



Kristianstad
University
Sweden

Kristianstad University

UN Global Compact and PRME Communication on Engagement Report

June 2020–May 2022



Content

Renewal of Commitment	5
Preface	7
New initiatives for sustainable development	7
Sustainable development initiatives in the academic programmes	8
The Business Administration programmes	9
Human Resources and Working Life Science Programme	9
The Public Health and Health Promotion with Specialization in Behavioural Science Programme	9
The Preschool Teacher Education Programme	9
Landscape Science Programme	11
Computer Science Programme	11
Sustainability and research	11
PRME	12
Future progress and outlooks	12
Outcomes	13



Renewal of Commitment

To our stakeholders:

I am delighted to have this opportunity to express Kristianstad University's continued support for the United Nations Global Compact and to renew its commitment to the initiative as well as to the ten principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-corruption.

Kristianstad University, located in the City of Kristianstad, Sweden, was founded in 1977 and has about 14,000 students and 550 employees. The University is oriented towards professional education and aims to be a leading university in its fields of research and education. Our institution offers undergraduate and graduate education in a range of academic professional areas, preparing students for their future working life as, inter alia, teachers, nurses, accountants, HR specialists, and computer engineers. This is our second Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact.

New knowledge and skills are crucial to ensuring the future sustainable transition of our societies. The fundamental efforts of universities and higher education institutions therefore lie in education, research, and collaboration. It is through education and research that universities can make a difference. Moreover, the direct environmental impact and climate footprint of higher education institutions are increasingly in focus. Efforts

to reduce emissions and make informed decisions are linked to both a university's attractiveness and its recruitment of both students and teachers/researchers. Kristianstad University's ambitions regarding its own climate and environmental work are high, and this is reflected in its Strategy and Plan for Sustainability and Environmental Work for the period 2021-2024.

To address issues of attractiveness, sustainability, and a changing working life, we at Kristianstad University are working to develop a new campus area. This development is necessary if we are to offer employees and students attractive and suitable premises, particularly the premises needed to support increased use of digital technology in university activities. We hope to be able to present our new educational and research environments in the next five to six years.

We are glad to be able to share some of our experiences in this Communication of Engagement. We also look forward to achieving new sustainability objectives over the next two years.



Dr. Håkan Pihl
Vice Chancellor
Kristianstad University

Kristianstad University in numbers	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Number of students in undergraduate and graduate programmes	14 107	13 642	14 829	14 554	14 591
Student completion/ performance indicator	85	85	81	81	79
Number of degrees awarded	1 459	1 908	1 443	1 310	1 290
Number of professors (Full-time equivalent)	29	31	31	27	25
share women (%)	37	41	39	39	29
Number of academic refereed publications	176	159	151	134	136
Revenue education (M SEK)	513	469	486	462	432
Revenue research (M SEK)	117	90	93	83	69
Share of external research funding (%)	16	23	29	24	23
Revenue (M SEK)	630	559	578	546	501



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Preface

This is Kristianstad University's third report to UN Global Compact. It encompasses the period between June 2020 and May 2022.

At Kristianstad University, continuous work is being done to promote sustainable development. Sustainability is integrated into and serves as a cornerstone of the operational development system, and within the education programmes more sustainability-related projects are underway. Kristianstad University is a member of the UN-based organizations Global Compact, Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) and Sustainable Development Solutions Network. It is also part of the PRME Champions network (until the end of 2022) and affiliated with the Climate Framework, in which affiliated Swedish universities and colleges promise to actively contribute to the climate transition and to national and international commitments linked to the climate goal of 1.5 degrees C.

New initiatives for sustainable development

Strategic roadmap

For 2020, Kristianstad University was commissioned to develop its environmental management system and sustainability work and to reconnect with the views of the Swedish Higher Education Authority (2017) and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (2018). The assignment was an integral part of the university sector's joint government assignments for 2021. The University

has developed a Strategy and Plan for Sustainability and Environmental Work for the period 2021-2024 that brings together strategic planning, environmental management systems, and medium-term goals in one place. Clear assignments are set out in the plan, and linked to those responsible, to work with the development areas that the Swedish Higher Education Authority and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency have identified at the University. During 2021, the University's responsible coordinator visited all faculties and informed them about the plan. An environmental assessment was to be carried out in 2021 to complement the environmental management system, but the work was moved forward to 2022. The reason for this is twofold: the University had to delay filling an analyst position in 2021 and the pandemic generated additional work.

To avoid the revitalized environmental management system (Miljöledningssystem) becoming a separate process, disconnected from the University's control system, it has been integrated into the University's operational development system. Together with a supplementary cycle for specific environmental management elements that continue over four years, the University now has a more complete environmental management system. Clear assignments are set out in the plan, and linked to those responsible, to work with the development areas that the Swedish Higher Education Authority and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency have identified at the University. A new goal and activity plan have also been developed and linked to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Agenda 2030.

Sustainable development is already a focus area in the University's operational development system, and issues of sustainable development are always considered in the faculties' development of education, development projects and when organizing external activities.

In 2021, the University recruited an analyst to work with coordination, support, and reporting within the framework of its environmental work.

Transport

In 2020 and 2021, the University participated in the project REMM (Travel-free meetings in authorities) as one of 87 authorities. The work to increase the proportion of digital meetings is part of the digitalization of public authorities in Sweden. As in several other participating authorities, the proportion of digital meetings increased due to the pandemic, and digital collaboration became a more natural part of activities in 2020. The increase in the use of Microsoft Teams and Zoom tools for digital interaction was dramatic during 2020; 427 Zoom meetings in January grew to 7,002 such meetings in December. The trend was similar regarding use of Microsoft Teams, where 23 appointments booked in January grew to 1,371 in December the same year. By all accounts, digital meetings have become part of everyday work at the University. In 2021, the average was 7,555 Zoom meetings a month, excluding the summer months of July and August. Figures on the use of Microsoft Teams show a similar development. In 2021, an average of 1,455 meetings a month were held using Teams, excluding the summer months of July and August (also excluding January, for which the University has no figures). The number of digital meetings remained at a high level even after travel restrictions and work-from-home recommendations were removed.

As one of only two Swedish higher education institutions, Kristianstad University applies an internal environmental fee. The purpose of the fee is to encourage staff to reflect on their transport choices. It has been in place since 2017, and it burdens all air travel with a fee of SEK 200 per tonne of carbon dioxide emitted. Collected environmental fees are set aside to create quality funds. In the spring, staff can apply to these funds to finance quality-enhancing projects focused on sustainable development.

The total carbon emissions related to transport dropped by 92 percent from 2019 to 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Digital meetings remained at a high level even after travel restrictions were removed, which led to yet another reduction in carbon emissions by 26 percent from 2020 to 2021. This may indicate that the decreasing emission levels rela-

ted to transport are not solely associated with the pandemic, but that university staff's travelling patterns may also have changed.

Higher education pedagogy

The course Teaching for Sustainable Development is meant to give teachers the tools they need to integrate sustainable development into their courses within their own subject area. The course has been offered by the Department of Library and Higher Education for several years, but had to be paused in 2020 due to the pandemic. The aim of the course is to provide students with integrated knowledge and reflections concerning sustainable development regardless of their field of education. In 2021, the course was relaunched and offered to teaching staff at all other higher education institutions belonging to Higher Education Institutions South (Lärosäten Syd). Teachers from the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Economics are the course leaders.

PRME

Kristianstad University has been part of the UN-led PRME network since 2016. PRME is a global network linked to the UN's 17 SDGs and a platform for the development of responsible and sustainable economic education. During the period 2018-2019, the University was also part of PRME Champions, the network's global working group. Being part of PRME Champions means that the University will implement the 17 SDGs in education. The University was given renewed trust to be part of PRME Champions during the period 2020-2022 as well. The new period includes 36 universities and colleges around the world and mainly applies to education in economics, working life and law.

Sustainable development initiatives in the academic programmes

Sustainability has grown to become a cornerstone of all academic programmes at Kristianstad University. For decades, awareness of the impact our actions have on the natural world around has been part and parcel of a Kristianstad University education. More recently, and because of the University's commitment to the SDGs and the Global Compact, the institutional understanding of sustainable development has broadened to include challenges and opportunities beyond the natural environment. The issues range from labour rights and anti-corruption at the Faculty of Economics, food security and AI (among many other issues) at the Faculty of Science, sustainability-centred pedagogy and learning at the Faculty of Education, to public health at the Faculty of Health. These issues are tied together by applying a sustainability track – a way of mainstreaming sustain-

nability thinking in all programmes – that faculties develop independently, but that are all related to the University’s sustainability strategy.

Furthermore, the systemic nature of the SDGs is mirrored in how faculties and colleagues look for opportunities to collaborate and learn across disciplines. For example, students are encouraged to – and do regularly – participate in cross-disciplinary innovation exercises along with members of the local private and public sectors. Programmes are structured not only to ensure that students are competent in their chosen field of study, but also to emphasize general attributes such as critical thinking, collaboration, dialogue and problem-solving – all qualities that are fundamental to successfully achieving the goals of Agenda 2030. The progress being made in this work is continuously followed up and revised in line with the University’s sustainability strategy, quality assurance commitments and operational development system to ensure that the work represents the latest research and current best practices.

The Business Administration programmes

Kristianstad University has been part of UN PRME for six years and, the UN’s global network PRME Champion Programme for four years. During this period, the six principles of PRME have helped the faculty develop sustainability- and CSR-related courses and focusing on the SDGs has strengthened the Business Ethics track that continues throughout the Master’s programme. Today, these are indispensable tools for ensuring that graduating students are ready to apply sustainable business practices in their chosen profession. To accurately position sustainability as a core concept in business administration, first-year students are immediately asked to work on a sustainability report as their introduction to the subject. Indeed, the stated aim of the Business Administration Programme is to develop business students’ ability to relate to aspects of sustainability in organizations and society as well as to develop their capacity for ethical reasoning. Throughout the programmes, and at different points, the curriculum focuses on topic areas such as human rights, labour, environmental issues, and anti-corruption.

Human Resources and Working Life Science Programme

Working life science has a long tradition within the area of sustainability. Although it is an expansive scientific field, the common denominator has long been the vision of a sustainable working life. This vision is also the most central premise of our educational programme, courses, research, and

collaboration with the surrounding community. The point of departure of the Human Resources and Working Life Science Programme is to educate students in identifying and analysing problems related to work, its functions, and consequences within an organizational and societal context. This approach highlights not only the complex and interdependent relation between the individual, organization, and society, but also the crucial need for a deliberate and sustainable perspective. The University strives to integrate this into all courses, modules, and examinations, with additional emphasis in the courses entitled “Sustainable Working Life” and “A Sustainable Work Life in Time and Space”.

The dominant perspective in Working Life Science is the vision of a sustainable working life. This is made visible through research contributions and collaboration with the surrounding community. Publications cover topics such as regenerative work, sustainable work systems and complexity, integration, recovery, crisis agreement between unions and companies, shortened working hours, the well-being and growth of individuals, social enterprises and social innovation.

The Public Health and Health Promotion with Specialization in Behavioural Science Programme

Regarding public health and sustainability, major societal challenges exist at various levels. The Public Health and Health Promotion with Specialization in Behavioural Science Programme, launched in 2020, offers students instruction in how public health and sustainable development are linked. Students are taught how the SDGs and Agenda 2030 are connected to local national goals; they are exposed to literature that provides in-depth knowledge of public health, health and sustainability, and their importance in achieving sustainability in the coming decades. Underlining the interdisciplinary nature of both the challenges and solutions for sustainable development, the behavioural science orientation of the programme (sociology, psychology, and pedagogy) strengthens students’ ability to analyse, understand and manage new challenges pertaining to public health and sustainable development, such as distrust in expertise and hesitancy to take certain healthcare measures.

The Preschool Teacher Education Programme

An underlying objective of the Preschool Teacher Education Programme at Kristianstad University is to focus on learning for sustainable development, and every course touches on different aspects of sustainability. This again showcases the systemic approach Kristianstad University has adopted in relation to the development goals. During



their first term in the programme, students are familiarized with the concept in a course where the notion of a sustainable preschool is compared to sustainability in the Kristianstad Man and Biosphere Reserve, utilizing the University's location near a unique natural reserve. In their second and third terms, students work with social sustainability in relation to the notion of literacy and gender issues. The fourth term involves a course entitled "Sustainable Development in the Preschool" (30 credits), the aim of which is to expand integration of sustainability into the preschool teacher education curriculum. In the fifth and sixth term, health and sustainability are recurring themes, and in their sixth term, students study childhood and sustainability from a sociological perspective. During their final term, students carry out sustainability-oriented developmental work in preschool. Graduates are well-rounded, with a broad understanding of sustainability and with the professional skills needed to apply the concepts they have studied at their workplace.

Landscape Science Programme

The renewed Landscape Science Programme with its two different profiles – Management and Planning and Communication and Outdoor Pedagogy – are both firmly based on the European Landscape Convention and UNESCO's SDGs (Agenda 2030). The programme is multidisciplinary and initially aims to develop students' abilities to shape their basic knowledge in ecology, earth sciences and in the natural and cultural history of landscapes. Through these basic beginnings, students gain an initial insight into issues such as biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and forestry, geosystem services and how these aspects are important to understanding and preserving a living landscape. As the programme progresses, students' ability to understand and manage landscapes in a sustainable way is deepened. Through excursions and field exercises, they are given the opportunity to practise their newly acquired knowledge of, among other things, landscape planning, landscape assessment and how landscapes are communicated to experts as well as members of the public. When students in the programme have completed their studies, they are able to demonstrate their ability to manage, assess and value landscapes using a critical and

independent approach that includes the scientific, social, sustainable, and ethical aspects of landscapes. They must also show their insight into the importance of their own knowledge for sustainable development of the landscape as well as their own responsibility for how this knowledge is used in their future professional practices. By shifting the programme into a distance learning format, Kristianstad University will be able to attract students from all over the country to this nationally unique programme, thus helping to increase knowledge about sustainable landscapes.

Computer Science Programme

Computer science and information and communications technology (ICT) play a fundamental role in improving education, fighting climate change, and achieving gender equality. Applied Computer Science for Sustainable Development is a flagship Master's programme that combines ICT and sustainability to engage with and resolve today's societal challenges. The programme gives students the opportunity to engage with both challenges related to sustainable development and the technology needed to resolve them. In doing so, students explore multidisciplinary contexts that are important to achieving the SDGs, such as eHealth and water management. Although a relatively new programme, the rapid-changing nature of technology today means the syllabus is constantly being updated and optimized to ensure the programme continues to be one of the most innovative synergies between technology and sustainability in Sweden.

Sustainability and research

The research conducted at Kristianstad University is challenge driven to a high degree and carried out through close relationships with working life practitioners. Our research endeavours are largely intended to have practical implications for, and contribute to developing, a sustainable society. Many of our research groups conduct studies aimed at knowledge development for the advancement of social, economic, and environmental sustainability, and they have reported activities with a clear sustainability focus during the 2020-2022 period.

Number of refereed, scholarly publications

Research area	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Humanities/Social science/ Business administration	31	38	32	30	29
Natural science	25	22	27	24	19
Engineering/Computer science	9	5	3	8	12
Medicine/Health science	75	62	53	62	56
Educational science	36	32	36	10	20
In total	176	159	151	134	136

During the period 2018-2021, Kristianstad University participated in the Vinnova-funded project Agenda 2030 and the Global Sustainable Development Goals as a Framework for Collaboration (AGERA). The AGERA project involved eight Swedish universities and focused on strategic issues concerning how the universities' collaborative processes can contribute to achieving the global sustainability goals. It ended in 2021 with a final report describing different experiences of work within the border area between collaboration and sustainability at the participating universities. The report also contains an "AGERA ladder" that aims to offer conceptual support for developing the collaboration capacity of universities based on Agenda 2030.

Kristianstad University, along with several other universities, participated in an international conference (ISCN2021) arranged by The International Sustainable Campus Network, where the AGERA project and several case studies within the project were presented. Central to the AGERA project is the online learning tool SDG Impact Assessment, which visualizes the results of a self-assessment of how an activity, organization or innovation affects the SDGs. The tool was first applied to programmes within the Faculty of Natural Science, and during subsequent years, additional programmes at the faculties of teaching and health sciences have held workshops with the same starting point.

In mid-November 2021, the twelfth annual Biosphere Research Conference was held, which is a joint arrangement between the Biosphere Reserve office at Kristianstads Vattenrike and Kristianstad University. Several researchers and students from the University participated by giving presentations. The annual conference is an important part of the collaboration between the University and the biosphere reserves at Kristianstads Vattenrike, which today includes collaboration on teaching and research in areas such as environmental science, gastronomy, and teacher education.

The Research Environment for Computer Science (RECS) has several projects related to Agenda 2030. Together with Kristianstad Municipality, the researchers are working to make forecasts for possible future floods – the aim being to reduce the impact of climate change. The same research environment collaborates with Sweden Water Research to analyse the bacterial content of drinking water. Two researchers from another research environment, Childhood, Learning and Education (BALU), are editors of a published book on teaching about and for sustainable development in preschool. The research environment Man & Biosp-

here Health studies the relationships between ecosystems and humans/society, with a strong focus on aquatic environments. The research links to UNESCO's biosphere reserve concept "Man and the Biosphere", where humans are seen as an integral part of ecosystems. Examples of other research on sustainability in the environmental field include studies on insects and algae as food, the environmental impact of sewage systems, as well as studies aimed at increasing the quality of drinking water and reducing energy use in the food processing industry. The laboratory MoLab is equipped for advanced research in the field of purification of pharmaceutical residues in water.

Kristianstad University also conducts research that has a more overall sustainability focus, such as sustainability in preschool, sustainability and the public meal, the introduction of resource-efficient evidence-based knowledge, smart and sustainable cities, and faculty-wide multidisciplinary research projects on sustainable development.

Two overall aspects of sustainability related to research involve ensuring a sustainable supply of skills and competence development for the University's researchers and ensuring that active research is conducted in the major areas of education. An important foundation is therefore that the positions of all PhD-level teachers who are active in research should include time for research, thus rewarding successful researchers and actively supporting researchers who have the potential to advance and become merited teachers. The various forms of strategic initiatives meant to strengthen the University's research are thus also important from a sustainability perspective.

PRME

Kristianstad University has been a PRME signatory since March 2016. PRME aims to transform business and management education, research, and leadership globally to achieve the UN's SDGs. As a signatory, the Faculty of Business is committed to integrating the UN initiative PRME into its academic programmes. As a testimony to the faculty's success in this endeavour, the University was named PRME Champion for 2018/2019 as well as for 2020/2021.

The Business Programme at Kristianstad University offers three specialization paths at the Bachelor's level: Accounting and Auditing, Bank and Finance, and International Business and Marketing. Kristianstad University also offers a Master's programme in International Business and Marketing and a Master's programme in Advanced Accounting at the Faculty of Business.

PRME 2020-2022: Excerpt of activities:

2021

- Thanks to the Kristianstad University's commitment to PRME and in recognition of the knowledge students possess, representatives were asked to participate in a webinar on sustainable environmental engineering, organized by the industrial company PH Nederman AB in Helsingborg.
- In June, PRME representatives from Kristianstad University took part in the UN PRME Global Forum webinar.
- In December, at the 2nd Annual Virtual Nordic Chapter PRME Symposium at Karlstad Business School in Sweden, researchers and academics joined colleagues for a deep dive into the role of business schools in fostering sustainability and responsibility in management education. The virtual symposium is part of the Nordic chapter PRME annual meeting. It focuses on the theme Sustainability and Responsibility in Management Education.

2022

- In January, Sustainability Day 2022 was organized together with Master's students at the Faculty of Business, who presented their work-integrated learning project digitally. Invited guests were the University's partners from industry and organizations, teachers, and students at the University.

Future progress and outlooks

Our previous Communication on Engagement report was submitted at a time when working life was changing rapidly due to the mobility restrictions set in place during the Covid-19 pandemic. Two years later, our workplace – like many others – has adopted digital tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams as standard means of communication. Naturally, this has increased the prospect of holding meetings, seminars, and conferences with colleagues outside Kristianstad University without having to travel. As a result, the University's carbon footprint has been significantly reduced. The University will continue to encourage its employees to replace physical gatherings with digital meetings when this is appropriate.

The overarching process of digitalization also continues to affect the University's use of paper. Since 2018, a sharp decrease in the number of paper printouts has been observed, from 191 printouts per person in 2018 to only 62 in 2021. Whether this trend depends entirely on the pandemic or whether it reflects new working and reading patterns remains to be seen. Kristianstad University management is committed to safeguarding these new and more sustainable working methods.

Outcomes

To conclude, Kristianstad University's commitment to the UN Global Compact has led to positive outcomes on several levels.

- Since the introduction of the new system for development planning, academic programmes have integrated sustainable development in various ways, and sustainability is a key feature of the system.
- Aspects of sustainability are always considered when new projects, educational developments and external conferences are being planned and implemented.
- The new programme Public Health and Health Promotion with Specialization in Behavioural Science links public health with sustainable development.
- The Landscape Science programmes have been revised to further highlight sustainability aspects and to link the courses more closely with both UN and EU sustainability commitments.
- To encourage staff to reflect on their transport choices, the University applies an internal environmental fee. Collected fees are set aside in a special sustainability fund, to which staff can apply for money to support quality-enhancing projects.
- Research conducted at Kristianstad University is largely intended to have practical implications for a sustainable society. Several of the research groups conduct studies aimed at enhancing knowledge for the advancement of social, economic, and environmental sustainability, and they have reported activities with a clear sustainability focus during the 2020-2022 period.
- Paper consumption is falling; the number of printouts per person has decreased by 68 percent since 2018.
- The total carbon emissions related to transport dropped drastically – by 92 percent – from 2019 to 2020 due to the pandemic. Digital meetings remained at a high level even after travel restrictions were removed, which led to yet another reduction in carbon emissions – this time by 26 percent – from 2020 to 2021. This may indicate that the decrease in transport-related emission levels is not entirely connected to the pandemic, but that the travel patterns of university staff may have changed.





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