

SUSTAINABLE.INNOVATIVE.DIGITAL.

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023



Umwelt-Campus
Birkenfeld

H O C H
S C H U L E
T R I E R



Dear reader,

the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld at Trier University of Applied Sciences is an outstanding national and international example of how climate-neutral action, research and teaching can be successfully implemented. With our motto „Sustainable, Innovative, Digital“, we not only want to develop solutions, but also be a role model for sustainable transformation.

Universities are key players in sustainable development. The state of Rhineland-Palatinate has recognised this and stipulated in the new Higher Education Act that universities are committed to the principles of sustainable development, promote the sustainable treatment of nature, the environment and people and strive for a conscious use of resources. In addition, they should actively participate in the implementation of the state's sustainability strategy.

The responsibility of universities for a sustainable transformation is also emphasised and supported at federal level. In my role as Vice President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), I am responsible for the following topics „Transfer, sustainability, equality and diversity“. These topics fit perfectly with the profile of the HRK and the strengths of Trier University of Applied Sciences. At the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld, we implement the Whole Institute Approach, which integrates sustainability holistically into teaching, research, operations, transfer and governance.

The most sustainable university in Germany is located in Rhineland-Palatinate – in the international GreenMetric Ranking 2022, the Umwelt-Campus achieved an outstanding 6th place worldwide out of 1050 universities and held 1st place nationally for the sixth year in a row. These successes motivate us to continuously develop further, as sustainability requires constant innovation and adaptation.

In this report, you will find out what we have achieved at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld over the past year and what new goals we have set ourselves. I am particularly pleased that the report was compiled as part of a student Master's project by Malika Arstan and Alina Clemens, who were actively supported by many teaching staff, researchers, students and employees. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the current sustainability report, please do not hesitate to contact our Sustainability Officer, Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling, whom I would also like to thank for his commitment.

Please enjoy the insights provided in this sustainability report – I hope that you will be able to transfer many of the ideas and projects already implemented at the Environmental Campus to your professional and private environment.

Kind regards,

Prof. Dr. Dorit Schumann

President of Trier University of Applied Sciences

HISTORY

In 1993, the state of Rhineland-Palatinate decided to establish the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld in the municipality of Hopstädten-Weiersbach as a new location for the then Rhineland-Palatinate University of Applied Sciences. This was also a structural policy decision, as the loss of military facilities hit the district of Birkenfeld hard. The buildings had previously been used as a reserve hospital for the US armed forces. In October 1996, the Environmental Campus started teaching with 550 students. Today, around 2000 students from over 90 countries study in 15 Bachelor's, 9 dual Bachelor's and 14 Master's degree programmes, supervised by 56 professors.

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld has been Germany's leading university in the GreenMetric ranking for years and is ranked 6th worldwide. Sustainability, internationality and applied research are key topics. In 2022, Trier University of Applied Sciences raised more than 16 million euros in third-party funding, making it the third most funded university in Rhineland-Palatinate. Researchers from Birkenfeld accounted for around 10 million euros of this. With its teaching and research, the Environmental Campus provides regional, national and global impetus and is an important factor for the region.

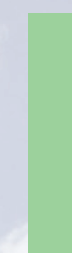
[More about the history](#)



NATIONALITIES ON CAMPUS 92



1248



63%



37%



721



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

526

DEPARTMENT

UW/UR
904



UP/UT
1065



PROFESSORS



46



82%



18%



10



141



49%



51%



145

EMPLOYEES



Environmental Campus Birkenfeld

No. 6 WORLDWIDE No. 1 IN GERMANY!

1. INFRASTRUCTURE



In this category, 1175 out of 1500 possible points were achieved, which represents an improvement of 150 points compared to the previous year.

2. ENERGY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION



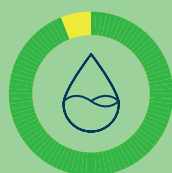
In the area of energy and climate protection, the Environmental Campus was able to increase its score by 25 points compared to the previous year and thus achieved 1975 out of a possible 2100 points.

3. WASTE MANAGEMENT



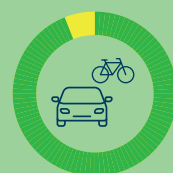
In this category, the Environmental Campus scored 1575 out of 1800 possible points.

4. WATER



In terms of water management, the Environmental Campus 950 of 1000 possible points.

5. MOBILITY

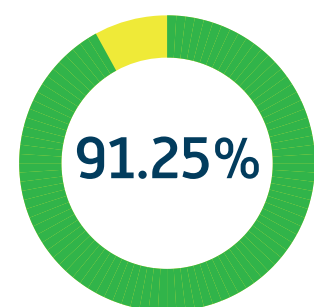


In mobility management, the campus achieved 1700 points, which is more than 90% of the possible points.

6. TEACHING AND RESEARCH



In the assessment category of teaching and research, the Environmental Campus again received over 90% of the achievable points.



Total points 2022:
9125 from a maximum of 10000



GOALS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORT

The targets for 2021 and their current fulfilment status are listed below. The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld publishes the achievement of targets and new targets in each sustainability report, together with brief explanations.

GOALS & MEASURES	DATE		STATUS & EXPLANATION
1. Promotion of biodiversity			
Planting new, flowering shrubs or trees in front of the new central building (ZN)	2022	✓	Will be integrated into the „Nature trail for sustainability“ project
Further development of biodiversity database	end of 2020	✓	In the summer semester 2020, the data collection app and the administration and documentation system were developed in student projects
2. Development of partnerships			
Cooperation agreement Saar-Hunsrück Nature Park	2022	✓	Cooperation agreement as part of the MINT region
Expansion of cooperation with the Hunsrück-Hochwald National Park	2021/2022	✓	Cooperation as part of the „MINT National Park Region Hunsrück-Hochwald plus“ project
3. Sustainability in procurement			
Maintaining the Fairtrade University award	2021	✓	Regular realisation of fairtrade activities
Replacing the vending machine	2022	⌚	In planning, installation 2023
4. Establishment of a circular economy strategy			
Optimisation of recycling management with a focus on redesigning the recycling collection point	2021/2022	✓	Separate collection of residual and wood waste as well as metal and electronic waste
Implementation of the reusable deposit system „Mensa-to-go“ with the IntakeDAV app	2022	✓	Utilisation of reusable multi-use bowls with the help of the developed web app IntakeDAV
Setting up a Repair Café	2021	✓	Tool hire at UCB-Contact on the first Wednesday of every month
5. Promotion of sustainable mobility			
Digital bike hire	2021	⌚	Reservation of bicycles via UCB-Contact
Purchase of 10 bicycles + 1 cargo bike	2023	✓	5 bicycles and 1 cargo bike, repair of used bicycles via the Repair Café
Increased number of participants in Birkenfeld city cycling event	2021/2022	✓	Higher number of participants achieved
Hydrogen campus project	2022	⌚	Approval of the funding application in cooperation with the VG Birkenfeld
Creation of an e-car sharing scheme for students and employees	2021	✓	Offer via EMOS GbR

GOALS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORT

GOALS & MEASURES	DATE	STATUS & EXPLANATION	
6. Resource Conservation			
Purchase of a refrigerator to store food donations for Foodsharing	2022	✓	Use of the tea room's refrigerator
Establishment of a digital platform for the exchange of used furniture and the opening of a used furniture marketplace at the recycling centre of the student dormitories	2022	✓	Used furniture exchange open at the recycling centre
Continuation of lighting optimisation in the sanitary rooms and corridors in the ZN	2021/2022	✓	Implemented by the facility management team
7. Sustainability communication in the social environment			
Regular lecture series related to sustainability (e.g. fairtrade)	2021/2022	✓	Lecture series on climate change and agriculture/food by RENN.west
Seminar: Sustainability in the start-up phase	2021	✓	Internal seminar organised by the start-up office
Educational trail for sustainability at the UCB and the cycle path to Birkenfeld	2022	⌚	Implementation by IfaS
8. Equality			
Continuation of MINT mentoring by female students for schoolgirls (Ada Lovelace project)	2021/2022	✓	MINT mentoring continued
Continuation of the „family-friendly university“ audit and processing of the target agreements reached	2021/2022	⌚	2023 planned
9. Participation of students/university members in the sustainability process			
Call to collect ideas for implementing more sustainability on campus: Digital collection of ideas: Online Board	2022	✓	Implementation by Green Office in collaboration with Circular Community
10. Social affairs			
Expansion of sports offerings	2022/2023	✓	Offer of a self-defence course
Construction of the barbecue hut	2023	⌚	Development of the fundraising e-strategy completed
Outdoor seating areas	2022/2023	⌚	Implementation postponed by one year Campus-Company

NEW SUSTAINABILITY GOALS 2023

GOALS	MEASURES	DATE	RESPONSIBLE
1. Promotion of biodiversity	Setting up the bee colonies	2023	IfaS
2. Development of partnerships	Visit to the Celtic Park in the Hunsrück-Hochwald National Park in cooperation with EAO	2023	Prof. Nitschmann, Prof. Valeva, Dr. Carvalho
3. Sustainability in procurement	Conducting basic training on the topic of „Sustainable public procurement“	2023	Prof. Rick
	Maintaining the award as a Fairtrade University	2023	Green Office
4. Establishment of a circular economy strategy	Installation of a repair station for bicycles in building 9915	2023	Prof. Hartard
	Foundation of a circular economy initiative Circular Community	2023	Prof. Hartard
5. Promotion of sustainable mobility	Implementation Germany Semester Ticket	2023	AStA
	Launch of GreenTwin project for CO ₂ -saving co-operative mobility & logistics in rural areas	2023/2024	Prof. Dartmann
6. Resource Conservation	Continuation of lighting optimisation in the sanitary rooms and corridors 9913, 9914 and 9915	2022	Facility Management
7. Sustainability communication in the social environment	Using the MINT mobile for school visits	2022/2023	Prof. Wahl
	Increased media work: creation of podcasts	2023	Prof. te Heesen, Prof. Kammlott
8. Equality	Implementation of the family-friendly university action programme	2023	Equality Office
	Positive assessment as part of the application for the Female Professors Programme 2030	2023	Prof. Spatz
9. Participation of students/university members in the sustainability process	Organisation of the Sustainability Week	2023	Green Office
	Continuation of the clothes swap parties	2023	Green Office
10. Social affairs	Creation of additional seating areas between dormitories 9902, 9903, and 9904	2023/2024	Campus Company

GOVERNANCE & STAKEHOLDERS

Sustainability Officer

Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling regularly monitors and communicates the sustainability goals of the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld. These goals are published in the sustainability report. In addition to the Sustainability Council, the Green Office and other university members are committed to sustainability. The introduction of a new platform for sustainability improvement is planned for 2021/22.

Governance and responsibility

In 2022, Trier University of Applied Sciences implemented a university-wide Sustainability Council, which includes the President, one professor from each department, one person from the Trier and Birkenfeld AStA and one person from each of the three Green Offices. Each campus has a site- or campus-specific Sustainability Council, which is chaired by Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld.

Legal conformity

The Environmental Campus ensures compliance with all legal regulations, including data protection, building and fire safety and occupational safety. The Staff Council represents the interests of employees. Guidelines ensure good scientific practice and the handling of misconduct.

Green Office

The Green Office at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld was founded by students in 2017. Since 2021, there has also been a Green Office at the Design Campus and the Main Campus in Trier.

[Click here for the university's mission statement](#)



TEACHING

On 18 May 2022, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the German UNESCO Commission awarded the „National Prize – Education for Sustainable Development“ for the first time. The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld was one of the 19 nominees and was shortlisted in the „Place of Learning“ category. Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling and Master’s student Katharina Kuhn attended the award ceremony in Berlin, where Dr. Jens Brandenburg and Prof. Dr. Maria Böhmer honoured the nominees and announced the winners.

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld was recognised as a place of learning by the German UNESCO Commission back in 2018. At the time, the jury emphasised that the campus had managed to effectively integrate education for sustainable development (BNE) into its study programmes. The students benefit from extensive opportunities to participate and shape the programme. With 32 future-oriented Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes in the fields of technology, business and law, the Environmental Campus offers practical knowledge for a sustainable transformation.

[Interested in study and further education programmes?](#)



As part of the project „Trier University of Applied Sciences International: Global Innovation for Sustainable Futures“, Trier University of Applied Sciences is developing innovative approaches to integrating sustainability into teaching from 2022 to 2025. This project is funded by the DAAD programme line „HAW.International“ with funds from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

A central element of this project is the „International Teaching for Sustainability“ training and workshop series. These further education modules are not only aimed at lecturers at Trier University of Applied Sciences, but are also open to lecturers at other universities. The aim is to teach participants how they can meet the growing demands of the globalised working world and prepare their students for their social responsibility as global citizens in order to actively contribute to shaping a sustainable future.

[Click here for further study programmes](#)



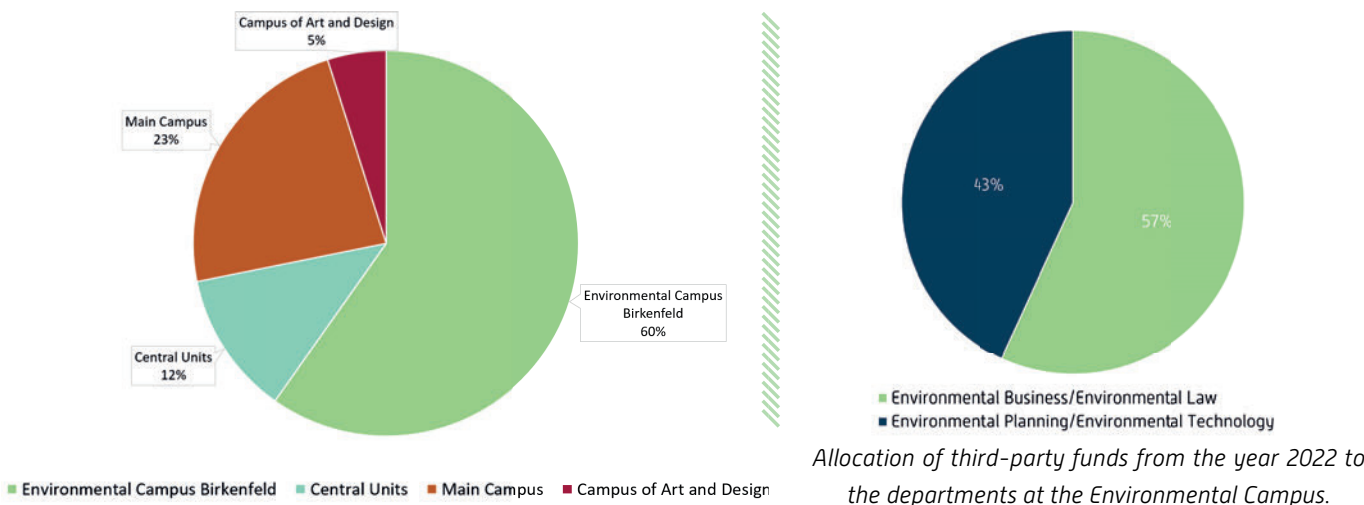
RESEARCH

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld contributes to all of Trier University of Applied Sciences’ main research areas: „Applied Material Flow Management“, „Intelligent Technologies for Sustainable Development“ and „Life Sciences: Medical, Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology“. Around 56 professors and their teams research and teach here, combining business, technology, law and ecology. On 4000 m², the campus has modern laboratories and research facilities that make it a valuable partner for business, industry and government.

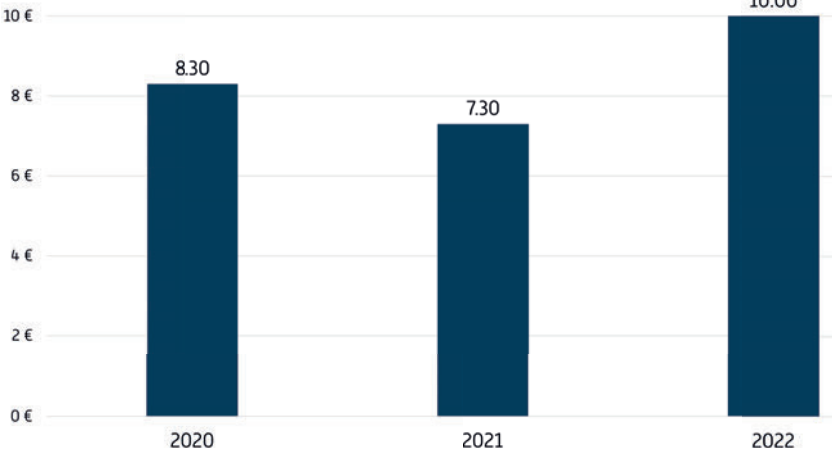
The available expertise supports a wide range of collaborations with companies and authorities, including consultations, expert opinions, development and learning partnerships, and long-term research projects. This collaboration helps to translate theoretical principles and research findings into practical projects and develop sustainable solutions.

Significant emphasis is placed on integrating research and teaching. Students are actively involved in research projects and receive practical training. Since the Environmental Campus was founded in 1996, several institutes and competence centres have been set up in order to bundle and further improve present scientific activities.

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld conducts extensive research on sustainability. Their application for the GreenMetric ranking revealed that 94% of research income between 2019 and 2021 came from sustainability projects.



Allocation of third-party funds at Trier University of Applied Sciences in 2022.



Development of third-party funds for the Environmental Campus in recent years.

In 2022, Trier University of Applied Sciences raised third-party funds totalling 16.7 million euros, of which the Environmental Campus, with 1/3 of the researchers, received 2/3 of the third-party funding income.

[Click here for current research projects](#)

[Three main research areas](#)

[Our institutes at a glance](#)

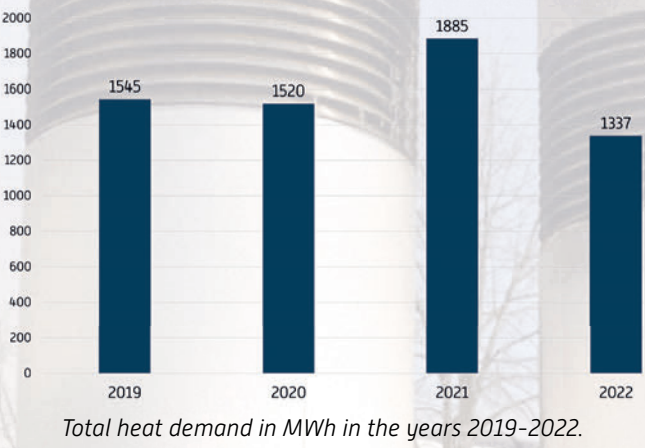
ZERO EMISSION CONCEPT

Power supply
The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld is committed to a climate-neutral energy supply by purchasing certified green electricity with guarantees of origin and by using its own renewable electricity from PV systems.

Communication building: Passive house with excellent insulation, modern air conditioning and ventilation technology, LED lighting and photovoltaic system.

Lighting: LED lamps with motion detectors and daylight utilisation through glass structures and light shafts.

Energy saving: Special louvre blinds and daylight control systems in the ZN to reduce electricity consumption.



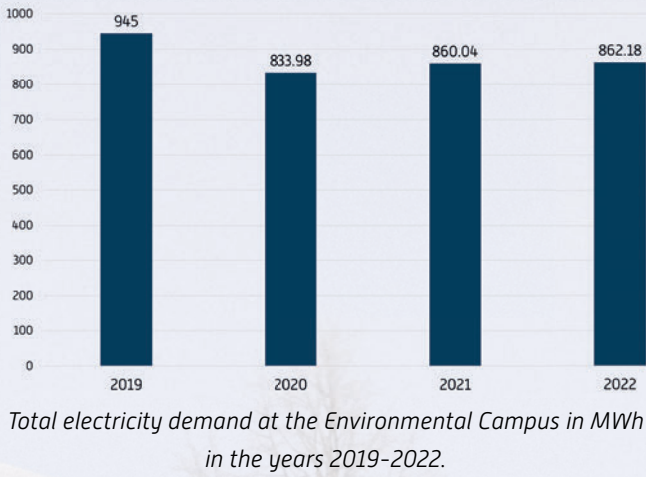
Water supply
Water utilisation efficiency: implementation of technological solutions to increase efficiency and reduce the environmental impact. Drinking water comes from the Steinbachtal dam, fresh water consumption in 2022 was 1404 m³.

Rainwater utilisation: The rainwater produced on campus is used to supply the toilet facilities, which relieves the wastewater system. At the same time, the soil structure of the campus acts like a sponge, storing the water and thus preventing flooding. This efficient use of water resources contributes to the sustainability of the campus and reduces the consumption of fresh water.



[Click here for the zero-emission concept, explained by Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling:](#)

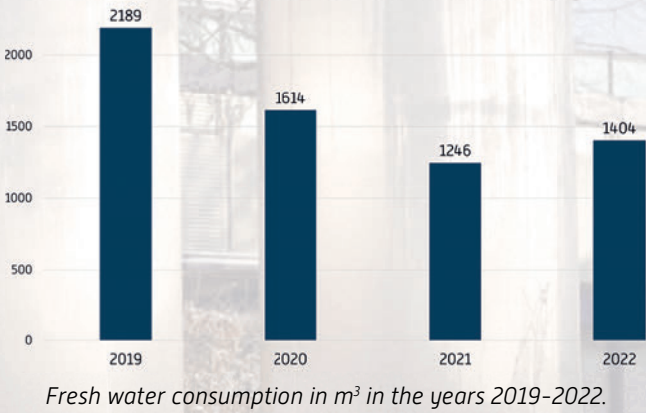
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENT



Heat supply
The zero emission concept at the UCB is supplied with CO₂ - neutral heat from regional waste wood by a benacbased wood chip power plant (HHKW). This means that both electricity and heat are sourced entirely from renewable sources.

Decentralised control: Temperature regulation in offices to avoid unnecessary heating.

Ventilation technology: CO₂ monitoring, geothermal heat exchanger for efficient temperature control. Cooling of lecture halls/library using solar thermal energy and HHKW heat. Pre-cooling/ pre-heating of the air using geothermal heat exchangers for energy-efficient temperature control.



EQUALITY AND HEALTH PROMOTION

At Trier University of Applied Sciences, the topics of equality and gender equality are firmly anchored in the mission statement, the equality plan and the university development plan as a component of social sustainability. The Equal Opportunities Office at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld is committed to equal opportunities and the compatibility of family, career and studies. It promotes an inclusive and supportive environment with a wide range of counselling services on topics such as career paths, student financing and childcare. Through targeted measures to combat discrimination and sexual harassment, the office makes a significant contribution to creating a fair and safe campus. This emphasises the importance of equality as a central component of the campus concept.

More information here



Holiday childcare

To help university members balance their studies, work, and family, Environmental Campus Birkenfeld provides holiday childcare during the winter, Easter, Whitsun, summer, and fall breaks. In collaboration with the Campus Company, which provides landlord services to students, the university offers exciting and diverse holiday programs for children. At the Trier and Birkenfeld locations, children enjoy vibrant, activity-filled days designed with an educational focus. The childcare team consists of qualified educators and youth leaders, ensuring a safe and enriching environment. Themed weeks and excursions add extra fun and variety, leaving no room for boredom.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Green Office

Founded and run by students, the Green Office has been organizing vegan breakfasts, food-sharing events, clothes swap parties, and „Cleanup Days“ since 2017 to raise awareness about environmental protection while making it enjoyable

Sustainability Week 2022 of the Green Office at the Environmental Campus

The cross-university action week for Education for Sustainable Development 2022 brought together interested parties from Rhineland-Palatinate to engage with sustainability topics. Events on the topics of subsistence, the knowledge-action gap, greenwashing, sustainable supply chains and utopias took place both in person and online.



Translated from German: „Sustainability Week“.



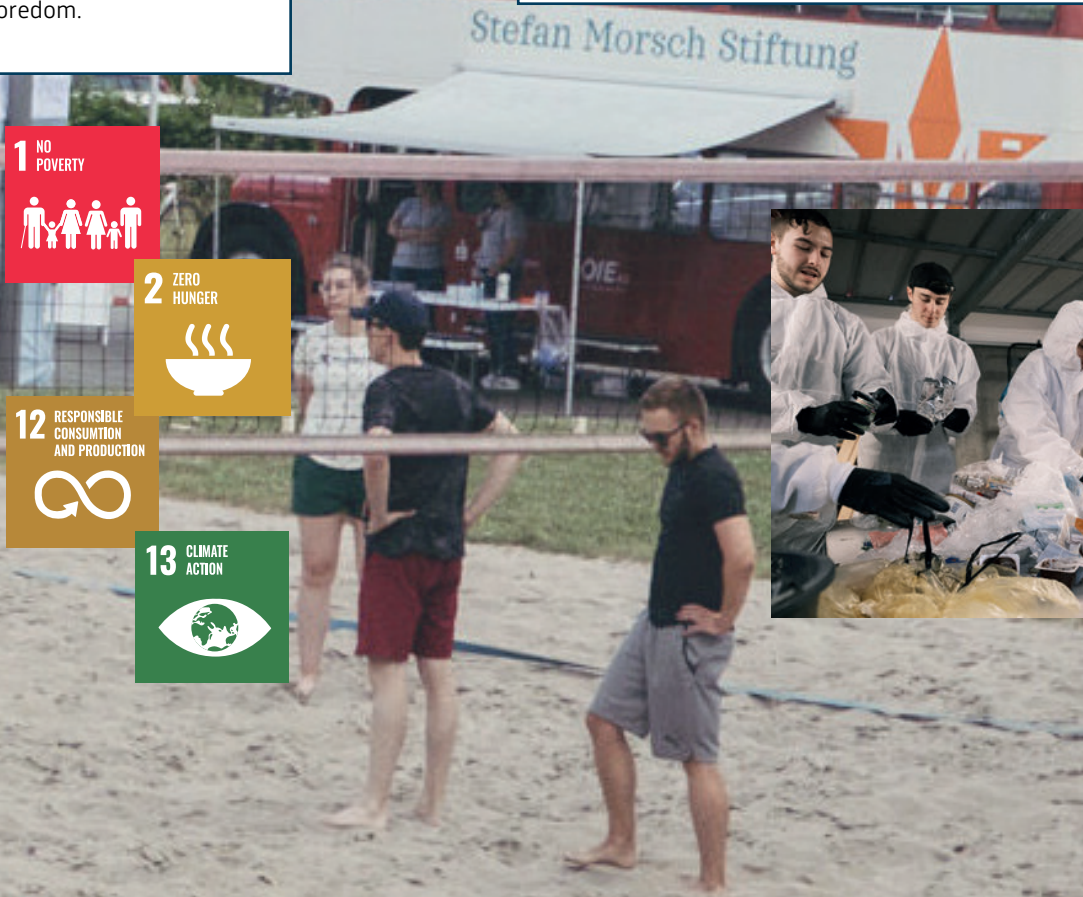
Canteen boxes

On 1 September 2022, the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld at Trier University of Applied Sciences launched a new reusable system in the canteen. With the help of the IntakeDAV web app, reusable bowls can be borrowed deposit-free to avoid disposable packaging and promote sustainability.



Recycling centre

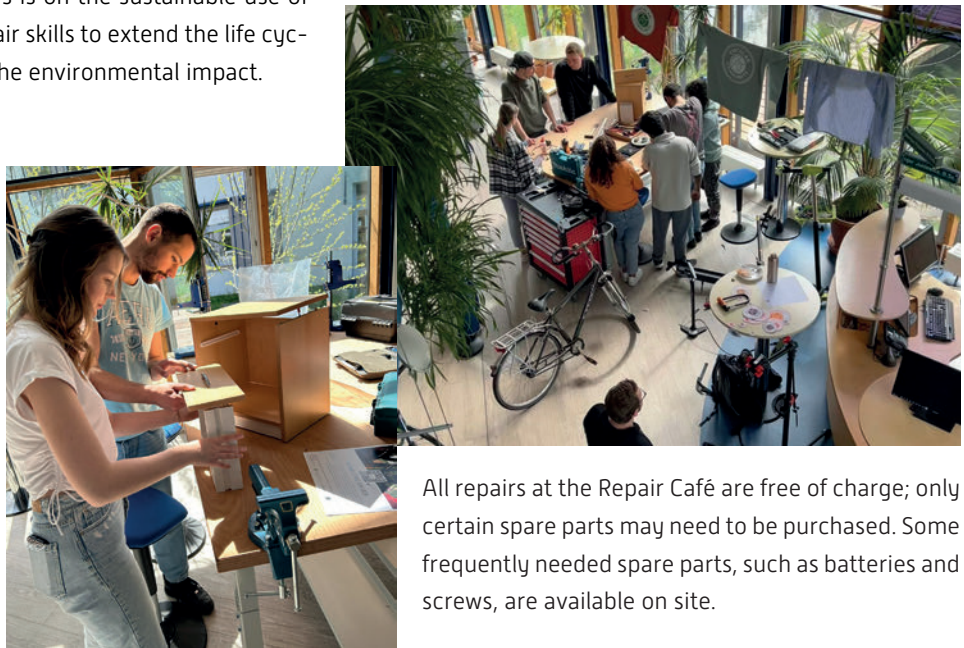
On 13 May 2022, a used furniture exchange was opened at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld to provide used furniture for students and avoid waste. As part of the research project „Reusable and Cascade Economy“, funded by the Ministry for Climate Protection, a digital system for managing the furniture exchange is also being developed to support a sustainable circular economy.



Repair Café and Circular Community

The **Circular Community** is an innovative community, initiated by the DigiCircleLAB project staff, which is open to all students. The aim is to empower students to act in a circular economy, for example through repair, waste avoidance and waste sorting. The aim is to promote „circular literacy“ on campus. The concept centres on raising awareness of the importance of circular economy through practical experience. Students should experience self-efficacy through successful repairs and be sensitised to transformation and the circular economy in new ways through peer-to-peer learning.

The **Repair Café** is a central component of our commitment to a „culture of repair“ and takes place once a month in building 9914, room 019. Since July 2022, in collaboration with the Green Office and with the support of university staff, it has offered the opportunity to repair defective everyday items such as bicycles, electronics or household appliances together. The focus is on the sustainable use of resources and learning repair skills to extend the life cycle of products and reduce the environmental impact.



All repairs at the Repair Café are free of charge; only certain spare parts may need to be purchased. Some frequently needed spare parts, such as batteries and screws, are available on site.

AStA

The General Students' Committee (AStA) represents the students and is committed to improving study programmes and campus life. It acts as a link to university management and politics and is active in areas such as culture, events and university policy. The AStA comprises a board and various departments that regularly organise events and provide services such as sports courses, a fitness room, an art room and the tearoom. In addition, the campus pub Kadu and the campus garden promote leisure activities.



Student Councils

The Environmental Economics/Environmental Law (UWUR) and Environmental Planning/Environmental Technology (UPUT) Student Councils represent the interests of their students and offer support in academic and organisational matters. They lend out lab coats, calculators, boomboxes and pizza ovens, provide memory protocols and organise events such as semester opening parties, football tournaments and pride parties. Together with the AStA and the Green Office, they also regularly organise plant and clothes swap parties.



COMMUNICATION AND TRANSFER

Night of Science

On Wednesday, 9 November 2022, the Birkenfeld Environmental Campus of Trier University of Applied Sciences hosted the „Night of Science“, at which four professors gave short presentations on their current research topics in order to promote the transfer of knowledge and technology. The President of Trier University of Applied Sciences, Prof. Dr. Dorit Schumann, welcomed almost 200 participants and emphasised the importance of this event for the exchange with politics, business and society.



PARTNERSHIPS

HAW International

As part of the „HAW International“ projects, the international campus offers numerous further education measures and exchange programmes for international students. The Career Service and UCB Contact support students in career planning and networking with industry.

Career Service

The Career Service at Trier University of Applied Sciences supports students and graduates in their transition into practice by offering advice, organising events on key skills and promoting contacts with potential employers, as well as providing advice on career prospects, application portfolio checks and working in the Greater Region and in Germany.



UCB Contact

Since the summer semester of 2010, the student service agency UCB-Contact, which was founded in 1998, has been supporting students at the Environmental Campus in starting their careers. In addition to regular counselling appointments with career advisors, UCB-Contact offers practical services such as professional application photos and thesis printing with a comprehensive service.

The International Students' Office (ISO)

The International Students Network Office (ISO) at the Umwelt- Campus Birkenfeld supports international students with language support projects such as „Tandem@UCB“, the loan of games and kitchen utensils, regular office hours, the weekly „Café International“, German regulars, study groups and weekly chess training sessions.



At the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld, Trier University of Applied Sciences maintains numerous partnerships with national and international institutions and companies in order to promote research projects and practical solutions in environmental economics, technology and law. In the field of education, the campus cooperates with schools and educational institutions to promote STEM subjects, while international partnerships offer students exchange opportunities. Company contact fairs and joint projects strengthen the connection between science and business.





PUBLISHER

Prof. Dr. Dorit Schumann
The President of Trier University of Applied Sciences

Trier University of Applied Sciences, Environmental Campus Birkenfeld
Campusallee
55768 Hoppstädten-Weiersbach

COORDINATION AND EDITORIAL SUPPORT

Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling
Dean of the Department of Environmental Economics/Environmental Law
and Sustainability Officer
Phone.: +49 6782 17-1224
E-Mail: k.helling@umwelt-campus.de

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TEXT

Project team „Sustainability at the Environmental Campus“:
Alina Clemens (Master's student „Sustainable Business Management“)
Malika Arstan (Master's student „Sustainable Business Management“)

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Project team „Sustainability at the Environmental Campus“
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Trier University of Applied Sciences
Environmental Campus Birkenfeld

Postfach 13 80
55761 Birkenfeld

Phone: +49 6782 17-18 19
Fax: +49 6782 17-13 17
E-Mail: info@umwelt-campus.de

www.umwelt-campus.de