

Education on Environmental Systems and Sustainability in Schools

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Zagreb (23/09/2023)

Recognizing that:

- Climate change is a reality and there are serious changes ahead of Europe's way of life. Young Europeans should be educated on the topic.
- The Green Deal for Europe is a challenge for decades to come and in order to be fulfilled European citizens have to understand the importance of moderation of negative human impact on the environment and sustainability as its crucial point.
- Environmental sustainability must be ensured, yet we need to meet our continent's energy needs.
- The students of today are the future generation of tomorrow. They must be adequately informed about environmental sustainability (how to meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs).
- It is only through proper education on energy and environmental systems, that EU citizens can make informed decisions on what kind of an energy future they want for themselves and their children.
- This is a long-term process requiring small, measurable steps that are monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Acknowledging that:

- There is currently no EU legal requirement for member states to enshrine energy and environmental systems into their school curriculum.
- The EU has placed objectives and recommendations on the member states regarding guidelines pertaining to classes for environmental and energy-related matters in schools.
- While each country is responsible for developing its own education system and teaching methods, the EU offers support on topics of common interest¹ (listed as follows):
 - a. The Commission provides teachers and other educational personnel with teaching methods and materials. It also provides educational institutions with opportunities for cooperation (such as but not limited to educational platforms for schools like the European education platform specifically the eTwinning Community and the networking platform EPALÉ).²
 - b. The EU Commission supports member countries in developing teaching methods and provides educational staff with the appropriate resources³.
 - c. The existence of the CC-EDU Program from ERASMUS+ develops the capacity of teachers to provide future-oriented curricula.⁴

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/education/teaching-methods-and-materials/teaching-methods_de accessed April 2023

² https://commission.europa.eu/education/teaching-methods-and-materials_de

³ https://commission.europa.eu/education/teaching-methods-and-materials_de

⁴ <https://ccedu.erasmus-projects.eu/>

- d. The existence of the Digital Education Action Plan, which provides a vision for high-quality, inclusive, and accessible European digital education and training pertaining to the green transition and sustainable development.⁵
- e. The existence of a recommendation of the Council to embed sustainability in school development plans.⁶
- The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality must be respected. The level of autonomy ensured by educational institutions varies across the member states.
- In some member states educational institutions as well as teachers have a high degree of autonomy.
- As EPP we stand for a sustainable Europe and are committed to combatting climate change. The basis of this combat is the propagation of knowledge of energy security to the citizens which starts with education in schools.

YEPP calls on:

- EPP member parties to advocate for a better implementation of education on energy security in schools via a cross curricular approach.
- Institutions of the EU to advertise the already existing educational programs more proactively.
- EPP member parties in national governments to carry this out as they deem fit yet following guidelines regarding content based on a scientific approach rather than an ideological narrative, set by the European institutions.
- EPP member parties and EPP-affiliated ministers of education to promote field trips to sites of sustainable energy production.
- EPP member parties and EPP-affiliated ministers of education to encourage the portrayal of the different perspectives of the EU Member States.
- EPP member parties and EPP-affiliated ministers of education to campaign for sustainable energy sources.
- Institutions of the EU to help potential candidate countries' and candidate countries' Ministry of Education to develop and implement educational programs on climate change and its impact on Environment.
- EPP member parties to promote the use of GreenComp, the European sustainability competence framework to design targeted educational activities.

⁵ Council Recommendation of 16th June 2022 on learning for the green transition and sustainable development

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