Akademia WSB

WSB University

# SDG 13
# Tracker Report

2025

13 CLIMATE ACTION



# Climate Action: WSB University's SDG 13 Report 2025

*WSB University (Akademia WSB), Dąbrowa Górnicza · Reporting year 2025*

## Executive summary

WSB University works on climate action in a region where it matters most in Poland. Silesia is the country's coal heartland, and its transition to a low-carbon economy is the largest such process in the European Union. The University contributes through research on energy transformation, education in climate and carbon competences, vocational training for the renewable-energy industry, and the management of its own buildings.

Key results for the reporting year:

- **Energy research:** the Institute of Energy Transformation, directed by the commercial director of the Veolia group in Poland, researches renewable energy, low-carbon transport and sustainable heating.
- **Vocational training for renewables:** an Industry Skills Centre for solar energy, established with the City of Żywiec (National Recovery Plan, PLN 11.7 million), was completed in November 2025. Its closing conference gathered more than 250 participants.
- **International climate research:** WSBU led a Visegrad Fund project on forecasting the factors behind climate change within the SDG framework, with partners from Ukraine, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.
- **Indicators:** a paper in *Sustainable Development*, co-authored with the National Institute for Strategic Studies in Kyiv, set out a system of indicators for the environmental component of sustainable development.
- **Education:** climate mitigation and adaptation, the EU Emissions Trading System, the carbon border adjustment mechanism and carbon-footprint workshops are taught within the ESG and Green Competences programmes.
- **Campus:** WSBU's UI GreenMetric score for energy and climate change rose from 885 points in 2023 to 1,100 in 2024. A thermo-modernization project with rooftop photovoltaics and energy storage begins in April 2026.

## Context

SDG 13 calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Its targets of particular relevance to universities are:

- strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards (13.1);
- the integration of climate measures into policies, strategies and planning (13.2);
- improved education, awareness and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation and early warning (13.3).

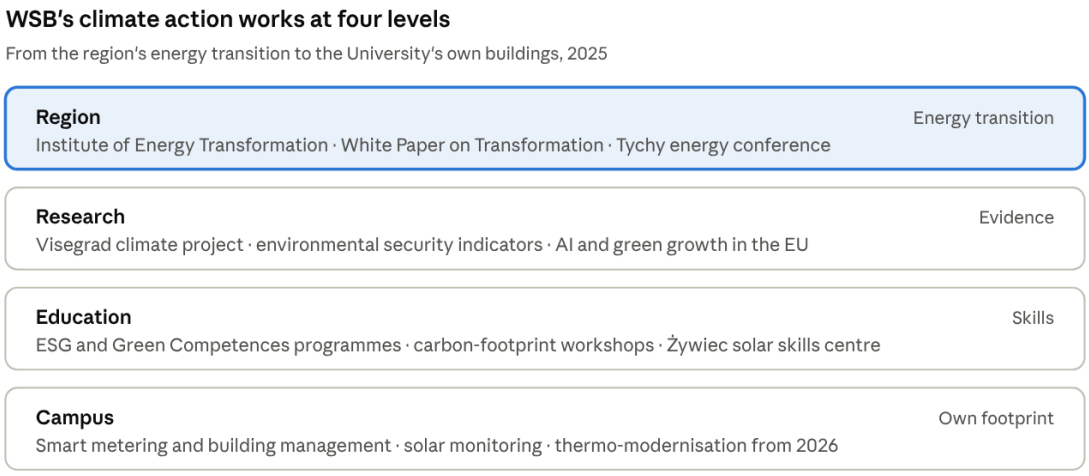
The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings assess universities through climate research, measures of their own carbon emissions, and cooperation with government and other bodies on climate action.

SDG 13 is not among the seven priority goals named in WSBU's Sustainable Development Strategy to 2030, although the University publishes a Climate Action Plan and an Energy Efficiency and Climate Action page. In practice, climate action is pursued through the Strategy's priority goals:

- **SDG 4:** knowledge and skills for sustainable development, including climate competences;
- **SDG 9:** technology development and industrial diversification, in this case towards low-carbon technologies;
- **SDG 11:** reducing the environmental impact of cities, with attention to air quality;
- **SDG 12:** resource efficiency and corporate sustainability reporting, which now includes climate disclosure under the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive.

The regional setting gives this work its weight. The Silesian Voivodeship is one of the European Union's coal regions supported by the Just Transition Fund, which finances two WSBU projects. Coal-fired heating remains the principal source of air pollution in the region, and the transition of its energy system is the subject of the White Paper on Transformation, to which WSBU experts contribute.

## Four levels of climate action




WSBU climate action by level · 2025

The University's strongest contribution is at regional level, where its research and expertise shape the energy transition of a coal region. Education converts that expertise into competences, both for managers who will report under EU climate rules and for technicians who will install solar systems. The management of WSBU's own buildings is the smallest of the four levels in terms of emissions, but the one over which the University has full control.

## Energy transition of the region

### Institute of Energy Transformation

The Institute of Energy Transformation researches the decarbonization of Poland's energy system. Its fields include renewable energy sources, low-carbon transport, sustainable heating and end-use energy efficiency. It is directed by Prof. Krzysztof Zamasz, who is also Commercial Director of the Veolia group in

Poland. This arrangement connects academic research with the operating practice of a major heat, water and energy company.

### Policy for coal regions

WSBU experts contribute to the White Paper on Transformation, a strategic document that identifies the barriers to moving away from coal and proposes instruments of EU cohesion and energy policy for coal regions. Vice-Rector Prof. Marcin Lis was appointed in 2025 to the Scientific Council of the Central Mining Institute (GIG-PIB) for 2025–2029, a state research institute whose work covers the environmental consequences of mining and its restructuring.

### Energy competences of local government

On 11 April 2025 WSBU was content partner of the national conference "Energy challenges of cities: building the energy competences of local government", held in Tychy with the Tychy Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the Katowice Special Economic Zone. The Institute of Energy Transformation led a session on municipal energy action. The programme covered:

- the energy self-sufficiency of municipalities;
- local energy planning;
- energy communities and energy clusters;
- financing for energy investment in local government.

### Vocational skills for renewable energy

In partnership with the City of Żywiec, WSBU established an Industry Skills Centre for solar energy at the Mechanical and Electrical School Complex in Żywiec, financed from the National Recovery Plan (PLN 11.7 million, July 2023 – November 2025). The center trains technicians for the photovoltaic industry, a sector that will determine how quickly the region can replace coal-fired generation. Its closing conference in November 2025 gathered more than 250 representatives of science, education, local government and the renewable-energy industry, who discussed the green and digital transformation of the energy sector.

### Just Transition Fund

Two WSBU projects are financed by the European Funds for Silesia programme from the Just Transition Fund, the EU instrument created to mitigate the social and economic effects of decarbonization:

- **Comprehensive support for the development of WSBU in line with the needs of the green and digital economy** (PLN 9.1 million, 2024–2026);
- **EduLider** (PLN 5.1 million, 2024–2026), which includes applied research on energy management in enterprises.

## Climate research and indicators

### Forecasting the factors behind climate change

WSBU led the Visegrad Fund project "Forecasting factors influencing climatic changes as a part of SDGs 2030". The consortium comprised:

- Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute;
- the University of Žilina;
- VŠB – Technical University of Ostrava;
- Pan-European University in Prague;
- Corvinus University of Budapest.

The project developed a new method for estimating sustainable development indicators. Its results were published in two articles in ranked journals and in an online guide of good practice and recommendations, prepared in consultation with local governments and non-governmental organizations.

### Indicators of environmental security

Kharazishvili, Kwilinski, Ivaniuta, Sukhodolia and Czart published a system of indicators for the environmental component of sustainable development, viewed through a security lens, in *Sustainable Development*. The paper was co-authored with the National Institute for Strategic Studies in Kyiv and covers climate adaptation alongside other environmental dimensions.

### Climate and the green economy

The research team working with Sumy State University and EKA University of Applied Sciences in Riga published in 2025 on green finance and ESG performance, on entrepreneurship and green economic development, and on the role of artificial intelligence in green growth in the European Union. Three members of this group are among the world's top 2% most-cited scientists.

### Climate and water in education research

SHORE (Horizon Europe) addresses ocean and water literacy, including the role of oceans in the climate system. Its activities reached more than 100 schools in Europe, and its Mission Arena in Sopot gathered over 200 stakeholders around a carbon-neutral, circular blue economy.

### Climate adaptation and urban risk

The project funded by the GZM Metropolitan Science Fund on AI analysis of satellite images develops a prototype system for monitoring flood-protection infrastructure. Flood risk is among the climate-related hazards named in target 13.1, and the system is designed to support early detection of threats to dikes, dams and reservoirs.

## Climate education and competences

### Climate in the curriculum

The ESG Manager and Sustainable Development Manager programmes include climate mitigation and adaptation, the EU Emissions Trading System, the carbon border adjustment mechanism and practical carbon-footprint workshops. Related programmes address the subject from other directions:

- **Logistics Manager – Green Competences:** low-emission transport and reverse logistics;
- **Project Manager – Green Competences:** the PRiSM methodology, which requires project managers to account for environmental impact;

- **Sustainable Development and ESG** (with TÜV NORD Polska): verification of climate and sustainability disclosures;
- **Management specialization in Sustainable Organization Management and ESG Reporting:** preparation of non-financial reports, which under the CSRD include climate risk.

In total, 15 courses at WSBU integrate responsible management and the SDGs, and 178 of the University's 265 peer-reviewed articles in 2025 addressed responsible management and sustainability.

### Green project management

Through its agreement with GPM Global, WSBU teaches the PRiSM methodology for sustainable project management, and 18 staff have completed GPM training. Students may take the GPM-b certification.

### Teacher and staff development

The Teaching Excellence project (European Funds for Social Development, PLN 3.4 million, 2024–2027) requires every participating academic teacher to complete training in green competences alongside learning design and digital skills. This embeds climate content across disciplines rather than confining it to specialist programmes.

### Climate education beyond the University

- **Schools:** SHORE delivers environmental education on oceans, inland waters and their role in the climate system. In the 2025/26 academic year WSBU carried out more than 18 activities with over 2,500 participants and supported 11 schools.
- **Public installation:** the "EkoŚcieżka" (Eco-Path), funded within EduLider, provides interactive environmental education for visitors and school groups.
- **International students:** the Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme "Fostering Sustainable Business Practices" covers Green Project Management and greenwashing.

## Campus energy and emissions

### Energy management in buildings

The University manages energy use through the technologies it teaches:

- building management systems that control heating, cooling and lighting in real time;
- building information modelling for the management of University buildings;
- smart meters that track energy and water consumption;
- environmental sensors that monitor air quality and lighting;
- monitoring systems that track the output of solar panels.

These measures are described on the University's Energy Efficiency and Climate Action page, alongside the published Climate Action Plan.

### Investment in building efficiency

From April 2026 WSBU will carry out a deep thermo-modernization of its historic building at ul. Konopnickiej 36 in Dąbrowa Górnicza, financed by the European Funds for Infrastructure, Climate and

Environment (PLN 4.2 million, April 2026 – March 2027). The work goes well beyond insulation and includes:

- replacement of windows and external doors;
- modernization of the central heating and hot-water systems;
- new ventilation;
- LED lighting throughout;
- a rooftop photovoltaic installation with energy storage.

This is the University's first documented investment in on-site renewable generation combined with storage, and it will provide a basis for measuring the reduction of emissions from its own buildings.

## Awareness and public engagement

### Students

- **#climateofchange:** a debate programme in which students engage with climate advocacy.
- **UN Club WSBUU:** a student organisation working on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Volunteering:** volunteers of the European Solidarity Corps project "United in Action" ran pro-environmental campaigns and developed tools to promote environmental attitudes.

### Public dialogue

- **Sustainable Development of Enterprises** (3 April 2025): the national conference covered green loans from Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego for energy efficiency, alongside ESG risk and cross-sector cooperation.
- **Agriverde Start-up** (27 March 2025): WSBU was a partner of a conference on green innovation and environmental start-ups at the KSSENON accelerator in Żory.
- **Energy challenges of cities** (11 April 2025): a national conference on the energy competences of local government, held in Tychy.
- **Żywiec Industry Skills Centre closing conference** (November 2025): more than 250 participants discussed the green and digital transformation of the energy sector.

### International sharing

WSBU presents its sustainability work in international forums. In December 2025 the results of the ENTER-CBL project were presented at the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings Forum, the annual meeting of universities assessed in the ranking. The University also takes part in the PRME network as one of seven signatories in Poland.

## Continuing activities in 2026

- **Building efficiency and renewables:** the thermo-modernization of the historic building at ul. Konopnickiej 36, including rooftop photovoltaics with energy storage, runs from April 2026 to March 2027.
- **Green-economy curricula:** the two Just Transition Fund projects, including EduLider, conclude in June 2026, delivering curricula and laboratories aligned with the green economy.

- **Energy research:** the Institute of Energy Transformation continues its work on renewable energy, sustainable heating and low-carbon transport, and WSBU experts continue to contribute to policy for coal regions.
- **Climate and water education:** SHORE continues its activities in European schools until the project's completion in 2026.
- **ESG education:** the Green Competences and ESG programmes continue to prepare specialists for companies reporting climate risk under the CSRD.
- **Teaching staff:** Teaching Excellence continues to train academic teachers in green competences until 2027.