

# Quantitative Analysis of Human Rights and Vulnerable Groups for 197 Countries

## Utilization of the Danish Human Rights: The SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer for the Analysis

Draft, October 2021, Aljaz Kuncic<sup>1</sup> & Austin Hamilton<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Background<sup>3</sup>

The Danish Human Rights SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer ([sdgdata.humanrights.dk](https://sdgdata.humanrights.dk)) is the result of an experimental data mining project. Their classification algorithm has helped to identify links to the SDGs for more than 190,000 human rights recommendations and observations. Online there is a searchable database that links monitoring information from the international human rights system to the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It allows users to explore the recommendations and observations of international human rights monitoring bodies, as they relate to the implementation of the SDGs and their 169 targets in specific countries.

“On average, states receive more than 70 recommendations per year under the various human rights monitoring mechanisms of the UN. With 193 UN Member States, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) alone has generated over 68,000 recommendations since its beginning in 2007. In order for governments to implement these recommendations in a systematic and efficient manner, it is necessary to categorize them into thematic clusters.”<sup>4</sup>

The SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer lets you explore more than 190,000 recommendations and observations from 67 monitoring mechanisms of the international human rights system. Over **60% of these recommendations and observations are directly linked to an SDG** and hence immediately relevant for national SDG implementation.

Its suggested use is both at the national as well as regional/global level, giving the following guidelines for National and Global and regional level:

#### National implementation

The SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer can be used to explore how human rights recommendations for individual countries linked to specific SDGs. The recommendations can then be used to:

- Identify and prioritize issues that need to be addressed in a given country.
- Guide the strategies and actions to achieve the relevant SDGs and related human rights obligations.
- Identify vulnerable groups, such as migrant workers, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities, who need special considerations, strategies, and actions to achieve particular SDGs and related human rights obligations to ensure they are not left behind.

---

<sup>1</sup> Aljaz Kuncic ([kuncic@un.org](mailto:kuncic@un.org)) is a Senior Economist at the Resident Coordinator Office for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> Austin Hamilton ([Austin.g.hamilton@gmail.com](mailto:Austin.g.hamilton@gmail.com)) is an Economist at the UN Resident Coordinator Office for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations.

<sup>3</sup> <https://sdgdata.humanrights.dk/en/what-is-the-upr-sdg-data-explorer>, accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> of October, 2021

<sup>4</sup> <https://sdgdata.humanrights.dk/en/methodology>

## 2. Algorithm to determine the links to SDGs and vulnerable groups

**“The human rights recommendations have been categorised through an analytical process using semi-supervised machine learning. Through this process, an algorithm has been initially trained to classify UPR recommendations based on a small set of training examples (classified by a human expert) and a large amount of unclassified data.”<sup>5</sup>**

“Sustainable Development Goals categories: The 169 targets under the 17 Sustainable Development Goals serve as categories for the classification of the recommendations. The current data material reflects about 70 of the 169 targets. Recommendations are linked directly at the target level, with no residual categories at the Goal-level. This means that recommendations are only classified if they are linked to a specific target under one of the 17 Goals.”<sup>6</sup>

The 12 categories of rights-holders identified in the SDG – Human Rights Data Explorer are:<sup>7</sup>

- Women and girls
- Children
- Indigenous peoples
- Persons with disabilities
- Migrants
- Refugees and asylum-seekers
- Internally displaced persons
- Members of minorities [Ethnic and religious minorities]
- Human rights defenders
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI)
- Older persons
- Youth

## 3. An example using the KSA

### Summary statistics:

- 981 recommendations and observations between 2008 and 2019: 2008 (41), 2009 (122), 2013 (235), 2016 (47), 2017 (7), 2018 (470), and 2019 (59)
- Over half of all the recommendations and observations were made in 2017 or later
- There are 142 Observations and 838 Recommendations
- Out of the 606 UPR cases, 422 were supported, and 184 noted
- Out of all 981 cases, 555 have an SDG link identified, and 622 are linked to a vulnerable group (43.3% of cases are not linked to an SDG, and 36.6% are not linked to a vulnerable group. Most of which are generic recommendations.)

We want to answer the following questions:

1. Overall, what is the distribution of observations and recommendations across SDGs and across vulnerable groups, and are there vulnerable groups that are more than proportionally affected within the SDGs?

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

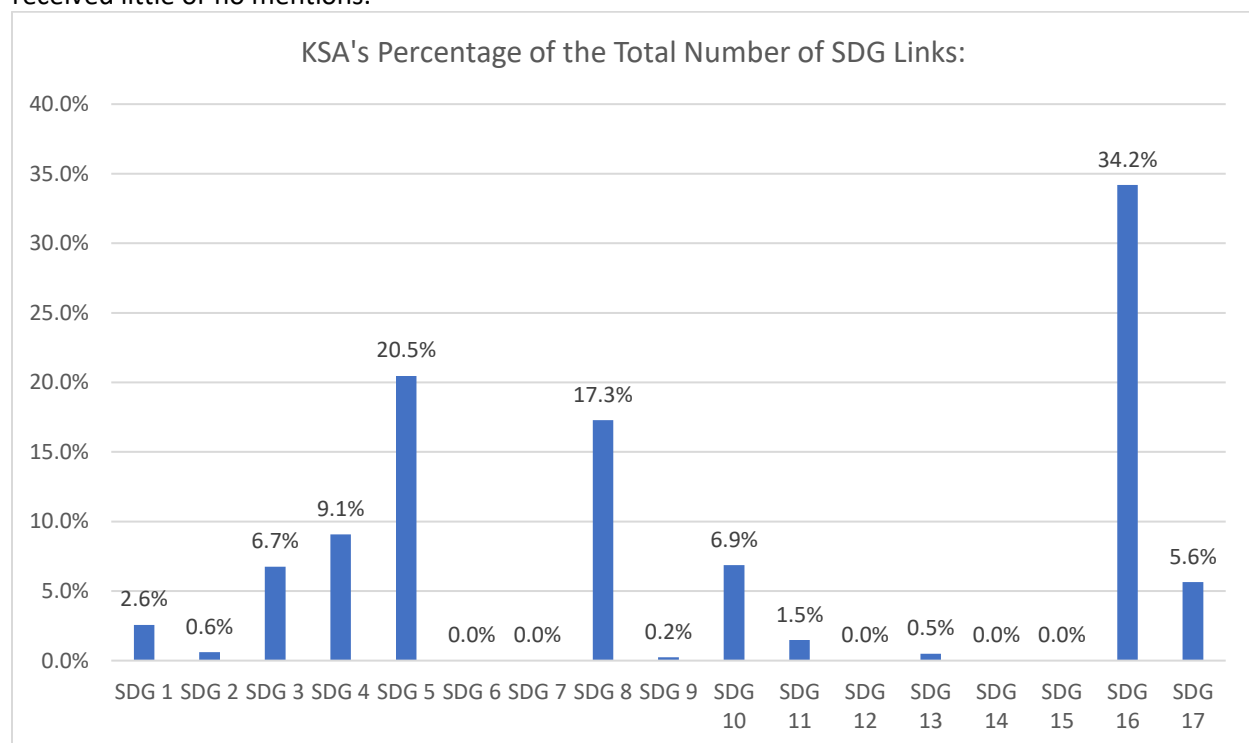
<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

2. What is the change and trend (if any) over time (2009, 2013, and 2018) of UPR observations and recommendations across SDGs and across vulnerable groups?
  3. What is the change and trend (if any) over time (2009, 2013, and 2018) of UPR Noted vs. Supported observations and recommendations in total as well as across the top 3 vulnerable groups and SDGs?
  4. What is the change and trend (if any) over time (2009, 2013, and 2018) of countries giving UPR observations and recommendations in total?
- 3.1. Overall distributions of observations and recommendations across SDGs and across vulnerable groups and vulnerable groups that are more than proportionally affected within the SDGs and which SDGs are the most relevant for different vulnerable groups

#### Identifying Sustainable Development Goals priority areas from the Human Rights lens:

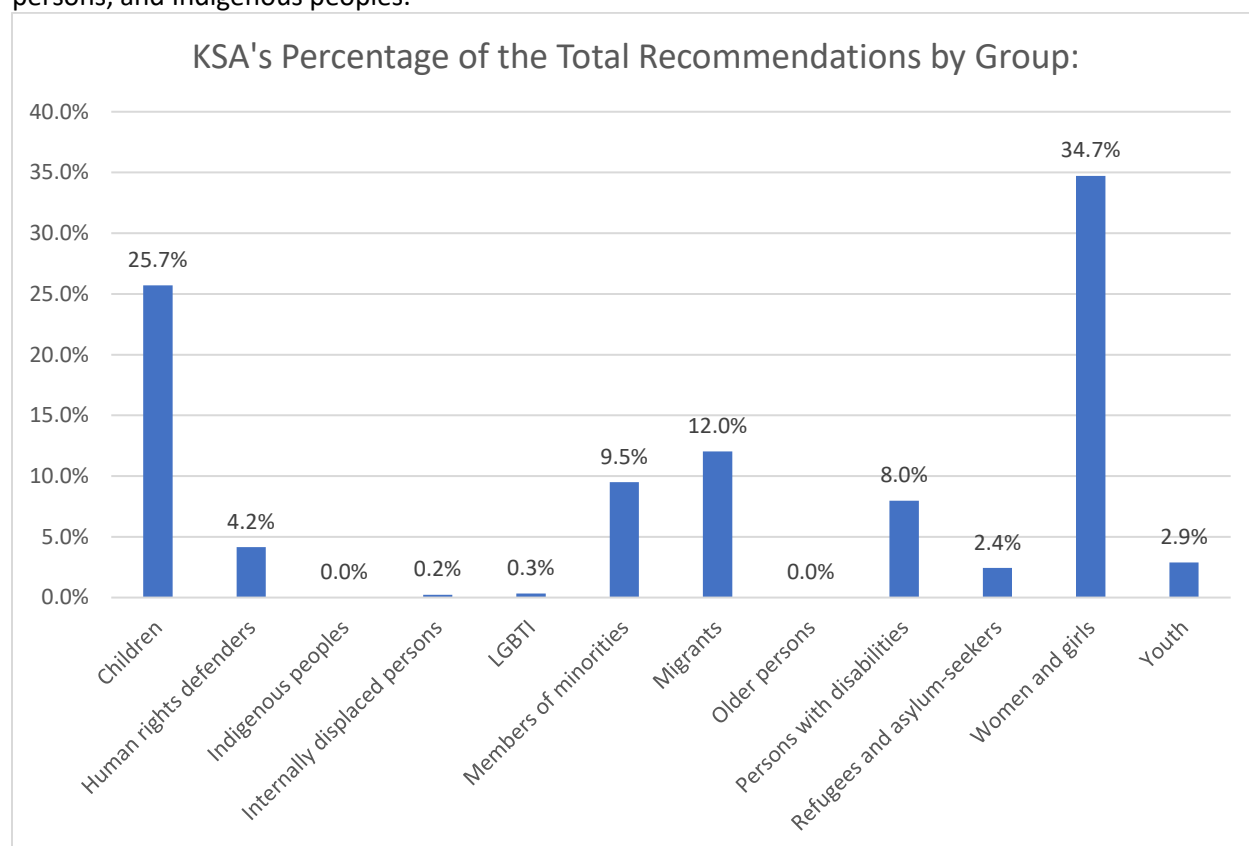
- The 555 observations and recommendations that have a link to SDGs identified to have a total of 862 references to SDGs, with 43.4% of cases with no reference to an SDG, 35.9% referencing one SDGs, 13.5% referencing two SDGs, 4.8% referencing three SDGs, and the maximum links being six referenced SDGs.
- The figure below shows that the most salient link to sustainable development goals is to **SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, with more than a third of all observations and recommendations mentioning it, followed by SDG 5 on Gender equality, and SDG 8 on Decent economic growth**, with SDGs 4, 10, 3, and 17 having mentionable but small numbers, while SDGs 1, 2 on poverty and hunger, SDGs 6, 7, and 9 on water, energy and industry, and all the environmental goals SDG 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 have received little or no mentions.



#### Identifying vulnerable groups from the Human Rights lens:

- Out of the 622 observations and recommendations that refer to one or more vulnerable groups with a total of 864 links, 36.6% not identifying a vulnerable group, 45.7% identify one group, 12.7% identify two groups, 3.9% identifying three groups, and identifying a maximum of six groups.

- The figure below shows that the most frequently identified vulnerable groups are predominantly **Women and girls with 34.7% of all mentions**, followed by Children at 25.7%. Vulnerable groups featured relatively often in observations and recommendations are also Members of minorities and at 12.0% and 9.5%, respectively, while sometimes mentioned are also Persons with disabilities, Human rights defenders, and Youth. In contrast, no or almost no mentions for LGBTI, Internally displaced persons, Older persons, and Indigenous peoples.

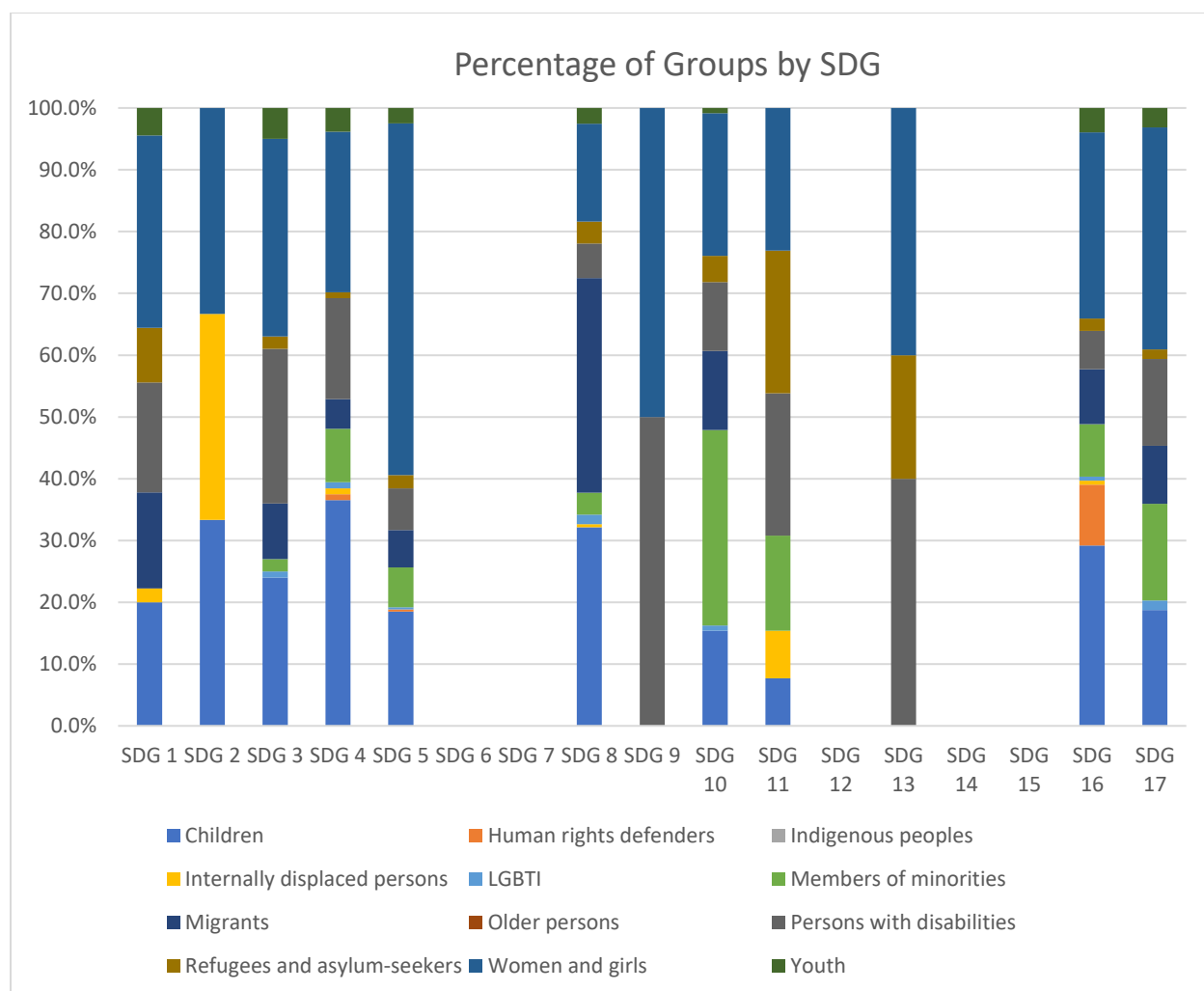


**Identifying vulnerable groups that are more than proportionally affected within the SDGs (SDG saturation with vulnerable groups), and which SDGs are most relevant for each vulnerable group (vulnerable group saturation with SDGs):**

- The figure below shows two ways to look at the overlap between human rights observations and recommendations on SDGs and vulnerable groups
- The first figure shows **vulnerable groups that are more than proportionally affected within the SDGs (SDG saturation with vulnerable groups) or, in other words, Relevance of vulnerable groups for different SDGs**, and it tells us the following, going by the SDGs that have at least a couple of percentage points in Human Rights mentions (in order of importance, with total % stated):
  - SDG 16 (24.6%): Women and girls are the most important vulnerable group, accounting for 30.2% of all references to this goal, followed by Children at 29.2%, Human rights defenders at 9.8%, and Persons with disabilities, Members of minorities at 8.9%, and Migrants at 8.5%
  - SDG 5 (22.7%): Women and girls are expectedly the most important vulnerable group within this goal, accounting for 56.9% of all references to this goal, followed by Children

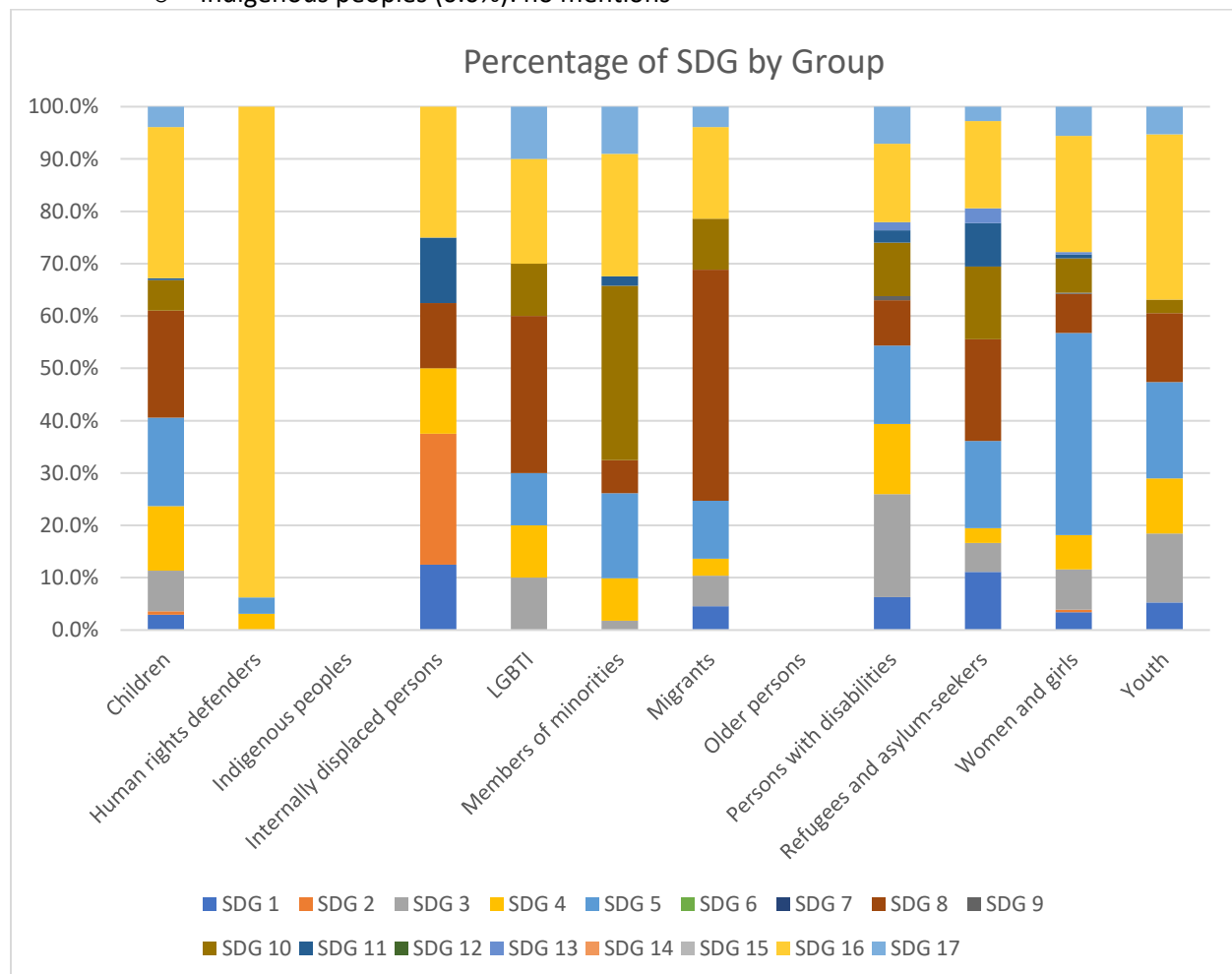
with almost 18.5%, and Persons with disabilities with 6.8%, with Migrants and Members of minorities at around 6%

- SDG 8 (15.8%): Migrants are the most important vulnerable group within this goal, accounting for 34.7% of all references to this goal, followed closely by Children with 32.1%, and then Women and girls at 15.8% and Persons with disabilities at around 5%.
- SDG 10 (9.5%): Members of minorities are the most important vulnerable group within this goal, accounting for 31.6% of all references to this goal, followed by Women and girls with 23.1%, children at 15.4%, Migrants at 12.8%, and Persons with disabilities at around 11.1%.
- SDG 4 (8.4%): Children are the most important vulnerable group within this goal, accounting for 36.5% of all references to this goal, followed by Women and girls with 26.0%, Persons with disabilities with 16.3%, and Members of minorities at around 8.7%.
- SDG 3 (8.1%): Women and children are the most important vulnerable group within this goal, accounting for 32.0% of all references to this goal, followed closely by Persons with disabilities with 25.0%, Children at 24.0%, Migrants at 9.0%, and then Youth 5.0%.
- SDG 17 (5.2%): Women and girls are the most important vulnerable group within this goal, accounting for 35.9% of all references to this goal, followed by Children with 18.8%, Members of minorities with 15.6%, Persons with disabilities with 14.1%, and Migrants with 9.4%.



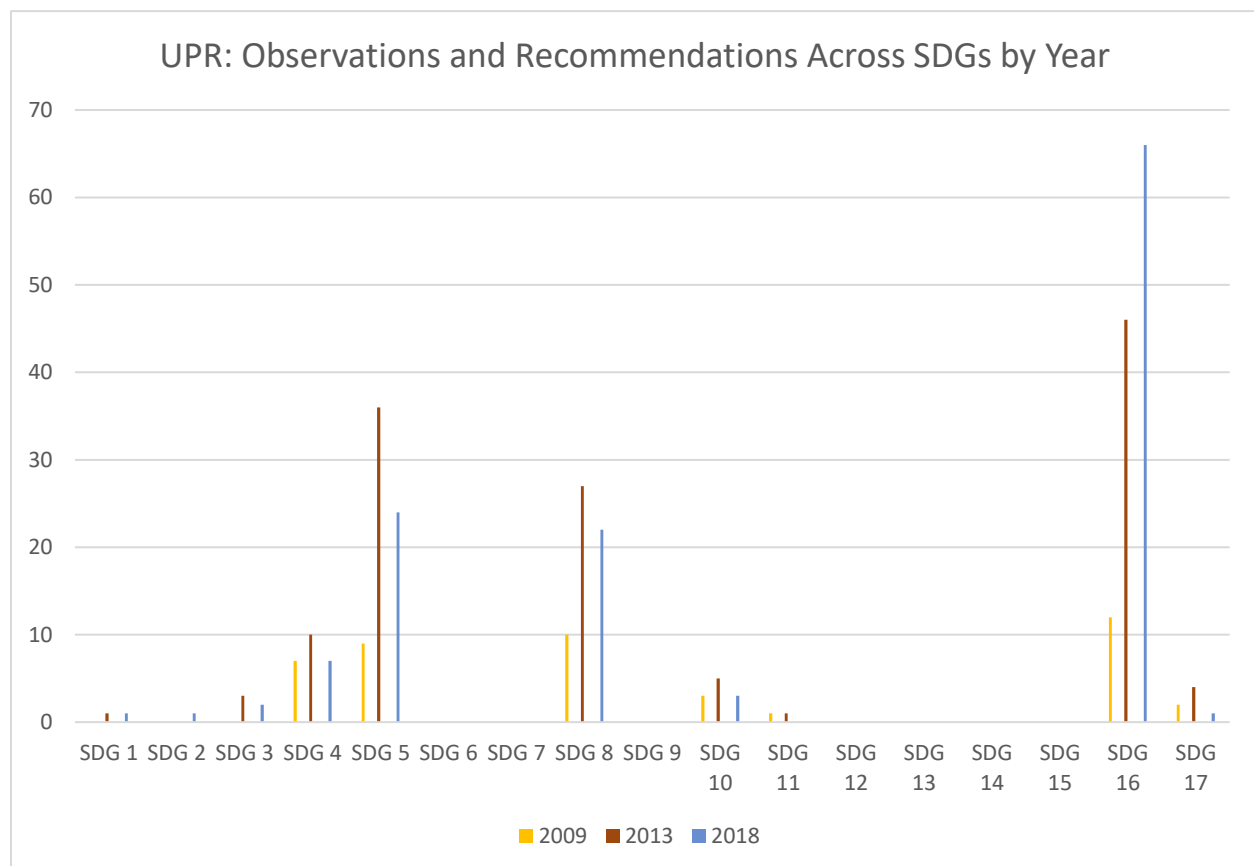
- The second figure shows **which SDGs are most relevant for each vulnerable group (vulnerable group saturation with SDGs) or, in other words, Relevance of SDGs for different vulnerable groups**, and it tells us the following, going by all vulnerable groups (in order of importance, with total % stated):
  - Women and girls (33.4%): 38.6% of all Women and girls observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 5, followed by SDG 16 with 22.2%, SDG 3 at 7.7%, SDG 8 at 7.5%, SDGs 4 and 10 with 6.5%, and SDG 17 with 5.6%.
  - Children (24.9%): 28.9% of all Children observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 16, followed by SDG 8 with 20.5%, SDG 5 with 16.9%, SDG 4 with 12.3%, SDG 3 with 7.8%, and SDG 10 with 5.8%.
  - Migrants (12.4%): 44.2% of all Migrants observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 8, followed by SDG 16 with 17.5%, SDG 5 with 11.0%, SDG 10 with 9.7%, and SDG 3 with 5.8%.
  - Persons with disabilities (10.3%): 19.7% of all Persons with disabilities observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 3, followed by SDGs 5 and 16 at 15.0%, SDG 4 at 13.4%, SDG 10 at 10.2%, SDG 8 at 8.7%, SDG 17 at 7.1%, and SDG 1 at 6.3%.

- Members of minorities (9.0%): 33.3% of all Members of minorities observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 10, followed by SDG 16 with 23.4%, SDG 5 with 16.2%, SDG 17 at 9.0%, SDG 4 at 8.1%, and SDG 8 at 6.3%.
- Youth (3.1%): 31.6% of all Youth observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 16, followed by SDG 5 with 18.4%, SDGs 3 and 8 with 13.2%, SDG 4 at 10.5%, and SDGs 1 and 17 with 5.3%.
- Refugees and asylum-seekers (2.9%): 19.4% of all Refugees and asylum-seekers observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 8, followed by SDGs 5 and 16 with 16.7%, SDG 10 with 13.9%, SDG 1 at 11.1%, SDG 11 at 8.3%, and SDG 3 with 5.6%.
- Human rights defenders (2.6%): practically all (93.8%) Human rights defenders observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 16.
- LGBTI (0.8%): 30% of all LGBTI observations and recommendations are linked to SDG 8, followed by SDG 16 with 20%, and SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, and 17 with 10% (one mention each).
- Internally displaced persons (0.6%): 25.0% of all Internally displaced persons observations and recommendations are linked to SDGs 2 and 16, followed by SDGs 1, 4, 8, and 11 with 12.5%.
- Older persons (0.0%): no mentions
- Indigenous peoples (0.0%): no mentions



### 3.2. Examining over time (2009, 2013, and 2018) dynamics of UPR observations and recommendations across SDGs and across vulnerable groups

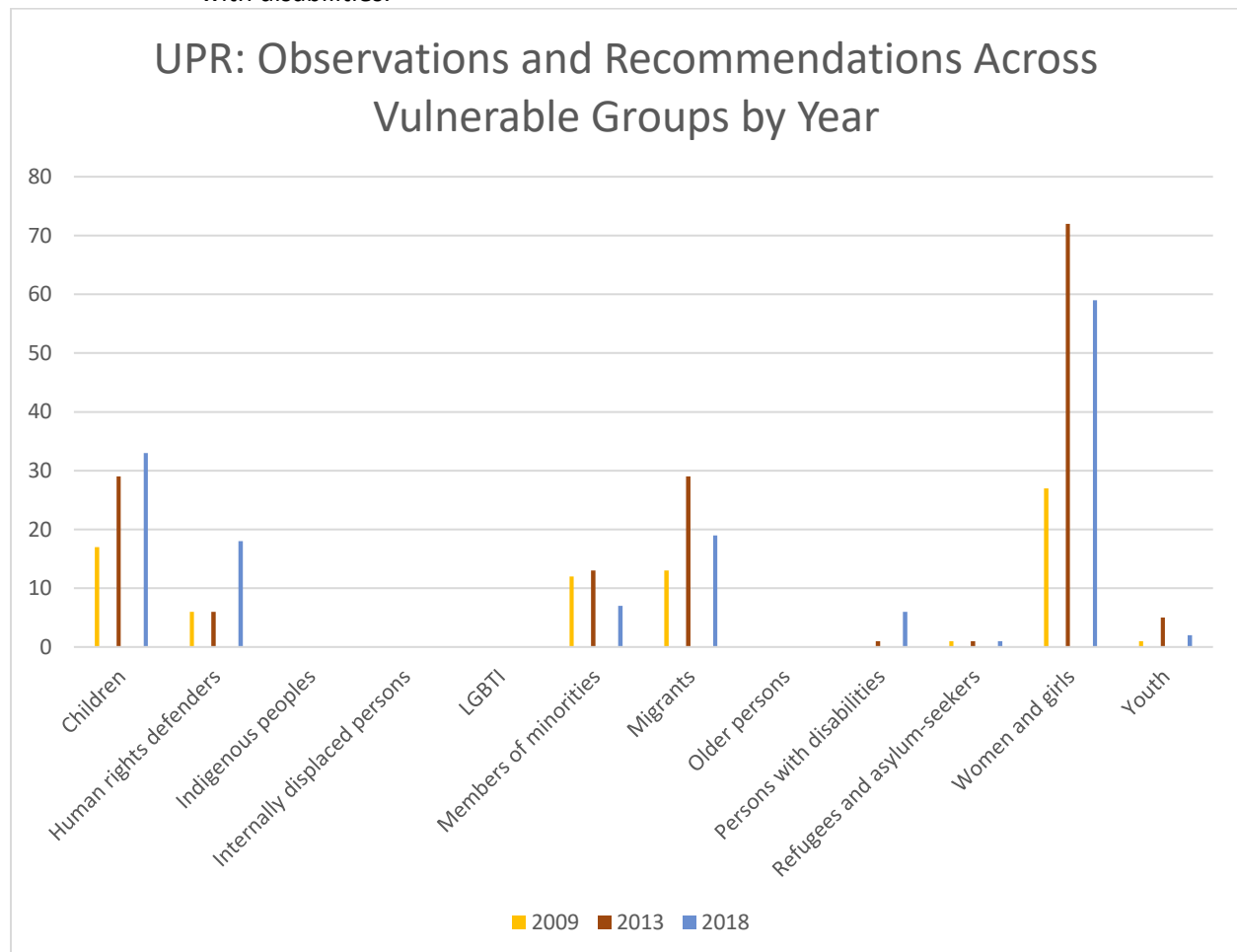
- 606 cases over the years 2009 (122), 2013 (235), and 2018 (470), with a bit than one half (43.3%) having a link to SDGs identified and 63.4% to vulnerable groups
- With the distribution across SDGs, expressed as a share of all UPR observations and recommendations in that year, we see a couple of trends across SDGs and time in the first figure, which signals the increasing or decreasing importance of SDGs for the KSA from the HR lens as seen by other countries:
  - An upward trend for observations and recommendations between 2009 and 2013 relating to SDGs 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, and 17. There is a downward trend between 2013 and 2018 for SDGs 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, and 17. The upward trend for SDG 16 continued for the period 2013 to 2018.



- With the distribution across vulnerable groups, expressed as a share of all UPR observations and recommendations in that year, we do not see many trends across groups and time in the first figure, which signal the relative constant focus on selected vulnerable groups for the KSA from the HR lens as seen by other countries:
  - There is an upward trend between 2009 and 2013 with Children, Members of minorities, Migrants, Women and children, and Youth. There is a negative trend between 2013 and 2018 with Members of minorities, Migrants, Women and girls, and Youth. There is an

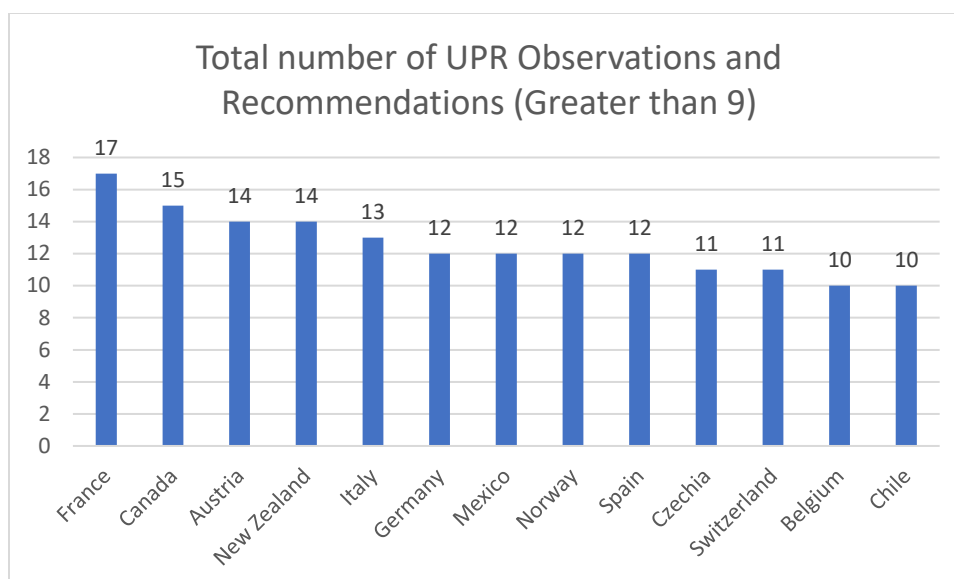


upward trend between 2013 and 2018 for Children, Human rights defenders, and Persons with disabilities.



### 3.3. Identifying the change and trend over time (2009, 2013, and 2018) of countries giving UPR observations and recommendations in total

- This can give us indices on possible political or situational motives within the UPR of other countries to either give or not give HR observations or recommendations
- The top countries in sum (across all three years) of all observations and recommendations are shown in the graph below, for those with a sum of 10 or more, and in addition, the countries who have listed only one observation or recommendation in the past 3 UPRs (guided by very limited interest or signaling maybe) are Armenia, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Gabon, Kyrgyzstan, South Sudan, Tajikistan, and Uganda



- The table below shows the dynamics of all the countries giving observations or recommendations to Saudi Arabia through the UPR in either or all the UPR periods, with no visible dynamics or excesses

Recommending (UPR) state	2009	2013	2018	Total	Recommending (UPR) state	2009	2013	2018	Total
Afghanistan	0	0	2	2	Lebanon	1	2	2	5
Albania	0	3	0	3	Lesotho	0	0	0	0
Algeria	5	0	2	7	Libya	0	0	2	2
Andorra	0	0	0	0	Liechtenstein	0	0	6	6
Angola	0	0	0	0	Lithuania	0	4	0	4
Argentina	0	2	3	5	Luxembourg	0	0	0	0
Armenia	0	1	0	1	Madagascar	0	0	0	0
Australia	0	4	5	9	Malaysia	3	2	2	7
Austria	4	4	6	14	Maldives	0	2	1	3
Azerbaijan	2	2	2	6	Mali	0	0	0	0
Bahamas	0	0	0	0	Malta	0	0	0	0
Bahrain	3	2	2	7	Marshall Islands	0	0	0	0
Bangladesh	0	0	2	2	Mauritania	0	0	0	0
Barbados	0	0	0	0	Mauritius	0	0	0	0
Belarus	2	0	3	5	Mexico	6	3	3	12
Belgium	2	4	4	10	Monaco	0	0	0	0
Benin	0	2	0	2	Mongolia	0	0	0	0
Bhutan	0	1	0	1	Montenegro	0	0	2	2
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0	0	3	3	Morocco	3	2	0	5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	1	0	1	Mozambique	0	0	0	0
Botswana	0	0	2	2	Myanmar	0	0	5	5
Brazil	0	2	2	4	Namibia	0	0	0	0

Brunei Darussalam	0	2	2	4	Nepal	0	1	2	3
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	Netherlands	0	3	2	5
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	New Zealand	8	3	3	14
Burundi	0	0	2	2	Nicaragua	1	1	0	2
Cabo Verde	0	0	0	0	Niger	0	0	0	0
Cambodia	0	2	0	2	Nigeria	1	4	2	7
Cameroon	0	0	0	0	North Macedonia	0	0	0	0
Canada	5	5	5	15	Norway	5	4	3	12
Central African Republic	0	0	0	0	Oman	1	2	3	6
Chad	2	1	0	3	Pakistan	0	2	3	5
Chile	3	3	4	10	Panama	0	0	0	0
China	0	2	2	4	Paraguay	0	3	0	3
Colombia	0	2	0	2	Peru	0	0	4	4
Comoros	0	0	2	2	Philippines	1	2	3	6
Congo	0	0	0	0	Poland	0	2	3	5
Costa Rica	0	2	6	8	Portugal	0	0	3	3
Croatia	0	0	2	2	Qatar	1	2	3	6
Cuba	3	2	2	7	Republic of Korea	2	3	2	7
Cyprus	0	2	2	4	Republic of Moldova	0	3	0	3
Czechia	0	6	5	11	Romania	0	4	2	6
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	1	1	Russian Federation	1	1	0	2
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0	0	0	0	Rwanda	0	0	0	0
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0	0	0	0	Saint Kitts and Nevis	0	0	0	0
Denmark	0	2	2	4	Saint Lucia	0	0	0	0
Djibouti	0	2	2	4	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0	0	0	0
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	0	Samoa	0	0	0	0
Ecuador	0	2	0	2	Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	0
Egypt	3	3	2	8	Senegal	0	3	2	5
El Salvador	0	0	0	0	Serbia	0	0	2	2
Equatorial Guinea	0	0	0	0	Seychelles	0	0	0	0
Eritrea	0	0	1	1	Sierra Leone	0	4	0	4
Estonia	0	0	5	5	Singapore	1	2	2	5
Eswatini	0	0	0	0	Slovakia	0	2	0	2
Ethiopia	0	2	0	2	Slovenia	0	4	3	7
Fiji	0	0	0	0	Solomon Islands	0	0	0	0
Finland	3	2	2	7	Somalia	0	3	0	3
France	4	8	5	17	South Africa	2	0	0	2
Gabon	0	0	1	1	South Sudan	0	1	0	1
Georgia	0	0	2	2	Spain	0	6	6	12
Germany	3	3	6	12	Sri Lanka	0	2	0	2
Ghana	0	0	2	2	State of Palestine	3	2	2	7

Greece	0	2	3	5	Sudan	2	2	3	7
Guatemala	0	0	0	0	Sweden	3	4	2	9
Guinea	0	0	0	0	Switzerland	4	4	3	11
Guyana	0	0	0	0	Syrian Arab Republic	0	5	0	5
Haiti	0	0	3	3	Tajikistan	0	1	0	1
Holy See	0	0	0	0	Thailand	1	2	2	5
Honduras	0	0	2	2	Timor-Leste	0	0	0	0
Hungary	0	1	2	3	Togo	0	2	0	2
Iceland	0	0	4	4	Trinidad and Tobago	0	0	0	0
India	0	0	2	2	Tunisia	0	3	2	5
Indonesia	0	2	3	5	Turkey	1	2	0	3
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0	0	6	6	Turkmenistan	0	2	0	2
Iraq	0	1	3	4	Uganda	0	1	0	1
Ireland	0	2	1	3	Ukraine	0	1	1	2
Israel	4	0	0	4	United Arab Emirates	1	2	2	5
Italy	4	5	4	13	United Kingdom of Great Britain and N..	0	0	0	0
Jamaica	0	0	0	0	United Republic of Tanzania	0	0	0	0
Japan	0	3	3	6	United States of America	0	3	3	6
Jordan	0	2	2	4	Uruguay	0	4	3	7
Kazakhstan	0	0	0	0	Uzbekistan	1	3	2	6
Kenya	0	0	0	0	Vanuatu	0	0	0	0
Kuwait	3	1	1	5	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	1	3	1	5
Kyrgyzstan	0	1	0	1	Viet Nam	0	2	0	2
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0	0	0	0	Yemen	1	0	1	2
Latvia	0	2	2	4	Zambia	0	0	0	0
					Zimbabwe	0	0	0	0