

Panel Discussion: ESD between Europe, the Danube Region and UNESCO ESD Decade (27. October 2014, 11:45 -12:30 pm)

The GREEN Network is – as the eSchool4S- also a Comenius Project within the Life Long Learning Program from the EU: Could you tell us little bit more about the approach of the GREEN Network and also share with us whether you see touchpoints, synergy potential and also common challenges between both COMENIUS projects?

Summary of Sabine's contribution:

The GREEN network seeks to promote the effective integration of climate change education into educational programmes and school curricula. Schools can play a central role in providing young people with information and knowledge to help them understand climate change as early as possible. Schools can assist their students with making more conscious consumer choices in terms of developing new attitudes towards what is appropriate and what is not.

GREEN tries to break the complex topic down to school level and make it more tangible for students, bringing the topic close to home. If we tell our students that the temperature will rise by 2°C by 2052, they don't feel that this relates to them. It is simply too far away and, as a matter of fact, it is for all of us difficult to project ourselves in the future. So it is all about finding ways to make students feel concerned about it and relate it to their lives and motivate them to live sustainably in order to counteract climate change and subsequent environmental problems. For us climate change is the "buzz word", the driver, but we want to tackle a variety of topics under this roof – such as biodiversity, sustainable development, waste management, and environmental protection – all topics that contribute to mitigate climate change.

GREEN addresses firstly teachers – such as the eSchool4S network: They shall be provided with modular concepts to tackle the issue of climate change and climate change adaptation both on the curricular and on the extracurricular level. And they shall be given guidance for mainstreaming climate change education into school curricula. This means some practical guidelines on how to work on the topic at schools will be developed. There we have parallel development works in both projects.

Both Comenius networks were presented under the priority „making science education more attractive“. Both projects intend to do this by implementing a centrally important issue – addressing firstly teachers by supporting them to implement the topic in a structured way, and secondly their students by inspiring and motivating them to live and act accordingly, but also by supporting them to make career choices, for some businesses will grow considerably while others will decline in the future.



In a nutshell, the synergies are very obvious: both projects deal with current issues that shall be implemented in schools. The links between climate change and sustainable development are very strong: Climate change is a global challenge with long-term implications for the sustainable development of all countries. Both projects address teachers and students and will do some development work in terms of manuals or guidelines for teachers. Both projects need to organise events and do dissemination activities. I think, there we can very well pool our activities and support each other. The GREEN network consists currently of 16 partner organisations in ten countries and represents thus a good dissemination platform for the eSchools4s network, and vice versa.

The challenges that I see for both projects are to find motivated teachers – without them the whole project won't work. From experience from former schools projects like JEM!, Joint Environmental Management in Schools, where we implemented an environmental management system along the lines of the European EMAS, or in CLIMES, Climate-friendly Management in European Schools, where we implemented a similar system looking at all processes in schools that have an impact on the climate, we experienced that these kind of projects can only work when we have motivated teachers in the schools that are open for new experiences. And I am glad to say that this has been the case also in GREEN. On the other hand it is a challenge in itself to build up a network that is sustainable beyond the funding period.

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