



**SWPS
University**

SUSTAINABILITY ANNUAL REPORT





The COVID-19 pandemic has largely slowed down, or even reversed efforts to reduce poverty internationally. As a result, in 2020 global poverty has risen for the first time since the 1990s. As a socially responsible and engaged university we are dedicated to the goal of ending poverty worldwide. We believe that real and lasting change requires a dialogue between the world of science and the social, economic and cultural environment, which is why we cooperate with local governments, entrepreneurs, cultural institutions and non-profit organizations. This is how a well-thought-out response to the challenges of today arises.

When designing **research**, we always ask ourselves questions about their usefulness and practical applications in various areas of life: economy, business, education, law, culture and art, development of enterprises and individuals. Our projects respond to specific social problems and improve the quality of life.

We share our knowledge and experience to **help those in need**. Clinics at SWPS University offer specialist psychological support for children, adolescents and adults. Student Legal Clinic provides free advice to people who cannot afford to use the assistance of an attorney or legal advisor.

In order to facilitate access to higher education to students from disadvantaged backgrounds we offer a number of [scholarship programs](#), including [scholarships for international students](#) where applicants from lower-income countries are especially encouraged to apply.



According to UN Statistics, up to 2 billion people around the world suffer from food insecurity. Yet, around 100 million tons of food goes to waste in Europe every year. As part of our dedication to the second Sustainable Development Goal, “Zero Hunger”, we offer [outreach and education programmes on food sustainability and preventing waste](#) as well as [those promoting healthy and safe food.](#)

In 2021 we initiated collaboration with the City Council of Warsaw and established the [Living Lab](#) which is part of [FOOD TRAILS](#), an international project on supporting the creation of urban food policies in accordance with the FOOD2030 initiative, financed via the EU program Horizon 2020. The Living Lab deals with the design of innovative solutions reducing food waste in three groups: students, merchants at marketplaces, small eateries.



The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous negative impact on national healthcare systems worldwide and a significant decline in the well-being of people. Throughout 2021 we continued to carry out our strongest efforts to promote physical and mental welfare among our students, faculty, staff as well as the local, national and international communities.

We are committed to ensuring [optimal access to education for all](#). We gradually eliminate architectural barriers in our buildings, install appropriate devices and introduce improvements that make it easier to navigate around university campuses and use the available infrastructure.

For students with special needs, we offer specialized equipment and software to support work on teaching materials, assistants, translators and stenographers, as well as the support of specialist staff. All students and staff have [access to free psychological counselling](#).

The university runs two clinics focusing on mental health:

[The Environmental Mental Health Center for Children and Youth](#) offers free of charge mental health services to children and youth, including individual cognitive-behavioral therapy and system therapy, as well as pedagogical therapy and family therapy.

[The Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Clinic](#) offers psychotherapy services to children, youth, and adults.

We also continue to promote health and mental well-being through the [publicly available Strefa Psyche](#).



We offer interdisciplinary study programs responding to the challenges of the present day and adapted to the changing needs of the labor market. Our educators not only pass on the latest knowledge, but also discover it together with students. In an atmosphere of trust and partnership, they motivate them to discover their abilities and define their future career plans. At the same time, they encourage students to implement their scientific ambitions and support them in applying for grants for their own research projects.

We co-create and constantly consult study programs with representatives of the business community. Thanks to agreements with companies that enjoy a good position on the market, students participate in workshops with experienced industry experts and have the opportunity to undergo apprenticeships and internships in reputable institutions.

Our education mission is not limited to our students. We offer free of charge resources in [psychology](#), [law](#), [design](#), [management](#), [culture](#) and [technology](#). We also offer [educational events](#) that are offered to the general public free of charge, both online and on-site.



SWPS University has always been and continue to be committed to **promoting equality and preventing discrimination in all areas of our activity**. We are guided by the values of openness, courage and responsibility, which form the basis of all activities that we undertake. These values, together with the classic university values (beauty, good, wisdom and truth), set the standards of conduct at the SWPS University.

Women constitute 70% of all SWPS University staff (82% administrative staff and 59% academic employees). **In the student community, 72% are women.**

As an academic community, we want the SWPS University to be a **safe and friendly space for everyone**, where the priority is learning, transferring knowledge, exchanging views as well as building and promoting appropriate attitudes and values.

We also want to prevent abuses and inappropriate behavior in our environment. We do not accept any form of discrimination on the basis of differences, in particular regarding gender, nationality, religion or belief, psychosexual orientation, any form of disability, political views, education, social origin and others. Respect for human dignity, individual characteristics and views is the highest value and the basis for the harmonious functioning of society. We therefore have an **antidiscrimination policy** in place backed by relevant procedures and every member of the university's community can confidentially report any occurrence of discrimination that they were subjected to or witnessed.

As proof of our efforts, we have been awarded the [HR Excellence in Research](#) award. The European Commission awards this prestigious distinction to institutions that provide researchers with the best working conditions - they guarantee a transparent

recruitment process, employment stability, career development opportunities, as well as substantive and financial assistance in research projects.



The sixth Sustainable Development Goal is to **ensure access to clean water and sanitation**. The buildings on the SWPS University campuses have been adapted to all sanitary requirements, which has been improved especially during the COVID-19 epidemic. We have taken many steps to minimize the risk of infection. We set the **decontamination stations at the entrances to buildings on each campus**. The high-touch surfaces are disinfected regularly with the use of professional means.

The infrastructure of SWPS University from the beginning of its existence provides students and employees with **unlimited access to running water**. Each campus is connected to the city's sewage and water supply networks. For example, the headquarters of the SWPS University main campus (Warsaw) cooperates with [Miejskie Przedsiębiorstwo Wodociągów i Kanalizacji m.st. Warszawa S.A.](#), and thanks to a complicated filtration system and continuous tests, our students and employees are guaranteed to use the highest quality water.

Our university also provides **free access to water from dispensers in designated areas**. Of course, both students and staff can also purchase bottled water from cafes and vending machines located on campuses. The University pays great attention to the waste sorting, therefore, on each floor of the University buildings, you will find **specially marked bins**, intended, among others, **for storing empty plastic bottles**.

We are committed to making the next generations of students and the local community aware of better, wiser use of water resources. For several years we have been actively participating as a partner in [the Economy of a Water City: Miasto-Woda-Jakość życia International Congress](#). Our lecturers take part in discussion panels organized as part of the congress. Among the discussed topics there is the relationship between the aquatic

environment and the urban environment, ways of eliminating the effects of the interaction of these environments, analysis of the supply systems, production and distribution of water, opportunities for the development of river transport, climate change and its effects on cities, as well as the use of water and wetlands for lifting quality of life in the city.

SWPS University is proud of the **pro-climate initiatives of our students**. Anna Marciniszyn, a graduate of the School of Form with a specialization in Domestic Design, created the vessels of the future that make us sensitive to rational eating and not wasting food. In turn, Natalia Siódmak, a graduate of the School of Forms, looking for an alternative to the very popular bottled beverages, designed Zdrój - a system of natural water filtration.

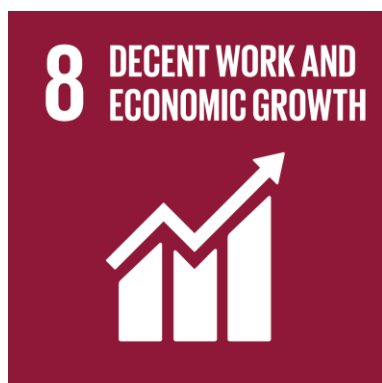
We are aware of the urgent threat posed by the dwindling water resources, which is why we are not only constantly adapting our infrastructure in order to use water more efficiently. The SWPS University firmly believes that science and education are the path to development and positive change.



Among others Sustainable Development Goals SWPS especially supports a **reliable, affordable, sustainable and modern energy ensuring.**

SWPS University has its campuses in five Polish cities. The headquarters of the University is located in the capital of Poland, Warsaw, but students can also study in centers in Poznań, Katowice, Wrocław and Sopot. Each of our complexes is modern, well-equipped, and at the same time integrated into the urban fabric. It reflects the unique character of its city, while ensuring the highest comfort of studying. The university authorities have carried out extensive renovations over the last several years including thermal insulation of the main campus in Warsaw. We saved this historic building and gave it a second life. Because of the size of the building there are some difficulties with keeping the classrooms warm by heating with radiators. Therefore we also replaced the window joinery and heating installation. We renovated the heat substation and insulated the roof. Thermo Modernization is only the first step in our journey to **upgrade the building to higher energy efficiency**. In the years to come we are planning to invest in renewable energy sources and green technology.

The SWPS University makes every effort to be also an arena for the exchange of ideas supporting pro-climate activism. We create a place for [discussion with specialists](#). We analyze the [strategy of other countries](#) that dynamically invest in green technologies. As always we can count on our creative students who [presented ecological proposals for obtaining electricity from compostable, local sources](#). SWPS University constantly pays attention to the climate catastrophe and tries to work out measures to prevent its negative effects.



SWPS University makes every effort to maintain sustained and inclusive economic growth. We perfectly know that it can drive progress and improve living standards.

SWPS University was granted the right to display the [HR Excellence in Research](#) logo in 2016. This honor is proof that we are committed to creating a stimulating environment for scientific research by supporting multiple initiatives, adhering to the equal opportunity policy, supporting mobility of academic staff, providing training, and securing financing for research projects. The University strives to create a stimulating environment for scientific research by supporting various initiatives of the researchers, adhering to the equal opportunity policy. We obey the [European Charter for Researchers](#). One of its pillars is the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. It is a guarantee of hiring employees with the highest substantive competences. We provide equal opportunities to all candidates and support scientific development and mobility.

Each job offer is published in accordance with the accepted templates on the websites of SWPS University of Humanities and Social Sciences, [the National Science Center](#), [the Ministry of Science and Higher Education](#) and [Euraxess](#). Vacancy announcements are also published in English which makes the information about the offered positions reach a wider group of researchers.

Required application documents are kept to a minimum. We expect to receive a curriculum vitae in the field of research containing a description of scientific achievements, a list of publications, a list of awards and achievements for scientific work and a description of the competences necessary to perform the tasks specified in the announcement. Both sexes are represented in the competition committees assessing the incoming applications.

All candidates for a research position receive information about the status of their application and information about the end of the competition procedure. Candidates invited to an interview with the selection board receive feedback from the Head of the Committee on the reasons for the rejection of their application. Then they may appeal against the decision of the selection board by reporting their reservations to the Head of the Committee.

In addition, the university provides a salary that is higher than the minimum wage. Moreover, employees of the academic and organizational division have open access to information about the financial limits applicable to individual positions.

The SWPS University environment is quantitatively dominated by women, both among employees and students. It proves our openness and inclusiveness. We focus on the hard work and talents of our associates, regardless of the group they represent.

We are constantly working on developing a network of contacts and exchanging internships with foreign universities. One of the newest initiatives we have engaged in is the [Global Academy of Liberal Arts \(GALA\)](#). All partner universities, including the SWPS University, signed an agreement that includes various commitments regarding working together against gender and racial inequality and also contains anti-slavery clauses.

GALA is an international community of diverse, innovative, and socially responsible universities and colleges, whose aims are to transform lives and to enhance global understanding through interdisciplinary collaboration in teaching and research. The SWPS University is honored to be part of this project.

SWPS University provides assistance to students and alumni in finding a job. Our [Office of Career Services](#) supports students in creative search and development of their own potential. We also maintain relationships with graduates. By combining information on the competences of our students and graduates with knowledge about the needs of employers, we are a link between these two worlds. Moreover, we enable students to take up work and internships within the university structures.

We are proud of the working conditions we create for our employees and students. Of course, we will continue to work hard to become an even more economic and inclusive employer in the years to come.



Human Touch Group (HTG) is an idea that associates universities, schools, companies, brands and foundations: SWPS University, [Collegium Da Vinci](#), [Da Vinci Academic Schools](#), [Concordia Design](#), [VOX](#), [Lab150](#), [Talent Scholarship Fund](#) and [VOX Artis Foundation](#). Human Touch Group is much more than a business connection between companies and entities founded by [Piotr Voelkel](#). It is primarily the ability to understand and make constant changes in which a person, their needs and values, but also the development of their talent and potential, are at the center of attention.

Over the years, we have developed many ideas for the development of the Group and the benefits of being part of it. We are still implementing many of these plans today. Cooperation is important for HTG: between science and business; between the master and the apprentice; between the company and the employee. Organizations within HTG are still looking for synergies and opportunities to work together and offer mutual support. Thanks to the close cooperation between these components, we can invest in clean and resilient infrastructure. The opportunities we create allow our students, graduates and researchers to carry out innovative projects, e.g. [ecological proposals for obtaining electricity from compostable, local sources](#). Moreover, we strongly believe that investment in infrastructure has an impact on improving health and education outcomes. Being aware of how much work is still ahead of us in this area, we gladly engage in the exchange of educational and research experiences with partner universities under bilateral agreements or through consortia as well as practices that can help us promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.



At SWPS University, we strongly believe that equality and prosperity must be available to everyone – regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs or economic status. We work hard to ensure that everyone has equal access to education and job opportunities at our University. We have signed over 100 cooperation agreements, both bilateral ones and under the Erasmus+ program, which allow the exchange of students, staff and faculty. Each year we are open to hosting foreign students, including those from developing countries and who show low income. We provide them with [scholarships and financial aid](#). In addition, students can try many more [scholarships](#) that everyone has access to, and the main determinant is hard work and academic performance.

Our university is an inclusive environment. Both faculties and workplaces are of great interest to women, which translates into their dominant number at our university. To make sure we create equal opportunities for everyone regardless of gender, the university has developed a [Gender Equality Plan](#). It was one of our priority actions in 2021 which resulted in the publication of the plan in early 2022.

We make every effort to ensure that our university is also a [friendly place](#) for students and employees with disabilities. We are committed to making learning opportunities available to persons with disabilities. We are gradually eliminating architectural barriers in our buildings, installing appropriate equipment and introducing improvements that make it easier for students with disabilities to move around the campuses and take advantage of the available infrastructure. Students with disabilities are offered specialized equipment and software to support their work on learning materials, help from personal assistants, translators and stenographers, as well as support from our Office for Students with Disabilities.

SWPS university is committed to protecting students and staff from discrimination and harassment. The university has established an [anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy](#). Anyone who has encountered discrimination or mobbing can report it via the form on the Virtual University website. Moreover, the Rector's Representative for the Prevention of Discrimination and Mobbing and the Anti-Mobbing and Anti-Discrimination Committee have been appointed in SWPS University. Additionally, a Discrimination and Mobbing Expert has been appointed for students.

These are just some of the areas of activity of our University that aim to reduce inequalities in both access to education and jobs among underrepresented groups. We hope that the coming years will bring even more advanced and inclusive solutions and policies at our university regarding SDG 10.



SWPS University takes an **active interest in the governance and management** of Polish cities. We aim to make cities **inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable** for our community, showing that in teaching, research, and community engagement over the years. Experts from SWPS University believe that research should provide practical solutions that improve the quality of life for people. Therefore, SWPS University is open to collaboration with public administration, institutions, NGOs, and local governments.

[The “Sopot Diagnosis” project](#) conducted by an interdisciplinary research team from SWPS University, led by Professor Mikołaj Cześnik, Director of SWPS University’s [Institute of Social Sciences](#), was commissioned by the Municipality of Sopot. It describes an expert assessment of the current situation and the key challenges that the city and its residents are facing. During the first phase of the project, the researchers collected and analyzed data to identify the main tensions and problems in the city. The team has been working with Sopot residents on the analysis of the most urgent challenges and has been developing a strategy for the upcoming decade.



The twelfth Sustainable Development Goal is to **ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**. Our University has organized a series of webinars, workshops and seminars promoting the efficient use of resources and the minimization of waste as well as contributed to many social projects, such as:

[Odpady do \(z\)użycia / Waste for \(re\)use](#). This project was created as a diploma thesis at the School of Form and then transformed into the startup Waste Lab. The designer and a graduate of the School of Form at the SWPS University, as part of her diploma thesis made of sugar beet leaves and beet pulp, created a material that is to be an alternative to plastics and a solution for things that have already been produced and have lost their "life".



Webinar entitled “[New resources - how waste becomes the raw materials of the future](#)” conducted by Paulina Grabowska - designer of innovation in the field of sustainable development, lecturer at the School of Form at the SWPS University.

**Nowe zasoby – jak
odpady stają się
surowcami
przyszłości**





Climate change is a serious threat, and fighting back against it is a **priority for both our research and our development as a university**: ensuring that we help to preserve our world for generations to come.

SWPS University has developed the special center responsible for climate actions and social transformation - [**4CAST Center**](#).

The mission of the **4CAST Center (Center for Climate Action and Social Transformations)** is to create an interdisciplinary academic and social environment and to develop innovative and effective solutions for society in response to the challenges resulting from global climate change. The 4CAST Center is an interdisciplinary research and implementation center whose activities include interdisciplinary research, development and application research in the field of social sciences and humanities, in the area of innovative and effective solutions for society in response to the challenges arising from global climate change.

The aim of the 4CAST Center is to **support social commitment for the climate** based on integrated cooperation in the field of science, local governments, business and non-governmental organizations.

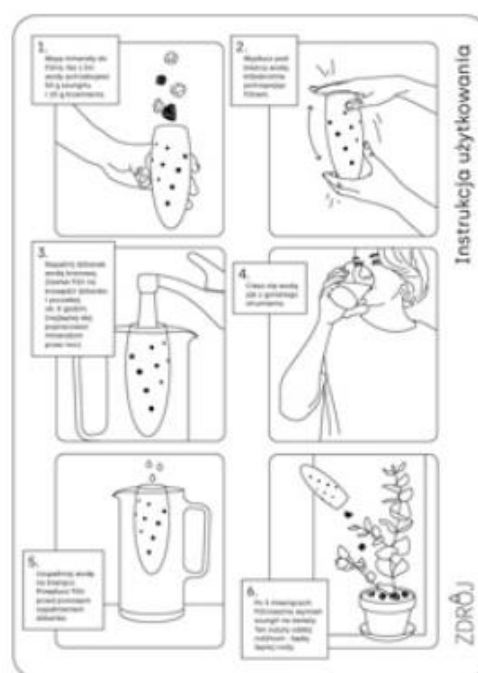


The fourteenth Sustainable Development Goal is **to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources** for sustainable development.

SWPS University is working towards protecting and enhancing aquatic ecosystems like lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands, rivers, estuaries and the open ocean. We are committed to embedding a culture of public engagement with research in Poland, putting in place the mechanisms to enable the widest possible range of audiences to understand and make use of our research.

SWPS University demonstrates a carefully managed practice and responsibility with the aim to prevent potential harm to humans, animals, or the environment by setting strict water quality standards at the University and guidelines for water discharges in order to protect ecosystems, wildlife, and human health and welfare and has an action plan in place to reduce plastic waste on campus.

Our students strongly believe in the importance of 14th Sustainable Development Goal - “Life below water” and actively contribute to University actions by developing relevant projects, such as [“Zdrój - a system of natural water filtering”](#). The Zdrój project assumes going back to the pre-polymer times. Using



only natural materials such as: flint, shungite, stoneware and porcelain, it offers a healthy and tasty alternative to mineral waters packed in polyethylene terephthalate. This is a circular solution - we filter the water that we already have in the tap. Filter components - we change activated carbon every 3 months, but then we use it as a drainage material and soil enrichment for indoor plants. We clean and reuse striped flint. In this way, additional unnecessary waste is not being produced.



The environment requires urgent solutions and SWPS University is proud to be working hard to protect our planet - ensuring we use it responsibly now, and conserve it for the future.

To protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss is another strategic development goal of SWPS University community.

Dr Agnieszka Jacobson-Cielecka i Karol Murlak, lectures from [School of Form](#) has shared their thought and ideas during the COP 24 climate summit in Katowice, Poland - [#TakeYourSeat](#).



SWPS University is highly committed to **championing justice, welfare and inclusivity**, and investing in research and projects which reflect the interests of our country. Our University promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provides access to justice for all and builds effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

We have many [students' organizations](#) in a university which represents students' political and welfare interests, which organize leisure activities and provide welfare services.

Furthermore, our University engages with local stakeholders, provide specific expert advice to local, regional and national governments.

[Gov LAB](#) is a unique educational project, which was created to teach representatives of local government units how to design services and effective support instruments for local entrepreneurs and investors. The project is implemented, among others by experts from the SWPS University, and its uniqueness is evidenced by the working methods used, based on the latest scientific knowledge and experience of practitioners, such as service design or design thinking.



The seventeenth Sustainable Development Goal is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the **global partnership** for sustainable development. The SWPS University community understands that sustainable development cannot be achieved without linkages between institutions, governments, companies, NGOs, and of course people.

This is why we collaborate with other countries, universities, organizations and stakeholders in order to work together towards sustainable development and all 17 SDGs.

Looking ahead, our University will work toward maximizing community benefit opportunities, embrace the SDGs strategically, and develop rigorous mapping of our activities. Furthermore, SWPS University would be honored to take the leading position in the region and assist other HE institutions in their SDG journeys.