LEARNING PROGRAMME

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Practice (From Global Goals to Classroom Action)

5-DAY COURSE

25 learning hours | Course programme

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Practice (From Global Goals to Classroom Action) – 5-Day Course

Introduction and Description

This intensive programme is aimed at strengthening the capacity of education professionals to integrate sustainability principles into educational practice. Grounded in internationally recognised frameworks for Education for Sustainable Development the course responds to the growing responsibility of education systems to contribute to sustainable, inclusive, and democratic societies.

The programme conceptualises ESD as a holistic and transformative educational approach that transcends subject-based instruction and isolated environmental initiatives. Participants explore sustainability as a multidimensional concept encompassing environmental integrity, social justice, economic responsibility, ethical decision-making, and democratic participation. Particular emphasis is placed on understanding the SDGs as an interconnected framework that reflects the complexity of global challenges and offers a coherent reference point for curriculum development, pedagogical innovation, and institutional strategy.

A central component of the course is the development of systems thinking as a key competence for educators. Participants are supported in analysing sustainability-related issues through a systemic lens, recognising interdependence, feedback processes, and unintended consequences. This perspective enables educators to design learning experiences that foster critical thinking, complexity awareness, and long-term responsibility among learners.

The programme further emphasises values-based education and the ethical dimensions of teaching and learning. Participants critically reflect on the role of education in shaping learners' values, attitudes, and identities, and examine pedagogical approaches that promote responsibility, solidarity, equity, and active citizenship. Attention is given to dialogic and participatory methodologies that support learner agency and democratic engagement while addressing controversial and "wicked" sustainability issues in an inclusive and reflective manner.

Although condensed in duration, the 5-day programme maintains a strong balance between theoretical grounding and practice-oriented application. Participants engage in collaborative inquiry, reflective dialogue, and guided design processes that support the translation of global sustainability agendas into concrete classroom practices and institutional initiatives. The course also introduces whole-school and organisational perspectives on ESD, highlighting leadership, institutional culture, and strategic planning as essential elements for sustainable educational change.

By the end of the programme, participants are equipped with conceptual clarity, pedagogical strategies, and practical tools to initiate and support ESD within their professional contexts. The course positions educators and education leaders as reflective practitioners and change agents capable of contributing to long-term sustainability processes across formal, non-formal, and adult education settings.

Methodology and Assessment

The course is based on experiential, participatory, and reflective learning methodologies consistent with adult education principles and Education for Sustainable Development frameworks. Learning activities include interactive lectures, collaborative workshops, systems-mapping exercises, case study analysis, reflective dialogue, and guided action-planning. Participants are encouraged to connect global sustainability concepts with their own professional contexts through continuous reflection and peer exchange.

Assessment is formative and developmental, focusing on active participation, reflective learning journals, collaborative tasks, and the design of an individual or institutional ESD action plan. Peer feedback and facilitator guidance support critical reflection and practical application. The course emphasises learning for transformation rather than summative evaluation, ensuring relevance, transferability, and long-term impact.

Learning Objectives

Understanding Education for Sustainable Development

Participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate a solid understanding of Education for Sustainable Development as a contemporary and transformative educational framework.
- Explain the relevance of ESD for schools, adult education, and lifelong learning in relation to global sustainability challenges.

Sustainable Development Goals and Systems Thinking

Participants will be able to:

- Analyse the Sustainable Development Goals as an interconnected system relevant to educational contexts.
- Apply basic systems thinking concepts to explore complexity and interdependence in sustainability-related issues.

Pedagogical Approaches for ESD

Participants will be able to:

- Apply learner-centred, participatory, and inquiry-based pedagogies aligned with ESD principles.
- Design interdisciplinary learning activities that integrate sustainability across subject areas.

Values-Based and Ethical Dimensions of Education

Participants will be able to:

- Integrate values such as responsibility, justice, solidarity, and democratic participation into educational practice.
- Facilitate reflective dialogue and critical discussion on complex and controversial sustainability issues.

Professional Practice and Action Planning

Participants will be able to:

- Develop a classroom-based, institutional, or organisational action plan for implementing ESD.
- Reflect critically on their professional role in promoting sustainable development through education.

Preparation

After registration participants will receive a pre-course questionnaire which will be used by the trainer to learn about participants' teaching backgrounds and to assess their exact needs. Before the beginning of the course a basic reading list will be suggested to participants to prepare for the training. Participants will also be asked to prepare a presentation about themselves, their professional context and their culture. The presentation will be presented on the first day of the course to facilitate networking opportunities. Participants will receive information about the country they are going to visit in order to prepare them for their cultural experience.

Follow up

After the course participants will be asked to share what they have learned with the rest of the staff in their schools. Further books and articles to deepen the topic and contacts with some other practitioners all over Europe and in the world will be suggested by the

trainer. The methods shared and explored and the bibliography given will allow the participants to complete and improve their educational path.

Certificate

Certificate complies with the guidelines of the Erasmus+ programme and includes the topic, number of didactic hours, dates and location of the course. We can list the record of learning outcomes on the Europass Mobility Document on request of participants. In case a participant requires a specific format of certificate we can accommodate that if requested at least one week before the start of the course. It is necessary to attend at least 80% of the hours in order to receive the certificate.

Accommodation

We do not directly offer accommodation and subsistence and participants are responsible for organizing it by themselves.

Paperwork

We also provide all the support with paperwork you might need for your Erasmus+ project documentation such as mobility agreement and registration letter.

Fee: 400 €

Cancelation policy

We have a flexible cancellation policy in force at the moment and you can cancel your registration up to 30 days before the course and receive a full refund. In case you don't cancel the registration more than 30 days before you will not receive any refunds, but you will be able to choose to attend any other confirmed course session later (within 6 months) without any additional costs. In case you are not able to travel, your school can send someone else to take instead of you and you can change the details of the participant any time before the start of the course at no additional cost.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME (25 didactic hours - 5*45min per day) Monday to Friday	
Day 1	Foundations of Education for Sustainable Development
09.00 - 09.45	Introductions & Icebreakers
09.45 - 10.30	Course Overview & Learning Agreement
10.30 - 11.15	Understanding ESD
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Sustainability challenges in education today
12.15 - 13.00	ESD competencies
Day 2	Sustainable Development Goals and Systems Thinking
09.00 - 09.45	Understanding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
09.45 - 10.30	SDGs as an educational framework
10.30 - 11.15	Introduction to systems thinking
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Applying systems thinking to sustainability issues
12.15 - 13.00	Mapping priority SDGs within participants' professional contexts
Day 3	Values-Based and Transformative Pedagogies
09.00 - 09.45	Values, ethics and sustainability in education
09.45 - 10.30	ESD and global citizenship education
10.30 - 11.15	Transformative learning approaches
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Facilitating dialogue on complex and controversial issues
12.15 - 13.00	Reflection and peer exchange
Day 4	ESD Across the Curriculum and the Institution
09.00 - 09.45	Interdisciplinary and cross-curricular approaches to ESD
09.45 - 10.30	Integrating ESD into everyday teaching practice
10.30 - 11.15	Whole-school and organisational approaches
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Designing ESD learning activities or initiatives

12.15 - 13.00	Monitoring and evaluating ESD initiatives
Day 5	Individual support, presentations & Closing
09.00 - 09.45	Designing ESD action plans
09.45 - 10.30	Preparing the final presentations and individual support
10.30 - 11.15	Final presentations and feedback
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Evaluation & Reflection
12.15 - 13.00	Validation of learning outcomes and certification

*This is only a tentative timetable. The exact hours or the course might differ and will be announced for each session 2 weeks before the start. However, there will always be a total of 5 didactic hours per day and all will be in line with the Erasmus+ quality standards. The trainer might slightly modify the content in response to the needs of the group.
**Cultural and social programmes will be organized in addition to the academic programme. The exact cultural and social programme depends on the location, season, weather, etc.