



Newsletter: The 3rd Annual Conference of the „eSchool4S“ No. 6/December 2016

3rd Annual Conference

organized by

**Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
(GIZ)**

17th November 2016

**Official launch and future perspectives of the main project's
contribution - an innovative E-Learning-Platform**

Project information: E-School for Sustainability in the Danube Region (eSchool4S)

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Project information:

eSchool4S - a transnational E-Learning-Platform for collaborative learning

The network-project E-School for Sustainability in the Danube Region (eSchool4S) unites ten partners from Germany, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania. Each partner is specialized in different relevant fields of expertise. They were brought together to pursue a common goal – bring Sustainable Development and European Integration to schools.

eSchool4S designs an operational E-Learning-Platform for cooperation and exchange of information and experiences in the field of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It develops interactive web-based teaching and learning concepts to cover cross-border issues in the fields of sustainable development and European integration. The approach brings together decision-makers, (in-service) teacher training institutions, schools, and students across the Danube Region to raise their ecological awareness and to promote inclusion of these issues into the school curricula of secondary schools. Students and teachers learn to which extent there is interdependence between social, economic, environmental, and political development of a country. Hence, afterwards they know why the balanced interplay of the development dimensions is a condition for sustainable development at the national, regional and European level. They improve their computer skills, cognitive competences, communication as well as soft skills.

The eSchool4S is a project within the framework of the EU program "Lifelong Learning Programme" (LLP), Comenius-Multilateral Networks. It was recognized as an official project in the Priority Area nine "Investing in people and skills", within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR).

Project data

Duration: 1st January 2014 – 31st December 2016

Target Group: students between the ages of 15 and 18

Project Lead: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Stuttgart

Internet: <http://eschool4s.eu>

Moodle platform: <http://moodle.eschool4s.eu>



Official launch and future perspective of the main project's contribution - an innovative E-Learning- Platform

1. Introduction and Welcome

During the 3rd Annual Conference and based on the experience gained during implementation the eSchool4S, project partners and guests discussed educational challenges related to sustainable development and European integration in the Danube region, but also provided concrete and operational solutions to tackle them. In this context, the official launch and further dissemination of the main project's contribution - an innovative E-Learning-Platform on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for the Danube Region - was of particular relevance. Within the Conference, the eSchool4S-Approach was contextualized, highlighting its contribution to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) when it comes to learning in the globalized world. Furthermore, the relevance of networks for addressing current global challenges was addressed during the Conference. Finally and in order to take a look at the future, concrete initiatives to support use and dissemination of the E-Learning-Platform of the eSchool4S beyond project termination were presented.

“We are very proud to announce today that the usage and update of these modules will be guaranteed in the future”

Ms. Suzan Bacher, head of department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports Baden-Württemberg-Germany, and Ms. Sabine Trommershaeuser, GIZ country director in Baden-Württemberg-



Germany, opened the event. They congratulated all project partners for the successful implementation of such an outstanding project and emphasized its relevance in the framework of high level strategies such as the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). Both GIZ and the Ministry of Education, proudly announced that the dissemination of the E-Learning-Courses will be guaranteed in the future. After the end of the Comenius project eSchool4S in December 2016, the State Center for Civic Education Baden-Württemberg (Landeszentrale für politische Bildung (LpB))

and the project partner AINOVA will host the courses in their websites in English (http://www.elearning-politik.de/internetangebote_schulklassen.html) and in Slovak language (www.ainova-moodle.sk)

2. Presentation and launch of the E-Learning-Platform of the eSchool4S

The E-Learning-Platform of the eSchool4S has been finalized, tested and revised by the network partners. At the closing conference, project partners shared the particularly innovative characteristics of the E-Learning-Platform and courses with the audience.

A video containing testimonials of teachers and students coming from the Danube region s who tested the eSchool4S-E-Learning-Platform showed their impressions and assessment of the project approach. Both teachers and students highlighted the relevance of the eSchool4S courses to build and strengthen valuable intercultural, social and digital skills. They confirmed that they were empowered to assume responsibility and act to promote sustainable development and European integration.

Ms. Gabriela Pico (GIZ-Germany), Ms. Danka Puric (University of Belgrade-Serbia) and Ms. Lavinia Andrei (TERRA Mileniul III-Romania) presented the innovative features of the eSchool4S-E-Learning-Platform. The

eSchool4S is innovative because it integrates the following three dimensions: the E-Learning-Approach and an ambitious didactic concept in order to contribute to the regional integration of people and countries by focusing on a specific topic: sustainability.

Afterwards, Ms. Christiane Spies (Landesakademie für Fortbildung an Schulen- Germany), Dr. Christine Lechner (Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol-Austria) and Ms. Danijela Petrovic (University of Belgrade-Serbia) addressed the quality assurance approach implemented by the project when developing the E-Learning-Courses. Concretely, two crucial elements of the quality assurance approach were presented to the public: 1) the methodology followed during the testing phases of the E-Learning-Platform which included evaluation and feedback by the target groups as well as implementation of corresponding improvements by course authors; 2) the analysis of the context within which the project eSchool4S was implemented. This included the elaboration of a baseline study which addressed potentials and challenges for E-Learning and ESD in the countries of the Danube region.

Finally, the great moment came: 10 representatives of the partner organizations cut the red band as a symbolic act to officially launch the E-Learning-Platform. Guests of the Conference were invited to test the E-Learning-Courses of the eSchool4S by themselves or accompanied by the course authors who were ready to provide bilateral “guided tours” through the E-Learning-Platform.



3. Contextualization of the eSchool4S-Approach: Learning in a globalized world

All countries have agreed on implementing the Agenda 2030 for a sustainable future in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as well as for global citizenship is a crucial target within SDG 4 “Quality Education”. In a complex regional ecosystem it is possible to reach SDGs only if citizens can situate their behavior in a broader context. During the Conference it was shown how the eSchool4S-Project- Approach contributes to successfully address this challenge.



In the afternoon, within the discussion panel, speakers of organizations active in the education sector situated the eSchool4S in a broader context to understand the meaning and added value of the E-Learning-Platform for learning in a globalized world. Ms. Julia Viehöfer (German Commission for UNESCO-Germany), Ms. Beatrix Melchinger (LpB-Germany) and Dr. Darina Výbohová (Methodology and Pedagogy Centre -Slovakia) shared their insights about relevant topics related to education in a globalized world. Participants discussed these topics in small groups and presented their feedback to the speakers and the audience. Ms. Julia Viehöfer illustrated the important contribution of secondary schools to global citizenship and sustainable development by implementing a competency-based approach. Ms. Beatrix Melchinger addressed the relevance of sensitizing young people about the relevance of regional integration. She presented concrete projects with schools to promote integration in the Danube Region and highlighted the benefits of political education for the



to promote integration in the Danube Region and highlighted the benefits of political education for the

promotion of regional integration. Dr. Darina Výbohová shared valuable experiences and Lessons Learnt and insights on teacher education for the future of the Slovakian context. She emphasized the challenges and potentials the context of a changing world and the essential role of teachers' education to prepare young people for living in a complex interrelated world.

4. Exploring the relevance of networks for addressing global challenges

The eSchool4S has been implemented as a network project. One of its aims was and is to promote a regional partner network. The conference provided insights into the relevance of the network approach for implementing ESD at European and international levels.



Prof. Dr. Armin Lude (Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg and Network Coordinator of ESD-Hochschulnetzwerk-Germany) and Dr. Christine Lechner (Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol and Member of ÖKOLOG Netzwerk-Austria) addressed the specific added-value of networking for addressing common global challenges and achieving common goals. Two best practice examples, ESD-Hochschulnetzwerk Baden-Württemberg and the ÖKOLOG-Network were presented and discussed. Lessons Learnt and recommendation from these two examples were shared with the partners of the eschool4S and the audience.



Afterwards, each partner organization of the eSchool4S reflected on and made statements on the added value of having worked as a network for three years in order to address global and regional challenges.

5. Presentation of concrete initiatives of the eSchool4S partners to support use and dissemination of the E-Learning-Platform in the future

The eSchool4S E-Learning-Platform and the approach behind it shall continue to be disseminated beyond project lifetime in different contexts. Awareness about challenges related to sustainable development and European integration shall continue to be raised. Therefore, at the end of the Conference concrete measures that allow this were proudly presented.



The eSchool4S-Consortium in cooperation with committed partners like AINOVA and the LpB will ensure sustainability of the project approach. GIZ announced the two concrete initiatives for the future which were then presented in detail by AINOVA and LpB respectively. AINOVA will host a Slovak version of the eSchool4S-Moodle-Courses under the link www.ainova-moodle.sk and LpB will host the English version of the eSchool4S-Moodle-Courses in their Moodle environment under the link http://www.elearning-politik.de/internetangebote_schulklassen.html. Both AINOVA and LpB highlighted the added value of the E-learning-Platform for their organizations and expressed their deep motivation to approach more target groups and raise their awareness about sustainability and European Integration. Finally, they presented the courses in their new environment and invited guest to continue implementing them in different contexts.

Impressions of the event

3rd Annual Conference of eSchool4S

Date: Thursday, 17th of November 2016, 9:30 am – 17:00 pm

Venue: Hotel Steinberger, Arnulf-Klett-Platz 7, 70173 Stuttgart



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This project is co-funded by the
Lifelong Learning Programme of
the European Union



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