



The SDG Accord

The University and College Sector's Collective Response to the Global Goals

Integration of SDGs in

- Institutional governance/strategic level
- SDGs in research
- SDGs in campus operations
- SDGs in curriculum development
- SDGs in student engagement activities
- SDGs into community activities
- SDGs at a whole-institution level

Focus on

- Goal 1 - No poverty
- Goal 2 - Zero hunger
- Goal 3 - Good health and wellbeing
- Goal 4 - Quality education
- Goal 5 - Gender equality
- Goal 6 - Clean water and sanitation
- Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy
- Goal 8 - Decent work and economic growth
- Goal 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Goal 10 - Reduced inequalities
- Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- Goal 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- Goal 13 - Climate action
- Goal 14 - Life below water
- Goal 15 - Life on land
- Goal 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals

SDG Accord Reporting 2021 CASE STUDY

Decent work and economic growth at an institutional level

For the past five years, the Warsaw School of Economics has been implementing participatory budgets, an initiative to enable the University community to co-determine the allocation of part of the funds spent by SGH. Since 2017, every year employees have had the opportunity to submit projects to improve the University's infrastructure or to support the professional development and health of employees and increase the comfort of work. The ideas to be implemented are selected by a popular vote among employees. In five editions of the participatory budget, a total of more than 70 projects have been submitted, and 13 have been implemented so far.

In the context of the SDGs, the following projects deserve special attention:

- university bicycle network - a system allowing employees to automatically rent bicycles on campus to travel between buildings, as well as allowing them to use the city bicycle network throughout Warsaw free of charge
- installing new bike shelters on campus
- flower meadow, compost piles and nest boxes on campus
- setting up an apiary with 6 beehives on the roof of the SGH Library
- revitalization of the garden located on campus.

However, it is important to note, that the implementation of various SDGs, with a particular focus on SDGs 3, 12, and 13, was largely related to more than 60% of the ideas submitted by employees, and each year there were more such projects - especially those of a pro-environmental nature. Many of submitted projects aimed on increasing the amount of greenery on the campus, increasing opportunities for segregation or green waste management, sustainable approaches to transportation (e.g. carpooling) and consumption, or a variety of health-oriented initiatives. In this way, an extensive and interesting database of ideas was created, the implementation of which may contribute to a more sustainable functioning of the university. Although participatory budgets were originally intended primarily to serve the integration of the SGH community and the implementation of the idea of participatory management at SGH, they have also turned out to be an excellent tool for building environmental awareness and increasing the sustainability of the university. Noticing this trend, the university authorities also organized two editions of the participatory budget for students and doctoral students dedicated only to environmental topics - with the motto "Eco-innovations". In this way, the entire university community was involved in the process of designing the university's sustainability, and i.a. an air quality sensor was installed on campus.

BENEFITS

1. Benefits resulting directly from completed projects, e.g., increased opportunities for employees to use bicycle transportation, increased biodiversity on the campus, which is located centrally in a large city.
2. Creating a comprehensive database of ideas for actions that enhance university sustainability
3. Integration of the university community around the process of designing activities that improve the functioning of the university, including activities for sustainable development.
4. Inclusion the entire university community in improving the working conditions of the university and building an attitude of responsibility.

BARRIERS

Insufficient funds to implement all worthwhile ideas. Due to the multitude of other needs, the funds that can be allocated by the university for the realization of such projects are quite limited. We hope, however, that with time the necessity of intensifying the activities for sustainable development also by the universities will be more strongly noticed and more widely emphasized, and thus the possibilities for financing will increase.



A flower meadow on the SGH campus and beehives on the roof of the SGH Library.

CONCLUSIONS

The example of participatory budgets implemented at the Warsaw School of Economics (SGH) shows that small actions inspired by the grassroots ideas of individuals - both employees and students - may play an important role in building the sustainability of the university. Of course this is not the only level at which sustainable development thinking has to be implemented at the university, as top-down activities concerning the whole operational processes related to the functioning of the university as a company are necessary. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to involve employees and students in this way. On the one hand, it fosters integration with the university and strengthens social bonds, building a sense of joint responsibility for its functioning, on the other hand - as it turned out in the case of the Warsaw School of Economics - it serves to promote the idea of sustainable development and pro-environmental attitudes, because employees and students observing completed and submitted projects are, in a way, taking on pro-environmental attitudes and thinking.