

INFORMAL COUNTRY REPORTS

CZECH REPUBLIC

a) To ensure that there is an EDS school plan in every school by 2015;

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the Czech Republic had followed up on the environmental education, which gradually began to extend to other key issues of sustainable development of social and economic nature since the 1990s in response to the UNESCO projects taking place at that time.

This concept of environmental education was then verified by large **projects** through the activities of the schools and teachers association - Environmental Education Club (founded in 1995):

in the **primary education** area through the Dutch - Czech Tulip project in which 48 primary schools were involved between 1998 - 2000 - six schools in the former regions of the Czech Republic, and all the faculties of education in the Czech Republic.

- in the **secondary schools** area there was, also in this period, the United Nations Development Programme UNDP project realized, in which 12 grammar schools participated (i. e., general secondary schools) and 12 secondary technical schools from various areas of expertise from various places of the Czech Republic.

Projekt „**Zelený most**“ podporovaný z prostředků EU, který se orientuje se na přípravu odborníků pro využívání **obnovitelných zdrojů energie**. Projektu se účastní 14 středních odborných škol z různých míst republiky.

„**Green Bridge**“ project supported by EU funds is oriented on education of **renewable energy sources** experts. 14 high schools participate in this project from different parts of country.

Nejlepší žáci z různých odborných škol mají možnost již několik let se zúčastnit celostátní soutěže ENERSOL podněcující zájem o obnovitelné zdroje energie.

For several years best pupils from different vocation schools are in a position to take part in a countrywide contest ENERSOL aimed at **renewable energy sources** interest.

Environmental education school plan in the EDS sense was prepared in the above mentioned projects.

In 2004 The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS, MŠMT in Czech) recommended in its methodical guideline establishing the school coordinator in all primary and secondary schools.

The fact that environmental education should be expanded in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is stated in the Act 123/98 Coll. „**The right to information about the environment**“ in which for education field in the Article 13 is explicitly said:

(4) Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

*a) is responsible for the **inclusion of environmental education in the sense of sustainable development** into curricula, and*

b) supports ongoing education of teachers in the field of environmental protection and sustainable development.

In this context, the issue of ESD also got into the curricula - the so-called **Framework education programmes** which are mandatory for all primary and secondary schools.

In 2005, the Czech UNESCO Commission, in cooperation with the Environmental Education Club launched the **Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** and there was announced the opportunity to gain the **Sustainable Development School** appreciation.

There are **Environmental Conferences** organized for primary and secondary schools students, where participants present individual works devoted to various problems of environmental protection and sustainable development.

In between 2005 - 2008 even more complex projects for ESD were realized, namely projects supported by the EU the "**Environmental Education Club pilot elementary schools as a centre of education for sustainable development modernization**".

Eco-School Project - Eco-School Programme is not running in the Czech Republic only but also in another 52 countries worldwide with over 25,000 schools participating. The international coordinator is a non-profit organization FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education).

Environmental education in schools is also supported by **extracurricular facilities - environmental education centres**, which provide an informal education of children, youth and partially of adults.

In 2012, two-year **Envigame** project was completed, which was focused on the use of audio-visual teaching aids in the form of games and teamwork. Nine primary schools and one grammar school from different areas of the Czech Republic participated in this project..

The best schools in this area have started to carry out the role of **educational ESD centres**. Support of these activities will be the part of further ESD action plan in the education system.

b) To promote the introduction of ESD into teacher education;

There are two basic levels of preparing teachers for ESD:

1. further ESD education of teachers already working at schools
2. ESD preparation of future teachers at the university faculties

In between 2002 - 2003 there was the **participatory UNESCO project "Eco-literacy for school"** realized in the Czech Republic, and its aim was to directly introduce the principles of sustainable development to teachers at schools.

60 schools from all over the country directly participated in the project and there were workshops realized for the teachers in all regions, attended by a total of over 1000 teachers. The teachers were given written information on the ESD concept.

Specialized studies of 250 hours to increase the teachers' skills for ESD have been organized for the **environmental education school coordinators** (ESD) since 2005 according to the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS).

For further ESD education of teachers there is a number of technical and methodological seminars organized - these are accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) on the following topics: Our community, Energy sources yesterday, today and tomorrow, Sustainable production and consumption, Forest as an interdisciplinary theme, Biodiversity as an interdisciplinary theme, Waste, Transport and environment, Legal and environmental education of the citizen, Greening of the school operation, Urban nature and its utilization for school excursions, etc.

Since 2009 Environmental Education Club has also begun to organize one day seminars for school coordinators focusing on current information, the implementation of ESD experience exchange and presenting a number of useful documents to schools. Organizing such seminars and conferences depends on the activity of regional authorities' education departments and their cooperation with the Environmental Education Club. Examples of such active regions so far are the following: Moravian-Silesian Region, Olomouc Region, Central Bohemian Region, South Bohemian Region and Karlovy Vary Region. It is expected that this activity will gradually extend to all regions.

Charles University Environment Centre together with 55 partners from almost all European countries is involved in preparation of the 3-year international project which builds upon the work of [COPERNICUS Alliance](#) and seeks to give continuity to the [People's Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education](#) launched at Rio+20. It has been developed by a project steering group composed by the University of Gloucestershire (lead organisation, UK), Charles University (Czech Republic), Leuphana University (Germany) and the University Autónoma of Madrid (Spain). The project focuses on support of the processes for quality enhancement in HE and ESD innovation in the HE academic practice and curriculum through identifying and creating opportunities for university educators to develop ESD competences within their professional development. This project aspires to placing HE in a better position to address and contribute to the SD challenge. The project will ensure that university educators will have the competences and skills to prepare students for addressing sustainability within their professional work and personal lives, which means that students going through university will have the better prerequisites to contribute to a more sustainable EU.

The consortium of 15 partners led by Charles University Environment Centre has a specific interest in education for sustainable development from either a research or practical teaching perspective. The project contributes to harnessing the power of ICT as a catalyst for social and educational innovation and change through strengthening learning via innovative pedagogy and approaches to learning, particularly in parts of Europe where these approaches have not been fully utilised to date. The envisaged Open Educational Resources also have the potential to integrate formal, non-formal and in-formal learning opportunities, as well as flexible lifelong learning by developing educational materials that are adaptable enough to be applied to different levels of education, inside and outside the educational mainstream. The project will also assist in developing key digital competences for both learning and teaching in a variety of settings by enabling collaborative learning, peer learning in communities, creative problem solving, discovery, learning by doing, experiential learning, critical thinking and creativity. While the SCULPT OER will be created initially for HEI learning, it will also be designed in such a way that it can simultaneously cater for other types of learners, whether that be through the independent creation of user groups and profiles for learners who more interested in learning for personal goals and creating their own learning materials for that purpose.

c) To reorient technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy.

The ESD is of particular importance in preparation of specialists, especially of technical and economic focus for the transition to a green economy in accordance with the conclusions adopted at the Rio + 20 conference in 2012.

In the area of **vocational training of cadres** at secondary schools there has been and still is gained a lot of experience and ESD is incorporated as a meaningful and important task in general educational subjects for all secondary vocational schools fields. As stated in the first point, vocational schools of various focus have always participated in large complex ESD projects within UNESCO and other projects mainly supported from the EU funds. Technical aspects were examined in the fields of agriculture, forestry, construction, engineering, economic, electrical engineering, chemical and in the clothing industry. Regarding the general education component, the compulsory basis of natural sciences of biology and ecology and the economic and social aspects of ESD were, at least in the minimum amount required, incorporated into schools of polytechnic and economic focus as well. These are included and emphasized in the Basics of social sciences course. Integration with specialist training requires interdisciplinary theme “Man and the environment”. Since the 1990s, there are training courses specifically focused on the issue of protection and creation of the environment supported by the EU Phare programme.