

SOFIA  
UNIVERSITY



“ST. KLIMENT  
OHRIDSKI”

EST. 1888

# STRATEGY

FOR ACHIEVING THE UN SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2022 - 2027



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Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is the first Bulgarian academic and higher education institution. Its history is embodiment and continuation of centuries-old cultural and educational tradition of the Bulgarian nation. Currently, it is the country's largest and most prestigious university. Its leading role on the national roadmap of educational institutions and R&D structures, its participation in numerous European and international projects and research networks determine its responsibility in creating and implementing modern policies of national, regional and international importance, which are also reflected in its mission.

The University's mission is fully aligned with its leading role in the area of education policies, innovations, technology transfer, entrepreneurial skills development, digitalization, training and research connectivity. It is focused on students' education in all degrees – Bachelor, Master and PhD, as well as on developing of environmentally responsible institutional models for research, applied and educational aspect and their implementation in the society. Logically, this mission corresponds to the

## STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (2022 – 2027)

This Strategy is in line with the European institutional values, the sustainable development principles, environmental and social standards. It corresponds to the National Development Program "Bulgaria 2030" and envisages realistic measures in short, medium, and long term in the key university activities.



The UN Sustainable Development Goals are important because they do not only impact the sustainable development in general. They are related to all important topics of modern times, incl. poverty and overcoming inequalities. They cannot be achieved by one country or only one type of institution. That is why a global network covering the whole world is the most appropriate, and universities are leaders in this movement. Sofia University can play a key and leading role in this regard, because by starting from sustainable campuses and educating future leaders on sustainable development, we can be even more useful to society.

To achieve these ambitious objectives, Sofia University has adopted its own Strategy and a specific Action Plan for climate mitigation and adaptation. These are two strategic documents that will help us not to move chaotically for the next five years, but to work systematically on our progress.

**Prof. Anastas Gerdzhikov**  
Rector of Sofia University

A working group appointed by the Rector defined the targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that can be achieved through various projects, activities and initiatives. The process starts with drafting an initial list of material issues.

Their identification went through 5 stages (presented in the chart below), which combine communication with internal and feedback from external stakeholders, and aim to bring the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" development objectives in line with the stakeholders needs so that the Strategy is consistent in the long term.



Among the seventeen SDGs, we have identified the following fourteen as relevant to our core activities. They are related to our material issues and objectives in terms of sustainability and are presented below:

### Global goals that are highly relevant to our work



### Global goals that complement our main priorities



In the long term, this Strategy has the following objectives:

- 1 Achieving the Global Goals**
  - 1.1. Education for the priority Global Goals
  - 1.2. R&D and expert activities towards the priority Global Goals
  - 1.3. Promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and stimulating innovations
- 2 The University as a responsible institution**

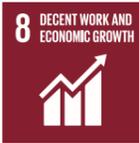
  - 2.1. Promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all
  - 2.2. Ensuring sustainable consumption patterns
  - 2.3. Building global and national partnerships for sustainable development
- 3 Building a healthy and solidarity society**

  - 3.1. Ensuring a healthy lifestyle and promoting well-being
  - 3.2. Achieving gender equality and empowering everyone
  - 3.3. Reducing inequalities within and between countries
  - 3.4. Supporting effective, responsible and inclusive institutions at all levels
- 4 Improving the idea of a more green and sustainable Bulgaria**

  - 4.1. Preventing pollution
    - 4.1.1. Reduction of emissions, waste, energy and resources consumption
    - 4.1.2. Energy efficiency and new energy sources
    - 4.1.3. Water
    - 4.1.4. Recycling and circular economy
  - 4.2. Promoting eco-travels and new eco-mobility
  - 4.3. Promoting biodiversity protection

The strategy was adopted by the Academic Council of SU with protocol N° 7/19.04.2022.

The results of the materiality assessment are summarized in the following table:

	Key topics	Global goal (UN SDGs 2030)	Stakeholders	Target	Indicator	THE 2021 position of SU
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	Complete and productive employability and decent work for all	 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members, employees	8.2 8.3 8.5	8.2.1 8.3.1 8.5.1 8.5.2	 301-400 place
<b>SOCIAL</b>	Implementation of healthy and safe working conditions	 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	3.8 3.b.	3.8.1 3.b.1 3.b.2	 601-800 place
	Quality education for all	 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	4.3. 4.4 4.5 4.7 4.b	4.3.1 4.4.1 4.5.1 4.7.1 4.b.1	 401-600 place
	Gender equality in science research activities	 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	5.1 5.5 5.c	5.1.1 5.5.2 5.c.1	 301-400 place
	Safe access to public spaces	 Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members and visitors	11.7	11.7.1	 301-400 place
	Accessible and clean energy	 Clean energy	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members and visitors	7.1 7.2 7.3	7.1.2 7.2.1 7.3.1	 301-400 place
<b>ECOLOGICAL</b>	Climate changes	 Urgent actions to combat climate change and its consequences	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members and visitors	13.1 13.2 13.3	13.1.2 13.2.1 13.2.2 13.3.1 13.3.2	 201-300 place
	Global partnership	 Strengthening the means for application and revival of the global partnership for Sustainable Development	Students, PhD candidates, academic and management team members	17.16	17.16.1	 601-800 place

We plan the following activities to achieve these objectives:

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
<b>1. University to achieve the Global Goals</b>			
<b>Creation and promotion of knowledge in the field of sustainable development</b>	Development and update of study curricula related to priority Global goals	Number of subjects in bachelor's programs (nature science and humanities) Number of subjects in master's programs (nature science and humanities) Number of subjects in PhD programs (nature science and humanities) Number of subjects in Postgraduate programs (nature science and humanities)	Before 2025
	Development of interdisciplinary study curricula between the different nature studies faculties and between nature science and humanities faculties	Number of interdisciplinary studies in Bachelor's programmes (nature science and humanities) Number of interdisciplinary studies in Master's programmes (nature science and humanities) Number of interdisciplinary doctoral programs	Before 2025
	Development of targeted and compliant requirements of the specialty, study materials focused on priority Global goals	Number of articles by nature science and humanities Faculties Number of science projects by nature science and humanities Faculties Number of educational resources with accessible content Number of educational resources with (free) access	Before 2023
	Organising events on priority Global Goals	Number of campaigns Number of events	Before 2023
	Participation in social or environment protection volunteering activities	% Academic staff % Non-academic staff	Before 2023
	Promotion of the link between High education and Further education	Number of partnerships between secondary schools and Sofia University Number of partnerships between business and Sofia University Number of joint events	Ongoing
	Creating Alumni in the field of Global goals	Number of specialized Alumni networks Number of activities in all Alumni associations	Ongoing

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
<b>Creating and promoting science solutions for sustainable development</b>	Project development and conducting research related to Global goals	Number of case studies Number of specific projects	Ongoing
	R&D activities and technology transfer in the area of Global goals	Number of implemented innovations in business Number of science conferences with business participation Number of publications with an environmental focus or element Number of academic and science degrees with an emphasis on Ecology and Environment protection Number of contracts with businesses with an environmental focus or element	Ongoing
	Increase of students' Diploma papers and dissertations in the areas of Global Goals	Number and list of Diploma papers Number and list of dissertations	Before 2023
	Promotion of Expert assessments of business	Number of developed assessment (EIA, Environment, biodiversity etc) Number of expert participating	Ongoing
	Identifying a responsible unit for a unified contact and coordination on the topics of Global Compact which will support the participation of the representatives	Completed database with individual experts Number of experts participating in various formats for partnership with government, business and NGOs Number of international partnerships to measure progress on the Global Goals	Ongoing
	Developing a strategy for facilitating scientific products sale	Completed strategy for facilitating scientific products sale Number of contracted scientific products in business	Before 2023

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
<b>2. University as a Responsible institution</b>			
Conditions for a decent work	Providing fair remuneration	% of employees receiving remuneration above the minimum wage Existing system for ensuring fair remuneration	Before 2023
	Providing conditions for career development	Number of lecturers and employees who participated in postgraduate qualification and retraining programs Number of habilitated persons per year	Ongoing
	Promoting freedom of association	Number of members in Trade unions	Before 2023
	Ensuring human rights protection in the workplace	Policy for prohibition of forced and child labor Number of human rights violations Number of registered complaints to the Ombudsman of Sofia University	Before 2023
	Ensuring equal working conditions for teachers and employees with disabilities	Number of open positions for people with disabilities Number of adapted jobs	Before 2023
	Ensuring equal working conditions for civil law contract staff	Number of social benefits available civil law contract staff	Before 2023
	Limiting opportunities for discriminatory behavior based on religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, etc.	Non-discrimination policy	Before 2023
Promoting work-life balance	Development and implementation of maternity and paternity policy	Number of employees - men who take paternity leave Number of employees - women on maternity leave	Before 2023
	Construction and maintenance of day care centers for children / employees	Number of children attending the children's center available for staff Number of partnership agreements to provide access to day care for children	Before 2023
Promoting on-line work and education	Development and implementation of a policy for work in a hybrid environment	(Internal) publication of a policy for work in a hybrid / remote work environment Established standards % of working time in a hybrid environment	Before 2023

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Promoting on-line work and education	Providing opportunities for quality online training	% of learning content adapted for online learning % of time for online / face-to-face learning	Before 2023
Promoting of education for people with disabilities	Increasing services for supporting people with disabilities	Number of accessibility facilities provided Number of electronic services adapted for people with disabilities % Mandatory information related to the education process, adapted and accessible to people with disabilities	Before 2023
	Financial support for the education of students with disabilities	Number of scholarships provided for the training of students with disabilities	Before 2023
Support for creating sustainable communities	Providing general support for the arts and heritage	Number of cultural monuments with provided management - Rectorate, Faculty of Theology Number of museum collections	Ongoing
	Providing access to buildings, monuments or natural heritage of cultural significance	Number of visitors Number of business partners	Ongoing
	Providing access to university libraries	Number of books used offline Number of online downloads	Ongoing
	Providing access to museums, exhibition spaces or works of art on the territory of Sofia University	Number of visitors to university museums Number of visiting exhibitions Ticket revenue	Ongoing
	Providing free access to green areas on the territory of Sofia University		Ongoing
	Promoting urban art	Number of performances by university theater groups Number of participation of university choir / orchestra	Ongoing

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Preservation of the intangible cultural heritage	Development of projects for preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage, incl. Local traditions, languages, knowledge and folklore	Number of completed cultural projects Number of preserved local traditions, knowledge and folklore	Ongoing
	Providing appropriate living conditions for students with disabilities	Number of adapted accommodation for students with disabilities	Ongoing
Construction of affordable and sustainable housing and buildings	Establishment of a dedicated unit for joint planning of affordable housing construction	Number of accommodation that meet the financial capabilities of students	Before 2023
		Number of dormitories that meet the financial capabilities of the academic staff	
	Number of dormitories that meet the financial capabilities of the guest lecturers		
Investments in sustainable construction	Number of buildings which meet national or international standards for sustainable construction	Number of buildings completed on the site of previously demolished ones	Ongoing
Developing scientific solutions for sustainable development	Increase the number of partnerships with external stakeholders to support society's efforts in achieving the Global Goals	Number of partnerships	Ongoing
		Number of partnership contracts with the business	
		Number of contracts with NGOs	
	Number of partnership contracts with international partners		
Participation of the academic staff in the development of normative and other documents related to the priority Global goals	Number of participations in advisory councils and working groups of relevant ministries and number of proposed documents	Ongoing	
	Financial results and reinvestment in education and educational innovations; Funds from the Rating System	Total value of the invested means % of project revenues with ecological element	Ongoing

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
<b>3. University for a healthy and solidarity society</b>			
Creating professionals in the area of public health	Developing educational programmes for health specialists	Number of graduates from public health protection specialties	Before 2023
Promoting sports	Developing policies for promoting sports	Number of students involved in sports Number of staff involved in sports Participation of the representative teams in national and international competitions	Before 2023
Elimination of smoking	Developing anti-smoking policy	Number of students involved in information campaigns	Before 2023
Promoting mental health	Developing mental health programmes	Number of students involved in the programmes Number of students involved in information campaigns	Before 2023
Promoting sexual and reproductive health	Developing programmes to promote sexual and reproductive health	Number of students involved in the programmes Number of students involved in information campaigns	Before 2023
General health care	Providing affordable health care to students, lecturers and staff	Number of students, lecturers and employees who use medical services at the University Hospital Number of students, lecturers and employees who use the rehabilitation centers at Sofia University	Ongoing
Promoting women's participation in higher education	Development and implementation of policy for women's access to application and admission to Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programs	Share of first generation female students Number of students Number of newly enrolled students Number of first generation students in a family	Ongoing
		Number of newly enrolled women Number of first generation female students in a family	
	Developing special programmes for mentoring women	Number of programmes for mentoring women	Ongoing
	Providing scholarships for women	Number of scholarships for women Number of scholarship applicants	Ongoing
	Development and implementation of a policy for women inclusion in specialties with predominantly male students	(Internal) published policy for inclusion of women in typically male specialties	Ongoing

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Promoting men's participation in humanities	Development and implementation of a policy for inclusion of men in specialties with traditionally predominant female students	(Internal) published policy for inclusion of men in typically female specialties	Ongoing
	Providing scholarships for men	Number of scholarships for men Number of scholarship applicants	Ongoing
Promoting gender equality	Development and implementation of a policy for equal remuneration	(Internal) published policy for equal remuneration Individual salaries	Ongoing
	Development and implementation of a policy for equal participation in the management bodies	(Internal) published policy for equal participation in the management bodies % of the management bodies members	Ongoing
Stakeholders involvement	Promoting students' participation in internship programs	Number of students participating in internship programs	Ongoing
	Developing a policy for stakeholder participation	Adopted stakeholder participation policy List of stakeholders and partnerships	Ongoing
Preserving academic integrity	Elimination of corruption and bribery	Policy for Zero tolerance to corruption	Ongoing
	Promoting academic independence	Policy to guarantee academic independence % of academic staff who adopted the policy	Ongoing
	Promoting transparent governance	Annual accounting report Annual sustainability report	Ongoing
Policy development on a local, regional and national level	Establishment of a special unit for technical assistance to representatives of the public sector	Number of creating policies	Before 2023
	Creating a neutral platform for discussing public issues between different political actors	Number of events organised	Before 2023
Developing law specialists	Programmes development for postgraduate qualification of law specialists	% of law graduates	Ongoing

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
<b>4. University for a green and sustainable Bulgaria</b>			
Reduction of carbon footprint for reaching climate neutrality (base year 2019)	Organising annual Day of climate and energy awareness in all Faculties	Number of participating faculties	Ongoing
	Promotion of digitalization and paper use reduction through IT based processes	Kg paper per employee Number of policies introduced	Ongoing
	Promotion of digitalization and paper use reduction through IT based processes	% of eco-friendly clean resources, materials, chemicals, equipment, with technical characteristics Number of methodologies for assessment of the environmental characteristics of the provided resources	Ongoing
	Preparation of offset plan for carbon footprints and to be launched if necessary	Offset CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (tons) Number of plans prepared by Faculties	Before 2023
	Identification and reporting of significant emissions – 1,2 (GHG protocol)	Expected range of reported emissions from range 1,2 Number of digital calculators introduced Number of university developments on carbon or greenhouse footprint calculation	Before 2023
	Development of climate plan for all activities and reaching climate neutrality in relation to CO <sub>2</sub> emissions Before 2023 (open for upgrading opportunities)	Climate neutrality in relation to CO <sub>2</sub> % reduction in y/y (base year: 2019)	Before 2023
	Implementation and maintenance of environmental management systems (EMS) – ISO 14001 or EMAS. Coordination of EMS with QMS of Sofia University	Number of in-house University units for Environment management by Faculties Number of developed internal Environment management systems	After 2023
	Appointment of energy management officers and/or coordinators in all sites	Number of sites involved Number of identified coordinators	Before 2023
Improvement of use of LED lighting in all sites	% LED bulbs in use	Before 2023	

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Energy efficiency promotion and energy consumption reduction	Conducting energy audits in order to identify the potential for energy savings	Number of sites audited	Before 2023
	Defining and applying energy efficiency criteria for purchasing/supplying materials, facilities/ equipment, goods, vehicles).	Number of tender procedures with set criteria for energy efficient goods	Before 2023
	Promotion of projects and measures to reduce energy consumption in all sites	Energy consumption (MWh) /tonne product Number of plans for reduction of energy consumption	Before 2023
	Installing of photovoltaic energy systems	% of produced in-house electricity % of buildings suitable for electricity generation are used for this purpose	After 2023
	Increasing the renewable energy share and switching to green electricity	Share of renewable energy Share of Green electricity	After 2023
	Implementation of new processes for energy efficiency improvement	Number of newly introduced processes like waste recycling, biofuels etc.	After 2023
	Conducting a study on the need for energy management implementation in accordance with internationally established standards	Number energy management University units by Faculties Number ISO 50001 certified/ DIN EN 16247 audited sites	After 2023
Responsible water management	Separate water collection systems for the new sites design or current sites upgrade	Laboratory water with chemicals and toxicants Domestic waste water from toilets and restaurants	Before 2023
	Evaluation of rainwater harvesting opportunities	Liters of harvested rainwater	Before 2023
	Reduction of water consumption or the potential water pollution through use of water saving cycles and other measures.	% reused water Number of water saving devices	After 2023

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Following the circular economy principles "Reduce, reuse, recycle" and waste reduction	Elimination of hazardous materials and pollutants	Number of hazardous waste collection systems introduced	Before 2023
	Implementation of separate waste collection system	Number of containers on SU territory Waste in kg/tonnes (absolute and specific) Types of waste in kg/tonne Non-hazardous waste in kg/tonne Number of composting technologies	Before 2023
	Promoting separate waste collection	Kg separate waste collected % General waste reduction	Before 2023
	Implementation of innovative technologies for recycling and turning waste into a resource	Number compost systems installed	Before 2023
	Creating a movie about Sofia Municipal enterprise for waste treatment and Sofia University business incubator training students in "Eco biotechnology"	Number of people working in Sofia Municipal enterprise for waste treatment Number of people supported by the Business incubator Number of people who watched the movie and provided feedback	Before 2023
Promoting eco-friendly travel and electro-mobility	Promoting the use of cycling	Number of bicycle parking spaces/lots Number of voluntarily reporting students and academic staff	Ongoing
	Maintenance and expansion of the public transport support/employee travel support	% of the employee receiving sponsored public transport tickets etc.	Before 2023
	Improving CO <sub>2</sub> data collection CO <sub>2</sub>	Expected share of the travels and transport registered emissions (%)	Before 2023
	Development and implementation of eco-friendly travel policy	(Internally) published eco-friendly travel policy % decrease of business flights % of electric cars/hybrids in the fleet % of hybrids events participation	Before 2023
	Development and implementation of eco-friendly office cars policy	(Internally) published eco-friendly office cars policy Average/max CO <sub>2</sub> g/km emissions % or number of electric cars /hybrids	Before 2023

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Promoting eco-friendly travel and electro-mobility	Providing pedestrian access to all campuses and university buildings	Number of voluntarily reporting students and academic staff Number of prepared maps / signs for pedestrian access, distributed online and at the entrances to the campuses	Before 2023
	Promotion of shared travel among students and staff	% of students participating in shared travel schemes % of employees participating in shared travel schemes Number of targets adopted to increase the indicated percentages	Before 2023
Promotion of biodiversity on the sites	Good management of the University Botanical Gardens (UBG), the experimental field, the agricultural lands and the buildings of Sofia University. Strengthening the role of the "rescue center" (determined according to order RD 826 / 02.11.2012 of the Minister of MoEW) of the Botanical Garden in Balchik	% maintenance and increase of ex-situ collections of plant species of conservation importance - included in CITES, Red List and Red Data Book of Bulgaria, Volume 1, as well as in Annexes 2a, 2, 3 and 4 of the Biodiversity Act, zoological collections, reintroduction programmes and rescue operations on the territory of Sofia University	Ongoing
	Promotion of partnerships with Environmental organisations, scientific institutions and businesses that work in the environmental protection and sustainable development.	Number of civil society partners (national and international) Number of cooperation agreements with environmental NGOs (national and international) Number of partnership projects for biodiversity protection Number of supported endangered species (flora and fauna)	Ongoing
	Actions in accordance with the protection of biodiversity and natural habitats regulations on the on the sites incl. the protected area Botanical garden Balchik	Number of performed activities for protection of biological diversity (including animal species of conservation importance) and for protection and maintenance of the protected area "Botanical Garden Balchik", as an element of the National Ecological Network. Studies on the state of biodiversity. Number of compensatory measures & invested funds (in BGN)	Before 2023

Goal	Measure	Key performance indicators	Deadline
Promotion of biodiversity on the sites	Preservation, maintenance and development of the scientific collections of Sofia University, related to the preservation of the unique genetic fund of species of Bulgarian flora, fauna and mycota (Herbarium of Sofia University, Zoological Collections, Living Algological Collection, Mycological and Lichenological Collections, etc.) and development of exchange with related collections, reintroduction programmes – their material base and rescue operations	% maintenance and increase of the collections and specimens of species of conservation significance (in CITES, the respective Red Lists of Bulgaria, Red Book of Bulgaria, Volume 1 and Volume 2, etc.) and of representative species from the protected habitats of Bulgaria (Volume 3 of the Red Book of Bulgaria)	Ongoing
	Increase of green/vegetation areas (incl. roofs/facades), shelters for animal species	Green areas/roofs/facades at the sites (in sq.m. or %)	Before 2023
Promotion of biodiversity on the sites	Development of a plan for environmental compliance of repair and maintenance activities, renovation of buildings in order to minimize damage to biodiversity.	Guidelines for the preparation of environmental compliance plans adopted. Number of environmental compliance plans	До края на 2022
	Protection and promotion of Sofia University botanic gardens as part of the national eco network, "Rescue centers" and ex-situ collections of plant species of conservation importance	Number of events promoting the botanic gardens Number of visitors Number of business partners Financial donations attracted In kind donations attracted	Before 2023
	Assessment, maintenance and increase of the value of the ecosystem services provided by the ecosystems on the territory of properties owned by Sofia University	Number of value of the ecosystem services % growth of the ecosystem services	Before 2023



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