



Institutional Approaches and Strategies for Greening HERE Virtual Study Visit 25 and 27 March 2024

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HERE VIRTUAL STUDY VISIT:
INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES FOR GREENING
25 and 27 March 2024
Hosted by University College Cork, Ireland
Via ZOOM

About

Higher education institutions can provide an important contribution to global and regional agendas such as the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), the [Paris Agreement of 2015](#), and the [European Green Deal](#). Greening of higher education is also a priority of the European Union and is defined as "*increasing awareness and taking concrete action towards a green, environmentally friendly, and resource-efficient university. This involves addressing the university's mission, campus, and its members while contributing to its larger community and surroundings. It may or may not be part of a broader approach to tackle the SDGs and contribute to the 2030 Agenda.*"¹

This is increasingly recognised by governments and higher education leaderships, who strive to enhance governance, teaching methodologies and student engagement. The aim is to better prepare students, staff and teachers, fostering stronger commitments and encouraging them to act as advocates for sustainability while actively engaging in green initiatives. The recent organization of the [Conference of the Parties \(COP28\) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) marked another important moment in this process.

Under the SPHERE initiative, work has been proceeding to highlight the concept of greening in higher education and showcasing examples of its integration into national policies and institutional practices in HERE countries².

The present HERE virtual study visit on "Institutional approaches and strategies for greening" presents the case of [University College Cork \(UCC\)](#) in the broader Irish and European context. The 'virtual visit' aims to highlight UCC's comprehensive approach to sustainability and greening, particularly how it is integrated into its institutional mission and practices, such as its Green Campus strategy. The visit will address the issue in the context of research, education, governance & administration, internationalisation, and digitalisation. Furthermore, the visit will explore the impact of greening

¹ Stöber, H., Gaebel, M., & Morrisroe, A. (2021). Greening in European higher education institutions: EUA survey data. <https://eua.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?id=3323>

² HERE countries: Algeria, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo*, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine**, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Territory of Ukraine as recognised by international law, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

** This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

activities on the surrounding community, as service to society and opportunity for student engagement, and the alignment with national policies, and their contribution to European policies.

Objectives

The objectives of this HERE study visit are:

- Gain insights into UCC's institutional approaches and strategies for integrating sustainability and greening into its policies and practices, including teaching and learning, digitalization, curriculum design, research, services to society/ outreach, international collaboration, governance and campus management.
- Understand how UCC's green strategy engages with diverse stakeholders within and outside the institution, including civil society, the private sector, the public sector, youth.
- Explore Ireland's national strategy for greening in higher education and how it relates to the European context, showcasing challenges and successes of incorporating sustainable practices within the Irish higher education context.
- Discuss how national strategies can address the role of higher education in contributing to environmental sustainability and also enable this.
- Understand, at both institutional and national levels, how these initiatives align with broader frameworks such as the SDGs and the European Green Deal, and also how Erasmus is used in this regard.

In order to reap the full benefit from your participation, we very much encourage you to browse through the information provided by UCC and by SPHERE below.

UCC background information

- [Office of Sustainability and Climate Action | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- [Sustainability and Climate Action Plan 2023 - 2028 | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- [Greenshoots Green Campus Programme at UCC | University College Cork](#)
- [SDSN | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- [Irish Tree Explorers Network Project | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- [UCC International Office Swap Shop | University College Cork](#)
- [SDG Toolkit | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- [Securing our Future - UCC Strategic Plan 2023-2028](#)
- [SDG Toolkit | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- [Sustainability in Enterprise PG Cert/MSc \(Online\) | University College Cork | UCC | Ireland | Postgraduate Degrees | Courses](#)

SPHERE background information

- [Greening in European higher education institutions: EUA survey data](#)
- [Green Innovation and Employability in the Med through the Triple Helix | A study. UNIMED and UfM](#)
- [Learning for the green transition and sustainable development. European Education Area. European Commission](#)
- [Education for Climate](#)
- [EngageSDG](#)
- [CLIMAR](#)

AGENDA

DAY 1 | Monday, 25th March

Time (IST)	Session
09:15– 10:00	Welcome and introduction SPHERE Team Leader Vice President Global Engagement, UCC International Officer, UCC Policy Officer, European Commission, DG EAC
10:00 – 10:50	Overview of Sustainability and Climate Action Plan 2023 - 2028 Sustainability Officer, UCC
10:50 – 11:30	Greenshoots Green Campus Programme Greenshoots Green Campus Coordinator, UCC <i>Greenshoots Communications Intern, UCC</i> <i>Q&A – Discussion</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Break
12:00 – 13:00	Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Manager of the SDSN Ireland, UCC <i>Q&A – Discussion</i>
13:00 – 13:45	Trends in HERE countries: SPHERE Publication on Greening <i>Presentation of the publication results with key discussion questions and Reflection on strategic institutional approaches to greening</i> Academic Expert, SPHERE Team HERE member. Tunisia HERE member. Uzbekistan
13:45 – 14:00	Close and overview of Day 2 Activities SPHERE Team

END OF DAY 1

DAY 2 | Wednesday, 27th March

Time (IST)	Session
08:15 – 08:30	Recap of day 1 SPHERE Team
08:30 – 09:30	Breakout sessions Breakout group 1 Greening and Teaching and Learning <i>Chair: UCC</i> <i>Rapporteur: HERE Algeria</i> Breakout group 2 Third Mission and University Engagement <i>Chair: UCC</i> <i>Rapporteur: HERE Kosovo</i> Breakout group 3 Research Collaboration <i>Chair: SPHERE Team</i> <i>Rapporteur: HERE Armenia</i>
09:30 – 10:00	Wrap up breakout groups SPHERE Team
10:00 – 11:00	Irish Tree Explorers Network Project Head of Plant Science. Senior Lecturer, UCC <i>Q&A – Discussion</i>
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
11:15 – 11:30	UCC International Office Swap Shop International Officer, UCC
11:30 – 12:30	UCC Environmental Society: A Student's Perspective <i>UCC Student and Chair of Global Justice Society</i> <i>Followed by Q&A and Discussion with:</i> <i>Student. HERE Ukraine</i> <i>Student. HERE Tunisia</i> <i>Assistant Principal Officer. Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Irish Government</i>

12:30 – 13:00

Wrap-Up: main take aways

Discussion with HEREs

SPHERE Team

13:00 – 13:10

SPHERE updates and close

SPHERE Team

END OF THE STUDY VISIT

