

Polytechnic University ranked 37th in THE University Impact Rankings 2020 and got the highest ranking among Russian universities

On April 22, the British Times Higher Education, which specializes in covering topical issues of higher education, and one of the leaders in the field of assessing the quality of university activities, published the worldwide ranking “The Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2020”. The ranking is dedicated to assessing the impact of universities on the process of implementing the sustainable development goals (SDGs, for more details see below “For reference”), formulated by the United Nations for the period up to 2030.



The new ranking assessed the contribution of universities to the implementation of 17 UN goals. Last year, first-time participant in the ranking, SPbPU was ranked 85th in the world. This time, it got 37th position, ahead of all Russian and many foremost foreign universities. In some areas, Polytechnic University showed even better results than the average.

It is assumed that to be considered in the overall ranking of THE University Impact Rankings, the university must participate in the achievement of at least four SDGs,

including SDG-17: partnership for sustainable development.

The total score of the overall ranking is calculated by combining the score for SDG-17 and the top three points for other SDGs. At the same time, the weight of the SDG-17 score is 22%, and the weight of each of the three SDGs included in the university rating is 26% each. Thus, all universities, in fact, are assessed by various SDGs, depending on the development priorities of the universities.

The number of universities participating in each SDG varies. The highest number of universities, i.e., 806, provided data on SDG-17. 766 universities from around the world have passed the minimum threshold presuming mandatory participation in at least four SDGs.

Polytechnic University received the top scores for:

- SDG-7: ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy sources for all - **ranked 5th in the world**
- SDG-13: urgent measures to combat climate change and its consequences: **ranked 5th in the world**
- SDG-14: conservation and rational use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development - **ranked 21st in the world**
- SDG-8: promoting steady, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all: **ranked 28th in the world**
- SDG-11: ensuring openness, security, resilience and environmental sustainability of cities and settlements - **ranked 30th in the world.**

SPbPU Rector, Academician of the RAS Andrei RUDSKOI, believes that the university's position in the ranking demonstrates its commitment to the UN sustainable development goals. The formed scientific, educational and innovative ecosystem of the university serves this purpose, providing a solution to the urgent tasks of the dynamic and sustainable development of the university, as an essential component of the socio-economic system of Russia. In particular, in his opinion, Polytechnic University contributes to the development of society with its in-demand graduates with world-class competencies, research results, developments and innovations, governance in the broad sense of the term, meaning effective management of intellectual potential, resources, quality of education, and the degree of influence on the high-tech industry and business.



“If we look at the sustainable development goals defined by the UN, we will see that in many ways they intersect with Russian national projects, within the framework of which the policy of socio-economic development of our country is implemented. These are, first of all, education and science, health, ecology, industry and digital technologies, and, finally, the digital economy as a whole. And in each of the areas Polytechnic University makes a significant contribution and has considerable achievements,” said the rector.

Each university has its own priorities within the 17 UN goals. According to Alexey BOROVKOV, SPbPU Vice-Rector for Innovative Projects, for SPbPU this is, first of all, SDG-9: creation of a solid infrastructure, promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrialization and introduction of innovations. And this was also reflected in the ranking of THE University Impact Rankings 2020: were SPbPU received the top points for publication activity (95.1) precisely under SDG-9.

“If we speak about SDG-9, concerning infrastructure, industrialization and the introduction of innovations, then, first of all, we should note on the high publication activity of scientists at Polytechnic University, and the unique resources it has: the

Supercomputer Center, an exceptional set of academic and commercial licenses for world-class computer technology, modern equipment allowing to carry out multidisciplinary projects in a wide range of scientific areas and high-tech industries with high productivity and at a high level. Polytechnic University, in particular, its NTI Competence Center, is a partner, and in many cases the strategic partner, of scores of companies included in the TOP-100 for Russia's sustainable development,” explains Alexey BOROVKOV.



“Gazprom, Rosneft, Rosatom, Rostec, UEC, Russian Helicopters, Severstal, USC, NovaTEK, Surgutneftegas, Sibur, Transmashholding, RusHydro, KamAZ, AVTOVAZ and many others from this list,” the Vice Rector continues, “give the country millions of jobs; these leading companies pay more and more attention to socio-economic and environmental issues, realizing that these are the matters of a long-term strategy for sustainable development. Most importantly, the big business is largely tied to the research and development that we carry out for it. There are about 10 landmark projects that Polytechnic University is proud of. For example, we work with KamAZ in six areas related to public transport and the environment. But the core one, no doubt, is the universal modular passenger platform of buses, electric buses and trolleybuses, where for the first time in history Polytechnic University performs as the lead contractor: no other university has acted as the lead contractor of such a large-scale project”.

According to Alexey BOROVKOV, the 37th ranking of Polytechnic University in THE

Impact Rankings 2020 indicates that the priority areas for the dynamic and sustainable development of the university were correctly identified: *“Especially, given the fact that recently based on a trans-disciplinary approach and cross-industry transfer we are actively involved in advanced production technologies in new projects meeting the UN SDGs; for example, as a technology coordinator and one of the main executors in the development of the federal project ‘Digital Ob-Irtysh Basin’, the largest in Russia and the third largest river basin in the world; in mathematical modeling and predicting the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus infection in St. Petersburg and the North-West Federal District; in the creation and development of a breeding and production center in the field of agriculture with the aim introducing advanced digital technologies into the Russian agro-industrial complex.”*

For reference:

On September 25, 2015, 193 countries, including Russia, adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The concept of “sustainable development” was introduced at a meeting of the United Nations (UN) Commission on Environment and Development in the 1980s. It denotes development that promotes prosperity and economic empowerment, increased wealth and environmental protection; it offers the best way to improve the lives of people around the world. It is assumed that in order to achieve each of the set goals, governments, business, civil society institutions, and people should make their contribution. Some countries voluntarily publish national sustainability reports. Russia is preparing to publish the first voluntary report in 2020.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are comprehensive and indivisible, ensure the balance of all three components of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental for 17 points:

- SDG-1. The universal eradication of poverty in all its forms
- SDG-2. End hunger, ensure food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- SDG 3. Ensure a healthy lifestyle and promote well-being for all at all ages
- SDG 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- SDG 5. Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
- SDG 6. Ensure the availability and rational use of water and sanitation for all
- SDG-7. Provide access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- SDG-8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- SDG 9. Build a solid infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and innovation
- SDG-10. Reduce inequality within and between countries
- SDG 11. Ensure openness, security, resilience and sustainability of cities and towns

- SDG-12. Provide rational patterns of consumption and production
- SDG-13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its consequences
- SDG-14. Conservation and rational use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- SDG-15. Protection, restoration of terrestrial ecosystems and promotion of their rational use, sustainable forest management, combating desertification, ending and reversing the process of land degradation and ending the process of loss of biological diversity
- SDG-16. Contributing to building peaceful and open societies for sustainable development, ensuring access to justice for all and creating effective, accountable and participatory institutions at all levels
- SDG-17. Strengthening the means to achieve sustainable development and revitalizing global partnership mechanisms for sustainable development.

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