

Educators for the Future: Insights from European ESD Professional Development Initiatives

Educators for the Future: Insights from European ESD Professional Development Initiatives. Higher education is ideally positioned to address sustainable development, by preparing future generations of professionals, challenging dominant paradigms and producing ground-breaking research. International movements and university initiatives have triggered a wave of activity over the past 10 years to advance learning for sustainability in higher education. However, there is evidence of the need for stronger focus on professional development to achieve lasting curriculum change and to engage more widely with the academic community on sustainability. Despite interest in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), its approaches to learning and education are not yet in common practice in HE. There are large 'translation gaps' in applying ESD ideas in different subjects and courses, so that learning processes can contribute to more sustainable futures. The University Educators for Sustainable Development (UE4SD) project tackled this need by focusing on professional development of academic staff to advance ESD. UE4SD was led from the University of Gloucestershire with regional Steering Group leads across North, West, East and South Europe. It was funded by the European Commission Lifelong Learning Programme from 2013-2016 and involved a network of 53 active partners (mostly universities) in 33 European countries.

The presentation will share insights and practices from the UE4SD project outputs:

- state of the art report that mapped national policy and new practices across Europe
- leading practice publication of different approaches to ESD professional development
- training academy residential for university teams using action learning principles
- online toolkit of resources, including practical experiences and new examples

The session will share an outline of the project and offer interactive dialogue with participants about challenges, tips, experiences, as well as ways to adapt and use the professional development materials

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