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JANUARY 2023

# NEWSLETTER 1

University cooperation for promoting the GREEN transition and sustainable practices in education and training



## Kick-Off Meeting

12 & 13 May 2022 in Modena, Italy

The Kick-off meeting of the U-GREEN Project took place on May 12th and 13th, 2022 at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, in Modena, Italy.

The U-GREEN project aims to promote green skills among a new generation of European citizens and is based on the idea that education and training institutions can be the main catalysts for the change in mindsets and behaviors needed for the transition to a circular, digital, and climate-neutral economy.

## Get in touch with us:



<http://www2.ual.es/u-green/>



[@ugreen.erasmus](https://www.facebook.com/ugreen.erasmus)



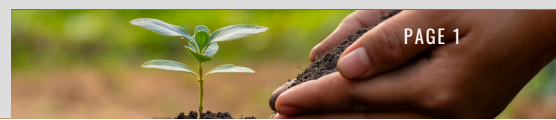
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In this work meeting, the project was presented to all partners of the consortium, as well as the activities to be developed during the course of the project and the main results already achieved.

Topics such as management and financial plan and administrative issues of the project, the visual identity, sharing and promotion plan, evaluation and quality assurance plan, sustainability of the project after its execution, and work to be developed by each partner of the consortium in the 2nd phase of the project were also addressed.

During the meeting, the Consortium partners also had the opportunity to visit the Geophysical Observatory of Modena.





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## Focus Groups

During May and June 2022 project partners organized focus groups in order to collect inputs for the definition of the U-GREEN standards, practices and recommendations leading to the preparation of the U-GREEN guidelines.

All targeted profiles have been included in the groups, such as institutional and external experts: teaching, non-teaching and staff members involved in implementing new green and sustainable practices and/or institutional sustainability strategies, as well as experts, researchers and green professionals, companies and labor market actors.

In general, the participants of the Focus Groups consider that the sustainability actions taken by the Institutions are still not sufficient. Sustainable development is a long-term process that requires a great deal of awareness-raising, starting from basic levels of education up to higher education.

Among the main conclusions were that university represents the cradle of knowledge and education of the new generations.

Adopting a proper environmental management is extremely important for the entire university population, as an example of best practices at the local level which could then also have an impact on the private sphere, community, Municipalities and on the future workplace of students.

In general, there is a common feeling that current environmental management practices carried out by Universities are not enough to minimize the environmental impact of them. It is stressed that they should develop more initiatives while deepening and extending the existing ones to the community.

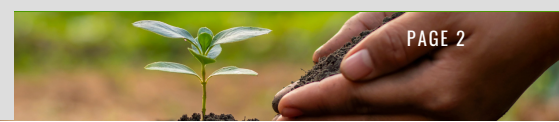
According to the focus groups participants, some relevant aspects to reduce environmental impact of the universities are:

- Mobility of the academic community: fuel consumption, air emissions and climate change.
- Energy consumption.
- Water consumption and discharge.
- Waste production: in the facilities in general, in laboratories, workshops, and canteens and/or cafeterias.
- Sensitization of the entire academic community;
- Waste recycling at the University;
- Sustainable food;
- Creation of an organic garden managed by students.
- More parking spaces for bicycles and scooters.
- Use of geothermal energy for heating.



The focus groups participants have proposed indicators that have been classified according to the three areas defined in the Project and their specific topics.

Read more 





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## U-GREEN Guidelines for Education and Training Institutions. Result 1.

The main milestone of Result 1 of the U-GREEN Project has been the definition of a set of common standards, practices and approaches, based on internationally recognised standards and practices and on Consortium members' know-how and experience, to support the green transition in Education and Training institutions (including – although not limited to – Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)).

This document offers an overview of the proposed U-GREEN approach and recommendations for incorporating green and sustainability practices and provide tips and guidance towards creating a road map to become a carbon neutral institution. The University of Almeria has been in charge of the coordination of the definition of the U-GREEN standards, practices and approaches, but the final document, U-GREEN Guidelines for Education and Training Institutions, has been jointly prepared by Consortium members by considering information coming from different sources:



**U-GREEN Guidelines for Education and Training Institutions**

### Objectives of Result 1

- To promote the definition of common standards and practices to foster the green transition adapted to the context and needs of Education and Training institutions
- To offer recommendations for incorporating updated green and sustainability practices in line with EU goals and policies in Education and Training institutions.

September 2022

### U-GREEN Guidelines for Education and Training Institutions





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## Areas and topics covered by U-GREEN

### 1. Infrastructure & Resources

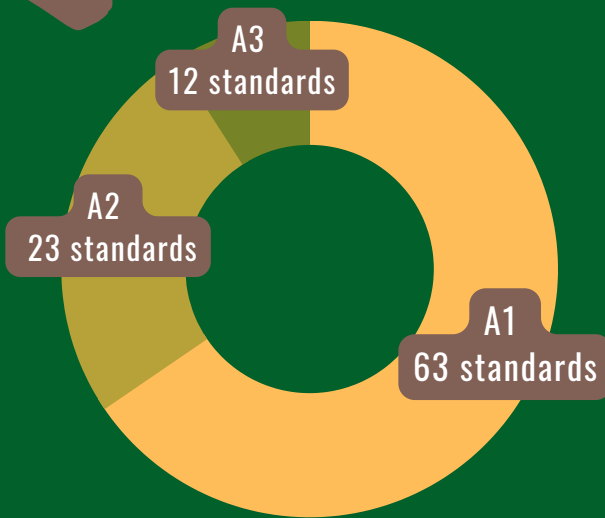
- Energy efficiency and adoption of new forms of energy
- Water consumption and reuse
- Heating and cooling systems
- Recycling, waste management and single-use consumables
- Sustainable food
- Green travel and mobility
- Preventing pollution
- Green areas and maintaining biodiversity

### 2. Administrative Management, Teaching & Learning

- Digitalisation of Education and Training institutions
- Embedding green and sustainability principles in HE curricula and developing green skills for new labour market scenarios
- Implementing innovative teaching and learning pedagogies

### 3. Community Engagement and Awareness

- Engaging the educational community and reaching out to the wider community for promoting behavioural change



The selected standards make up the U-GREEN Guidelines for Education and Training Institutions, which will be released to the public and available only electronically on the project's website: <http://www2.ual.es/u-green/>

The activities of R-1 were scheduled within the period running from March 2022 to September 2022.

The description of each standard has been done by the partner who proposed it. U-GREEN Guidelines for Education and Training Institutions includes a total of 98 number of standards, practices and approaches. All the areas and their topics have been covered by the standards.



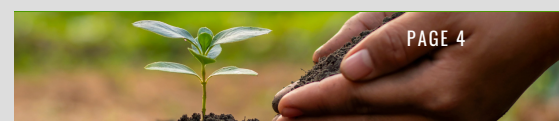
## U-GREEN

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PROJECT

RESULTS

### Partners





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## 2nd Meeting

1 & 2 December 2023 in Liège, Belgium

On the first day of the meeting, partners visited La Reid campus, its infrastructure and laboratories and had a working session on the definition of the Green Label standards.

With the aim of defining the U-GREEN Label, an operational and methodological questionnaire has been drawn up in order to centralise the opinions of the partners on:

- the need or not to formulate indicators and/or thresholds. If yes, how much for each level of acquisition of the label (beginner, advanced, mastery)?
- the number of standards for each level
- the need or not to document (prove) the achievement of these standards

Partners agreed to write a general comment, without necessarily answering each of the questions separately.

On the second day of the meeting, the U-GREEN consortium visited the Erasmus House with its green roofs.

They had a working session on the finalisation of the Green Label standards.

The 2nd Partner Meeting was finished by having a eco-tour of Liège by Julian Huls, who is the co-author of "Liège on foot".

