

DECODE *Sustainability*

*European Deans Council for
Sustainable Development*

DECODE COUNCIL STATUTE

Table of Contents

GLOSSARY.....	2
Chapter 1. Name and Seat	3
Chapter 2. Aims and Activities of the Council	3
Chapter 3. Belief, Vision, Mission, and Values of the Council	4
Chapter 4. Involvement in the Council	4
Chapter 5. The Structure of the Council	7
Chapter 6. The Council Leadership.....	8
Chapter 7. General Assembly	10
Chapter 8. Dissolution of the Council	12
Chapter 9. Amendments to the Statute	12

***Disclaimers:**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

GLOSSARY

This glossary is provided to explain some of the key terms used in the Statute:

Council Secretary

- The role given to a selected Council Member to take over the function of the Executive Secretary after the DECODE Sustainability project funding ends. The main responsibility of the Council Secretary is to support the Council Chair and Vice-Chairs in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Council Leadership e.g. Council meetings are effectively organized and minuted and maintain effective records and administration. The Council Secretary will be elected by the Council Leadership.

Council Leadership

- The executive body of the Council which is responsible for implementing the decisions taken up by the General Assembly, and for the overall management of the Council. The Leadership consists of one Council Chair and two Council Vice-Chairs who are referred to as the Council Leaders.

Executive Secretary

- A representative of the DECODE Sustainability project in the DECODE Council. The Executive Secretary ensures the smooth communication and collaboration between the DECODE project consortium partners and the DECODE Council members. Executive Secretary has the rights to attend Council meetings and General Assembly however does not have voting rights. Once the project funding ends, the role will be replaced by the Council Secretary, who will be elected by the Council Leadership.

General Assembly

- The general meeting of all of the members of the Council.

Sustainability or Sustainable Development (SD)

- Within the scope of the DECODE Sustainability project, the terms Sustainability and Sustainable Development (SD) are used interchangeably and cover all three dimensions of SD: environmental, social and economic.

STATUTE OF THE EUROPEAN DEANS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (DECODE Deans Council)

Chapter 1. Name and Seat

Article 1 - Name

The European Deans Council for Sustainable Development (DECODE), from here on referred to as the Council, is a non-profit initiative established for a period of unlimited duration. The Council is a result of the sustainability efforts of the DECODE Sustainability project, an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships Program co-funded by the European Commission. The envisaged territorial range of the Council is predominantly to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) which are geographically located within Europe (refer to the list in Appendix).

Article 2 - Registered Address

The registered office of the Council is located in Wilhelm-Schickard-Str. 14, 48149 Muenster, Germany, which is the headquarter office of ACEEU (Accreditation Council for Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities), one of the five partners involved in the DECODE Sustainability project. The registered office might be moved to a different location within Europe by decision of the Council Leadership voting in accordance with Article (26.4) of the Statute.

Chapter 2. Aims and Activities of the Council

Article 3 – Aims

- Provide a mechanism that enables European deans and mid-management leaders responsible for sustainability efforts within academic units to share experiences and knowledge on the topic of SD in HEIs
- Drive their respective institutional development in the area of sustainability
- Bring the topic of SD to the time light and advance in its embeddedness in academic units of HEIs
- Act as an umbrella for interaction and creation of opportunities to collaborate on the progression of SD in and from HEIs

Article 4 - Activities

The Council shall achieve its aims by developing and engaging in different types of activities, including:

- Creating a toolbox consisting of innovative tools used to equip deans and representatives responsible for driving SD in an academic unit level in enhancing their SD integration and implementation

- *Designing Impact Pathways and Impact Roadmaps to advance HEI academic units' contribution to SD*
- *Developing an Empowerment Program where HEI deans and representatives responsible for driving SD in an academic unit level are trained and invited to share their own experiences and insights around the challenges and opportunities to embed SD within HEI academic units in a systematic way*

Chapter 3. Belief, Vision, Mission, and Values of the Council

Article 5 – Belief

- *We believe Higher Education Institutions should be core drivers of sustainable development.*

Article 6 – Vision

- *We envision academic units to have sustainability embedded into their educational policies, governance systems, operations and in general, all levels of their academic units.*

Article 7 – Mission

- *Our mission is to inspire and enable deans and other academic unit leaders to share, learn and collaboratively put sustainability measures into action/practice.*

Article 8 – Values

- *Forward Thinking: Entrepreneurship and engagements as drivers of systemic change*
- *Innovative Thinking: Pioneering innovative actions to increase positive impact*
- *Collaborative: Fostering community-based learning journey and collaboration not only between HEI academic leaders but also staff, students, and community*
- *Acknowledging: Recognising and valuing all contributions*
- *Inclusive: Embracing diversity and encouraging civil and respectful expression of ideas and opinions*

Chapter 4. Involvement in the Council

Involvement in the Council can be obtained through a membership.

Article 9 – Memberships

a. Full Members

The Full Members that directly make up the Council are deans, vice-deans and other academic leaders of HEIs e.g. heads of departments/faculties/schools including

representatives of Sustainable Development in academic units of HEIs in Europe. The list of the European countries can be found in Appendix.

The Full Members of the Council are eligible to vote on the strategic and structural aspects of the Council. All Full Members of the Council have the right to drive the council activities and impact by suggesting topics that are open for voting.

b. Associate Members

The Associate Members that make up the Council are deans, vice-deans and other academic leaders of HEIs e.g. heads of departments/faculties/schools including representatives of Sustainable Development in academic units of HEIs outside of the European Countries. Additionally, experts in SD and former deans/vice-deans/heads of departments/faculties/schools, both from and outside of the European countries are also eligible to join the Council as Associate Members.

The Associate Members of the Council do not have the rights to vote on the strategic and structural aspects of the Council. However, they have the rights to drive the Council activities and impacts by suggesting topics that are open for voting. The Associate Members have the opportunities to attend Council meetings and at the same time learn and share the activities and good practices.

Article 10 - Eligibility Criteria

a. Full Membership:

A Full Membership is given to those who currently hold a role as a dean/vice-dean/ head of department/ faculty/ school or a representative assigned by dean to take up a role as of Sustainable Development officer/leader in an academic unit of HEI in a European country (See the list of the countries in Appendix).

b. Associate Membership:

An Associate Membership is given to those who:

- hold a current role as a dean/ vice-dean/ head of department/ faculty/ school or a staff/ student representative assigned by dean to take up a role as of Sustainable Development officer/ leader in an academic unit of HEI outside Europe, or*
- already served as a dean/vice-dean/ head of department/faculty/school or a representative assigned by dean to take up a role as of Sustainable Development officer/leader in an academic unit of HEI no longer than 3 years upon the admission of the membership, or*
- are renowned experts in promoting SD in higher Education*

Article 11 - Admission

Those who are interested in becoming a member of the Council shall contact the Executive Secretary for this purpose by filling up a membership form available on the Council's official website: <https://www.decode-council.org/>.

Following the submission of the application form, the applicant will be contacted by the Executive Secretary to submit follow up information or documents such as:

- a. Title and full name
- b. Affiliation (link to the website is to be provided)
- c. End date of serving as dean/vice-dean/ head of department/faculty/school
- d. If not dean or vice-dean, but representative of Sustainable Development in an academic unit of a Higher Education Institution, the application form needs to be signed by the dean or vice-dean of the respective academic unit.

Membership is granted by the Council Leadership, which has the sole discretion to determine whether persons wishing to become members meet the required conditions. The Executive Secretary reviews the admission and draft decision for the Chair/Vice-Chairs of the Council. The final decision is made by the Chair/Vice-Chairs. Members agree to abide by the Statute of the Council.

Article 12 - Rights and Obligation

Depending of the status of the memberships, the members of the Council shall have the right to:

- be involved in the Council activities
- actively participate with voting rights in the General Assembly (Full Members only)
- propose items for inclusion in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly
- access the General Assembly documents made available in the DECODE restricted area of the website
- nominate candidates for positions open in the Council Leadership
- promote the dissemination of information and activities of the Council at national level
- submit proposals to the Council Leaders relating to the Council activities e.g. topics for discussions in the General Assembly, special workshops or event to promote the Council
- use the DECODE logo on every DECODE related documents or deliverables

Article 13 - Membership Fee

The membership is free of charge.

Article 14 - Loss of Memberships

Membership of the Council is lost through:

- a. written resignation by means of a simple letter or an e-mail to the Executive Secretary
- b. the death of the natural person or the dissolution of the legal person
- c. breach of the present statute, or in the event of any action which is likely to cause prejudice to the Council's reputation or effectiveness. The final decision on the loss of membership will be decided by the Council Leadership.

Chapter 5. The Structure of the Council

Article 15- The Council Core Stakeholders

The governance of the council consists of:

- Council Chair
- 2 Council Vice-Chairs
- Full Members (with voting rights)
- Associate Members (without voting rights)
- Executive Secretary (a representative from the DECODE consortium partnership)

Article 16- Rights and Responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities of the Council Core Stakeholders include, but not limited to:

- a. Chair and Vice-Chairs
 - Representing the Council to the public
 - Chairing Council meetings (General Assembly)
 - Hosting executive meetings (Chair, Vice-Chairs, Executive Secretary) every 3 months
 - Mediating with members regarding votes
 - Making decisions on the membership applications
 - Working with the Executive Secretary on the Council's operational focused activities
 - Preparing and supervising the strategic plan and annual work plan
 - Preparing the Council's annual activity report
- b. Full Members
 - Attending council meetings (with voting rights)
 - Suggesting council topics for votes
 - Voting on strategic or structural aspects
- c. Associate Members
 - Attending council meetings (no voting rights)
 - Suggesting council topics for votes
 - Taking part in the council meetings and discussions

d. *Executive Secretary**

- *Attending council meetings (no voting rights)*
- *Reviewing and preparing the decision of membership applications*
- *Preparing voting*
- *Preparing DECODE Sustainability's work packages outcomes to be reviewed by the committee / working groups*

**Once the DECODE Sustainability project ends, the role of Executive Secretary will be replaced by the Council Secretary who will be appointed by the Council Leadership among the Council Full Members.*

Chapter 6. The Council Leadership

Article 17 - Composition of the Council Leadership

The Council Leadership comprises the Chair and two (2) Vice-Chairs.

Article 18 – Functions

The Council Leadership is the executive body of the Council and responsible for implementing the decisions taken up by the General Assembly, and for the overall management of the Council. The rights and responsibilities of the Council Leadership are stated in Chapter 5 Article 16a of this Statute.

Article 19 – Operation

The Council Leadership is convened by the Chair every 3 months, giving at least 10 days' notice. One of the Vice-Chairs shall deputize for the Chair in his/her absence. Unless otherwise specified, the Leadership shall take its decisions with a simple majority of the members present. The Chair shall have the casting vote in case of equality of votes. The decisions by the Leadership are entered in the minutes and notified to all Council members in writing.

Article 20 – Nomination of Candidates

The positions in the Council Leadership can be filled only by the Full Members of the Council. The candidates can be nominated by other members or self-nominate themselves. Nominations for the Leadership shall be made to in the DECODE Connect Platform 40 days prior to date when the election takes place. The nominations shall include a short biography of the nominees. Details of candidates shall be circulated to all members prior to the General Assembly.

Shall there be no nominations received from the Full Members of the Council, a call for nominations for interim Chair and Vice-Chairs will be sent to Associate Members and it will proceed to an election for an interim Council Leadership. The interim position lasts for up to 6 months. A new call for nomination will need to be reopened to the Full Members of the Council proceeding in an election at least 40 days before the 6-month period ends.

Article 21 – Election

All Council Leadership members are elected by the General Assembly to act as Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Council. The General Assembly elects the Full Members of the Council Leadership for a regular mandate of two years. The Council Leadership members may not serve for more than two terms, except that members filling an unexpired term created by a vacancy may be appointed for two subsequent terms.

The elections of Council Leadership members, Chair, and two Vice-Chairs shall take place in DECODE Connect platform using a confidential online voting tool and be opened for at least 14 days. Each member shall have one vote per Council Leadership vacancy: one vote in the Chair election, and two votes (one for each position) in the election of the Vice-Chairs.

A simple majority of members present at the General Assembly shall determine the successful candidate(s). The election of the three new members of the Council Leadership shall take place within the same ballot and the results shall be announced to the General Assembly.

If two or more candidates receive the same number of votes and the number of vacancies is insufficient to allow all to be elected, the affected candidates shall be asked to agree among them who shall serve on the Council Leadership. If agreement cannot be reached among the candidates, the election shall be re-run. If the second run results again in a draw, the Chair at the time shall decide who shall be designated to fill in the vacant position(s).

A voting result that would lead to Council Leadership only representing one gender will be overruled. More precisely, the candidate with the least votes from the overrepresented gender has to give way to the candidate of the other gender with the highest number of votes.

A voting result that would lead to a double representation of one country will also be overruled. More precisely, the candidate with the least votes from the overrepresented country has to give way to the candidate from other country with the highest number of votes.

Article 22 – Representation of the Council

Members of the Council Leadership represent the Council by:

- Fostering relations with similar councils and initiatives
- Promoting the activities in the Council
- Representing the Council in relevant events
- Carrying out any specific mandates given by the General Assembly or the Council, within the terms of the Statute including policies and procedures

Article 23 - Ending the Leadership Mandate

The end of the deanship of the Chair or Vice-Chairs in their own institutions do not immediately affect their mandate in the Council. Chair and Vice-Chairs can presume their role until their mandate term ends. However, the mandate of the Council leaders may end by termination of their position at their institution or death. The next General Assembly shall elect a new Leadership member for the remaining time of the original term of the Leadership member whose term had ended prematurely.

In the event of a vacancy arising for the position of Chair, the Vice-Chair who has a higher vote will automatically take up the role as a Chair. And in the event of a vacancy arising for the position of Vice-Chair, the remaining members of the Council Leadership will appoint one of the Council Full Members to presume the Council Leadership term.

The Leadership members may resign at any time by submitting a written indication of resignation to the Executive Secretary. The resignation becomes effective immediately. The remaining members of the Council Leadership is responsible for notifying the Council Members regarding the resignation and appointment of a new Council Leadership member.

Chapter 7. General Assembly

Article 24 – Composition

The General Assembly is composed of all members of the Council. The General Assembly may be attended by a limited number of observers (see Article 27).

Article 25 – Functions

1. The General Assembly has the power to suggest any matter significant to the existence and long-term success of the Council
2. The General Assembly meets at least twice every year for an ordinary assembly. In addition to these ordinary meetings the General Assembly meets for extraordinary meetings at the initiative of the Council Leadership

3. *Meetings of the General Assembly may be held in electronic form.*
4. *Matters may be added to the agenda of a General Assembly meeting at the request of (two-fifths) of the members present.*

Article 26 – Operation

1. Convocation of meetings

The General Assembly shall meet at least once year. The date and place of the meeting shall be decided by the Council Leadership. It is possible that the General Assembly is conducted online. The Chair shall convene the meeting, giving at least 40 days' notice.

2. Extraordinary meetings

An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly may be convened by the Chair or by the Vice-Chairs or by a formal request in writing from at least one-fifth of the total members of the Council.

3. Chair of meetings

Meetings of the General Assembly shall be hosted by the Chair or, while in the absence of the Chair, it shall be hosted by one of the Vice-Chairs, to be nominated by the Council Leadership.

4. Voting procedure

Each Full Member of the Council has one vote for each decision opened by the Council Leadership. The voting takes place in the DECODE Connect platform using a confidential online voting tool and be opened for at least 14 days. The Council shall take its decisions by simple majority of the votes received.

5. Minutes of meetings

The decisions by the General Assembly are entered in the minutes and notified to all Members in writing.

Article 27 - Observers

Partner organisations, European institutions and international and regional bodies may be invited as observers by the Council Leadership to attend the General Assembly. Observers have the right to speak in open discussions of the General Assembly at the invitation of the Chair, but may not vote.

Chapter 8. Dissolution of the Council

Article 7 - Dissolution Process

A proposal to dissolve the Council shall be made by the Council Leaders or by more than half of the Council Full Members. The General Assembly shall approve the proposal of dissolution by a two-thirds majority of the Members present. In the event of dissolution of the Council the assets and liabilities of the Council shall be allocated to a non-profit aim.

Chapter 9. Amendments to the Statute

Article 8 - Statute Amendment Process

Shall minor edits to the Statute is needed to be made, such as spelling mistakes or adding clearer explanation and example that can improve the comprehensibility of the Statute, the Council Leadership can consult with the Executive Secretary to make amendments. The changes will be informed to all Council Members in writing.

Significant changes of the Statute, concerning the content, addition and removal of a certain article, require a voting of the Council Full Members. A proposal to amend the Council Statute is made upon a written request and given to the Council Leadership for a council voting. The final decision is taken based on the majority of the votes.

Appendix

List of Countries in Europe based on Geographical Boundaries

*The list is created based on the information provided in the official website of the European Union (EU). The list includes the 27 of members of countries of the EU, candidate and potential candidate countries and other European countries.

Source: https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries_en

Number	Country
1.	Albania
2.	Andorra
3.	Armenia
4.	Austria
5.	Azerbaijan
6.	Belarus
7.	Belgium
8.	Bosnia and Herzegovina
9.	Bulgaria
10.	Croatia
11.	Cyprus
12.	Czechia
13.	Denmark
14.	Estonia
15.	Finland
16.	France
17.	Georgia
18.	Germany
19.	Greece
20.	Hungary
21.	Iceland
22.	Ireland
23.	Italy
24.	Kosovo
25.	Latvia

26.	Liechtenstein
27.	Lithuania
28.	Luxembourg
29.	Malta
30.	Moldova
31.	Monaco
32.	Montenegro
33.	Netherlands
34.	North Macedonia
35.	Norway
36.	Poland
37.	Portugal
38.	Romania
39.	Russia
40.	San Marino
41.	Serbia
42.	Slovakia
43.	Slovenia
44.	Spain
45.	Sweden
46.	Switzerland
47.	Turkey
48.	Ukraine
49.	United Kingdom
50.	Vatican City

PROJECT PARTNERS:



Author:

ACEEU (Accreditation Council for Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities)
December 2021



www.decode-council.org

Project Number: 2020-1-IT02-KA203-079952

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.