

# UNIC Summer Course „Resilience and Sustainability”

## General Information

Course title:	Resilience and sustainability
Credit point awarded:	5 ECTS
Organizer:	Department of Management and Economics, Ruhr-Universität Bochum
Partners:	University of Oulu, Liège Université, University of Łódź, Erasmus University Rotterdam
Field of education:	Management and Economics
Teaching language:	English
Venue:	Bochum, Germany
Participants:	Students
Level of study:	Bachelor, Master
Max # participants:	30
Format:	Online and physical
Dates:	25 August – 29 August 2025: Physical meetings at home universities and online lectures 1 September – 5 September 2025: Online workshops 8 September – 12 September 2025: Summer course in Bochum

## Description and goals

Global megatrends, such as climate change and digitalization change people’s lives and affect regional development. These megatrends lead to challenges and threats, but also provide opportunities for regions. The question is about resilience: our capability to adapt to these changes. How can individuals, organizations, interorganizational networks and regions develop resilient strategies and innovation cooperation to meet changes in their operational environment when developing sustainability? People, firms, and other types of organizations, and regions face unexpected changes in their economic and technological environment. How can we improve and support, for example, with the help of new technologies, our ability to adapt to these changes and promote our social and economic well-being? How can digital transition support the green transition, and thereby improve sustainable development?

This course is designed for master and bachelor students interested in the theme “Resilience and sustainable development”. During the course students will familiarize themselves with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations. Regional sustainable development will be investigated from the perspective of resilience paying attention to the links and interaction between actors at different levels.

After taking this course, students can

- collaborate in international teams,
- apply methods for complex problem solving,
- generate creative and visionary solutions,
- present their solution to a non-expert audience,
- compare issues of sustainability and resilience across different regions,
- transfer insights from one region to another.

## Problem

Aging is key problem in many European countries. In post-industrial regions such as the Ruhr region, Northern Finland and Lodz, the aging problem is aggravated by shrinking populations due to outmigration and scarcity of high-skilled employees. This demographic change has multiple consequences: the regions are not attractive for modern industries with high productivity and innovativeness, tax incomes are low, there is labor shortage in many important industries such as health and care. Furthermore, regions with insufficient supply of young high-skilled workers are vulnerable to external shocks such as weather events caused by climate change.

Students' task is to think about solutions how the regions could **cope with the demographic challenges**. Students address the same problem of sustainability and resilience from different regional and national perspectives.

## Schedule

Date	Part	Activities
25 Aug – 29 Aug 2025	Individual workshops and Lectures	The regions and their problems
1 Sep – 5 Sep 2025	Joint online workshops	First exchange, problem-solving method
8 Sep – 12 Sep 2025	Joint week in Bochum	Find a solution
Until 26 Sep 2025	Paper (Bochum students)	

## Online lectures

In the week from **25 August to 29 August**, students will attend several online lectures that introduce the topics of the summer course. Lecturers from the participating universities will talk about resilience and sustainability, regional development, aging and demographic challenges. At the end of the week, students have to take a short online test on the topics of the lectures.

## Workshops at home universities

In the same week, students also meet at their home universities with their local instructors. The local lecturers introduce the topic and the tasks. Then, students do research about the demographic challenges of their home regions. They also prepare presentations with some facts about the regions. Finally, they read provided papers on demographic challenges and prepare presentations.

## Joint online workshops

In the week from **1 September to 5 September**, the students from the participating universities meet in several online workshops. They present their home regions and the papers on the demographic challenges.

Furthermore, Prof. Roos (Ruhr-Universität Bochum) will introduce a structured method for complex problem-solving in teams. This will serve as a template for the group work in the week in Bochum.

## Summer course at Ruhr-Universität Bochum

All students will meet in Bochum from **8 September to 12 September**. In several teams, they will define a specific problem related to demographic challenges in one of the regions of the participating universities and develop a solution approach following the method discussed in the previous week. The proposed solution shall contribute to at least one of the Sustainable Development Goals and make the region more resilient against external stress. During the week, students regularly present the progress on their work. The final solution will be presented on the last day of the summer course and evaluated by a jury.

In addition to the group work on the problem, there will be social events in the evening and visits to interesting places in the Ruhr region.

## Course requirements

To participate in this special course, students must be enrolled in a master's or bachelor's program in one of the UNIC universities, and they must have a strong interest in the theme "Resilience and sustainability". A level of B2 English is required.

Participants must attend the physical meetings and the online formats to pass the course. In addition to active participation in the virtual formats and summer course week, students must fulfill the assessment requirements of their home universities to obtain credit points.

## Application process

The partner universities select the students based on their own criteria as discussed with the course organiser. The deadline for applications is 1st of May 2025. Successful applicants will be notified by 10th of May 2025.

Learning agreements are handled digitally using Online Learning Agreements (OLA).

Each selected student applies for their home university's Erasmus+ funding to cover any possible travel and accommodation costs. Ruhr-Universität Bochum does not cover any costs related to travel or accommodation.

## Application links for partner universities

Ruhr-Universität Bochum	<a href="https://moodle.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/course/view.php?id=64322">https://moodle.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/course/view.php?id=64322</a>
University of Oulu	<a href="https://www.joonalohtander.com/UNIC">https://www.joonalohtander.com/UNIC</a>
Liège Université	please follow normal Summer School application process
University of Łódź	announcement via email
Erasmus University Rotterdam	<a href="https://www.eur.nl/en/news/applications-open-unic-summer-course-resilience-and-sustainability">https://www.eur.nl/en/news/applications-open-unic-summer-course-resilience-and-sustainability</a>

## Contact information

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