

Developing Education for Sustainable Development Competences in Higher Education: European Case Studies in Teacher Education Programmes

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Higher education institutions train professionals in different fields through curriculum models that organize their instruction. In the field of teacher education a curriculum model needs to make explicit the type of professional to which the programme is addressed. The last years there is an ongoing discussion about output oriented models and about basic competences for teachers. The reason for this focal shift was the insufficient quality of teacher education being considered as a conglomerate of unconnected knowledge.

Call of the UNECE Ministers of the Environment in 2003 for including Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in curricula from pre-school to higher and adult education
ENSI (Environment and School Initiatives) in 2002 developed the Comenius3 project SEED, which aimed to identify the implicit and explicit criteria inspired by values of Environmental Education, as used to guide, support or award Eco-Schools involved in incorporating principles and actions for sustainability in whole school plans
The integration of ESD in mainstream school curricula requires a re-thinking of teacher training curricula.

CSCT project

- Curriculum, Sustainable development, Competences, Teacher training
- Teacher Education Institutions: 15 partners – 8 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Hungary, Germany, Norway, Spain, UK)
- Comenius 2.1 Socrates Programme.

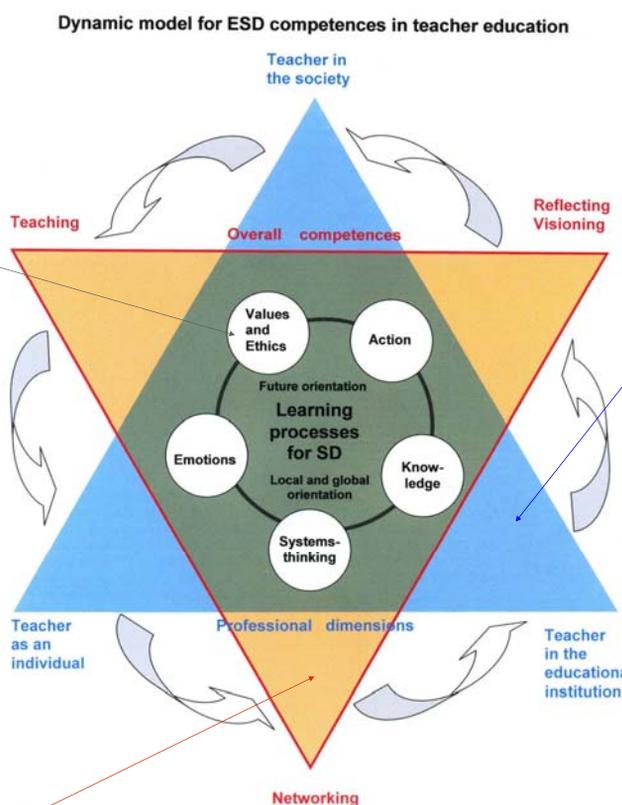
The CSCT project aimed at developing a *curriculum model* that could be useful for the context of European higher education institutions that included teacher training programmes. In addition the project adopted a common framework for the introduction of teacher education innovations based on *action research* as a process for change. The results of these innovations were written in the form of *case studies* so that contextualization, reflection, and meaning could be preserved and communicated more effectively.

Five Competence Domains

The CSCT project has identified 5 fundamental competences domains which are crucial for ESD in teacher education. Competences related to:
(a) knowledge building,
(b) action development,
(c) systems thinking,
(d) emotional development,
(e) the construction of values and ethics.

Three Overall Competences

In addition to the professional dimensions teachers need to develop overall competencies which are fundamental for the development of their profession and for ESD such as (a) Teaching, (b) Reflecting and visioning, (c) Networking. These competencies are all related and can be developed within the three previously mentioned domains.



Three Professional Dimensions

The CSCT project moves beyond the idea of the teacher as an instructor and rather envisions teachers as individuals who are in a dynamic relationship with their students, their colleagues and the wider society. It is within this dynamic relationship that we create the conditions that enable genuine learning to develop and progress in ESD. The professional dimensions are: (a) Teacher as an individual, (b) in the educational institutions, (c) in society.

Case Studies and Action Research

Each participating country developed an action research project with the aim of developing ESD teacher education competencies (**12 CS**)
The comparative analysis of the case studies point at important results about the difficulties of implementing innovations in higher education institutions related to ESD.

- What is the relevant context?
- What are the intentions of the initiative related to the competences?
- What have we done?
- How did we research the initiative?
- Description of empirical data
- Analysis of empirical data
- What did we learn for future planning?
- What materials were used?