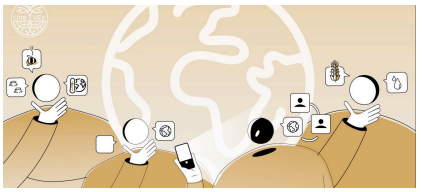
VIRTUAL BRIDGE
BETWEEN EUROPEAN & AFRICAN STUDENTS
FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES



una europa

# Una Europa Virtual Exchanges for Sustainability (UnaVEx)

## Program & Instructions

UnaVex is a five-week-long virtual exchange unit consisting of a total of five sessions. During the virtual exchange, you will attend **inspiring plenary talks** on different perspectives on sustainability. You will also be introduced to your **international small group** and a moderator. In the groups, you will discuss and develop a collaborative, sustainability-themed action task.

## UnaVEx offers a versatile look into sustainability – topics of the virtual exchange include:

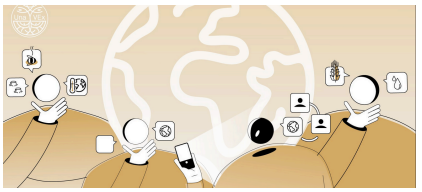
- Sustainable Development
- Ecological Sustainability
- Social Sustainability
- Economic Sustainability
- Cultural Sustainability
- Taking action for sustainability



No previous sustainability or natural science studies are required. UnaVEx is a platform for **multidisciplinary** and **intercultural** encounters for university students interested in sustainability and the future of our common planet. UnaVEx welcomes students from EU and African nations, building a bridge between the continents for sustainable futures.

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ALMA MATER STUDIORUM UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA
KU LEUVEN
UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
UNIVERSITE DE KINSHASA

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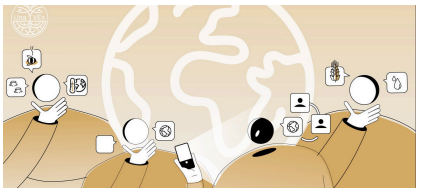


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# Instructions for the first day

Before the start of the Virtual Exchange (VE) Week, please, study and familiarise yourself with the materials on DigiCampus online learning platform.

Prior to the 1st day of the VE Week, **prepare to introduce yourself and your thoughts related to sustainability to your small group**. Find also **a sustainability action that took place in your local community** or home country to share with your group members.

# Structure of the virtual exchange

The weekly virtual exchange sessions follow the same structure consisting of plenary sessions and small group activities. The exchang e concludes with presenting every group's sustainability actions.

| Time | 1st VE day | 2nd VE day | 3rd VE day | 4th VE day | 5th VE day |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Hour | Guest lecture, Q&A | Guest lecture, Q&A | Guest lecture, Q&A | Guest lecture, Q&A | Guest lecture, Q&A |
| Hours 2-3 | Small group activities | Small group activities | Small group activities | Small group activities | Finalizing the action, joint presentations |

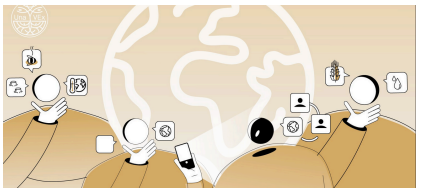
Planning and implementing the Sustainability action

Indivdual study report

1 ECTS



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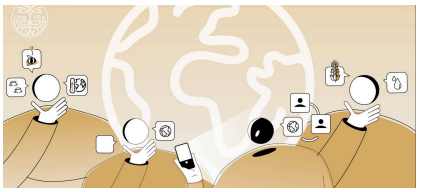


# Virtual exchange program

| Date | Time | Plenary topic & guest speaker | Group activity |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.3.2026 | 14–17 (Bologna, Kinshasa, Leuven)<br>15–18 (Helsinki, Johannesburg)<br>16–19 (Nairobi) | Introduction to UnaVEx; Guest speech: Guest speech: Imagination in Action, Kairos Futura, Nairobi-based art collective | • Getting to know one another and starting to plan your group's *Sustainability action.*<br>• **Pre-task:** Find a sustainability action that took place in your local community or home country to share with your group members. |
| 12.3.2026 | 14–17 (Bologna, Kinshasa, Leuven)<br>15–18 (Helsinki, Johannesburg)<br>16–19 (Nairobi) | Guest speech: Foresight in Agriculture, Food and Energy: Planning and Managing Water in the Changing Global Environment, Prof. Cush Luwezi, Univ. Kinshasa, Kongo | • Discussion on the day's topic<br>• Update and continue with your group's *Sustainability Action* task. |
| 19.3.2026 | 14–17 (Bologna, Kinshasa, Leuven)<br>15–18 (Helsinki, Johannesburg)<br>16–19 (Nairobi) | Guest speech: Solomon Derese from the University of Nairobi, Kenya. | • Discussion on the day's topic: reflect on your Sustainability action and if it relates to the guest speech.<br>• Update and continue with your group's *Sustainability Action* task. |
| 24.3.2026 | 14–17 (Bologna, Kinshasa, Leuven)<br>15–18 (Helsinki, Johannesburg)<br>16–19 (Nairobi) | Guest speech: Francesco Spampinato from the University of Bologna. | • Discussion on the day's topic: reflect on your Sustainability action and if it relates to the guest speech<br>• Update and continue with your group's *Sustainability Action* task. |



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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 26.3.2026 | 14–17 (Bologna, Kinshasa, Leuven)<br>15–18 (Helsinki, Johannesburg)<br>16–19 (Nairobi) | Guest speech: Sustainable Development in Politics, President Tarja Halonen, former president of Finland. | • Discussion on the day's topic: reflect on your Sustainability action and if it relates to the guest speech<br>• In small groups: fiinalize your Sustainability Action task<br>• Joint ending: going over every group's action, filling in in the feedback survey. |

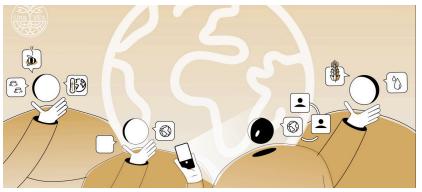
## Digicampus course page & the virtual exchange materials

UnaVEx uses the *Digicampus* online learning platform. There, you will access all the materials and instructions you need to complete the virtual exchange, including:

- News forum about the course practicalities
- Your group number
- Lecture recordings and PowerPoint presentations of the virtual exchange sessions
- The Zoom link
- Folder for returning the individual course report



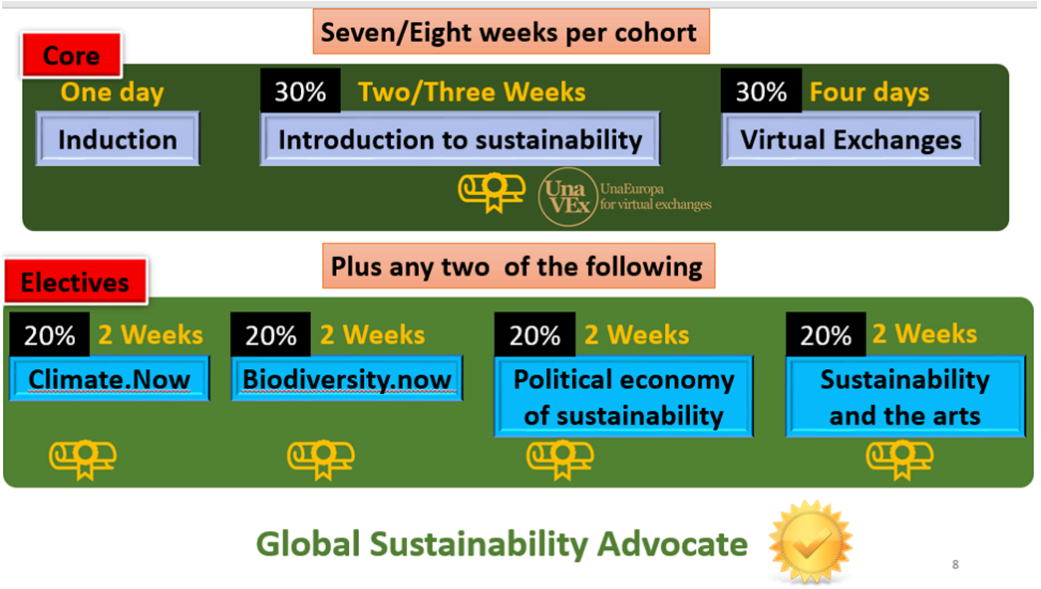
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# After the virtual exchange: Becoming a Global Sustainability Advocate

To become a *Global Sustainability Advocate*, you will need to complete the following:

1. **Virtual Exchange Program**: Participate in five online sessions (each 2-3 hours), earning 1 Credit Point.
2. **Introduction to Sustainability MOOC**: Complete this foundational course (worth 3 ECTS) via the University of Helsinki's online learning platform. Find the course here.
3. **Optional Una Europa MOOC**: Choose and complete two additional MOOC from the Una Europa Micro-credential in Sustainability program. Browse the courses here.

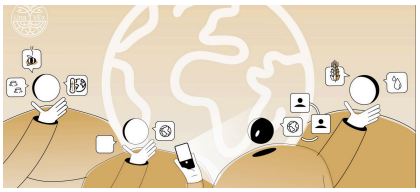



This combination of courses and virtual exchange will equip you with the foundational knowledge and practical skills needed to advocate for sustainability on a global scale.

By participating in the Virtual Exchange, you will receive a certificate of completion and earn one credit, regardless of additional coursework.



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# UnaVEx Program

## Thursday 5.3.2026

**Host: Lee-Ann Modley, University of Johannesburg, South Africa**

15:00 Welcoming words, overview of the UnaVEX Virtual Exchange, Solomon Derese, University of Nairobi & Laure van Hoecke, KU Leuven

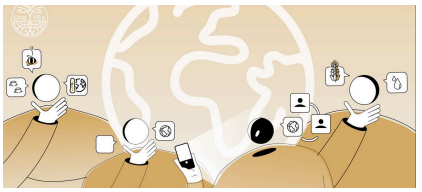
Short introduction of Unavex Partner Universities:

- *University of Helsinki, Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research (UH-INAR), Hanna Lappalainen & Helsinki team*
- *Alma Mater Studiorum – Universita di Bologna (UNIBO), Italy (IT), Francesco Maria Spampinato and Bologna Team*
- *Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL), Belgium (BE), Laure van Hoecke, KU Leuven and KUL team,*
- *University of Johannesburg (JU), South Africa (ZA), Lee-Ann Modley & JUL team*
- *University of Nairobi (UoN), Kenya (KE) Solomon Derese & KE team*
- *Universite de Kinshasa (UNIKIN), Democratic Republic of the Congo (CD), Gode Bola & UNIKIN team*

15:15 UnaVEx Global sustainability advocate, Solomon Derese, University of Nairobi
15:30 Sustainability action task, Julia Karhumaa, University of Helsinki
15:45 Reports and getting credits, Aleksi Vauhkonen, University of Helsinki & Laure van Hoecke, KU Leuven
16:00 How communicate and work on-line during the virtual exchange, Laure van Hoecke, KU Leuven
**16:15 Guest speech: Imagination in Action, Kairos Futura, Nairobi-based art collective. Introduced by Francesco Spampinato, Università di Bologna**
17:00 Zoom break-out rooms, Mikko Kulmala University of Helsinki
17:10 Small group activity in Zoom break-out rooms (students & moderators) E.g testing Miro tool together
18:00 End of the day



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## Thursday 12.3.2026
**Host: Professor Raphaël Tshimanga, Universite de Kinshasa, Kongo**

15:00 Welcoming words, program of the day
**15:15 Guest speech: Foresight in Agriculture, Food and Energy: Planning and Managing Water in the Changing Global Environment, Prof. Cush Luwezi, Univ. Kinshasa, Kongo**
16:00 Instructions for the group activity & Zoom break-room, Julia Karhumaa, Mikko Kulmala, University of Helsinki
16.15 Small group activity in Zoom break-out rooms, sustainability action task (students & moderators)
18:00 End of the day

## Thursday 19.3.2026
**Host: Solomon Derese, University of Nairobi, Kenya**

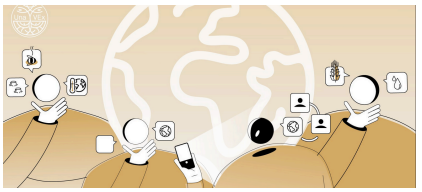
15:00 Welcoming words, program of the day, Hanna Lappalainen, University of Helsinki
**15:15 Guest speech: Solomon Derese**
16:00 Instructions for the group activity & Zoom break-room, Julia Karhumaa, Mikko Kulmala, University of Helsinki
16.15 Small group activity in Zoom break-out rooms, sustainability action task (students & moderators)
18:00 End of the day

## Tuesday 24.3.2026
**Host: Francesco Spampinato, Università di Bologna**

15:00 Welcoming words, program of the day
**15:15 Guest speech: Francesco Spampinato**
16:00 Instructions for the group activity & Zoom break-room, Julia Karhumaa, Mikko Kulmala, University of Helsinki
16.15 Small group activity in Zoom break-out rooms, sustainability action task (students & moderators)
18:00 End of the day



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## Thursday 26.3.2026

**Host: Hanna Lappalainen, University of Helsinki, Finland**

15:00 Welcoming words, program of the day
**15:15 Guest speech: Sustainable Development in Politics, President Tarja Halonen, former president of Finland**
16:00 Instructions for the group activity & Zoom break-room, Julia Karhumaa, Mikko Kulmala, University of Helsinki
16.15 Small group activity in Zoom break-out rooms: finalizing the sustainability action task (students & moderators).
Plenary session: the groups' sustainability action presentation on the Miro canvas.
Filling in the feedback form
18:00 End of the day



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