



KATHOLISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
EICHSTÄTT-INGOLSTADT

SUS TAIN ABILITY REPORT

2024/25



KATHOLISCHE UNIVERSITÄT
EICHSTÄTT-INGOLSTADT



Twelfth

Sustainability Report 2024|25

Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt

Welcome



President Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gien (upd)

Dear readers,

We live in a time of profound change. International conflicts and wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, geopolitical shifts, and social tensions in many countries are shaping our present. At the same time, global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent, and competition for natural resources is intensifying. The consequences of climate change can already be felt by many people around the world.

These developments are sobering – but they are no reason to be paralyzed. They are a call to action.

Sustainability and democracy are inextricably linked. Only in an open, free, and united society can we collectively take responsibility for the natural foundations of our existence – for ourselves and for future generations. This makes it all the more important to hold fast to ambitious sustainability goals and to develop, test, and publicly discuss potential solutions to the complex challenges of a socio-ecological transformation – together with citizens, the business community, and policymakers.

For the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, sustainability is a key profile element. We take our responsibility as a place of teaching and learning very seriously. We are continuously working to make our campus operations future-proof and sustainable. We design teaching formats that equip our students with key skills for the future. In numerous research projects, we explore questions related to shaping a sustainable future.

In 2024 and 2025, we refined our sustainability profile further. With the School of Transformation and Sustainability, we are working to establish a faculty fully dedicated to socio-ecological transformation. The Future Campus in the heart of Ingolstadt has become a vibrant hub for dialog between academia, society, and politics. In addition, through strategic initiatives in the areas of mobility, biodiversity, and procurement, we have taken important steps to further reduce our University's ecological footprint and advance sustainable development. The EMAS certificate, which we received for the tenth time this year, confirms that our approach is effective.

My heartfelt thanks go to everyone who is walking this path with us and helping to shape it: our students, professors, all staff in research and administration, as well as our supporters and partners. Your commitment shapes the KU as a place where responsibility rooted in research and teaching is translated into tangible social impact.

I am convinced that we can shape a sustainable future if we have the courage to act together and the joy of making a difference.

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gien – KU President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Gabriele Gien".

Eichstätt, August 2026



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Introduction

Sustainable development is one of the KU's profile elements and core tasks. It is firmly anchored in its Mission Statement, the 2030 Development Plan, and the 2020–2030 Overall Sustainability Concept. In line with a consistent whole-institution approach, sustainable development is seen as a University-wide responsibility and is actively practiced in all areas of the institution. As a result, the KU has been among the pioneers in Germany for many years, systematically aligning its overall development with the global Sustainable Development Goals and consistently pursuing them across the six action areas: teaching , research, university operations, governance, knowledge transfer, and student engagement.

For the KU, sustainable development means ecologically, economically, and socially balanced development that takes global and intergenerational justice into account. As a place for excellent research and teaching, the University is committed to implementing Education for Sustainable Development and fostering creative and future-oriented skills as an integral part of its teaching practice across all degree programs. Another important goal is to position sustainability as an interdisciplinary research topic that is broadly embedded in all faculties.

The KU has been EMAS-certified since 2015 and has celebrated the tenth anniversary of this certification in 2025; since 2019, it has also been the first German University to be certified under EMASplus. The EMASplus environmental management system is based on the European EMAS system (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) and expands its focus on environmental aspects to include social and economic perspectives. Environmental management thus becomes an integrated and holistic approach to sustainability management that incorporates values of business ethics and corporate responsibility.

Since 2012, the KU has published an annual sustainability report that transparently documents progress across all areas of action and enables the continuous monitoring of sustainability goals. This report summarizes the developments and activities of 2024 and 2025. To save resources, this report is published exclusively in digital format.



Action area

Governance

Sustainability at the KU is implemented through clearly defined governance structures that enable systematic management and monitoring of the Overall Sustainability Concept, as well as the annual sustainability programs and their measures. Sustainability is designed as an integral part of all processes at the University and is consistently implemented according to the principle of the whole-institution approach. In recent years, the KU has worked continuously to integrate sustainability goals into administrative and management processes, define responsibilities, and create appropriate structures for cross-functional coordination. The goal is to permanently embed sustainable practices in the decision-making processes of the University Management as well as in the University's day-to-day practice, thereby making an effective contribution to socio-ecological transformation.

Organization and responsibilities

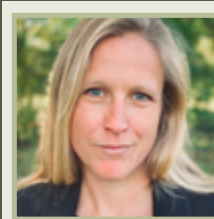


An important milestone in the further development of the KU's sustainability governance was the establishment of the position of a Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) in 2023. The CSO reports to the Vice President for International Affairs and Profile Development, Prof. Dr. Klaus Stüwe, and strengthens the integration of sustainability at the University Management level as well as in university decision-making and management processes. In 2025, sustainability governance was further strengthened by a resolution: the CSO, sustainability coordination, campus sustainability management, and the Green Office are to be organizationally merged into the Sustainability Office and, as such, firmly anchored within the University's administrative structures.



**Person responsible
within the
University
Management**
Prof. Dr. Klaus Stüwe

Prof. Dr. Klaus Stüwe, Vice President for International Affairs and Profile Development, has held this position since April 2020.



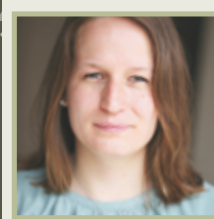
**Chief
Sustainability
Officer**
Eva-Maria Hugo

In May 2025, Eva-Maria Hugo assumed the position of Chief Sustainability Officer.



**Campus
Sustainability
Manager**
Dr. Frank Zirkl

Since November 2021, Dr. Frank Zirkl has been in charge of campus sustainability management (including EMASplus).



**Sustainability
Coordinator**
Patrizia Hartmann
Patrizia Hartmann has held this position since July 2022.

At the administrative level, Nicole Mayinger supports the Sustainability Office's operations and oversees the operational implementation of sustainability initiatives. Student staff members in the Green Office also encourage their fellow students to get involved and help coordinate sustainability initiatives across the University.

Steering group Sustainability and Fair Trade

The steering group, which has been in existence since 2010, is composed of representatives from the faculties, central departments, and administrative units, as well as students. Its task is to formulate goals and measures for the sustainability program and to assist in its implementation.

<https://www.ku.de/en/campus-life/sustainability/team-in-the-sustainability-office>



Steering group Sustainability and Fair Trade

The implementation of the Overall Sustainability Concept is coordinated by the Sustainability Office and supported by the "Sustainability and Fair Trade" steering group. The steering group is structured as an interdisciplinary committee and includes employees from all subject areas as well as central administrative units. It promotes university-wide participation in the further development and implementation of sustainability goals and measures and supports participatory and consensus-oriented decision-making. To address specific topics, special working groups are formed from within the steering group. In 2025, the Mobility and Biodiversity working groups were established, which work across departments to develop corresponding strategies.

Research and teaching

Research and teaching in the field of sustainability have been strengthened in recent years through targeted structural measures. The establishment of the Future Campus in Ingolstadt has created a new venue for interdisciplinary dialog, research, and knowledge transfer (see p. 53). There, the Sustainability Competence Cluster, established in 2025, brings together researchers from various disciplines to address sustainability-related issues and promotes interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration (see p. 19). Furthermore, the School of Transformation and Sustainability, founded in 2023 as an independent faculty, strengthens institutional governance and the integration of sustainability into research and teaching (see p. 28).

Digital communication and participation

Digital communication and participation in the area of sustainability are supported by a redesigned website from the Sustainability Office. Since 2025, the central information platform for the KU's sustainability activities has been available at www.ku.de/en/campus-life/sustainable-ku. The website is fully bilingual (German/English) and includes a digital suggestion box that allows students, staff, and external stakeholders to submit proposals for sustainable measures.

Equal opportunities and diversity

Updating the KU's gender equality policy

In the area of gender equality and diversity, the KU is committed to long-term structures for promoting equal opportunities. As part of its application for the federal state and government “Women Professors Program 2030,” which aims to promote gender equality in science and research, the KU updated its gender equality plan in 2024. The plan for gender parity at the KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt includes a current analysis of the situation and defines key priorities for gender equality efforts through 2030. The planned measures aim to increase the proportion of women among professors and on university committees, as well as to support female researchers pursuing a qualification project at the KU.



Mentoring program for female early-career researchers

The mentoring program for female early-career researchers, which has been in place since 2021, was held for the fifth time in 2025. To date, 33 female doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers have successfully participated in the program.

Development of a diversity strategy

The KU sees diversity as a core value of its university community. The 2030 Development Plan therefore called for the establishment of a diversity working group to assess the current situation and lay the groundwork for strategic development. In 2025, the course was set for the further process, which is scheduled to begin in early 2026 with approximately 30 representatives from various groups within the University and will be supported by a series of workshops.

Participation in the German Diversity Day

In the context of the 2025 German Diversity Day, the KU participated in an event in Ingolstadt for the first time, together with the THI. The focus was on the international diversity of students and staff. A panel discussion, followed by a World Café, provided an opportunity for exchange of experiences, discussion of challenges, and exploration of opportunities for international students and staff in the region.

Family-friendly KU

The KU considers family-friendliness an important part of its Mission Statement and has been actively committed for more than 20 years to helping students and employees balance family life with their studies and work at the University. In 2004, it became the first Bavarian University to receive the “Family-Friendly University” designation. After successfully completing the “Family-Friendly University” audit for many years, the KU joined the best-practice club “Familie in der Hochschule e. V.” in 2016. It supports its students and employees in leading good lives within and alongside their families at every stage of life and career development.

Center for Flight and Migration

The Center for Flight and Migration (ZFM) was founded in 2016/2017 at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. It has quickly established itself as an interdisciplinary institution for research and education. Through its research on refugee and migration processes, the ZFM contributes to the sustainability of shaping a pluralistic and democratic society. Researchers from various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences collaborate at the ZFM on topics such as civil society, participation, racism, education, media-shaped public spheres, and border relations in modern societies. Through expert reports, educational programs, and lectures, research findings are made accessible not only to the scientific community but also to policymakers and the civil society.



Networks and partnerships

To further advance its sustainability goals, the KU actively participates in national and international networks. The goal is to facilitate a structured exchange of knowledge and best practices, as well as to jointly promote a socio-ecological transformation in higher education. During the reporting period, the KU was involved in the following networks and collaborations, among others:

BayZeN - Bavarian Center for Sustainability in Higher Education

Founded in March 2023, the network serves as an inter-university think tank dedicated to strengthening sustainability and climate protection across all areas of activity at Bavarian universities. Since 2023, the KU has been the lead institution and is responsible for the coordination office in the area of teaching.

DGHochN - German Society for Sustainability in Higher Education

Since 2020, the KU has been a founding member of DGHochN. Together with other universities, it is working towards the goal of systematically advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 in research, teaching, operations, governance, and knowledge transfer.

Uniservitate

Since 2020, the KU has been one of seven global hubs of the international Uniservitate network, which promotes the institutional integration of service-learning at Catholic universities.

Senatra

As part of a collaborative project with the University of Vechta, the University of Bremen, Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, and netzwerk n, a study was conducted through 2025 to examine the extent to which service-learning can contribute to the institution-wide sustainability of universities.

Network 'Lernorte für Nachhaltigkeit'

Since 2024, the KU has been part of the “Lernorte für Nachhaltigkeit” network, which connects educational institutions and programs that contribute to a climate-friendly and sustainable society.



KU – engaged and award-winning

Outstanding performance in THE Impact Ranking

KU's institutional sustainability efforts are validated by international rankings. In the Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Ranking 2024, the KU achieved outstanding results. In the SDG category “Quality Education”, it ranked first in Germany and 51st internationally out of a total of 1,681 universities evaluated. The KU also held a top position in Germany in the categories “Sustainable Consumption and Production” and “Climate Action”. For the KU, this outstanding performance in the ranking is a tribute to its long-standing and diverse activities in the field of sustainability.

Fairtrade University

In 2017, the KU was named a “Fairtrade University” for the first time – and in 2025, it received the distinction for the fifth time. This renewed recognition of its commitment to sustainability demonstrates that the KU is continuously working to promote fair trade.

Paper Atlas 2025

The KU is one of the most recycling-paper-friendly universities in Germany; it ranked fourth in the “Paper Atlas” university competition organized by the 'Pro Recyclingpapier' 2025 initiative and achieved an impressive overall recycling-paper rate of 99.24 percent. A total of 59 universities participated, collectively achieving an average recycling-paper rate of 71 percent.

EMASplus

The KU has been certified under EMAS since 2015 and under EMASplus since 2019. The KU's Overall Sustainability Concept is specifically aligned with the EMASplus criteria, which, compared to the European Union's standard “Eco-Management and Audit Scheme” (EMAS), expands environmental management to include social and economic aspects. This also entails a commitment to have economic, environmental, and social impacts systematically reviewed by an external party on an ongoing basis and to continuously optimize them.





KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt – 8 *faculties*

Students:

(Last updated: 2025/26 winter semester)

Total number enrolled at the KU: **4845**
International students: **1029**
Female: **3166**
Male: **1672**
Non-binary: **2**

Research staff:

(Last updated: December 2025)

Professors
Total: **120**
Female: **40 %**
Male: **60 %**

Research staff, excluding professors
Total: **344**
Female: **56 %**
Male: **43,7 %**
Non-binary: **(0,3 %)**

Lecturers
Total: **270**
Female: **132**
Male: **138**

Research support staff:

(Last updated: December 2025)

Total: **386**
Administration & IT: **320**
Library: **66**
Female: **74 %**
Male: **26 %**

- Faculty of Theology (ThF)
- Faculty for Religious Education and Church Educational Work (RPF)
- Faculty of Philosophy and Education (PPF)
- Faculty of Languages and Literatures (SLF)
- Faculty of History and Social Sciences (GGF)
- Faculty of Mathematics and Geography (MGF)
- Ingolstadt School of Management (Business and Economics Faculty)
- School of Transformation and Sustainability
- Faculty of Social Work (FSA)





Action area Research

At the KU, sustainability is firmly established as a broad, interdisciplinary research topic across all faculties. The focus is particularly on analyzing the interactions between humans, society, and the environment, as well as examining the dynamics of social and ecological transformation processes. In light of global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, resource scarcity, and social inequality, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives are becoming increasingly important. The KU therefore specifically promotes the integration of approaches from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences in order to address sustainability-related issues from diverse academic perspectives and to develop and test potential solutions to the challenges of socio-ecological transformation in collaboration with stakeholders from politics, business, and civil society. To structurally strengthen this collaboration, the KU is consolidating its research activities within the Sustainability Competence Cluster at the Future Campus in order to increase the visibility of sustainability-related research and systematically integrate its findings into social, political, and economic discourses.

Thematic focus areas include climate impact assessment, resilient ecosystems, sustainable energy and regional development, democratic participation, education for sustainable development, environmental psychology, mobility, and economic policy frameworks in the context of sustainable development.

Sustainability competence cluster at the Future Campus

At the Future Campus at the Georgianum in Ingolstadt, research into processes of social transformation is a key focus. With its university-wide Sustainability Cluster, the KU established a platform in 2025 that links research, teaching, and knowledge transfer in an interdisciplinary way. This initiative systematically brings together insights from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences to better understand complex human-environment relationships in the Anthropocene. By consolidating research activities at its Ingolstadt and Eichstätt campuses, the KU aims to expand its participation in relevant national and international research programs and sustainability networks, increase the visibility of sustainability-related research at the KU, and actively shape the academic and societal discourse on sustainable development.



Transformation Summer Camps 2024 and 2025

In 2024 and 2025, the KU's Transformation Summer Camps fostered international exchange among young researchers. In 2024, the focus was on diversity and its role in sustainable social transformation, with guidance from researchers in Sociology, Journalism Studies, Theology, and Political Science. In 2025, the camp addressed the topics of climate, environment, and health, including practical insights gained through exchange with the Ingolstadt Hospital. Interdisciplinary workshops and discussion

forums enabled participants to develop new research approaches, reflect on global perspectives, and foster cross-border networking in sustainability research and transformation processes.





Newly-appointed professors in the field of sustainability



Maria Waldinger teaches and researches on sustainable economic policy

In 2025, Prof. Dr. Maria Waldinger assumed the Professorship of Economics with a focus on Sustainable Economic Policy at the WFI. Her research examines the economic consequences of climate change and strategies for adapting to environmental changes. As the former deputy director of the ifo Center for Labor Market and Population Economics, she brings her international experience – gained through her studies in England and her research fellowship at

the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London – to the Ingolstadt School of Management (WFI).



Jan Hiller takes over as Professor of Geography Didactics and Education for Sustainable Development

In 2025, Prof. Dr. Jan Hiller assumed the Professorship of Geography Didactics and Education for Sustainable Development at the KU. His research interests lie in the areas of Education for Sustainable Development, digital task-based instruction, geography-specific learning process research, and field trip pedagogy. The goal is to strengthen students' ability to shape their own futures, foster democratic participation, and cultivate a sense of responsibility.

Award for early-career researchers in the Geography department

Two early-career researchers in Geography were honored for their research. Dr. Verena Schröder received the top prize from the Akademie Ländlicher Raum for her doctoral thesis on human-wolf relationships in Alpine cultural landscapes. Magdalena Lauermann was honored at the General Assembly of the European Geosciences Union for her poster presentation on the importance of natural river dynamics for riparian forests along the Naryn River in Kyrgyzstan.



Current research projects in the field of sustainability

For the reporting period, the KU sustainability website documents 55 ongoing and completed research projects that fall under the category of sustainability research. The following selection of projects is intended to illustrate the thematic variety of sustainability-related research at the KU.

Small Communities, Big Impact

The “Small Communities, Big Impact” project examines the potential for transformation in small towns in rural areas. To this end, the KU is collaborating with the city and district of Eichstätt to establish a real-world laboratory incorporating artistic research elements and a Transformative Design Space. Researchers from the fields of Social and Organizational Psychology, European Ethnology, Art Education, and Journalism Studies are working with three municipal maintenance depots as exemplary “change agents.” Together with local residents, they are developing specific sustainability projects to promote sustainable regional development. The project is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.



newMIND

The newMIND pilot project supports public transportation in the Ingolstadt area. More than 50 measures are improving the availability and quality of public transportation, including the expansion of on-demand bus services to better connect surrounding communities. The three-year funded project came to a close at the end of 2024. The Junior Professorship in Operations Management at the KU provided scientific guidance for the project and, using operations research methods, developed algorithms for the more efficient use of on-demand transit services. A milestone for public transit in the greater Ingolstadt area was the introduction of the VGI Flexi-Buses. This funded on-demand service is now available around Ingolstadt University Hospital, in Scheyern, around Baar-Ebenhausen and Karlskron, and in the Eichstätt district. The newMIND pilot project was funded by the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Affairs (BMVD).



DynAu – Strengthening the Dynamic Development of Water Bodies and Floodplains in the Natura 2000 Network

Near-natural water bodies and floodplains are important biodiversity hotspots, but they are severely degraded in Central Europe. The goal of the Floodplain Institute's research project, completed in 2024, was to demonstrate how to implement restoration measures in accordance with European law that initiate dynamic changes and processes in water bodies and floodplains. This was intended to facilitate decision-making in administrative actions as part of the balancing of nature conservation and water management considerations. The study also identified the conditions under which cross-regional concepts – such as biotope networks, development corridors, or management plans – as well as different scales of analysis can help resolve potential conflicts of interest in river and stream floodplains.

Energy Transfer in Atmosphere and Ocean

The project, initiated by the Mathematical Institute for Machine Learning and Data Science (MIDS), started in 2024 and focuses on decomposing flows into vortical components and waves. The method is based in part on linear global modes, but also on fully nonlinear high-order approaches, which are, however, less general. MIDS will now bridge the methodological gaps between the two approaches and advance their practical implementation in order to ultimately quantify nonhydrostatic effects on kilometer-scale grids in the atmosphere and wave emission in the ocean, and to better understand the spontaneous radiation of gravity waves. The use of machine learning for these purposes will also be investigated.

Easy Language in Journalism as a key to democratic participation

A study by the subject area of Journalism Studies and Communication Studies, analyzed in 2025, shows that approximately 6.2 million adults in Germany have limited understanding of the news. Interviews with those affected make it clear that political reporting, in particular, is often too complex. The researchers recommend more accessible formats, more service journalism, and improved findability of relevant content – for example, via messaging services, apps, or AI-powered translations into plain and Easy Language (*Leichte Sprache*).



A talking tree in the KU's research and teaching forest

In the research and teaching forest of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, a tree equipped with sensors will provide data for climate research in the future. The checkertree “Else” measures, among other things, sap flow, leaf temperature, soil moisture, and trunk growth. The project is supervised by the Professorship of Physical Geography/Landscape Ecology and Sustainable Ecosystem Development. The goal is to better understand how trees respond to environmental factors and drought stress. The findings are intended to help develop climate-resilient forests and to study how ecosystems adapt to climate change.



How sustainably young people in the Ingolstadt region think and act

In her doctoral thesis completed in 2025, Dr. Ann-Kathrin Bremer examines the sustainability awareness of 195 young people between the ages of 14 and 25 in Ingolstadt. The survey shows that while knowledge and attitudes are high, sustainable behavior is often less pronounced. Self-efficacy expectations are particularly influential and are closely linked to engagement in the context of sustainability. Based on her findings, Bremer formulated recommendations for the practice of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Successful ESD should give young people the opportunity to experience self-efficacy – for example, through teaching formats such as service-learning, which combine practical experience with a sense of effectiveness.



ESD indicator for the German Sustainability Strategy

How can we measure progress in implementing ESD in the school system?



Prof. Dr. Ingrid Hemmer and Steven Mainka together with Rosa Liss, director of the Environmental School in Walting

As part of the project “Development of Indicators for Measuring ESD in the School Education Sector” (E-I-BNES), expert surveys identified the “school label indicator” as the most suitable indicator. It represents the proportion of schools with an ESD-related label out of the total number of schools. Prof. Dr. (Ret.) Ingrid Hemmer, Professorship of Geography Didactics and ESD and head of the aforementioned project, and her team were asked to provide scientific support for the operationalization and application of the indicator as part of the project “Support for the ‘School Label’ Education Indicator” (U-BiSchuLa). This is both a scientific and a political process, which serves the purpose of reporting and is also intended to contribute to the quality development of the labels. To investigate factors that favor or hamper the latter, selected label-granting bodies were interviewed. Political decisions were made between 2023 and 2025; the first survey using the indicator took place in 2024; and this first – and so far only – ESD indicator was incorporated into the German Sustainability Strategy in 2025. Both projects were funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.





Action area Teaching, Studies, Continuing Education

In its studies and teaching practice, the KU aims to empower students to actively shape sustainable development. Universities have the responsibility to impart the knowledge and skills that enable students to understand sustainability in its ecological, social, economic, and ethical dimensions, to recognize conflicting goals, and to act responsibly in their personal and professional lives. In accordance with the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), the focus is on fostering skills for actively shaping the future.

Through a variety of degree programs, students at the KU acquire specialized knowledge as well as communicative, participatory, and reflective skills. They learn to assess the opportunities and risks of sustainable development with foresight, to collaboratively develop solutions, and to jointly shape their implementation.

This is achieved both through a growing number of sustainability-related degree programs and by integrating sustainability topics and shaping skills into the curriculum at the module level. These competencies are specifically strengthened, particularly in teacher training programs and in continuing education courses on university teaching methodology.

Practice-oriented projects and qualification works, as well as service-learning formats, foster exchange between the University, society, and the professional practice. The 2019 Mission Statement for Studies and Teaching underlines this focus and establishes sustainability and ESD as central guiding principles. With the interdisciplinary program Studium.Pro and the supplementary program in Sustainable Development, the KU also creates a structural framework for an interdisciplinary approach that is open to students from all academic disciplines.



Selected degree programs and certificate courses in the field of sustainability

- Business Administration Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTRE) (MSc)
- Conflict, Memory and Peace (MA)
- Flight, Migration, Society (BA)
- Geography: Education for Sustainable Development (MA)
- Geography: Environmental Processes and Natural Hazards (MSc)
- Inclusive Music Education / Community Music (MA)
- Sustainable Education and Social-ecological Transformation in Church Institutions (Certificate)
- Sustainability in Business & Economics (BSc)
- Tourism and Sustainable Regional Development – Management und Geography (MSc)
- Transformation and Sustainable Living Spaces – Reshape Tourism (MSc)
- Transformation – Orientation – Future (Certificate)
- Transformation – Sustainability – Ethics (BA)
- Certificate course for people in crisis regions "Learning Facilitator"
- Supplementary studies in Sustainable Development (Certificate)
- Supplementary studies in Sustainability in Business (Certificate)
- Supplementary studies Personal Development & Social Commitment (Cert)



STS – a new faculty is established

Since its founding, the School of Transformation & Sustainability (STS) at the KU has increasingly established itself as a pioneering institution for research, teaching, and social change. The STS was launched as a new faculty in the 2023–24 winter semester and sees itself as an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary platform for research, teaching, and knowledge transfer related to social transformation processes and sustainability issues. It builds on the legacy of the former Faculty

of Religious Education and expands its profile towards a future-oriented focus on sustainability and transformation.



In 2024, the primary focus shifted to the institutional implementation and academic development of the STS. In the 2024–25 winter semester, the new Bachelor's degree program "Transformation–Sustainability–Ethics"

was launched, empowering students to help shape transformation processes in society, the economy, and the church in a sustainable manner: The curriculum combines ethics, education, and sustainability studies in an interdisciplinary approach. Another important event was the conference "Shaping Futures – Futures Studies as a Framework for Sustainable Development", which the STS co-hosted with the "Mensch in Bewegung" project in Ingolstadt in June 2024. This event was aimed at researchers, educators, and social stakeholders and provided impetus for futures studies and sustainable development.

In 2025, the STS increased its visibility and practical relevance. In addition to academic events and course offerings, public workshops and other formats contributed to the discussion of issues related to societal transformation. Specifically, STS researchers, for example, worked with students from the Katharinen-Gymnasium in Ingolstadt to develop future scenarios for Ingolstadt and discussed specific courses of action in the areas of mobility, energy, and civic participation. This allowed participants to experience transformation concepts in a practical way and helped them develop socially relevant skills. Another important initiative was the "STS Talks," a series of public events that addressed current topics in socio-ecological transformation and strengthened the dialog between academia, the professional sector, and civil society.

An important step in shaping the faculty's profile was the appointment of Prof. Dr. Uwe Schneidewind, one of the leading researchers in the fields of transformation and sustainability, as the STS's first fellow. Professor Schneidewind will provide strategic guidance to the faculty and contribute to the academic discourse through guest lectures.

Sustainability Coaches

The "Sustainability Coaches" training program is a professional development initiative for apprentices in companies and was developed as part of the collaborative project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (MIB II). The program's goal is to embed sustainability in a practical way within organizations and training companies. It is aimed at companies that wish to strengthen sustainability competencies across operational processes and train change agents.

The program teaches participants how to identify levers for change in organizations, expand their organizational know-how, and apply sustainability knowledge both theoretically and in specific day-to-day work contexts. The training places a strong emphasis on group work, role-playing, and discussion to collectively reflect on sustainability issues and understand them as processes of change.



The Sustainability Coaches serve as change agents: They bring knowledge about the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability to their workplaces and support change processes there. Particularly within the regional context of Region 10, for example, in cooperation with the municipal enterprise Strukturentwicklung Pfaffenhofen an der Ilm (KUS) and the State Vocational School I in Ingolstadt, several groups of apprentices have already been successfully trained.





Senatra – Service Learning and sustainable transformation at universities, sub-project: Service Learning on campus

Since October 2022, Dr. Ann-Kathrin Bremer and Prof. Dr. Anne-Kathrin Lindau (former holder of the Chair of Geography Didactics and Education for Sustainable Development, now at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg) have been investigating the extent to which the use of Service Learning (SL) in higher education can contribute to an institution-wide sustainable transformation of universities.



At the KU, SL projects are implemented as part of courses on campus and are intended to promote sustainable transformation in all areas of university operations. The KU itself serves as a real-world laboratory for sustainable development. Students interact with stakeholders in sustainable development from the six areas of action: governance, research, teaching, campus management/operations, student initiatives and engagement, and knowledge transfer.

During the 2024/25 winter semester, students worked on a total of four SL projects addressing topics such as fair trade, mobility, biodiversity, and diversity and inclusion. Among other things, this resulted in a city map with information on fair trade shopping options, a social media series on “Commuting Heroes”, a guide to biodiversity-friendly green space maintenance in collaboration with the KU Facility Management, and flyers for students and staff listing points of contact for questions and concerns regarding diversity and inclusion.

The goal is to empower students to contribute their theory-based practical experiences to the University’s areas of activity and to reflect on them in their roles as change agents. The project is scientifically monitored and evaluated as part of a multi-faceted, transdisciplinary case study using a mixed-methods design (surveys, interviews, focus groups). This collaborative project with Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, the University of Vechta, the University of Bremen, Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, and netzwerk n is funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology, and Space.

February 2025: Focus on Service Learning and the third mission: International Service Learning Conference

The KU, in collaboration with the Social Impact Start-up Academy (SISTAC) in Ingolstadt, hosted the Uniservitate Conference titled “Service Learning Meets Business Education: Strategies for Effective Integration and Competency Development.” Numerous representatives from Catholic universities around the world attended. The conference provided an opportunity to continue the discussions that began at the Uniservitate Symposium in Rome and to further develop the social responsibility of universities in line with the Third Mission.



Students present their sustainability projects

At the end of the 2025 summer semester, KU students publicly presented their projects in the field of sustainable development at the Eichstätt weekly market. Students from degree programs such as Education for Sustainable Development, German and French Political Science, and the School of Transformation and Sustainability showcased their semester projects in information booths and pavilions.



The projects ranged from environmental education programs to intercultural exhibitions and hands-on workshops, combining academic knowledge with social engagement. The goal was to foster dialog between students and the general public and to highlight sustainable practices. By participating in the weekly market, the students received feedback from practice and were able to reflect on the effectiveness of their projects. The event highlighted how closely academic learning and social responsibility are intertwined at the KU. At the same time, it provided a platform to present new ideas and approaches for sustainable engagement in the region and to raise public awareness of sustainability.





"Montagsmaler": A creative approach to sustainability

In Eichstätt's Wiesengässchen, students from the KU, together with local residents, transformed a 51 meters long wall into a colorful work of art inspired by the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Under the motto "Art Meets Sustainability", the focus was not only on the final result but, above all, on fostering exchange and engagement with sustainability. The participatory project was initiated by the City of Eichstätt's Fairtrade Steering Group, the Professorship of Art Education and Education Studies at the KU, and other partners. Students developed the designs in collaboration with local businesses, associations, and institutions, and also used generative AI for research and visualization.

The project was implemented over six Mondays, when participants applied paint to the wall themselves under guidance. In a roundtable discussion, they exchanged ideas on sustainability. The project demonstrated how artistic creativity and social participation can be combined to make sustainable development visible and tangible – in line with the KU's commitment to embedding sustainability as an integral part of university practice.



Exploring the KU community garden: Elementary school gardening project

At the community garden "Kapuzinergarten Eden", KU students worked together with class 4a from the elementary school am Graben to tend a vegetable garden for over half a year, following the principles of the Campus-Ackerdemie.

The goal was to help children experience how much work and joy go into growing fresh vegetables and to foster an appreciation for nature and food. The collaboration took place as part of a seminar on the didactics of biology led by Dr. Maximiliane Schumm in cooperation with teacher Dr. Philipp Simon. The project was supported by the externally funded initiatives Senatra and ServusMINT, which provide students with hands-on experience in sustainable development and science education. The children were able to apply theoretical knowledge, participate in the project, and strengthen their awareness of sustainable practices.



Three students from the FOS/BOS Ingolstadt participated in the activities over the course of several sessions and subsequently wrote a seminar paper on a gardening-related topic. In this way, they put the service-learning philosophy into practice – a concept that combines hands-on learning with social engagement and strengthens the participants' practical skills.

Open air studying: New outdoor classroom opened

In 2025, a new outdoor classroom was opened at the KU, enabling learning in the open air. The learning space is located in the garden area of the Main Library in Eichstätt and is part of the Outdoor Campus, which is designed to promote analog, creative, and collaborative learning outside of traditional seminar rooms. At the ceremonial opening, it was emphasized that learning in the open air serves as an important counterbalance to the digital world: Fresh air, physical activity, the natural environment, and sensory stimuli such as birdsong or the rustling of leaves support focused and creative learning. The classroom can accommodate 20–25 people and is ideal for discussions, small-group work, and interdisciplinary activities. This learning space was created in collaboration with the Eichstätt Vocational School, whose students designed and built the furniture themselves under guidance: A hands-on project that combines craftsmanship with dedication. The project was also supported by the HERMANN GUTMANN FOUNDATION.



The learning space is not only available to KU students but can also be used by school classes. It serves as a bridge between university education and K-12 practice and demonstrates how innovative learning spaces and Education for Sustainable Development can be linked. With its opening, the KU is expanding its teaching and learning offerings and setting an example for nature-oriented, participatory, and creative educational formats that complement traditional seminar rooms and provide new impetus for sustainable higher education.





Places of sustainable learning – a new network is born

With the “Places of sustainable learning” network, the KU has launched a platform that connects educational and experiential sites in the region and brings sustainability knowledge to life. The network was officially launched in the fall of 2024 and is aimed at schools, volunteers, and the general public.

Partners include the Schernfeld Forest Experience Center, the Altmühltal Nature Park Center, the KU’s research and teaching forest, and the KU’s Green Office. As early as the summer of 2024, the participants implemented a joint program of events that offered practical insights into garden and forest maintenance as well as current research projects.



In 2025, the collaboration was further expanded with a joint annual program. This includes guided tours, workshops, and hands-on activities, including family-friendly offerings at the Forest Day event hosted by the Schernfeld Forest Experience Center. The goal is to increase the visibility of the places of learning and attract additional target groups to sustainable engagement in the region.

The network is coordinated by the KU as part of the “Mensch in Bewegung” project. The ongoing exchange among participants enables the development of new programs while simultaneously strengthening the collective presence of the places of learning. In this way, the KU underlines its commitment to permanently embedding sustainability in its teaching practice, research, and knowledge transfer in the region.



Sustainability prizes for final theses in 2024 and 2025

The Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt's Sustainability Prize has been awarded annually since 2014 to recognize outstanding Bachelor's or Master's theses in the field of sustainable development. The award, worth €1,000, is sponsored by the Fritz Gutmann Brewery Foundation to honor student commitment to sustainability and raise awareness of sustainability research.

2024 award winner – Florian Hartwich

In 2024, the prize was awarded to Florian Hartwich for his Master's thesis on “Soil Science Analysis and Accompanying Hydrological Studies to Assess the Peat Condition of a Lowland Bog in the Nassenfelser Schuttertal.” Hartwich investigated the condition of a lowland bog – a sensitive ecosystem that is important as a carbon sink for climate protection. He combined field-based soil analyses, laboratory tests, and hydrological measurements to assess peat quality and its impact on the water balance. The results showed that drained bog areas are subject to severe peat degradation and, without appropriate management, lose their ability to sequester carbon. His work highlights the need for sustainable restoration and land-use strategies to restore the area’s climate function. The thesis was supervised by Dr. Peter Fischer, head of the Department of Soil Geography/Soil Erosion.



2025 award winner – Adelheid Maier

In 2025, Adelheid Maier received the prize for her Master's thesis, “From ‘I’ to ‘We’—Living Happily and Sustainably Together.” She linked Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) with models of well-being from positive psychology and applied this synthesis in practice. For the Eichstätt Environmental Youth Hostel, she developed a new ESD program for school classes starting in fifth grade that combines ecological topics with social and personal skills such as self-awareness, mindfulness, cooperation, and solidarity. The evaluation of the program demonstrated its high effectiveness in promoting sustainable lifestyles and psychosocial resources among young people. Maier thus makes a practical contribution to a holistic understanding of sustainability and supports socio-ecological transformation processes in the field of education.



Smaller field trips in the 2025 summer semester

Socio-ecological transformation on Lake Constance: Challenges and potential solutions

From June 5 to 6, 2025, 14 Geography students, led by Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Zademach, undertook a two-day field trip to the Lake Constance region. Under the overarching theme “Socio-ecological transformation in the Lake Constance region: Challenges and solutions”, they explored key issues of sustainable development in this dynamic four-country region and discussed them on site. The group traveled to Lindau by train – a climate-friendly mode of transportation – and got around by bicycle during the field trip. This deliberate choice not only underlined the commitment to sustainable organization but also allowed for a direct and unhurried experience of the landscape. After the first day – which included a stop in Bregenz and an overnight stay at the JUFA Hotel – the group continued its journey along the Austrian and Swiss shores of Lake Constance to Romanshorn. From there, they took the ferry back to Lindau. In terms of content, the field trip was accompanied by a series of short introductory presentations by the students, which encouraged in-depth discussion of a wide range of topics. Among other things, the following topics were covered:

- The Rhine Delta: Protected area and center for environmental education
- (Over)tourism in Lindau
- Energy transition in the Lake Constance region - a cross-border perspective
- Urban development in Bregenz
- Transportation, including Lake Constance boat service
- Four-country region of Lake Constance
- Vorarlberg: Regional economic structures



Fotos: H. Zademach

The following personal reflections from the students illustrate the wide range of insights gained during the study trip. As one participant describes:

"During the Lake Constance field trip, I came to appreciate above all the region's importance as a tourist destination, particularly the cities of Lindau and Bregenz. Even though there weren't large crowds during our visit due to the mediocre weather, it was still evident how the infrastructure is geared toward tourism. In Lindau, in particular, I noticed the lovingly designed downtown area: small, artfully decorated shops offering tourist items and all kinds of souvenirs line the streets alongside everyday businesses. Away from the main streets, however, some building facades were already peeling, reinforcing the impression that it is primarily the city center that is 'spruced up' for tourist purposes."

"Furthermore, during a visit to an industrial area, we realized that the region does not rely exclusively on tourism but is also very strong economically. We also made an interesting observation when comparing the bike paths in Germany and Austria. While in Germany, only a few paths along our route ran directly along the lake and access to the water was sometimes restricted, the Austrian side offered well-developed bike paths with direct views of the lake."

Overall, the participants viewed the field trip as a valuable learning experience that not only conveyed theoretical content but also provided an opportunity to critically examine specific spatial conditions. The combination of science-based analysis, personal observation, and sustainable mobility played a key role in bringing the challenges and opportunities of socio-ecological transformation in the four-country region to life.

4

Action area Campus Management

Sustainability on campus: Environmental management responsibilities at the KU

In order to live up to its self-image as a responsible and sustainable University, the KU is working to continuously improve its institutional environmental performance. This includes, among other things, climate-friendly and resource-efficient operations, as well as social and socio-economic aspects in line with a whole-institution approach.

The action area Campus Management coordinates efforts to improve university operations and infrastructure and make them more sustainable. This includes goals and measures to reduce energy and resource consumption, as well as initiatives to promote more sustainable procurement and environmentally friendly travel practices for business trips, field trips, and commuting. The EMASplus environmental management system serves as the central foundation for these efforts.

A significant portion of environmental considerations stems from the University's physical infrastructure at its Eichstätt and Ingolstadt campuses, which consists of a mix of historic buildings, structures from the 1960s, and more modern (functional) buildings. A particular challenge is the comprehensive renovation of the historically protected college buildings in Eichstätt, which began in 2023. At the same time, the extensively renovated Georgianum opened in Ingolstadt.

For detailed information on campus management and EMAS data: see the 2025 Environmental Statement. Please note that the PDF files of the environmental statement are only available in German ► <https://www.ku.de/en/campus-life/sustainability/sustainability-on-campus/emasplus/environmental-statement>

Students and lecturers have short commutes at both campuses. Although Eichstätt and Ingolstadt are accessible via local and long-distance public transportation and are connected to one another, the regional public transportation system is insufficient and, in some respects, not very convenient. In terms of mobility, commuting between, to, and from the campuses poses a particular challenge.

At the KU, social and economic aspects are also taken into account when assessing the institution's environmental impact. Viewing legal requirements as a minimum standard, the KU is continuously expanding its commitment to the environment and sustainable development and strives for fair, responsible, and socially responsible treatment of employees, students, and (external) partners. Employees and students play an essential role in implementing the sustainability concept. The KU promotes their awareness of and responsibility for the environment and sustainable development, and encourages all members of the University community to contribute suggestions and ideas and to participate in the implementation of the sustainability goals. In addition, the KU supports research projects focused on sustainable development and education for sustainable development at the University, in the region, and in society.

Central challenges and environmental aspects

Use of resources on campus

In the areas of building heating, electricity consumption, waste disposal, water consumption, and the use of consumables, maximizing efficiency is of paramount importance. For many years now, renewable energy sources have been used for electricity supply (green electricity) and heating buildings (district heating, biogas, and natural gas). In addition, sustainability considerations play just as important a role in energy-efficient renovation and modernization as they do in technical infrastructure (IT, etc.).

Mobility

Efforts to promote more sustainable mobility are of great importance. For business trips and field trips, the most environmentally friendly mode of transportation must always be chosen in accordance with the KU guidelines. Commuting to and from the KU, however, is one of the biggest challenges when it comes to reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Through the 'JobRad' bike leasing program, employees were offered the



opportunity to acquire a bicycle, an option that more than 40 people have taken advantage of so far (2024). Not least, participation in the “Stadtradeln” (city cycling) initiative at both University campuses promotes cycling as part of everyday life. The development of a mobility concept will soon establish a structural framework for increasingly sustainable mobility. To this end, a strategic process was launched in 2025, and the Mobility Working Group was convened from within the steering group.

Procurement and investments

Procurement management takes environmental impacts and social aspects into account to ensure improvements in environmental protection and compliance with social standards. The products to be procured should be environmentally and socially responsible throughout their entire life cycle (manufacturing, use, disposal). Corresponding regulations are laid down in the KU Procurement Policy. In 2023, among other measures, the KU Shop’s product offerings were redesigned to include more sustainable products (Blue Angel certification, GOTS/Oeko-Tex Standard 100 for textiles, etc.). To ensure the University remains ideally positioned to meet future procurement challenges, work has been underway since 2025 to develop a KU strategy for sustainable procurement.

Biodiversity on campus

Assessing the use of green spaces and expanding flowering areas is a stated goal of the KU’s sustainability program. To this end, various planting initiatives were implemented on the KU’s green spaces, with the aim of contributing to greater biodiversity. In addition, a phenological garden was inaugurated near the University Library. Since November 2023, the KU has also been maintaining its own forest for teaching practice and research, which was established in collaboration with the Ingolstadt-Pfaffenhofen Office for Food, Agriculture, and Forestry (AELF) and the municipality of Nassenfels in the Adelschlag forest district. Currently, the development of a biodiversity and green space strategy is on the agenda, for which a Biodiversity and Green Spaces Working Group has been formed from members of the steering group.

Greenhouse gas accounting

Since 2011, the KU has been conducting simplified CO₂ accounting (previously limited to Scope 1 and Scope 2), which is part of the Environmental Statement and will in the future be carried out using the BayCalc accounting tool developed by the Bavarian Center for Higher Education and Sustainability (BayZeN). In addition, the calculation of all significant greenhouse gases will be expanded to include Scope 3 and made more comprehensive, which will require further improvements in data collection and its (digital) provision within the KU.



Environmental performance

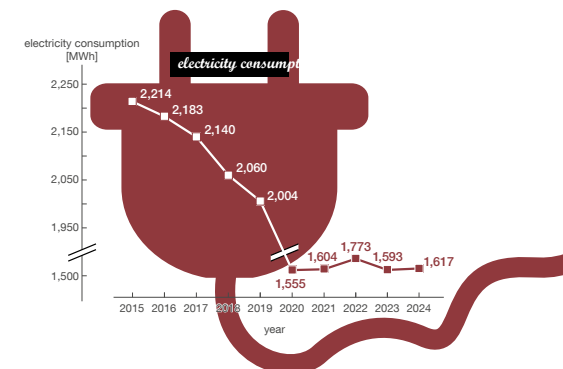
Reference data

Environmental performance is determined based on general reference data (total building area broken down into primary usable area, secondary usable area, circulation area, heated usable area, and the number of University members). The collection and processing of this data is the responsibility of various departments within the KU administration (primarily Facility Management).



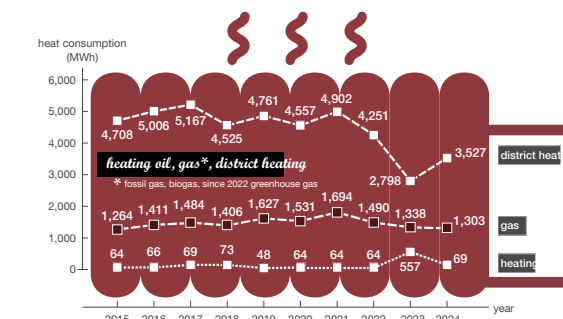
Electricity

Since 2012, the KU has sourced all of its electricity from renewable energy sources; in addition, electricity from its own PV system is fed into the University’s power grid. Additional PV systems are being installed as part of the comprehensive renovation of the Main Buildings. Electricity consumption has fallen steadily over the past 10 years, both in absolute terms (2011: 2.3 GWh; 2020: 1.5 GWh) and relative to the total building area. The low overall electricity consumption associated with the COVID-19 pandemic (online semesters, 2020) rose slightly in 2021 and 2022 due to the return to normal operations on campus and will level off in 2023 and 2024 at annual values of approximately 1.6 GWh.



Heating energy

Hot water for heating the buildings at the KU is primarily supplied by district heating and (greenhouse) gas, with small amounts (in one building) coming from heating oil (less than 1 % of total output). Year-over-year, heating energy consumption decreased significantly between 2021 and 2023; for 2024, figures are nearly identical (approximately 4.7 GWh of heating energy) to those of the previous year. These savings can be attributed to several relatively mild winters, a reduction in average indoor temperatures, and a decrease in the use of operational space resulting from renovation measures in the Main Buildings.





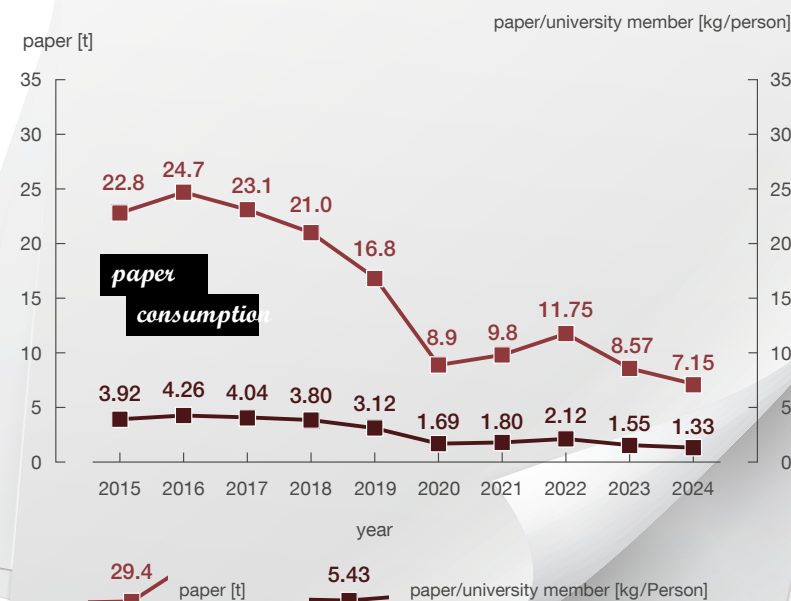
Water / wastewater

Water is primarily used for the sanitary facilities, the canteen kitchen, and irrigation of the University sports field. Water consumption has dropped significantly since 2019, but rose sharply in 2022 – only to fall significantly again in the following two years, 2023 and 2024. These fluctuations can be explained by the varying intensity of weather-dependent irrigation measures on the University sports grounds. A similar trend can therefore also be observed in wastewater discharge. In general, the goal for the coming years should be to reduce water consumption associated with the irrigation of green spaces. Innovative irrigation systems could be introduced to achieve this.



Paper consumption

Paper consumption declined from 2013 (33.2 metric tons) to 2020 (8.9 metric tons) to about a quarter of the initial value, but increased slightly in 2021 and 2022, only to decline again in 2023 and 2024 (2022: 11.75 metric tons, 2024: 7.15 metric tons). In relation to the number of University members, the figure stood at around 2.2 kg in 2022; by 2024, this had decreased to 1.33 kg per person – and thus remains significantly lower than in the years before the pandemic. The University primarily uses recycled paper (over 97 % of total consumption).



Waste

The figures for waste volumes are currently still estimates based on calculations of container volumes and the frequency of emptying. However, due to organizational and logistical changes, the volume of residual waste has been reduced (fewer containers, fewer pick-ups); a similar decrease is expected with further measures targeting paper waste and packaging waste.



Emissions (Greenhouse gases/ CO₂ emissions)

Until now, Scope 1 and Scope 2 have been included in our GHG accounting; we are currently expanding this to include Scope 3 in accordance with the guidelines of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. The initial focus is on mobility (commuting, business travel, field trips, etc.) and on incorporating the GHG emissions resulting from construction work during the comprehensive renovation of the Main Buildings. The CO₂ emissions recorded in the inventory were reduced by 80 % in Scopes 1 and 2 between 2011 and 2022. For the years 2020 through 2022, the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic were the cause of a further decline in emissions. As University operations returned to a more normal state, the figures for 2023 rose as expected; however, in 2024, CO₂ emissions reached an all-time low of 337.15 metric tons per year.

In its 2030 Overall Sustainability Concept, the KU has set the goal of achieving climate neutrality within defined system boundaries by 2025. In 2020 when the strategy was drafted, this goal referred to Scope 1 and 2 emissions that had been accounted for up to that point. However, with the subsequent inclusion of Scope 3 emissions in the greenhouse gas inventory in accordance with the BayCalc standard, the underlying scope of the inventory has expanded significantly. This requires an adjustment to the original climate neutrality goal.

Over the past 15 years, the KU has been able to continuously and significantly reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, thereby making operations at both locations considerably more climate-friendly. Nevertheless, the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2025 has not yet been met. The objective for the coming years is to redefine the system boundaries, consistently reduce emissions, and continuously improve the greenhouse gas balance of the KU's activities through various measures.



EMASplus: Certified environmental management system & organizational leadership



The KU fulfills its social responsibility in accordance with EMASplus within the core topics of ISO 26000: Governance plays a special role in this context, as it is a prerequisite for the other core areas.

Respect for human rights

Respect for human rights in procurement is safeguarded at the KU through the “KU Procurement Guidelines”, as their sustainability criteria aim to prevent human rights violations such as child labor or the exploitation of workers. Since 2017, the KU has been recognized as a “Fairtrade University” and promotes awareness of fair trade (use of fair-trade products such as coffee, etc.). Additional contributions come from, among others, the “Center for Flight and Migration”, the student group of “Amnesty International”, and the working group “AK Shalom.”

Good work practices

Compliance with applicable occupational safety and health regulations is addressed by the KU’s Occupational Safety and Health Committee (ASA), as well as through inspections conducted by Facility Management, department heads, and the occupational safety specialist. To ensure the future well-being of KU members, an occupational health management program has been established and is being continuously expanded (including psychological advice for students, preventive health measures such as vaccinations, etc.).

Fair operating and business practices

As a matter of principle, the Catholic University treats students, employees, and citizens fairly. The KU has a hospitality policy as well as regulations to ensure standards of good scientific practice. Since 2019, an Ethics Committee has been in place to provide researchers with assistance and advice regarding ethical and legal aspects of the research process.



Consumer issues

At the KU, the staff-to-student ratio averages twelve students per lecturer. Students can participate in shaping the University through various committees (e.g., in the area of sustainability through the Green Office or the steering group). In terms of the teaching practice, many lectures and seminars on sustainability are offered, and the University also promotes “Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)”. To address students’ interests, the quality of academic programs is regularly evaluated. Key areas of focus include the curriculum, the level of student support, the connection to research and real-world practice, facilities, advice and support services, as well as the general conditions of study and the program structure.

Community involvement and development

The KU's research and teaching practice focus on exposing students to new insights and preparing them for life after graduation. A key objective in this regard is fostering students’ values to empower them to serve as advocates for sustainable development.

The KU sees itself as a socially engaged University and promotes the transfer of research to society and of ideas from society to research, a process driven primarily by the “Mensch in Bewegung” project. The current project phase (2023–2028) of the collaborative project with TH Ingolstadt focuses on the areas of digitalization and AI, sustainable development, and the future.

5 Action area Student Initiatives and Engagement

The KU is one of only a few universities in Germany to embed student engagement in their sustainability strategy in such explicit terms. In the Overall Sustainability Concept 2020–2030, “Student Engagement & Initiatives” is defined as a separate area of action. In doing so, the University recognizes the pivotal role students play in its sustainable development. Looking back, it is clear that without the impetus provided by dedicated students – who as early as the 1990s developed specific visions of a sustainable university and persistently pursued them – this level of development would hardly have been achieved. They not only provided internal impetus but also significantly influenced the external perception of the KU as a sustainable institution.

As part of the project “Sustainable University: Criteria for an Assessment” (KriNaHo), funded by the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection, student engagement is highlighted as a key factor in sustainable university development. On this basis, the KU has deliberately given this area strategic priority – even beyond the areas of action outlined in the BMBF consortium project “HochN – Sustainability at Universities: Developing – Networking – Reporting”. At the KU, sustainability is thus explicitly understood as a collaborative endeavor in which students play a key role.

This engagement unfolds at various levels. In addition to formats integrated into the curriculum, such as Service Learning or project-based teaching, student-led volunteer initiatives in particular shape the sustainability discourse at the KU. Through projects, events, and discussion forums, they continuously bring new perspectives to the University’s internal sustainability process while simultaneously strengthening their own capacity to shape the future.

Green Office activities

The KU’s Green Office was founded in 2020 and has since been promoting the integration of sustainability into academic studies, teaching practice, and everyday campus life. Organized by student assistants, it carries out a wide range of initiatives that invite students, staff, and interested members of the public to get involved and make sustainability tangible. A key feature of the program is the Green Office Cafés, where current topics related to sustainability are discussed in a relaxed atmosphere. For example, several cafés focused on the topic of fast fashion: Participants reflected on the environmental and social impacts of clothing production, exchanged ideas about sustainable consumption patterns, and enjoyed fair-trade coffee and cookies while doing so.



Another highlight was the “Fair Through the Holiday Season” campaign, which took place in 2024 and 2025 in collaboration with Welt-Brücke Eichstätt. Fair-trade products were showcased, production conditions were explained, and tastings were offered. In addition, an event was held in Ingolstadt in collaboration with the Weltladen, where participants could make and taste fair-trade chocolate themselves. This allowed people to experience fair trade firsthand and encouraged conscious consumer behavior. The Green Office’s offerings also range from upcycling workshops and sustainable pub quizzes to expert lectures, such as those featuring the landscape conservation association Ackerwert. Participants experience creative, scientific, and hands-on approaches to sustainability. Participation in public events such as the Open Day, the Hofgartenfest, or the Citizens’ Festival in Ingolstadt also demonstrates how the University’s engagement connects with the region. The focus is on hands-on experiences: During Green Friday, participants could drop off cell phones for recycling, swap clothes, and try out food-sharing initiatives. Vegan action days in the canteen also gave students and staff the opportunity to practically experiment with sustainable eating. The Green Office brings together knowledge, commitment, and creativity to make sustainability visible and tangible. Students and staff develop skills in design, reflection, and collaboration and contribute to a culture of sustainability at the KU. By combining academia, practice, and participatory activities, the Green Office plays a key role in embedding sustainable thinking and action within the institution and society at large. The Instagram channel @greenoffice_nachhaltigeku regularly shares updates on current initiatives and invites people to get involved.

Sustainability Weeks



The KU's biannual Sustainability Weeks in 2024 and 2025 demonstrated once again how vibrantly and diversely sustainability is embedded as a cross-cutting theme in everyday university life. The events place a particular focus on participation, knowledge transfer, and hands-on experience – driven by students and staff and organized by the University's Green Office.

During the Sustainability Weeks, a wide range of events is offered at the Eichstätt and Ingolstadt campuses. Students, staff, and interested members of the public can participate in workshops, open courses, and hands-on activities that address topics such as upcycling, clothing swaps, fair production, the circular economy, and sustainable mobility. The programs are complemented by expert lectures, discussion forums, nature and climate tours, as well as hands-on projects such as community gardening initiatives and sustainable food services. The goal is not only to teach sustainability in theory but also to bring it to life and to connect different stakeholders. The Sustainability Weeks also provide space for creative and participatory formats: clothing swaps,

book-sharing cabinets, vegan options, and craft workshops encourage participation and demonstrate how sustainable practices can be integrated into everyday life. Open courses allow anyone interested to engage with the ecological, social, and economic aspects of sustainable development in an accessible way. In this way, the program underlines the KU's ongoing commitment to embedding sustainability both institutionally and culturally.

It combines academic perspectives with practical experience, fosters exchange and reflection within the University community and beyond, and demonstrates how networked engagement at universities supports processes of social transformation.



Exchange with the Green Office at the Universidad de Salamanca

In the spring of 2024, the KU's international networking efforts in the area of sustainability were strengthened further: For the first time, an exchange took place between the KU's Green Office and the Oficina Verde at the University of Salamanca in Spain. While the Green Office had previously focused primarily on collaborations in Bavaria and Germany, the week-long meeting – held as part of the Erasmus program – opened up a new European perspective.

In March, Patrizia Hartmann, head of KU's Green Office, traveled to Salamanca to engage in in-depth exchanges with Celia Aramburu Sánchez's team. The goal was to familiarize themselves with the structures, working methods, and strategic approaches of both institutions, identify common ground, and learn from one another. The historic Universidad de Salamanca in northwestern Spain, with approximately 30,000 students, has many years of experience and a wide range of initiatives in the field of sustainability.

The program included expert discussions, workshops, and joint activities, including work in the university's shared garden. Exchange with local media was also part of the visit. The discussions revealed numerous thematic overlaps, such as in sustainability communication, rankings, campaigns, and the strategic integration of sustainability goals. Despite differing institutional



frameworks, it became clear how comparable the challenges, tasks, and success factors of committed sustainability work at universities are. The many parallels underlined how strongly the topic of sustainability unites universities across national borders.

A special highlight of the program was an interview on the student radio station "Radio USAL." There, Patrizia Hartmann was interviewed by María del Mar Marcos Martín. In the publicly broadcast conversation, she presented the KU's sustainability efforts, reported on the exchange between the two Green Offices, and explained the importance of institutionally anchored sustainability structures in an international context.

"Green Travel" was also part of the exchange: Hartmann made a conscious choice to travel by bus and train. Under the Erasmus+ program, climate-friendly mobility is specifically promoted; students and staff can receive an additional funding top-up for choosing sustainable travel options. In this way, sustainability was not only discussed but also put into practice.



Exhibition "Friedensklima!" – Connecting sustainability and peace

From October 21 to 23, 2025, the traveling exhibition "FRIEDENSKLIMA! 17 Goals for Justice and Peace" was on display at the Civic Engagement Office at Marktplatz 18 in Eichstätt. It vividly illustrated how the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are linked to peace and justice, with a particular focus on SDG 6: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

The exhibition highlighted that fair economic practices, strong institutions, and climate protection can prevent conflicts and promote stable, just societies. Ecological, social, and political sustainability were shown to be interrelated and were examined collectively. The exhibition was presented by the KU's Green Office in cooperation with the Fairtrade City Eichstätt steering committee.



The traveling exhibition was sponsored by the City of Augsburg and pax christi Augsburg, which are implementing the project nationwide to raise awareness of the interconnection between peace and sustainable development.

Setting up a community fridge at Marktplatz 18

A food sharing station has been set up at the Civic Engagement Office at Marktplatz 18 to prevent food waste and promote sustainable consumption. Here, students, staff, and interested members of the public can drop off food that is still good but no longer needed, or take



it home for free. This helps conserve resources and raises awareness about food waste. The community fridge is part of the Foodsharing network, which oversees such locations nationwide. It serves as an accessible meeting place for collaborative, sustainable action. The initiative combines social responsibility, environmental protection, and civic engagement in everyday life. With the new "Fairteiler", the KU is creating a place where sustainable action can be experienced firsthand, the University community's commitment is strengthened, and the culture of sustainability is further embedded on campus.



Student initiatives in the field of sustainability

At the KU, numerous student initiatives are actively committed to sustainable development, social responsibility, and a conscious lifestyle. These groups raise awareness of environmental, social, and global issues, discuss them, and put them into practice – thereby enriching campus life beyond the lecture hall.

AK DenkNachhaltig! e.V. promotes a thoughtful understanding of sustainability and organizes initiatives such as book-sharing cabinets, trash cleanups, vegan cooking evenings, and lectures on sustainable products.

AK Kapuzinergarten offers an urban community garden as an open space for learning and socializing, teaches about ecological relationships, and provides opportunities for hands-on gardening.

AK Mental Health Awareness advocates for mental health, promotes education and preventive measures, thereby strengthening social sustainability and student well-being.

AK Queer is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusive structures on campus, and links social justice with sustainability in co-existence.

AK Wetterschau provides meteorological and aerobiological measurements, shares information about climate change, and raises awareness of environmental and climate issues.

CampusGrün focuses on ecological and social issues, sustainable nutrition, critical consumption, and social participation.

Das Umweltreferat (Environmental Department) supports environmentally conscious behavior, organizes clothing swap parties, trash cleanups, and initiatives in orchard meadows, and offers practical tips for resource-conserving behavior.

SDS.DieLinke Hochschulgruppe Eichstätt advocates for social justice, participatory decision-making, and accessibility, and operates the campus Fairteiler in collaboration with the Food Sharing Working Group.

Die Unicef Hochschulgruppe Ingolstadt advocates for children's rights, equal opportunity, and the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, linking local activities with global responsibility.



Action area Transfer

Knowledge always holds the potential for change – in society, locally, and beyond the region. This is precisely where knowledge transfer at the KU comes into play: It connects research, teaching, and social engagement, and purposefully integrates scientific findings into addressing current challenges. In light of the social, political, environmental, and economic upheavals of our time, the KU sees itself as an engaged University that takes responsibility. It shapes its knowledge transfer through dialog and participation: Academia and society work together in a co-creative manner, learn from one another, and develop solutions together.

This approach is firmly anchored in the KU's Development Plan. It lays the foundation for researchers and students to collaborate at an early stage with stakeholders from politics, local government, education, culture, business, and civil society. This gives rise to projects that address real-world issues – ranging from sustainable urban development and social cohesion to social innovations in education – and tackle them through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and teaching formats.

With its broad spectrum of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, the KU is particularly good at examining complex topics from diverse perspectives. An important step toward strengthening this commitment is the Science Forum: Since 2024, the Science Forum has been taking shape as a "House of Science" in Ingolstadt, serving as a central platform for exchange, cooperation, and innovation.

Future Campus

With the Future Campus at the Georgianum in Ingolstadt, the KU has been developing a high-performance research campus since 2023. It also serves as a transfer-oriented space for dialog and interaction, in which sustainability plays a central role. Building on its initial structural foundations, the Future Campus has evolved into a vibrant hub of exchange in 2024 and 2025. Within the historic buildings of the Georgianum, an internationally connected hub for science and education is thus taking shape in one of Europe's leading research regions.

A "House of Science" for the KU

A key driver of knowledge transfer at the KU is the Science Forum on the Future Campus. Through its offerings and program initiatives, the Science Forum opens the University to the public and creates diverse ways of access to scientific knowledge – for citizens as well as for local governments, businesses, schools, and cultural institutions. Whether through exhibitions, discussions, or lectures; science cinema; academic continuing education; advice; or public engagement: the Science Forum brings science to life for the public and invites active participation. In doing so, it brings together various areas of work under one roof that breathe life into the KU's commitment to knowledge transfer: The Event Center in the Peter & Paul Chapel organizes a public program of education and culture and transforms the KU into a vibrant hub for community engagement in the city. The Citizen Science Lab brings together research and societal experiential knowledge, enabling new forms of participatory collaboration.

The KU Academy consolidates continuing education offerings and tailors them to specific different target groups, such as in the field of sustainability. The Cooperation Management office builds bridges to business, administration, and civil society, precisely matching consulting needs with specialized expertise. And with the Upper Bavaria Startup Hub, the KU creates new spaces for entrepreneurial spirit, where students and early-career researchers can develop their ideas further and put them into practice.

The successful development of these structures has also attracted attention beyond the University: As a model project for society-oriented knowledge transfer, the KU today exemplifies a new type of university that actively combines social responsibility with high-quality research. The Science Forum serves as the place where science is shaped collaboratively – openly, participatively, and with the goal of contributing to overcoming the major challenges of our time.



The KU as an innovative University

The Science Forum is being established at the KU through the “Mensch in Bewegung” (MIB II) project. Nationwide, only six projects from the first funding phase have succeeded in securing a second round of funding from the federal-state “Innovative University” program. With MIB II, the KU and TH Ingolstadt have therefore been continuing their joint knowledge transfer initiative since 2023.

The overarching goal is to establish a regionally rooted platform for co-creative knowledge exchange that systematically brings together academia, politics, business, and civil society. In addition to the Science Forum, well-established transfer structures such as the Civic Engagement Office and the Citizen Science Lab play a key role in this effort. Both locations provide low-threshold access to science and make it possible to develop and address societal issues together with citizens. As open spaces for reflection and dialog in Eichstätt and Ingolstadt, they also specifically promote participatory and transdisciplinary research.

In line with the recommendations of the German Council of Science and Humanities (position paper “Science in Germany – Perspectives through 2040”), MIB II thus implements key requirements for a sustainable science: The interdisciplinary linking of disciplines, the integration of diverse actors and forms of knowledge, and a focus on societal impact. Through venues such as the Civic Engagement Office and the Citizen Science Lab on the KU’s two campuses, as well as through a structured program, the project is thus creating lasting structures for knowledge transfer. In doing so, it makes a significant contribution not only to the implementation of these guidelines but also effectively translates research into regional transformation processes.

Regional Future Barometer

As part of the MIB project, the KU conducted surveys in Region 10 from April through August 2024. Residents aged 18 and older were able to share their perspectives on mobility, climate protection, health, social cohesion, and economic issues either online or in person. Based on this data, a regional “Future Barometer” was created, which serves both to systematically document regional developments and to identify research needs. The results form the basis for workshops, dialog sessions, and other knowledge-transfer formats and are intended to be updated every two years to systematically document developments in the region.



Events

The following selection of projects and programs illustrates the variety of topics covered by the KU’s community engagement efforts:

Can we Shape the Future? – Conference at the KU in Ingolstadt

In June 2024, the KU, together with interested parties from business, academia, and society, explored possible futures and the process of envisioning them. Under the topic “Designing Futures – Futures Studies for Sustainable Development”, the School of Transformation and Sustainability and the MIB II project hosted a public conference in Ingolstadt.

Participatory Research at the KU: The Citizen Science Lab

The Citizen Science Lab of the MIB II project supports researchers in planning and implementing participatory projects and in involving citizens in science. The lab also regularly hosts roundtable discussions. In 2024, transformation researcher Prof. Stefan Selke and the KIT’s “Quartier Zukunft” real-world laboratory were guest speakers. These discussions provide researchers with a space to exchange ideas on participatory and transdisciplinary research and citizen science and offered practical insights for engaging societal stakeholders.

G-Forum 2024 in Ingolstadt: Entrepreneurship and Transformation

From September 25 to 27, 2024, the KU and THI jointly hosted the 27th Interdisciplinary Annual Conference on Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (G-Forum) in Ingolstadt. As the largest conference in the field of start-ups and entrepreneurship in the German-speaking world, the conference served as a central platform for academic and practice-oriented exchange on current issues in entrepreneurial innovation, sustainable business practices, and regional development.



Science exhibition "Ewiges Eis, adé"

The exhibition on perpetual ice was on display at the Future Campus from October 16 through December 8, 2024. Infographics, videos, and hands-on experiments for school groups vividly illustrated the consequences of glacial melt in the Alps for people and nature. Based on the SEHAG research project, visitors were able to learn about the methods scientists use today and how far climate change has progressed in the mountains. The exhibition was developed and produced by the MIB II project and the Chair of Physical Geography. Since then, it has been touring various locations – from county administrative offices to schools to national parks.

Places of Learning for Sustainability – Kick-off for a new network

On October 28, 2024, the “Places of Learning for Sustainability” network was launched at the Geo Dome in the Kapuzinergarten in Eichstätt. The goal is to connect regional educational and hands-on learning sites that actively involve citizens in shaping sustainable development. Coordinated by the MIB project, annual information and event programs are developed for all interested parties. In addition to the Kapuzinergarten, the learning centers include partners such as the Schernfeld Forest Experience Center, the Altmühltal Nature Park Environmental Center, the district’s subject area for climate protection, sustainability, and green planning, the KU’s Teaching and Research Forest, the KU Green Office, and the Eichstätt Orchard.

Exhibition "Demokratie leben – Rechtsextremismus bekämpfen"

What worldview is behind the right-wing ideology? What does the far-right youth scene look like, and what supposedly makes it attractive? The exhibition “Living Democracy – Combating Far-Right Extremism” highlights ways to work together to promote an open and tolerant society. In March 2025, the Center for Political Education at the Stadtjugendring Ingolstadt and the KU, together with the MIB project, opened the interactive exhibition at the KU’s Future Campus.



Small Communities, Big Impact – Actively Engaging Citizens

As part of the “Small Communities, Big Impact” project funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, an inclusive participatory process took place over several weeks in the summer of 2025 in Eichstätt and the surrounding region with the goal of actively involving citizens in the development of a shared vision for the sustainability transition. This process yielded a wide variety of ideas ranging from biodiverse playgrounds to the conversion of municipal recycling centers to support a circular economy.



Reading by Georg Büchner Prize winner Lutz Seiler at the KU



At the invitation of literary researcher Prof. Dr. Friederike Reents, Georg Büchner Prize winner Lutz Seiler read from poems, essays, and the first chapter of his new novel in June 2025 in the Holzersaal at the KU. The focus was on the impacts of uranium mining on the landscape, health, and the sense of home. Between the reading segments, history professors Vanessa Conze and Marcus Ventzke provided historical context

for what had been read. The event combined literary perspectives with environmental and sustainability topics and shed light on processes of transformation in the context of mining.

Experiencing and understanding a climate conference through simulation

In July 2025, simulations of international climate conferences were held at the KU’s Future Campus and in the conference room of Ingolstadt City Hall. Citizens and students were able to experience the procedures, decision-making processes, and negotiation scenarios of such conferences in a realistic setting. The event was organized by the City of Ingolstadt, the Audi Foundation for the Environment, and the MIB project in cooperation with the association “die Multivision e.V.”



Science in the City – Future Festivals 2024 and 2025



The Future Festivals held in Ingolstadt in November 2024 and 2025 (organized by the “Mensch in Bewegung” project and the City of Ingolstadt) provided a platform for transdisciplinary exchange among academia, administration, businesses, and civil society. In 2024, the focus was on dialog about societal challenges and positive futures, supported by presentations, workshops, and co-innovation

labs. In 2025, the event addressed the role of science in participatory and co-creative urban development – with a focus on AI, infrastructure, sustainability, and health. The Future Festival takes place every year in November and emphasizes collaborative approaches between research and practice, as well as the joint shaping of societal transformation processes.



Green Office Cafés

The Green Office Cafés at the KU have established themselves as a vibrant forum for exchange and networking, where sustainability topics are discussed in a relaxed atmosphere. Through specific ideas and projects, they encourage more sustainable behavior in everyday university life. At the same time, the events are not only aimed at the KU community but also specifically target interested external parties, fostering dialog with the outside world. In this way, they make an important contribution to strengthening sustainability both on campus and beyond. In 2024 and 2025, approximately 25 Green Office Cafés took place, covering a broad spectrum of topics ranging from sustainability in everyday life, consumption, and the circular economy to social aspects such as mental health, as well as sustainable finance, agriculture, and the environment. At the same time, the focus was on networking and initiative-building, complemented by interactive formats such as pub quizzes and forward-looking discussions on transformation and sustainable development.

STS Talks

The STS Talks, organized by the KU's School of Transformation and Sustainability, have established themselves as an interdisciplinary series of events that regularly address current topics in transformation and sustainability. The talks are aimed at university members as well as interested members of the general public and promote interdisciplinary exchange and new perspectives on societal challenges.

Society meets science: Real-world laboratories in the great transformation

On April 29, 2024, the focus was on real-world laboratories as tools for transformative research. Through keynote presentations and practical examples – including those from the MIB II project and “Dresden City of the Future” – the opportunities and limitations of participatory experimental spaces were discussed. The event demonstrated how science and society can jointly shape sustainable transformation processes.

Contested climate policy

On November 25, 2024, Prof. Dr. Ottmar Edenhofer, Director and Chief Economist of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), discussed the global and European challenges of climate policy as well as strategies for CO₂ reduction and removal. In the subsequent panel discussion with KU researchers, Audi representatives, and students, the focus was on political feasibility, cross-sectoral incentives, and societal participation for a sustainable transformation.



On the relationship between economics and ecology: Does sustainability need to be re-thought?

As part of the STS Talk on May 12, 2025, at the Georgianum in Ingolstadt, Prof. Dr. Oliver Schlaudt gave a lecture on “The Economy in the Anthropocene” and subsequently engaged in a discussion with researchers from the KU as well as experts from politics and society. The focus was on systemic approaches to sustainable transformation, cross-sectoral cooperation, and value-driven decision-making processes for politics, business, and society.

Innovation gaps as a challenge for sustainability transformation

At the KU's STS Talk on December 8, 2025, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Felt (University of Vienna), Prof. Dr. Sebastian Pfotenhauer (Technical University of Munich), Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Zademach (KU), Jana Hollmann (startup consultant), and Dr. Matthias Konrad (Bavaria Innovativ GmbH) discussed innovation in the context of sustainable transformation. The event shed light on the societal consequences of innovations and provided practical insights for policymakers, the business community, and civil society.

Picture taken at the event "Contested climate policy"

Goals and measures

Overall Sustainability Concept 2020–2030

Since 2010 already, the KU has been pursuing an institution-wide approach through its first Overall Sustainability Concept. This concept was further developed in 2020 as part of the second Overall Sustainability Concept, in line with a consistent whole-institution approach. The Overall Sustainability Concept defines goals for sustainable development across six areas of action, which are implemented through measures established annually in the sustainability programs.

Governance

Goals in the action area Governance

- Governance goal 1:**
The profile element of sustainability is clearly and visibly embedded in the KU's Mission Statement and Development Plan. Based on this, a shared, broadly supported understanding of sustainability at the KU is being further developed. Those responsible for sustainability have clearly defined roles and are adequately resourced.
- Governance goal 2:**
The profile element of sustainability and the associated structures and activities are clearly visible both internally and externally.
- Governance goal 3:**
Sustainability criteria are applied to all major decisions within the KU; internal processes and structures are designed to be sustainable; progress is regularly measured, reported, and evaluated using indicators, and appropriate measures are derived from these findings.
- Governance goal 4:**
The profile element of sustainability is an integral part of our appointment policy and human resource development.

Research

Goals in the action area Research

- Research goal 1:**
By 2030, research on sustainable development and sustainability will be structurally embedded and strengthened at the KU.
- Research goal 2:**
The research achievements in sustainable development and sustainability research at the KU are clearly visible both internally and externally.
- Research goal 3:**
The KU is represented in relevant regional, national, and international research programs and sustainability networks.



Goals in the action area Teaching

Teaching goal 1:

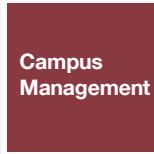
All students should have been exposed to sustainable development and/or ESD during the course of their studies and should be able to take a course in ESD that earns academic credit.

Teaching goal 2:

Sustainability and ESD at the KU are integrated into a significant number of degree programs, certificate programs, and areas of specialization.

Teaching goal 3:

The KU as place for continuing education and professional development in ESD at multiple levels.



Goals in the action area Campus Management

Campus goal 1:

The EMASplus sustainability management and the associated annual sustainability program have led to tangible progress (as measured by indicators) in all three areas (environmental, social, and economic). The specific measures aimed at achieving the goals of the Overall Sustainability Concept are outlined in the sustainability program.

Campus goal 2:

The KU is climate-neutral by 2025 at the latest, within the defined system boundaries.

Campus goal 3:

Many members of the KU community are actively involved in shaping a sustainable campus and participate in a sustainable campus life.

Campus goal 4:

The goals, measures, and achievements related to EMASplus and campus management are clearly communicated and visible both internally and externally.



Goals in the action area Student Engagement

Engagement goal 1:

Involvement in student initiatives is valued and encouraged.

Engagement goal 2:

Student participation is high at various levels (particularly in teaching and committees) due to their structural integration into the KU's sustainability initiatives.

Engagement goal 3:

Student activities in the area of sustainability receive structural and financial support.



Goals in the action area Transfer

Transfer goal 1:

Thanks to its competence in the field of sustainable development, the KU has established itself as a valued partner for societal and academic stakeholders outside the University.

Transfer goal 2:

The KU has continuously expanded its transfer activities and, as a result, provides a supportive framework for sustainability initiatives and projects within the University.

Transfer goal 3:

The KU's Overall Sustainability Concept is taken into account and integrated into the development of the KU's transfer strategy.

Annual sustainability programs

As part of the KU's integrated sustainability management system, the Sustainability Office develops an annual sustainability program in collaboration with the “Sustainability and Fair Trade” steering group. This program includes measures addressing the six areas of action and the goals of the Overall Sustainability Concept.

2024 Sustainability program

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
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Action area 01: Governance

1 2	Establishment of competence clusters on sustainability, digitalization, and ethics as part of the Future Campus; organization of regular inter-faculty networking meetings	Presidium / Strategy and University Development/ Sustainability team	100 %
2	Reactivation of the working groups within the steering group to better focus on achieving the goals set in the action areas	Sustainability team	75 %
3	Aligning the goals in the Development Plan and the sustainability program to increase consistency and effectiveness	Presidium / Sustainability team	50 %
3	Interlinking sustainability, diversity, and inclusion goals; improving coordination	Presidium / Sustainability team	75 %
2	Further development and optimization of the KU's website in the area of sustainability, including expansion of information available in English	Sustainability Team / Communications department	100 %

Action area 02: Research

1	Sustainability Competence Cluster: Organizing network meetings / Goal: Connecting experts and establishing a cooperation management system in Innovation Region 10	Presidium / Strategy and University Development/ Sustainability team	50 %
2	Research database / Mapping of research output related to sustainability, including SDG classification	Sustainability team	50 %

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
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Action area 03: Teaching

1 2 3	Revision of responsibilities for the (E)SD curriculum (including the supplementary program in “Sustainable Development” and the lecture series)	Presidium / Faculty MGF / Sustainability team	75 %
2	Updating and modernizing the “Sustainable Development” lecture series	Sustainability team	100 %
3	Designing an ESD Onboarding program for new teaching staff	Sustainability team	100 %
3	Conducting at least one ESD training session within the Bavaria-wide PLP network	HR Development and Professional Training department	100 %

Action area 04: Campus Management

1	Fully transition GHG accounting to the BayCalc system	Sustainability team / Campus Management / Facility Management	75 %
2	Developing and adopting a tangible climate action plan (strategy, definition of system boundaries, and measures to achieve the goal of a climate-neutral KU by 2025)	Presidium / Sustainability team / Campus Management	50 %
3	Improving bicycle infrastructure (expansion, parking spaces, e-bike infrastructure), preparing for the KU's certification as a bicycle-friendly employer (EU/ADFC certificate)	Sustainability team / Campus Management / Facility Management	75 %
3	Participation in the “City Cycling” campaign in Eichstätt and Ingolstadt	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %
3	“Edible Campus”: Planning and implementation of planting initiatives (fruit trees, raised beds)	Sustainability team / Green Office / Campus Management / Didactics of Biology/ Facility Management	100 %
4	Developing and adopting KU policies on waste disposal / plastic management	Presidium / Sustainability team / Campus Management	25 %

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
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Action area 05: Student Engagement

1 2 3	Long-term consolidation of Green Office's visibility / regularly hosting a Green Office Café with a focus on specific sustainability topics to inform students, staff, and society	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %
3	Organizing a KU-wide Sustainability Day in Eichstätt and Ingolstadt to raise awareness of sustainability and student initiatives (once per semester)	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %
1 3	Establishing a Green Office at the Ingolstadt campus: Recruiting student assistants, integrating the office into the Future Campus, and organizing events in Ingolstadt	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %
3	Networking event for sustainable student and non-university initiatives in Eichstätt and Ingolstadt to strengthen and organize collaboration	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %

Action area 06: Transfer

1	Informing and raising awareness among the regional public about sustainability issues (including through thematic exhibitions, event programs, media coverage, etc.)	Coll. project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (2nd funding period) under BMBF funding initiative "Innovative University"	(2023–2027) 100 % (2024)
2	Developing and implementing a series of events on transformation and sustainability	Coll. project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (2nd funding period) under BMBF funding initiative "Innovative University"	(2023–2027) 100 % (2024)
2	Training "Sustainability Coaches" to serve as transformation facilitators for stakeholders from local government, administration, the business sector, schools, and civil society in the region	Coll. project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (2nd funding period) under BMBF funding initiative "Innovative University"	(2023–2027) 100 % (2024)

2025 Sustainability program

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
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Action area 01: Governance

2	Consolidation / Participation in the Sustainability Working Group at the Future Campus; Development of (at least three) sustainable measures	KU members, Sustainability team	25 %
1	Filling the CSO position and ESD Coordination at BayZeN	University Management	100 %
2	SENATRA subproject: Fair trade: Creating a "Fairtrade Map" to highlight fair trade locations at the KU and in Eichstätt as part of SENATRA	Students of Service Learning Seminar SENATRA, Sustainability team	100 %
3	SENATRA subproject: Diversity and inclusion: Defining the terms for the KU, identifying areas of action to promote diversity and inclusion	Students of Service Learning Seminar SENATRA, ZFG	100 %
1	Continuation of the discussion on the concept of sustainability at the KU and adoption of an updated definition	Sustainability team, steering group, University Management	50 %
3	Discussion forum on conflicts between the environmental and social aspects of the sustainability strategy: CO2 emissions from (international) travel vs. the importance of (international) exchange as the University's "core mission" (students, staff). How is the KU addressing these challenges?	Sustainability team, steering group, Internationalization division	50 %
3	Creating a dedicated subpage on green travel as part of the Erasmus+ program and promoting the topic through Instagram takeovers	Internationalization division	100 %
2	Further development and optimization of the KU's website in the area of sustainability, including the expansion of information available in English	Sustainability team, Communications department	100 %
2	Developing a timeline and a portfolio of marketing initiatives (e.g. permanently highlighting sustainability on the website; reaching out to schools; improving communication structures to strengthen colleagues' sense of responsibility and engagement, etc.)	Communications department, Strategy and University Development, Sustainability team	50 %

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
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Action area 02: Research

1	Two panel discussions on research and sustainability: (a) The potential of research on sustainability issues (b) Sustainability considerations in research at the KU	Sustainability team, ZFF, Sustainability working group (Future Campus)	50 %
2	Inclusion of all ESD activities from all subject areas in the research map on the DGHochN Wiki to better highlight the KU as a center for research on sustainability issues	Researchers & lecturers in field of ESD, Sustainability team supported by ZFF	25 %

Action area 03: Teaching

1	Regular offer of onboarding program for new teaching staff (in consultation with the administrative office, incorporating ESD initiatives and/or Service Learning examples), once a year	VP Studies and Teaching, HR Development & Continuing Education	100 %
3	Conducting an ESD training program within the Bavaria-wide PLP network and actively applying for the ESD offerings from the PLP and BayZiel networks	HR Development & Continuing Education, Sustainability team	100 %
2	Further development of information on sustainability-related degree programs on the KU website	Communications, Strategy and University Develop- ment, Sustainability team	100 %

Action area 04: Campus Management

1	Further development / drafting / adoption of a biodiversity strategy at the KU	Campus Management, Didactics of Biology, Facility Management	50 %
1	SENATRA Subproject Biodiversity: Development of action plans for the preservation and improvement of ecological diversity on campus.	Students of Service Learning Seminar SENATRA, Didactics of Biology	100 %
2	GHG accounting for the KU (for 2023 and 2024), particularly Scope 3	Campus Management	50 %

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
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2	Further development / drafting / adoption of a procurement strategy at the KU	Campus Management, Procurement	50 %
2	SENATRA Subproject: Commuter mobility: Identify commuting challenges, develop alternatives, and present examples of best practices; provide suggestions, etc., for more sustainable commuter mobility to the KU (or between campuses)	Students of Service Learning Seminar SENATRA, Campus Management	100 %
2	Participation in City Cycling initiative 2025 (both locations), including an internal KU competition (e.g., prizes for the top three participants)	Sustainability team	100 %
2	Expansion of bicycle parking spaces at the Interim building and in front of the University Library	Facility Management, Sustainability team, (idea: Student Rep. Council)	25 %
3	Additional tables and benches (seating) on the lawn in front of the University Library	Facility Management, Student Rep. Council, Sustainability team	0 %
2	Measures to facilitate mobility between the two KU campuses (e.g., “KU Express Bus Ticket” for employees)	Sustainability team, adminitstration	25 %

Action area 05: Student Engagement

3	Establishing a Green Office at the Ingolstadt campus: Recruiting student assistants, integrating the office into the Future Campus initiative, and organizing events in Ingolstadt	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %
3	Networking event for sustainable student and non-university initiatives in Eichstätt and Ingolstadt to strengthen and organize collaboration	Sustainability team / Green Office, STS	100 %
3	Long-term consolidation of Green Office's visibility / regularly hosting a Green Office Café with a focus on specific sustainability topics to inform students, staff, and society	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %

Goal	Measure	Responsible contact	Implementation
2	Organizing a KU-wide Sustainability Week in Eichstätt and Ingolstadt to raise awareness of sustainability and student initiatives (once per semester)	Sustainability team / Green Office	100 %

Action area 06: Transfer

1	Informing and raising awareness among the regional public about sustainability issues (including through thematic exhibitions, a program of events, media coverage, STS Talks, etc.)	Coll. project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (2nd funding period) under BMBF funding initiative "Innovative University", STS	(2023–2027) 100 % (2025)
1	Development and implementation of a series of events on transformation and sustainability	Coll. project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (2nd funding period) under BMBF funding initiative "Innovative University"	(2023–2027) 100 % (2025)
1	Training “Sustainability Coaches” to serve as transformation facilitators for stakeholders from local government, administration, business, schools, and civil society in the region	Coll. project "Mensch in Bewegung II" (2nd funding period) under BMBF funding initiative "Innovative University"	(2023–2027) 100 % (2025)
2	Expansion and establishment of the “Places of Learning for Sustainability” Network	"Mensch in Bewegung"	01.01.2025 – 31.12.2025 100 % (2025)

The implementation status of the sustainability programs shown here refers to the reporting period from 2024 to 2025. The information is updated on an ongoing basis and may differ from the information in the environmental statement due to differences in reporting periods.

Annex steering group "Sustainability and Fair Trade" 2025

Steering group for Sustainable KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt

- **Prof. Dr. Klaus Stüwe** (Vice President for International Affairs and Profile Development, person responsible for sustainability issues within the University Management)
- **Eva-Maria Hugo** (Chief Sustainability Officer)
- **Dr. Frank Zirkl** (Campus Sustainability Manager)
- **Patrizia Hartmann** (Sustainability Coordinator)

Research centers and platforms

- **Center for Flight and Migration (ZFM):** Prof. Dr. Karin Scherschel
- **Research Service Center (ZFF):** Dr. Wolfgang Thiel
- **Center for Latin American Studies (ZILAS):** Jana Wieser
- **KU.Sustainability Research Lab:** Prof. Dr. Bernd Cyffka, Prof. Dr. Christian Steiner

Administration

- **Facility Management:** Albert Pfaller (Technical Department), Anna Michl (Health Management Coordinator), Stefan Wenzel (Technical Building Management & Head of Facility Management)
- **Finance & Budget:** Eduard Breitenhuber (Head of Finance Department), Bernhard Semmler (Head of Procurement & Contracting)
- **HR Department:** Christine Feierle (Business Trips)
- **Organization of Studies:** Dr. Michael Schieder (Project officer system accreditation)

Faculties

- **Faculty of Theology:** Prof. Dr. Martin Kirschner, Professorship of Theology in Transformation
- **Faculty of Philosophy and Education:** Prof. Dr. Rainer Wenrich, Professorship of Art Education and Education Studies
- **Faculty of Languages and Literatures:** Prof. Dr. Friedericke Reents, Chair of Modern German Literary Studies
- **Faculty of History and Social Sciences:** Prof. Dr. Robert Schmidt, Professorship of Process-oriented Sociology
- **Faculty of Mathematics and Geography:** Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Zademach, Professorship of Economic Geography; Prof. Dr. Jan Hiller, Professorship of Geography Didactics and Education for Sustainable Development
- **Ingolstadt School of Management:** Prof. Dr. André Habisch, Professorship of Christian Social Ethics and Social Policy; Prof. Dr. Maria Waldinger, Professorship of Economics, esp. Sustainable Economic Policy
- **School of Transformation and Sustainability:** Prof. Dr. Simone Birkel, Professorship of Religious Education; Youth and School Pastoral Care
- **Faculty of Social Work:** Prof. Dr. Christian Beck, Professorship of Ethical Foundations of Social Work with focus on Sustainability

Institutions and Departments

- **University Library:** Magdalena Hager
- **International Office:** Dr. Anna Marcos
- **Computer Center:** Dr. Nils Blümer (Campus Eichstätt), Bernhard Brandel (Campus Ingolstadt)
- **Communications and Marketing:** Dr. Christian Klenk, Melena Renner
- **HR Development and Continuing Education:** Dr. Jennifer Dobschenzki
- **Center for Teacher Education (KU ZLB):** Laura Kovac & Alexander Steindl
- **Strategy and University Development:** Thomas Metten

Committees

- **Staff Representative Council:** Ann-Kathrin Bremer
- **Student initiatives:** DenkNachhaltig! e.V., Environmental Department, Student Representative Council, Green Office





Nachhaltigkeit

Sustainability – always a win

www.ku.de/en/campus-life/sustainable-ku