



# DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION AT THE LUDOVIKA UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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## INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions, including the Ludovika University of Public Service (Ludovika-UPS), are pivotal in building a sustainable future. Increasing climate change, the energy, water and food crisis, the growing loss of biodiversity, the depletion of minerals, and the amount of plastic pollution all contribute to an accelerating and interconnected crisis. A fundamental change in socio-economic processes is needed to make the best contribution at the national level **to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, adopted by consensus by UN member states in 2015, and to tackle the challenges posed by these crises successfully. This requires a prepared civil service, awareness of the challenges, and commitment to finding solutions and making the necessary changes.

The Ludovika University of Public Service (Ludovika-UPS) is committed to serving the Hungarian national community and statehood, strengthening the European and global community of nations, promoting peace, freedom and security, **sustainable development** and cooperation among nations through its activities based on academic research, teaching and learning. The establishment of the Faculty of Water Sciences, the launch of the International Master's Degree in Water Diplomacy and the initiative related to the Institute of Environmental Sustainability have all served these **qualitative policy goals**.

The Ludovika University of Public Service should be at the forefront of **shaping and supporting national and international institutional sustainability policies**. The University should be more active in academic institutional alliances, networks of experts, civil initiatives and social awareness-raising on environmental sustainability. It should play a proactive role in the policy discourse and related academic collaborations on environmental and social sustainability.

**The University should gradually become a model institution for green governance and a sustainable quality of life.** The University can make a decisive contribution to greening its immediate and broader environment by promoting a **culture of green service**, both through the training of students and by stimulating socio-economic research and innovation in the field of sustainability.

# 1

## GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONCEPT

The primary objective of this concept is to outline the **content and methodological framework for sustainability strategy development and implementation**. The University's strategic planning is part of institutional development. **Sustainability development planning** should be aligned with the sustainability goals in the 2020–2025 Institutional Development Plan (IDP) and inform future strategic planning. The present concept **considers development planning as part of a management and operational culture** that involves the University's departments and partners, as well as a wide range of University citizens, in an inclusive manner. The Sustainability Development Plan of the Ludovika-UPS will be prepared as an institutional core document linked to the Institutional Development Plan 2020–2025, approved by the Senate and the Board of Trustees.

By launching the sustainability transition planning process, we will contribute to the following goals:

- **Creating value and raising awareness for sustainability:** by raising awareness of the environmental and socio-economic processes that threaten our global and Carpathian Basin livelihoods, we strengthen the value-based vision of university citizens based on national commitment.
- **Commitment to institutional goals:** dialogues organised during planning and implementation help to explore, recognise and deepen our shared university values. The goals and actions articulated in dialogue strengthen commitment to implementation.
- **Collective action:** involving a wide range of university citizens in actions based on their ideas and initiatives, based on the principle of “every little step counts”. Building on the collective successes achieved, identify and organise programs requiring further longer-term commitment.
- **Improving position in the higher education market:** social engagement, the “third mission”, is an increasingly important factor in students' choice of University and training. Sustainability goals and activities, and their effective communication, strengthen the University's ability to attract students at home and abroad and its competitiveness in university rankings.
- **A flexible planning process that is responsive to present challenges** the constantly changing environment of accelerating crises requires dynamic “rolling” planning involving stakeholders, continuous feedback and self-correction based on indicator-based self-assessment.
- **Public policy integration:** the Ludovika University of Public Service plays a key role in preparing the civil service and has a model mission.

## CORNERSTONES, PRINCIPLES

- The concept and the strategy it underpins aim to contribute to implementing the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the **Sustainable Development Framework Strategy and the National Environment Programme of Hungary**.
- The strategy focuses on **environmental sustainability**, and all the University's activities contribute to effectively addressing the challenges facing humanity, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion and increasing pollution.
- It sees the **sustainability of society and national culture** and the development of **management and organisational practices** that serve sustainability goals as a matter of equal importance to environmental sustainability. The University should also develop exemplary solutions for the public service transfer of **ESG operational practices** in the corporate world.
- **The planning and implementation process is open-ended**, with the participation of faculties, research centers, functional departments, colleges, student governments, and thematic working groups to regularly assess the results achieved and plan further objectives and actions.
- **Building on the specificities of the Ludovika-UPS, the value-driven sustainability goals and actions** are based on the intervention logic of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) practically and systemically.
- The achievement of the objectives and results can be monitored and verified through **sustainability commitments based on** clear **monitoring indicators** adapted to the planning time horizon of the IDP.
- A regular **situation assessment** is carried out, which provides a solid basis for evidence-based planning in an "honest", self-reflective way, identifying problems and opportunities.
- **Funding planning** builds on institutional national grants, EU grants (RRF and MMF), international grant sources and business partnerships.

# 2

## IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC AREAS FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

The transition to sustainability can be integrated with a **systems approach across all the University's activities**. The definition of **strategic areas** outlines the themes for **situation assessment** and priority setting in strategic planning.

### The strategic areas:

- the mission, vision and culture of the University, which defines the approach to the strategy, taking into account the University's objectives and operations
- the basic educational tasks of university operation
- research + development + innovation
- social engagement
- operations that support the achievement of the objectives of all areas
- the operation and development of infrastructure that supports climate change objectives and minimises environmental pressures

Synergies between these areas, the involvement of university citizens and the integration of sustainability into the University's operations and communications can be achieved through coordinated governance.



## SUSTAINABILITY AT THE LUDOVIKA-UPS

Strategic leadership involves making decisions and taking action based on vision and mission. It is essential that the University's vision and mission clearly articulate its commitment to serving sustainable development, enhancing ecological balance, developing a university culture of environmental health and well-being, and communicating this to the public.

### Goal:

A shared vision that expresses the institution's commitment to the SDGs and the national and European climate goals in all areas of university operations.

### Measures:

- Existing research, strategic principles, and principles of environment and social governance will inform the shared vision. It will be developed in a broad dialogue with university citizens and partners.
- The resulting shared vision of sustainability is embedded in the institutional culture. It guides the renewal of institutional policies, the definition of strategic objectives and interventions, and external and internal communication.

## EDUCATION, TRAINING

Sustainability knowledge is a multidisciplinary set of knowledge, attitudes and soft skills, as well as values and value choices that universities should communicate to students.

### Goal:

All graduates will have the competence needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with their qualifications and fields of study. Have a sound, up-to-date knowledge of sustainable and unsustainable processes, the ability to place and apply knowledge in the socio-economic context, and the skills and attitudes to make systemic solutions and decisions.

### Measures:

- defining and integrating learning outcomes and competence across sustainability themes into the requirements of all courses and forms of training
- review and strengthen educational capacities in the field of sustainable development
- strengthening cooperation between faculties and institutes in this field, joint training development, optimising opportunities for retraining and transfer
- recognition of student practice and volunteering for sustainability in the assessment of learning

## RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

Measuring the sustainability performance of University research and development activities is a dynamic and evolving competitiveness issue. Both EU and national grant funding research projects use indicators and quality criteria to assess "green compliance" at the proposal stage. A system for monitoring the sustainability of R&D&I projects and measuring the institutional contribution to sustainability should be developed within the University.

### Goal:

University research contributes to analysing the regional and global impacts of accelerating environmental, social and economic changes, and thus to developing social innovations and safety technologies that support environmental sustainability.

### Measures:

- To measure the extent to which planned and implemented R&D&I projects contribute to the sustainability transition, a **Sustainability Project Track** will be developed, providing a joint monitoring framework for assessing the sustainability of R&D&I projects through key indicators and quality criteria.
- Sustainability monitoring and communication of Ludovika-UPS-related publications.
- Supporting targeted research and social innovation for sustainable development.

## THIRD MISSION

The social mission in today's "media society" is based to a large extent on the effectiveness of communication. The University's presence in the media is intensifying year by year. Scientific results are communicated more and more effectively in various forums and platforms. The University's presence in the public policy discourse is growing spectacularly, and communication with young people through cultural programs and social media platforms is also significant. Institutional partnerships are expanding both nationally and internationally. At the same time, the issue of sustainability is minimal in our social interactions, and awareness and change are essential.

### Goal:

To build on the sustainability messages and the action programs that validate them in the social mission areas prioritised by IDP 2020–2025.

### Measures:

- an overview of partnerships – national and foreign universities, international organisations, public administrations, companies
  - strengthening joint programs for sustainability in existing relationships where relevant
  - building partnerships with prominent organisations and professionals in the field of sustainability to strengthen social service
- shaping social attitudes
  - through partnerships
  - through community research
  - events, through conscious communication
- review and targeted development of training

## OPERATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Increasing energy efficiency and energy savings will contribute to reducing climate problems due to the carbon burden of energy production. Investing in energy efficiency in buildings and exploiting the potential of renewable energy sources in a low-carbon environment will pay off financially in the medium term. Optimising transport and traffic can also lead to significant energy savings and, thus, lower carbon emissions. The selective collection and disposal of waste produced by university citizens, together with the power of sample collection, also contributes to the strengthening of the circular economy, and reduced municipal waste transport can also bring financial savings.

In addition to its positive environmental effects, increasing the amount of green space, both inside and outside, and biodiversity has been shown to improve the well-being and performance of university citizens and students.

### Goal:

Environmentally responsible institution operation and infrastructure development for the physical and mental health of university citizens, supporting the achievement of sustainability education–research–social engagement goals and minimising the environmental burden of the institution.

### Measures:

- analysis, selection and further development of environmental, sustainability and health-promoting criteria systems that also provide opportunities for international comparison
- assessment of the situation based on the set of aspects, situation assessment: using assessment methods to underpin the proposed measures
- sustainable solutions for the operation of buildings, review, proposals
- assessment of operational processes, environmental analysis
- increasing the green spaces and their biodiversity on the campuses, planning the development of the Orczy Garden as a model area for climate adaptation and water management

## AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE THAT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABILITY

Organisational culture is a set of values, a shared understanding of values, and a shared agenda of thought and action accepted by the members of an organisation. Development planning for the sustainability transition only makes sense if it gradually becomes part of the organisational culture, which defines leadership and management at all levels of operation. The governance of a well-functioning institution is defined by its culture (governance by culture).

It means that sustainability must become an inner part of planning, decision-making and action across the whole spectrum between the decisions of the Board of Governors, Senate and Rector and the implementation endpoints. Regulation, documentation, measurement and evaluation are technical aids, but they are insufficient. Sustainability must become part of the organisational culture: governance processes, networking, proactive action, strategic management, institutional policy formulation and communication. The development planning process is the first step in building culture: it does not start with a top-down and bottom-up (vertical) logic, but with a horizontal and inclusive planning that reinforces organisational culture and considers sustainability a community value.



# 3

## TRANSITION PLANNING: SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

### STEPS OF THE DESIGN



- Planning Task Force: to prepare the Ludovika-UPS Strategic Sustainability Development Plan.
- Headed by a university manager appointed by the Rector.
- Its members are delegates from the following areas (Secretary General, Directors General, Vice-Rectors, Deans, representatives of relevant institutions and the University Students' Union).
- Management, professional and administrative coordination: coordination and organisation is carried out by the Institute of Environmental Sustainability in collaboration with the Rector's Office.
- The working group operates according to its agenda, sets up further sub-groups and invites experts.



## SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The University's decision-makers and citizens need guidance and evaluation in designing and implementing the sustainability strategy. To support this, the University's Sustainability Advisory Board, **composed of national and international environmental and social sustainability experts appointed by the Rector and linked to the University**, may be established.

### Active participation of university citizens in planning

Strategic planning based on broad participation is suitable for bringing the issue of sustainability to the center of attention through consultations, bringing the opinions and visions of university citizens closer to each other. As they participate in formulating the objectives, they become interested in contributing to their implementation and taking the initiative, which is essential for the success of most of the actions.

A sustainable approach is a long-term commitment to active engagement so that the citizens, researchers, staff, contractors and subcontractors of the University are aware of, support and contribute to the University's sustainability goals.

Through the university and faculty Student Unions, students should be actively involved in all committees and activities from the beginning of the development process; their opinions should be incorporated, and their ideas should be presented.

- Faculty Student Unions and College Committees should also prepare a work plan linked to the strategy.
- Developing a sustainability ambassador scheme in partnership with the students' organisations.
- Creative presentations and information sessions.
- Promote and develop a system of recognition for student volunteering within training and research activities.
- Developing recognition for employee volunteering.

## PARTNERS

Promoting sustainability in the University's domestic environment (governmental, business, civil and co-university) is essential. Carpathian Basin and other foreign partnerships are paramount to make the Ludovika-UPS activities in this area visible in international networks and rankings.

- an overview of partnerships – national and foreign universities, international organisations, public administrations, companies
  - strengthening joint programs for sustainability in existing relationships where relevant
  - building partnerships with prominent organisations and professionals in the field of sustainability
- expand and strengthen partnerships on environmental sustainability with domestic organisations and businesses
- to review the potential of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) membership since 2022 and develop a work plan to capitalise on it
- to explore and prepare opportunities for further involvement in international sustainability education and research networks, such as the United Nations University (UNU) initiated Regional Centers of Expertise (RCE) network, or active participation in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings Network or the Nature Positive Universities Alliance



## COMMUNICATION

Consciously planned and implemented sustainability communication effectively contributes to achieving the set goals, targets the communities and people to be reached, and channels the necessary information back to them. Communication tools that target sustainability must be consistent with the values and messages conveyed.

Communication should support the achievement of the goals set in each area: environmental sustainability should be prominent in the University's communication, the presentation of sustainability goals and results should be emphasised in all the institution's manifestations, and the commitment to the sustainability of all university citizens and the society at large should be strengthened.

### Measures:

- We start the planning process with effective internal communication.
- As part of the action plan for each strategic area, an external and internal communication plan is prepared, which identifies the communication tasks that will be part of the actions to help implement them and contribute to the broad awareness, acceptance, support, and, where relevant, take-up and follow-up of the results.
- A specific communication programme is being prepared in the spirit of the institutional strategy
  - to review with the University's communication specialists the current communication plans and policies and plan how these reflect the sustainability goals and outcomes of the University in a coordinated way
  - highlight and coordinate (website, social media, speeches, press releases) existing education, research, operational results and events that promote sustainability
  - coordinating information on the various communication platforms, events or personal involvement of model university citizens to raise external and internal awareness

It also builds on the initiatives launched by the Institute of Environmental Sustainability to raise awareness: evergreen events, lectures, events based on presentations by recognised experts, sessions for students or schoolchildren, and social media channels.





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