



UNIVERSITY *of* NICOSIA

Sustainability Strategy
Office of the Senior Vice Rector
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University of Nicosia Sustainability Strategy

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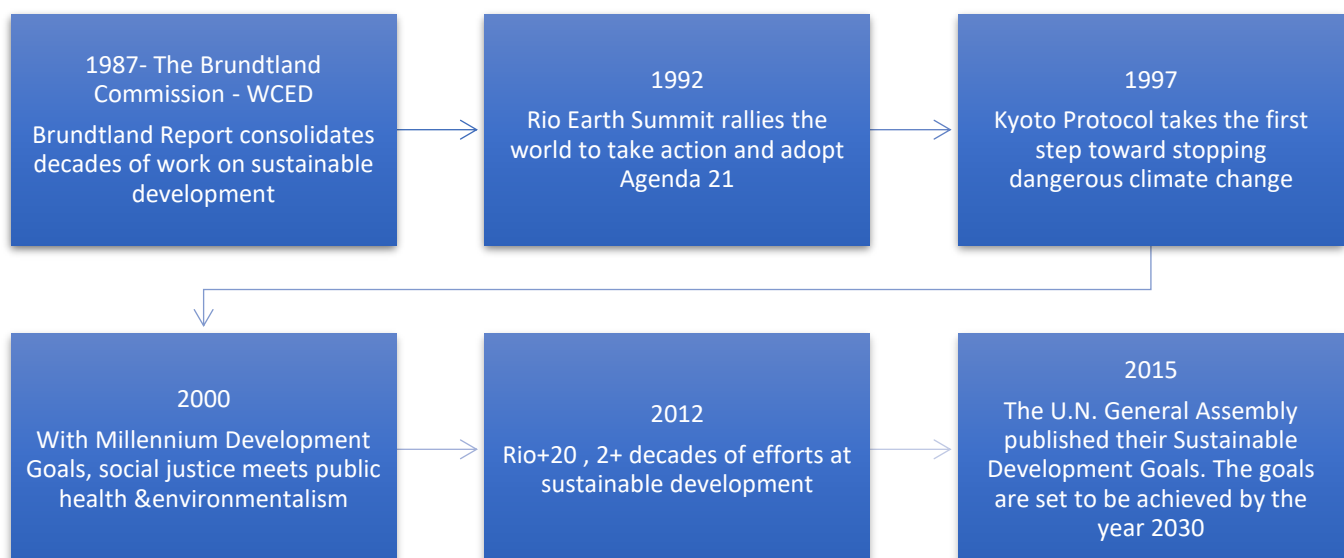
Executive Summary

By devising a solid Sustainability Strategy, we plan ahead for a sustainable future. Our aim is to become the region’s most cost-effective, environmentally friendly and sustainable institution of excellence, whilst working with the authorities to improve the City of Nicosia, to give back to the society, and to contribute to continuous innovation in business and academia, in our efforts to positively shape the world.

The Brundtland Commission report in 1983 titled “Our common future” defined sustainable development as follows:

“It is a development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Figure.1. History of the Sustainability Movement



The University of Nicosia is the largest university in Cyprus. With over 12,500 students and over 1,000 employees, we seek to maintain a pleasant environment through which staff, faculty, students, and associates will benefit from. Our strategy provides a strong outline through which we pursue economic, financial, social, environmental, and academic sustainability, with the aim to create a long-lasting vision and raise awareness over such issues. This strategy is the product of discussions between the Office of the Senior Vice Rector and several academic and administrative units at UNIC.

Our four main pillars are summarised as follows:

1. Thrive in Research and Innovation

- The backbone of our approach – focus on knowledge exchange and innovative approaches through which UNIC and the wider society can become more sustainable
- Produce concrete analysis for policymakers and researchers at local, regional, and international level
- Enhance and support existing research units and departments by promoting interdisciplinary research and teaching actively
- Create new partnerships with local, regional, and international players to promote UNIC's Research and Innovation image on the global scene

2. Work with Local Stakeholders

- Take in feedback from NGOs, businesses, governmental authorities (the City of Nicosia, the government, and other services) in implementing continuous successful policies
- Provide a Hub for the local community and its stakeholders through which industry, social initiatives, and research can thrive further & keep the local community engaged

3. Education and Other SDGs

- Promote the Sustainable Development Goals across all courses
- Introduce new programmes and use existing certifications that are internationally recognised, including free UN courses that staff, faculty, and students should take to enhance their knowledge (e.g. 'I Know Gender 1-2-3') to build a friendlier UNIC community
- Create a UNIC Sustainability Task Force

- Incorporate student feedback by creating and supporting a Student Society on Sustainability
- Educate staff and faculty on related decision-making responses on sustainable practices in their work

4. Carbon Neutrality

- Work with Facilities and all administrative and research departments to achieve carbon neutrality
- Cut on printing – invest in electronic filing, databases, and other material
- Incorporate expert knowledge and draft a Carbon Neutrality strategy based on such knowledge from in-house and outsourced associates
- Draft and implement a plan/roadmap to track projected progress in achieving Carbon Neutrality goals
- Having consulted experts and introduced a viable Carbon Neutrality Strategy, significantly reduce initially by 2030 and then cut absolutely emissions by 2038.

UNIC's Vision

Our aim is to become the region's most cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and sustainable institution of academic excellence.

It is now more evident than ever that the world is transitioning towards a high-paced environment, where technology is playing a major role in our lives. What about making sustainable and improving this journey, however? What happens when we realise that we are simply not ready to deal with global crises as effectively due to a lack of support or infrastructure?

The phrase 'going sustainable' does not simply mean 'going green'. It is so much more. A strategic direction is required to identify what sustainability really means. Simply put, it is the way through which we maintain a balance. It is a prudent, practical, and the best strategic direction that ensures societies, businesses, states, and academia will all continue growing.

For this very reason, we are working as hard as ever to introduce a safer UNIC environment, where the transition is friendly, the structures we create are solid, and our people actively take part and own bit by bit this great change we all contribute towards to. Each step of the way, we work towards improving teaching, research, and our overall environment for our staff, faculty, students, but also our associates and the wider community in Nicosia and beyond. We aspire to become one of the most established regional institutions in Higher Education in the Eastern Mediterranean.

For one thing, the leadership of the University alone is not enough to implement this important vision. In our endeavour to improve the quality of education, ensure sustainable growth and equality across the diverse UNIC family, we work both with our staff as well as our students. We wish to take on board any useful feedback they have and to continue improving, as reflected in our Ranking year after year. Our initial goal is to address initial changes and reduce emissions by 40% by 2030, improve our campus working and studying environment, and achieve complete carbon neutrality by 2038.

The path ahead is challenging and full of obstacles. Despite this, an important lesson we have derived from the COVID-19 pandemic is that UNIC as an institution and family is able to adapt and respond to crises. We will do our best to keep fighting and remain on this path, without losing sight of the urgent need to contribute towards a sustainable future for our academic community, our city and country, and our planet.

Professor Constantinos N. Phellas

Senior Vice Rector

UNIC's Approach

Our approach is multidimensional in nature. At the University of Nicosia, we follow a model that incorporates not just the members of the academic community, which includes our staff, faculty, and students, but we also keep any feedback we derive from associates and local stakeholders on board. We believe that our path towards sustainability is paved with a diverse framework that explores ways of constantly improving from bottom up to left and right across a wide socio-economic, professional, research, and innovation spectrum.

The next few sections focus on the following thematic categories:

- Our Approach to the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**
- **Research and Innovation** at UNIC
- Our Focus on **Education and Teaching**
- **Impact and Rankings**
- The Need for **Carbon Neutrality**
- **UNIC and Government** at the National Level
- **UNIC and the City of Nicosia**



Related Documents

The following documents include strategic reports, updates, and codes and practices related to UNIC’s Sustainability Strategy. These documents have either already been published and are due for review or will be published in the near future.

TITLE	DETAILS	DATE	FIRST REVIEW DUE	EXECUTED BY
University of Nicosia Charter	A detailed review and explanatory guide whereby UNIC lays out its aims and legal status as a University, as well as its infrastructure, its academic structure, and faculty and student regulations.	June 2015 (revised)	TBA	Senate and Council
University of Nicosia Institutional Values and Code of Practice	A thorough guide, laying out the core priorities of our UNIC, including what should drive our priorities, define our policies and practices, and how we should truly act within the University.	September 2008	September 2024	Senate and Council
Academic Freedom Statement	Statement/declaration on safeguarding academic freedom at all costs.	N/A	N/A	Rectorate
University Mission	Outlines UNIC’s broad mission, vision, and general aims	N/A	N/A	Rectorate
Waste and Recycling Strategy	Strategy detailing how UNIC aims at moving towards zero waste and full recycling.	Under Review*	June 2024 – Reviewed every 2 years	Facilities (lead), Health and Safety
Procurement Strategy	Strategy detailing socially and environmentally conscious procurement, reduced emissions, monitor supply chain, and to support ethical practices.	Under Review*	June 2024 – Reviewed every 2 years	Facilities
Gender Equality Plan	Plan to reinforce gender equality awareness, create a gender equality culture in the workplace, foster a positive work-life balance, and eliminate the gender pay gap	Published in 2022	October 2024 – Reviewed every 2 years	Human Resources, University Gender Equality Committee
Sustainability Governance Structure	Document outlining a suggested governance structure through which decisions, policies, and related strategies are decided on	Under Review	Under Review – Reviewed every 5 years	Senate, Council, Rectorate
Carbon Neutrality Strategy: Annual Reports	Strategy & Annual Reports, detailing the progress on the following strategy documents: Waste and Recycling, Procurement, Sustainability	Annually Reviewed; unpublished *	July 2024 – Reviewed every 3 years	Facilities (lead), Health and Safety, Senate and Council
Energy and Buildings Strategy	Strategy detailing energy reduction targets, measures to reduce consumption across buildings, as well as allocating energy-efficient standards for construction resource uses	Under Review*	July 2024 – Reviewed every 3 years	Facilities, Health and Safety
EHS Policies	Policies detailing the functions of the Environment, Health and Safety Office	Published; to be made publicly available	June 2024 – Reviewed every 2 years	Health and Safety
THE World University Rankings and QS University Rankings Strategy	This may include an overall annual Sustainability Report that covers the progress of this five-year Strategy	END of 2023 – To be made available in-house	June 2024 – Reviewed collectively every 2 years	RIO

*These documents are imperative to the functions of a good sustainability strategy. Implementing this strategy also sets in motion the above strategies, reports, and deadlines, including an **Annual Sustainability Report** as a deliverable. The **Sustainability Task Force** (refer to next section) is responsible for collecting updates on these documents.

Communication and Decision-Making

UNiC’s sustainability initiative incorporates efficient communication with various in-house stakeholders.

Our **Sustainability Task Force**, comprised of academic and administrative units, is led by the **Office of the Senior Vice Rector**. The Senior Vice Rector (SVR) chairs all meetings with each department, research, and administrative unit respectively, as well as during Task Force meetings.

Subgroups, led by corresponding heads, may be established within each category/field in order to feed the strategy as best as possible. For instance, the **Research and Innovation Office (RIO)**, who has closely worked with the SVR to develop the initial framework, will be heading the Rankings and Research & Innovation subgroups.

The following parties are included in their advisory capacity as members of the Task Force:

- Office of the Senior Vice Rector
- Research and Innovation Office
- Human Resources
- Student Services and Student Affairs
- Facilities
- Health and Safety
- School Representatives (Faculty)
- Student Sustainability Society (to be led by in-house experts with a student committee)

The Task Force meets **biannually** on either of the last 2 months of the Fall and Spring Semesters. It is also in charge of reviewing an **Annual Sustainability Report** that marks the progress of this five-year strategy.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

This section offers a thorough explanation of how UNIC contributes on a wide range of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

2030 Agenda and the 17th SDGs

The 2030 Agenda provides a blueprint for all the United Nations Member states aiming on world peace and prosperity for the planet and the people for now and for the future. The 17th SDGs are a global call for action and it is the result of decades of work. The SDGs incorporate specific targets aiming in improving:

- Health and Education,
- Reduce inequality and
- Spur economic growth

Figure 2. 17 SDGs¹



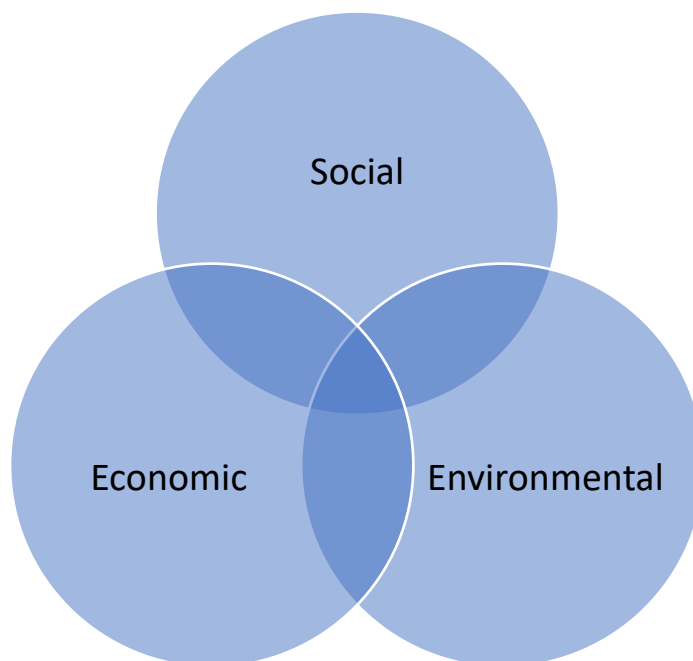
¹ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Achieving the Goals

Our faculty work hard in research related to sustainability. They also contribute to innovative means through which UNIC attempts to put Cyprus on the map, in our collective effort to maintain sustainable growth, keep low emission and waste levels, as well as bring forth attractive, beneficial, and profitable ventures.

This strategy is in line with the international scientific consensus on ensuring sustainable practices across the Higher Education sector. At the same time, it focuses on the UNSDGs. In our pursuit to tackle various problems, we take a holistic approach to these Goals. The key is maintaining a balance across environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Only then can we truly achieve these Goals.

In doing so, our decision-making process involves constant consultation with staff, faculty, and students, as well as with external partners and associates, in ensuring this balance is always achieved. Such a process is also aligned with our Code of Practice and Institutional Values² and our wider Mission as a University³.



² <https://www.unic.ac.cy/unic-at-a-glance/institutional-values-and-cop/>

³ <https://www.unic.ac.cy/unic-at-a-glance/the-university-mission/>

Research and Innovation

Research and Innovation at UNIC is a topic of interest across all units, Departments, Schools, and labs. This function is closely monitored and coordinated by the Office of the Vice Rector for Faculty and Research and the Research and Innovation Office, in consultation with the Office of the Senior Vice Rector. Programmes and funding under RIO also often fall under the University of Nicosia Research Foundation (UNRF).

Through these entities, UNIC strives to tackle sustainability challenges surrounding the sciences. At the same time, our approach helps invest back to society and wider public knowledge, providing meaningful proposals to governmental institutions and services, and helps raise awareness over sustainability in science and academia.

Our approach is split across four sub-categories:

1. Research

Utilising all research units, academies, laboratories, and research centres, the University of Nicosia aims at finding solutions to the challenge of realising a sustainable future. This allows UNIC to build knowledge and capacity across its departments and units, while integrating sustainability-related research into our teaching, curricula, and publications.

Additionally, research often has a much wider impact, not just within academia, but in the policy-making world as well. This allows academics and researchers to advise on key issues dealt at a national, regional, and international level. For instance, UNIC staff and faculty have advised the government on matters of national security, health management, and legal proceedings, among others.

As outlined in the strategical vision of UNIC⁴, using our expert knowledge and resources at University, our research aims at elevating Cyprus in the regional and international scene, by showcasing our wide portfolio of how our researchers have positively transformed the wider world, contributing to a more sustainable future. For this reason, we also seek to introduce a University-wide survey to collect data on how the UNIC community views and understands

⁴ <https://www.unic.ac.cy/research/vision-for-research/>

what ‘Sustainability’ and ‘being sustainable’ means, as well as to map out their knowledge on the UNSDGs.

In order to fulfil this objective, research centres and units, staff and faculty (wherever applicable) will have to submit through their Departments/Office the ways through which their work contributes to sustainable practices across UNIC on a biannual basis: **once by 15th December and once by 15th June**. This will serve as a reflective exercise through which researchers at UNIC will be able to further enhance and adjust their work to sustainable practices, as defined through the UNSDGs pursued herein.

2. Innovation

Although the term ‘innovation’ is tied to ‘research’ by default in matters of sustainability, we must also treat it as a separate variable for true sustainable growth. Not only do UNIC resources and Offices like RIO support and inform the University community about the plethora of opportunities and projects they can participate in Cyprus, Europe, and beyond, but our work also focuses on knowledge exchange with strong transformative impact.

Working with local and international businesses and governments in supporting the service-based, engineering, information, and education sectors is among our top priorities. This strategic point helps better focus our activities on this field by integrating our work and knowledge into initiatives set forth by the Cyprus Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF/IDEK), as well as through aspiring collaborations with other governmental services, including the Deputy Ministry for Research, Innovation, and Digital Policy.

3. Sustainable Research Practices

In addition to conducting solid and innovative research, we must equally calculate and monitor the impact of our research on the rest of the society. In further aiding and enabling society to engage with our work, we strive to make our research accessible, as widely understandable as possible, and beneficial to the rest of the world. Our research culture focuses on sustainable practices that value high standards of research integrity and ethics.

In achieving such sustainable practices, we first ensure the manner in which research itself is conducted is sustainable. We regularly advise our researchers on minimum waste and energy-efficient equipment and proceedings. Similarly, we also acknowledge two major

disadvantages of Cyprus being an island: (a) researchers to pay high mobility costs for travelling, and (b) travelling abroad increases emissions. As such, more mobility grants are available on an annual basis, while also encouraging the active participation in online research conferences that do not necessarily require travelling abroad.

4. Funding Research

The University utilises internal grants to support early career researchers. Some programmes such as the annual Seed Grant, up to €20000 per successful proposal for a duration of 24 months. Under normal circumstances, this amounts to at least one proposal per Department. This grant helps with delivering solid output on publications, academic and wider public engagement, small pilot research projects and data extraction, as well as setting the initial groundwork for larger grant applications.

Moreover, we make widely available other sources of funding through programmes such as Erasmus+, to guarantee alternative sources of research funding. UNIC is a serious advocate of fair distribution of funding across all disciplines. For that, we ensure that:

- Funding is always fairly distributed to and available for under-represented research units and Departments
- Internal grant winners in certain projects are only eligible to reapply after 2 years following the end of their respective grant project
- Priority is always given to early career researchers, including doctoral and post-doctoral researchers in an active full-time programme or contract, as well as full-time researchers within 5 years of experience or 8 years of completion of their PhD.

At the same time, our commitment in working closely with industry and government partners helps secure additional funding from collaborative sources and initiatives. It is important for ensuring sustainability across different sectors to access open research and innovation by collaborating with other partners, both in Cyprus, as well as abroad. This equally ensures sufficient knowledge and skills exchange.

Education and Teaching

This section details UNIC’s commitment to sustainability in education and teaching. The first section addresses education on its own, whereas the second section tackles teaching within the sustainability sphere. This section is the product of continuous consultation with both the student and faculty communities.

Sustainability in Education

UNIC takes education matters seriously. Education and further research in this field across each and every Department and School is at the forefront of what constitutes us as a reliable academic institution. Primarily, in line with Goal 4 under the UNSDGs, we aim at extending educational opportunities and learning methods that are relevant to all students, regardless of their field. A holistic approach to education is signified by these following elements that we incorporate in every subject matter:

- Investing in **critical thinking** so as to help students develop the ability to think outside the box through constant research and raising questions over any material covered, by cross-checking sources
- Integrate other fields so as to motivate students to engage in **interdisciplinary work**, particularly because science and academia do not follow a linear path, thus learning and education equally follow a multidimensional approach through different fields
- Investing in courses, programmes, and extracurricular educational **activities** to promote sustainability in education. Through partnerships such as a partnership developed with the European Commission in 2020-2021, we aim at encouraging students to learn more about sustainable practices on their own
- To empower **informed, responsible citizens** by expanding their set of skills beyond their own discipline.

Throughout this 5-year period, UNIC aims at working with Departments and Schools to integrate this strategic element in their own curriculum. Schools will be required to submit annual reports to signify the progress over how sustainable practices in education are

introduced. It must be emphasised, nonetheless, that this transition **cannot be at the expense of academic freedom**. UNIC remains committed in ensuring academic freedom across all Departments. Introducing these sustainability points in education, therefore, must be an added value to this freedom and not counterproductive nor restrictive. It is up to each School how a balance will be maintained for this pillar to succeed.

For this very reason, Departments will be required to appoint a **Sustainability Coordinator**, responsible for submitting comprehensive annual sustainability reports. Coordinators will be relieved off other administrative/departmental positions if they so desire, provided the report is detailed and each step is discussed on every Departmental Meeting. The progress and updates of such reports will also be compulsorily included in the Departmental Agenda. Each report must be submitted to the Dean of the School by 31st June each year.

Reports may take any format to suit the needs of each coordinator. The following points may be taken into consideration for separate courses and degrees each department offers:

- Department Name
- Subject, degree, course
- Detailed curriculum
- Sustainability subjects covered within curriculum
- Examples of in-class material with relevant sustainability output
- Examples of extracurricular material with relevant sustainability output
- Projected impact for the next academic year
- Actual impact throughout current academic year
- Limitations and challenges encountered
- Further work for additional improvement
- Other observations

Sustainability in Teaching

When engaged in teaching, it is important to safeguard the teaching techniques used by each and every faculty member accordingly. Teaching varies from person to person, thus it is virtually impossible and not the intentions of this strategy document to enforce a universal method of teaching.

What this strategy seeks to implement, nonetheless, is a set of teaching practices that are consistent with the sustainability principles UNIC engages with and teaches about. For instance, more distance-learning programmes can be utilised, as seen through the COVID-19 pandemic and more courses may be introduced on a remote basis, without diminishing quality and sacrificing it for added quantity. Moreover, new exciting and enriching opportunities that actively engage students within a sustainable teaching environment.

Departments are, therefore, strongly encouraged to submit through their Sustainability Coordinators and within the report a detailed section over comprehensive methods introduced.

Impact and Rankings

While pursuing meaningful strategies and University policies to encourage sustainable growth and practices institutionally, pursuing a Sustainability Strategy is equally important to UNIC for progress and visible impact, as demonstrated by improvements in University rankings.

Currently, Sustainability is a recently introduced variable that takes into consideration the impact of Higher Education institutions. Therefore, while UNIC pursues this comprehensive strategy to promote sustainability across all relevant avenues, it simultaneously adds value to its global position against Higher Education rankings. The aim is to reflect transformational achievements through our active engagement with the UNSDGs.

UNIC is committed to incorporating sustainability across the following areas:

- Campus-wide
- Student community
- Staff and faculty experience
- Research area
- Wider society impact

This section falls under the responsibility of UNIC's RIO, the main unit responsible for accounting for sustainability and the impact on rankings. The Sustainability Strategy, therefore, is a reference document that helps RIO navigate through how UNIC has progressed over its strategic pillars, so that positive transformations are best reflected in University rankings as well.

Additionally, RIO will be heading the Rankings and Research and Innovation subgroup, responsible for feeding back to relevant UNIC strategies for improvement in Rankings, Research and Innovation, as well as the Sustainability Strategy.

Carbon Neutrality

Achieving Carbon Neutrality is by no means an easy task. This framework aims at introducing pathways through which carbon neutrality can be achieved within a reasonable timeframe, aided by hard work and continuous commitment across UNIC.

The aim is to develop a comprehensive Carbon Neutrality Strategy, followed by Annual Reports as detailed in the “Related Documents” subsection under “UNIC’s Approach” in this strategy document. Developing such a strategy falls under the Facilities (Project Lead) and remains a joint responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer. The implementation and consultive bodies to such a strategy will be the Senate and the University Council.

Achieving Carbon Neutrality, nonetheless, cannot be a solely internal process. This means that the strategy should take into consideration the following:

- Identifying possible external collaborators to outsource/hire
- Identifying other good practices across other Higher Education institutions
- Consult in-house experts on carbon neutrality
- Ad hoc and other relevant joint activities to ensure the effective planning and implementation of a Carbon Neutrality Strategy and subsequent Annual Reports

The initial mandate of such a strategy is to significantly reduce emissions by 40% by 2030 and then completely cut down by 2038.

The following subsections make up of the pillars of such a strategy.

Facilities, Environment, Health, Safety

Facilities include the Administrative Department responsible for maintenance, repairs, building access, and technical support over buildings, energy, procurement, logistics, and other related matters across UNIC. Not only does it constitute an integral and vibrant part of the University, but it also has a leading role in implementing the Sustainability, Waste and Recycling, Procurement, as well as the Carbon Neutrality Strategies.

Together with the Office for Environment, Health and Safety (EHS), they coordinate on furthering these strategies. The Office for EHS, as outlined in its mission statement, aims at:

1. Supporting and enhancing the academic and research objectives of the University by promoting a safe and healthy environment for all employees and students
2. Promoting environmental consciousness and energy conservation
3. Fully complying with the Republic of Cyprus and EU legislation related to EHS issues.

Together with Facilities, EHS is equally responsible for:

- Ensuring that all buildings are covered with appropriate EHS protocol and policies
- Maintain safety across campus structures, including during crisis and other hazards and emergency situations
- Track and monitor waste and recycling processes by identifying and appointing in-house specialists or outsourcing – this will have to be discussed with UNIC Management regarding costs of services etc
- Monitor energy consumption and identify strategies for effective reduction of costs and emissions.

Implementing these points also contribute towards developing an effective and comprehensive document on “Waste and Recycling Strategy”. This document needs to be devised, in line with the “Related Documents” subsection under “UNIC’s Approach”, as detailed in this document.

Energy

The current situation across the globe calls for immediate action in combating climate change. Through both research and internal practices, we aim at significantly reducing fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gases for energy generation.

Energy across UNIC currently mostly relies on the consumption of fossil fuels, with the exception of solar panels for water heating. Moreover, the majority of energy use spreads over generating electricity, for maintaining critical infrastructure (e.g., wireless networking devices for Internet) heating during winter, and cooling during summer.

Under this subsection, the following points must be seriously taken into consideration:

- To identify and contract options for introducing an in-house or outsourced (far more likely) expert that will introduce sustainable and fully renewable energy sources, including but not limited to options on solar, wind, and other means of generating power and electricity
- In line with the Carbon Neutrality, to ensure a 40% reduction of emission in 2024-2030 and absolute carbon neutrality by 2038
- To identify possible options in incorporating low-carbon heating options as technology allows during the first target of 40% reduction, before transitioning to absolute neutrality.

In order to further strengthen this pillar, a comprehensive document on “Energy and Buildings Strategy” needs to be devised, in line with the “Related Documents” subsection under “UNIC’s Approach”, as detailed in this document.

Food

Through the combined efforts outlined throughout the Sustainability Strategy, UNIC aims at creating an internal food system that is resilient, while preventing environmental damage, food waste, and promoting alternative products to less healthy options.

Meat consumption is at its highest across Cyprus, as it is culturally embedded and institutionalised through tradition and other unsustainable practices. For this very reason, UNIC, through its food outlets, restaurants, and cafeterias (including the UNIC Gallery Restaurant and Coffeology 101) should actively promote the sales of sustainable foods, including vegan, vegetarian, and other healthy food options.

Simultaneously, UNIC should introduce a **Meat-Free Mondays** scheme, whereby the cost of such healthy and sustainable foods is significantly reduced, in order to encourage more people to buy less carbon-intensive foodstuffs and more non-meat and non-animal food products, while equally respecting everyone’s dietary choices.

UNIC should also **label** organic and sustainable foods in an effort to raise awareness over concepts such as Food Security, as part of the global UN-led strategy to implement solutions for society to reduce emissions through food.

Single-use plastics and other items for food storage, packaging and distribution will also be **replaced** with paper and other **biodegradable** options, in line with existing Republic of Cyprus and EU policies. Similarly, UNIC should invest in more health-approved and safe water fountains and water filtering devices (COVID-permitting and as long as there are no other healthcare crises such as an epidemic/pandemic).

Finally, UNIC should also explore local and on-campus food growing, in an effort to promote sustainable food culture and equally export organic products to the wider market.

Procurement

“Procurement” refers to identifying supply chains and other services that require purchasing of logistics, accessories, and other materials across campus.

Through effective policies, UNIC will be able to focus on identifying suppliers that remain committed to sustainable practices, while also encouraging staff and faculty through training to eliminate unsustainable purchasing practices and excessive printing and ideally going fully paperless by 2030.

In order to further strengthen this pillar, a comprehensive document on “Procurement Strategy” needs to be devised, in line with the “Related Documents” subsection under “UNIC’s Approach”, as detailed in this document.

UNIC and Government

UNIC researchers have acted multiple times as special advisors, strategists, and consultants to policymakers and governments. Our research is empowered by vibrant centres of excellence and staff and faculty that remain committed to positively shaping the world. At the same time, investing in sustainable practices also contributes to the Republic of Cyprus' goals to reduce emissions and to introduce more sustainable growth across society.

As one of the largest academic institutions, UNIC is committed to providing research-based evidence to practitioners and policymakers to act effectively in the best interests of society and to establish the Republic of Cyprus as a viable and reliable partner in the Eastern Mediterranean, for Europe, the Middle East, and beyond. Our research, therefore, aims at being at the forefront of public policy, contributing to the best practices across Cyprus.

Through added research and innovation, UNIC also thrives in its ambition to aid the government in developing infrastructure and policy across a variety of fields and a non-exhaustive list – from healthcare to foreign and security policy, to environmental and economic policies, among others.

UNIC and the City of Nicosia

The University of Nicosia, as the name implies, has a strong commitment to the ongoing infrastructural, scientific, and policy-related growth of the City of Nicosia. As an academic and scientific institution, we have a transformative role to play in Nicosia.

While being the largest in size, as an academic institution, our entire community comprised of students, faculty, and staff are all active members of the local community. For this reason, we work hard towards achieving sustainable progress across the city through different activities.

Commitments to the City

We remain committed to helping the City of Nicosia achieve sustainability through the following activities:

- We provide open services and consultation by utilising our knowledge and research to combat sustainability challenges, including during periods of crises (financial crisis, healthcare crisis, etc)
- We aim at enhancing collaboration prospects between UNIC, organisations, public and administrative bodies, local businesses, as well as NGOs and voluntary sector organisations, in an effort to address any sustainability gaps
- We wish to contribute towards deepening the wider community's understanding of science and academic contribution
- We seek to better understand the local community's challenges in order to identify possible compromises and to help them overcome these obstacles
- Through these activities, we are committed towards creating sustainable and friendly local communities
- We aspire to establish ourselves as a major Events Hub, through continuous investment in our specialised units, such as our Events Office, Mediazone, and the Marketing (administrative) Department
- Last but not least, our continuous contribution and commitment to progress places us as a key Research and Innovation Hub, accessible to the wider public through our commitment to open science.

Reflections – Next Steps

In reflecting on the strategic points and policy objectives this Sustainability Strategy outlines, UNIC aspires to be a force of positive change. It is of paramount importance to ensure that this document acts as a reference point for everyone across the University, in order to maintain a smooth and meaningful implementation of our priority objectives.

Following the successful implementation of this Sustainability Strategy, UNIC aims at becoming highly committed to delivering world-class sustainability practices and among the chief higher institutions in the country in this field. This will be reflected through our research, teaching, campus, and continuous policy and community contributions.

Consequently, during the first 5-year period, an annual report on this strategy will be submitted year after year to the Senate, reflecting on any ongoing progress. As already highlighted in this document, each report will be made publicly available a month after submission, noting the progress and how this Strategy unravels.

Additional reports to be delivered are outlined under “Related Documents” in the “UNIC’s Approach” section. These documents include reports and strategies that must be developed within a year and no later than the date outlined in the relevant section of this Sustainability Strategy. Following the end of this 5-year period, the strategy may be revised and extended, in order to address potentially new needs and priority targets.