

UCLouvain Sustainability Transition

UCLouvain: among the world's best universities, also on sustainability transition issues

IN BRIEF:

- **UCLouvain ranks between 101st and 200th** out of the 1,115 participating universities worldwide (and 1st in Belgium) in the latest **Times Higher Education ranking** in terms of **sustainable development** objectives.
- **Why did UCLouvain participate** in this new ranking? **'To firmly commit the university to sustainable development objectives,'** explains Marthe Nyssens, UCLouvain Pro-Rector for Sustainability Transition.
- What is UCLouvain's **strong point**? **Innovation**, thanks to its performance in developing sustainability transition research (patents, spin-offs).

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Since 2019, **Times Higher Education** (THE) has offered a new **ranking** that assesses the **performance of universities** worldwide against the United Nations **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs).

In its first participation in the rankings, **UCLouvain** debuted remarkably, ranking first for Belgium and between 101st and 200th out of 1,115 participating universities worldwide, including top rankings in several fields:

- UCLouvain **excels in terms of innovation (28th, score 97.5/100)**, thanks to its performance in terms of publications and use of its research (patents, spin-offs) in fields related to sustainability transition.
- UCLouvain's **second-best score** is in terms of **good health** and well-being, which reflects the work carried out by the UCLouvain Student Support Service, its **inclusion policy** and ample **social assistance** offers (mental health, support), and health collaborations (Univers santé).
- UCLouvain also scores very well in terms of **sustainable and non-discriminatory working conditions** (decent work and economic growth).

What is the point of participating in such a ranking? **'It allows the university to commit itself resolutely to the objectives of sustainable development,'** explains Marthe Nyssens, UCLouvain Pro-Rector for Sustainability Transition. **'UCLouvain has an ethical duty and a major societal responsibility** to engage in a **transition towards a sustainable society**. It must be at the **forefront** of society's thinking. In this sense, situating ourselves in relation to others through this ranking allows us to **signal our commitment publicly, to motivate ourselves to go even further** in order to incorporate sustainable development objectives in our practices, and to innovate even more.'

In concrete terms, an **ambitious 'transition' plan** is currently being approved by the university's governing bodies, based on three areas: education, research and sustainable campuses. It includes carbon **neutrality for its buildings by 2035**. To achieve this, UCLouvain is aiming for a 60% reduction in its consumption (compared to 2009) and the use of renewable energy for the remainder. What is UCLouvain's intention? To go beyond appearances, by analysing in detail the nature of its long-term commitments.