

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY ON THE SDGs

Slovenia



Respondent Profile

Some details on the respondent:

- A representative from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport completed the ARC9 survey. The respondent is involved in the priority setting, policy drafting, decision-making, policy implementation and evaluation stages of the policy cycle. Based on self-evaluation, their knowledge of SDG-related concepts, - such as the UN 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) – is at the Intermediate level. Their knowledge of existing higher education policies aimed at contributing to the SDGs in Malta is at the Expert level.

Understanding the National Context

Who do you expect to be most responsible in pushing forward the implementation of the SDGs in higher education in your country? Is there a department/agency in-charge of such efforts and what are the priorities?

- By order of responsibility, the government and policymakers are seen as the primary actor responsible in pushing forward SDG-related efforts, followed by higher education institutions (HEIs), and civil society.
- Government's primary role in the implementation of the SDGs in higher education is establishing a common vision and strategy. By order of importance given by the respondent, this is followed by enforcing regulations, providing funding opportunities, providing reputational incentives, and building capacity.
 1. Establish a common vision and strategy
 2. Enforce regulations (e.g. accreditation requirements, audits, non-binding policy statements)
 3. Provide funding opportunities
 4. Provide reputational incentives (e.g. national ranking, labels, awards)
 5. Build capacity (special units advising, tools for self-assessment, optional institutional reviews, guidelines)
- In Slovenia, the [Higher Education Division](#) of the [Ministry of Education, Science and Sport](#) is the responsible government body for implementing the SDGs in higher education. They work closely together with the [UNESCO Office in Slovenia](#), and the [Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency](#).

Are there policy documents for higher education's response to the SDGs?

- In Slovenia, the [Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme 2030](#) is the policy document that refers to for the implementation of SDGs in the higher education sector. In this document both the economic, social and environmental dimensions are addressed.
- Additional policy documents addressing the topic are the [Higher Vocational Education Act](#) and the Integrated [National Energy and Climate Plan](#).

What are some obstacles faced by HEIs in contributing to the SDGs?

- In terms of obstacles faced by universities, the key obstacle are the Structural issues (e.g. lack of time, funding, human resources, infrastructure) combined with lower priority of SDG's in comparison to other challenges.
- The key challenges identified in the UNESCO National Commission and UNESCO Chair Consultation Report, as featured in the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC2022) "The future of higher education" report also apply to Slovenia:
 - Lack of strategic orientations and appropriate policies and limited funding
 - Rigidity of programmes, policies, rules, organisational structures

- Fragmentation and protectionism
- Weak internationalisation
- Linking formal - non-formal education
- Digital transformation
- Optimizing the system and not adapting the process to the individual (Society 5.0)

What are the top 5 SDG priorities for higher education in your country?

➤ In the case of Slovenia no priority of SDGs was indicated, but the following 5 was indicated as top priorities:

- SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing
- SDG 4 Quality Education
- SDG 9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
- SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG 13 Climate Action

Policy Tools

What policy tools are used to encourage HEIs to address the SDGs in your country? What specific higher education area do they target?

➤ The MFHEA employs a number of policy tools to encourage universities to contribute to the attainment of the SDGs, addressing different missions of the institutions:

	Education & Teaching	Research	Campus Operations & Governance	Partnerships and Societal Engagement
Financial support or budget allocation	x	x	x	x
National rankings, labels and awards				
Access to facilities and infrastructure	x	x	x	x
Special units advising and guidelines				
Tools for self-assessment				
Optional institutional reviews				
Legal obligations	x		x	
Accreditation requirements	x	x	x	
Audit, monitoring, or evaluation				

➤ A specific example on such policy tool is the [“Pilot projects for the renovation of higher education for a green and resilient transition”](#)

Contextualising Higher Education Policies for SDGs

What steps has your country taken to contextualize the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in its higher education context? Which partners were involved in these steps?

- To contextualise SDG-related policies, the Ministry took the following policy steps: it has established governance and coordination mechanisms, undertook multi-stakeholder consultations, reviewed national plans and strategies, mapped, prioritized and adapted targets, mainstreamed concepts into existing or new strategies, and Established monitoring arrangements for reporting and follow-up to the SDGs. It did not Assess interlinkages, synergies, and tradeoffs.
- The Ministry has consulted and involved the following partners in these steps:
 - **Central/national government authorities:** were consulted and involved in all of the steps above, with the exception of multi-stakeholder consultations.
 - Partners that are **not involved** in any of the policy steps: Higher Education Institutions and think tanks, Provincial/local government authorities, Non-governmental organizations, Industry and the private sector.

Sources

The information was provided by the **Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia**, as of 25 October 2022.

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