

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



UNI-ECO



UNIVERSITÉ DE
MONTPELLIER



The need to change our lifestyles and production methods to reduce the negative impact of human activities on the environment is clearly identified as one of the great challenges of our century.

The UNI-ECO project is an initiative led by the University of Montpellier in partnership with the University of Barcelona, the University of Utrecht, the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and Trinity College Dublin, the objectives of which are in line with this need of change. The UNI-ECO project embraces the values of sustainable development, particularly the environmental aspects, and recognises that universities have a major role to play in the transition of our societies towards more sustainable living.

With education and research as their fundamental missions, universities have the capacity to produce knowledge centred on these challenges and to pass it on to future generations. They also have a role to play on their own campuses, in how they consume resources and impact their environment, setting examples in how to improve relatively large operations. Finally, universities host a multitude of initiatives at the local level, carried out by students, teachers and researchers, and administrative staff members on a daily basis.

By integrating Education for Sustainable Development at the heart of their activities, by better monitoring their environmental impact, and by bringing the campus community together, actively engaged and committed to ecological sustainability, universities will assume their responsibilities regarding sustainability more

fully, and the UNI-ECO project supports the policies already carried on by the partner institutions in that direction.

UNI-ECO takes inspiration from the Sustainable Development Goals, identified by the United Nations (UN) in 2015 as a roadmap for supporting change at all scales.

UNI-ECO is also rooted in the Green Deal proposed by the European Commission and the support for structural university initiatives under the Erasmus + program.

Finally, UNI-ECO marks a decisive step in the cooperation between 5 European universities engaged in an unprecedented convergence effort through the CHARM-EU alliance, which places sustainability at the heart of its strategy and allows partners to take advantage of each other's experience with regards to sustainable development on campus.

This first annual report aims to present to you the objectives of our project as well as the results of the work accomplished since its launch in October 2019 and informs you of the activities scheduled for the current year.

We hope that you will enjoy reading it and look forward to your participation in the actions carried out throughout the year!

THE UNI-ECO COORDINATING TEAM

Climate change is about all of us. We have the duty to act and the power to lead.

*Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, in her speech at the European Parliament on 27th November 2020, **integral text here.***

ID CARD OF THE PROJECT

Type: “Strategic Partnership” (Erasmus+ programme, KA203, co-financed by the French Erasmus+ Agency)

Duration: from October 2019 until August 2022 (3 years)

Allocated budget: 422 773 EUR, shared between the partners for the conception, development and implementation of the activities

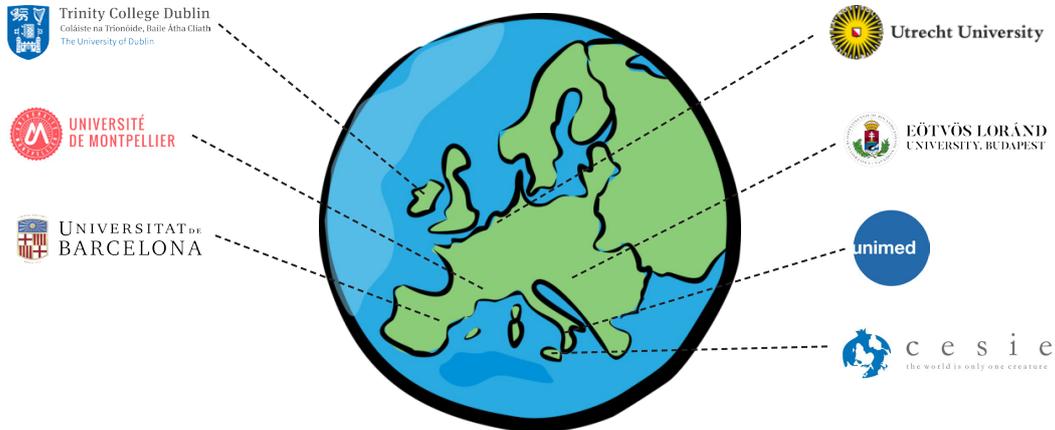
Key words: sustainable development, citizen engagement, awareness, Erasmus+

Partners: 5 partner universities, members of the **CHARM-EU** European University alliance
1 universities network (UNIMED)
1 NGO (CESIE)



The Erasmus+ programme of the European Commission is well-known by students who undertake a semester abroad. But this programme also supports innovative structural projects of cooperation born by European universities. To that extend, UNI-ECO is co-financed by Erasmus+ !

Target audience? UNI-ECO targets the “campus users”, meaning all students, teachers, researchers, administrative staff members, who participate daily to the campus life and who can get involved, either individually or collectively, for sustainability !



UNI-ECO's objectives

- 1 Raise awareness**
Share information on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN, and support campus users to adopt eco-friendly habits at the university.
- 2 Cooperate**
Encourage campus users to get involved in the community by proposing mini-projects to promote the exchange of good practices within the institution, and between the partner universities.
- 3 Contribute**
Support the activities implemented by institutions and students to raise awareness of sustainable development and environmental consciousness, and inspire universities in Europe in their engagement towards sustainability.

UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 2020, UNI-ECO carried out a “state of play” analysis of sustainable development in the project’s partner universities in order to see how Universities from across Europe are engaging in the green transition and how they are implementing a comprehensive strategy to reduce their impact on the environment.

We sought, on the one hand, to better understand the motivations and aspirations of university students and staff on issues related to sustainable development and, on the other hand, to identify the capacities and needs of each institution in terms of structure and operations.



“ Understand the aspirations of the campus users ... ”

Through a survey of campus users conducted between April and October 2020:

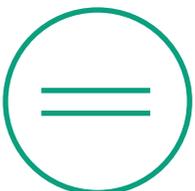
- more than 5,000 students and staff interviewed
- established the state of play regarding day to day practices and commitment
- established the sustainability issues of greatest importance to the campus community



“ ... and identify strenghts and weaknesses of universities ... ”

Through an inventory of good institutional practices:

- 10 themes (energy, waste management, procurement, impact of teaching and research activities, etc.)
- 218 indicators
- an analysis of internal and external factors favouring or hindering the implementation of a global strategy



“ ... to propose targeted and relevant actions. ”

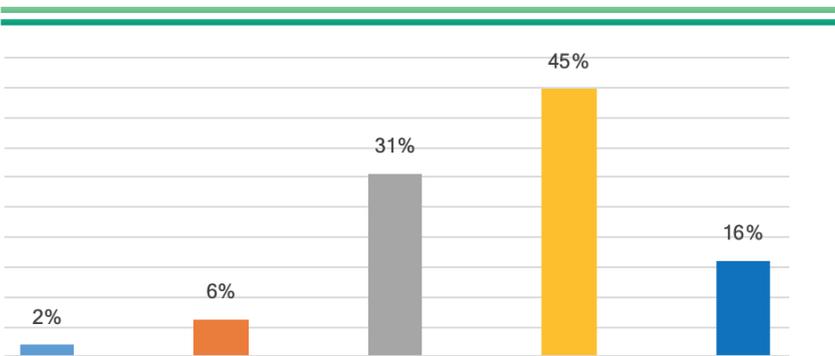
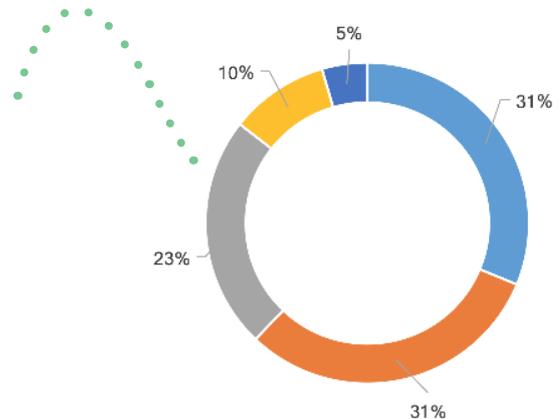
- a report per university to guide institutional policies towards greater sustainability
- a synthesis report providing a state of play on challenges and opportunities for universities in Europe, available for consultation on **our website**
- the identification of priorities for outreach activities and the thematic focus of “green challenges”; projects to be undertaken by campus users within the framework of the project.

“ *The longer-term objective is to monitor changes in attitudes and operations by including these surveys in a self-evaluation plan for universities.* ”

What do campus users say? : Results from the UNI-ECO survey*

Are you familiar with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set up by the UN?

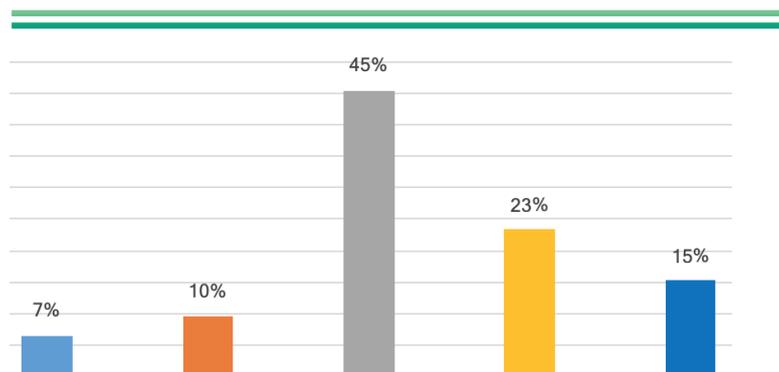
- Never heard of them: **31%**
- I've heard of them but I don't know what they are: **31%**
- I know a few of them: **23%**
- I know them in detail: **10%**
- My job/studies are related to SDGs: **5%**



How often do you think you act in favor of sustainable development?

- Almost never: **2%**
- Rarely: **6%**
- Sometimes: **31%**
- Often: **45%**
- All the time: **16%**

In your opinion, which theme(s) should be prioritised by universities?



Would you like to participate in sustainable development initiatives at the university?

- No: **7%**
- Probably not: **10%**
- Maybe, if I have time: **45%**
- Probably yes: **23%**
- Yes: **15%**

*Summary of responses of students and staff at partner universities for 4 of the questions in the survey conducted between April and October 2020 (sample of 4491 students and 433 staff).

RAISE AWARENESS AND TAKE ACTION ON CAMPUSES

Sustainable development is everyone's business: each person can make a daily commitment, at his or her own level, to adopt eco-responsible gestures and reduce his or her personal impact on the environment. This is the objective of the UNI-ECO project's awareness actions, which will take the form of online modules, accessible to all campus users.

1 UNI-ECO training modules

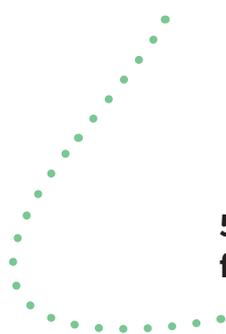
Format: 5 online training modules

Target: campus users (students, academic and non-academic staff members)

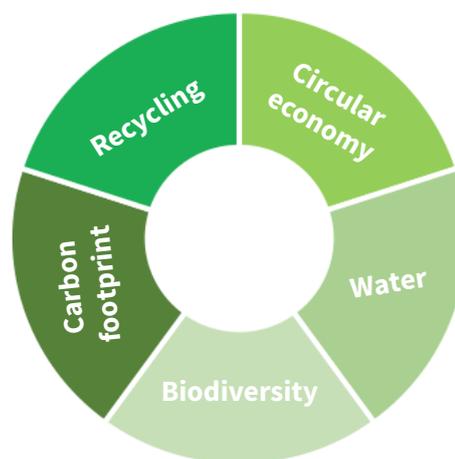
Content: playful content developed by experts in each partner university

Average duration: 2 to 3 hours

Recognition: a virtual badge or certificate at the end of each completed module



5 priority themes for awareness-raising



The training modules will be tested at the UNI-ECO summer school in July 2021 and then made available online for the entire university community.

Beyond individual commitment, the UNI-ECO project aims to support the commitment of the university community as a collective. For actions in favour of a greener campus to have a significant impact, it is necessary to encourage collaboration between students, teachers, researchers and staff members to build on the complementarity of the skills of each.

To do so, UNI-ECO partners are launching the “green challenges” campaign on their respective campuses!

2 Acting for a greener campus with the “green challenges”

What is a “green challenge”? It is a challenge issued to campus users on a theme related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Campus users will be able to **challenge themselves** by proposing their own team projects, or by supporting existing projects.

A committee of experts in each university will select the most relevant projects and support their implementation.



The selected projects will be presented to the partner university communities at the UNI-ECO Summer School in Dublin in July 2021.



The teams formed to engage in the green challenges will have access to a dedicated online space, the **“Living Lab”**, where they will be able to obtain information, exchange ideas and coordinate the implementation of their mini-project.

The “green challenges” campaign will start in March 2021 on the UNI-ECO platform. Don’t miss its launch!

3 Development of a resource platform

The UNI-ECO website will host a platform dedicated to sustainable development in the partner universities. This tool is being developed by the Italian NGO CESIE.

By logging in to the platform, campus users will be able to access:

- the training modules
- information on sustainable development in universities
- green challenges and “Living Lab”



The platform will be regularly enriched and will serve as a privileged source of information on the project, on the topic of sustainable development in Higher Education and on citizen engagement for the environment.

**The UNI-ECO platform will be hosted on the project website.
www.uni-eco.edu.umontpellier.fr**

4 Sharing results on a large scale

INFORM



CONNECT



COMMUNICATE

Because the theme of sustainable development in universities is a major issue in the new European Erasmus+ program, the UNI-ECO partners have prioritised communication and dissemination about the project; the objectives and first results are actively being shared on an ongoing basis.

Implementation schedule (key landmarks)

2019 - 2020	STUDY PHASE: 10/2019 - 10/2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick-off meeting in Montpellier: 10/2019 Distribution of the survey on sustainable development on campuses: 04/2020
2020 - 2021	DEVELOPMENT PHASE: 11/2020 - 08/2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-term evaluation: 02/2021 Launch of the call for projects “green challenges” #1: 03/2021 Summer School in Dublin (Ireland): 07/2021
	IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: 09/2021 - 05/2022
2021 - 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online availability of awareness modules: 09/2021 Launch of the call for projects “green challenges” #2: 10/2021 Summer School in Utrecht (the Netherlands): 05/2022 Festival of Sustainable Development on campuses: 05/2022
	COMMUNICATION PHASE: 05/2022 - 08/2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing Meeting: 06/2022 Final evaluation : 08/2022

NB : 2021-2022 schedule subject to modification due to the COVID-19 situation.



2020

- Presentation at the «Erasmus+ in Higher Education» days organized by the French Erasmus+ Agency on 29th and 30th June.
Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIEDoTD_-i8
- Presentation at the international conference of the “Višegrad4 Green Universities” group at the University of Pécs on September 22nd.
Link: https://zoldegyetem.pte.hu/sites/zoldegyetem.pte.hu/files/sajto/v4gu_conference_final.pdf
- Presentation at the ELTE ErasmusDays 2020 on October 16th, 2020.
Link: <https://www.elte.hu/content/erasmusdays-2020.e.12909>

2021

- Participation in the annual conference of the EAIA (European Association for International Education) in **september** (to be confirmed).
Link: <https://www.eaie.org/gothenburg.html>

2022

- **May:** a sustainable development festival organized simultaneously on the campuses of the 5 partner universities: presentation of project results & highlighting of the actions undertaken by members of the university community.
- **June:** UNI-ECO international conference in Rome (Italy), organized by the network of Mediterranean Universities (UNIMED).

NB : 2021 and 2022 schedules subject to modification due to the COVID-19 situation.



- Follow up on the project's social networks ...



- ... and on our website!



The UNI-ECO team

A question or suggestion? Please contact us.

Coordination



Partners



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