



Key activities 2023

The Centre for Sustainable Business at SSE Riga (CSB) was founded in 2012 thanks to the generous financial support of SEB. The key aim of the CSB is to foster a discussion on sustainability both in the business community and in society in general. As of now, the Centre consists of its director, Professor Arnis Sauka and Associate Professor Xavier Landes. Several other researchers and project managers representing academic institutions and NGOs are involved in the activities of the CSB on an ad-hoc basis.

To raise awareness of sustainability, the CSB, in cooperation with its partners, provides research, teaching and training and contributes actively to public debate. This report summarises key activities within the Centre for Sustainable Business at SSE Riga in 2023.

1. Teaching at BSc, EMBA and PhD level

Xavier Landes:

BSc courses at SSE Riga

- *Academic Studies and Critical Thinking*
- *Ethics and Sustainable Business*
- *Eco-Innovation, Social Responsibility, and Sustainable Management*

In addition, Landes contributed to the following courses:

- *Global Challenges*
- *Research Methods*

Courses taught outside SSE Riga:

Master seminar on *Climate Engineering*, Sciences Po Lille

EDUPART course *Sustainable Societies: Social and Environmental Dimensions*

Arnis Sauka:

PhD courses: How to write an academic article (4.5 ECTS), Contemporary Entrepreneurship research (Open Workshops) (6 ECTS) (*all courses in cooperation with BA/ RISEBA PhD programme, involving PhD students also from other universities in Latvia*).

Bachelor's, EMBA and PhD Theses

In 2023, CSB members have supervised and evaluated numerous theses. By doing so, they contribute to the diversity of skills nurtured at SSE Riga and to training responsible future leaders.

In 2023, *Xavier Landes* has been supervising 5 BSc. theses and 3 EMBA theses.

Arnis Sauka supervised PhD thesis by former SSE Riga Alumni Sanita Rugina (defended in 2023, at Maastricht University) as well as is currently supervising 1 EMBA and 3 PhD theses.

2. Research: publications

To understand the business environment in terms of sustainable (as well as unsustainable) business practices, there is a need to undertake research on two levels: *theoretical*, about the economic, political and ethical dimensions of sustainability and business ethics, and *applied* – in both the Baltic context and beyond. Key output from the research activities of the CSB from 2023 is summarised below.

2.1. Academic Publications

Journals

Polese, A., T. Tokyzhanova, G.M. Moise, T. Aguzzi, T. Kerikmae, A. Sagynbaeva, A. Sauka, O. Seliverstova, O. Lysa, A. Kussaiynkyzy (2023). Why shadow economy and informality should be separated as concepts: results and implications of the shadow economy survey in the post-Soviet region. *Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review*, 23:1.

Polese, A., G.M. Moise, T. Tokyzhanova, T. Aguzzi, T. Kerikmae, A. Sagynbaeva, A. Sauka and O. Seliverstova (2023). Informality versus shadow economy: reflecting on the first results of a manager's survey in Kyrgyzstan. *Central Asian Survey*. 42(1), 149-170.

2.2. Applied research: Reports/Research Series

Williams, C., Sauka, A. and Plasschaert, I. (2023). Developing methodology and key performance indicators (KPIs) measuring the effectiveness of labour inspectorates. European Platform Tackling Undeclared Work, European Labour Authority.
<https://www.ela.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-04/UDW-Platform-study-Developing-methodology-and-KPIs-measuring-the-effectiveness-of-labour-inspectorates.pdf>

Putnins, T. and A. Sauka (2023). Shadow economy index for the Baltic countries 2009-2022. SSE Riga: Riga. <https://www.sseriga.edu/shadow-economy-index-baltic-countries>

Sauka, A. (2023). FICIL Sentiment Index. SSE Riga un Foreign Investors Council in Latvia (FICIL). <https://www.sseriga.edu/centres/csb/sentiment-index>

In addition, one of the main research focuses of Xavier Landes since 2020 has been on climate engineering, several publications (two books, articles) being planned for release in 2024.

2.3. Reviews for peer-reviewed academic journals

In 2023, Xavier Landes has been reviewing articles for academic journals, such as *Res Publica*.

2.4. Editorial boards for academic journals

Arnis Sauka serves on the editorial boards of:

Baltic Journal of Management

<http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/journals.htm?id=bjm>

Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies

<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/eie>

Journal of Business Management

<https://www.riseba.lv/en/research/zinatniski-petnieciskie-virzieni/journal-business-management>

Xavier Landes seats on the editorial board of the book series *Key Issues in Climate Change and Sustainability: Ethics, Politics, and Policy* at Lexington Books.

3. Events/Policy activities

3.1. Academic events

CSB staff is actively involved in organising, moderating and presenting at various academic events, including:

The SSE Riga Open Workshops Series

The Open Workshop Series in Business and Management Studies aims to promote top-quality academic and applied research in various fields of the social sciences. The main target audience includes doctoral students and more senior scholars interested in recent developments in conceptual frameworks as well as methodologies to

address entrepreneurship and management challenges, providing a platform for sharing knowledge and networking with the local and international community. Some of the seminars are devoted to sustainability issues, broadly defined. *Arnis Sauka* is responsible for organising the Open Workshops at SSE Riga.

Open Workshops are run since February 2014 and offered to PhD students as a PhD level course, 'Contemporary Entrepreneurship Research'. On average, 20 participants attend the course, mostly PhD students from various universities in Latvia, including the University of Latvia, Riga Technical University, Riga Stradins University, and RISEBA University. Also, more senior academics as well as practitioners attend the workshops. Workshops are moderated by Arnis Sauka. They are free of charge for participants and run in English. The Open Workshops were ceased during the Covid-19 pandemic and relaunched in January 2022. Following workshops took place during the 2023:

27.01.2023.

Prof. Ulla Hytti, University of Turku, Finland

Transforming entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship education research

10.02.2023.

Prof. Rainer Harms, University of Twente, the Netherlands

Recipes for opportunity recognition in the tension field of knowledge and learning:
The case of converging industries

24.02.2023.

Dr. Vita Kadile, University of Leeds, U.K

Intractable Conflict Diversity in Entrepreneurial Teams

10.03.2023.

Prof. Maaja Vadis, University of Tartu, Estonia

The Relationship of Technological and Organizational Innovation with Firm
Performance: Opening the Black Box of Dynamic Complementarities

31.03.2023.

Prof. Arnis Sauka, SSE Riga, Latvia

Making an impact beyond academia: research, policy- and industry cooperation
applied.

21.04.2023.

Prof. Kim Klyver, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

The Dynamics of Emotional Support and Venture Progress - the Moderating Role of
Disjunct Brokerage

13.10.2023..

Arkādijs Zvaigzne, PhD candidate in Education, Harvard University, U.S.
The Effectiveness of Tuition Waivers and Further Stipends to Students

27.10.2023.

Dr. Alexandra Klein, Vlerick Business School, Belgium
In Search for Strategic Risk Management: The Interplay between Risk-Based Strategic Planning and Risk Analytics

10.11.2023.

Prof. Arnis Sauka, Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, Latvia
The Art of Writing PhD Thesis

8.12.2023.

Prof. Karl Wennberg, Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden
In Search of the Entrepreneurial State.

3.2. Involvement in international research projects

Since 2020 Arnis Sauka is a member of the project team (leader: team Latvia).
MARKETS: Mapping Uncertainties, Challenges and Future Opportunities of Emerging Markets: Informal Barriers, Business Environments and Future Trends in Eastern Europe, The Caucasus and Central Asia (Horizon 2020 project: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks).

3.3. Policy debate

An integral part of the Centre's activities is to raise awareness of sustainable business. This involves an active communication strategy, including events such as open lectures and seminars, workshops, guest lectures, roundtables, and media activities:

SSE Riga Shadow Economy Index for the Baltic Countries and Conference on the Shadow Economy

Study developed by Talis Puntins and Arnis Sauka. The aim of the SSE Riga Shadow Economy Index for the Baltic Countries is to measure the size of the shadow economies in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia as well as to explore the main factors that influence participation in the shadow economy. SEB generously supported the Index during the period of 2012-2016. The SSE Riga Shadow Economy Index for the Baltic Countries has been presented annually since 2010 at a mid-May conference organized by SSE Riga (Arnis Sauka, Dana Kumpina) in cooperation with the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Finance of Latvia. Recent conference was held in May 2023 for the 13th time. The media reports on the Index extensively

throughout the year. The conference attracts major interest from policymakers, the Index is used extensively by the Ministry of Finance of Latvia, the Ministry of Economics of Latvia, the Estonian Tax and Customs Board, and various associations and NGOs in the Baltic countries. <https://www.sseriga.edu/shadow-economy-index-baltic-countries>

FICIL Sentiment Index and conferences on the foreign direct investment climate in Latvia The FICIL Sentiment Index was established in 2015 by the Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia (FICIL), developed by Arnis Sauka. The key aim of the Index is to foster more evidence-based policy decisions to further promote a favourable investment climate in Latvia. We aim to achieve this by summarising the key concerns and suggestions of the main foreign investors in Latvia – representatives of companies that have made the decision to invest in the country and have been operating here for a considerable time period. The FICIL Sentiment Index draws on a survey – mini case studies of foreign investors in Latvia. Findings are annually presented by Arnis Sauka at the FICIL Sentiment Index conference organised in cooperation with FICIL. The conferences were attended by key policymakers in Latvia, including ministers, officials, ambassadors, and foreign direct investors. A wider audience has been introduced with the contents of the report via mass media. The recent FICIL sentiment index (2015-2022): the Government edition was launched in April, 2023: <https://www.sseriga.edu/centres/csb/sentiment-index>

Intellectual talk show at TVNET (and ReTV) "MONEY TALKS"

Since 2020 Arnis Sauka is the host of the talk show MONEY TALKS, featuring discussions and interviews with the most erudite Latvian economists, politicians, entrepreneurs, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. Tvnet.lv portal.

Challenges in the health industry (with participation of Minister of Health of Latvia and other experts), development trends of Latvian economy (with participation of the Minister of Finance, president of Latvian Confederation of Employees and representative of the Bank of Latvia), shadow economy (discussion with entrepreneurs from construction and tourism sectors), geopolitics and economics in Latvia (with participation of the former Minister of Defence of Latvia and number of industry experts), education and science in Latvia (with participation of the Minister of Education and Science, and industry experts) were amongst the topics discussed in 2023.

<https://www.tvnet.lv/term/645000/nauda-runa>

Forum: Fight Against Smuggling

On July 2023, SSE Riga hosted the 5th national forum on smuggling-related problems, "Fight Against Smuggling: Challenges and Progress", organised by the association BASE ("Business Against Shadow Economy") in cooperation with SSE Riga and the research centre SKDS. During the forum, research data were presented, which reveal the opinion of the general public on the smuggling problem in the country, as well as the attitude towards the purchase of smuggled goods, knowledge about places to buy smuggled goods, as well as possible penalties and actions to reduce smuggling. Arnis

Sauka is among the organizers, speakers and panelists.
<https://www.sseriga.edu/forum-fight-against-smuggling>

World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Index

WEF Global Competitiveness Index focuses on analysing factors that contribute to the productivity of the economy, considering the latest trends in the specificity of competitiveness that comes with globalisation and new digital technologies. In Latvia the research “Global Competitiveness Index” is represented by the Centre for Sustainable Business at SSE Riga (led by Arnis Sauka).

3.4. Media Activities

Activities implemented by the Centre for Sustainable Business (such as the Shadow Economy Index, shadow economy research in the construction industry, the FICIL Sentiment Index) have been widely discussed by national media, mostly in Latvia but also in Estonia and Lithuania. Researchers of the Centre comment on topics related to competitiveness, sustainability and ethics on a regular basis.

In addition to regular radio and television appearances, CSB members have contributed to public debates through newspaper articles and tribunes, e.g. Landes, Xavier, ‘Vai Francijas 2023. gada nemieru pamatā ir imigrācija?’ *Satori*, August 2nd.

4. Memberships in boards, councils

Xavier Landes: Advisor for the Happiness Research Institute (Copenhagen, Denmark).

Arnis Sauka:

Since 2023: Head of the State Competitiveness Council.

<https://www.president.lv/en/state-competitiveness-council>

Since 2022: Head of the Council at Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences. www.va.lv

Since 2020: founding member of IfM Research Fellow Network (Bonn, Germany).

<https://www.ifm-bonn.org/en/research/ifm-research-fellow-network/prof-arnis-sauka>

Since 2021. Member of the postdoctoral supervisory board (State Education Development Agency, Republic of Latvia), nominated by the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Since 2019. Corresponding member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences. www.lza.lv

Since 2015. Board member of BASE (business against shadow economy). Inviting some of the leading experts with academic, entrepreneurship promotion and entrepreneurship policy-making expertise in Latvia, this NGO was created to actively involve in fighting the shadow economy- by providing evidence-based policy

suggestions- and promote competitive entrepreneurship climate in the country.
www.base.org.lv

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