

## PREFACE

The goals of sustainable development concern all citizens of Bulgaria and the European Union, and the World as a whole. Sustainable development refers to a society providing a better quality of life for us, our children, and our grandchildren as it comprises the economic, social and environmental dimensions of our society,

The concept of “sustainable development” was popularised as a long –term goal policy by the World Commission on Environment and Development in the “Our common future” report to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1987. Sustainable development is defined as a development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations of meeting their own needs”. The Commitments on sustainable development, a result of the Earth Summit and the conference of UN on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 led to adoption of EU Sustainable Development Strategy in 2001 and its followed renewing in 2006.

In 2005 the European Council set out principles, which will guide Europe on a sustainable path of development. These principles include the permanent need of fostering economic prosperity based on an innovative, competitive and eco-efficient economy, protecting and improving the quality of the environment and promoting equity and social cohesion in solidarity with the rest of the world. The key challenges lying ahead of us are pointed out in the renewed EU sustainable development strategy as follows:

- climate changes and clean energy;
- sustainable transport;
- sustainable consumption and production;
- conservation and management of natural resources;
- public health;
- social inclusion, demography and migration;
- global poverty and sustainable development challenges.

The European Commission in cooperation with Member States developed a set of sustainable development indicators for the purpose of measuring progress towards sustainable development.

The publication “Sustainable development in Bulgaria” covers the themes, which reflect the seven challenges indicated in the EU Strategy, as well as the key objective of economic prosperity, and guiding principles related to good governance. It is developed in accordance with the themes and groups of indicators published by Eurostat. Seven of the themes included correspond to the priority areas of Commission, stated in its Communications in 2001 and 2002, while themes connected with Production and Consumption Patterns and Good Governance were initiated by the Plan of Implementation in Johannesburg. The Economic Development theme highlights the economic dimension of sustainable development and links it to the Lisbon Process. Five of the themes also correspond to the international engagements taken in the framework of the Millennium Declaration.

The indicators concern economic, social, ecological and institutional issues and are included in the following 9 themes

Theme 1. Socioeconomic Development.

Theme 2. Sustainable Consumption and Production.

Theme 3. Social Inclusion.

Theme 4. Demographic Changes.

Theme 5. Public Health.

Theme 6. Climate Change and Energy.

Theme 7. Sustainable Transport.

Theme 8. Natural Resources.

Theme 9. Global Partnership and Good Governance.

The first and second level indicators from the three-stage pyramid structure of the developed system are mainly set in the themes. The first level indicators are leading and are at the top of the pyramid. They are used to observe the implementation of the “overall objectives” of the strategy for sustainable development and they are of high communicative value. The second level variables are related to the operational objectives of the strategy and are leading in their respective sub themes. The indicators of both levels are available for most EU Member States for a period of at least five years.

The introductory part of each theme concerns the mutual commitment to the other themes for measuring and accounting the extent of sustainable development, as well as it presents the interlinks between the indicators included in the reference theme.