Action plan

Savonia University of Applied Sciences

Content

1 Introduction

Rebuilding business life after the corona crisis is taking Finland towards a digital, carbon-neutral and climate-resistant economy. This is based on know-how and RDI activities. The work requires a higher understanding of responsibility than before. Universities of applied sciences have a key role in raising Finns' carbon neural competence level and in the continuous renewal of sustainable development competence in the future working life needs.

Savonia's responsibility can be seen in the fact that we operate in an ecologically, socially, information security and financially sustainable manner. The basis of financial responsibility is taking care of one's own profitability and competitiveness, in which case Savonia has the conditions to also take care of social and environmental responsibility. Ecological responsibility is looked at holistically, taking into account the environmental effects throughout the entire life cycle. Social responsibility refers to all the effects that Savonia's operations have on students, staff and stakeholders of the university of applied sciences.

There are 24 universities of applied sciences in Finland with 145,000 students. All Finnish universities of applied sciences are committed to the sustainable development and responsibility program they have jointly built. Savonia University of Applied Sciences is committed to following the program of sustainable development and responsibility of universities of applied sciences, which is based on the sustainable development goals approved by the UN in 2015. According to the program, Savonia's goal is to be a sustainable, responsible and carbon-neutral university of applied sciences by 2030. In order to achieve this, Savonia undertakes to systematically implement various measures to reduce emissions, monitor the development of its carbon footprint and jointly search for other ways to achieve carbon neutrality.

- Producing know-how and experts is our way of supporting the sustainable and responsible development of society and working and business life.
- With our expertise, we support and challenge working and business life, universities and universities of applied sciences, municipalities, personnel and students to build a more sustainable future.
- Responsibility means that we take into account the direct and indirect effects on the surrounding society in all our activities.
- Savonia will be carbon neutral by 2030.

The implementation of the program means concrete changes to the teaching, working life cooperation and innovation activities of universities of applied sciences.

- Education: Savonia trains experts who promote sustainable development and combat the negative effects of climate change in society.
- RDI activities: Savonia produces solutions to sustainability challenges, promote sustainable development and reduce the effects of climate change.
- Management and staff competence: Savonia acts as economically, ecologically, culturally and socially responsible employer.

Through these choices, Savonia is supporting the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030), adaptation to climate change (Paris 2015 climate agreement with its implementation agreements) and disaster risk reduction (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030).
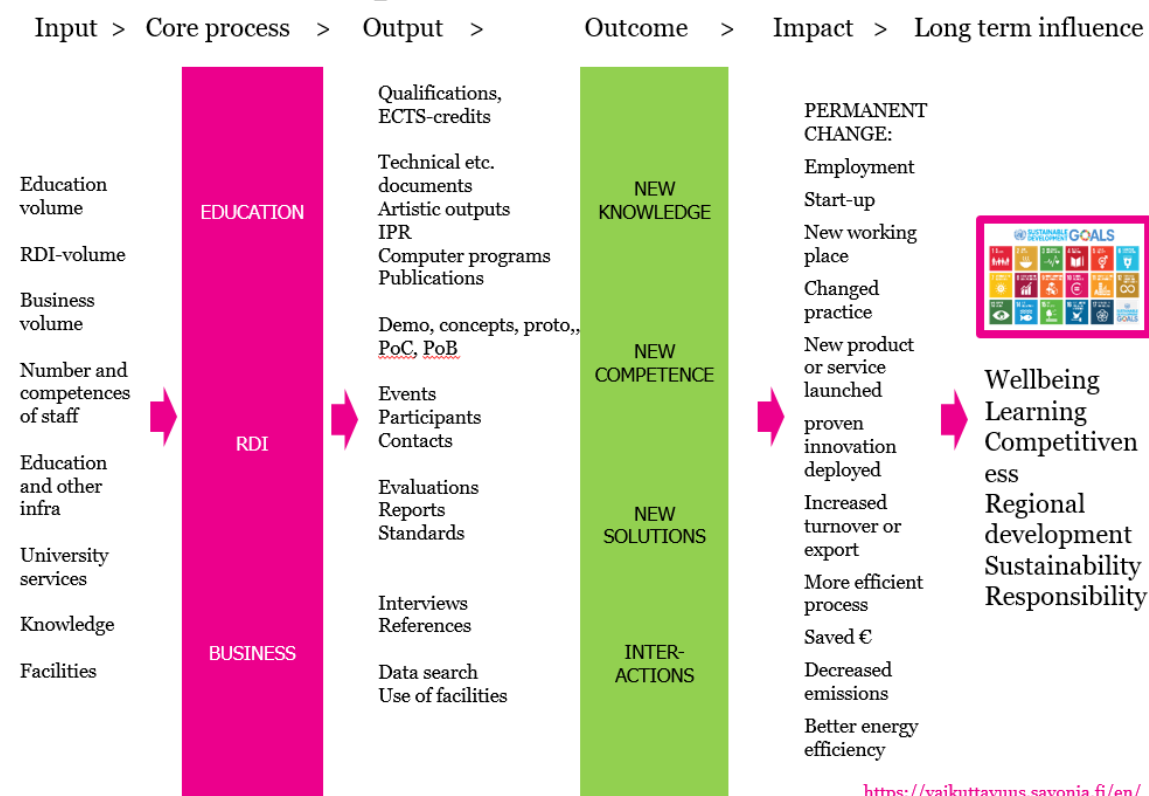
2 The improtance of impact

In the strategy period 2017-2020, the board of directors of Savonia University of Applied Sciences set the vision of impact, a permanent positive impact on the surrounding society.

In order to analyse the concept of impact and make it concrete, an effectiveness framework has been built, which is based on the identification of cause-and-effect relationships. Savonia invests in its Core Tasks (training, RDI activities and business operations), they produce a number of different Deliverables. The result is new knowledge, new know-how, new solutions and interaction. The effects are visible as permanent changes, such as employment, a started company, a launched innovation, increased turnover or, for example, reduced emissions. Impact is created as well-being, learning, competitiveness or, for example, sustainable regional development.

The diagram below shows Savonia's impact framework.

Savonia Impact Framework – how to measure?

Input > Core process > Output > Outcome > Impact > Long term influence

Input	Core process	Output	Outcome	Impact	Long term influence
Education volume RDI-volume Business volume Number and competences of staff Education and other infra University services Knowledge Facilities	EDUCATION RDI BUSINESS	Qualifications, ECTS-credits Technical etc. documents Artistic outputs IPR Computer programs Publications Demo, concepts, proto,, PoC, PoB Events Participants Contacts Evaluations Reports Standards Interviews References Data search Use of facilities	NEW KNOWLEDGE NEW COMPETENCE NEW SOLUTIONS INTER-ACTIONS	PERMANENT CHANGE: Employment Start-up New working place Changed practice New product or service launched proven innovation deployed Increased turnover or export More efficient process Saved € Decreased emissions Better energy efficiency	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS Wellbeing Learning Competitiveness Regional development Sustainability Responsibility

https://vaikuttavuus.savonia.fi/en/

The perspective of human security connects Savonia's diversity with the UN's sustainable development goals, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The challenges are related to water, food, energy, health and the bio- and circular economy, as well as technology transfer, industrial implementation and societal change (transformational adaptation).

3 Savonia's goal is to be sustainable, responsible and carbon neutral

Savonia's goal is to be sustainable, responsible and carbon neutral university of applied sciences by 2030. In order to achieve this, Savonia undertakes to implement systematically different measures to reduce emissions, to monitor the development of their carbon footprint and to look for other ways to achieve carbon neutrality together. Responsibility means that we take into account the direct and indirect effects on the surrounding society in all our activities, and our operating culture is open and transparent. Savonia influences the social debate by producing new information in an open and accessible manner with the help of open publications, open data and open learning materials.

In accordance with its strategy, by 2030, Savonia will be a leading European player in training, research and development related to the Human Security theme.

4 Background in strategy

Responsibility is a strategic value for Savonia.

The strategy is based on a global framework in which human security combines different types of global challenges and looks at people and their wellbeing rather than structures.

The challenges relate to food, water, health, energy and bio economy.
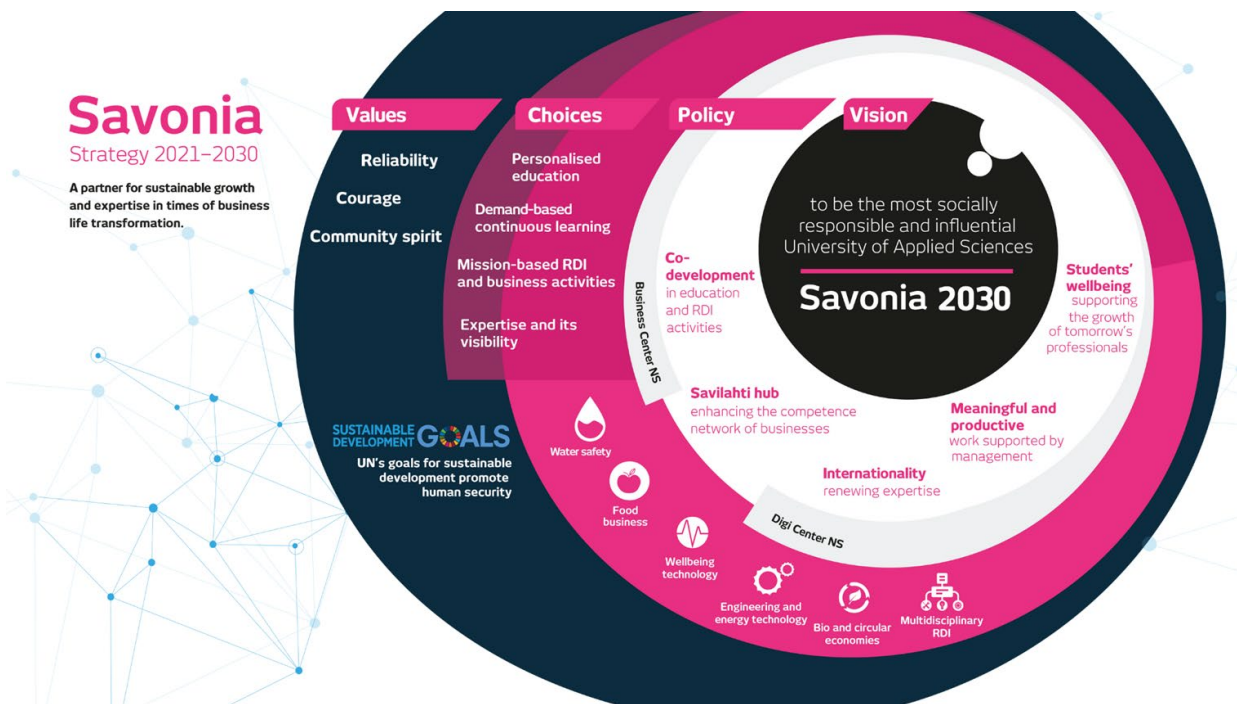
Producing know-how and experts is our way of supporting the sustainable and responsible development of society and working and business life. We train experts who promote sustainable development and combat the negative effects of climate change in society. With our expertise, we support and challenge working and business life, universities, municipalities, personnel and students to build a more sustainable future.

A safe study environment is created for students, both physically and psychologically. Starting with student selection, our operations are open, fair and equal, following good and information-secure governance practices. Services are offered to students in an accessible way and with a human perspective in mind.

4.1. Responsibility and sustainable development in education

Experts who graduate from Savonia know how to act responsibly and take into account the requirements of sustainable development in the development of their own work, work community and society. Competence related to responsibility and sustainable development will be described at the degree level based on competence by the end of the academic year 2022-2023.

Competence descriptions are maintained as part of the fraud plan process. We are actively moving towards development-promoting degrees and continuous learning training. Education that promotes sustainable development is made part of Savonia's operating culture and is communicated clearly and openly to applicants, students and various stakeholders.

The impacts of the measures is measured and evaluated regularly according to ARENE's (Rectors Conference of Finalnd) common framework. In 2024, Savonia will be at an advanced and partly strategic level. Then Savonia's education is recognized as promoting sustainable development and it is part of Savonia's operating culture, values and attitudes and especially work with students.

Savonia also supports work promoting sustainable development in the activities of its partners and encourages publicly for the promotion of sustainable development in society. The best deal with responsibility and sustainable development theses are awarded annually.

4.2. Responsibility and sustainable development in RDI

Savonia's RDI areas of strength, water safety, food business, machine and energy industry, bio and circular economy, wellness technology and multidisciplinary RDI, are at the heart of the change.

The UN sustainable development (SDG), human security and regional development goals and the missions derived from them have been taken into account in the team agreements of the areas of strength (2021) in accordance with the operational management system.

The goals and missions will be updated for the final years of the 2022 strategy. Project activities in areas of strength produce responsible impact to society by developing, as a business partner, the keys to the solution and competitiveness for business opportunities for sustainable growth. We research themes and produce know-how and results that benefit society. We produce solutions to sustainability challenges, promote sustainable development and prepare for the effects of climate change and nature loss.

Climate change has accelerated the breakdown of livelihoods. Finland strives to be the leading country in climate solutions. Curbing climate change creates business opportunities that can be promoted with high expertise and RDI activities. Reporting and communicating the responsibility of RDI activities is an important part of Savonia's social effectiveness. We bring the results of our work and their effects to public discussion.

We evaluate activities according to ARENE's impact framework

4.3. Internationality renews competence

Social and cultural responsibility is taken into account in Savonia's international goals. Internationality and multicultural competence increase equality. In international cooperation, ecologically sustainable and responsible activities are promoted and awareness of mobility measures is increased about the importance of actions that reduce the environmental footprint.

In connection with this, the special support offered by the Erasmus+ program will be used to promote sustainable travel methods. In addition, the introduction of digital tools and learning methods in international cooperation is supported, and the Erasmus Without Paper method of operation is introduced.

Savonia is involved in the EU4DUAL European University alliance,

one of whose main goals is to find solutions to major global challenges. Savonia is responsible for leading the Grand Challenges work package and coordinating activities related to the Green Economy challenge. The alliance also develops mobility measures that take sustainable development into account.

4.4. Personnel

Financial responsibility is implemented with a sustainable personnel policy. It means identifying and monitoring the factors affecting work productivity. As a key measure, the development of productivity metrics and the implementation of personnel management development activities that improve productivity.

Responsibility is part of the personnel's competence and it is integrated as part of the management of abilities and competence.

- Competence goals are defined at the team and employee level:
- Goals and criteria can be defined for different competence levels and by encouraging the development of competence by introducing responsibility competence marks.
- Competence development is agreed upon in team and employee development discussions and integrated into team contracts
- Internal training is organized for personnel to strengthen sustainable development skills

The goal is the recognition and visibility of sustainable development as part of Savonia's Great Place to Work operating culture, values, management, attitudes and social effectiveness.

- Responsibility is included in Savonia's orientation program
- Personnel are encouraged to act in accordance with the principles of sustainable development outlined by Savonia, for example by including responsibility/sustainable development as part of the reward criteria
- Let's take responsibility more strongly into account in the practices guiding recruitment and in the marketing of the employer image

Promoting the strategic goals of responsibility and implementation through leadership:

- Systematization as part of operational management
- Drawing up instructions
- Organization at different levels of the work community

The impact of the measures is measured and evaluated regularly according to the common framework of ARENE.

- Ecological responsibility is promoted, among other things with the following methods:
- Utilizing multi-location work in accordance with the agreed principles
- By encouraging ecological travel in accordance with the guidelines for sustainable travel and by offering benefits that support business travel.
- Ecological responsibility means strengthening digitization and automation Inn and utilizing flexible work methods.
- In addition, the goal is to reduce the ecological footprint at work

4.5. Management and leadership to increase the significance of work and improve results

The basis of financial responsibility is taking care of one's own profitability and competitiveness, in which case Savonia has the prerequisites to also take care of responsibilities related to sustainable development.

Reducing the total amount of space, optimizing the use of space and energy saving measures will significantly reduce the environmental load caused by Savonia's operations.

- Savonia's action plan for energy saving contains ten measures aimed at saving more than 1000 mwh of electricity annually.
- The indoor temperatures of the properties used by Savonia are reduced by one degree, and the resulting energy savings are estimated to be 5%.
- In terms of the carbon neutrality goal, the essential choice is responsible travel, which involves choosing a travel destination, the method of travel to the travel destination and preferring remote participation opportunities.
- Electric car purchases and measures aimed at promoting bicycle riding are also responsible choices

4.6. Taking into account sustainable development in campuses

Campuses have easily accessible sorting points separately for plastic, metal, paper, cardboard and bio-waste, as well as glass. In addition, there are separate containers for pawned bottles and cans.

The use of sorting bins is guided by clear instructions so that sorting is easy.

Programming the campus computers to turn off during the night and renewing the Light Automation so that the premises are litelectricity-saving LED lights and user-controlled motion detection technology.

The acquisition and use of the library's material is based on circular economy principles. The library actively highlights new information related to the themes of sustainable development. The library plays an essential role in maintaining social and cultural sustainability.

Savonia's campuses are open and accessible to everyone.

The activities support equality and community.

4.7. Leave no one behind

Sustainable development goals are based on the idea that no one is left behind. This principle is based on indivisible and universal human rights. The basic idea is that no one is left behind in development – that is, in the implementation of goals, special attention must be paid to people or groups of people who are often left aside or forgotten. By following this principle, we can be sure of our goals of genuine success, instead of interpreting global or national averages in the best light, losing touch with the real world.

The "no one is left behind" principle is an excellent guideline that by monitoring, we ensure that the development we aim for is desirable from everyone's point of view and that no one is discriminated against. Basically, in principle, it is about giving all people the opportunity to be heard, influence their own lives and live as a valued member of the community.

4.8. New rules on corporate sustainability reporting: The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) is the new EU legislation requiring all large companies and listed SMEs, to publish regular reports on their environmental and social impact activities. It helps investors, consumers, policymakers, and other stakeholders evaluate large companies' non-financial performance. The purpose of the CSRD is to improve transparency and accountability around corporate ESG performance. ESG reporting is the disclosure of environmental, social and corporate governance data.

CSRD is a law that prescribes requirements for organizations to report sustainability disclosures across several topics pertaining to environmental and social issues and improve non-financial reporting. Longer term, the intended outcomes of CSRD are to contribute to Europe's 2050 climate-neutrality target, and European Green Deal objectives.

Savonia will start reporting according to the new directive in 2024.

5 Responsibility program and action plan work – collecting and analyzing data – whats coming next?

We have collected and anlayzed data from many different sources. The responsibility surveys were sent to students (15998 e-mail addresses / 174 answers) and Savonia Green Transition Group (29 e-mail addresses/ 10 answers) in May 2023 have been collected analyzed in autumn 2023. Main results of the survey to students and green transition group increase to extend sustainable knowledge. The survey confirmed that has been able to highlight relevant perspectives that have been chosen to action plan. We have also organized Prospective Rapid Impact Assessment (PRIA) method workshop to Savonia´s green transition group. The workshop followed by two follow up discussion session to get concrete for significant results. Work continues by planning and putting into practice and to find new project ideas.

Savonia´s 2025-2028 strategy is currently being prepared. Listening to personnel and stakeholders has been central to the strategy process. From the point of view of the Action Plan, the indicators may change with the new strategy. Savonia's new strategy during the strategy period emphasises internationality, sustainability, influence and comprehensive security. Central mission includes the development of degree programmes (including international degrees), RDI activities as well as continuous learning. Regional development and work-oriented activities are a central element in all operations.

6 Table/goal for 2030

Table 1. SDG indicators data and action plan goal for 2030

		Goal for 2030
2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture		
Total numbers of agriculture's students completed sustainability studies. Total number of agriculture's RDI project aim at reducing agricultural emissions	Unavailable	All
Food waste kilos per Savonias member	year 2018–2020 65 kg	Cut to half
3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages		
Students and staff taking part into Sykettä sport services	2021-2022 806 (student: 756 staff: 50)	Increase number of participants
GPTW index	year 2023 85 %	Measurement methodology is changing
4 Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning		
Total number of students enrolled	year 2023 (19.4.2023) 7329	The goal is defined (Strategy process is ongoing)
Total number of students graduating	year 2022 1319 (bachelor: 1126, master: 193)	The goal is defined (Strategy process is ongoing)
The % of students who complete their degree in time corresponding to the scope of the degree out of all those who completed their degree	Year 2022 74,7 %	The goal is defined (Strategy process is ongoing)
Number of graduates who start or continue as entrepreneurs after one year of graduating	year 2021 45	The goal is defined (Strategy process is ongoing)

Number of fields of education which have adopted the value proposition of sustainable development	Unavailable	Goal achieved; all fields have adapted
Number of graduating students who are in working life after one year of graduating.	year 2021 1100	The goal is defined (Strategy process is ongoing)
Number of online students	year 2023 (19.4.2023) 2855 (bachelor: 1940, master: 915)	The goal is defined (Strategy process is ongoing)
9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation		
Total number of publications related to SDGs	No direct link to SDG´s #responsibility is used in Institution´s publications Year 2022/ 8 Year 2023/ 44	The goal is defined
Total number of RDI-projects related to SDGs	Reportronic	All
Total number of training projects/programs related to sustainability	Unavailable	All
Customer satisfaction of participants joining projects/programs on sustainability	Unavailable	The goal is defined