

Project LLABS: Lifelong learning for adults  
to become sustainable 2013-1-RO1-GRU06-29574-5

# LIFELONG LEARNING FOR ADULTS BECOME SUSTAINABLE

Basic EU legislation and policies on sustainable development  
in Czech Republic, Italy and Slovakia

Sustainable development - a challenge for adult education  
in some European countries



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*“If we are to eradicate poverty and hunger, improve health, protect our planet and build more inclusive, resilient and peaceful societies, then every individual must be empowered with access to quality lifelong learning, with special attention to opportunities for girls and women.”*

(Irina Bokova, general director UNESCO)

Information brochure **Sustainable Development – Legislation and Policies** has originated as a part of project Lifelong Learning for Adults Become Sustainable (LLABS). In this project three European countries decided to discuss the connection between lifelong learning (LLL) and the concept of sustainable development (SD). Inside you can find information on what SD is, and how it is related to LLL. You will go through the evolution of these concepts and their synthesis, in order to understand why it is important for project partner countries. Synthesis of these concepts is reflected in a variety of **strategic documents at national and international level**. We will introduce important outcomes of the meetings at three levels, proving that the world is making steps forward in the SD issues – **at the UN level, European level** and the **EU member states level**, each of them reacting differently, but in the common framework.



Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia\\_Governance\\_workshop\\_at\\_Wikipedia\\_in\\_Higher\\_Education\\_Summit\\_3,\\_2011-07-09.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia_Governance_workshop_at_Wikipedia_in_Higher_Education_Summit_3,_2011-07-09.jpg) or [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Small\\_World\\_Social\\_Teamwork.JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Small_World_Social_Teamwork.JPG) or [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science\\_education?oldformat=true#/media/File:Argonne\\_lab\\_education.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science_education?oldformat=true#/media/File:Argonne_lab_education.jpg)

During the implementation of LLABS project educational organisations from three European countries has met, thanks to what you can find information about the relevant policies and legislation in Czech Republic, Italy and Slovakia.

Even though their approaches are slightly different in their specific priorities, we have also found lot of similarities. For example Slovak Strategy of Sustainable Development emphasises, apart from three traditional elements of sustainable development – environmental, social and economic, also cultural aspects of SD, while Czech strategy put emphasis on science and research. Italian approach to the issue is dominantly focused on environmental aspects of SD<sup>1</sup>. All these documents and strategies are based on the common frame, which sets their limits.

<sup>1</sup> HAMETNER, M. a STEURER, R.; *Objectives and Indicators of Sustainable Development in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of European Coherence*; 2007; available at: [http://www.esdn.eu/?k=quarterly%20reports&report\\_id=7#qr5](http://www.esdn.eu/?k=quarterly%20reports&report_id=7#qr5)

## 1.1. WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

*“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*

(Brundtland Report, UN, 1987)

Sustainable development or simply sustainability is more like kind of mindset or life approach than concrete educational principle. Quotation from the beginning of this section says that *we should behave and act in a way we could leave the world in a state we would like to find it ourselves. That is a principle of sustainable development.* However, day to day reality shows that it is not generally accepted life principle. On contrary, western society, with other societies just behind, opts for unsustainable lifestyles. Planet is falling apart, data on ruining its balance is alarming. This unhealthy long-term setting of modern societies' has to be challenged via policy and legislative changes in particular areas of societies' functioning, within and between them.

What strategies did countries chose in the last decades to correct that balance? One of the ways was to mainstream the sustainability principles into each sphere of our lives – including education. According to UNESCO, education is essential precondition to SD<sup>2</sup>. *If we will count with SD in our educational practice, we will contribute to its acceptance and wider spread around society.* Then it could help to give the planet and human dignity a chance. This requirement is reflected in all the Slovak and international documents related to SD, and gradually it also gets into the legislation of all individual parts of society, as well as into documents related to LLL.

### Strategic documents related to SD and LLL at the international level:

Agenda 21 (UN, 1992)

Treaty of Amsterdam (EU, 1997)

European Strategy of Sustainable Development (EU, 2001)

Declaration on SD from Johannesburg (EU, 2002)

UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (OSN, 2005)

UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UN - UNESCO, 2005 - 2014)

Revised European Strategy of SD (EU, 2006)

Lisbon Treaty (EU, 2009)

The Future We Want (UN, 2012)

### Documents related to SD and LLL at Slovak level:

National Strategy of Sustainable Development (2001)

Concept of Lifelong Learning in Slovakia (2004)

Sustainable Development Action Plan in Slovakia since 2005 to 2010 (2005)

Revised Concept of Lifelong Learning in Slovakia (2011)

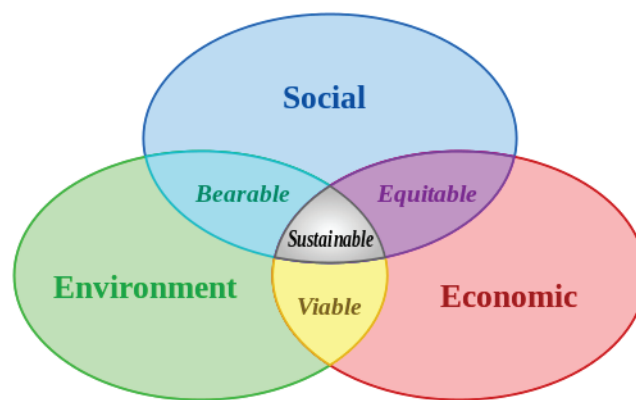
Law no. 17/1992 on Environment (including further changes)

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO: Education for Sustainable Development; available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/education-for-sustainable-development/>

Sustainable development is formed out of three mutually overlapping components:

1. sustainable economic production
2. social inclusion
3. environmental sustainability

Countries, which are actively engaged in the realisation of the strategies of SD, can choose themselves how much they will be focused on individual components. Slovakia, for example, emphasises social and cultural aspects, Czech Republic put emphasis on research and development, and Italy accentuates environmental perspective.



This diagram shows the overlaps of three relatively autonomous dimensions of planet development. This overlap has to be reached in order we could considered development as sustainable.

Source: [www.wikimedia.org](http://www.wikimedia.org)

If we split the idea of SD into smaller fragments, if we define concrete areas and reasons for engagement of various actors into solution of imbalances of the world (environmental, economic and social), the whole concept loses its academic facade. Responsibilities in each area of society become more or less obvious then.

This deconstructing of the concept also relates to the education, which has to identify tools to enable its absorption into the process. Organisations that guarantee that impetus of SD issues is not slowing down under the pressure of economic or social problems, continually bring new challenges and contributions to the debate on SD. UN is currently planning to adopt (should do so in September 2015) so called Sustainable Development Goals<sup>4</sup>. One of the anticipated UN goals for period of 2015-2030 will be related to education. It aims to include principle of sustainable development into all areas of education, including lifelong learning, using all the approaches, formal, non-formal and informal. European countries will have to react on that, and prepare plans for its implementation at national levels.

Project LLABS is primarily oriented on adult education, and in the other informational materials it brings also good practices examples in the area of interconnecting of SD and LLL.

<sup>4</sup> Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform; available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal>

## 1.2. FROM LARGE GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO CONCRETE COMMITMENTS OF INDIVIDUAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

- Term SD became part of the discourse in '70s, however it became more accepted only after so called Brundtland Report titled Our Common Future<sup>5</sup>. Report was conducted by the UN commission led by former Norwegian prime minister Gro Brundtland. Since that time SD slowly became a cross-cutting issue mainstreamed into all relevant policies and legislation.
- SD was the main topic of large UN Conference on Environment and Development at so called Earth Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro in year 1992. 177 national delegations have adopted Agenda 21<sup>6</sup> there. Since then various programme and strategic documents on SD were based on Agenda 21 (also documents dealing with SD in project LLABS countries are reflecting it).
- Since 1992 Agenda 21 was gradually included into all spheres of life. At the subsequent UN conferences and summits (i.a. Johannesburg, 2002) there were several declarations and strategies adopted clarifying or further developing its message. Issue became also part of EU policies, policies which are directly related to partner countries in LLABS project. As a result of all these, the perspective of sustainable development has become part of the education.
- The EU has adopted Treaty of Amsterdam<sup>7</sup> in 1997. It has enacted issue of SD as an overarching goal of all the policies it included.
- In 2001 the EU has adopted European Strategy of Sustainable Development at the summit in Gothenburg. Strategy showed concrete unsustainable trends in the development of the EU, and tried to identify concrete cross-sectoral measures, which could contribute to make European economic, social and environmental policies coherent and enforcing each other. In the area of LLL, there was an obligation defined to "Identify coherent strategies and practical measures with a view to fostering lifelong learning for all."<sup>8</sup>
- Slovakia as a candidate country for EU accession adopted its own National Strategy of Sustainable Development<sup>9</sup> in 2001. Lifelong learning was its integral component.
- Government of Slovak Republic adopted Action plan of SD since 2005 to 2010<sup>10</sup> in 2005. It again enforced the role of LLL in sustainable development.

<sup>5</sup> UN; Our Common Future, 1987; available at: <http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> UN; Agenda 21, 1992; available at: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?documentid=52>

<sup>7</sup> EU; Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997; available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/treaty/pdf/amst-en.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> EU; EC Communication – European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development, 2001; available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52001DC0264&from=EN>

<sup>9</sup> Government of Slovak Republic; National Strategy of Sustainable Development, 2001; available at: <http://www.environet.sk/?M=21&lang=sk>

<sup>10</sup> Government of Slovak Republic; Action Plan of Sustainable Development of Slovak Republic in 2005 to 2010, 2005; available at: <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-20307?prefixFile=m>

- In 2006 the European Union has revised European Strategy of SD from 2001<sup>11</sup>. New revised version included changes caused by accession of new member states as well as by changing international situation.
- Objectives of European strategy of SD from 2001 and from its revised version from 2006 became part of several articles of Treaty of Lisbon effective since 2009.
- 20 years after the UN environmental conference in Rio de Janeiro, another round of negotiations took place at the same city. It is known as Rio +20. Its guests proclaimed that mankind did only a minor steps for its sustainability, and that we have a long way ahead of us, yet. Document named The Future We Want was published as an outcome of this event. It further opened door for even tighter bond between SD and LLL. This effort should officially culminate in September 2015, when Sustainable Development Goals ought to be adopted by the UN General Assembly. Goals should be universal, with indicators tailor-made for countries around the globe, thus valid for each country in the world, not aimed solely at so called development countries as it was usual before.

COUNTRY	YEAR OF ADOPTION (eventual revision)	COVERAGE OF 3 SD COMPONENTS	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	DISTINCTIVE PRIORITY	INCLUSION OF LLL INTO THE NATIONAL SD STRATEGY
Czech Republic	2004 (2010)	balanced	Government Council for Sustainable Development	International dimension, governance, research and development, education	yes
Italy	2002	It covers only environmental component	Ministry of environment, land and sea	—	yes
Slovakia	2001 (2005)	Emphasis on social dimension	Government Council for Sustainable Development	Culture	yes

Collected by author

source no. 1: [http://www.esdn.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2013-July-National\\_Sustainable\\_Development\\_Strategies\\_in\\_Europe\\_2013.pdf](http://www.esdn.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2013-July-National_Sustainable_Development_Strategies_in_Europe_2013.pdf)

source no. 2: [http://www.esdn.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2007-December-Objectives\\_and\\_Indicators\\_of\\_Sustainable\\_Development\\_in\\_Europe.pdf](http://www.esdn.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2007-December-Objectives_and_Indicators_of_Sustainable_Development_in_Europe.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> EU; Revised European strategy of SD, 2006; available at: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%2010917%202006%20INIT>



Picture of proposed UN sustainable development goal related to education. The UN is in coming 15 years planning to put emphasis on education at all its levels, since preschool education to adult learning.

Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal.html#goal4>

March 2014

## 2. BASIC EU LEGISLATION AND POLICIES ON THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN CZECH REPUBLIC

The protection of environment becomes more and more important and urgent with all changes in the globalised world. Constitutions of European countries contain this issue among the basic principles of the legislation. Thus, generally it is guaranteed that people will protect the environment and nature and that this basic legal act will be incorporated in many other legal acts which implement the basic principles of the constitutions.

In the same time, it is necessary to support the public awareness about the necessity to protect the environment and nature. Both the initial and adult education should participate on this long-term task. The project LLABS is one of the contribution to this task.

The knowledge of the national system of education represents the preliminary step to be sure that the developed materials can be integrated with local and national criteria for training courses aimed at unemployed people according to the European Qualification Framework (EQF) for Life Long Learning.

This document describes both the educational system according to the legislative framework in the Czech Republic and some legal acts concerning the protection of environment and nature.

## 2.1. THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN CZECH REPUBLIC

In Czech Republic, the formal education system is the responsibility of the state and some private educational bodies that have to have the acknowledgement from the state. The non-formal education is a domain of various types of public and private organisations and some of them are specialised to the protection of the environment. Many providers of non-formal adult education incorporate the protection of environment into their courses. Mainly it concerns the concrete field of the protection of nature, water, air, the industry and pollution, etc.

### A. Formal education (initial education)

#### 1<sup>st</sup> level: basic education

The minimal level of the required/compulsory education is the basic education, finished by the completion of 9 years at school (ISCED 1)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> level: higher education

After that, there are various possibilities:

1.) Vocational training for a job (mainly 2 - 3 years, completed by the state exam and acquisition of a certificate – not A-levels (ISCED 2C). This type of schools relates to manually-oriented professions as e.g. bricklayers, plumbers, shop-assistants, hair-dressers etc.

2.) Vocational training for a job finished with A-levels (so called “maturita” exam). Its quality is lower, not comparable with the below mentioned other types of the “maturita” (ISCED 3C). No environmental education is included. Some agricultural and forestry fields of study are available.

3.) Higher vocational schools (ISCED 3) – 4 years finished by A-levels (“maturita”). Graduates are prepared both theoretically and practically for certain areas of jobs (machinery, chemistry, health care, agriculture, construction, etc.). Some types of higher schools provide with certain extend of environmental education. Graduates can continue on universities or go to practical jobs as lower and middle management.

4.) Gymnasia (ISCED 3A) – either 4 year after the primarily school (after 9th year) or 8 years (after 5th year of the primarily school). Finished by a A-levels (“maturita”). Graduates are prepared for the further study at universities. More general education than at higher vocational schools. Both in 2) and 3) some environmental education is included, rather general.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> level: universities

There are some entry conditions for enrolling universities:

1.) The applicant has to have the “maturita” exam.

2.) The majority of universities require successful passing through some tests or exams.

Who wants to study more environmental issues, it is possible at several Agricultural Universities or at faculties of Natural Sciences of other universities. Certain extend of environmental education (lessons, seminars, practical exercises) or specific fields of study are a part of curricula at such universities.

## B. Non-formal education (further education/adult education)

Besides this, there are plenty of vocational training courses for adults provided by various types of organisations in the non-formal sphere of education. Such courses must be accredited by the Ministry of Education and the participants are given the certificate. Some of them are considered as the enlargement of the actual level of the qualification.

There are 2 basic orientation of topic in the courses for adults:

**Sustainable development**, a constantly evolving concept, is the will to improve everyone's quality of life, including that of future generations, by reconciling economic growth, social development and environmental protection<sup>12</sup>.

**Environmental sustainability** is a strategy whose guiding principle is the use of goods from environment without interrupting the natural production of these products in sufficient quantities in the future. Environmentally sustainable development implies the development of the productive structures of economy together with an attention to the natural environment and ecological issues, the exploitation of natural resources at a lower rate than their regeneration time rate.

Such vocational courses are widely attended by people who reached the required level of the formal education but are not experts in the field where they are going to work. Employers send very often their employees to non-formal vocational courses to gain experts in required positions. Many vocational courses are offered by universities but their completion does not mean that people who finished such courses have got a higher level of the education. They are given a certificate.

In the sphere of non-formal education, there is a lack of offer of training courses in environmental field. There are only few fields that are acknowledged by the state system:

- Company Ecologist
- Guide on Natural Sites
- Expert for recycling (newly adopted to state system of qualifications in 2010, will be piloted in 2013)

The system of education is quite complicated: higher schools belong to regions, primarily schools and universities to the state. Moreover, there are some private schools mainly universities there. In the sphere of the formal education schools and their education programmes must be accredited by the Ministry of Education (so-called "big-accreditation").

In the sphere of the non-formal education schools/training centres/NGOs must have accreditation only for individual courses issued by the Ministry of Education (so called "small accreditation"). Thus, although regions have got the right to establish and manage the administration of higher schools and vocational training programs, only central Ministry of Education is responsible for the curricula and its quality.

Moreover, people are not generally familiar with the EU- and Czech legislation concerning the protection

<sup>12</sup> UN Decade for Sustainable Development 2005-2014; available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001416/141629e.pdf>

of environment. This knowledge is considered to be a part of the profession of experts and clerks working in the field of environment protection.

There was a small survey in Ostrava carried out by METER Silesia about the environmental policies and the training needs of people in adult education.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT AND PRIORITIES

Which do you think are the main priorities regarding sustainability in Czech Republic?

	Not a priority	Medium priority	High priority
Air pollution			X
Water pollution		X	
Availability and quality of drinking water	X		
The level of Energy consumption		X	
The scarce use of energy from renewables			X
Urban Waste management	X		
Waste prevention		X	
Contaminated sites (brownfields)			X
Hydrogeological instability	X		
The environmental management of enterprises		X	
The lack of environmental policies			X (concerning air pollution)
Transportation and mobility		X	
The lack of innovative and clean technologies		X	
The risk for biodiversity		X	
Environmental and energy quality of buildings			X
The impact of agriculture and zootechnics		X	
The impact of forestry activities		X	
Sustainability of products		X	
The continuously raising price of energies			X

To sum it up, it is possible to say that there is not a wide-spread environmental and sustainability awareness in the Czech population yet. There are some experts who work in this field and it is considered as a normal situation.

Nevertheless, the opinion of the general public is formed by many initiatives from municipalities and NGOs (like a sorting of the waste, keeping water clean). Unfortunately the existing legislation can't protect people for example from the air pollution).


## 2.2. BASIC LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

The basic legal act concerning the environment protection is the Legal act No.17/1992 Sb. in the actual version. This Legal act defines the basic terms and conditions for the protection of the environment and duties of legal and physical persons for the protection of the environment and the exploitation of natural resources. The main principle is the environmental sustainability.


The Czech Ministry of Environment is responsible to collect the legislative information and to keep the general awareness of all actual legal acts and their changes. It publishes the actual versions of all important Legal acts at its website: <http://www.mzp.cz/cz/legislativa>

01	Environment - generally
02	Water
03	Waste
04	Air protection
05	Nature protection
06	Protection of the soil and forests
07	Geology and Mining
09	Assessment of the influence to the environment
11	Prevention of serious accidents
12	Genetically modified organisms
13	Integrated prevention of environmental deterioration
14	Energetics
15	Noise
16	Climate protection
	Ecological damages
	Chemical substances

The print screen from the website of the Czech Ministry of Environment:



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## Platná legislativa

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▶ 02 VODNÍ HOSPODÁŘSTVÍ					
▶ 03 ODPADOVÉ HOSPODÁŘSTVÍ					
▶ 04 OCHRANA OVZDUŠÍ					
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Tel:  +420 267 121 111 , fax: +420 267 310 308, e-mail: [posta@mzp.cz](mailto:posta@mzp.cz).

## 2.3. CONCLUSION

The legislation concerning the protection of environment and the sustainable development in Czech Republic is harmonised with the EU-legislation and the Czech Ministry of Environment is in charge to publish all legal acts in their actual versions.

This information is therefore freely available for anybody who is interested in it.

Nevertheless, the role of the education in terms of the protection of environment and the sustainable development (both the initial and adult education) is not properly developed yet and there are many challenges here for the improvement of the awareness of the general public about the sustainable development, environmental sustainability and environmental protection.

METER Silesia, spol. s r.o..  
March 2014

### 3. LIFELONG LEARNING – PRECONDITION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD, OF WHICH SLOVAKIA IS A PART OF

Slovakia is an integral part of the Europe. Previously, since the beginning of 20th century, it formed common state with nowadays Czech Republic. After revolutionary events in the late 1989 it slowly became part of freely developing Europe. Slovakia became independent in 1993. Since that time Slovakia implements issue of SD into its policies and legislation. At the beginning of this brochure, there is a list of important meetings, initiatives and documents related to SD at the UN and the EU level. Slovakia was influenced by these initiatives even before the accession to the European Union.

- Slovakia, still as a candidate country, adopted its own **National Strategy of SD<sup>13</sup>** in 2001. Lifelong learning is its integral part.
- In 2005 the government of Slovak Republic approved **Action Plan of SD in Slovakia since 2005 - 2010<sup>14</sup>**, it had further widen the role of LLL in SD.

Lifelong learning is voluntary education beyond the frame of formal educational system. In the age of fast development and obsolescence of knowledge at the same time, LLL helps to further develop knowledge, skills and attitudes gained during obligatory formal education, as well as it helps to keep up with up-to-date proceedings. Motivation by personal and/or professional reasons, and the fact it relates to adults, are both important aspects to mention in relation to LLL.

According to **Communication from the Commission from 2006 titled Adult Learning: It is never too late to learn<sup>15</sup>** LLL fosters social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development. **Concept of Lifelong Learning in Slovak Republic<sup>16</sup> from 2004** adds to it support of one's abilities to find the job and her/his place at the competitive labour market, promotion of citizen participation and governance, and the activities promoting SD of Slovakia.

LLL and SD are obviously two indivisible concepts – **education is the precondition to the sustainable development**. In the domain of SD, lifelong learning is reflected since Agenda 21 (see article 36 of this document) from the beginning of '90s. LLL included it only years later. **Sustainable development has joined LLL at the highest EU level in the Lisbon Strategy from 2000.**

<sup>13</sup> Government of Slovak Republic; *National Strategy of Sustainable Development, 2001*; available at: [http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Slovakia\\_NSSD\\_Final.pdf](http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Slovakia_NSSD_Final.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Government of Slovak Republic; *Action Plan of Sustainable Development of Slovak Republic in 2005 to 2010*; available at: <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-20307?prefixFile=m>

<sup>15</sup> European Commission; *Adult learning: It is never too late to learn, 2006*; available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SK/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52006DC0614&from=EN>

<sup>16</sup> Government of Slovak Republic; *Concept of LLL in Slovakia, 2004*; available at: [https://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2609\\_koncepcia\\_czv.zip](https://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2609_koncepcia_czv.zip)

In the area of lifelong learning Slovakia is compatible with other countries of the EU, although LLL is not very actively used in comparison with European average<sup>17</sup>. Slovakia has adopted common ISCED system<sup>18</sup>. It is employing all sorts of education – formal, non-formal and informal<sup>19</sup> at all levels – from preschool facilities to the universities and further education.

- SD did not enter LLL in Slovakia until 2004, when Concept of Lifelong Learning in Slovakia was adopted by Slovak government<sup>20</sup>. LLL should, according to the document, apart of the other considerable social goals, lead to the activities supporting SD.
- Inclusion of the issue of SD into education in general, got stimuli from UNESCO, which announced and led UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in between 2005 and 2014.
- Ministers of education and environment from UNECE (UN Economic Commission for Europe) member countries gathered in Lithuanian capital Vilnius in 2005 and adopted Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development<sup>21</sup>. Strategy consisted of suggestions how to identify tools, which could lead to the implementation of sustainable development education into educational process (formal, non-formal and informal) in individual countries<sup>22</sup>. It has also formed another step to harmonisation of concepts of LLL and SD.
- Countries present at the meeting in Vilnius, including Slovakia, Czech Republic and Italy, elaborated action plan on how and when to reach the goals set in the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. Year 2015 is deadline when all individual countries should present their reports on its fulfilment. Procedure was divided into three phases<sup>23</sup>:
  1. Phase until 2007 – supplementing of existing activities, implementation of initial measures and defining of other priorities.
  2. Phase until 2010 – integration of SD education programme into practice.
  3. Phase until 2015 – creation of considerable progress in the implementation of SD education.

<sup>17</sup> EUROSTAT; Lifelong learning statistics 2006 a 2001; available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Lifelong\\_learning\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Lifelong_learning_statistics)

<sup>18</sup> ISCED; International Standard Classification of Education; available at: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/international-standard-classification-of-education.aspx>

<sup>19</sup> EACEA; Dospelí vo formálnom vzdelávaní: politika a prax v Európe, 2011; available at: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic\\_reports/128SK.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/128SK.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Government of Slovak Republic; Concept of LLL in Slovakia, 2004; available at: [https://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2609\\_koncepcia\\_czv.zip](https://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2609_koncepcia_czv.zip)

<sup>21</sup> UNECE; Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, 2005; available at: <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2005/cep/ac.13/cep.ac.13.2005.3.rev.1.e.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> UNECE; Action Plan of Education for Sustainable Development in Slovakia; available at: <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/Implementation/NAP/SlovakiaNAP.Slovak.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

- UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development as a whole created base for implementation of aforementioned **UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** under guardianship of the UNESCO. In this phase concepts of LLL and SD has finally unified.

*"If we would like to make our world sustainable, we should approach sustainable development from holistic perspective, from up to bottom, from left to right, from all the directions. It means that if we would like to contribute by the education, it should be complex, lifelong learning."*



Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Advanced\\_editing\\_workshop\\_at\\_Wikipedia\\_in\\_Higher\\_Education\\_Summit,\\_2011-07-09.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Advanced_editing_workshop_at_Wikipedia_in_Higher_Education_Summit,_2011-07-09.jpg)

Here we have pointed out indicators out of the Action plan of fulfilment of National strategy of SD since 2005 to 2010<sup>24</sup>. We took only the formulations illustrating conjunctions between SD and LLL:

- Conditions for implementation of LLL at the regional and local level.
- Effective interconnecting of LLL with the needs of local and regional labour market by including of all the levels of schools, employers, local governments, professional associations.
- Creation of national programme for learning regions.
- Creation of regional committees for development of LLL.
- Solving the status and role of LLL.
- Increasing of the allotment of financing for LLL with the aim to reach the average allotment in the other EU countries.
- Securing financial resources and proposing strategy of multisource financing of LLL with the goal to improve the level of spent financial resources.
- Creation of legislation for the system of multisource financing of LLL.
- Creation of legislation for acknowledgement of non-formal education at the credit system base.

<sup>24</sup> National Council of Slovak Republic; Action Plan of Fulfilment of National Strategy of Sustainable Development for 2005 to 2010; available at: <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-20307?prefixFile=m>

- Improvement of the quality of information-advisory system aiming to interconnect areas of education and labour market.
- Development of integrated national information-advisory system for the area of education and labour market.

Lifelong learning in Slovakia comprises of various kinds of education – vocational education, deepening or improving of qualification, retraining schemes, gaining of new vocational competences. All these are suitable for the implementation of sustainable development. There are plenty of actors involved, who are offering LLL services in Slovakia, including providers from national and local level, from corporate sector, however, civil society organisations are also deeply involved in both, SD and LLL.

### 3.1. PRINCIPLES OF LIFELONG LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In order LLL could contribute to SD, it has to fulfil concrete requirements, characteristics – we mention only some of them, based on UNESCO materials<sup>25</sup>:

- is based on the principles and values that underlie sustainable development<sup>26</sup>;
- deals with the well-being of all four dimensions of sustainability – environment, society, culture and economy;
- uses a variety of pedagogical techniques that promote participatory learning and higher-order thinking skills;
- promotes lifelong learning;
- is locally relevant and culturally appropriate;
- is based on local needs, perceptions and conditions, but acknowledges that fulfilling local needs often has international effects and consequences;
- engages formal, non-formal and informal education;
- accommodates the evolving nature of the concept of sustainability;
- addresses content, taking into account context, global issues and local priorities;
- builds civil capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, an adaptable workforce, and a good quality of life;
- is interdisciplinary. No single discipline can claim ESD for itself; all disciplines can contribute to ESD.

### 3.2. LIFELONG LEARNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

Many educational activities realised within LLL are already led by the principles contributing to sustainable development. However, in some of them we can more clearly identify their focus on the topic and involvement in SD as such. You can find examples of such kind of projects between other outputs of LLABS project published at the project website <http://www.fondazionementore.com>.

<sup>25</sup> UNESCO; *Education for Sustainable Development*; available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/education-for-sustainable-development/>

<sup>26</sup> UNESCO; *Earth Charter, 2000*; available at: [http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme\\_a/img/02\\_earthcharter.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_a/img/02_earthcharter.pdf)

Table with legislative norms, which at various levels regulate the implementation of SD, with emphasis on the environmental issues<sup>27</sup>

INSTITUTION	LEGISLATIVE NORM	LINK
National Council of the Slovak Republic	Slovak Constitution, art. 55	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/460-1992-zb.p-2044.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/460-1992-zb.p-2044.pdf</a>
Ministry of Environment	Law no. 17/1992 on environment	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/17-1992-zb.p-1601.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/17-1992-zb.p-1601.pdf</a>
Government of Slovak Republic	Decision no. 655 from 1997, which sets the obligation to evaluate the exercising of individual parts of Agenda 21, and which sets the indicators of SD according to individual chapters and responsible government departments	<a href="http://www.minzp.sk/dokumenty/strategicke-dokumenty/agenda-21.html">http://www.minzp.sk/dokumenty/strategicke-dokumenty/agenda-21.html</a>
Ministry of Environment	Announcement of Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 271/2011, setting criteria for sustainability and goals for lowering emissions of greenhouse gases	<a href="http://www.minzp.sk/files/oblasti/oze/biopaliva-a-biokvapalina/2011-271.pdf">http://www.minzp.sk/files/oblasti/oze/biopaliva-a-biokvapalina/2011-271.pdf</a>
Ministry of Environment	Law no. 205/2004 on gathering and spreading of information on environment	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/205-2004-z-z.p-7801.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/205-2004-z-z.p-7801.pdf</a>
Ministry of Environment	Law no. 24/2006 on environmental impact assessment	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/314-2014-z-z.p-35886.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/314-2014-z-z.p-35886.pdf</a>
Ministry of Environment	Law no. 39/2013 on integrated prevention and control of pollution of environment	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/39-2013-z-z.p-35070.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/39-2013-z-z.p-35070.pdf</a>
Ministry of Economy	Law no. 309/2009 on support of renewable sources of energy and highly effective combined production	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/309-2009-z-z.p-33084.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/309-2009-z-z.p-33084.pdf</a>
Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development	Law no. 539/2008 on the support of regional development	<a href="http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/539-2008-z-z.p-32651.pdf">www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/539-2008-z-z.p-32651.pdf</a>
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport	National Strategy of Global Education for 2012 – 2016	<a href="http://www.statpedu.sk/files/documents/odborne_info/narodna_strategia_globalne%20vzdeldavanie_2012_2016.pdf">www.statpedu.sk/files/documents/odborne_info/narodna_strategia_globalne%20vzdeldavanie_2012_2016.pdf</a>
Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport	Concept of Environmental Education in Slovakia	<a href="http://www.infovek.sk/predmety/enviro/index.php?k=4">www.infovek.sk/predmety/enviro/index.php?k=4</a>
Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	National Strategy of Gender Equality and Action Plan of Gender Equality for 2014-2019	<a href="http://www.aspekt.sk/content/aspektin/vlada-schvalila-strategiu-akcny-plan-rodovej-rovnosti-na-roky-2014-2019">www.aspekt.sk/content/aspektin/vlada-schvalila-strategiu-akcny-plan-rodovej-rovnosti-na-roky-2014-2019</a>

<sup>27</sup> As sustainable development is taken as a cross-cutting priority, it is difficult to identify concrete legislative norms explicitly dealing with it. Because of that we mention mostly environmental legislative norms and only a few of them from other resorts. Therefore this list should not be taken as exhausting.

In Slovakia there are, among others, also these organisations and institutions dealing with SD in context with LLL:

- Ministry of Environment and other individual government and municipality institutions
- Government Council for Sustainable Development
- Slovak NGDO Platform and its member organisations
- ZMOS (Association of municipalities in Slovakia)
- CEEV Živica
- Corporate sector
- Professional associations



Source: [www.monda.eu](http://www.monda.eu)

*TRANSFER Slovensko s.r.o.*  
*March 2014*

## 4. CONCLUSION

Concepts of sustainable development and lifelong learning has gone a long way independently, however now they form indivisible couple. If we really would like to contribute to the sustainability of our common planet and society, it has to be expressed in the education, and especially in lifelong adult education, too.

In a more complex way, we should not think about the sustainable development only as about a purely economic or educational approach, but we should take into consideration also other components altogether leading to economic, but also social, cultural and environmental sustainability.

There is a positive sign for the future – connection of sustainable development and lifelong learning is already considered a common practice. Combining these concepts allows for preservation of national specifics of individual countries or regions, while still in line with the overall concept. Thanks to that in Slovakia we can focus our sustainable development effort on culture, while in Czech Republic emphasis is held on development, education or science, and in Italy on environmental issues.

The effort of project partners ends here, however process of inclusion of sustainable development principles into lifelong learning continues in countries all over the world.

## 5. GLOSSARY

- **Sustainable development** stands for meeting the needs of present generations without jeopardizing the ability of futures generations to meet their own needs – in other words, a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It offers a vision of progress that integrates immediate and longer-term objectives, local and global action, and regards social, economic and environmental issues as inseparable and interdependent components of human progress.

Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/>

- **Agenda 21** together with **Rio Declaration** are important baseline conceptual documents related to both, sustainable development and lifelong learning. Agenda 21 serves as an action plan of SD support at the global level; it is reflected in all relevant documents to this topic. Principles it states and trends it brings forward are exercised in the energetics, transportation, agriculture, forestry, business, health care, natural resources extraction, but also in fighting poverty, in women empowerment, rural development and other.

- **Sustainable development goals** are set of universal goals, which are planned to be adopted at the UN level in September 2015. Signatory countries will bound themselves to fulfilment of 17 goals<sup>28</sup> aiming to sustainable development of the planet. They will form the frame of policies at the national levels around the world for upcoming 15 years.
- **Lifelong learning** is the process of knowledge and competence acquisition persisting after finishing of formal school education. It is based on voluntary basis, motivated by personal or professional incentives. Lifelong learning contributes to all the aspects of sustainable development, especially social inclusion or active citizenship, and personal and professional development. It can be performed within formal, non-formal and informal education process. Among lifelong learning activities we can mention, for example, retraining schemes, courses, senior university programmes, and so on. It is delivered by various organisations and institutions, dealing with the widest range of target groups.

## LINKS TO IMPORTANT INTERNET SITES

- UN report titled Our Common Future known as Brundtland Report, 1987;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/OSN-Brundtlandovej-sprava>
- UNESCO; LLL Policies and Strategies, 2014;  
available at: [http://bit.ly/CZV\\_politiky\\_okolo\\_sveta](http://bit.ly/CZV_politiky_okolo_sveta)
- UN, Agenda 21, 1992;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/OSN-Agenda-21>
- Website of National Office of Lifelong Learning;  
available at: <http://www.nuczv.sk>
- EU, Treaty of Amsterdam, 1999;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/EU-Amsterdamska-zmluva>
- UN, Declaration on SD from UN conference in Johannesburg (Rio +10), 2002;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/OSN-Johannesburska-deklaracia>
- UNECE; Strategy of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/OSN-Strategia-EHK-k-vychove-TUR>
- EU, revised Strategy of Sustainable Development, 2006;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/EU-revidovana-strategia-TUR>
- EU, Treaty of Lisbon, 2009;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/EU-Lisabonska-zmluva>
- UN; Future We Want, 2012;  
available at: <http://bit.ly/OSN-Buducnost-ktoru-chceme>

<sup>28</sup> Number 17 may not be final