
Making sustainability real:

EU policies, the role of technology, and new business models

Call for Papers/expression of interest

Date: 17-18 April 2023 (Monday-Tuesday)

Convenor: EU*Asia Institute at ESSCA School of Management, France.

Venue: ESSCA School of Management, Lyon (4 Pont Pasteur)

Since 2018, the 'Governance of Sustainability in Europe' network has held five interdisciplinary research workshops:

- At ESSCA Angers, by Pr Thomas Hoerber (2018 & 2021)
- At ESSCA Bordeaux, by Pr Gabriel Weber
- At Roskilde University, Pr Helene Dyrhauge
- At Andrassy University Budapest, by Pr Kristina Kurze

They have brought together scholars and practitioners in the field of sustainable development research, encompassing all its dimensions - economic, and social and environmental sustainability. Two books are the outcome of these meetings (Hoerber, Weber, published in 2022; Kurze, Dyrhauge, forthcoming in 2022/2023). Another book - edited by Tendero and Weber - is planned. Connections have been made to other COST (GOVTRAN), UACES (Climate change and Sustainable development) and PERISCOPE Erasmus + project (Purchasing Education Research with an Innovative Sustainability Scope) networks in the field.

This conference is meant to open a discussion on the applications of EU social and environmental policies in the business world. The objective of the conference is to analyse the enablers and barriers for the full participation of businesses in the transition to sustainability.

As an example of an emerging business model, the circular economy (CE) aims to maintain the value of products, materials, and resources in circulation for as long as possible, minimizing the generation of waste (European Commission 2014). Despite having been offered as a solution to environmental issues, only 30% of plastic waste is collected for recycling in Europe and most of the waste is downcycled into materials with a lower value than that attributed to the original product (Calleja, 2019). The private sector faces numerous challenges, such as the adaptation to more stringent environmental regulations; the access to the latest technologies and digitalisation processes, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with less resources; or the increase in public scrutiny over their social and environmental impacts. EU policies have attempted to influence and foster change in these areas, as it can be seen, for instance in the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).

Along with EU policies (and their challenges), research on the role of technology and its potential to enable the transition to more sustainable practices, requires attention from a multidisciplinary perspective. The same applies to corporate behaviour, supply chains design, reporting and governance, with the potential for new business models that embrace the need to address social and environmental impacts and justify their social license to operate to all stakeholders.

Contributions should address one of the following themes:

- The influence of EU policies on business decision-making
- The barriers for implementation of digital tools and environment-friendly technologies
- Challenges and best practices in sustainability reporting and sustainable corporate governance
- Sustainable finance and sustainable investment practices
- Social and environmental issues in supply chains
- The role of emerging technologies in circular supply chains
- Buying in secondary markets
- New and needed green competences: what are them?

Previous workshop participants are particularly welcome to submit proposals. We would like to thank them for their contribution and are looking forward to seeing them in Lyon.

Please send an abstract of 150-200 words to

- Professor Thomas Hoerber, ESSCA - Thomas.Hoerber@essca.fr
- Professor Katia Picaud-Bello, ESSCA - Katia.PICAUD-BELLO@essca.fr
- Dr Rosa Fernandez, University of Warwick - Rosa.Fernandez-Martin@warwick.ac.uk

Deadline for paper proposals: extended until 16 February 2023

You will be notified if your application has been successful by 18 February 2023.

There are no registration fees for this workshop. Venue, lunch and coffee breaks will be covered by ESSCA & UACES. Some travel funding may be available for young, early career researchers and invited speakers.

References:

Calleja, D. (2019). Why the “New Plastics Economy” must be a circular economy. Field Actions Science Reports. The Journal of Field Actions, (Special Issue 19), 22-27.

European Commission. (2014). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe. 2.7.2014, COM (2014)398 final. Brussels: EC.

Hoerber, T. Weber, G. (2022) (eds.) The European Environmental Conscience in EU Politics, Routledge, London