

# Maximize Your University's Role in SDGs:

## Why you should participate in THE's Impact Rankings



Times Higher Education  
**Impact Rankings**

Duncan Ross  
Chief data officer

September 2024

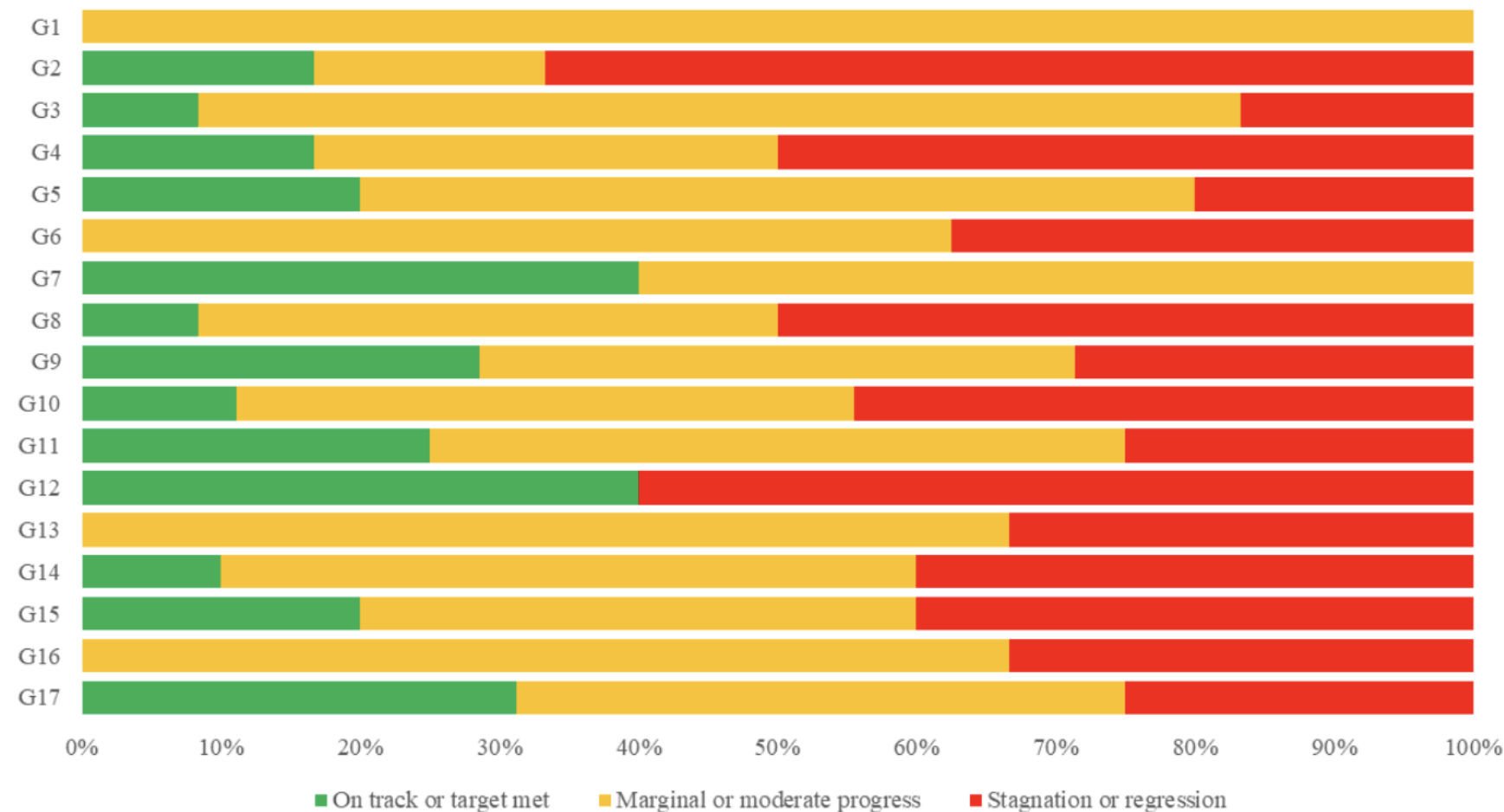
# Sustainable Development Goals

- Goals agreed by the UN in 2015
- A common framework for evaluation and a commitment to deliver
- Broad and comprehensive
- 17 Goals
- 169 Targets
- Over 230 indicators



# Crisis of sustainability

As we begin the second half of our journey to 2030, signs of a determined, sustained global comeback have yet to emerge. This year's report reveals that only seventeen per cent of SDGs targets are on track to be achieved, nearly half are showing minimal or moderate progress, and progress on over a third has stalled or even regressed.



António Guterres – Secretary-General of the UN

From *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General* May 2024



# Higher Education and the SDGs

- All goals are relevant to all universities
- Not just SDG 4: Quality Education



# Higher education brings specific skills to the SDGs

## Education

Higher education institutions are both direct, and indirect educators of future generations

## Research

Universities lead the development of new solutions, both scientific and social

## Perspective

The higher education sector thinks long-term: they are generational actors

# Higher education has a social *and* economic value

P	Team	GP	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Form
1	Man City	38	28	7	3	96	34	62	91	
2	Arsenal	38	28	5	5	91	29	62	89	
3	Liverpool	38	24	10	4	86	41	45	82	-
4	Aston Villa	38	20	8	10	76	61	15	68	- -
<hr/>										
5	Spurs	38	20	6	12	74	61	13	66	- -
<hr/>										
6	Chelsea	38	18	9	11	77	63	14	63	
7	Newcastle	38	18	6	14	85	62	23	60	-
8	Man Utd	38	18	6	14	57	58	-1	60	- -

	Revenue 2023*
University of Manchester	£1,334m
Manchester City	£712m
Manchester United	£635m

# Need for measurement

In order to deliver on the SDGs, measurement is critical.

If we don't know where we are we can't plan for change.

When we take actions we can't evaluate their impact.

Measurements need to be

- Quality
- Accessible
- Timely

And include data from civil society

48. Indicators are being developed to assist this work. Quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind. Such data is key to decision-making. Data and information from existing reporting mechanisms should be used where possible. We agree to intensify our efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in developing countries, particularly African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries. We are committed to developing broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product (GDP).

## National level

78. We encourage all member states to develop as soon as practicable ambitious national responses to the overall implementation of this Agenda. These can support the transition to the SDGs and build on existing planning instruments, such as national development and sustainable development strategies, as appropriate.

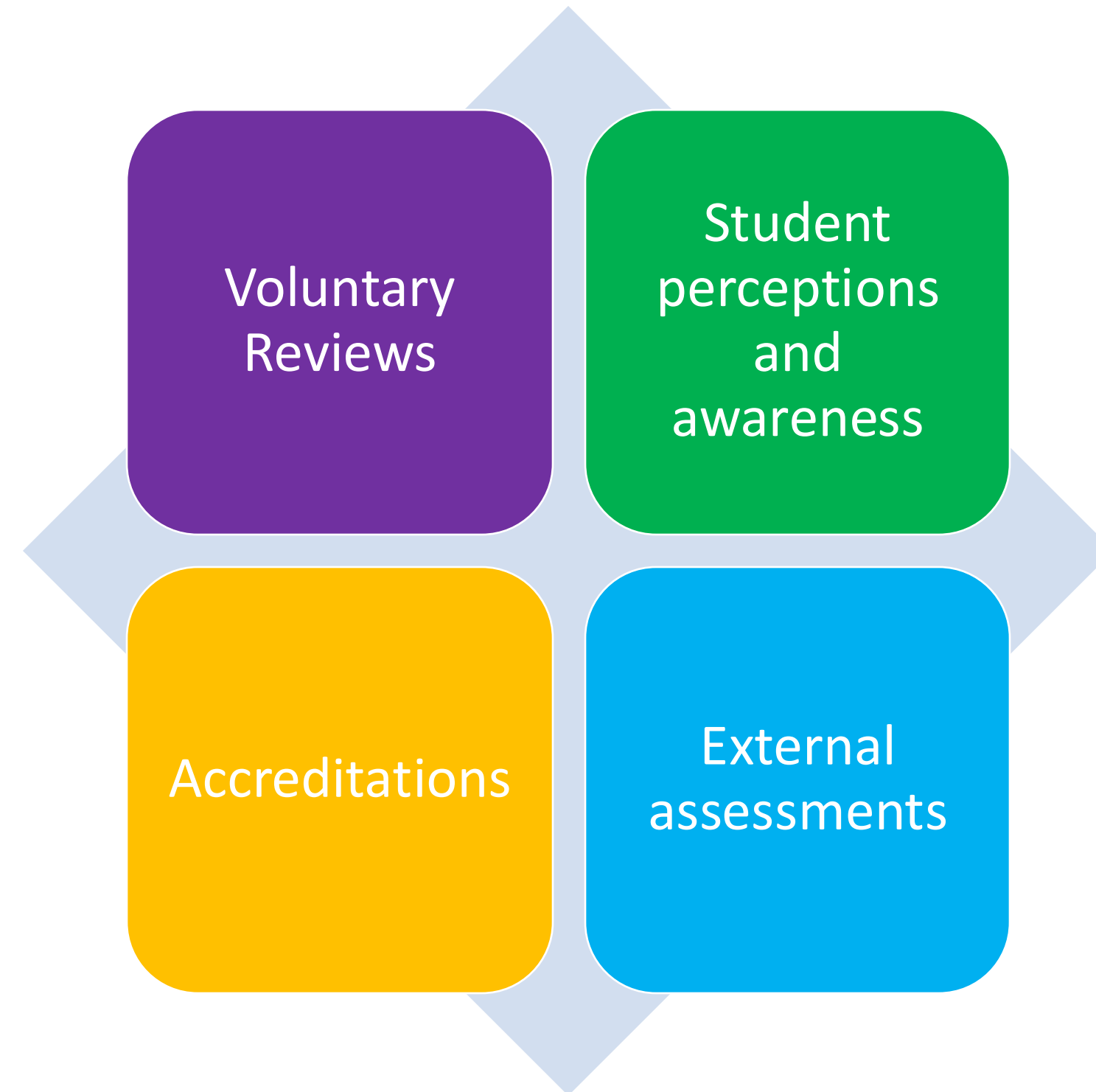
79. We also encourage member states to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven. Such reviews should draw on contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities. National parliaments as well as other institutions can also support these processes.



# Measurement systems

- The standard for the SDGs
- You can choose the metrics that are most relevant to you
- They are time consuming
- It's hard to compare your review with other institutions
- Example: Carnegie Mellon University

- Accreditation systems may have sustainability requirements
- These may be at an institutional or course level
- Provide visibility for your institution
- Often minimum standards and may be mixed with other aspects of performance
- Example: AACSB



- The views of students are important and often undervalued
- May be more radical than professionally led insights
- Can be linked to external evaluation
- Example: Sulitest TASK

- Require you to provide consistent data to specific standards
- Ability to compare results across institutions in some cases
- Useful for visibility of your work
- Examples: STARS, THE Impact Rankings

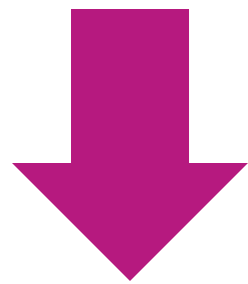


# THE Impact Rankings

- Created in 2017
- First edition in 2019
- Takes into account all 17 SDGs
- Focused on driving continuous improvement
- Makes sustainability a strategic focus of university leaders

# Where does it fit?

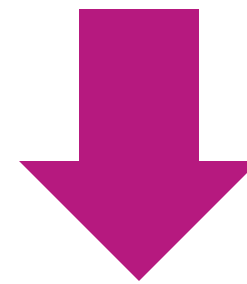
## TEACHING



**Focus:** student satisfaction, employer reputation, graduation rate + more

**Participation rules:** ranking specific

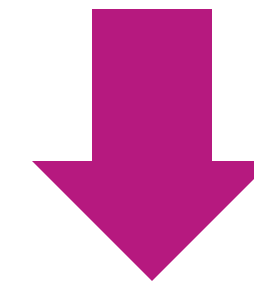
## IMPACT & SUSTAINABILITY



**Focus:** research, teaching, stewardship and outreach against the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals

**Participation rules:** all UG or PG higher education institutions

## RESEARCH



**Focus:** research output, research quality, research collaboration, reputation + more

**Participation rules:** 1,000+ publications over 5 years, teach undergraduates across a range of subjects

# What are the Impact Rankings?

- 18 different rankings
- One for each SDG
- One overall ranking
- Data from Universities and from Elsevier



Times Higher Education  
**Impact Rankings**

The largest and most comprehensive global university ranking  
dedicated to the UN sustainable development goals



**2,152**

Universities

**30,000+**

person hours (mainly evidence validation)

**283,000+**

documents collected

**269,000+**

measurements

**3.7m**

publications on the SDGs

**75**

metrics\*

**125**

Countries and regions

**251**

indicators\*





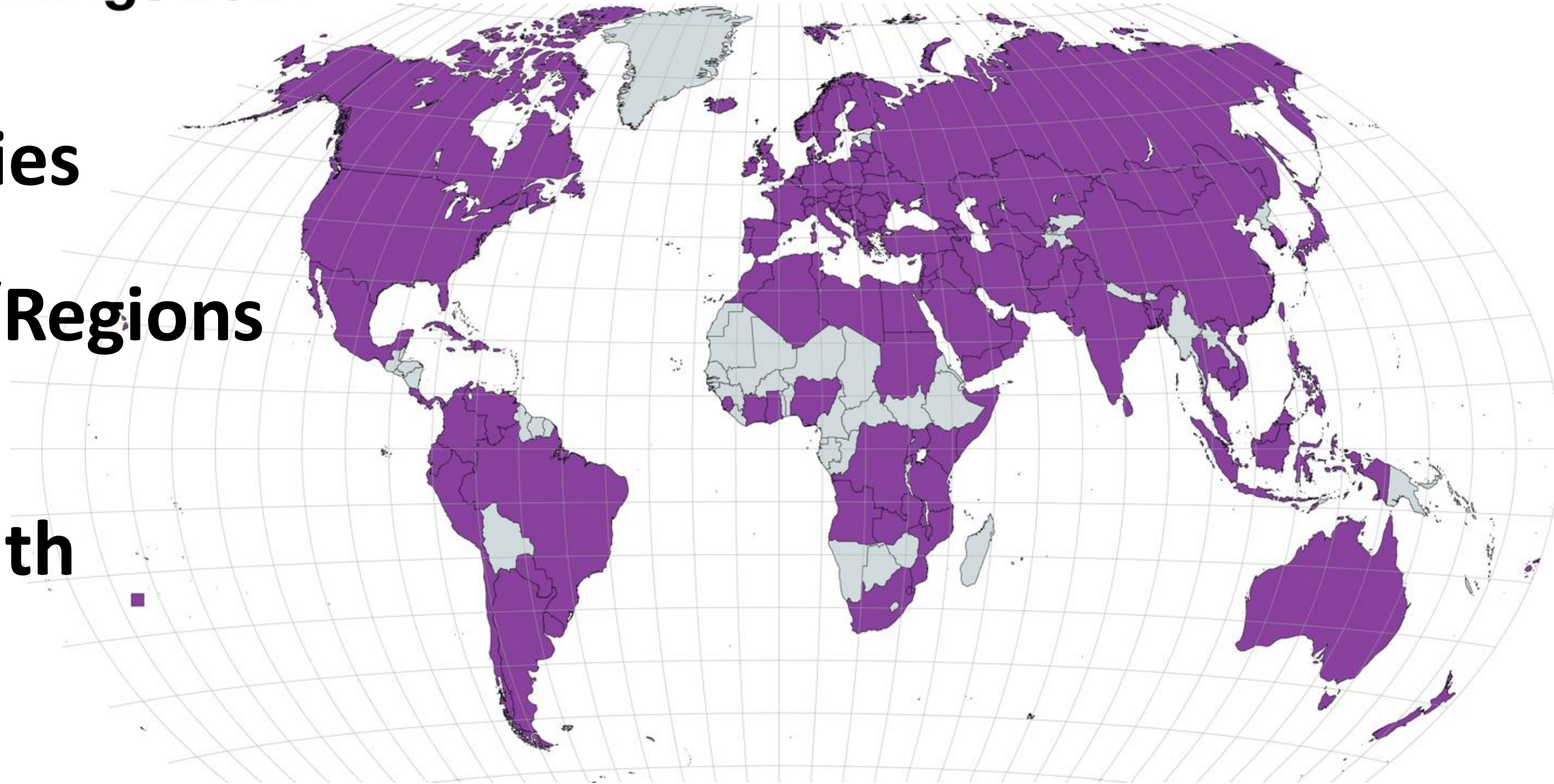


Times Higher Education  
**Impact Rankings 2024**

**2152 Universities**

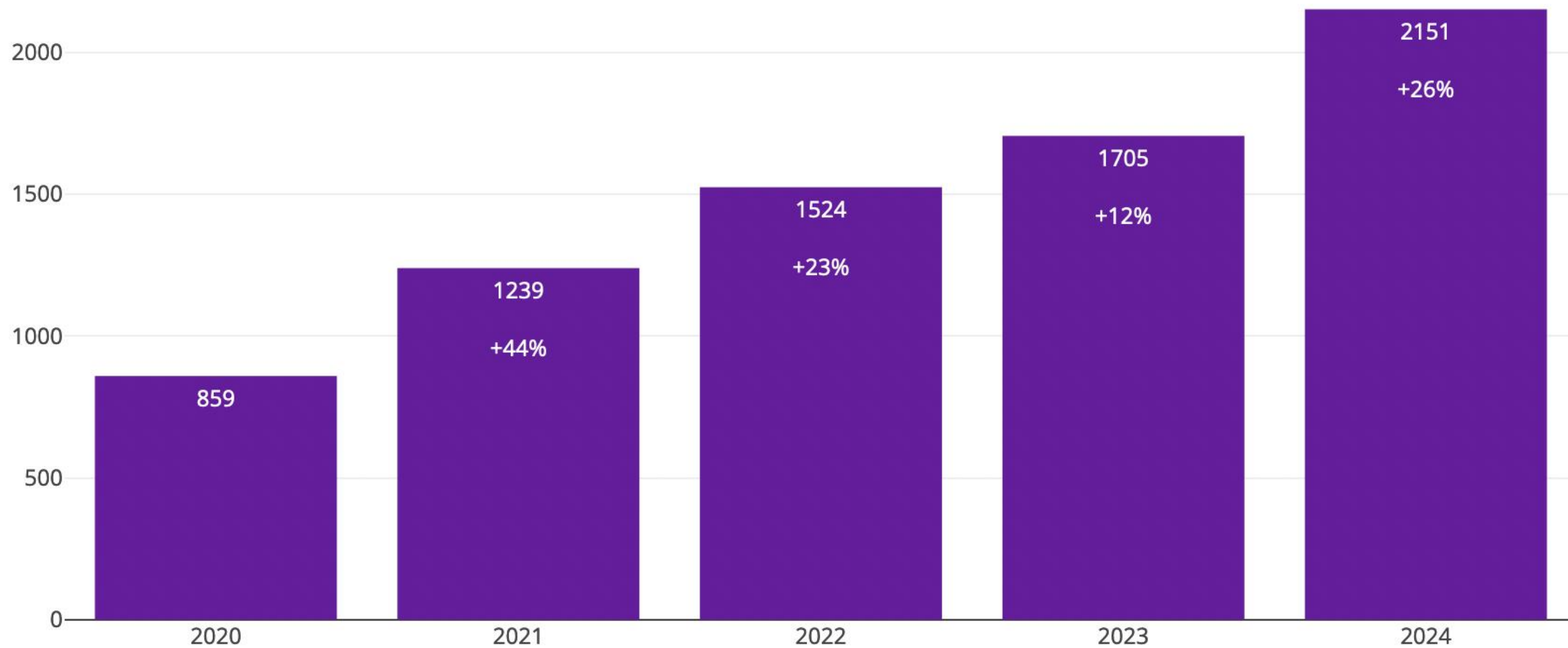
**125 Countries/Regions**

**Global north  
and Global south**



# Growth 2020-2024

Impact rankings participation over time



# How do we measure what universities do?





## Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Target	Description
4.1	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys <b>complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education</b> leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
4.2	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality <b>early childhood development, care and pre-primary education</b> so that they are ready for primary education
4.3	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to <b>affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education</b> , including university
4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant <b>skills</b> , including technical and vocational skills, for <b>employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship</b>
4.5	By 2030, eliminate <b>gender disparities</b> in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the <b>vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</b>
4.6	By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve <b>literacy and numeracy</b>
4.7	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the <b>knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development</b> , including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
4.a	Build and upgrade education facilities that are <b>child, disability and gender sensitive</b> and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
4.b	By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of <b>scholarships available to developing countries</b> , in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries
4.c	By 2030, substantially increase the supply of <b>qualified teachers</b> , including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States





## *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

Target	Description
4.3	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to <b>affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education</b> , including university
4.5	By 2030, eliminate <b>gender disparities</b> in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the <b>vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</b>

### **Proportion of first-generation students**

The metric is set to demonstrate that universities are able to provide education for disadvantaged groups – no group should be left behind.

This is defined as the number of students starting a degree who identify as being the first person in their immediate family to attend university, divided by the total number of students starting a degree. All data is provided as full-time equivalents



## Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Target	Description
4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant <b>skills</b> , including technical and vocational skills, for <b>employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship</b>
4.5	By 2030, eliminate <b>gender disparities</b> in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the <b>vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</b>
4.7	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the <b>knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development</b> , including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
4.a	Build and upgrade education facilities that are <b>child, disability and gender sensitive</b> and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

### Lifelong learning measures

Universities need to highlight lifelong learning opportunities they provide

- Provide free access to educational resources for those not studying at the university.
- Host educational events at university that are open to the general public.
- Undertake educational outreach activities
- (e.g. tailored lectures or demonstrations) beyond campus – in local schools, in the community.
- Have a policy that ensures that access to these activities is accessible to all, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability, immigration status or gender.



## *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

Target	Description
4.c	By 2030, substantially increase the supply of <b>qualified teachers</b> , including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

### **Proportion of graduates with teaching qualification**

To understand how a university is supporting early years education we measure the proportion of its graduates who gained a qualification that entitled them to teach at primary school level in their country.



## *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

Target	Description
4.7	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the <b>knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development</b> , including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

### Education for the SDGs

We are exploring how universities are teaching the next generation to adopt sustainability in their lives.

- Have a commitment to meaningful education around the SDGs across the university, relevant and applicable to all students
- Have dedicated courses (full degrees, or electives) that address sustainability and the SDGs
- Have dedicated outreach educational activities for the wider community, which could include alumni, local residents, displaced people.



# Evidence questions and numeric questions

## Declaration

Declare your  
commitment and  
achievements

## Evaluation

Have your evidence  
externally validated

## Publication

Show the world what  
you do and hold  
yourself to public  
scrutiny

# Top 10



Rank	Name	Country
1	Queen's University	Canada
2	Oklahoma State University	United States
3	Lincoln University	New Zealand
4	University of Alberta	Canada
5	La Trobe University	Australia
6	University of Indonesia	Indonesia
=7	National Taiwan University (NTU)	Taiwan
=7	Michigan State University	United States
9	Kyungpook National University	South Korea
10	Penn State (Main campus)	United States

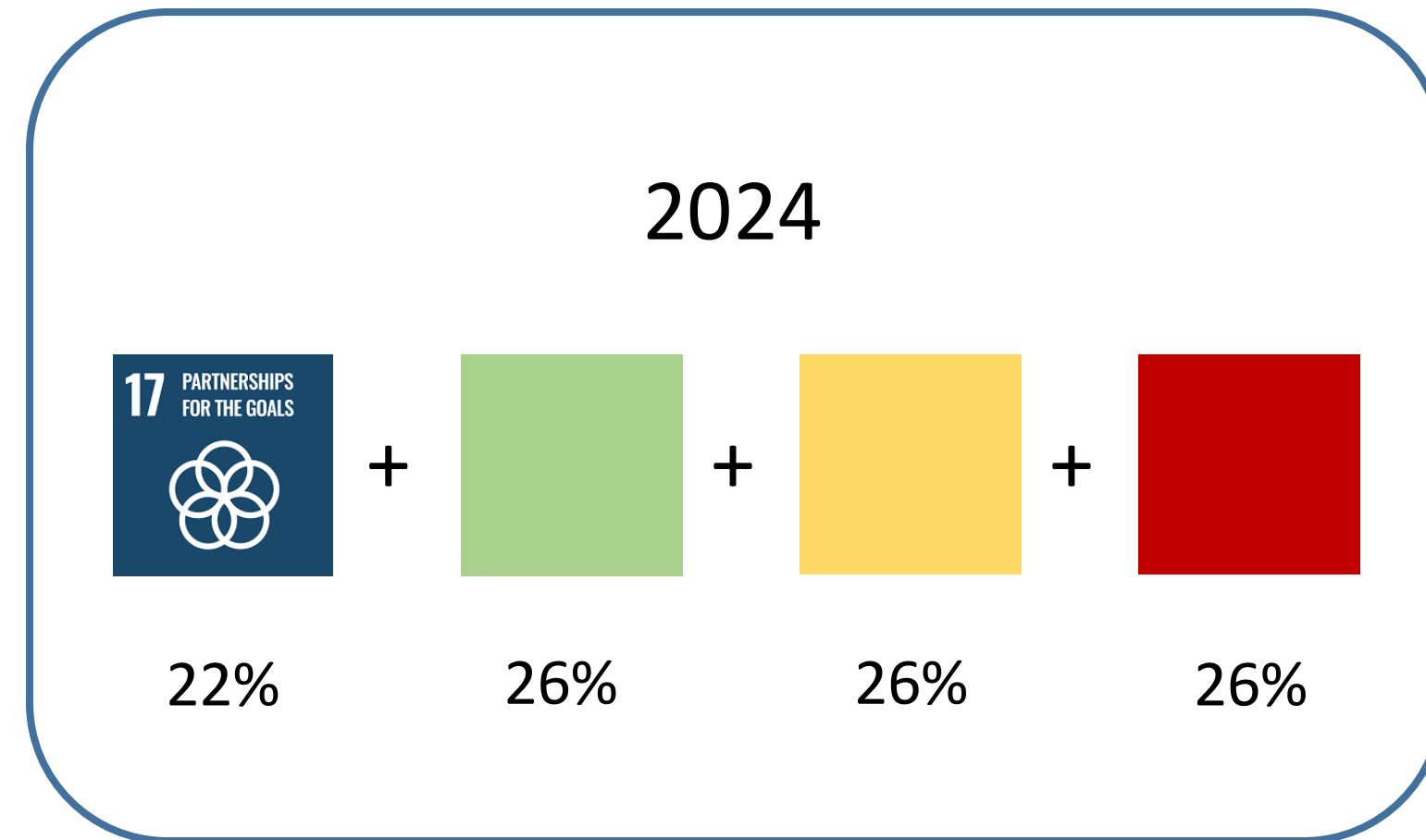


# Top 10



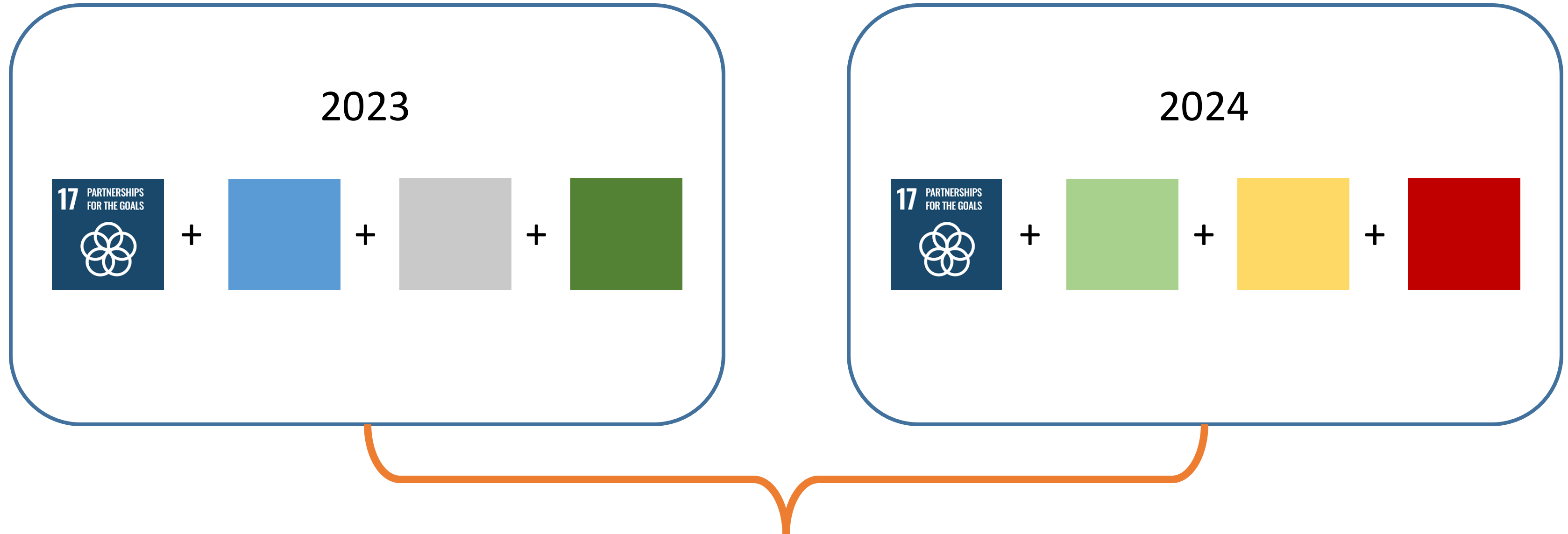
Rank	Name	Country
1	Universiti Sains Malaysia	Malaysia
2	Western University	Canada
=3	University of Neuchâtel	Switzerland
=3	Queen's University	Canada
5	Catholic University of Portugal	Portugal
6	Yonsei University (Seoul campus)	South Korea
7	University of Auckland	New Zealand
8	University of Leicester	UK
9	Durham University	UK
10	Université de Montréal	Canada

# Calculating an annual score





# Overall score



# Overall ranking

Provides a truly international understanding of excellence

Flexibly represents your strengths

Recognised across the world

Rank	Name	Best scores by rank				Overall
1	Western Sydney University 📍 Australia	5 79.7	15 96.6	12 93.3	17 98.5	99.7
=2	University of Tasmania 📍 Australia	13 92.7	15 96.8	14 93.1	17 96.8	98.5
5	RMIT University 📍 Australia	10 92.8	6 87.8	8 85.1	17 97.1	97.7
7	UNSW Sydney 📍 Australia <a href="#">Explore</a>	6 91.2	13 92.1	15 93.0	17 93.7	97.2
11	Yonsei University (Seoul campus) 📍 South Korea	9 100.0	8 88.1	16 89.7	17 84.8 - 90.0	96.0
=13	University of Auckland 📍 New Zealand	15 95.3	16 89.1	12 88.1	17 92.5	95.2
=13	University of Technology Sydney 📍 Australia	12 91.3	6 89.1	8 80.7	17 99.6	95.2
18	Universiti Sains Malaysia 📍 Malaysia	16 90.9	2 80.3	6 81.3	17 97.4	95.0
=19	Mahidol University 📍 Thailand	3 94.5	5 71.5	9 77.0 - 90.2	17 98.3	94.9

# Why do universities participate?



Times Higher Education  
**Impact Rankings**



# Visibility

## ITS in THE Impact Rankings 2024

ITS Achievements in THE Impact Rankings 2024

**Indonesia Rank**  **World Rank** 

**=5** **201-300**

Best scores by rank

 69.3-73.8	 73-87.2
 77-90.2	 75.4-80

AMRITA RANKED AMONG TOP 100 IN THE WORLD | 1<sup>ST</sup> IN INDIA

AMRITA VISHWA VIDYAPEETHAM

THE IMPACT RANKINGS 2024 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

amrita.edu/impact

 3 <sup>rd</sup> QUALITY EDUCATION	 7 <sup>th</sup> GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING	 22 <sup>nd</sup> GENDER EQUALITY	 62 <sup>th</sup> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	 87 <sup>th</sup> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	 87 <sup>th</sup> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	 301-400 PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS
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### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# University Impact Rankings 2024: The world's top universities for delivering the Sustainable Development Goals

Jun 12, 2024





# Benchmarking

## Sustainable Development Goals Breakdowns

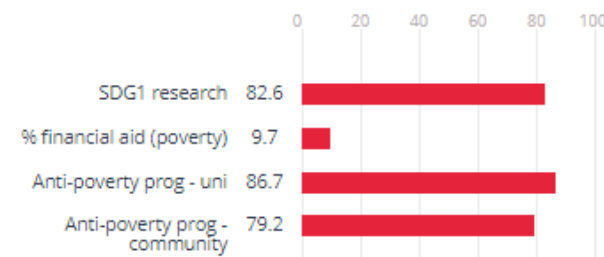
Info [List Icon] [Grid Icon]

1

### NO POVERTY

SCORE **63.1** RANK **101-200** out of 1093 institutions

[Details](#)



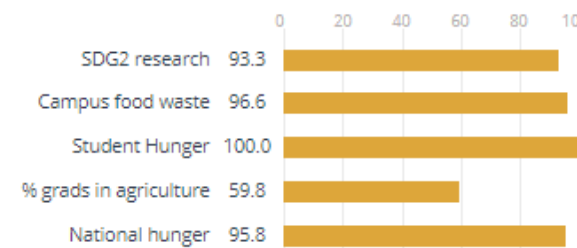
2

### ZERO HUNGER

QUALIFYING SDG - 26% OF OVERALL

SCORE **89.1** RANK **4** out of 803 institutions

[Details](#)

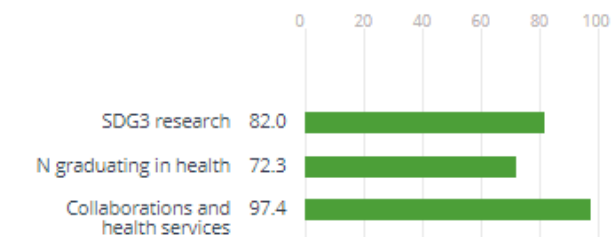


3

### GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

SCORE **84.6** RANK **=48** out of 1498 institutions

[Details](#)

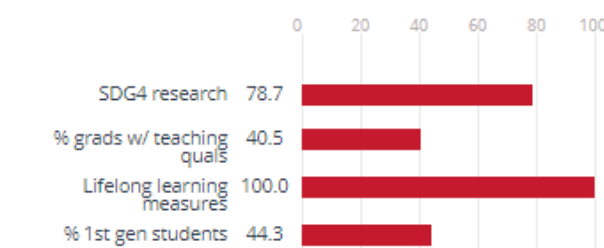


4

### QUALITY EDUCATION

SCORE **67.9** RANK **201-300** out of 1681 institutions

[Details](#)

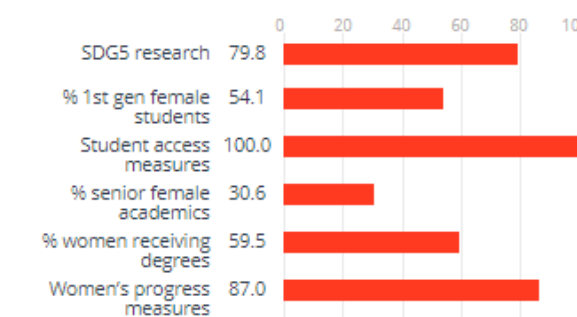


5

### GENDER EQUALITY

SCORE **70.1** RANK **=69** out of 1361 institutions

[Details](#)

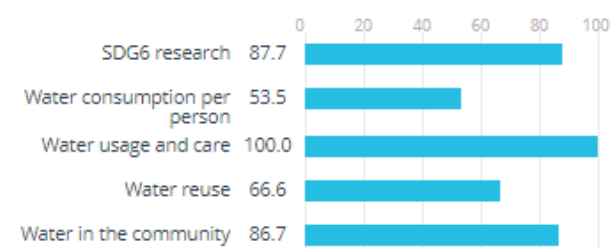


6

### CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

SCORE **81.3** RANK **=39** out of 867 institutions

[Details](#)

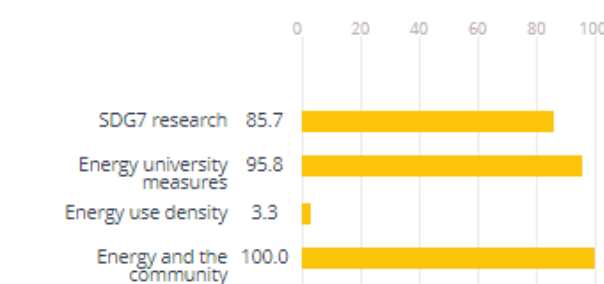


7

### AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

SCORE **69.0** RANK **101-200** out of 987 institutions

[Details](#)



8

### DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

SCORE **59.3** RANK **401-600** out of 1149 institutions

[Details](#)

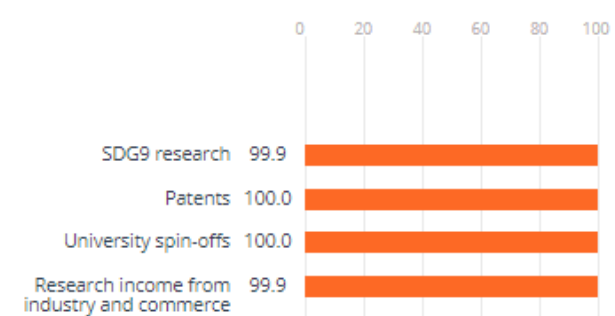


9

### INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

QUALIFYING SDG - 26% OF OVERALL  
SCORE **99.9** RANK **=9** out of 1018 institutions

[Details](#)



# Benchmarking

## THE Impact Rankings 2024 ▼

[Download](#)

### OVERALL SCORE

**97.4** out of 100

### OVERALL RANK

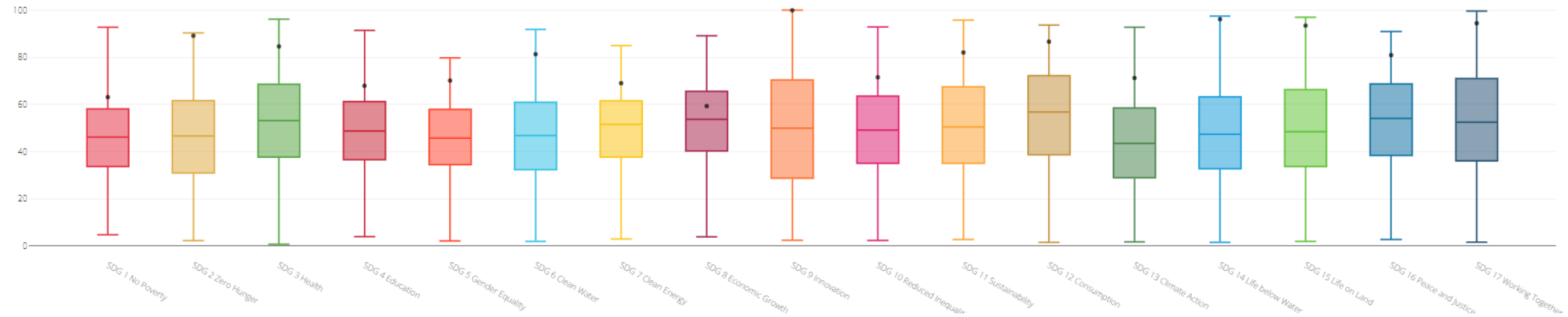
**6** out of 1963 institutions

### SDG PARTICIPATED

**17** out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals

### SDG SCORES

[List](#) [Grid](#)



## Sustainable Development Goals

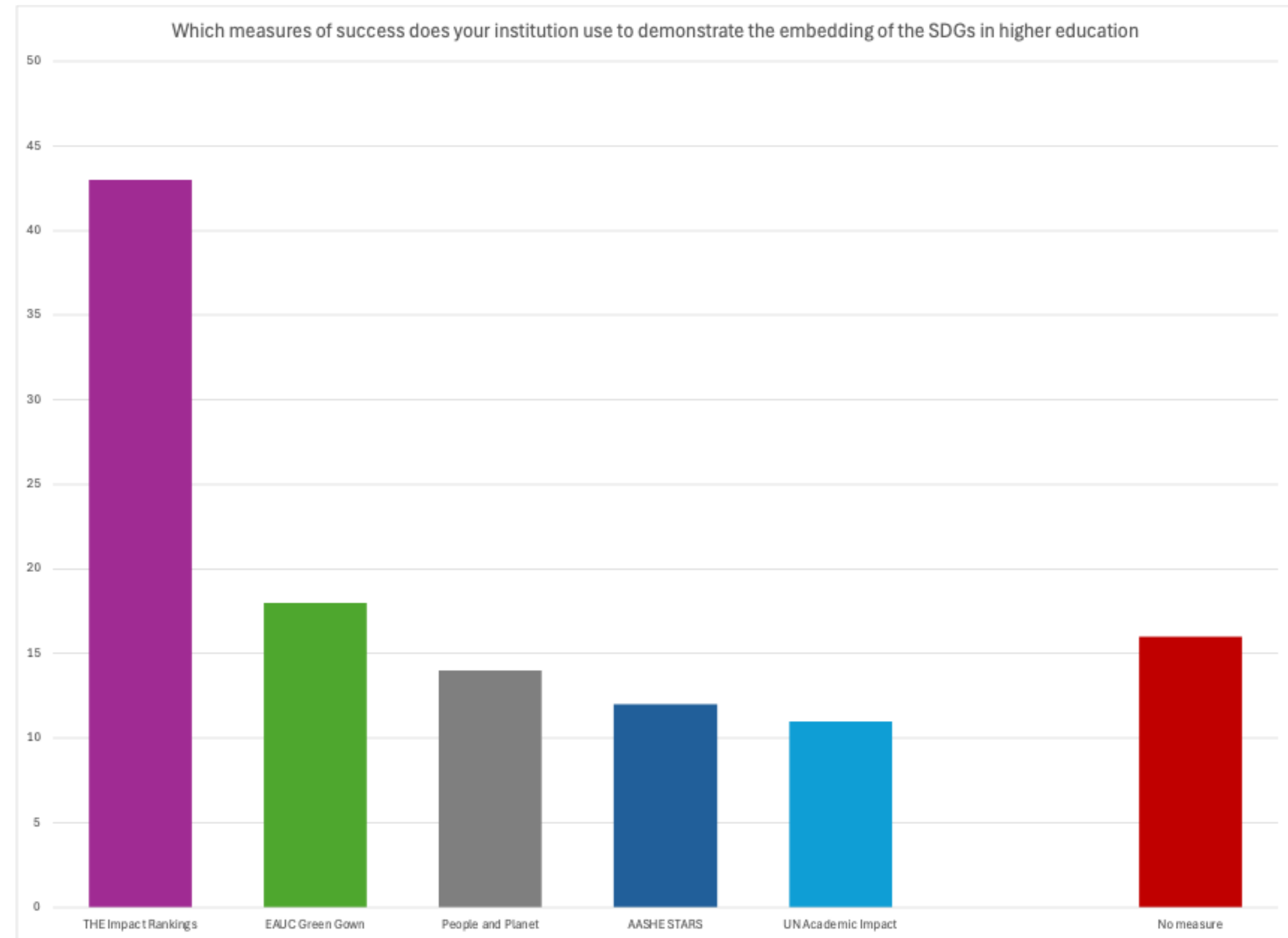


# Comparison to other systems

THE's Impact Rankings is the most popular measure of success for demonstrating SDG progress

Based on a survey of European universities

Filho, W.L., Sierra, J., Price, E. *et al.* The role of universities in accelerating the sustainable development goals in Europe. *Sci Rep* **14**, 15464 (2024).  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-65820-9>



# Case studies



Times Higher Education  
**Impact Rankings**



# RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences



# RCSI



**2024 Ranked 5<sup>th</sup>  
SDG 3**

**The benefits of taking part: creating a benchmark, attracting talent, making an impact**

“The challenge is for us now to demonstrate our impact. That’s why the Impact Rankings are so important. It is a very useful benchmark and framework for us to measure ourselves against.”

“There is no doubt that our focus on innovation, our focus on making an impact, is allowing us to attract top international talent to Ireland and that benefits the institution.”

“It is important that [students] see our institution is serious about making an impact on society and the planet through the template of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

**Cathal Kelley, CEO and registrar**

# Lingnan University

Ammy Chan, Head of Lingnan University's Institutional Research and Branding Office, explains how Lingnan's leadership is placing a strategic priority on championing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and improving the university's performance in THE's Impact Rankings.

THE's Impact Rankings are important to Lingnan University as they play a pivotal role in driving the university's student and staff recruitment efforts, helping to attract more research funding and enhancing people's trust and perception of the university.

Ammy Chan explains how the university's ranking position is one of the main considerations for the university's applicants, and one of the key factors to secure funding from the government and research organisations. Lingnan University has seen a steady improvement year-on-year on their Impact Ranking position since 2020.

## Lingnan engaged THE to:



Understand the Impact Rankings data to analyse strengths and opportunities for improvement

Analyse Lingnan's bibliometrics to identify potential SDGs to focus on

Advise on ways to improve communication and evidencing of Lingnan's SDG activities

Drive data-informed strategic guidance

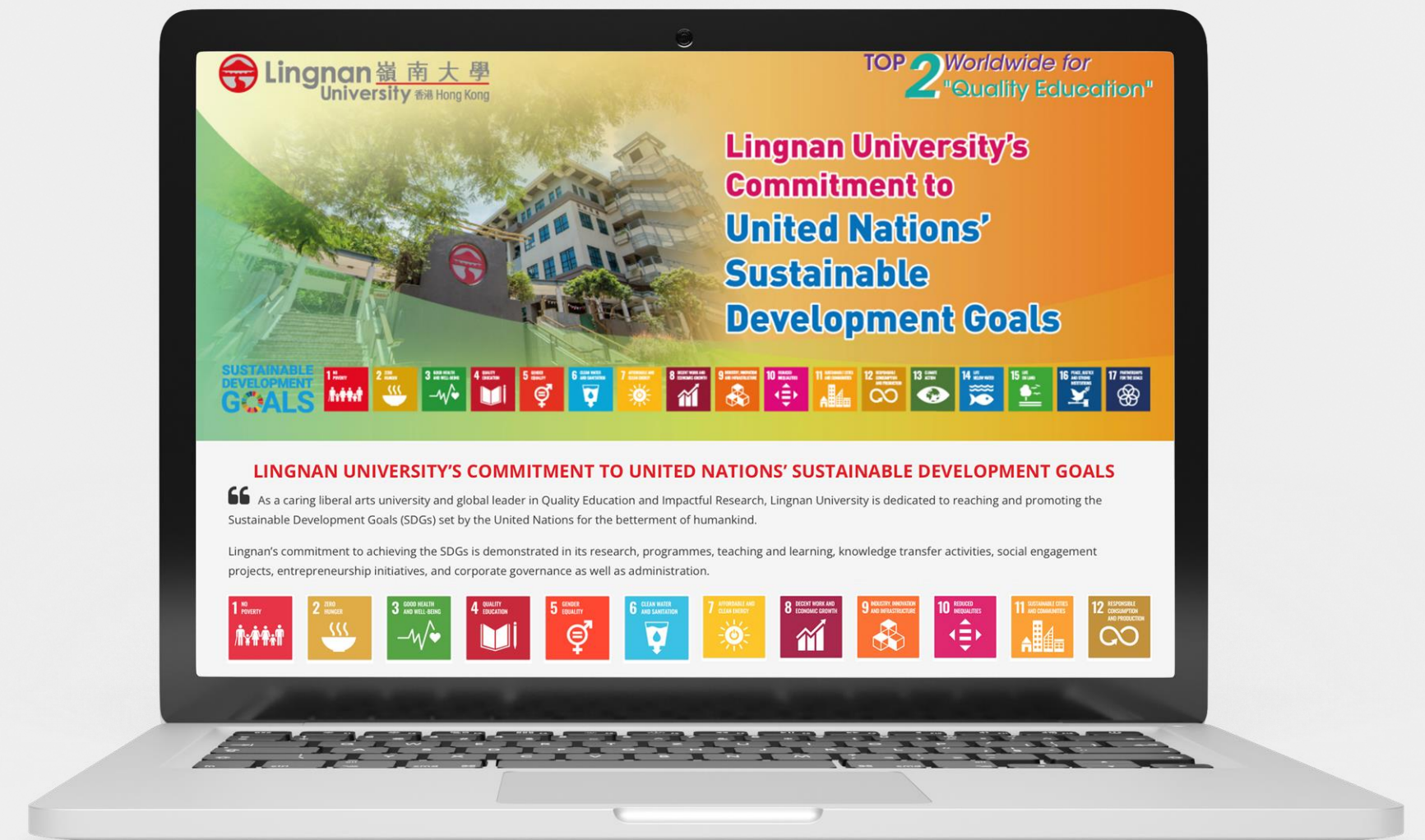
Support with international awareness, reputation management and partnership building

# Lingnan University

## THE Impact Rankings

One of the recommendations made by THE's team was to set up a [website](#) with case studies to better communicate Lingnan University's SDGs contribution to its stakeholders and global audience, which the university has now published.

This offers Lingnan University a platform to communicate its commitment to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, engage with society locally and farther afield, as well as an important hub of resources that the university can refer to as part of its submission to THE's Impact Rankings.





# Ashesi University, Ghana

Ashesi University is a non-profit, multidisciplinary institute with a mission to propel an African renaissance by educating next-generation ethical, entrepreneurial leaders and raising the bar for higher education in Africa.

## The benefits of taking part: global accreditation, creating a path, telling your story

“Ranking is pretty much the equivalent of global accreditation in its own form. It allows you to be comparable to other universities who have no idea what the 1,600 universities on the African continent are capable of.”

“We have a saying in Ghana: ‘It is the person walking behind you who knows that the path you’re trying to make is either crooked or straight.’ Ranking gives you a number in the queue.”

“Rankings give you the opportunity to tell your story the way you want to tell your story, and see where you fall.”

**Angela Owusu-Ansah, provost**



**2024 Ranked 101-200**  
**SDG 1**



# Thailand's Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation

Linked to the national higher education 'Reinventing Universities' initiative in Thailand, MHESI created five strategic focused groups of universities and wanted THE specifically to measure the contribution of Group 3 Area based and community universities towards the UN SDGs, as a central part of their development strategy.

The aims of Phase 1 were to:

- Evaluate the levels of research, teaching, outreach, and stewardship for each university linked to the SDGs.
- Understand the universities' future strategies for expanding their SDG-related activities.
- Link their activities to the regional economic development priorities, and where possible present recommendations on additional areas of development.
- Quantify the level of government support universities needed to improve the impact of their current SDG-related activities.



# Phase 1

THE's consultancy and methodology is supporting the Ministry's strategic objectives by allowing universities to assess and benchmark themselves against other universities worldwide that are using the same criteria.

Learning more about themselves is helping Thai universities to identify the specific actions and policies they can undertake to improve going forward and move up in the rankings - and in doing so, contribute to the Thai Government's development and economic plan.

In 2024, 77 Thai universities were listed in THE's Impact Ranking, up from 18 in 2020. Furthermore, 4 Thai universities featured in the top 100.

*Prof Rattachat Mongkolnavin,  
Director of Higher Education Development  
and Promotion at MHESI, explains how the Ministry is :*

**“trying to set up a culture of self-evaluation by looking at each university's own potential and performance”**

*and how THE has provided a form of assessment to achieve that:*

**“We've based the assessment of the first group of Thai universities on the world class model and what THE is doing (...) and we are in conversations with THE about how to develop all other assessments for the purpose of the Reinventing Universities initiative”.**



# Phase 2

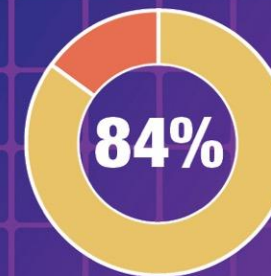
The second phase of the consultancy consisted of a national survey among Thai final-year students to monitor outcomes from their undergraduate journey thanks to Thai universities' education on sustainable development.

The survey was designed to support the needs identified in Phase 1, showing a need to measure student outcomes linked to sustainability.

THE designed and conducted the survey, which quantified and benchmarked universities across Thailand measuring the sustainability outcomes of their undergraduate programmes.

The data is being used by MHESI and Thai universities to make informed decisions about their sustainability curriculum and assess the effectiveness of Thailand's national strategy to promote the SDGs.

## Results of Thailand Student Sustainability Survey 2023



84% OF STUDENTS AGREED THAT THEIR UNIVERSITY EDUCATION has equipped them with the necessary foundation to live their lives in a sustainable manner.

**4,544 RESPONDENTS**  
94 OUT OF 158 UNIVERSITIES PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

**1 in 3**  
STUDENTS FELT THAT volunteering and community service is the most beneficial activity for furthering their understanding of sustainability.



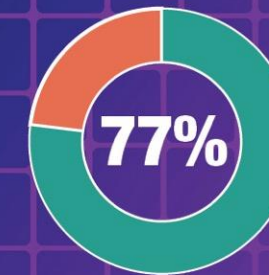
**4 IN 5 STUDENTS** AGREED THAT THEY CHOSE TO LIVE SUSTAINABLY EVEN IF THE IMPACT MAY NOT BE VISIBLE.

SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES ARE KEY IN DEVELOPING 21ST CENTURY skills in students, particularly in soft skills like collaboration and communication.



**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY** IS A TOP SKILL DEVELOPED BY STUDENTS (59%) AS A RESULT OF SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

## Results of Thailand Student Sustainability Survey 2023



**77% OF THAI STUDENTS** ARE CONFIDENT IN THEIR EMPLOYABILITY POST-GRADUATION.

STUDENTS (86%) WHO UNDERWENT THE UNIVERSITY 2 TAMBON (U2T) PROGRAMME WERE MORE CONFIDENT IN THEIR EMPLOYABILITY AS COMPARED TO THEIR PEERS.



**70% OF STUDENTS** EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SEEKING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED INDUSTRIES.

**82% OF STUDENTS**

WERE KEEN TO EXPLORE ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED FIELDS.



**83% OF STUDENTS** HAVE OBTAINED SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED EXPERIENCE THROUGH THEIR WORK PLACEMENTS AND/OR INTERNSHIPS.

# Tecnológico de Monterrey



**2024 Ranked  
=67<sup>th</sup> Overall**

Tecnológico de Monterrey is a private university system founded in 1943 in Monterrey, México.

## **The benefits of taking part: building a community, attracting students, creating structure**

“The way I view the rankings is that it should be a growing and learning experience, so the feedback that we get for each area is highly relevant. It’s a community of learning and we are very excited to be part of that.”

“The rankings help us to convey a powerful message to attract socially committed students, but at the same time allows us to review our own internal processes and practices to see how we can be a more diverse and inclusive university.”

“We’re a highly dispersed university with a large student body...so just collating the information was a challenge. Participating in the rankings helped give us a structure and a database in terms of how to bring all this together.”

**Juan Pablo Murra, rector of undergraduate and graduate programmes**



# Participation in 2025

We want your institution in the Rankings in 2025!

Data collection dates :

- Opens on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2024 and closes on 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2024

Resources to support participation

- Guidance based on best practice
- Sessions at World Academic Summit in Manchester

Please reach out to us on [impact@timeshighereducation.com](mailto:impact@timeshighereducation.com)



# 2024/25 Releases



**World  
University  
Rankings**



Times Higher Education  
**Impact Rankings**

