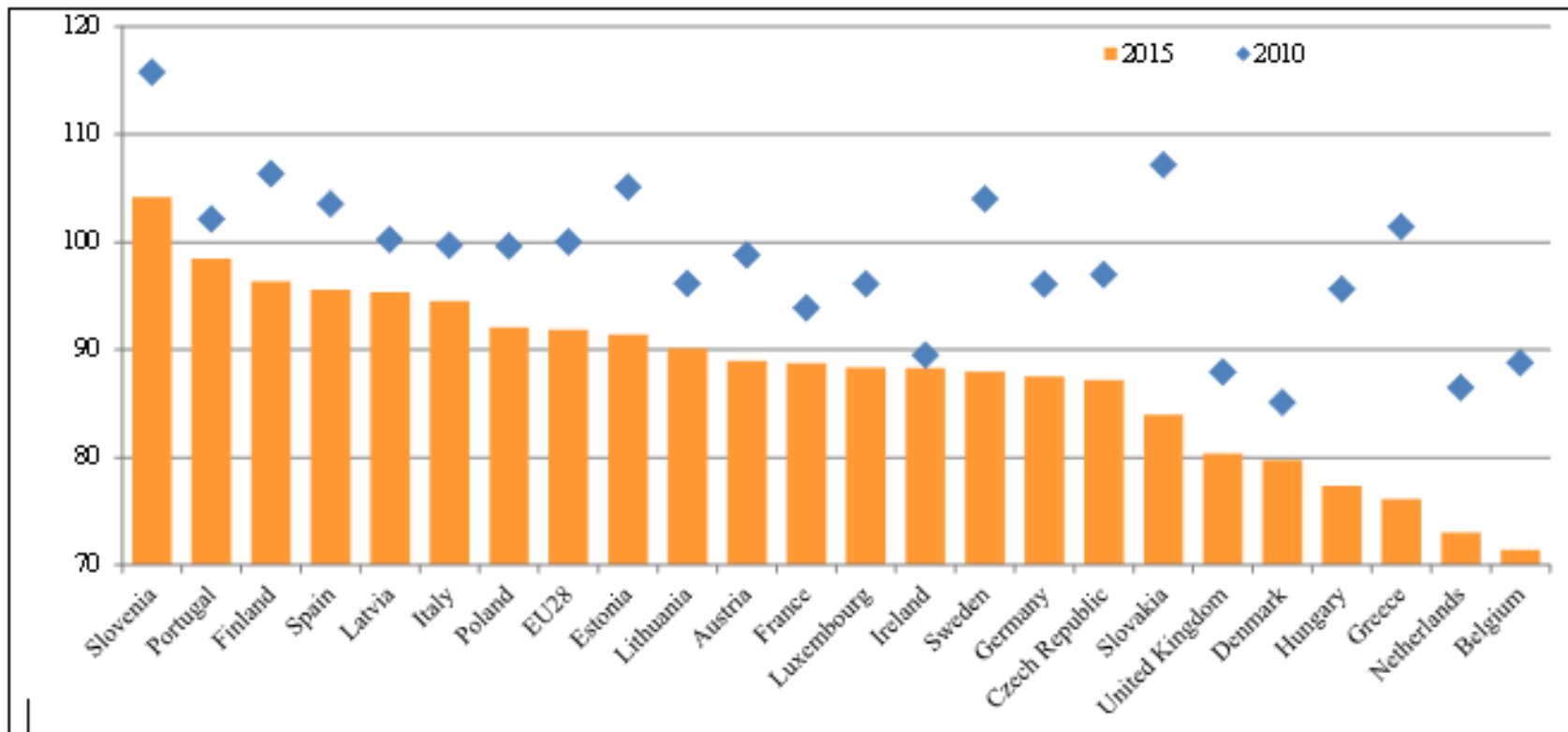


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# Upward convergence?

**Fig. 15.2 – SDG15 composite indicator scores for EU28 countries, years 2010 and 2015. Base EU28 2010=100**



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# The role(s) of the EU

1. Help countries to develop a common vision for the future
2. Develop “policy packages” to cope with a world full of shocks
3. Design policies to achieve a higher equitable and sustainable wellbeing
4. Improve policy coherence
5. Develop common analytical tools to be used by countries in planning their own integrated economic, social and environmental policies

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# Art. 3 of the EU Treaty

1. The Union's aim is to promote **peace**, its **values** and the **well-being** of its peoples.
2. The Union shall offer its citizens an area of **freedom, security and justice** without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime.
3. The Union shall establish an internal market. It shall work for the **sustainable development** of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at **full employment and social progress**, and a **high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment**. It shall promote **scientific and technological advance**. It shall combat **social exclusion and discrimination**, and shall promote **social justice and protection, equality** between women and men, **solidarity** between generations and protection of the rights of the child. It shall promote economic, social and territorial **cohesion**, and **solidarity** among Member States. It shall respect its rich **cultural and linguistic diversity**, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced“.

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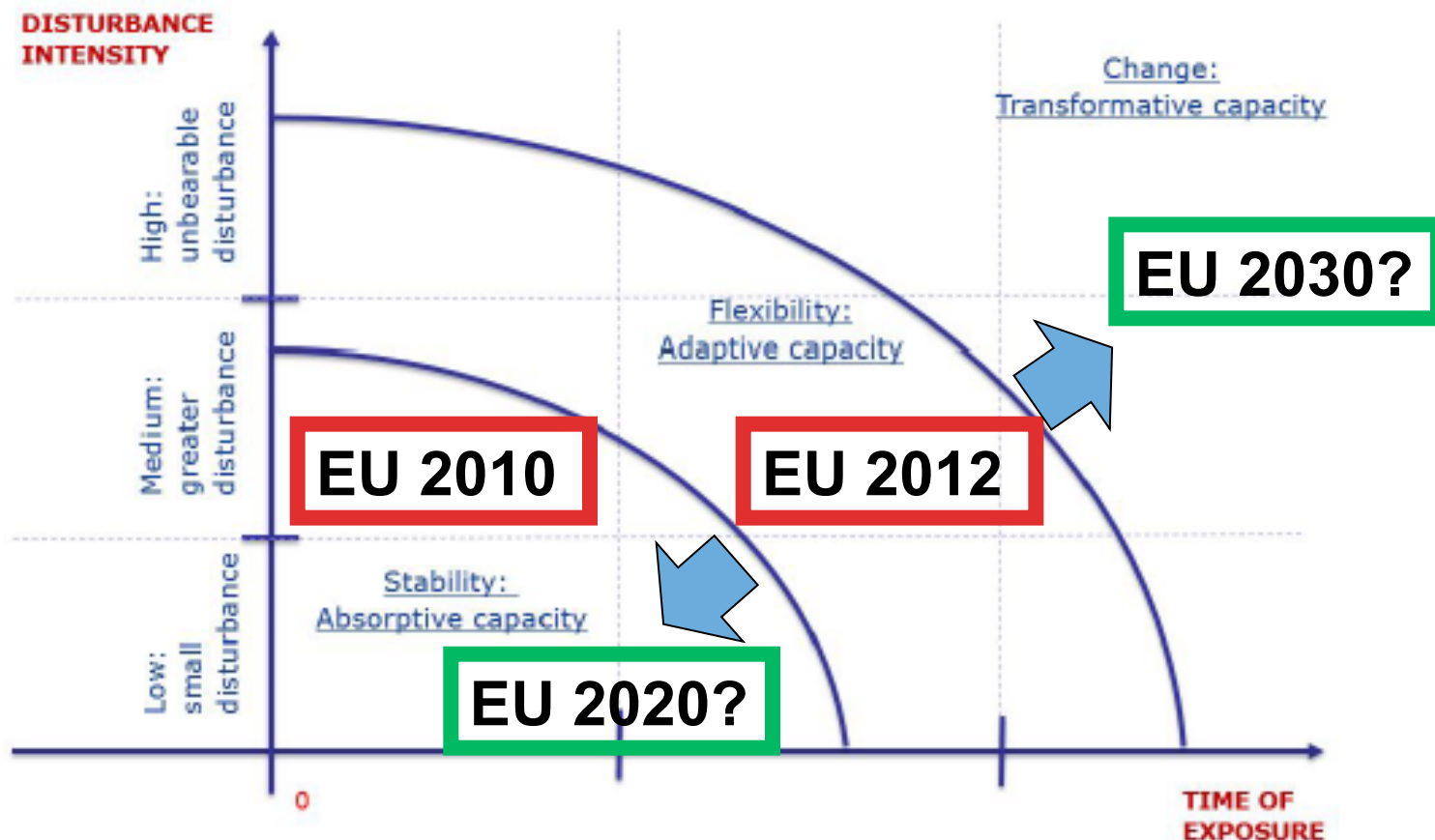


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# How to build a new political narrative

Figure 2: Shocks and capacities



# How to build a new political narrative

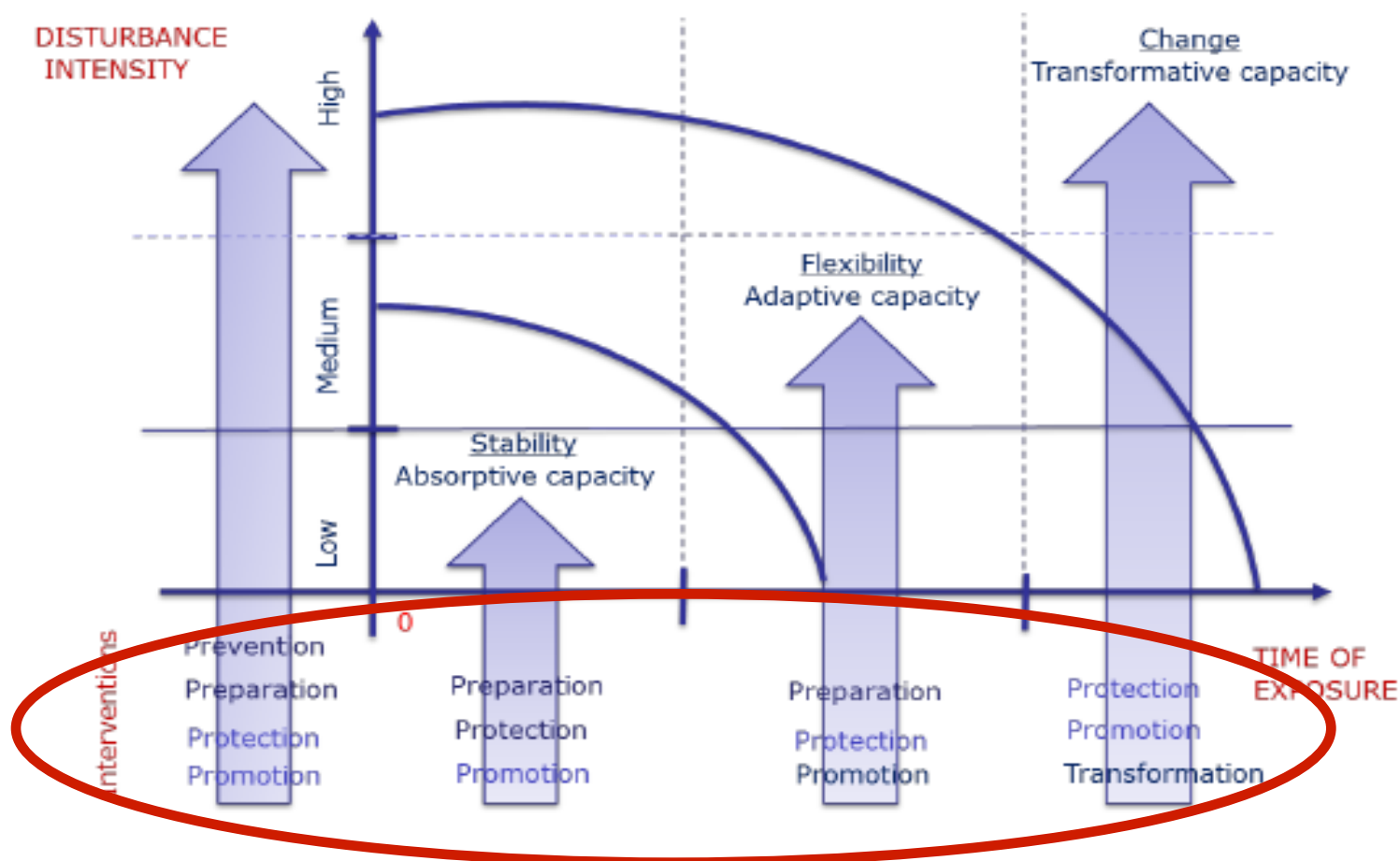
The EU is not on a sustainable path.

Economic growth alone will not solve our problems.

**A new vision is needed, based on resilience and sustainable wellbeing:** a resilient society aims to sustain its level of individual and societal wellbeing in an intergenerationally fair distribution, i.e. ensuring current wellbeing without compromising that of future generations.

# How to build a new political narrative

Figure 4: Link between capacities and interventions





# From a conceptual “system view” to a policy framework

- **Prevention measures** aim at reducing the incidence and size of shocks and, in the best case, to avert them.
- **Preparation measures** aim at putting in place arrangements that would reinforce the necessary resilience capacities in case a disturbance materializes.
- **Protection measures** are required to mitigate their impact, and to provide relief from potential deprivation or a loss of the standard of living.
- **Promotion measures** serve to invoke the adaptive capacity (flexibility) necessary to cope with longer and/or more severe disturbances.
- **Transformation measures** facilitate this process, to avoid unnecessarily abrupt changes.

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# Resilience to face future shocks and achieve sustainable development

- We are interested in a «transformative resilience» that takes the system onto a new «steady state»: **from «bouncing back» to «bouncing forward»**
- **From Bauman's «Retrotopia» to an «Equitable and sustainable wellbeing utopia»:**
  - Invest in «resilient and sustainable assets»;
  - Invest in «resilient and sustainable businesses»;
  - Invest in «resilient and sustainable people and societies»;
  - Invest in a «resilient and sustainable system»

# The “social pillar” and the SDGs

- Education, training and long-life learning
- Gender balance and equal opportunities
- Active labour policies, decent work, working conditions, Social dialogue and engagement of workers
- Work-life balance, safe working environment and data protection
- Childcare and support to youth
- Social protection and unemployment benefits
- Minimum income
- Income and pensions
- Health, inclusion of disabled people, long-term care
- Housing for homelesses
- Access to basic services



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# Break the silos

- **Protection measures:**
  - Minimum income with measures to foster people's resilience
- **Transformation measures:**
  - Energy transition
  - Digicircular economy
  - Educational system
  - Fiscal system
- **Preparation and prevention measures:**
  - Health system
  - Urban policies
  - Environmental protection and climate change adaptation
- **Promotion measures:**
  - Gender equality
  - Sustainable companies
  - Active labour policies

# From “structural reforms” to “systemic transformative policies”

- New narrative for the European Semester
- New narrative for EFSI II
- New narrative for MFF
- New narrative for cohesion policy
- New narrative for «Social Europe»
- ...

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# Towards the MFF 2021-2027

## THE NEW MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK 2021 - 2027 A BUDGET FOR A UNION THAT PROTECTS, EMPOWERS AND DEFENDS

In billion euro, current prices

**I. SINGLE MARKET,  
INNOVATION AND DIGITAL**  
€187.4

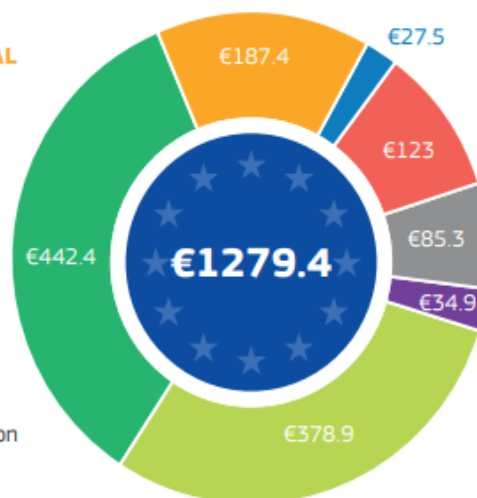
- 1 Research and Innovation
- 2 European Strategic Investments
- 3 Single Market
- 4 Space

**II. COHESION AND  
VALUES**  
€442.4

- 5 Regional Development and Cohesion
- 6 Economic and Monetary Union
- 7 Investing in People,  
Social Cohesion and Values

**III. NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND ENVIRONMENT**  
€378.9

- 8 Agriculture and Maritime Policy
- 9 Environment and Climate Action



**V. SECURITY  
AND DEFENCE**  
€27.5

- 12 Security
- 13 Defence
- 14 Crisis Response

**VI. NEIGHBOURHOOD  
AND THE WORLD**  
€123

- 15 External Action
- 16 Pre-Accession Assistance

**VII. EUROPEAN PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION**  
€85.3

- 17 European Public Administration

**IV. MIGRATION AND  
BORDER MANAGEMENT**  
€34.9

- 10 Migration
- 11 Border Management

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# The EU Parliament Resolution on MFF

The EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens, all together. Key messages:

- Disappointment on the proposed **global level of the next MFF**, which is very low (1,08% of EU GNI). EP sticks to its position of 1,3% of the EU's GNI.
- Criticism on proposed **cuts under cohesion policy, agricultural policy and European Social Fund, against EP political priorities for increases.**
- Request on:
  - **SDGs mainstreaming** into all EU policies and initiatives;
  - **gender mainstreaming;**
  - increase of **climate related spending** to 30% (not included in the Commission's proposal)

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# A big challenge: Policy Coherence

- **Political commitment and leadership** – to guide whole-of-government action and translate commitment on the SDGs into concrete and coherent measures at the local, national and international levels.
- **Integrated approaches to implementation** – to consider systematically inter-linkages between economic, social and environmental policy areas before making decisions.
- **Intergenerational timeframe** – to make informed choices about sustainable development considering the long-term impact of policy decisions on the well-being of future generations.
- **Analyses and assessments of potential policy effects** – to provide evidence on the potential negative or positive impacts on the well-being of people in other countries, and inform decision-making.

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# Learn about SDGs interactions

Different types of interactions:

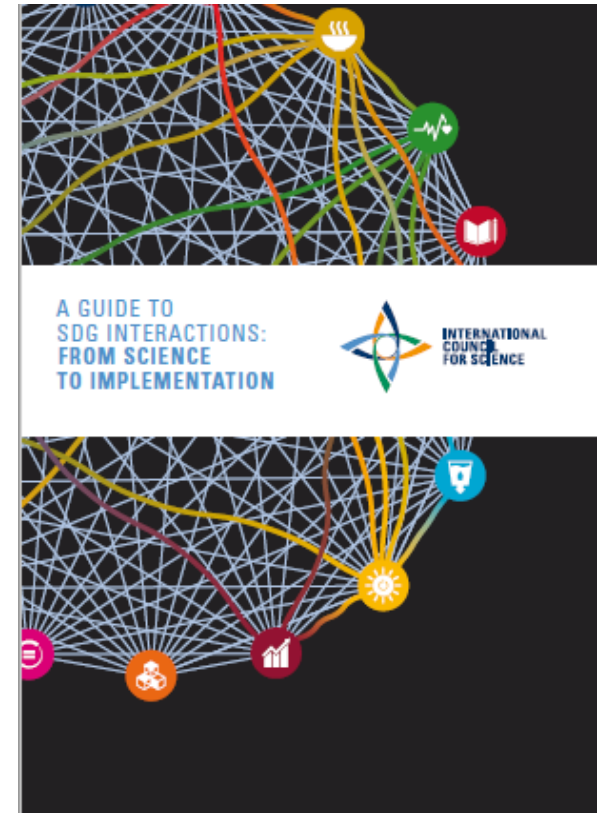
– **Positive:**

- Enabling
- Reinforcing
- Indivisible

– **Negative (trade-offs):**

- Constraining
- Counteracting
- Cancelling.

– **Neutral**



# Go back to the origin of the “European semester(s)”

- A tool for the implementation of the «2020 Strategy»
- Why are we using only one semester?
- From «Annual Growth Survey» to «Annual Sustainable Development Survey»
- Too much focus on macroeconomic policies
- Lack of involvement of national public opinions
- New communication strategy

## Conclusion

«Although many Democrats have come to associate emotional appeals with demagoguery, emotional compelling appeals need not be appeals to people's fears and prejudices.

They can just as easily be appeals to their hopes and dreams, their sense of shared fate or purpose, their better angels, or their sense that there might be someone who genuinely cares about their welfare and has what it takes to help restore it».

*Drew Westen, «The Political Brain»*