



Flanders
State of
the Art

Cross-border sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY AND INTERNATIONALISATION
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT
& SPATIAL
DEVELOPMENT

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COLOPHON

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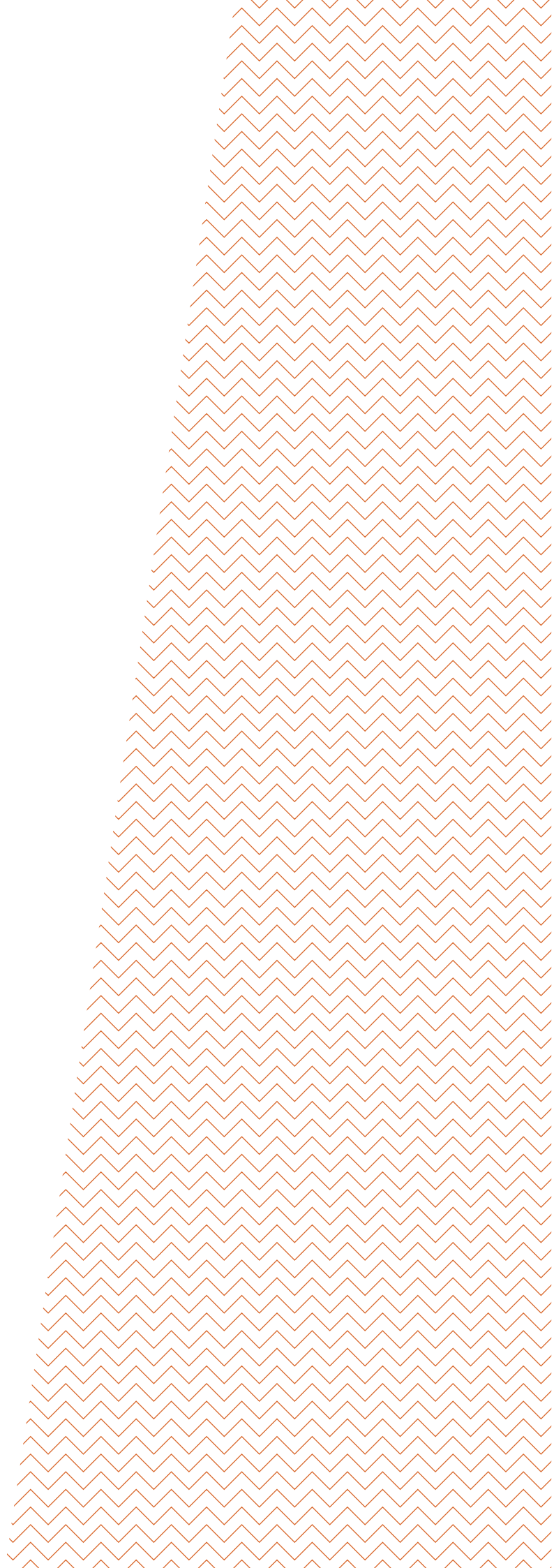
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Cross-border sustainability

sustainability and internationalisation in higher education

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Introduction:

This paper on cross-border sustainability zooms in on the mutual reinforcement between the themes 'sustainability' and 'internationalisation' in Flemish higher education, as an appropriate response to societal challenges.

This paper discusses:

1. the concept of sustainability
2. the topics 'sustainability' and 'internationalisation' in higher education
3. the cross-fertilisation between sustainability and internationalisation in higher education
4. working areas for promoting and/or anchoring this cross-fertilisation and existing examples of good practice from higher education.

The focus lies on educational practice. As this is a translation of a Flemish publication 'cross-border sustainability', references to websites and examples were included that refer to the Flemish educational context. Nevertheless, we hope to inspire you with this note to make the transfer to your own educational context.

This paper provides an initial step towards a broader debate on the possibilities of orienting practice towards cross-border sustainability.



1 Parallel survey in Flemish higher education: sustainability and internationalisation

Higher education institutions are faced with a context of complex societal challenges. The call to (help) find answers through education, research and social services is growing louder.

Higher education institutions, for instance, are given an important role and responsibility in pursuing the Agenda for Sustainable Development, as described in the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). These Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations and are the successor to the Millennium Development Goals. More information on the sustainable development goals is available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

The debate on generic competencies within the context of 'lifelong learning' and/or the [21st century skills](#) also directs its attention towards higher education. These competencies should enable graduates to respond swiftly and flexibly to future societal challenges.

More information about lifelong learning is available at <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/actionlines/LLL.htm>

More information about 21st century skills can be found in Voogt, J. & Roblin, N.P. 2012. 'A comparative analysis of international frameworks for 21st century competences: Implications for national curriculum policies'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, (44,3). pp.299-321.

The [Flemish institutional review](#) which has assessed the education policy of higher education institutions since 2015 also makes a targeted appeal to look for answers. The institutional review highlights sustainability and internationa-

lisation as themes through which institutions may provide answers to societal challenges. More information about the NAS (New Accreditation Scheme) Decree is available at <https://www.nvao.net/beoordelingsproceduresvlaanderen/instellingsreview>

It is neither desirable nor feasible for higher education institutions to solve all the societal challenges. What they can do is adopt an integrated approach to societal challenges and create increased support in educational practice for rolling out responses to these challenges. This was the starting point of the [Flemish ad hoc working group on internationalisation and sustainability](#) which, in 2015, studied the question whether any synergy exists between internationalisation and sustainability in higher education and, if so, where exactly.

Sustainability was soon regarded as both a connecting and stimulating factor. This idea was also shared in the paper of the Flemish Education Council (VLOR) following the 2014 elections. In this paper the VLOR General Council claims to be in agreement with the position that the Flemish Coalition Agreement should show restraint in assigning new tasks to education. In this respect the General Council states that education itself should continue to show vitality to actively meet societal expectations. In the paper the General Council also adds that "a concept of sustainability which is conceived in a sufficiently broad context can play a connecting and fostering role".

More information about the VLOR paper is available at <http://www.vlor.be/advies/memorandum>



2 Sustainability and internationalisation as global challenges

Flanders is part of a global society which is characterised by worldwide economic, political and cultural integration. This dynamics results in growing internationalisation which offers opportunities but also creates challenges in the demographic, social, technological, economic, ecological and administrative fields.

Around the world, *sustainability*¹ is presented as an idea, a process and an objective which allows us to address the current ecological, social and economic crisis (the so-called global change). Sustainability was given its current modern

and formal interpretation in the well-known Brundtland report (World Commission on Environment & Development, 1987). It is a key concept in UN treaties and owes much of its fame and popularity to it. However, the concept is by no means limited to this intergovernmental, political sphere. A *multitude of societal actors* has started using it (Hopwood et al., 2005), which is to be applauded and illustrates the attractive nature of the concept. However, Figure 1 also shows that this diversity of stakeholders can lead to a large *variety of interpretations*.

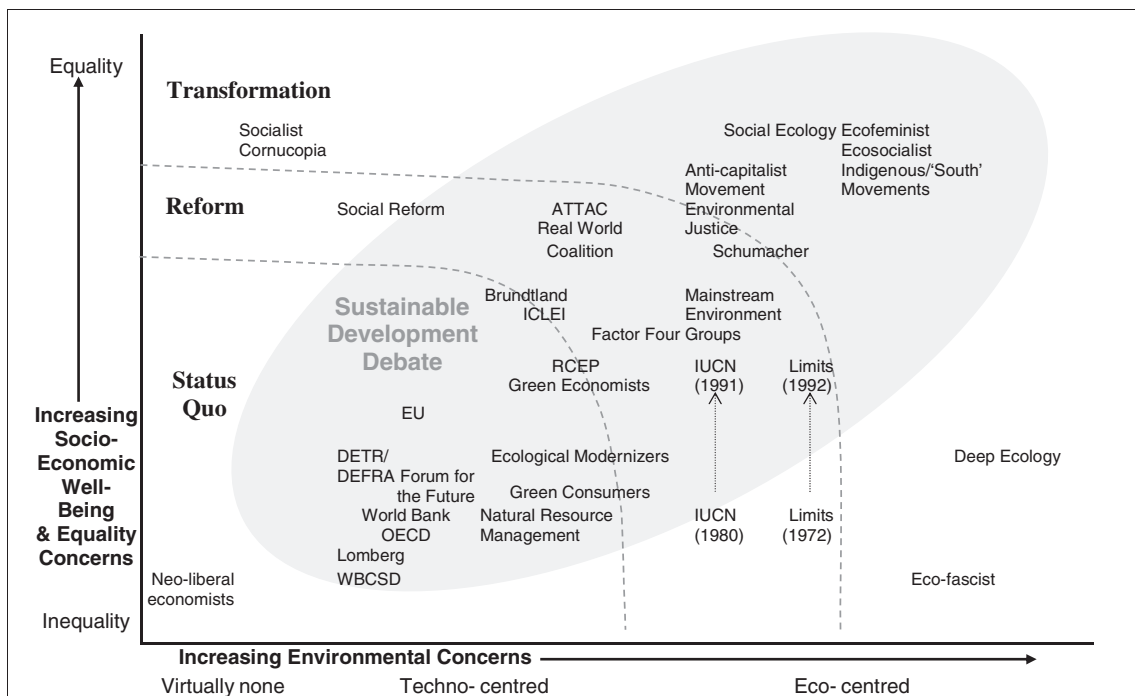


Figure 1: Schematic representation of the interpretations of sustainability (Hopwood et al., 2005): the grey 'cloud' shows the various interpretations of sustainability, which can be subdivided into status quo, reform-oriented and transformation interpretations. The X-axis shows a continuum from little to much attention to the environmental component of sustainability. The Y-axis shows a continuum from little to much attention to the social component of sustainability.

¹The text on sustainability below was mainly copied from the advisory paper 'Sustainability in Research'- Department of Environment, Nature and Energy - Ecocampus

It thus seems difficult to give an 'exact' definition of sustainability. Still, it is precisely this **constructive ambiguity** that makes the concept attractive and flexible, since it can be translated into a myriad of actions that are tailored to the needs and abilities of different stakeholders. Before and after the sustainability conference of Rio (UN Conference on Environment and Development, 1992) several sustainability principles were presented (Daly, 1990), such as normativity, justice and integration, which clarify the concept (Waas et al., 2011). Recently, Griggs et al. (2013) presented a **working definition** which incorporates the idea of planetary boundaries (Steffen et al., 2015): "development that meets the needs of the present while safeguarding Earth's life-support system, on which the welfare of current and future

generations depends".

The debate on the interpretation of sustainability is still ongoing, which is neither desirable nor doable. It shows that **varying interpretations** exist for the concept - often summarised as strong versus weak sustainability (Dedeurwaerdere, 2013; Dietz & Neumayer, 2007) - but that **these interpretations also have their limits** which guarantee the relevance of the concept of sustainability (Waas et al., 2011).

These limits to the interpretation are often depicted by placing 'people', 'planet' and 'prosperity' on top of each other as three concentric circles. This presentation visualises that prosperity should be created within the limits of the carrying capacity of both people and planet.

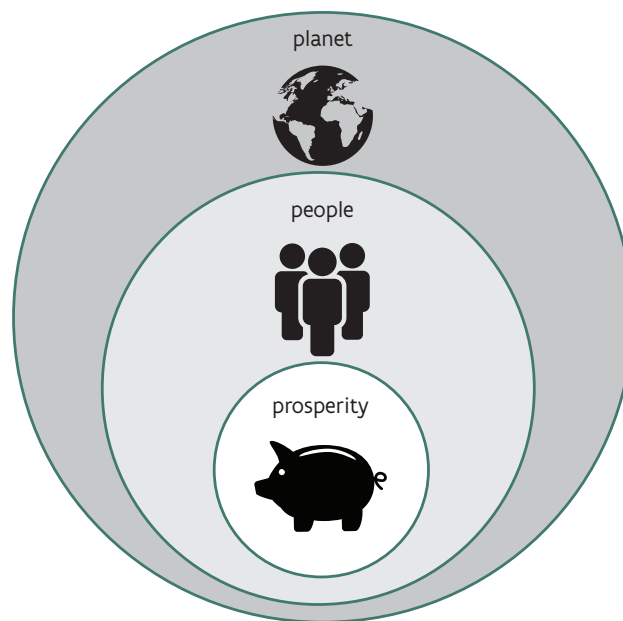


Figure 2: Visual presentation of the limits to the interpretation of sustainability

Sustainability and internationalisation in 3 higher education

3.1 Internationalisation in higher education

Internationalisation of higher education is a topic which has received increased attention in Flemish higher education institutions over the past years. Internationalisation implies more than student mobility and is “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education.” (Jane Knight 2003) Internationalisation of higher education is not a purpose in itself, but a means to an end.

Working on internationalisation within the core remit of education is a means to develop international and intercultural competencies in students which they need to function in a globalising and multicultural society.

More information about the interpretation of internationalisation in higher education:

- Mobility Action Plan ‘Brains on the move’:
<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/beleid/ActieplanMobiliteit/actieplan2013.pdf>
- ‘Descriptoren internationalisering – bologna experten 2009-2011’:
<http://www.vlaanderen.be/nl/publicaties/detail/descriptoren-internationalisering-hoger-onderwijs-bologna-experten-2009-2011>

3.2 ‘Sustainable higher education’

Sustainability too has moved to the forefront over the past years. Sustainability has consequences for higher education. On the one hand, on the level of the higher education system as a whole. On the other hand, at organisational level for the entire institution, including the traditional three-fold remit of education, research and social service provision; internationalisation; democratisation; innovation; campus management; student life; organisational structures and cultures; reporting and evaluation; and finally, ethics. Contrary to internationalisation, sustainability is not a means but a guiding concept.

Working on sustainability within the core remit of education implies that students, researchers and lecturers are given the space to gain experiences and acquire competencies for shaping a sustainable society.

More information about the interpretation of sustainability in higher education:

- Publication ‘Ontwerpen voor het onbekende – Inspiratieboek duurzaam hoger onderwijs’:
<http://www.vlaanderen.be/nl/publicaties/detail/ontwerpen-voor-het-onbekende-1>



Exploration of the relationship between sustainability and internationalisation in higher education institutions

4

4.1 My higher education institution works on internationalisation. What can sustainability offer?

The following question is prevalent in the internationalisation environment: “Why should we internationalise?” The traditional answer is: it is a means to acquire international and intercultural competencies which are necessary to be able to function in a globalising society.

Sustainability can offer added value in this context. It is not just about being able to function in a globalising society, but also about creating a sustainable global society. Global engagement and global citizenship are therefore dedicated to a sustainable society. It is about students, lecturers and researchers contributing to the creation of a sustainable society.

For example, students who help reflect in international teams on the development of sustainable electronics, e.g. in view of the extraction of precious metals in the South and the raw material-intensive economy in the North.

That sustainability can generate added value does not mean that all internationalisation activities should serve the purpose of sustainability alone. A student’s personal development through the promotion of language knowledge and international expertise is important as well. However, sustainability can offer added value when considering internationalisation activities as a whole within a higher education institution.

4.2 My higher education institution works on sustainability. What can internationalisation offer?

An international perspective is always close at hand and rarely lacks in sustainability circles. Sustainability issues, like the climate issue, are often characterised by complex interaction between the local and the global, between here and elsewhere. The effects can be felt locally, but the causes and solutions are global. This involves students, lecturers and researchers who consider local themes within the global system from an intercultural perspective and design actions from there.

For example, students who study the global solutions (or the lack thereof) for climate change.

On the other hand, it is both possible and recommendable to work on sustainability in higher education institutions without an international perspective. Through their (professional) work, students, lecturers and researchers can contribute locally to a society where prosperity is created within the limits of both people and society. One example is the campus as living lab, for which students design and/or implement recommendations for making it sustainable (liveable and greener). However, an international and intercultural perspective may offer added value when considering sustainability as a whole within a higher education institution.

4.3 Working together on internationalisation and sustainability within a higher education institution

'A focus on global issues and sustainability isn't about adding another commitment to an already overloaded curriculum. In fact, the framework of global sustainability advances educational objectives by making all subjects more engaging, relevant, and solutions-oriented.'

www.facingthefuture.org

The conclusion is that the ambitions of internationalisation and sustainability are mutually reinforcing. On the one hand by aiming to create a sustainable society when fleshing out internationalisation activities. On the other hand, by taking the international and intercultural perspective into account in sustainability activities. The intention is to shape a global citizenship which implies exchanging ideas and taking up social and ecological responsibility at both local and global level.

This vision is shared internationally in the [Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda](#). This sustainability agenda, which succeeded the Millennium Development Goals, was adopted by the UN on 25 September 2015. [The Sustainable](#)

[Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) contain an important reference to education for sustainability and global citizenship under Goal 4 "Education" in paragraph 4.7: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development". Moreover, the SDGs reaffirm yet again that we have a lot of societal challenges ahead of us which require a sustainable and international approach.

'Sustainability and internationalisation'

5 working areas

Higher education institutions can provide a sustainable response to global societal challenges in which sustainability and internationalisation mutually reinforce each other. That is why work should be done on the Mission and vision of an institution (5.1), Education (5.2), Capacity building among staff (5.3) and the Valorisation of societal impact (5.4). The message seems to be to take action on several fronts at the same time.

Below, a number of working areas are described for working simultaneously on sustainability and internationalisation. The synergy is each time illustrated with examples.

5.1 Working area 1: Mission and vision of the institution

An important working area is no doubt the mission and vision of an institution. A good vision gives a concrete idea of the future of a higher education institution. It answers the question 'How do we see ourselves in tomorrow's world?' On the one hand, you devote attention to future developments within the higher education institution and the changes that may be expected in its surroundings. On the other hand, you indicate how, as an organisation, you want to respond to these developments and changes. The basic idea, then, is to examine how you deal with a global society where sustainability issues are becoming increasingly manifest.

The following questions may help an institution on its way. The first set of questions pertains to the theme 'internationalisation'; the other set to the theme 'sustainability'.

- 1 What role do you think your higher education institution should play in a global society? What does internationalisation mean for your institution? Specifically also: Why should so many students and lecturers go abroad or come to Flanders each year? Why should the curriculum be internationalised?
 - A useful reference work is the [Handboek Internationalisering \(Internationalisation Guide\)](#) ³
 - Inspiration material is available on the [Good Practices in Internationalisation Platform](#) ⁴

- 2 How do you envisage your higher education institution in a world which is increasingly faced with (global) sustainability issues? What does sustainability mean for your institution? Specifically also: What does sustainability mean for your programmes of study? For your internationalisation ambitions? For your research? For your development cooperation? For your operation?
 - A useful reference work is the [inspiration book and reference framework 'Duurzaam Hoger Onderwijs' \(Sustainable Higher Education\)](#).⁵
 - A helpful reflection instrument is the [LiFE reflection instrument](#).⁶
 - Inspirational material regarding sustainability in programmes of study can be found on the [digital inspiration wall](#).⁷
 - All this information is available on the [website of Ecocampus](#).⁸

A clear policy vision sets out a framework for members of staff who are engaged in internationalisation and/or sustainability.

³ <http://www.handboek-internationalisering.be>

⁴ http://www.nvao.net/good_practices_in_internationalisation_platform

⁵ <https://www.vlaanderen.be/nl/publicaties/detail/ontwerpen-voor-het-onbekende-1>

⁶ <https://www.lne.be/life-reflectie-instrument>

⁷ <https://www.lne.be/inspiratiemuur>

⁸ ecocampus.lne.be

Example 1:**Mission and vision – AMS**

Antwerp Management School is an autonomous forward-looking business school that helps its customers to create sustainable value by shaping talent into becoming **Global Citizens**, mastering the art of decision-making and leading people.

To accomplish this mission, Antwerp Management School delivers to its customers state-of-the-art management knowledge, anchored in a business and organisational context. This is the fundamental basis on which we put three value pillars that we believe are needed to become Global Citizens:

- 1 Self-awareness, which results in **cooperation** with others
- 2 Global Perspective, which results in **resourcefulness** to find appropriate solutions for problems and issues
- 3 Societal Consciousness, which results in **sustainability** in essential economic processes, which is of fundamental value to businesses.

INSTITUTION:

Antwerp Management School

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.antwerpmanagementschool.be/en/about-antwerp-management-school/mission-vision>

5.2 Working area 2: Core remit of education

A second working area is the education of an institution. In this context integrated work on sustainability and internationalisation can be reflected in:

- the mission and vision of a programme of study (6.2.1)
- the learning outcomes of programmes of study (6.2.2)
- the curriculum activities (6.2.3)
- the learning environment (6.2.4).

5.2.1. MISSION AND VISION OF THE PROGRAMME OF STUDY

The mission and vision of a programme of study imply support for integrated work on sustainability and internationalisation. It answers the following questions: What is the purpose of our programme of study?, How do we envisage our programme of study in tomorrow's world?, What changes are coming?, How do we respond to this?, How do we address the demand for more internationalisation?, What do we want to offer our students?, etc.

Example 2:**Mission of the Electromechanics Programme – PXL****MISSION:**

Antwerp Management School

The Electromechanics Bachelor Programme trains responsible, high-educated, versatile, technical specialists with a broad technological basic knowledge and an open mind for a sustainable international future. It offers training into excellent professionals with ambition, innovative strength and the ability to anticipate. The programme is targeted on technical specialists and project managers in Maintenance Technology and Climatology. With a personal approach and guidance we create opportunities for development and further professionalisation for each student.





CORE VALUES:

- Multidisciplinary and authentic: The Electromechanics programme attaches great weight to authentic education combined with professional practice. We bring the professional practice to our university college by carrying out realistic projects (service provision and research), together with the students, for the professional field. Reversely also by sending students to businesses both home and abroad to do bachelor tests in real-life situations.
- Innovative and enterprising: The Electromechanics programme wants to train students who can place problems in a broad perspective, look for solutions in an innovative manner and show entrepreneurial spirit.
- (International) cooperation: The Electromechanics programme considers close cooperation with its entire network, including the student committee, alumni in the work field committee and international partners, to be of crucial importance.
- Sustainability: As a technical programme, Electromechanics attaches great importance to a circular economy. It is essential for the programme to focus on a sustainable future. We must train students into professionals who adopt a sustainable approach to the future.
- Committed: The Electromechanics programme believes it essential for the whole training team to commit itself and actively take initiatives in addition to the regular curriculum. In this way the team can set a good example and pass on its own enthusiasm to the students.
- Empassion: The Electromechanics programme is a programme that wants to stand for passion and empathy, both in lecturers and in students. It is vital that everyone gets to know each other's social environment in order to make the programme stronger.

INSTITUTION:

University college PXL

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5.2.2. PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

Even when learning outcomes are focused on you can do integrated work on sustainability and internationalisation. You can, for instance, use the overlap and the distinction between competencies for sustainability and international and intercultural competencies as starting point. After that, regard is given to in-house learning outcomes and curriculum activities.

Competencies for sustainability are described in the publication 'Duurzame ontwikkeling als kompas bij de opmaak van leerresultaten' (Sustainable development as a compass for [drawing up learning outcomes](#)).⁹

An interpretation of international and intercultural competencies is given by the [ICOM project](#)¹⁰

Example 3:**Description of individuality and starting points for strengthening competencies for sustainability and international and intercultural competencies - KDG, UCLL, PXL and Ecocampus**

With collaboration from Els Apers (KDG), Gunilla De Graef (KDG), Karine Hindrix (UCLL) and Ruth Jamers (PXL) Ecocampus looked for the distinction between competencies for sustainability and international and intercultural competencies and for ways to strengthen them. This exercise was carried out on the basis of the publication 'Sustainable development as a compass for drawing up learning outcomes' and the ICOM framework. The participants believed that a similar exercise could prove useful for teaching staff as the start of a more integrated curriculum practice.

⁹ <http://www.lne.be/doelgroepen/onderwijs/ecocampus/kennis-en-instrumentenhub/leidraad-do-als-kompas-bij-de-opmaak-van-leerresultaten>

¹⁰ <http://www.internationalecompetenties.be/nl/icoms/>

Below, we present a summary description of the four main conclusions.

1. Each competency framework has its individuality

Both competency frameworks have a clear individuality. For instance, competency units, like language proficiency, are inherent in international and intercultural competencies, whereas systems thinking is inherent in competencies for sustainability. This confirms the position that competency units are necessary to be able to respond quickly and flexibly to societal challenges.

Cross-fertilisation also takes place in both competency units. This reinforces both competency units in the practice of a programme of study.

2. Intercultural competencies strengthen interpersonal competencies for sustainability

A first starting point is the interpersonal competencies (competencies for sustainability) and intercultural competencies (ICOM framework). Interpersonal competencies focus on cooperation and negotiation between different actors/stakeholders/interests. Intercultural competencies put the various cultural backgrounds in the forefront within this larger context. The participants regarded this intercultural dimension as an added value compared to the interpersonal competencies in the competencies for sustainability.

3. Anticipatory, normative and strategic competencies reinforce global engagement

A second starting point between both competency frameworks is the international engagement in societal or international topics and issues (ICOM framework - global engagement) and the anticipatory, normative and strategic competencies (competencies for sustainability). Global engagement within the ICOM framework is about forming and expressing an opinion on societal international topics and showing societal involvement. Competencies for sustainability go one step further. Anticipatory and normative competencies imply the collective negotiation of sustainable goals and strategies and the anticipation of a non-sustainable variant of the future. Moreover, strategic competencies are about learning to use strategies to realise sustainable goals. Whereas global engagement involves exploring societal topics, anticipatory and normative competencies concentrate on trying to find a sustainable response, and strategic competencies emphasise the actual realisation of actions for a sustainability society. According to the participants, sustainability can in that sense be part of a non-negotiable framework which is to be pursued, as is also put forward in the sustainable development goals.

4. Both personal and societal development are important

A third starting point is the difference in focus on personal development and societal development. Whereas international and intercultural competencies mainly focus on the student's personal development, competencies for sustainability concentrate on the societal development. It was the opinion of the ad hoc working group that both emphases should be discussed and balanced in a programme of study.

INSTITUTION:

- Karel de Grote University College
- Leuven-Limburg university-colleges
- PXL University College
- Ecocampus

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5.2.3. CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES FOR INTERNATIONALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

In curriculum activities the reinforcement between internationalisation and sustainability, in other words cross-border sustainability, becomes really tangible. We highlight 8 different didactic options to consolidate this reinforcement. Each option is illustrated with current examples from higher education. We do not pretend to give an exhaustive list. The first four options rather have to do with reinforcing internationalisation and sustainability in the curriculum @home. The last four inspiration options address the reinforcement of internationalisation and sustainability for students who go abroad.

Inspiration 1: Analysis of sustainability challenges from a local to an international perspective

A first didactic starting point is to examine sustainability challenges that reveal themselves in the local environment of the campus. Students can research them and then position them in an international context or system. Or reversely: the research of sustainability challenges that receive international attention can be translated to the local level and be embedded there.

Take, for instance, the sustainability issue surrounding climate change. It is a complex phenomenon that can be approached from various angles: legally, ecologically, anthropologically, climatologically, etc. It features worldwide on the political agenda, as well as reveals itself locally in the growing stream of climate refugees arriving in Flanders.

What are **sustainability challenges**? They are wicked problems. Wicked problems are unstructured, meaning that there is uncertainty about the knowledge base (there is a lot we do not know) and there is disagreement on norms and values (Zeijl-Rozema et al., 2008). Just think of sustainability challenges like climate, energy, neighbourhood liveability, mobility, spatial planning and materials use. What is typical of these sustainability challenges is that they are locally embedded (e.g. poorly insulated digs in the neighbourhood of the campus), and that they require a global vision and approach (e.g. energy).

Example 4:

Think Global, Act Local (TGAL) workshop – Huron University College

ABSTRACT:

The TGAL initiative aims to offer students the opportunity to commit within their curriculum to local initiatives in view of the global issues they learn about during their studies. The initiative is founded on strong cooperation with civil society organisations engaged in global issues in London (Ontario - Canada). Students work around topics like immigration and refugees, environment, poverty, HIV/AIDS and violence against women.

INSTITUTION:

Huron University college - Center for International Studies

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.huronuc.ca/Academics/FacultyofArtsandSocialScience/CentreforGlobalStudies>

Inspiration 2: Creating sustainable global visions for the future

A second didactic starting point is the intercultural creation of a sustainable vision for the future and the design of strategies to achieve it. This may involve the creation of a future vision for a topic like education, mobility, a city, a migration policy, etc. Students and lecturers reflect on the following questions:

- What is sustainable?
- What does global engagement mean in this context?
- What are the cultural differences or similarities?
- What consequences do specific choices have (for others)?

These questions are on the intersection of sustainability and internationalisation.

By designing various sustainable visions for the future (different alternatives), the participants also develop a mental flexibility and subsequently an ability to change in view of the societal challenges.

Example 5:

Intensive Programme 'Well-being and Economic Growth' - KDG University College

ABSTRACT:

Over a period of ten days participants from socio-educational care work and business studies in Flanders and other European countries (Sweden, Spain, Bulgaria, Finland and Germany) take part in a training programme sponsored by the EU. The subject is the relation between well-being and welfare. Key focus is placed on exploring an alternative scenario for an economic model that is based on continuous growth. Apart from a fascinating provision of guest lectures, these multicultural and multidisciplinary working groups formulate visions for the future, action plans for realising these visions, and policy recommendations.

INSTITUTIONS:

Karel de Grote University College together with UCCL (formerly KHLeuven) and foreign partners

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<http://www.wellbeinggrowth.eu/>

Example 6:

'Tackle the Grand Societal Challenges - Prototype the future with Sustainable Value'. Fontys Hogescholen

ABSTRACT:

Solutions for the grand societal challenges (GSC) help Europe to create a sustainable society. Lecturers of Fontys find, however, that the EU Horizon 2020 programme which was designed to that end is 'boarded up' with outlined pathways and is in addition backed up with project calls that are in line with today's thinking patterns. Still, they believe that young professionals are willing to contribute to their own future. For this reason, they produced a course for shaping the (distant) future. Students were challenged to design a desired future for 2050 and make it as concrete as possible through backcasting. They were asked to create a TED Talk. To that end they had to create a vision, develop a corresponding ecosystem, analyse relevant future stakeholders and find and use signs for drawing up a roadmap to achieve this desired future. In addition, they had to make a prototype to substantiate their vision on 2050.

INSTITUTION:

Academy for Creative Industries, Fontys Hogescholen (Nederland)

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ch.heselmans@fontys.nl en l.hofman@fontys.nl

Example 7:**Maono-project - UCOS****ABSTRACT:**

For three years in a row 15 Belgian and 15 Congolese young adults met each other over a period of three to four weeks in the province of Katanga, in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Together they explored different visions on the future (MAONO in Swahili). The trips were cultural exchanges during which they immersed in each other's social environment and forged relationships. The programme included visits to local organisations in the city of Lubumbashi, a visit to the Katangese inland and a stay with host families, which allowed the young people to personally get to know development processes and culture in Congo. At the end of the exchange the young people shared their combined visions for the future with a number of local artists who converted them to works of art.

INSTITUTION:

Universitair Centrum voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking/UCOS (University Centre for Development Cooperation)

MORE INFORMATION:

www.ucos.be

Example 8:**Generation under construction - UCOS****ABSTRACT:**

Generation Under Construction is an exchange project between students from Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Université de Lubumbashi (Congo) and Sichuan University (China). In Generation Under Construction the participating students welcome each other in their home country for three years and explore how they can shape their future.

INSTITUTION:

Universitair Centrum voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (UCOS) (University Centre for Development Cooperation)

MORE INFORMATION:

www.ucos.be

Inspiration 3: Origin/life cycle analysis of a product

A third didactic starting point is products (like clothing, nutrition and electronic devices) with an international life cycle which can be made increasingly sustainable (working conditions, food miles, raw material extraction, etc.). Such products make the sustainability challenges concrete, tell a global story, link up with the student's social environment and make the consideration of alternatives challenging.

Example 9:**Dissect a happy meal – Wageningen University****ABSTRACT:**

Prof. Dr. Arjen Wals often starts his lectures by handing out parts of a Happy Meal of fast food chain McDonald's. The students, divided into small teams, are given part of the meal: the Coke, the chips, the hamburger or the 'free' toy. They have to answer three questions:

- 1 What does it contain?
- 2 Where does it come from?
- 3 Can we produce a Happy Meal that actually makes us happy?

According to Prof. Dr. Arjen Wals it is remarkable what students find on the Internet, at the library and even through observations at McDonald's. Some of the things they discovered:

- They discover, for instance, that fast food chains use a specific type of potato which guarantees that the chips will maintain their quality. As a result, the potato growers of McDonald's grow only a few varieties of potatoes. This makes these varieties more sensitive to diseases and pests, which compels farmers to use more pesticides. This sensitivity in its turn leads to the use of genetically modified varieties.
- The students also discover that McDonald's, due to consumer pressure, does not use genetically modified potato varieties. However, another team finds out that the Diet Coke contains genetically modified corn sweeteners. This gets a discussion going on genetic modification.
- The toy also raises a lot of questions each time: Where was it made? By whom? How long is it played with? What happens to it in the end?

Each product from the Happy Meal stirs up another discussion and students become aware of matters they never used to dwell on before.

This is insufficient, however, since becoming aware of something but not acting on it leads to apathy and feelings of powerlessness. That is why there is a crucial third question: Can we produce a Happy Meal that actually makes us happy? The teams discuss alternatives that are healthier and CO₂ neutral and are produced with more respect for people and animals. One team comes up with an alternative for the toy in the form of a fair trade toy, whereas others suggest organic meat from the neighbourhood. The subsequent calculation exercise shows that the alternative is much more expensive. This triggers a discussion on consumers' responsibility and their willingness and capacity to pay more for their food.

By dissecting a Happy Meal, students learn to ask questions, look for reliable information and think critically. It raises matters like North-South relations, health issues, ethical issues, the role of businesses, consumerism, crop biodiversity, child labour, etc. They learn how to see everyday things in a different light. Not so they would never eat another Happy Meal, but to learn to take a critical view on food consumption in relation to sustainability. The idea is for graduates to check for each problem and each solution whether or not it will lead to resource depletion or the exploitation of people somewhere in the world. The graduates thus often have to come up with innovative solutions that result in an integrated sustainable community, school or agriculture. Someone who is capable of this, has the ability to think 'differently', to think out of the box. Someone like that should also be able to picture him or herself in other people's social environments and minds. It is about a change in perspective: from a western culture to another, from the present to a different era, from local to international, from a young person to an older person, or even from a human to another species.

INSTITUTION:

Wageningen University

MORE INFORMATION:

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Example 10:**Your smartphone dismantled - Ecocampus****ABSTRACT:**

'Your smartphone dismantled' is one of the action sheets in the EDGE kit, an educational instrument to support lecturers in integrating sustainability (in this case raw materials) into economic programmes of study.

The action sheet takes the aforementioned example developed by Prof. Dr. Arjen Wals to the teaching practice of students in economic programmes of study.

The starting point is the same, i.e. the question 'What does it contain and where does it come from?' The students are challenged, in small teams, to find explanations for the answers to that question on the basis of the economic frameworks they have learned about.

Then, they go one step further. In a second exercise the students are challenged in small groups to also look beyond the economic discipline: they examine the impact of a smartphone's current life cycle on various stakeholders in Peru, China and Europe. As a third step, the students formulate recommendations for a real company 'Fairphone' on the basis of the above mentioned findings.

INSTITUTION:

Ecocampus, EDGE kit (Educatie voor Duurzaam Grondstoffenbeheer in Economische opleidingen/Education for Sustainable Resource Management in Economic Programmes)

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.edgekit.be/>

Example 11:**Campaign 'Let your blue jeans talk... green' - Netwerk Bewust Verbruiken, Test-Aankoop, Ecolife vzw and Schone Kleren Campagne****ABSTRACT:**

Within the framework of the campaign 'Let your blue jeans talk... Green' a great deal of information was collected on the used raw materials, the production process (water consumption, working conditions, kilometres) and sustainable alternatives for a pair of jeans. This offers an insight into the international chain and the related sustainability issues.

INSTITUTIONS:

- Netwerk Bewust Verbruiken
- Test-Aankoop
- Ecolife vzw
- Schone Kleren Campagne

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://kleurbekennen.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/greenjeans-dossier.pdf>

<http://www.bewustverbruiken.be/artikel/let-your-blue-jeans-talk-green>

Inspiration 4: The relationship between one or more disciplines and sustainability challenges

A fourth didactic starting point is the search for opportunities to work on sustainable development in one's own discipline. The key question may be: 'What contribution can my discipline make to solving today's sustainability challenges (in which the local and the global are interwoven)?'

Example 12:

International 'Sustainability' Week - UA

ABSTRACT:

During this international week bachelor students in Applied Economics attend guest lectures on sustainability given by international speakers and representatives from the business community. In 2014, the speakers included representatives from Unilever, BASF, Deloitte, Elia, Oxfam, Triodos, Copenhagen Business School, Toyota, WWF and Umicore. This allows the theme to be approached from various angles (e.g. financial, marketing, ecological and ethical perspectives). This matter is also further explored in workshops which are each attended by 60 students. Finally, students work in small teams (which each include one international student) to develop a paper which analyses a sustainability topic in an international organisation and a poster which summarises the topic they are analysing. The poster is presented during this international week, and the paper is submitted afterwards.

INSTITUTION:

University of Antwerp, Faculty of Applied Economics

MORE INFORMATION:

Prof. Luc Van Liedekerke

Prof. Rudy Martens

<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/faculties/faculty-of-applied-economics/news-and-events/international-week/>

Example 13:

Globalisation International Law and Sustainable Development - VUB

ABSTRACT:

This course first sets out the key determinants and challenges of globalisation. It also illustrates the existing consensus that international law and global governance structures can and should be mobilised to steer globalisation towards realising the broad economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development (1990 Paris Charter, 1992 Rio, 1995 Copenhagen, 2000 MDGs, 2015 SDGs). Students are divided into teams (maximum 4 students) and asked to write a joint research paper (in English) on a topic of their choice. In this paper they must:

- clearly identify and describe a particular globalisation challenge
- analyse and evaluate the relevant action undertaken by the competent global governance structures to address the challenge
- formulate recommendations for further action.

INSTITUTION:

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Faculty of Law and Criminology, Department of International and European Law

MORE INFORMATION:

Servatius.Van.Thiel@vub.ac.be

<http://www.vub.ac.be/en/study/fiches/57263/globalization-international-law-and-sustainable-development>

Example 14:**Global Development Issues – Fontys Hogescholen****ABSTRACT:**

Approximately 100 students from various programmes of study (journalism, communication & multimedia design, pedagogy, etc.) follow the minor Global Development Issues (GDI). Students address cross-border sustainability issues (spatial inequality, rich-poor divide, environmental issues, the production of sufficient and safe food for all) and reflect on how they can make a contribution with their own discipline from an economic, ecological, political or cultural angle. This requires well-informed choices and the ability to ask the right questions with regard to sustainability, justice and interculturalism. This allows students to become engaged in developing sustainable solutions on the basis of a shared responsibility. The minor consists of a content-based programme and a project assignment.

INSTITUTION:

Fontys Hogescholen (Netherlands)

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://fontys.nl/Studeren/Minors/Global-Development-Issues.htm>

Example 15:**Provision of international lecturers on mining and a sustainable use of metals – CATAPA****ABSTRACT:**

Each year, CATAPA provides lecturers on mining and a sustainable use of metals, who are mostly experts by experience, to a large number of universities and university colleges (UA, KU Leuven, KDG, UGent). Through its experts database, CATAPA offers a list of experts and guest lecturers who can give lectures and workshops on a diverse range of topics, including the impact of mining on the environment, the economy, societies, etc.

CATAPA is a volunteering organisation that has, since 2005, been working around sustainable development and (alternative) globalisation, with a specific focus on mining issues in Latin America. To actually contribute to a sustainable solution for the ecological and climate crisis, it encourages a fairer mining industry and a more sustainable use of metals. To that end it raises awareness, engages in networking, conducts research, participates in lobbying, exchanges practices and supports farming communities that are threatened by multinational mining companies in the partner countries Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru. CATAPA also follows some open-pit mining cases in Europe, especially in Romania and Greece.

INSTITUTION:

CATAPA

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://catapa.be/en>

Example 16:**Intensive Programme 'Ecommotive' - Howest & KDG****ABSTRACT:**

Automotive students from Antwerp and Portugal join forces with Communications and Marketing students from Kortrijk, Hungary, Austria, Spain and Finland to develop new marketing and communication strategies in order to make customers accept the end of the reign of "Car Almighty" and to warm the new generation to ecological vehicles. Mixed teams of some 7 to 8 students work for ten days on different approaches to match ecologically innovative and marketable automotive solutions. Each team is assigned an alternative fuel or drive which is currently being developed in the automotive technology sector and will design a complete communication plan and media campaign. Partnership lecturers and experts offer them both guidance and advice. The communication plans and marketing strategies are evaluated by a jury of experts from the automotive industry and lecturers. The IP ends on 7 March with a jury presentation and the presentation of an award for the best team.

INSTITUTIONS:

University College West Flanders, Communications Management (Kortrijk)
Karel de Grote University College, Automotive Technology (Antwerp)

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.howest.be/Default.aspx?target=howest&lan=nl&item=316>

Inspiration 5: International summer school on sustainability

A fifth didactic starting point is the international summer schools on sustainability in general or on topics that make sustainability concrete for a programme of study (like social entrepreneurship, corporate social responsibility (CSR), eco design, etc.).

Example 17:**Climate-KIC - European Institute of Innovation & Technology****ABSTRACT:**

Last summer, Climate-KIC gathered around 300 young people for the 5-week summer school on entrepreneurship and climate innovation. The participants attended lectures on science, technology and entrepreneurship and wrote a business plan to start up their own green business. Anyone who desired to do so could request further guidance or take part in international pitch competitions.

INSTITUTION:

European Institute of Innovation & Technology

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.climate-kic.org/for-students/>

Example 18:**International Economy and Sustainable Development - INNES Institute****ABSTRACT:**

This summer school is described as follows: "The course will clarify if the current paradigm in international economy, international finance and macroeconomic regulation is sustainable. This question will be enriched by an analysis of the impacts of changing environment on management and citizenship through the concepts of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development."

INSTITUTION:

INNES Institute (Vienna)

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/course/3540/international-economy-and-sustainable-development>

Inspiration 6: International competition around a sustainability challenge

A sixth didactic starting point is the international competitions which focus on a sustainability challenge.

Example 19:**LSM cup****ABSTRACT:**

The LSM Cup is organised by LSM Conseil. It is an international business game on the theme of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Four students work together in an international, interdisciplinary team. In one single day they are presented with three business challenges which companies are actually faced with. Each team works on a solution for each challenge, which is then presented to a jury of businesses, CSR experts and professors. After each session, a Crack the Case session is held where students can learn from their mistakes. The teams are international and multidisciplinary.

INSTITUTION:

LSM conseil

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.lsmcup.be/>

Example 20:**Solar team - KULeuven****ABSTRACT:**

The Solar Team is composed of 17 Engineering Technology students. Every two years, a new team is selected to build a new solar car. Each part of the car is designed and constructed by the students themselves in the course of only one year. To make everything go smoothly, each team member is given a specific task to specialise in. Naturally, this task also entails responsibility, as a result of which not only the technical aspect is important but so is working together in a team and making their own decisions. The team will then leave for Australia with the new car to compete against top universities from all over the world in the World Solar Challenge, the unofficial world championship for solar cars. Since the rules and experiences of the team are growing in number, new and innovative solutions have to be found for the presented challenges.

INSTITUTION:

KULeuven, students from the course of study 'Engineering Technology' (specialisation 'Electromechanical Engineering' and 'Electronics Engineering')

MORE INFORMATION

www.solarteam.be

Inspiration 7: International internship/project/practical experience regarding sustainability challenges

A seventh didactic starting point is the integration of actual sustainability challenges into (international) internships, studies and projects. This can be done by focusing on and stimulating programmes, internships, research or projects in which students gain international experience in looking for solutions for real sustainability challenges. Possible actions include the promotion of internships with NGOs, schools and businesses that are engaged in CSR.

Example 21:**Academics for development - AFD****ABSTRACT:**

The goal of Academics for Development is to offer students the possibility to have social impact in the South in a sustainable and meaningful way by applying the knowledge they have acquired. To that end, AFD organises annual projects in which students work together in teams on a specific issue put forward by an NGO and actually implement this project in the South during the summer. AFD seeks to connect students, the South and the business community in a unique way:

- Students lack practical and international experience as a supplement to theoretical training.
- The business community is looking for ways to engage in development cooperation in a meaningful way. Moreover, businesses are interested in ambitious and enterprising students.
- The South wants sustainability with a focus on local communities.

INSTITUTION:

Academics for Development

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.academicsfordevelopment.be/home/>

Example 22:**Internships in the South - VVOB****ABSTRACT:**

The Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand/VVOB) was established in 1982 as a non-profit-making organisation. VVOB's motto 'Education for Development' reflects the general objective to contribute to poverty reduction and the creation of a more just world with more opportunities for all. The organisation wants to sustainably improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of education and training in developing countries. Each year, some thirty students from Flemish university colleges and universities do an internship in partner countries of VVOB under the guidance of VVOB. Selections take place for this each year.

INSTITUTION:

Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand/VVOB (Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance)

MORE INFORMATION

www.vvob.be

Example 23:**Travel grant for internship or research stay in the South - VLIR-UOS****ABSTRACT:**

A travel grant is a financial compensation amounting to €1,000 for students enrolled at a Flemish university or university college for a stay of at least one month in one of the 54 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This stay is part of a recognised programme component, such as an internship or a dissertation. Examples of internships and research stays in the South: placement in a hospital as a nurse or doctor, music education in a primary school, research on the impact of national parks on the local population, research into the control of agricultural pests, research on the use of digital information channels, research into creative ways to learn a foreign language, research into the development of a hydropower plant, etc.

INSTITUTION:

VLIR UOS

MEER INFO:

<http://www.vliruos.be/nl/>

Inspiration 8: Volunteer work during a stay abroad

An eighth didactic starting point is to promote (extra) curricular activities for a sustainable society, like volunteer work, during a stay abroad.

Example 24:**www.gostrange.be - Go Strange****ABSTRACT:**

On this website students can find information about volunteer work/exchanges/internships abroad and/or in the South.

INSTITUTION:

Go Strange

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.gostrange.be/>

Example 25:**Volunteer work in addition to the academic internship programme of The Washington Center****ABSTRACT:**

UGent student Annelies Van Huffel did some voluntary work during her participation in the academic internship programme of The Washington Center. One day every week she taught extra lessons 'English as a second language' to young Latin American immigrants at The Next Step Public Charter School. This institution offers second chance education to anyone who cannot attend mainstream education. By enabling these young people to communicate in English they are one step closer to realising their American Dream, according to student Annelies Van Huffel.

INSTITUTION:

The Washington Center

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.studeerinhetsbuitenland.be/nl/beurzen/the-washington-center/>

Example 26:**Humasol offers multidisciplinary projects around renewable energy and sustainability in the South.****ABSTRACT:**

Humasol is a Belgian organisation which offers students the opportunity to carry out renewable energy projects in the South. Humasol is entirely dependent on committed students who have an interest in development cooperation and sustainability. Each year, more than 30 students from various programmes of study participate in a technical, social and/or cultural project, together with the local people, in countries like Benin, Kenya, Congo and Peru. To that end Humasol works together with several Flemish universities. These multidisciplinary projects often take place within the framework of an internship.

INSTITUTION:

Humasol

MORE INFORMATION:

www.humasol.be

5.2.4. Learning environment for internationalisation and sustainability

A fourth possibility is to create a learning environment in Flemish higher education institutions which adopts an integrated approach to internationalisation and sustainability.

Inspiration 1: Coaching students in terms of mobility

When coaching outgoing students, attention should be devoted to global citizenship for a sustainable society.

Example 27:

Workshop for outgoing students - UCOS

ABSTRACT:

UCOS coaches students who go to the South or elsewhere in the world within the framework of an internship, research stay or volunteer work, with an eye to developing global citizenship competencies. These competencies allow them to actively contribute to just North-South relations and a sustainable world which is based on solidarity.

Preparation days are organised around the following central themes and questions:

- Building an intercultural reference framework
- Reflecting on their own contribution during and after the experience in the South
- Communicating on and in another culture
- Dealing with people in a different socio-economic context.

Through concrete cases, exercises and group discussions students are presented with ideas, vehicles and tips for an instructive experience in the South. Intercultural competencies are practised using interactive methodologies.

The preparation days are organised in collaboration with Flemish higher education institutions.

INSTITUTION:

University Centre for Development Cooperation

MORE INFORMATION:

an.maeyens@ucos.be tel.: 02/614.81.65. of www.ucos.be

Inspiratie 2: milieu-impact studentenmobiliteit

Progress is definitely still to be made in terms of the environmental impact of student mobility. Incentives can be provided for using sustainable modes of travel (e.g. train) and organising meetings (e.g. virtual meetings).

Example 28:

Promoting sustainable mobility among Erasmus students - UGent1010

ABSTRACT:

UGent1010 promotes sustainable mobility among Erasmus students. Each year, around 270,000 students take part in the Erasmus programme. Encouraging this target group to use alternative modes of transport when travelling to their destination may have a huge impact. This is also in line with the objectives of the Erasmus programme, viz. to develop autonomy and responsibility. UGent1010 would like the University of Ghent to take a clear stand on this issue in order to serve as an example for other universities and by extension for the European Commission to integrate sustainability throughout the Erasmus programme.

In concrete terms, UGent1010 argues for:

- Changes to the Erasmus information brochure:
 - *Offering general information about the impact of air travel.*
 - *Information about alternative modes of transport, like bus, train and full cars, including references to useful websites on sustainable mobility (carpooling eurostop.be, raileurope.com, compenco2.be).*
 - *Replacing the picture of a plane on the front page of the Erasmus brochure with a picture of a train.*
 - *An online forum on the website where students can arrange to travel together and where students can place testimonies on their hitchhiking or cycling adventures to their Erasmus destinations.*
- Active incentives to choose a sustainable mode of transport. In concrete terms:
 - *Ghent University could for instance organise an Erasmus bus service. This bus would follow a route along which several Erasmus destinations are located.*
 - *Financial compensation for using more sustainable modes of transport. This could be done by reducing the scholarship of air travellers by a small percentage to compensate sustainable travellers. For instance, the airline company Brussels Airlines offers discounts to exchange students. This could also be done for using sustainable modes of transport.*
- Keeping statistics on which modes of transport are used by students. These data could be used to develop a sustainability strategy for Erasmus mobility, which would make Ghent University one of the pioneers in sustainable Erasmus mobility.

INSTITUTION:

UGent1010

MORE INFORMATION:

deiraderijcke@gmail.com

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5.3. Working area 3: Capacity building among staff

The staff (lecturers, researchers, support personnel) of an organisation can also commit to internationalisation in view of sustainability. They can be offered opportunities to that end through training programmes (e.g. doctoral schools), initiatives within the framework of staff mobility or participation in international networks.

Example 29:

Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) – VLIR-UOS and Anton De Kom University

ABSTRACT:

VLIR-UOS supports long-term multi-disciplinary partnerships between Flemish academics and a university in the South. These partnerships may last 10 years or more. One example is AdeKUS, which is a unique partnership between the Anton de Kom University in Suriname (AdeKUS) and several Flemish universities. Six separate projects are included in the Partner Programme (e.g. set-up of the Master of Sciences programme on education for sustainable development). During the implementation of the Partner Programme, AdeKUS will evolve to an institute for highly qualified scientific education, research, and services to society in specific areas with the aim of improving the awareness and well-being of the people of Suriname.

INSTITUTIONS:

VLIR-UOS en Anton De Kom University (Suriname)

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.vliruos.be/nl/>

Example 30:

Learning network ‘Equal educational opportunities in North and South’ – VVOB

ABSTRACT:

VVOB is building a North-South dialogue on equal educational opportunities. VVOB wants to inspire teacher trainers and pedagogical supervisors with examples of good practice from the South. It is a way to critically reflect on equal educational opportunities in Flanders, as well as to underline the importance of education for development. The shared challenge of improving opportunities of quality education for all children (a sustainability issue) is considered from an international perspective.

INSTITUTION:

Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand/VVOB (Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance)

MORE INFORMATION:

www.vvob.be

5.4. Working area 4: Valorisation of societal impact

Finally, the efforts which the staff (researchers and lecturers) are to make for sustainability must also be valorised. For now, mainly the number of publications is valorised but not the fact whether someone generates societal impact. It goes without saying that ways must be found to include societal impact as a positive element in an assessment.

Example 31:

An initial analysis of Research Excellence Framework (REF) - HEFCE

ABSTRACT:

An interesting study on the valorisation of impact and the mapping of research impact can be found on the website of the Higher Education Funding Council for England. This report captures an analysis of 6,679 impact case studies which outline changes and benefits to the economy, society, culture, policy, health, the environment and quality of life – both within the UK and overseas

INSTITUTION:

Higher Education funding Council for England.

MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/Year/2015/analysisREFimpact/Title,103621,en.html>

6 Cross-border sustainability in practice

This paper paves the way for a more in-depth debate on possibilities to orient practice towards cross-border sustainability. At the same time it is a call to action for cross-border sustainability. A more integrated approach to sustainability and internationalisation in higher education may provide a stronger answer to global societal challenges which feature in each societal debate. The many inspiration options and examples in this paper which constitute the building blocks for facilitating change provide convincing evidence that this is possible.

7 References

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