



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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MASTERCOURSE IN TERRITORIAL, URBAN,  
ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE PLANNING

*Abstract*

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS MAPPING  
PROCESSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:  
AN OVERVIEW**

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Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are key actors to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): they are not only important economic actors in the physical context they operate, but they also act as reference for transitions toward sustainable development. HEIs are now faced with the societal responsibility of providing guidance towards the SDGs, in educating future decision makers and practicing what they preach in all the dimensions of University's sustainability: education, research, campus management and urban outreach.

Mapping what is already being done by the major universities can be an important step to deepen the understanding of how to implement SDGs at a local level.

This thesis contributes to this step by mapping tools to identify key stakeholders engaged in contributing to the SDGs, keep database of what is already being done, identify strengths and gaps in the organization activities, gather information for reporting, communicating and showcasing the institution's contribution to the SDGs.

A systematic literature review was carried out in a first phase with the aim of identifying the SDGs mapping tools and methodologies used by HEIs, where the first ten relevant entries were analysed. Scientific publications were selected across those specifically focusing on SDGs mapping. Then, the first ten ranked universities in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (THE) 2020, that is the only global performance tables that assess universities against the SDGs, were used as a sample for analysing current best practices. Results present a comparative analysis on Sustainable Development Goals mapping tools as adopted in Universities across the world. Conclusions show how the SDGs progress measurement represents a starting point for a comprehensive assessment of institutions' contribution to the achievement of the goals. This thesis offers a baseline to assess the current situation and help HEIs decision makers to design pathways towards SDGs.