

Activity report 2022-2023

"The core mission of the Sustainable Development Initiative is to equip future business and economics graduates with the knowledge and skills to contribute actively to the sustainability transformation of our society. Doing so is not limited to changing how and what we teach. We see ourselves as a catalyst for change at the School level and beyond."

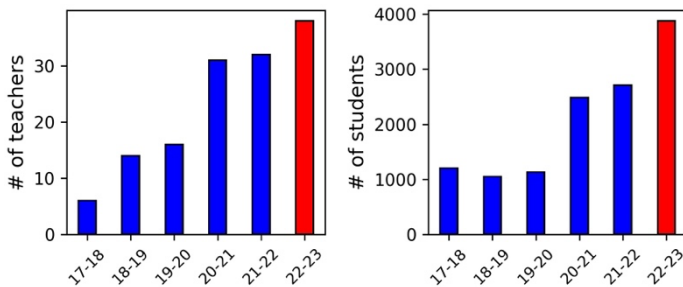
- Estelle Cantillon, Academic director of the Sustainable Development Initiative

Four areas of activities for the SDI:



Transforming our teaching

Upskilling our teachers: in 22-23, we continued our teacher training program in sustainability. This support is based on workshops ("How to integrate sustainability into my teaching"), the sharing of experiences and resources on a dedicated online platform, feedback sessions (lessons learned, identification of facilitators and challenges encountered), and annual consultations with program coordinators. We incorporate sustainability into the induction programs for new teachers.



Impact: last year, 3,877 students benefited from sustainable development education through our pathways supported by 38 professors who have modified the content of their teachings and coordinated their courses at the program level.

Executive education: building on our expertise and the success of our company-specific program in sustainability, we launched an Open Enrolment program "[Sustainability Fundamentals](#)" in 22-23. For this first edition, 22 professionals embarked on a sustainability journey and got certified by the Solvay Lifelong Learning association. The second edition will start in November 2023.



Carbon Literacy Project: Since 2022, we work with the UK-based Carbon Literacy Project, a UN-recognized Transformative Action Program that reviews training programs and accredits those deemed to fulfil the requirements of the Carbon Literacy Standard. We are proud to announce that our program was the first in Belgium to be certified by the CLP, an international recognition of our expertise!

Hardwiring sustainability

To guarantee long term impacts, we hardwire sustainability in the processes and teaching practices of the faculty. This started with adapting our course offering and integrating sustainability as part of the intended learning outcomes of all programs in 2020. This year, we have further moved forward in terms of course offering and quality assurance.

Quality assurance: our sustainability learning compass ensures a common culture in our faculty regarding intended learning outcomes for sustainability. In 22-23, we piloted an evaluation method to monitor the coverage of the sustainability knowledge and skills in our programs and the progress of our students during their cursus at the School: teachers identified questions in their exams and assignments that evaluated one of the four dimensions. By compiling the dimension coverage across courses and students' scores, we can evaluate both the extent to which programs cover each dimension and students' performance for each dimension.



New course: a new course in sustainability started this year (the fourth since the start of the SDI): **GEST-S492 Energy policy, sustainability and management**. The course presents the multifaceted aspects of energy as source of economic development and international competition, when nations still fight according to the playbook of old fossil fuel world, while discovering the new rules dictated by the energy transition and the fight against climate change.

Sustainability Bootcamp: organized as a kick-off event for the students enrolling in the Master of Management Sciences, this two-day bootcamp was an opportunity to give a baseline level in sustainability to all students coming from the ULB and other institutions. With interactive workshops, external speakers, plenary sessions, and presentations of students' initiatives at the School, it was the perfect setup to start the academic year with an innovative teaching approach and a sustainability mindset!



Mainstreaming sustainability beyond education



The Ernest Learning Lab encourages all members of the School (students, staff, researchers, teachers) to experiment, learn, and innovate as an organization. Since its launch in 2022, 10 events have been organized, including a workshop on sustainability, on diversity and inclusion, on carbon footprint, and on climate change. To date, more than 200 participants and speakers have taken part in the activities of the Ernest Learning Lab. The next events will include a discussion about the impact of

ChatGTP on teaching, a presentation of students' initiatives that transform our university, and a session dedicated to System Thinking.

Carbon footprint: this year, the School will start a pilot field project to measure its carbon footprint. Four students will develop a carbon footprint calculator for the SBS-EM that should be able to clearly summarize the faculty's carbon footprint and to help us identify leverage points to reduce our impacts. In a second phase, this tool can be adapted for use by other faculties within the university.



Outreach



BUSINESS & SOCIETY

SYMPOSIUM



Business & Society Symposium: organized with our SDI corporate partner UCB, the symposium serves as a regular forum to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration to address the grand challenges facing our societies and contributes to SBSEM’s ambition to support – through research, education and knowledge dissemination - the sustainability transformation of our societies. This year’s symposium centered around case studies especially written for the occasion and presented by the case protagonists themselves. The topics were diverse – including one on our corporate partner ETEX – and so were the perspectives (business, NGO, academic, policy). Based on the post-event survey, attendees appreciated the diversity of participants and the real-life cases that made the discussions very concrete, stimulating and without taboo, as well as the network opportunities.

Mobilizing private sector data for climate action: capitalizing on our expertise, we prepared a report for the PARIS21 Foundation entitled “[Mobilizing private sector data for climate action](#)”. The report provides a comprehensive review of the types of data available in the private sector and their policy use for climate action, deep dives into three case studies (satellite, supply chain, social media) and analyses the challenges and enablers for mobilizing these data for climate action. This is a fast-moving area with lots of research opportunities.



How do we do it?

The Sustainable Development Initiative lives because of the daily actions on the ground of participating professors, teaching assistants, programme directors, staff and students. As of June 2023, 38 full-time and part-time professors and their teaching assistants take part in the Initiative and work towards an ever greater integration of sustainability into their courses. The Initiative is coordinated by a small team of two academics, two staff members and one student.

A model with leverage. The money the Initiative raises outside contributes to the salaries of the deputy director of the Initiative, pathway coordinators and extra teaching assistants (for a total of 1 FTE in 2022-23), new curricular and extra-curricular activities for students and research subsidies to faculty working on projects with corporate partners. The yearly budget of the Initiative revolves around 117,000 EUR. This past academic year, the SDI benefited from the continued support of corporate partners ETEX and UCB and a one-off seed funding from the Solvay Schools Alumni association. These sponsorships were completed by revenues raised from a consulting mission on private sector data for climate action carried out by SDI academic director Estelle Cantillon and deputy director Bertrand Collignon for the Paris21 Foundation.

