



**ENLIGHT**  
STUDENT NETWORK

The Shared Guide of Sustainable Best Practices

*June, 2022*



université  
de **BORDEAUX**



COMENIUS  
UNIVERSITY  
BRATISLAVA



GHENT  
UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITÄT  
GÖTTINGEN



UPPSALA  
UNIVERSITET

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## Introduction

The United Nations' Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is one of the most ambitious and important global agreements in recent history (Lee et al, 2016). The agenda, with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) at its core, is a guide to addressing **the world's most pressing challenges** - including ending poverty and bringing economic prosperity, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and peace, and good governance to all countries and all people by 2030 (Mori, 2019).

### **The shared guide of sustainable best practices (SGSBP)**

Governments, businesses, and organizations in most countries are already taking a keen interest in the SDGs and responding strongly to them (Mori, 2019). The SDGs will have a major impact on the strategies and actions of these stakeholders over the next years to come. The SDGs are also of **great interest to universities** and the Higher Education Institution (HEI) sector in general. Most universities have already included some **sustainability goals in their strategic plans**. But how can our network **benefit** from these already included sustainable best practices? The ENLIGHT Student Network compiled a "guide of sustainable best practices" to **share and gain inspiration** for our path to go greener. This can function as a shared inspirational sustainable guide that our ENLIGHT network can take up and share.

Naturally, different universities in our ENLIGHT network will approach the sustainability process in different ways, and in this





guide we have shared the sustainability best practices of each of our universities **to learn from each other the tools** and valuable experiences that can be adapted to different contexts and needs. This guide of best practices, then, functions as a **pre-policy report of the ENLIGHT network**, to inspire and to learn from each other in the process of sustainability. Given the magnitude of the task of achieving the SDGs and the critical role universities have in supporting and achieving them, there is an urgent need for our network to accelerate action on the SDGs and to help each other where possible. The key is for our network **to discover practices that work best**. This guide of best practices will then provide the **inspirational framework** to do just that and possibly, and hopefully, even more.

#### **Critical note**

In this document you will find the “handpicked” **3 best practices per university**, but by also exploring the **links** in the document you will see that there are even more sustainability practices to be found within our network. However, this shared guide is not intended to assign specific responsibilities to specific universities, but rather acts as **a narrative of a shared institutional ethos**, a way to situate oneself in and to sustainable best practices while being inspired by others. As a network, we do not blame others for what they do, or do not (yet) do — but rather we **listen, help, and learn** from each other in different ways.

On behalf of the whole **ENLIGHT Student Network**,

Sincerely,

Lotte Karsten



# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Basque Country

## Introduction

Like many other organizations, the University of the Basque Country sees the **SDGs as a framework** that can accommodate many of the programs currently being implemented. In this regard, certain degrees and research, promotion of a culture of human rights, gender equality policies, cooperation for development, environmental management or **joint projects with organizations** active in the third sector indicate that the SDGs are not separate from what we are or what we do. However, it would not be enough to stop there. In fact, it is not enough because the problems are still there. Turning the SDGs into a strategy to legitimize what is already being done cannot and should not be an option for us. **EHUagenda 2030**, For Sustainable Development is the result of this global and local reflection, a **roadmap** that aims to align the university's work with the planet's greatest challenges, on the way to a verifiable, pragmatic contribution.

## Links

[EHUagenda 2030 for Sustainable Development](#)

[Contribution to SDG from different programs and actions](#)

[EHU Sustainability News](#)

### **Best Practice 1 — Euskadi Platform against Food Waste**

In November 2020, the UPV/EHU joined the Euskadi Platform against Food Waste, reaffirming its commitment against food waste and progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular SDG 12 “Responsible production and consumption”.

This platform is a forum for the exchange of views in which institutions, organizations, associations, entities, etc. participate. that we have joined this initiative, voluntarily and in mutual cooperation, to participate in the elaboration and implementation of the actions proposed in the Action Plan.

### **Best Practice 2 — Arboretum**

This kind of botanical park, for educational and recreational purposes, is open to all citizens. It has an area of 19 hectares, connected by 3 kilometers of roads, there are 2,200 trees and shrubs of 420 species and varieties. Inaugurated on November 4, 2008, the Arboretum is located on the southeastern slope of the Leioa-Erandio area of the Bizkaia Campus of the UPV/EHU and is a kind of botanical park with both educational and recreational purposes. Moreover, the Arboretum acts as a link between the university and the neighboring municipalities of Leioa and Erandio, since it is open not only to the university community, but also to all citizens. Therefore, in addition to the educational value of the Arboretum, efforts have been made to provide recreational and scenic value for all who wish to walk there. Visitors to the Arboretum can see much of the municipalities of Leioa and Erandio, with their numerous hills and forests, as well as the Lertutxe dam.

### **Best Practice 3 — The Awareness Project for Responsible Consumption**

The awareness project for the responsible consumption of electrical energy through the monitoring and participatory development of strategies is intended to improve energy efficiency in systems and usage patterns in faculties of the UPV/EHU: This project was born in 2016 with the aim of giving rise to a simultaneous action in different centers of the three university campuses, which would allow the development of a collaborative and competitive dynamic of groups to move forward in the energy efficiency of our buildings, as well as to raise awareness among the university community of the need to change towards more sustainable energy consumption patterns (Sustainable Development Goal 12-Ensure Responsible Production and Consumption modalities).

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of NUI Galway

## Introduction

Sustainability has been **gathering momentum** as a core value at NUI Galway for a number of years now. Most recently, sustainability was enshrined in the NUI Galway **Strategic Plan 2020-2025** as one of four key values. Alongside and linked to - respect, openness and excellence – sustainability is now at the heart of everything NUI Galway does. NUI Galway values of sustainability comes most strongly from their students. This generation faces climate change most vividly. Students are demanding that NUI Galway **leave the world a better place** than they found it. In NUI Galway's research, teaching and engagement, and actions, NUI Galway is committed to being an **exemplar of climate action**. This is a responsibility of us all so NUI Galway **works with their communities and partners** to achieve this.

## Links

[NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy and Policy](#)

[Learn-Live-Lead Model](#)

[CUSP](#)

[Student Pantry](#)



## Best Practice 1 — Learn-Live-Lead Model

At NUI Galway we adopt a Learn-Live-Lead approach to sustainability. *Learn*: The aim with Learn is to embed learning about sustainability into all aspects of university practice, learning and research. This ensures that our campus community gains the necessary knowledge and skills to demonstrate sustainable thinking and decision making in the wider world. *Live*: The aim with LIVE is to implement the principles of sustainability through campus operations so that our communities understand the importance of sustainable living in all aspects of their lives and value their connection to the physical environment, ecosystems and biodiversity. *Lead*: The focus of LEAD is developing the campus as a role model for sustainability and fostering partnerships between community and university, so that we all work together to addressing sustainability challenges. By adopting a Learn-Live-Lead approach, NUI Galway aims to scale sustainability successes beyond the campus walls, acting as a leader on sustainability locally, nationally and globally.

## Best Practice 2 — Community University Sustainability Partnership (CUSP)

“The CUSP team is a multi-disciplinary, voluntary team of over 30 students and staff from across the campus and community partners all working together with the common aim of establishing the university as a leading institutional model for sustainability...here are six Sustainability Working Groups organised around six themes of the Learn Live Lead Model. The CUSP team plays a lead role in the development and implementation of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy”

## Best Practice 3 — NUI Galway Student Pantry

This initiative is run by students and for students in the University to combat food wastage around our city & county. The students work in partnership with local supermarkets to collect food that otherwise would be thrown away or dumped. This food is then made available and accessible to any student who would like to take part.

“The Student Pantry is a pilot initiative developed to encourage more sustainable food choices whilst helping to combat food wastage. As a group, we have been working alongside a community group in Co. Donegal-Clonmany Community Centre and FoodCloud, a national social enterprise. It is through these links that we have been able to adapt Clonmany’s very successful Community Pantry model to suit the student environment. FoodCloud have enabled our pantry to collect surplus food stock from locally assigned supermarkets in Galway City. The Student Pantry will be open to the entire University Community (and possibly beyond), and we encourage everyone to get involved and make use of this space. It is a wonderful space where sharing of information, produce, and learning takes place. The Student Pantry is replenished weekly and live updates will be posted on Instagram to reveal all the new items arriving.”

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Bordeaux

## Introduction

The University of Bordeaux created a **roadmap of 24 sustainability-related commitments** to accelerate the societal and environmental transitions. In order to meet these commitments, Bordeaux has a dedicated **office for green transition** called “TRUST” (Institutional Transition, Societal Responsibility and Territorial Development). This office gathers 5 professionals, volunteers within the university community and, last but not least, 10 transition ambassador students (probably even more in the upcoming years). The University of Bordeaux also monitors the implementation of the sustainable development policy through a **Council for Environmental and Societal Transitions (CTES)**.

The **transition ambassadors network**'s role is to promote sustainable-development best practices and community involvement, and to spread these across the different campuses. Basically, they organize specific **sustainability-related events** on each of the campuses to promote sustainability and to develop structures and networks to facilitate the environmental and societal transitions.

## Links

[University Transition Document](#)

[Développement durable & responsabilité sociétale](#)

[Ambassadeurs Transitions \(@ambassadeurtransitions\) • Photos et vidéos Instagram](#)

### **Best Practice 1 — Green Game**

The TRUST team has been organizing a sustainability-related quiz competition, for the second year in a row, called “Green Game - *Who wants to save degrees Celsius?*”. This competition is held on our different campuses and aims to raise awareness about sustainability among students. The winner will be offered a free trip to a partner European University, which could actually be a great opportunity for us to link it to ENLIGHT (work in progress thanks to the ongoing partnership with the University of Groningen). The Green Game could also be deployed to all ENLIGHT partner universities and become an ENLIGHT event in the upcoming years, allowing us to advertise and introduce the Student Network to more students.

### **Best Practice 2 — The Climate fresk**

The collaborative Climate Fresk is a collaborative tool that will teach you the fundamental science behind climate change in just 3 hours. More than 3000 students in the university have already participated since September 2021 (and more than 400 000 worldwide !). Learning about the extent of the problem is the first step in order to step up. The next one is to share knowledge with your friends, family, clients, colleagues and the wider public.

### **Best Practice 3 — The Student Sustainable Development Week**

The transition ambassadors network takes part in the French national event called the “Student Sustainable Development Week”: a week to highlight initiatives and raise awareness of environmental and social issues among students. This event aims to promote the activities and commitment of the student union, to engage students in all territories and to make the student world aware of environmental and social issues. The event is designed for debate and training activities (conferences, workshops and so on). It took place from March 29 to April 3rd.

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Bratislava

## Introduction

Comenius University in Bratislava is an **environmentally conscious institution** that trains specialists in environmental issues as part of its degree programs, and its scientists conduct research that contributes to the sustainability of our environment. In 2019, Comenius University openly showed its concern for the current ecological crisis by joining the **Global Climatic Strike**, which aimed to demonstrate the demand for climate justice for all people and all life on this planet. Comenius University has also participated in several small "**green initiatives**" and **supports** not only its researchers but also its students in environmentally friendly research. For example, the student team Comfy recently designed **biodegradable respirators** that do not pollute our planet, a design for which they won first place in Lifbee Academy's "medical technology competition." Participation in ENLIGHT has significantly helped to promote sustainability policies in universities.

## Links

[ENLIGHT boosts sustainability policies at Comenius University in Bratislava](#)

[Comenius University's Botanical Garden Opens to the Public](#)

[The development process and effects from the management of community gardens in two post-socialist cities: Bratislava and Poznań](#)



## **Best Practice 1 — The Botanical Garden of Comenius University in Bratislava**

Comenius University in Bratislava runs its botanical garden - a scientific and pedagogical institution whose major missions are to maintain and expand collections of living plants, to assist in educational and awareness-raising activities for schools and various workplaces and to generally provide scientific information on nature to the public. Especially the plants of thermophilic vegetation which the botanical garden grows in greenhouses attract great public interest. In cooperation with other organizations, the botanical garden organizes exhibitions and competitions addressed to the youngest as well as to the oldest generation, educating both the professional and unprofessional public. A major scientific and professional mission of the institution is the experimental acclimatization of various plant species. Its suitably acclimatized wood species find application in the fields of horticulture (the science of sustainable production) and forestry (the science of conserving and repairing forests which is associated with resources for human and environmental benefits). Another important task of the botanical garden is the publication of the seed index - the Botanic Garden exchanges seeds with 530 botanic gardens worldwide.

## **Best Practice 2 — The optional course “Green University”**

Comenius University in Bratislava runs its communal garden “Good Mind”, which is sustained by the Faculty of Natural Sciences and has been made possible by the grant from the grant programme announced by the Bratislava City Foundation under the name “Communities” Grant Programme in 2020. The major aim of the subsidized project “Grow more than just food (University Communal Garden Good Mind)” is to implement activities that will contribute to the revitalization of the communal garden, maintenance of green spaces around the Faculty of Natural Sciences and the creation of new relationships between students and university employees of the individual faculties. The garden-project also aims to raise awareness on the ecological and social importance of the communal garden among students and staff of the faculty. Students are given an option to participate in an optional course “Green University” which takes place in the communal garden. The course is aimed at gaining knowledge and experience in selected topics of environmentally sustainable development of the university environment, with particular focus on revitalization activities, increasing the natural biodiversity of urban complexes in the context of ecosystem services, waste separation and recycling

## **Best Practice 3 — The Ecological Club GAIA**

Organized by the Department of Ecology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the ecological club GAIA brings together students, teachers, absolvents, specialists and ecologically aware people, who meet at various lectures, discussions and excursions, whether in Slovakia or abroad. The club increases public awareness on current ecological issues by organizing open lectures, discussions and screenings on specific topics related to current environmental problems both of local and global concerns, as well as on philosophical issues related to the perceiving of nature.

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Ghent

## Introduction

Ghent University wants to be a frontrunner concerning sustainability policy and actions. Ghent tries to integrate sustainability among decision processes, in their daily operations, and in education and research. Their **Green Office** brings together students and staff to work for sustainability, every dorm and student association has an 'environmental responsibility', every faculty has an 'environmental committee' and a committee on diversity and inclusivity, there are central committees for those topics as well, the student restaurants are **50% vegetarian**, their money is invested in **sustainable funds**, **students and staff with disabilities get to redesign signalisation** on campus to make everything accessible. Ghent also has different policy plans around specific themes. There is the **Biodiversity plan** in which Ghent commits to keep and expand our green space and to improve the quality of it. Ghent integrates the **mitigation hierarchy** which means: avoid, minimize, restore, offset. There is also the **energy plan** in which we commit to decrease CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions, energy use, and to build fossil free. Also the **water plan** to reduce water use and to improve water reuse and infiltration. Moreover, there is the "**Masterplan 2050**" which is a long term vision for their building patrimony. Ghent also has a **travel policy** which prescribes that staff and students should go by train if the destination is available within 8 hours by train. Ghent also organizes specific actions such as the '**strange times cabinet**' during **COP26**. All university-broad committees and councils had designated meetings about climate and Ghent's responsibility as a university.

## Links

[Overview - Sustainability at Ghent University](#)

[Sustainability Report](#)

[Green Guide](#)

### **Best Practice 1 — Transitie UGent**

Transitie UGent is a thinktank which brings together professors, students and university staff to think about how our university can become more specific. Twice a year we come together and work in different groups around different themes. The transdisciplinary approach is super valuable to get to a more sustainable university.

### **Best Practice 2 — Green Guide**

The Green Office published (and regularly updates) the Green Guide which is a small booklet with tips and tricks on how you can live sustainably in Ghent: where and how to rent bikes, where to get sustainable food, where there are second hand shops and more...

### **Best Practice 3 — Swap Shop**

Every semester a lot of international students arrive in the dorms and every semester a lot of them leave the dorms. The Swap Shop collects all useful items like pots and pans and cleaning supplies and gives those items for free to the incoming students. A lot of waste is avoided and it's a kick start for incoming international students.

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Göttingen

The background features a light green gradient with various white line-art icons related to sustainability. These include a recycling symbol, a hand, a house, hearts, a tree, a water bottle, a bicycle, a globe, a flower, a sun, and the numbers '0' and '2'. The icons are scattered across the page, with some appearing larger and more prominent than others.

## Introduction

The University of Göttingen advocates the support and further development of discipline-specific and cross-disciplinary **research on sustainability** in all academic disciplines. The University of Göttingen and UMG want to achieve **climate neutrality by 2030** with the measures at their disposal. A corresponding **climate protection declaration** was adopted in June 2021.

## Links

[Overview](#)

[Foodsharing](#)



### **Best Practice 1 — Green Office**

The Green Office is the central office for sustainability at the University of Göttingen. It coordinates and pools all activities and knowledge in the field of sustainability at the university. Furthermore, it coordinates the development and implementation of appropriate measures. The Green Office also supports the cross-linking of all members of the university's community and the Göttingen Campus on the issue of sustainable development.

### **Best Practice 2 — Foodsharing**

The long term goal is to reduce the culture of throwaway food and other resources. We save food in private households and companies - collectively, sustainably & appreciatively. We see ourselves as an educational policy movement. It is done on a voluntary basis and free of charge, independently and free of advertising. The platform is the heart of our community. Here we network and coordinate ourselves locally and throughout Europe. The website and beta app is open source and based on the commitment and heart and soul of many. However, this initiative is not directly part of the university but practiced by the students of Göttingen.

### **Best Practice 3 — Operations**

Some of the operations to practice sustainability in the University and Göttingen City:

- A.** Waste management: So there is a waste disposal and separation system. The electrical waste and electronic scrap is separated and collected once a month. Then there is a Dangerous Goods Legislation. Provisions for Water protection.
- B.** Energy and emissions: There is an energy-saving campaign at the university, with installations of solar panes and energy supply of the campus. There is photovoltaic systems of the university  
Information from the Real Estate and Facilities Management department  
Energy Department | Technical Building Management  
University Medical Center Göttingen (UMG)

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Groningen

## Introduction

Sustainability is one of the core values of the University of Groningen (UG). UG has set itself the goal of being **carbon neutral by 2035** by integrating sustainable development into all aspects of the university. To this end, UG has developed a new **sustainability roadmap** (2021-2026), where sustainability is not only part of research and education, but also of the university's operations. As part of the sustainability program, UG has developed a **Green Office** that coordinates and works closely with the facilities department, academix, staff and students to inform and encourage students and staff at UG, as well as to coordinate and initiate projects related to sustainability.

## Links

[Sustainability at the UG | Sustainability | University of Groningen \(rug.nl\)](#)

[Info Labels Green Office 2021-2022 \(rug.nl\)](#)

[About the Green Office | Sustainability | University of Groningen \(rug.nl\)](#)

## **Best Practice 1 — SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS**

For Performance, sustainability is additionally focused on education and research, such as the development of the “Schools” of which two are specifically focused on energy and sustainability. The goal of these Schools is to offer interdisciplinary education and research in the form of minors, as well as PhD programs.

## **Best Practice 2 — MOBILITY**

The University attracts many students and staff from all over the world because of the high quality of its teaching and research. As a result, the university must face the increase in its overall carbon footprint due to student and staff air travel. The roadmap includes the following ambitions regarding mobility; (1) encourage staff to make sustainable mobility choices, (2) 100% carbon offset for all air travel by 2026, and (3) 16% carbon emissions from air travel in 2019 to 10% by 2026. In addition, there are also current discussions about establishing a Travel Green Grant, which would allow students who travel by bus or train to their exchange destination to be financially compensated. The Green Office is researching other universities, such as Utrecht University, to see if this would be beneficial and feasible.

## **Best Practice 3 — SUSTAINABLE SUBSIDY**

Groningen is a true student city where student and student organization are a large part of city life. To encourage sustainability in student life, the Green Office has introduced a “sustainable subsidy” that can be applied for sustainable events or activities. In addition, the Green Office has introduced green labels where all student organizations are rated for sustainability. Together with the available grants, this encourages associations at the UG to look critically at their events and think about how they can become more sustainable.

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Tartu

## Introduction

The University of Tartu (UT) wants to set an example by environmentally aware conduct in its operations. Striving for **environmental organizational culture** is a goal, which the university has expressed in its **new strategic plan** and towards which every one of us can move in small steps every day. By increasing the opportunities of the members of the university to develop and use their potential in the best manner, UT aims to create a community that carries **sustainable values** and increases participation in the everyday life and development of the university.

## Links

[Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#)

[Digital Cleanup Week: five simple steps to clear out digital trash](#)



### **Best Practice 1 — Digital Cleanup week**

The carbon footprint of the internet and the systems supporting it account for about 4 percent of global greenhouse emissions. This amount is estimated to double by the year 2025 already. Therefore, deleting unnecessary digital content helps reduce our carbon footprint and preserve the environment. During the Digital Cleanup Week everyone can make a contribution to reducing their carbon footprint by deleting from their devices old files, data, documents, etc. that have become digital trash over time. For example, an average email account user sends so many emails in a year that its impact on the environment equals that of driving more than 300 km by car. After our success, many followed our path. For example, University of Groningen, Estonian University of Life Sciences, and Telia.

### **Best Practice 2 — City bike sharing**

The city of Tartu has completed an electronic solution that enables institutions, including the university, to purchase an hourly, daily, weekly or annual ticket for the use of bicycles from the Tartu city bicycle circuit. The students and scientists of University of Tartu can access the city bike data to do research on smart mobility, cyber security and sustainability. The city and the university also cooperate on the location of bicycle parking lots to accommodate where students move the most.

### **Best Practice 3 — The Student Sustainable Development Week**

SmartEnCity is a project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme which aims to develop a systemic approach for transforming European cities into sustainable, smart and resource-efficient urban environments in Europe. The key activity for Tartu in the project was renovating the old Soviet apartment buildings in the Tartu downtown area into energy-efficient and modern houses. The University of Tartu analyzed and collected data using IoT devices to make more energy conscious decisions in the buildings.

# The Sustainable Best Practices of University of Uppsala

## Introduction

Uppsala University wants **to take a leading role on the road to a more sustainable society**. The education and research that is conducted is translated into new knowledge, better technology, developed social organization and changing behavioral patterns. The university must also contribute to sustainable development in its own activities. This means that the university must **set an example regarding the management of finite resources** and actively work with its own climate-affecting activities.

## Links

[UUSI](#)

[Postgraduate school](#)

[CLIMATE FUND](#)

### **Best Practice 1 — UPPSALA UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES (UUSI)**

It is a platform that, by bringing together researchers from the university's various areas in cross-border collaborations, will strengthen the university's research on sustainability issues. They also work to create collaborations with other universities, companies and organizations. The background to UUSI is Agenda 2030 with its 17 sustainability goals. UUSI works with five specially selected initiatives, with associated focus areas. The purpose of the research is to find new solutions for a more sustainable future. Within the initiatives, researchers from the university's three fields of science collaborate: Social justice, Circular economy, Water, a common and critical resource, Sustainable urban development

### **Best Practice 2 — POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Uppsala University's interdisciplinary graduate school in sustainable development is located at Campus Gotland. Eight of the university's departments collaborate in five research projects. A total of twelve doctoral students work in the projects that started in January 2021.

- Research projects:
- Sustainable destination development.
- Gotland's sustainable energy transition: resources, needs and planning.
- Fisheries and coastal zone development in an island perspective - past, present and future.
- Weigh right? - Application of legislation in the balance between energy conversion and preservation of cultural values.
- Digital innovation for sustainable consumption.

### **Best Practice 3 — THE CLIMATE FUND**

In order to strengthen and renew the university's work to reduce its climate impact, the rector has set aside SEK 2 million for a climate fund. It is now possible to apply for up to SEK 250,000 for a project or initiative with this purpose. Example of a project that has been granted funding from this climate fund:

- Uppsala University Campus Garden, which is a project that aims to build a garden to grow food on a university campus, with the goal of reducing the university's climate impact in terms of carbon dioxide emissions.

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