

A photograph of a university campus. In the background, a tall, modern building with a grid of windows stands against a cloudy sky. In the foreground, there are trees with yellowing leaves, a paved walkway, and a building with colorful murals. The text 'The Right to a Sustainable Future' is overlaid in large white letters.

The Right to a Sustainable Future

Report Sustainability in Education
Working Group SELECT 2021

Content

Introduction	03
1 Strategy	04
1.1 Introduction	04
1.2 Strategy and pillars of the EUR	04
1.3 Sustainability Pillar EUR: four focus areas	05
1.4 Sustainability in EUR education, the working group SEE and DIT	07
1.5 Sustainability in Education at the Erasmus School of Law	08
2 Sustainability, relevance and vision	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Sustainability	10
2.3 Relevance of sustainability for the education of the programmes	15
2.4 Vision of SELECT	16
3 Existing initiatives	18
3.1 Introduction	18
3.2 Inventory and analysis	18
3.3 Examples of initiatives	19
3.4 Scope for expansion	21
4 A further implementation of sustainability into education	22
4.1 Introduction	22
4.2 Implementing sustainability within a single course	22
4.3 Implementing sustainability at a programme level	26
4.4 Implementing sustainability at the faculty level	27
4.5 Possibilities for supporting lecturers	28
4.6 Establishing a 'learning community'	28
Conclusion	29

Introduction

Erasmus University Rotterdam (hereafter: EUR) has set seven goals in its strategy document *Creating Societal Impact- the Erasmian Way 2024*. One of those is Taking Responsibility on Sustainable Development. This goal relates to research as well as to education and operations.

The Erasmus School of Law has taken the initiative to further develop the pillar of sustainability with respect to its three programmes of Law, Tax Law and Criminology. To this end, the working group Sustainability at Erasmus in Law Education, Criminology and Taxation (SELECT) was established. The working group consists of:

- mr. dr. Eva Boomsluitter (chair) – Program Director for Master Program in Tax Law
- prof. mr. dr. Maarten Verbrugh – Dean Master Programs ESL
- prof. dr. Lieselot Bisschop – professor of public & private interests (criminology & dynamics of inclusive prosperity)
- mr. dr. Ferry Blom - policy officer education
- Niké Groot MSc. - advisor learning and innovation
- Onno Kok - Law student¹

The working group has made an inventory of how and to what extent the concept of sustainability in broad a sense is currently reflected in the teaching activities at Erasmus School of Law. Based on this inventory, the working group has formulated several recommendations on how the subject of sustainability can be further elaborated within the faculty's educational programmes.

This report reflects the working group's inventory and its recommendations. Chapter 1 focuses on the strategic embedding of the sustainability theme. Chapter 2 pays attention to sustainability in the broad sense, the role of law in this regard and describes the SELECT working group's vision on the implementation of sustainability in education. Chapter 3 is devoted to the inventory of existing initiatives in the field of sustainability within education at Erasmus School of Law and Chapter 4 outlines scenarios to further include the concept of sustainability in education at the faculty. Chapter 5 concludes with a summary and conclusion.

¹ Thanks to Laura Visscher, student-assistant.

1 Strategy

1.1 Introduction

The mission of the EUR is to create a positive societal impact and to contribute to the complex and multifaceted challenges today's society faces. Sustainability plays an important role in this. This chapter focuses on the strategic embedding of the concept of sustainability.

The EUR Strategy 2024, in which sustainability represents one of the seven pillars, is discussed in paragraph 1.2. The sustainability pillar materialises in relation to four areas. These four areas or domains are the subject of paragraph 1.3. The domain of education is explained into further detail in paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5; paragraph 1.4 is devoted to sustainability in the educational programmes at the EUR and paragraph 1.5 zooms in on sustainability in education at Erasmus School of Law.

1.2 Strategy and Pillars of the EUR

Strategy 2024

In the EUR Strategy 2024, the theme of sustainability is defined as follows: "The world is knocking at our door. Society demands expertise, knowledge and collaboration on sustainability. The leaders of the future are being trained here, and we can feed their growth and intensify our societal impact by setting clear objectives obtained from society, and by supporting individual and project-based sustainability initiatives. Aiming for societal impact means making real choices. We cannot achieve societal impact without considering the economic and environmental consequences of those choices. The question we have asked ourselves is: what role do we seek to adopt in society? The answer is clear: we want to incorporate sustainability into the very DNA of the university."²

The Erasmian Way

The EUR aims to achieve its goals in the Erasmian way: 'Being an Erasmian' means being a world citizen, embracing societal engagement and an open and critical mind-set. But it also means looking at how we do so: entrepreneurial, innovative, and based on diverse backgrounds and opinions, always unifying and collaborating, taking action and willing to be unconventional and daring when the situation calls for it.³

Seven pillars

The EUR has included seven pillars in its strategy. The fact that one of the pillars represent sustainability is partly due to the efforts of the University Council's student delegation. Thanks to their persistent, urgent message they have managed to convince the board of the EUR to include the ambition of sustainability in its strategy.

² Strategy 2024, *Creating Positive Societal Impact, The Erasmian Way*, 2019, p. 77.

³ Strategy 2024, p. 25.

The involvement of today's young generation is therefore twofold: they do not only feel the need to become scientifically informed and to develop skills to meet the current, perhaps greatest, challenge in human history. In addition, they themselves inspire the current generation of leaders in bringing sustainability to the forefront.

The sustainability pillar and the UNSDGs

The sustainability pillar has been named as Taking Responsibility for Sustainable Development: "We embrace the concept of sustainable development as a global footprint for dignity, peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and in the future. We want to contribute to a sustainable society by critical and dedicated thinking, teaching, and action in research, education and operations, as well as in our partnerships."⁴ The UN *Sustainable Development Goals* (UNSDG's) are used as a starting point: "We want to contribute to addressing and solving the major challenges society is facing, as defined in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a university, we can use our ability to invest and innovate to realise the SDGs. Through our activities, we contribute not only to the overall objective, but also to a specific SDG; carefully considering which goals we select will make our contribution more meaningful."⁵ eur.nl/en/about-eur/strategy-2024/

Program Manager Sustainability

The EUR has appointed a fulltime Program Manager Sustainability to further shape the EUR's **sustainability ambition within the university**.

The ranking

In 2020, the EUR obtained an average score (15th place in a total of 30) in the SustainaBul ranking, a ranking of Dutch higher education institutions on sustainability practice in research, education and operations that has been annually compiled by the organization Studenten voor Morgen since 2012. Typically, the institution that leads the ranking is named the winner of that year but in 2019 the institution that provided the most valued best practice for sustainable education won.

The EUR is not mentioned in the UI GreenMetric. The UI GreenMetric, an initiative of the University of Indonesia (UI), is a sustainability ranking for Universities in the field of operations, research and education in which more than 900 universities worldwide participate. The University of Wageningen is ranked first in the 2020 UI GreenMetric. The Universities of Groningen and Leiden are in seventh and eighth place respectively.

1.3 Sustainability Pillar EUR: four focus areas

The EUR's sustainability ambitions take shape in four areas:

1. Research;
2. Education;
3. Operations;
4. Within partnerships.

⁴ Strategy 2024, p. 78.

⁵ Strategy 2024, p. 78.

Research

Research on sustainability is, inter alia, conducted within the framework of the *Erasmus Initiatives*. These are three ambitious plans that will align the academic efforts of Erasmus University Rotterdam and express the interaction between science and society, between theory and practice. The Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity initiative centres around the question of how as many people as possible can benefit from prosperity growth and how negative consequences can be minimised simultaneously.

The increase in wealth requires a constant alignment of the changing interests and values of governments, businesses, citizens, and entrepreneurs. To map out this dynamic field, scientists of Erasmus School of Law, Rotterdam School of Management and Erasmus School of Philosophy started a multidisciplinary partnership.

The Smarter Choices for Better Health focuses on providing better healthcare by making smarter choices. Additionally, the Vital Cities and Citizens initiative investigates how contributions can be made towards increasing the quality of life in cities.

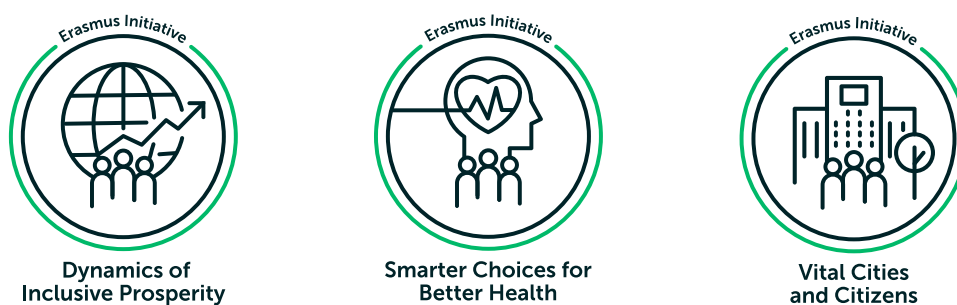


Figure 1: Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity

At DRIFT, a leading research institute on and for sustainability transitions, researchers develop and share transformative knowledge that supports people, cities, sectors and organisations to proactively engage in transitions.

eur.nl/en/about-eur/vision/sustainability/collaborate

Education

The EUR has expressed **the importance of sustainability in education** in as follows: "Sustainability in education at Erasmus University Rotterdam means paying attention to economic, social and ecological development. The goal is that graduates of our university, the leaders of the future, understand the challenges that we should overcome for our society and environment."⁶

Paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5 will further discuss the education part, the core topic of this report.

Operations

Erasmus University Rotterdam has the ambition to develop one of most sustainable campuses in the Netherlands. Several agreements and covenants with the municipality and the government contribute to this ambition. **Concrete goals of Erasmus University Rotterdam in terms of sustainable operations** are making a contribution to the Climate Agreement in 2030, 30% energy efficiency in 2020 compared to 2005 (long term energy-efficiency agreement), the construction of extra green roofs on

6 eur.nl/en/about-eur/vision/sustainability/education

Campus Woudestein, a balance between people, planet and profit and in the long-term a (nearly) energy-neutral campus with an attractive working, living and studying environment. In 2019 and 2020, the Roadmap Sustainable campus was drawn up. This roadmap to a CO₂-neutral and Eco-positive campus outlines several actions with which the EUR can reduce CO₂ emissions in the coming years.

Partnerships

The sustainability ambition is shared through partnerships between the EUR and other universities.

For example, the main objective of **the Erasmus MC, EUR and TU Delft Convergence** is: "Working on scientific breakthroughs that contribute to solutions for urgent and complex societal complex societal (future) challenges. These are challenges in fields such as climate change, sustainability, durability of healthcare, urbanisation, *artificial intelligence*, data and digitalisation."⁷ One of the themes of the Convergence is the Resilient Delta.

Another partnership that addresses the theme of sustainability is the **Leiden-Delft-EUR (LDE) cooperation**. Its strategy document notes for instance: "In the collaboration we focus on a number of societal themes that are closely aligned with the UNSDGs, EU Challenges, National Science Agenda and regional issues. With the UNSDGs, we are associating ourselves with an international, inspiring blueprint that is increasingly becoming the guideline for companies, social organisations and government authorities and the region, with The Hague as the world's third UN City. (...) By collaborating regarding the themes 'Healthy Society', 'Digital Society', 'Sustainable Society' and 'Inclusive Society' we take on a more prominent role in society."⁸ In this context, the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Centre for Sustainability has been established. This centre conducts interdisciplinary research, involving researcher and students from Leiden University, Delft University of Technology and the Erasmus University Rotterdam, aimed at accelerating the transition to a circular economy. At this moment the natural sciences are strongly represented in this initiative. The centre has indicated that it is looking for more cooperation with social disciplines, including law.

1.4 Sustainability in EUR education, the working group SEE and DIT

The Executive Board has commissioned an inter-faculty working group to come up with an implementation plan to integrate sustainability into the entire education portfolio. In 2020, the working group concluded that the EUR's education programme was not sufficiently sustainability-focused to realise its sustainability ambitions: "most students go through their education at EUR without ever being confronted with sustainability challenges or engaged in a critical debate about values, perspectives or intellectual diversity."⁹

The SEE working group has therefore formulated an ambitious vision. It recommends that the EUR should develop a coherent portfolio of learning paths around a shared vision of sustainability. It has made a connection between the Erasmian Values and the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education, with the intention of translating these values and principles to each individual faculty.

⁷ Framework cooperation convergence between Erasmus University Medical Center Rotterdam, Technical University Delft and Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2020, p. 4.

⁸ Strategy for the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Alliance 2019-2024, 2018, p. 9.

⁹ Working Group Report Sustainability in Education at EUR (2020), p. 5. (eur.nl/over-de-eur/visie/duurzaamheid/onderwijs)

The working group notes that each faculty should critically assess its existing teaching portfolio from the perspective of its sustainability ambitions and proposes that each programme should include a mandatory course on sustainability. The work group indicates that each faculty and programme will need to individually consider the best ways to achieve mainstreaming in their operations. To support mainstreaming sustainability in education, while appreciating the academic diversity of our university, the working group has developed four strategies: changing existing courses, developing new courses, new programmes and education beyond boundaries (for example future alumni, future students and EUR 'neighbours'). For the sustainability leaders to-be, a new interdisciplinary master needs to be developed, so the working group argues. The working group has called for the creation of a Sustainability Platform, in which specialist academics will take lead in advancing sustainability in education at the EUR, working closely together with the existing student-led **Sustainability Hub**.

Recently, the platform Design Impact & Transition (DIT) was established, which is led by prof. Derk Loorbarch (eur.nl/over-de-eur/visie/duurzaamheid/dit-platform). The DIT platform seeks to provide physical, institutional, intellectual and collaborative space for academics, students and societal stakeholders where they can actively contribute to a sustainable society by gaining appropriate skills and transdisciplinary knowledge, as well as acquiring the right way of thinking through education, research and impactful projects and training.

1.5 Sustainability in Education at the Erasmus School of Law: the working group SELECT and the faculty's policy

Working Group SELECT

With the establishment of the working group Sustainability at Erasmus in Law Education, Criminology and Taxation (SELECT), Erasmus School of Law has taken the initiative to explore how the EUR sustainability ambition can be embedded in its Law, Tax Law and Criminology programmes. To this end, the SELECT working group has, in line with the 'critical eye' mentioned by the SEE working group, first investigated to what extent and in which way the theme of sustainability is already being addressed in the current educational programme at the faculty. The inventory is based on the seventeen UNSDGs, in line with the EUR strategy. Based on the results of the inventory, the working group has developed guidelines and recommendations on how the sustainability ambition can be achieved at Erasmus School of Law by further expanding existing initiatives and by developing new educational programmes in the field of sustainability.

Erasmus School of Law: "Where Law meets Business and Society"

The theme of sustainability is reflected in several domains of the faculty's policy. The focus on sustainability fits the spearhead Re-evaluating Public Interests in Private Relationships of the National Sector Plan for Law: Collaboration and Renewal, in which the University of Groningen (RUG) and the EUR participate. The sector plan observes that the protection of public interests through private initiatives has come under increasing pressure due to a number of developments, in the Netherlands and Europe as well as at an international level. In this changing world, the authors of the sector plan point out that the question of how supra-individual public interests can best be anchored is becoming more topical: "The central question is to what extent, in the 21st century and against the backdrop of the trend towards a more compact government, public interests and values can effectively be safeguarded in a legal system that is partly based on self-regulation and autonomy of private parties?"

In particular, the necessary search for a more sustainable society, as laid down in the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) of the United Nations, poses great challenges to the Netherlands, Europe and the rest of the world. This mostly concerns public interests and values, such as human rights (e.g., protection of family life and of property rights), environment and climate policy, distribution of welfare and care, social security and workers' rights, taxation, public utilities, stability of the financial sector, competition law and the position of consumers and investors and good governance. In relation to all these areas, the question arises whether the principles of good governance that have regulated government behaviour for years should also be applied *mutatis mutandis* to private parties involved in safeguarding public interests."¹⁰

In this context, the Erasmus School of Law intends to make innovative contributions through research on the function of law in the economic and social context, and more specifically, on the question of how private actors like companies play a role in safeguarding public interests such as sustainability, equality and inclusiveness, which are also reflected in the UNSDGs.

In addition, Erasmus School of Law is one of the three participating faculties in the **Erasmus Initiative on Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity (DoIP)**. This multidisciplinary initiative of Erasmus School of Law, Rotterdam School of Management and Erasmus School of Philosophy focuses on the question of how to minimise the negative consequences of growing property as much as possible and how to improve the alignment between the changing interests and values of governments, businesses and society. The research themes that DoIP focuses on concern both the socio-economic and ecological aspects of sustainability (e.g. sustainable agriculture, sustainable finance).

The sustainability ambition contributes to other objectives of Erasmus School of Law as well, such as promoting multidisciplinary, internationalisation, the critical attitude of students, the introduction of wicked problems into education and the embedding of research in education. Moreover, the faculty's efforts to contribute to the development of legal tech fits within a longer-term focus on the role of law and regulation in a context of technological disruptions and in the interactions between law and technology. Erasmus School of Law is actively involved in the EUR Higher Education Quality Agreements (HOKA)-project *Impact at the Core. A recent working document (Impact at the Core Project Plan – 20.05.2020)* reports that working on realistic wicked problems for students is essential for the project. One of the elements here is that the wicked problems are related to the UNSDGs. The goal for the period 2022-2024 is that "each faculty develops an impact strategy for education, connected with the vision on sustainability."¹¹

¹⁰ National Sector Plan Law: Collaboration and Renewal, p. 79.

sectorplan-ssh.nl/sites/sectorplan_ssh/files/media-files/Samen%2Bsterker.%2BBeeld%2Bvan%2Bhet%2BSSH-domein%2Bversie%2B2019.05.24.pdf

¹¹ Impact at the Core Project Plan – 20-05.2020, p. 5.

2 Sustainability, relevance and vision

2.1 Introduction

This chapter first discusses the concept of sustainability and the role of law in the context of sustainable development. Next, the relevance of sustainability for education at Erasmus School of Law is described. Finally, the last part of this chapter explains the vision of the SELECT working group vis-à-vis the implementation of sustainability in education.

2.2 Sustainability

Sustainable development

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹²

With this definition and together with its report *Our Common Future*, the World Commission on Environment and Development has put the concept of sustainable development on the political agenda and emphasised that environment and poverty were inextricably linked. Although sustainability is often restricted to the ecological aspects, this definition underscores the connection between the ecological and the social aspects. In its 1972 *Limits to Growth*¹³ report, the Club of Rome already indicated that environmental damage was linked to unbridled economic growth and that sustainable ecological, economic and social development require that growth is limited.

Around the turn of the century, the far-reaching impact of human activities on the earth’s entire ecosystem was further emphasised by Dutch chemist and Nobel Prize laureate Paul Crutzen and American biologist Eugene Stoermer by referring to the era of the Anthropocene.¹⁴ Since the last Ice Age, some 12 000 years ago, we as human beings on earth have been quite comfortable in the relatively stable Holocene that has allowed us, thanks to the earth’s natural resources, to explore, whilst working, playing and living. The natural resources limited us to a certain extent but we seldomly were truly confronted with these limits. Throughout the centuries, human beings always had an impact on the living environment, sometimes even far-reaching but it is relatively recent that it fundamentally affects the way in which the earth as an ecosystem (*earth system*) with interacting and evolving parts functions. A recent study in the journal *Nature*¹⁵ clearly notes that the volume of man-made products and structures on earth

¹² BRUNDTLAND, Gro Harlem, et al. *Our common future*. New York, 1987, 43.

¹³ MEADOWS, Donella H.; RANDERS, Jorgen; MEADOWS, Dennis L. *The Limits to Growth* (1972). Yale University Press, 2013.

¹⁴ CRUETZEN, P., & STOERMER, E. (2000). The “Anthropocene.” *IGBP Global Change Newsletter* 41, 17–18
igbp.net/download/18.316f18321323470177580001401/1376383088452/NL41.pdf

¹⁵ ELHACHAM, E., BEN-URI, L., GROZOVSKI, J., BAR-ON, Y. M., & MILO, R. (2020). Global human-made mass exceeds all living biomass. *Nature*, 588(7838), 442–444. doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-3010-5

– what they describe as anthropogenic mass – is nowadays greater than the total global amount of biomass (plants, animals, bacteria). The model of the natural limits to the capacity of the earth – the planetary boundaries – was launched in 2009 by Earth System scientists and visualizes these boundaries.

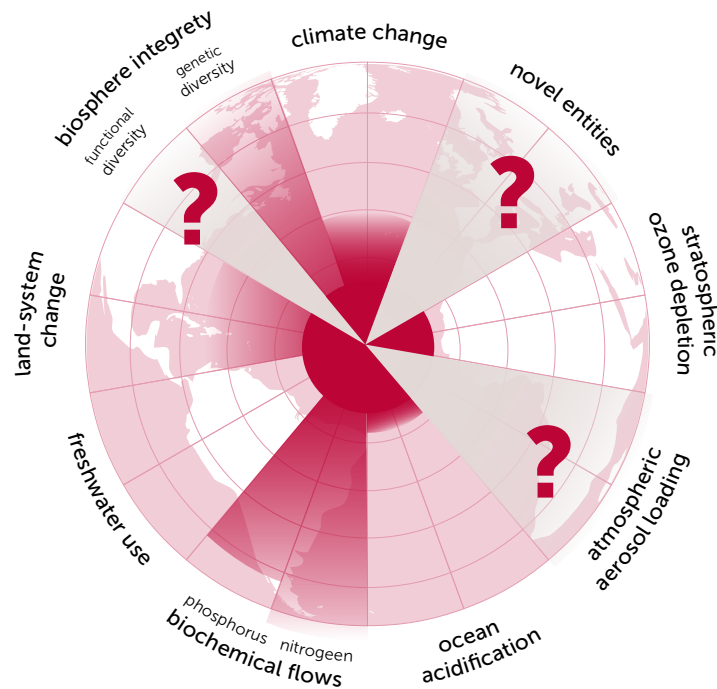


Figure 2: The Planetary Boundaries. Source: hisour.com/planetary-boundaries-debate-39351/

The role of the social sciences

Whereas the exact sciences have tried to know and measure how nature functioned as a complex system since the 1950s and 1960s and from the 1970s onwards have warned about the natural limits to economic growth, the role of social sciences in the scientific debate about environmental damage has remained rather limited.¹⁶

As a result, the focus has mainly been on the ecological impact, while the social impact of natural changes and the causes hidden in the social fabric of society have not always been mentioned. The economic, ecological and social are, however, inextricably linked to the concept of sustainability. Prof. Koo van der Wal, philosopher of law and emeritus professor at Erasmus School of Law, describes this inherent connection in his book *De Symfonie van de Natuur*. Van der Wal sketches the contours of a new image of nature as an open, non-linear, complex, organised system, with a series of levels of ascending structural complexity and an ever-higher degree of order (with a physical, organic, psychological, mental, and emergent layer). About the social as a natural phenomenon, Van der Wal says: "But to no less than to an inadequate understanding of nature the disturbed relation to nature must be ascribed to a skewed representation of the way society works."¹⁷

¹⁶ HAMILTON, C., & GRINEVALD, J. (2015). Was the Anthropocene anticipated? *The Anthropocene Review*, 2(1), 59–72. doi.org/10.1177/2053019614567155

¹⁷ VAN DER WAL, K., *De Symfonie van de Natuur*, Oud-Turnhout, 2020, p. 250.

Sustainability is also referred to in the Triple Bottom Line – also known as the 3Ps: People, Planet, Profit – which integrates social, ecological and economic values. This term was introduced some 25 years ago by John Elkington as an impetus to think differently about capitalism, not just about profit and growth but with more attention to social and ecological wellbeing. A few years ago, he suggested that it was time to retire the 3Ps because they had not created any real systemic change and even got in the way of change because it was being used as a mere accounting trick.¹⁸

“None of these sustainability frameworks will be enough, as long as they lack the suitable pace and scale – the necessary radical intent – needed to stop us all overshooting our planetary boundaries. Hence the need for a recall. I hope that in another 25 years we can look back and point to this as the moment started working toward a triple helix for value creation, a genetic code for tomorrow’s capitalism, spurring the regeneration of our economies, societies, and biosphere.” (Elkington, 2018, HBR)

This interconnectedness of social, economic and ecological dimensions has also been visualised by Kate Raworth’s Doughnut Economics.¹⁹ It is designed as a compass that can be used to work with the challenges we face.

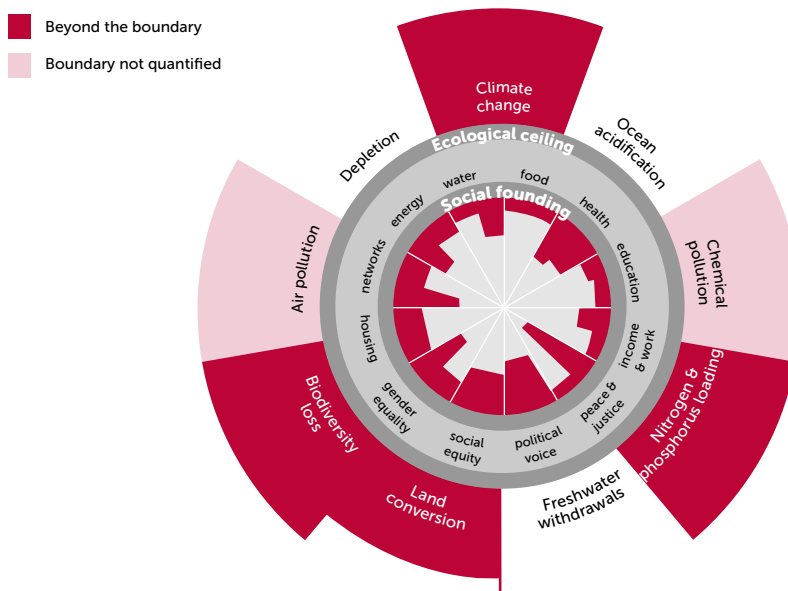


Figure 3: Doughnut Economics. Source: doughnuteconomics.org/tools-and-stories/

Sustainability is also at the heart of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of which the 17 UNSDGS form the core.²⁰ In 2015, the UN asked all regions of the world to form partnerships to jointly address the pressing, comprehensive problems of inequality, climate change, poverty and exclusion. These seventeen goals unite a diversity of themes and link up with all kinds of relevant education themes.

18 ELKINGTON, J., 25 Years Ago I Coined the Phrase “Triple Bottom Line.” Here’s Why It’s Time to Rethink It Harvard Business Review, 2018

hbr.org/2018/06/25-years-ago-i-coined-the-phrase-triple-bottom-line-heres-why-im-giving-up-on-it

19 RAWORTH, K. The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries, 2017, kateraworth.com/doughnut/

20 sdgs.un.org/goals. Also see sdgnederland.nl/sdgs.

“Ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.”



Figure 4: Sustainable Development Goals. Source: globalgoals.org/resources

UNSDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong public services) is of particular relevance for legal studies. Objective 16.3 refers to “promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, ensuring access to justice for all and creating effective, accountable and open institutions at all levels.” Corruption, tax evasion, money laundering, human trafficking and violence are explicitly mentioned as major challenges for the future, as well as the transparency and justice of the law. However, law also has an indirect connection with many other UNSDGs. Achieving SDG 7 on sustainable energy and SDG 12 on responsible consumption require legal instruments that can support implementing legislative agreements and that can thereby in particular represent the interests of developing countries. SDG 5 on Gender Equality requires that discriminatory legislation is adapted. The promotion of the rule of law is thus an essential component of the 15-year programme, even though it seems to be of limited relevance in SDG 16.²¹

The figure²² below shows for instance in which UNSDGs there is a link to (organised) crime.

²¹ a4id.org/student_blog/the-rule-of-law-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/

²² globalinitiative.net/analysis/organized-crime-as-a-threat-to-sustainable-development/

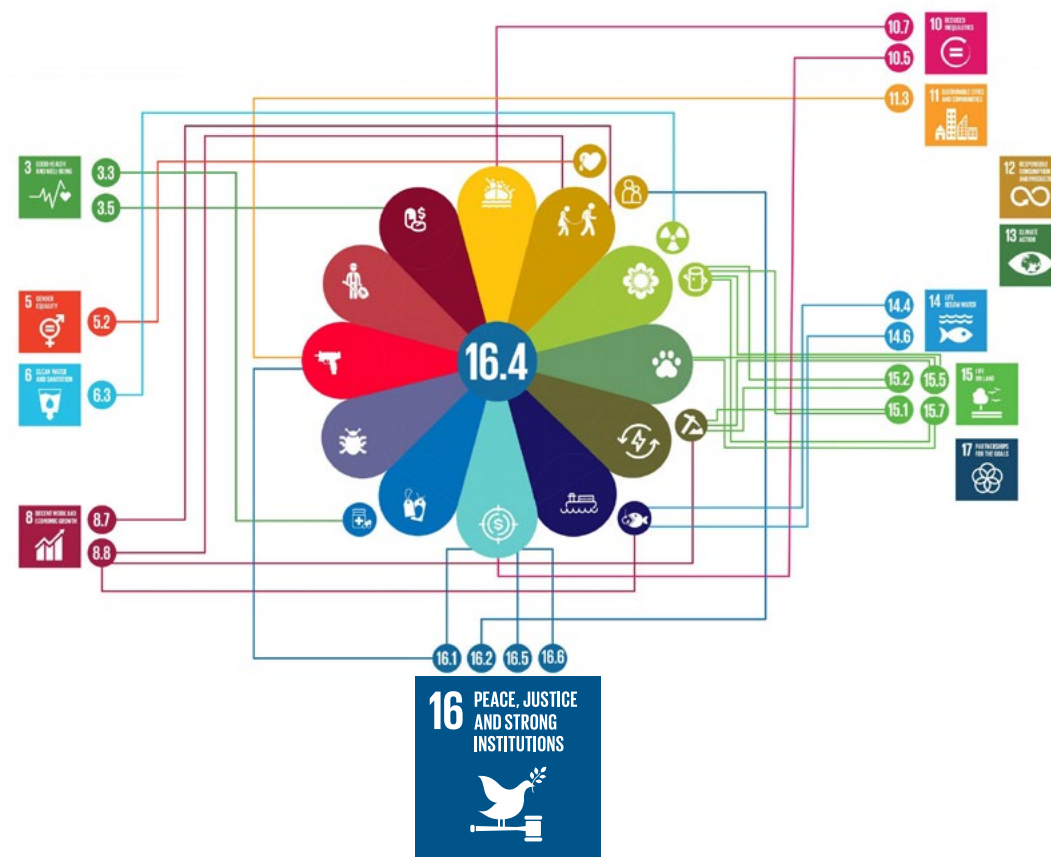


Figure 5: Mapping organized crime's impact on SDG goals and targets. Source: globalinitiative.net

Sustainability, law and regulation

In the past decades, hundreds of multilateral agreements were signed on waste, pollution, endangered animals and plants, biodiversity and other environmental issues. A number of behaviours (e.g., trade in endangered flora and fauna) has also been criminalised in these agreements, because they were considered to be a significant threat to the survival of mankind and the planet. Due to increasing scientific evidence of climate change and civil society attention to environmental pollution, the environment became an even more prominent agenda topic. For instance, the 1992 UN Earth Summit sought to bring both the global north and south to the negotiating table to discuss global issues like poverty, development and environment.

The United Nations (UN) is now giving absolute priority to environmental issues. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was very clear when he started his speech at the World Leaders Forum at Columbia University (New York) on 2 December 2020 with the following words: "We are facing a devastating pandemic, new heights of global heating, new lows of ecological degradation and new setbacks in our work towards global goals for more equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. To put it simply, the state of the planet is broken."²³

23 GUTERRES, A. (2020). Secretary-General's address at Columbia University: The State of the Planet. World Leaders Forum; Columbia University.

Climate change is graphically illustrated in the recent documentary *A Life on Planet Earth* by Sir David Attenborough, in which he explains how fundamentally the earth has changed during his lifetime. In the documentary he calls for strengthening the relation between mankind and nature because we have lost touch with it. He wishes us wisdom to solve the damage, because otherwise it will be the downfall for human existence. The damage associated with this environmental problem is, however, by no means limited to serious damage to (human) animals, plants, and ecosystems, but affects the entire ecosystem of the earth. That ecosystem has fundamentally changed with far-reaching ecological, economic, social, and political consequences.²⁴ In this context, UN Secretary Guterres emphasises that the disruption of the planet is causing economic and political instability. Sustainability is as such not only a matter of environmental issues but involves ecological, social, and economic aspects too. In this report we therefore use a broad view on sustainability. Law and regulation play an important role in ensuring a sustainable future. The wisdom that Attenborough refers to includes legal wisdom and creativity. To meet the challenges of climate change and socio-economic inequality we will need strong legal frameworks that safeguard public interests. Programmes such as Law, Tax Law and Criminology can contribute to the study, development, and implementation of these legal frameworks. It demands attention for sustainability in these programmes such that graduates of Law, Tax Law and Criminology can understand the sustainability issues, critically assess them and can contribute to solutions.

2.3 Relevance of sustainability for the education of the programmes

Sustainability in law has been a prominent news subject in recent years. The Urgenda judgment, the Milieudefensie v. Shell case and various court cases about the nitrogen problem can serve as examples. Internationally, the number of legal proceedings relating to climate change are rising. According to a report by **the United Nations Environment Programme 2020**, the number of lawsuits amounts to 1550 in 38 countries (including 39 cases in the EU). The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is also increasingly visible in company law.

The young generation, our student population, is strongly involved in these current issues. More and more Criminology students, for example, are showing an interest in studying environmental issues for their master's thesis. The Education Committee for the master programmes Law and Tax Law voiced a need for more attention in education to sustainability in the context of the UNSDGs. Stakeholders from the professional field Tax Law and Law have expressed the view that sustainability is playing an increasingly important role in professional practice.

As discussed earlier, the UNSDGs are a good reference point for the spearheads in legal, tax and criminology education as a global compass for challenges like poverty, education, and climate crisis. The major ecological, social, and economic challenges facing the world cannot, of course, be solved solely from the legal, fiscal and criminological perspectives. The wicked problem is multidimensional, international and requires an eminently multidisciplinary approach that includes economic, sociological, psychological, philosophical, business, technological, ecological and health science

24 RIEUR, J. (2020). Critical warning! Preventing the multidimensional apocalypse on planet Earth. *Ecosystem Services*, 45, 101161.

perspectives. On the other hand, the importance of legal, tax and criminological sciences should not be underestimated. An international legal instrument is required to deal with the problems. Recently, it is becoming increasingly apparent that not only the legislative and executive branches of the government but also the judiciary branch plays an important role in this.

The realisation that these challenges must be solved is gaining ground. There is a growing conviction that the viability of the planet is on the brink of a crisis, or that the crisis has already taken place. Not only are people thinking about preventing damage but also about limiting and recouping damage that has already been created. In this context, the UNSDGs are essential not only individually but also in relation to each other.

Science has an essential responsibility to make this crisis visible through research and to inform our students about the state-of-affairs through high-quality education. Students are the generation that need to develop the skills to come up with potential responses for the challenges we face today. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to train students to be critical, responsible and engaged professionals – that is, to become global citizens.

This type of attitude of our students is a prerequisite for identifying and explaining these social issues, including sustainability issues, in professional practice. This also requires that Erasmus School of Law stimulates existing student initiatives and pays attention to the students' living environment and ambitions.

2.4 Vision of SELECT

Objectives

Considering the urgency of the sustainability issues and taking into account the contribution that legal, tax and criminological expertise can deliver towards them, it is the working group SELECT's opinion that it can no longer sit on the sidelines.

Particularly in view of the attention of the EUR strategy on sustainability, its integration in the faculty's policy and the demand from students and the professional field, it is time to strongly anchor sustainability in the education programme of Erasmus School of Law.

The working group proposes to use the following objective hereto:

"Graduates of the Erasmus School of Law have knowledge about sustainability issues, have insight into the role of law²⁵ in relation to sustainability and understand how they can contribute to solutions from within their discipline."

This objective implies that the theme of sustainability must be addressed in all three bachelor programmes, as well as in all master programmes at Erasmus School of Law. The following paragraphs discuss this in greater detail.

²⁵ Mutatis mutandis in relation to tax law and criminology.

Integration into education

Taking responsibility on sustainable development in education means acknowledging, recognizing and taking responsibility to further embed sustainability in education.

Acknowledging responsibility entails that the importance of the theme of sustainability must clearly be emphasised in the different programmes. Recognition is equally important here: identifying what is already happening within Erasmus School of Law and increasing its visibility. Taking responsibility to further its development means that everyone in his or her position commits to justifying the sustainability theme in education at the Erasmus School of Law effectively.

The vision of the SELECT working group regarding the implementation of sustainability in education is based on the premise of natural growth: starting from what already exists and to stimulate further growth and development from there. This is based on the idea that developments arise from a perceived need among stakeholders, such as lecturers, students, management, and the professional field.

The inventory of education at Erasmus School of Law, as conducted by the working group SELECT, shows that a solid basis exists already. A large share of the courses already includes sustainability elements. As the inventory also shows, the legal profession has a wide range of intersections with the various aspects of the theme of sustainability, as expressed in the UNSDGs. This applies to all three programmes: Law, Tax Law and Criminology. From European CO₂-regulations to local environmental levies, from sustainable entrepreneurship to environmental crime, from equal wages to health care, law is eminently a field that addresses the UNSDGs across the board.

See for instance the [animation video on environmental crime](#) that was scripted by Prof. Dr. Lieselot Bisschop and Prof. dr. Karin van Wingerde and which was used during the Corporate & White-Collar Crime course²⁶. [The interview with Prof. Dr. Xandra Kramer about equal access to the judicial system](#) is another example. Via several steps, that will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4, the existing basis can be used to let the existing initiatives grow further, to connect them with each other and to thereby put sustainability clearly on the map and to further develop it within the Erasmus School of Law, as part of the university's strategy.

To optimise grow from within the existing initiatives, the working group agrees that it is important to create sufficient scope for new initiatives within the programmes, irrespective of the size and place of the sustainability theme within that course. Certain courses are very suitable to pay a lot of attention to sustainability, whereas others will only briefly touch upon it. It is preferable to consider these differences and to stimulate initiatives.

For those courses in which sustainability plays a prominent role, it can be examined how this can be expanded and made more visible. The latter could for instance be done by referencing to sustainability in the course description and objectives. For those courses that only briefly touch upon sustainability, for instance where it is only illustrated by an example, one can think of other tools to embed the theme of sustainability within the course, for instance by linking the course to other courses that focus on a similar topic through a sustainability line.

3 Existing initiatives

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the current state-of-affairs regarding sustainability within teaching at Erasmus School of Law. Paragraph 3.2 describes the way in which existing initiatives have been inventoried and briefly discusses the findings that emerged from this inventory. Paragraph 3.3 set outs several striking examples of initiatives. Paragraph 3.4 indicates the gaps that have been identified by the inventory and based on this an indication is given for the possibilities to expand existing initiatives.

3.2 Inventory and analysis

The SELECT working group has carried out an inventory to determine to what extent and in what way attention is currently being paid to the subject of sustainability in education at Erasmus School of Law. To this end and in line with the EUR strategy, the UNSDGs were used as a guideline. While using surveys, the working group has examined the following aspects: the extent to which the courses address the UNSDGs, which specific UNSDGs these include, which teaching format is used and whether the course objectives refer to sustainability. This analysis covered all three bachelor programmes Law, Tax Law and Criminology and the mandatory courses of the corresponding master programmes. Exceptions were made in relation to skills courses and courses that will be discontinued next academic year. Most of the surveys have been filled out by (or based on an interview with) the relevant term-, course- or master coordinator. A few surveys were filled out based on the course guide's information. This concerns a small number of courses, for which it was ultimately not possible to contact the relevant coordinator.

The results of the inventory have been made visible by means of different types of analyses.²⁷ These analyses specify, inter alia, for each UNSDG which course contributes to it. Additionally, the analyses demonstrate which UNSDGs are more prominent, and which are less prominent available in education at Erasmus School of Law. These overviews can be helpful in establishing a collaboration between different courses, they can be used to show the extent to which the faculty already contributes to realising the EUR's sustainability ambitions and finally they can play a role in a future selection of certain UNSDGs as guidelines for the EUR-related to sustainably in education.²⁸

²⁷ eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/2021-05/bijlage-rapport-werkgroep-select-overzicht-afkortingen-en-tabellen-bachelorvakken-definitief.pdf

eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/2021-05/bijlage-rapport-werkgroep-select-overzicht-grafieken-bachelors-definitief.pdf

eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/2021-05/bijlage-rapport-werkgroep-select-overzicht-afkortingen-en-tabellen-mastervakken-definitief.pdf

eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/2021-05/bijlage-rapport-werkgroep-select-overzicht-grafieken-masters.pdf

²⁸ See Strategy 2024, page 78: eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/2019-09/eur-strategy-2020-2024_creating-positive-societal-impact_the-erasmian-way.pdf

The inventory demonstrates that currently many activities related to the theme of sustainability already take place at Erasmus School of Law. Not only is the theme of sustainability an integral part of the curriculum in many courses, but various plans are also underway to further develop sustainability within education. In addition, it appears that the inventory itself acted as a trigger for lectures to further consider the integration of sustainability in their teaching. Initiatives can be found in all three bachelor programmes and all master programmes. Surely, one can distinguish between the degree of emphasis put on sustainability across different programmes. Certain master programmes prioritise the theme of sustainability. Examples include International and European Union Law, Financial Law, Healthcare Law, State- and Administrative law and Criminology. Other master programmes do touch upon sustainability but to a lesser extent. Meanwhile, several other programmes and most bachelor courses only briefly refer to sustainability. However, according to the SELECT working group, all these variations are relevant and each approach plays its own role in educating students at Erasmus School of Law to become (tax) lawyers and criminologists that can contribute to solutions for overcoming sustainability challenges from within their own discipline.

3.3 Examples of initiatives

Several examples are listed below to illustrate the richness and scope of existing initiatives at Erasmus School of Law.



- The master International and European Union Law discusses the theme of sustainability extensively. Examples of courses include Economic Analysis of European Law, which addresses poverty in the agriculture, overfishing, the bio-industry and the sugar- and tobacco industry and Globalization and Multidimensional Legal Orders²⁹, which uses case-studies to focus on almost all UNSDGs and their interconnectedness;
- UNSDG 7 (access to affordable and sustainable energy for everybody) is discussed in the Investment Arbitration course³⁰ and students in this course follow an external workshop on climate change (UNSDG 13) and arbitration;
- The Criminology master (including the IMARC variation) covers the course Globalisation, Digitalisation and Crime, in which social injustice, poverty and human rights are central topics and in which two lectures are devoted to green criminology. Moreover, environmental crime plays a central role in all of the three case-studies that students study in groups and write a policy report about in the Corporate & White-Collar Crime (Dieselgate) and Organised Crime (wildlife trafficking) courses;³¹
- The Ethics, Sustainability and Compliance course³², part of the master Financial Law, pays extensive attention to the UNSDGs, all 17 goals are being addressed throughout the course. The master Financial Law has the ambition to be fully dedicated to sustainability as of the academic year 2021/2022;

²⁹ RB36 and RB52 respectively.

³⁰ RRR85.

³¹ RQ42, RQ89 and RQ96 respectively.

³² RQ07.



- The master programme Tax Law established a thesis project in the context of sustainability. Topics that students can write about include circular economy, environmental levies and air travel tax. Additionally, the master pays extensive attention to ethics, tax evasion, transparency and governance;
- Legal philosophy³³ is an example of a course in the bachelor of Dutch law, in which sustainability plays a prominent role. It pays attention to, inter alia, the Urgenda verdict, a just distribution of goods in society, security and fundamental rights. A Problem on Inclusivity and Black Lives Matter will be added to the course's curriculum in academic year 2021/2022;
- The bachelor Tax Law covers the Public Finances course³⁴, which focuses on taxes as an instrument government can deploy to influence citizens' behaviour, on redistribution of income and on the greening of the tax system;
- The bachelor Criminology tackles several UNSDGs related topics (such as climate change, inequality, migration and human rights violations), whereby specific attention is paid to the way of looking at societal problems. Understanding explanations of human behaviour at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels and a critical view on how societal problems should be dealt with are, after all, essential competences in the work environment in which criminology graduates start their careers;
- UNSDG 5 (equal rights for men and women) is reflected in many very different disciplines. For example, the Master Health Care law pays attention to equal rights for women in health care, the Family(wealth) Law course focuses on LGBTI rights and the Income Tax course in the tax law bachelor discusses this UNSDG in relation to the concept of partner. The Criminology Master pays attention to this subject in the Border Crossing, Security and Social Justice course and the Commercial and Company Law master deals with the theme of directorships, equal payment, and diversity in the course International Corporate Governance.³⁵ The Labour Law master discusses the topics of maternity leave and leave days, while pregnancy and the hour criterion for the fiscal entrepreneurial facilities are being discussed in the Income Tax course of the Tax Law bachelor. Meanwhile, a Summer School will be organised in August 2021: The Right Way to Diversity and Inclusion. This kind of overlap, of which this is just one of many examples, offers various possibilities for cooperation.

³³ RRRD318.

³⁴ RFRFD215.

³⁵ RM03, RFRFD213, RIMC03 and RB19 respectively.

3.4 Scope for expansion

The filled-out surveys show a rich variety of initiatives and demonstrate that the topic of sustainability is widely discussed within the faculty in a creative and inspiring way. The existing initiatives also present how rich and full of opportunities working with the theme of sustainability can be. Meanwhile, the inventory has identified a scope for taking the initiatives to a higher level. For instance, even though sustainability is explicitly included in a course, it is generally not made explicit in the learning objectives. In addition, the inventory has shown that lectures that do address sustainability in their courses are often unaware of the other initiatives in the field of sustainability at Erasmus School of Law.

This is part of the reason why sometimes a link between the courses focusing on sustainability is lacking, even though this link could easily be established.

In addition, the inventory shows that multiple courses still leave room to include sustainability more prominently. This includes courses that do not or barely pay attention to this theme, despite that overlaps are present.

Finally, the inventory shows that the sustainability theme is only addressed in substantive lectures, while it is in fact a suitable theme for activating education formats such as problem-based education, workshops, papers, theses and skills courses. The possibilities for further embedding sustainability in education at the Erasmus School of Law include the following:

1. Making the theme of sustainability more explicit, including in the course objectives;
2. Encouraging familiarity with the different initiatives among lecturers and cooperation, and establishing a connection between the courses that focus on similar themes;
3. Expanding the theme of sustainability in existing courses;
4. Paying more attention to sustainability in activating education formats.

Chapter 4 further discusses these possibilities.

4 A further implementation of sustainability into education

4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces different possibilities to further implement sustainability into education. Sustainability can be embedded into education at various levels, that is within a single course, within the entire programme or at the faculty level.

This chapter discusses the implementation possibilities per level. Additionally, it discusses the potential lecturer support when incorporating sustainability in the course and describes the possibilities for establishing a *learning community*.

4.2 Implementing sustainability within a single course

Four categories

Chapter 3 already pointed out the different degrees of intensity in which courses address sustainability. For certain courses sustainability is the focus, in other courses sustainability plays a substantial but not a central role, a third category includes courses or disciplines that show certain intersections with the sustainability theme and a final category includes courses or disciplines in which sustainability plays no role at all.

Distinguishing between these different categories allows for creating diversity into policy in this field. For instance, making sustainability explicit in the course objectives is suitable for the first two categories whereas it is less appropriate for courses of the third category. Third category courses offer opportunities for further research regarding the possibilities to pay attention to sustainability. Some of these courses have an overlap with the sustainability theme from the perspective of their discipline but currently do not pay attention to it. This provides scope for further expansion. Even for courses from the fourth category – courses that have no overlap with sustainability from the perspective of its discipline – there are possibilities to draw attention to the sustainability theme, for instance by using sustainability as the theme of a problem or example in a lecture.

In short, the four categories are as follows:

1. Courses using sustainability as a central theme;
2. Courses in which sustainability plays a substantial role;
3. Courses that show an intersection with sustainability;
4. Courses that exclude sustainability as a theme.

Possibilities for expansion

The analysis of existing initiatives shows that there is room for improvement on several points. Chapter 3 listed the following possibilities to further embed sustainability in the teaching activities of the bachelor- and master programmes at the Erasmus School of Law:

1. Making the theme of sustainability more explicit, inter alia in the course objectives;
2. Stimulating familiarity with the different initiatives among lectures and cooperation, and establishing a link between courses that focus on similar themes;
3. Expanding the number of courses addressing sustainability;
4. More attention to sustainability in activating forms of teaching.

The discussion that follows examines these possibilities in further detail.

Making sustainability more explicit

Both course objectives (bachelor)/learning objectives (master) and the course descriptions leave room to make sustainability more explicit. Referencing to sustainability in the course objectives and learning objectives is especially relevant for courses in the categories 1 and 2.

A course objective or learning objective consists of a topic (the subject matter) and the desirable behaviour (the level at which a student is expected to master the material). The taxonomy of Bloom distinguishes between six cognitive levels (see Figure 6 below). It should be considered that when a course objective or learning objective refers to sustainability, it is required that this aspect is included in the exam as well.

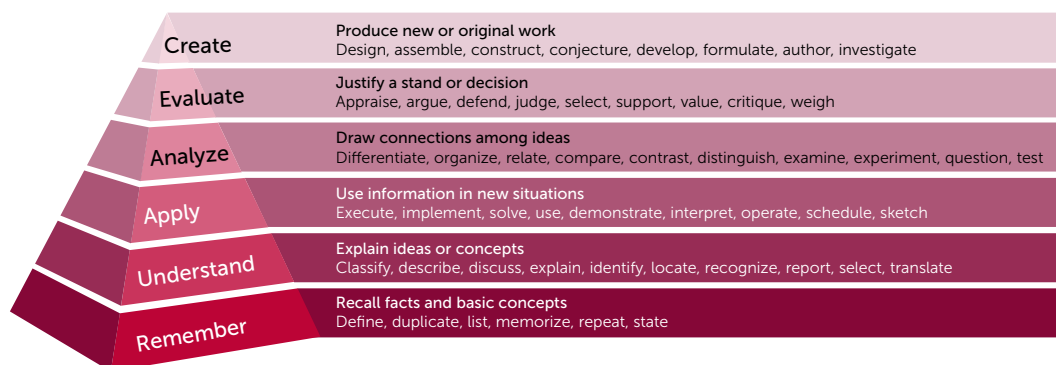


Figure 6: Bloom's Taxonomy, Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D.R. (2001)³⁶

Mutual awareness, cooperation and establishing a link between different courses

Mutual awareness and cooperation

Many possibilities for stimulating mutual awareness and thereby cooperation exist. One can think of a Canvas- or Teams-page showing information and updates, attention to the sustainability theme during meetings of existing education commissions and master conferences, establishing a new commission of frontrunners in this area (*a coalition of the willing*) and organising seminars in the context of a sustainability theme.

³⁶ A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing, Abridged Edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

In addition, one step further, one can think of the awareness of Erasmus School of Law initiatives externally and in the awake of which a collaboration with other EUR faculties. In this context, it is possible to connect to existing initiatives in the LDE-partnership.³⁷ Currently the EUR already offers multiple minors related to sustainability in the LDE framework. See eur.nl/en/about-eur/vision/sustainability/education for more information.

Alumni can also play a role, for instance by involving in teaching alumni that are active in the field of sustainability.

Linking the different courses

Lecturers of different courses, that address a specific UNSDG, could join forces and bring the coherence between the individual UNSDGs more to the students' attention. This can for instance be expressed by reference on the course page, discussion in the lectures, via a course ongoing problem, skills teaching or a thesis project. The analysis showing per UNSDG which courses contribute to it can serve as a guideline hereto.³⁸

Some examples:

- Chapter 3 already discussed various courses and masters that address UNSDG 5 (equal treatment of men and women): the master programmes Health Care Law and Labour Law and the course Family(wealth) Law, Income Tax, Border Crossing, Security and Social Justice and International Corporate Governance;³⁹
- Another example is the connection between the International Corporate Governance course of the Commercial and Company Law master on the one hand and the theme of fiscal ethics in the Capita Selecta course of the master Tax Law on the other hand.⁴⁰ Each of these courses pay attention to the business climate and the role that tax advantage plays herein;
- A link can be observed in relation to UNSDG 1 (poverty reduction) across the different bachelors and master programmes. Courses that pay attention to this UNSDG include Philosophy of Law, Civil Procedure, National and International Litigation, Social Security Law, Economic Analysis of European Law, Globalization and Multidimensional Legal Orders, Juvenile Criminal Law in Theory and Practice and Globalization, Digitalisation and Crime;⁴¹
- The role that sustainability plays in government policy and the political decision-making process, together with the way in which legislation expresses this policy, also provides an opportunity to make a connection between the different courses. Examples of courses that focus on public policy include Public Finance in the bachelor Tax Law, Indirect Tax Policy in the master Tax Law, Economic Analysis of European Law in the master International and European Union Law and Corporate & White-Collar Crime, Organised Crime and Migration, Radicalisation and Control in the Criminology master.⁴²



³⁷ See Chapter 2.

³⁸ Appendix Report Working Group SELECT bachelors and Appendix Report Working Group SELECT masters.

³⁹ RM03, RFRFD213, RIMC03 and RB19 respectively.

⁴⁰ RB19 and RF45 respectively.

⁴¹ RRRD318, RRRD213, RL75, RB79, RB36, RB52, RM33 and RQ42.

⁴² RFRFD215, RF73, RB36, RQ89, RQ96 and RIMC07 respectively.

Expanding the number of courses that address sustainability

This primarily pertains to the existing courses in which sustainability is not yet addressed but which do touch on the theme of sustainability. The lecturers could implement sustainability in their teaching. During the inventory, several lecturers who currently do not pay attention to sustainability, did identify a link with the theme of sustainability and were prepared to further investigate the possibilities for implementing sustainability in their teaching.

In addition, in all existing courses, irrespective of the intersections with the theme of sustainability, a sustainability theme can be put forward as the subject of, for example, a problem or an example in a lecture.

Finally, new courses focusing on sustainability can be developed within study programmes. For example, the new course *Overheid en Markt* (Government and Market) of the State- and Administrative Law master will pay attention to sustainability. Moreover, a new elective called *Sustainability & Tax* will be developed for the Tax Law master.

Another possibility is to offer thesis topics related to sustainability in the thesis track. Existing examples are the thesis project of the master Tax Law and the theses written by various Criminology students about sustainability issues (trade in endangered animals, environmental damage by drugs dumping, pollution by *forever chemicals*, healthcare fraud, migration etc.).

Activating forms of education

Sustainability is an excellent theme for the further development of students' skills, for example in the form of writing assignments, presentations, discussions and negotiations. This inventory shows that several courses and programmes have already adopted this approach:

- Students in the master Tax Law, in the framework of a thesis project about sustainability and indirect taxes, can choose topics like VAT and circular economy, green free policy in VAT, plastic tax and meat tax;
- Students in the Ethics, Sustainability and Compliance course⁴³ in the Financial Law master have a debate about ethics and sustainability and map out the financial risks related to sustainability in their final assignments;
- In the Economic Analysis of European Law course⁴⁴, students write policy papers about, inter alia, agriculture and poverty, overfishing and the bio-industry;
- Students in the Law of the Sea course⁴⁵ write an essay in which they advise the UN Secretary-General on how to implement one of the UNSDG 14 sub-goals (the protection and sustainable use of oceans and seas) in the relevant international institutions;



⁴³ RQ07.

⁴⁴ RB36.

⁴⁵ RB31.



- Debating lectures are organised in the Juvenile Criminal Law in Theory and Practice course⁴⁶, which focuses on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- The Globalization and Multidimensional Legal Orders course, which addresses nearly all UNSDGs, primarily uses case studies and assignments. In the Migration, Radicalisation and Control course students give presentations and critical reflections in the context of UNSDG 16 (improving safety);⁴⁷
- Students in the Corporate & White-Collar Crime and Organised Crime courses⁴⁸ work together in small groups on truth-based cases in which themes like environmental crime, money laundering and corruption are being addressed and based on their analysis students write a policy paper;
- Students in the Company Law & Restructuring course have written a group paper in which they had to respond to a public consultation of the European Commission about Sustainable Corporate Governance.

For the future, one can also think of projects in which students from different disciplines work together, for instance by organising a seminar on a particular sustainability theme or by writing a joint report about one of the UNSDGs. Another possibility is a collaboration between students and civil society, for instance in the form of 'green consultancy', in which students write an advice report for a municipality or international organisation.⁴⁹

4.3 Implementing sustainability at a programme level

At a programme level, it may be considered to include sustainability in the final qualifications that students need to meet upon completion of the programme. If sustainability is included in the final qualifications, sustainability needs to be reflected and tested in one or more courses, made explicit in the course objectives and learning objectives, needs to reoccur and be tested throughout the programme. An examination plan that shows an overview of all end qualifications and the courses that address and test them should be constructed. A sustainability related end qualification could for instance be: "The graduate can include ethical and sustainability perspectives in his or her judgment."

Apart from the expansion of existing courses in paragraph 4.2 and the implementation of new courses within programmes, offering a new minor in the bachelor programmes that focuses on sustainability from a legal perspective is worth considering. The EUR already offers various minors in the field of sustainability (eur.nl/en/about-eur/vision/sustainability/education).

⁴⁶ RM33.

⁴⁷ RB52 and RIMC07 respectively.

⁴⁸ RQ89 and RQ96 respectively.

⁴⁹ Compare with the EU minor Learning by doing: Consulting to Social Entrepreneurs.

New cross-master free electives can be developed for the master programmes. An example from Leiden is the extracurricular lecture series **Sustainability and Law**, which was developed on the initiative of students.

One can also think of creating a new master or master specialisation aimed at sustainability. An example of the VU is **the Climate Change and Corporations specialisation** of the International Business Law master.

Another option is to create a double degree Sustainability and Law, which **the University of New England, Australia** offers.

4.4 Implementing sustainability at the faculty level

A vision on sustainability in education, in line with the EUR vision, can be further developed at the faculty level.

Although the theme of sustainability fits well in the current spearheads of Erasmus School of Law, such as Impact at the Core and Reassessment of Public Interests in Private Relations, the SELECT working group proposes to approach sustainability as a separate pillar. This approach increases the visibility and makes setting up a sustainability teaching track more feasible. To further develop the faculty's vision on sustainability in education, reference can be made to the SELECT working group's objective:

"Graduates of the Erasmus School of Law possess knowledge about sustainability issues, have insight into the role of law⁵⁰ in relation to sustainability and understand how they can contribute to solutions from within their discipline."

In line with the EUR strategy, the UNSDGs can be used as a guideline to further narrow down the concept of sustainability in the context of Erasmus School of Law education programmes.

As described in Chapter 2, the SELECT working group agrees that it is important to develop suitable standards in line with the intersections with sustainability that each bachelor and master programme has. The question that needs to be answered is what the minimum level of attention is that needs to be addressed to the sustainability theme and how the variety in depth between the programmes should be expressed.

Points of attention in this respect are the scope – in teaching moments and the number of courses – of sustainability in education, the variation in education types, the depth (*Bloom's Taxonomy*), the multidisciplinary character and the UNSDGs that are addressed (a wide approach across the entire spectrum or one or more specific UNSDGs).

50 Mutatis mutandis in relation to tax law and criminology.

4.5 Possibilities for supporting lecturers

Support is available for designing a new course related to sustainability or integrating sustainability into an existing course. **Risbo offers a micro-lab specifically aimed at integrating the theme of sustainability in education.** At Erasmus School of Law, the Learning & Innovation Team (LIT) offers support during the designing process. One can also think of establishing a more encompassing, longer-term training programme that focuses on both the educational and policy-related aspects that play a role in embedding sustainability in education, with participation of different EUR faculties and possibly from other universities. Such a programme can contribute to the creation of a *learning community*, as discussed in the next paragraph.

4.6 Establishing a 'learning community'

According to the SELECT working group, establishing a '*learning community*' is one of the first steps that need to be taken to strengthen the integration of sustainability in the educational programmes at Erasmus School of Law. A process of knowledge sharing and inspiration can be set in motion by bringing together the expertise of those that have already taken steps along this road with enthusiastic lecturers that seek to implement sustainability in their teaching.

Bringing together a *coalition of the willing* within the Erasmus School of Law can also be the prelude to interdisciplinary education activities, possible collaboration with other EUR faculties and within the LDE context.

Examples of community-building activities are:

- Putting the theme of sustainability on the agenda of education committees and councils more regularly;
- Organising seminars on sustainability in education at the Erasmus School of Law to exchange experiences, ideas and examples;
- Setting up a sustainability network for employees who work on the topic of sustainability via Microsoft Teams. For an example from Leiden, see **the Leiden University Sustainability network**;
- Creating a faculty page on MyEUR, which displays the different education activities in the context of sustainability;
- Joining **the Erasmus Sustainability Hub** (ESH);
- Creating visibility during the annual Sustainability Days organised by the ESH;
- Streamlining student involvement by establishing an Erasmus School of Law GreenTeam. **See examples from Delft**;
- Joining national networks, such as the **Higher Education Sustainability Initiative**.

Conclusion

The sustainability problem is urgent. Today's students will encounter these issues in their future careers and will be asked to help find solutions based on their expertise. The importance of this theme for university education has been expressed in the EUR Strategy 2024 and in the current policy of Erasmus School of Law. Students and the professional field also demand to further embed sustainability in the training of lawyers, tax specialists and criminologists.

The SELECT working group has investigated possibilities to integrate sustainability in educational programmes at Erasmus School of Law. To this end, the working group proposes to use the following objective:

"Graduates of the Erasmus School of Law have knowledge about sustainability issues, have insight into the role of law⁵¹ in relation to sustainability and understand how they can contribute to solutions from within their discipline."

This objective implies that the topic of sustainability must be included in each of the three bachelor programmes as well as in each master programme of the faculty.

The vision of the working group in relation to the implementation of sustainability in education is based on the premise of natural growth: starting from what is already there and further stimulating growth and development from here.

The working group SELECT has, based on the UNSDGs, made an inventory of the existing initiatives related to sustainability in education at the Erasmus School of Law. The inventory shows that there is already a strong basis. Meanwhile there is scope for explication and expansion.

The SELECT working group has defined recommendations to further implement sustainability at three levels: within individual courses, at programme level and at faculty level.

The working group SELECT advises four ways to further embed sustainability at course level:

1. Make the sustainability theme explicit in, inter alia, course objectives;
2. Encourage familiarity with the various initiatives among lecturers, cooperation and establish links between courses that focus on similar topics;
3. Increase the number of courses that address sustainability;
4. Pay more attention to sustainability using activating teaching formats.

⁵¹ Mutatis mutandis in relation to tax law and criminology.

The working group recommends diversity in policy, considering the differences between courses, and thereby distinguishing between four categories: 1. Courses with sustainability as their main theme; 2. Courses in which sustainability plays a substantial role; 3. Courses that intersect with sustainability and 4. Courses that exclude sustainability as a topic.

Sustainability is an excellent topic on which to cooperate with other EUR faculties and other universities. Existing initiatives within the LDE partnership can be of relevance here.

At a programme level, sustainability can be anchored more strongly by including the theme into the end qualifications that graduates of that programme must meet. A minor focusing on sustainability from a legal perspective could be considered for the bachelor programmes. For the master programmes, new cross-master electives can be developed. One step further would be a new master or master specialisation or a *double degree* Sustainability and Law.

At faculty level, the vision on sustainability in education at Erasmus School of Law can be further developed. The SELECT working group proposes to approach sustainability as a separate pillar, beside the existing spearheads of Erasmus School of Law, such that the visibility, impact, and effectiveness of the theme will be highlighted appropriately.

Lecturer training is an important tool to implement sustainability in education. One could think of expanding the existing initiatives in this field.

To draw more attention to existing instruments, to bring them together and to let them grow further, the SELECT working group proposes to form a *learning community*.

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