Survey introduction

The IREB [Special Interest Group on Sustainability (SIGsus)](https://ireb.org/en/community/special-interest-group/sig-sustainability) invites you to participate in the Digital Sustainability Survey. Through this survey, SIGsus aims to gather insights into real-world practices, challenges, and opportunities shaping sustainability in software engineering. By participating, you will help us to:

1. identify current trends and challenges in integrating sustainability into software engineering.
2. enhance IREB curricula and resources to provide practitioners like you with cutting-edge knowledge and tools.

The Digital Sustainability Survey is performed annually to investigate any shifts in the perception and role of Digital Sustainability, which we consider an umbrella term for Sustainable Software – the sustainability of digital solutions – and Sustainable by Software – digital solutions designed to achieve positive sustainability impacts.

Why Participate?

* You will be able to receive a summary of our findings with valuable insights that can benefit your organization and the broader community. If you are interested, email us at: sig@ireb.org.
* The SIGsus can provide a platform through which you can connect with professionals and organizations in IT committed to sustainability. We believe that this will foster shared experiences and innovative approaches.
* Whether you are a requirements engineer, developer, tester, software architect, manager, or hold any other role, your perspective matters! Together, we can influence the promotion of sustainable and innovative practices across the software industry.

What to Expect in this Survey

* The survey covers demographic information, sustainability awareness, organizational practices, and role-specific questions.
* We know your time is valuable and we therefore made sure that it should take about 10 minutes to complete.
* All responses are anonymous, and findings will be communicated in aggregated form—for example, in IREB publications or scientific papers.

If you have any questions about this survey or how results will be used, please feel free to contact: sig@ireb.org

We appreciate your time and participation! Many Thanks in advance.

Survey Instrument

*Demographic*

*Tell us a bit about yourself—who you are professionally, and what you do. This will help us better understand the demographics of the people taking part in this survey.*

1. Which age group do you belong to? (single-select)\*
   1. 18–28
   2. 29–44
   3. 45–60
   4. Above 60
2. How many years of professional experience do you have in IT / software engineering?\*
   1. Less than 1 year
   2. 1–5 years
   3. 6–10 years
   4. 11–20 years
   5. More than 20 years
3. Which continent do you live on?
   1. Europe
   2. Asia
   3. Australia
   4. South America
   5. North America
   6. Africa
4. What is your current country of residence? (drop-down)\*
5. Which of the following best describes your current role in the organization? (single-select)\*
   1. Developer
   2. Tester / QA Engineer
   3. Requirements Engineer / Business Analyst / Product Owner
   4. Software Architect
   5. CTO
   6. DevOps Engineer
   7. Team Lead / Project Manager
   8. Executive / CEO / Owner
   9. Researcher / Educator
   10. Trainer
   11. Other (please specify)
6. Which of the following organizational types best describes your organization? (single-select)\*
   1. Industry – Microenterprise (up to 10 employees)
   2. Industry – Small enterprise (10–49 employees)
   3. Industry – Medium-sized enterprise (50–249 employees)
   4. Industry – Large enterprise (at least 250 employees)
   5. University / Research Institute
   6. NGOs
   7. Government
7. In which application domain do you currently primarily work? (single-select)\*
   1. Technology, Software, and IT Consulting
   2. Finance, Banking, and Insurance
   3. Healthcare and Medical Technology
   4. Chemistry, Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology
   5. Education and Research
   6. Retail and E-commerce
   7. Transportation, Logistics, and Trade
   8. Energy and Utilities
   9. Construction and Engineering
   10. Hospitality, Tourism, and Entertainment
   11. Government and Public Administration
   12. Telecommunications
   13. Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering
   14. Automotive and Vehicle Technology
   15. Aviation, Aerospace and Defense
   16. Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations
   17. Legal Services
   18. Other (please specify)

*General Awareness of Sustainability*

*Have you heard of digital sustainability? What steps are you taking toward it? We'd love to know more!*

1. We consider Digital Sustainability an umbrella term for two aspects: Sustainable Software and Sustainable by Software.  
     
   Sustainable Software concerns the sustainability of digital solutions in terms of their impact on environmental, economic, technical, social, and individual dimensions, including carbon footprint (Green IT) and process resources.  
     
   Sustainable by Software describes digital solutions designed to achieve positive sustainability impacts to help individuals and organizations reach sustainability goals, such as such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) more effectively.   
     
   Have you heard of this or a similar definition of sustainability before? (single-select)\*
   1. Yes
   2. No
2. How frequently do you encounter (e.g., coming across or taking part in) discussions about digital sustainability in your professional environment? (single-select)
   1. Never
   2. Every few months or less
   3. Monthly
   4. Weekly
   5. Daily
   6. Other → mostly an empty column in the CSV.
3. Have you participated in one or more training or educational programs on digital sustainability? (single-select)
   1. Yes
   2. No
4. *[Precondition: Q10 = No]*

What are the reasons you haven’t participated in any or more training or educational programs on digital sustainability? (multiple-select)

* 1. I was not aware such programs existed
  2. My organization does not offer such programs
  3. I have not had the opportunity to attend
  4. I don’t see the need for such training
  5. The cost is too high
  6. Other (please specify)

1. *[Precondition: Q10 = Yes]*  
   How many times training(s) or educational program(s) on digital sustainability did you participate in? (single-select)
   1. 1
   2. 2
   3. 3-5
   4. More than 5
2. *[Precondition: either Q10 = Yes]*  
   Did you participate in the training(s) or educational program(s) in your private capacity (i.e., you paid for it and participated out of personal interest)? (single-select)
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. My organization paid it on some occasions, and I paid it myself on others.
3. *[Precondition: Q10 = Yes]*  
   Please tell us a little about the training or educational programs on digital sustainability you participated in. (short/long text)
4. Are you satisfied with the number of training or educational programs you participated in?
   1. 3-5
   2. More than 5
5. What are the reasons you haven’t participated in more training or educational programs on digital sustainability? → This is a potential duplicate of Q11
   1. I was not aware such programs existed
   2. My organization does not offer such programs
   3. I have not had the opportunity to attend
   4. I don’t see the need for such training
   5. The cost is too high
   6. Other

*The Role of Digital Sustainability in Your Organization*

*Let us think about your workplace and your tasks for a moment. Is Digital Sustainability an important driver? By software development projects, we refer to any software-related activities within a project, including consulting and analysis*

1. Does your organization have specific digital sustainability goals or benchmarks for software development projects? (single-select)
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Not sure
2. Does your organization have a dedicated sustainability or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expert, team, or department? (single-select)
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Not sure
3. Does your organization incorporate sustainable development practices? (single-select)\*
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Not sure
4. *[Precondition: Q17 = Yes]*

Do different departments in your organization coordinate on sustainability for software development projects? (single-select)

* 1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Not sure

1. *[Precondition: Q17 = Yes]*

Which dimensions of sustainability are actively considered in your organization's software development projects? (multiple select)

* 1. Environmental sustainability (e.g., resource efficiency of energy/water/etc., carbon footprint)
  2. Social sustainability (e.g., the role of community, shared values, working conditions, and well-being)
  3. Individual sustainability (e.g., health, competence, access to services)
  4. Economic sustainability (e.g., cost efficiency, economic viability)
  5. Technical sustainability (e.g., maintainability, scalability)
  6. Other (please specify)
  7. Not sure

1. Does your organization report on sustainability practices? (single-select)
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Not sure
2. Does your organization offer training or resources to employees on the design or development of sustainable digital solutions? (single-select)\*
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Not sure
3. *[Precondition: Q23 = Yes]*  
   Can you tell us a little about the training or resources your organization offers? (short/long text)
4. What might be the reasons your organization does not offer any or more training or resources on the design or development of sustainable digital solutions? (multiple-select)
   1. Lack of awareness about the availability of such training
   2. Lack of understanding about the need for such training
   3. No demand or interest from employees
   4. Limited budget or resources for training programs
   5. Sustainability is (perhaps) not a priority for the organization
   6. Not sure
   7. Other (please specify)
5. How often is the sustainability of your digital solutions an explicit requirement of the customer or the users? (single-select)
   1. For every project or solution
   2. For most projects or solutions
   3. For some projects or solutions
   4. Rarely, but it has happened
   5. Never
6. *[Precondition: Q26 = d or e]*

Why do you think that your customers and users have not asked explicitly to build sustainable digital solutions? (open-ended short text)

*Sustainability in Your Job and Tasks*

*We want to know how sustainability is finding its way into what you do and the choices you make in your work life. We call these “role-specific tasks”. For example:*

* *If you are a requirements engineer, we are curious about how sustainability influences various RE tasks.*
* *If you are an architect, we want to learn whether you are incorporating measures into the architecture, for example, to reduce the environmental footprint.*
* *If you are a developer, we would like to hear how you approach, for example, writing energy-efficient code.*

*Most importantly, we recognize that sustainability encompasses many dimensions.*

1. Do you incorporate digital sustainability considerations in your role-specific tasks? (single-select)\*
   1. Yes
   2. No
2. *[Precondition: Q28 = Yes]*  
   What drives you to incorporate digital sustainability in your role-related tasks? (multiple-select)
   1. Organizational policies
   2. Personal beliefs
   3. Client requirements
   4. User requirements
   5. Legal requirements
   6. Other (please specify)
3. *[Precondition: Q28 = Yes]*Which sustainability dimensions do you consider in your role-specific tasks? (multiple-select)
   1. Environmental sustainability (e.g., resource efficiency of energy/water/etc., carbon footprint)
   2. Social sustainability (e.g., role of community, shared values)
   3. Individual sustainability (e.g., health, competence, access to services)
   4. Economic sustainability (e.g., cost efficiency, economic viability)
   5. Technical sustainability (e.g., maintainability, scalability)
   6. Other (please specify)
4. *[Precondition: Q28 = Yes]*

Are there specific tools, software, or frameworks that help you incorporate sustainability into your tasks? (e.g., gathering and managing requirements, writing sustainability-focused tests, optimizing code for less energy consumption.)\*

* 1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Not sure

1. *[Precondition: Q31 = Yes]*  
   Can you name the tools, software, and/or frameworks, and tell us how and for what you use them? (short/long text)
2. *[Precondition: Q28 = No]*  
   What hinders you from incorporating sustainability in your role-specific tasks? (multiple-select)
   1. Lack of personal interest (e.g., no incentive to make the effort to consider sustainability)
   2. Lack of knowledge or awareness (e.g., not knowing enough about sustainability impact or best practices)
   3. Limited resources or budget (e.g., insufficient tools or technology)
   4. Financial constraints (e.g., limited budget)
   5. Insufficient time or competing priorities (e.g., pressing deadlines, other projects taking precedence)
   6. Lack of organizational or leadership support (e.g., limited buy-in from management, inadequate policy frameworks)
   7. Complexity or uncertainty of sustainability solutions (e.g., difficulty measuring impact or navigating standards)
   8. Cultural or social barriers (e.g., resistance to change, misalignment with organizational culture)
   9. Resistance from clients and customers
   10. Other (please specify)
3. Which sustainability dimension(s) do you feel you lack sufficient knowledge or tools to effectively address? (multiple-select)\*
   1. Environmental sustainability (e.g., resource efficiency of energy/water/etc., carbon footprint)
   2. Social sustainability (e.g., role of community, shared values)
   3. Individual sustainability (e.g., health, competence, access to services)
   4. Economic sustainability (e.g., cost efficiency, economic viability)
   5. Technical sustainability (e.g., maintainability, scalability)
4. What additional support or resources would best help you integrate digital sustainability into your work? (multiple-select)\*
   1. Theoretical knowledge (self-study learning material)
   2. Tutorials (co-present or online training)
   3. Curricula (educational programs)
   4. Practical knowledge (how-to's)
   5. Positive case studies (real-world examples demonstrating benefits, including financial value)
   6. Structures (frameworks, definitions, standards)
   7. Tools (assessment checklists, creativity methods)
   8. I do not want to integrate more digital sustainability into my work
   9. Other (please specify)

Closing

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey on digital sustainability! Together, we’re shaping a more sustainable future in the IT industry, one thoughtful response at a time.

We know that this survey only scratches the surface and there is still a lot to discuss.

If you are interested in:

* Participating in a short interview to share more about your experiences,
* Connecting with other professionals who are passionate about digital sustainability, or
* Receiving a report on the survey results, the latest news, trends, and best practices in this field,

please feel free to email us at: sig@ireb.org.

If you would like to read more about the Special Interest Group on Sustainability (SIGsus), please visit the IREB website: https://ireb.org/en/community/special-interest-group/sig-sustainability