

RISEBA Approach to the Implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’, also known as the 2030 Agenda. It sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to reduce poverty worldwide and ensure sustainable global development.

The Strategic Objectives of RISEBA University of Business, Arts and Technology for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter SDGs):

1. **Quality and inclusive education** (SDG 4 – Quality Education)
To provide accessible, high-quality, inclusive and sustainable higher education that develops the skills required by the labour market, business and society.
2. **Equality and diversity** (SDG 5 – Gender equality)
To promote gender equality, equal opportunities and a safe, non-discriminatory environment for students and staff at all levels.
3. **Employment, innovation and entrepreneurship** (SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth)
To develop the competitiveness, entrepreneurship and professional skills of students and graduates, thereby promoting sustainable economic growth and decent employment.
4. **Sustainable resource management** (SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production)
To implement sustainable principles of resource management, consumption and institutional operations, thereby reducing the impact on the environment.
5. **Good governance and institutional accountability** (SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions)
To strengthen good governance, transparency, ethics and an inclusive institutional culture at all levels of the university’s operations.

RISEBA achieves these strategic objectives by implementing the following actions:

UN Sustainable Development Goal	UN Sustainable Development Sub-Goal	RISEBA’s activities and approach
4. <i>Ensure inclusive and high-quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities</i>	4.3. <i>By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university education</i>	RISEBA ensures equal opportunities for men and women to study at the university, to be eligible for tuition fee waivers, to stand for election to student representative bodies, and guarantees equal quality of education.
	4.4. <i>By 2030, significantly increase the number of</i>	Each year, the university admits approximately 200 students to first-cycle,

	<i>young people and adults with skills suitable for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship — including technical and vocational skills</i>	second and third-cycle higher education programmes, enabling them to obtain not only their first higher education qualification but also a second and even a third, by retraining and acquiring the skills required by the labour market and for entrepreneurship. The format of the study programmes (full-time daytime, full-time evening or distance learning) and the flexibility to change this allow students to combine their studies with family life and work, as students' financial circumstances often mean they need to earn a living whilst studying. To support these students, the university's discount policy provides support both to students with outstanding academic results and to those in need of social support.
	<i>4.5. By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and vulnerable children, to all levels of education and vocational training</i>	The format of study programmes (full-time daytime, full-time evening or distance learning) and the flexibility to change them allow students to combine their studies with family life and work, as students' financial circumstances often mean they need to earn a living whilst studying. To support these students, the university's fee reduction policy provides support both to students with outstanding academic results and to those in need of financial assistance. The university's admissions policy is based on the principle that anyone who has completed a previous level of education, even with modest but satisfactory results, should be allowed to realise their potential and develop professionally; therefore, competitive selection for admission to study programmes is applied only where physical constraints on space or equipment limit the number of students.
	<i>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development, including through education on sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, fostering a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and raising awareness of cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development</i>	The study programmes offered by the university include modules that provide the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development, including education on sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights and gender equality, whilst fostering an understanding of cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development. RISEBA aims to prepare socially responsible entrepreneurs, leaders, managers and professionals for work in Latvian and international organisations. One of the university's three core values is 'Diversity', which ensures a diverse and inclusive multicultural environment by offering a variety of study programmes, teaching formats and languages of instruction.

5. Achieve gender equality and ensure full opportunities for all women and girls	5.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against all women and girls in all areas	RISEBA ensures equal opportunities for men and women to study at the university, to be eligible for tuition fee discounts, to stand for election to student representative bodies, and guarantees equal quality of education. There are more women than men among the university's staff. Of the six members of the management group, four are women. The gender ratio among students is also equal. The University's Code of Ethics, which is binding on both staff and students, stipulates that every member of the RISEBA community shall treat others equally and with respect, and that all members of the RISEBA community and visitors to the University undertakes to oppose any discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, religion, cultural background, social status, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age or other such characteristics. It also undertakes to prevent ridicule, intimidation, arrogance and other negative forms of behaviour by staff and students, including physical, emotional and sexual violence. To uphold freedom of speech and thought, but not to misuse it for malicious or self-serving purposes.
	5.2. To eradicate all forms of violence against all women and girls in both the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other forms of exploitation	The University's Internal Regulations for Students (clauses 2.2.16–2.2.18) stipulate that students are obliged to: 1) comply with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and generally accepted standards of behaviour and decorum; 2) observe personal hygiene standards and, in their choice of clothing and appearance, respect the traditions of the academic environment and the interests of other RISEBA students, lecturers and general staff, as well as those of the University's partners; 3) to treat the cultures and traditions of other countries with respect and to independently develop intercultural communication skills. Clause 2.8 of the Internal Regulations stipulates that students shall exercise their rights and fulfil their obligations without any direct or indirect discrimination (i.e. regardless of a person's race, skin colour,

		gender, age, disability, religious, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, financial or family status, sexual orientation or other circumstances), and, through their attitude and conduct, promote an inclusive, positive and open university environment in which every student and staff member is valued and encouraged to make their own unique contribution and demonstrate their best performance.
	<i>5.5. Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities to assume leadership roles at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</i>	There are more women than men among the university's staff. Of the six members of the management team, four are women. The gender ratio among students is also equal. Of the seven active members of the Student Council's executive committee, five are women, including the president and vice-president.
	<i>5.c Adopt and strengthen well-considered policies and enforceable legislation to promote gender equality and ensure equal opportunities for all women and girls at all levels</i>	RISEBA's Development Strategy, Code of Ethics, internal regulations, as well as the procedures for implementing the ERASMUS+ programme, include provisions on equal treatment and the prohibition of discrimination (on grounds of gender, religious belief, nationality, origin, skin colour, sexual orientation, etc.).
<i>6. Ensure access to water and sanitation for all and sustainable management</i>	<i>6.1. By 2030, ensure universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</i>	Both RISEBA buildings provide free and open access to drinking water.
	<i>6.2. By 2030, ensure that all people have access to adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities and end open defecation, paying particular attention to the needs of women, girls and vulnerable populations</i>	Both RISEBA buildings provide free and open access to equally well-equipped toilet facilities, which are segregated for women and men.
	<i>6.3. By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating waste disposal in landfills and minimising the release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated waste and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse worldwide</i>	Both RISEBA buildings are equipped with specially labelled waste bins for paper, plastic, glass and other waste, encouraging waste sorting amongst students and staff.
<i>8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and</i>	<i>8.3. Promote development-oriented policies that support productive</i>	The learning outcomes of the study programmes implemented by higher education institutions ensure that

productive employment, and decent work for all	activities, the creation of decent jobs, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and to foster the creation and growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including by ensuring access to financial services	graduates can engage in entrepreneurial activity in the sector corresponding to their chosen profession.
	8.5. By 2030, ensure full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	As shown by the RISEBA graduate survey, the average salary of university graduates is above the national average. In addition, the university, together with its partners, has developed the MOTIVAL tool (as part of the project: ‘Development of value-based skills to improve the quality of human capital’). For example, this tool is also used by the University of Latvia. The MOTIVAL platform is a solution developed as part of the European Social Fund project ‘Digitalisation Initiatives for Student Engagement and the Improvement of Study Quality at the University of Latvia and Partner Higher Education Institutions’ (No. 8.2.3.0/22/A/006 (DIGITEKA)), which combines the innovative social technology MOTIVAL—which, by identifying personal values, provides information on an individual’s strengths as well as the most suitable forms of motivation—alongside digital skills tests that help students better understand which digital skills they need to develop. Based on the test results, students are recommended the courses developed as part of the project that are best suited to their skill development, intrinsic motivation and personality type. By incorporating the MOTIVAL plugin into course activities, students are allowed to better understand their values and recognise their personality strengths, as well as discover new approaches to boosting self-motivation. The opportunity to test their digital skills and receive recommendations for DIGITEKA courses will enable students to develop the skills required not only for their studies but also for their professional lives, particularly those related to the use of information technology.
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable	9.1. Develop high-quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure,	The university offers degree programmes in architecture, placing great emphasis on the development of sustainable

<i>industrialisation, and foster innovation</i>	<i>including regional and cross-border infrastructure, to support economic development and the well-being of the population, with a particular focus on ensuring accessible and equitable access for all</i>	architectural solutions (see the learning outcomes of the degree programmes)
<i>10. Reduce inequality both between and within countries</i>	<i>10.4. Adopt policies, particularly fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and gradually achieve greater equality</i>	The university's remuneration policy is based on the principle of gender equality.
	<i>10.7. Promote orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and human mobility, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies</i>	The university responsibly recruits international students, minimising the risks associated with obtaining residence permits for purposes other than study. This is evidenced by the fact that, for several years now, the higher education institution has adhered to best practice in the recruitment of international students, which the Ministry of Education and Science invites only those higher education institutions to sign that have, through their activities, demonstrated a responsible approach and the fair recruitment of international students. To ensure compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, the university has appointed a coordinator who oversees its implementation and makes proposals for improvements.
<i>12. Ensure sustainable consumption patterns and production models</i>	<i>12.2. Ensure the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources by 2030</i>	The university has reduced paper consumption to a minimum in its day-to-day operations. Both university buildings are within a half-hour's walk of each other; furthermore, the university has set itself the target of phasing out one of the buildings over five years, by relocating all three faculties and administrative staff to a single building. To a certain extent, this is also facilitated by the remote working policy, which allows heads of departments to adopt flexible working models – specifying whether work is carried out entirely remotely, partially remotely or in person. Almost every meeting is organised in a hybrid format, thereby enabling everyone to participate, regardless of their ability to physically attend a specific venue, which undoubtedly saves not only time but also reduces the volume of harmful transport emissions.
<i>13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</i>	<i>13.3. Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity in the areas of</i>	In accordance with the national education standard, every person at any stage of higher education must, at least once,

	<i>climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</i>	undertake a course of study that includes environmental protection topics.
<i>16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, ensure access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</i>	<i>16.7. Ensure flexible, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</i>	In every decision-making body, every representative of the relevant staff group has equal opportunities to participate, without any discrimination. The procedure and jurisdiction for the resolution of disputes are set out in Chapter 7 of the university's founding document – the Constitution. The highest dispute resolution body at the university is the university's academic arbitration tribunal, which does not include representatives of the administration but comprises representatives of the academic staff and students.

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