

A Rounder Sense of Purpose: Educational Competencies for Sustainable Development Cyprus Multiplier Event

Dr Aravella Zachariou

**Coordinator of the Unit for Education for Environment and Sustainable
Development**

Visiting Associate Professor in ESD, Frederick University

Chair of the UNECE ESD Steering Committee

aravella@cytanet.com.cy

Useful Information:

32 participants (19 teachers, 10 ESD teacher trainers, 3 public servants)

All of them they had background and experience in ESD

The multiplier event divided in 3 parts: a) Theoretical part and discussion on ESD competencies (concept, distinction between competencies and skills, importance, connection of competencies with school curriculum b) workshops on ESD competencies (theoretical and practical part, 6 competencies applied), c) Assessment, discussion, feedback

Main Findings

Overall comments for ESD competencies

- **Different needs for each competency**
- **There is a need competencies to connected with other curriculum areas and not only with the ESD Curriculum**
- **There is a need for school principals to introduced in ESD competencies as prerequisite for using esd competencies in whole school operation**
- **Competencies and workshops that applied were straightforward, were meaningful to the participants, everyone could find connections between them and personal experiences or issues they were aware of**
- **There is a need for more seminars especially practical**
- **The material was very useful and supporting**
- **Workshop activities were interesting and interactive**
- **The connection of theory ESD competencies with workshops and activities were really helpful to understand the importance and the usefulness of ESD competencies.**

Main findings for each competency

- **System thinking was perceived as one of the most difficult competency since the children understand what takes place around them.**
- **Empathy is should be the first to tackle so as to trigger the rest. The empathy requires a lot of experience with “oneself”. Suitable examples are needed in order to encourage teachers to develop empathy (stimulation, pictures, scenarios and stories are value for empathy).**
- **Transdisciplinarity was considered as important for changes in teaching practice and the way we are phasing the things. It was acknowledged the difficulty to achieve in secondary education. Effective implementation of interdisciplinarity needs a deep and solid pedagogical knowledge.**
- **Futures was characterized as an “open-ended” competency. This competency was found to have strong connections with creative thinking and imagination.**
- **Attentiveness was not considered to be difficult competency. Teachers are familiar with that because is a basic competency in all the subjects and disciplines.**
- **Evaluation was considered as important and useful as it leads to identifying needs and problems and is necessary for finding possible solutions and taking action.**

