

Sustainability in Business Studies – more than an elective!

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While it is basically undisputed that there is a sustainability revolution taking place and that sustainability and entrepreneurship are integrally related (Amatucci, 2019), there is little research on how and at what level sustainability should be introduced in business studies. These two questions, however, need specific attention.

The concept of sustainability is often perceived as the exact opposite of the contents provided in traditional business studies (von der Heide and Lamberton, 2011). Nevertheless, the integration of sustainable business concepts into business studies is neither extraordinarily original nor something completely new. Current research presents flagship projects all over the globe and their successes and failures (e.g. Gomes et al, 2021), but there is no structured approach on which level of higher education to choose for which kind of sustainability content.

To understand how to best integrate sustainability into curricula of business studies, it is – at least for Europe – necessary to start with understanding the framework of qualifications of the European Higher Education Area as adopted in 2005 and incorporated by 49 European countries and the European Commission. The fact that sustainability in business studies is in relation to traditional business concepts far from static, but rather characterised by constant change and evolution. It is not only key to choose the right level of tertiary education for sustainability content, but also to pick those concepts, ideas and doctrines that have the potential to complement or even replace traditional concepts in the long run. And even if this decision was taken based on thorough research, it is even more important to provide the students with a specific skill set that enables them to analyse, apply, advance and even question these concepts in their later career paths, such as defined by the *Inner Development Goals* (Growth That Matters 2030 AB, 2021).

As a result and conclusion there are different parameters to consider when designing bachelor's or master's programmes in sustainable business studies taking into account the underlying different cycles of qualification, the dynamics in the evolution of sustainable business concepts, sustainable business models and related (legal) frameworks as well as the specific set of competences required to prepare the students for the challenges of the sustainability revolution ahead of them.

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