

EXPECT

EXCHANGES OF PRACTICES IN EDUCATION FOR CLIMATE TARGETS

AUGUST 1, 2022



During the first half of 2022, partners of the project “EXPECT” have managed to meet two times. The first (4th in overall) meeting took place in Riga, Latvia from the 4th to the 5th of April. The second (5th overall) meeting took place in Helsinki, Finland from the 13th to the 14th of June. Keep reading to learn more about the recap of each meeting.

PLA RIGA

DAY 1

On the 1st day, project partners gathered at the premises of Latvian CCI to hear presentations from the guest speakers.

The first speaker of was Ms Ilze Buligina from the Ministry of Education and Science. She gave an insight into the Latvian VET system. In total, there are 55 VET institutions in Latvia with 27990 students. This year 3-months long training was organised for all VET institutions. The aim of this was to develop an Investment and Development Strategy for each VET institution, including green approaches into it.

Afterwards, Ms Inese Liepiņa, introduced project partners with the Latvian Student Song and Dance Festival, which is the largest cultural and art festival in Latvia, taking place since 1960. In 2021 it was organised virtually but the planned activities remained. One of them included a Climate calculator for students, allowing them to be more environmentally friendly and educating students on daily choices that affect the environment. A similar tool was also created for organisers to allow them to measure the climate impact of any event.

Then, she talked about the GLOBE programme which was launched in 1995, by NASA in US. 4 areas are investigated in this project, which is the atmosphere, biosphere, soil, and hydrosphere. Activities usually take place outdoors and are very practical.

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Then, Ms Līva Stāde gave a presentation about the Eco-Schools programme. Eco-Schools programme implements different projects in Latvia (around 200 schools), which are aimed to raise awareness and understanding about the circular economy, waste recycling and sorting, and reducing food waste. Activities in these projects are done in a practical way, involving pupils. E.g., to reduce food waste in schools, students mark their school menu, for schools to understand what students do and do not like.

After, Ms Aija Caune from Green Belt, which is in the market for 20 years and provides to enterprises everything that is related to the management of packaging, harmful waste and electrical engineering. The company has an initiative “I start with myself”. The idea is to change the habits of an individual, by changing their thinking about particular things they use in everyday life.



Ms Laura Treimane from WWF Latvia, presented the results of the conducted research on environmental education in youth, in 2021. It was carried out among young people (16-25 years old) and revealed that 91% think that it is very important for Latvia to contribute to global environmental and natural crisis mitigation. Additionally, WWF Latvia is implementing the project “Advocacy academy” with an aim to train and educate young people to defend their interests, and help them to gain faith in their abilities to make decisions.

Next was a speaker from Zero Waste Latvia, Ms Anna Doškina. She shared that back in 2020, they launched an educational project about the circular economy to educate young people. The project consisted of the lectures (online and hybrid) and home works students had to carry out. In total, 758 students have been reached so far.

As a next speaker was Mr Mihails Basmanovs, from the National Centre for Education. He spoke about the project “Skola2030” (School 2030), which was initiated in 2016. The aim of the project is to develop, test and subsequently introduce in Latvia such general education content and approach to teaching from preschool age to secondary school, as a result of which students would acquire the knowledge necessary for life today.

Next up were 4 high school students, who created a student learning company called “Bevaxx”. It is a bee wax wrap, which serves the same function as a paper wrap but it can be used multiple times. This product was developed with the aim to get more attention to the bees as they are crucial to the environment and their number is decreasing. 15% of their income is donated to the “Save the bees and farmers” fund.



The last speaker of the first day was a Member of the Board of the Latvian CCI, Mr Jānis Lielpēteris. He shared more about the initiative called “The Green Think Tank” which was developed with an aim to educate LCCI members on the EU Green Deal as 52% of LCCI members, do not have a full understanding of it. Additionally, he pointed out that it is important to discuss it as EU Green Deal will affect all industries.

DAY 2

On the second day of the meeting, project partners went on 2 study visits.

The first stop was at the largest waste polygon in Latvia – Getliņi EKO. Project partners had a trip around the polygon itself, learned about the processes within the company, and about their improvements for making a more sustainable and energy-efficient company. Additionally, partners learned that the heat they produce is used in order to grow tomatoes and cucumbers within the greenhouse, located in the company area.



The second visit was to the Ogre Technical School. Project partners were given a short presentation about the school, projects, and study programmes implemented in the school. Afterwards, there was a trip around the facilities, where partners had the opportunity to see the equipment and machinery that is being used in the learning process.

PLA HELSINKI



DAY 1

The first speaker was Mr Anssi Almgren, from the Education Division of the City of Helsinki. He shared that in 2020, the city's emissions were 33% lower than in 1990, even though the number of residents had increased by 150,000. But, in order to make Helsinki carbon-neutral, the emissions have to be reduced even more. A carbon-neutral Helsinki is being created in collaboration between the residents, the city, businesses and organisations.

Next, Ms Marjaana Suorsa from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland presented *Hiilestä kiinni – Catch the carbon* research and innovation programme. Its aim is to produce information that anticipates changes in the operating environment on how agriculture, forestry and other land use can be targeted in a more climate-smart manner, both in the short and long term. It aims also to strengthen the sustainable use of renewable natural resources and comprehensive sustainability.



The next speaker was Ms Sirpa Lindroos from Stadin AO, Helsinki Vocational College and Adult Institute. She shared about competency-based learning, which means systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. The objective of competency-based education - is to prepare individuals for the challenges of the future; empower students with knowledge and skills in various fields of study in a flexible educational program tailored to each student.

Afterwards, partners were introduced to Helen (energy company). It was founded over 100 years ago out of a need to create safer and more eco-friendly energy in a smoky city. Helen currently has 20 projects that promote carbon neutrality. They are the first Finnish energy company to commit to the 1.5-degree target according to the Paris Agreement and their energy production is awarded as the most efficient in the world. The company aims to achieve 100% carbon neutrality in energy production.

At the end of the first day, the project partners went to have a visit and dinner at the Helsinki Distilling Company. During the visit, project partners learned that company has made a choice to use steam power as the driving force for the distillery and renewable biogas as the fuel, as it is a more energy-efficient alternative to electricity in the case of a large distillery.

DAY 2

Day 2 began with the presentation from one of the project partners from Koning Willem I College, Mr Rob De Vrind. He gave a presentation about the Energy transition and the labour market. He highlighted among other issues that the current shortages of the labour force might endanger the energy transition process. Possible solutions are more innovation, e.g. robotization, digitalization, remote and flexible working schemes. We need to work in a smarter way if we want to reach the climate targets.

At the end of the 2nd day, there was a Learning Café, where project partners were divided into 3 groups. Each group had different questions that had to be discussed and ideas are written down. The questions which were discussed and answers were the following:

1. How could a VET student foster and work on the themes of climate responsibility and sustainable development in the workplace?
 -) Raising awareness
 -) Peer learning
 -) Learning triangles
 -) Evaluation and feedback
 -) International experience

2. Collaboration in Business: How do different countries operate in business cooperation?

-) Training, internship, WBL
-) Cooperation
-) Forums and discussions
-) Innovative projects

3. How does the structure of VET degrees in different countries make it possible to take into account climate responsibility and sustainable development?

-) Motivation of teachers
-) Sustainable development
-) Climate Education

Afterwards, groups switched tables and wrote down their thoughts on other questions as well.

NEXT STEPS

The next PLA will take place in September 2022, when project partners will meet in Frosinone, Italy.

***THE PROJECT "EXPECT" HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY EXTENDED
UNTIL 30/06/2023!***

As the project is extended for 9 months due to the Covid pandemic, the project partners suggested having an additional PLA to discuss all the Good Practices from all the PLAs and how they could best be used. So, a kind of summary PLA does not focus on one specific country.

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