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## LESSONS OF GREEN ECONOMICS AT KNEU

**Statement of the problem.** On 25 September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. At the core of the 2030 Agenda there are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The universal, transformational and inclusive SDGs describe the major development challenges for humanity. The aim of the 17 SDGs is to secure a sustainable, peaceful, prosperous and equitable life on earth for everyone now and in the future. The goals cover global challenges that are crucial for the survival of humanity. [1] They address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection and job opportunities while tackling climate change and environmental protection. The authors aim to focus on Education for Sustainable Development (or ESD) specifically. It makes **the subject of the research**. The organization of ESD at Kyiv National Economic University is **the object** of it.



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Sustainable development is the goal set by many economies. The concept connects present generations to the future ones, since sustainable development should meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs [2].

**Recent research and publications.** As described in the SDGs, individuals must become sustainability change-makers. They require the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower them to contribute to sustainable development. Education, therefore, is crucial for the achievement of sustainable development. However, not all kinds of education support sustainable development. Education that promotes economic growth alone may well also lead to an increase in unsustainable consumption patterns.

The now well-established approach of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society for present and future generations [3]. Embarking on the path of sustainable development requires a profound analysis of how humans think and act. A number of modern researchers dedicate their papers to sustainability-related issues. D. Summers, R. Cutting, K. Raworth, J.R. Schreiber, H. Siege, F. Fibbits, A. Mawonde are among them.

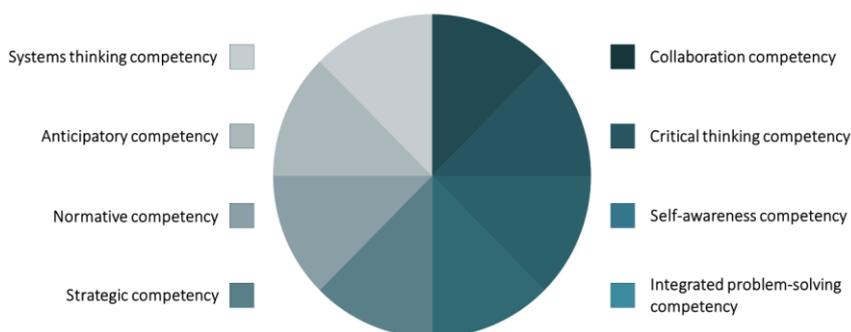
ESD has to be understood as an integral part of quality education, inherent in the concept of lifelong learning: All educational institutions — from preschool to tertiary education and in non-formal and informal education — can and should consider it their responsibility to deal intensively with matters of sustainable development and to foster the development of sustainability competencies. ESD provides an education that matters and is truly relevant to every learner in the light of today’s challenges. According to Director-General of UNESCO, «A fundamental change is needed in the way we think about education’s role in global development, because it has a catalytic impact on the well-being of individuals and the future of our planet. Now, more than ever, education has a responsibility to be in gear with 21st century challenges and aspirations, and foster the right types of values and skills that will lead to sustainable and inclusive growth and peaceful living together» [3].

**The key findings.** To create a more sustainable world, individuals must become sustainability change-makers. They require the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower them to contribute to sustainable development. Education, therefore, is crucial for the achievement of sustainable development. However, not all kinds of education support sustainable development. Education that promotes economic growth alone, may well also lead to an increase in unsustainable consumption patterns.

ESD can develop crosscutting key competencies for sustainability that are relevant to all SDGs. ESD can also develop specific learning outcomes needed to work on achieving a particular SDG. Key competencies represent crosscutting competencies that are necessary for all learners of all ages worldwide (developed at different age-appropriate levels). Key competencies can be understood as transversal, multifunctional and context-independent.

They do not replace specific competencies necessary for successful action in certain situations and contexts, but they encompass these and are more broadly focused [4, 5, 6].

### THE SUSTAINABILITY KEY COMPETENCIES



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The sustainability key competencies represent what sustainability citizens particularly need to deal with today’s complex challenges. They are relevant not only to all SDGs but also enable individuals to relate the different SDGs to each other — to see «the big picture» of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The implementation of ESD in the field of education has many advantages. The most vivid of them is that ESD helps to develop the above cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural learning outcomes as well as the crosscutting sustainability key competencies needed to achieve all the SDGs. It can be implemented through:

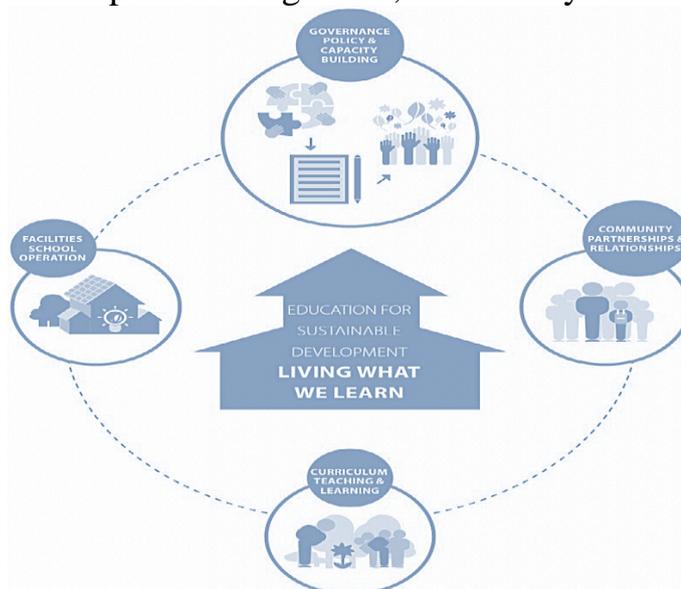
- integrating ESD into national educational policies and strategies. What is meant here, The Ministries of Education around the globe have an important responsibility to ensure that education systems are prepared for and responsive to, existing and emerging sustainability challenges;

- integrating ESD into curricula and textbooks. ESD has to be integrated in all curricula of formal education, including early childhood care and education, primary and secondary education, technical, vocational, and higher education. Mainstreaming ESD requires not only integrating sustainability topics into the curricula, but also sustainability-related learning outcomes;

- integrating ESD into teacher education. Teachers’ knowledge and competencies are essential for restructuring educational processes and educational institutions towards sustainability.

Additionally, *the whole-institution approach* should be implemented. For ESD to be more effective, the educational institution as a whole has to be transformed. Such a holistic approach aims at mainstreaming sustainability into all aspects of the educational institution.

It involves rethinking the curriculum, campus operations, organizational culture, student participation, leadership and management, community relationships.



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Schools and universities should see themselves as places of learning and experience for sustainable development and should therefore orient all their processes towards principles of sustainability. For ESD to be more effective, the educational institution as a

whole has to be transformed. Such a whole-institution approach aims at mainstreaming sustainability into all aspects of the educational institution. It involves rethinking the curriculum, campus operations, organizational culture, student participation, leadership and management, community relationships and research (UNESCO, 2014a). In this way, the institution itself functions as a role model for the learners. Sustainable learning environments, such as eco- schools or green campuses, allow educators and learners to integrate sustainability principles into their daily practices, facilitate capacity-building, competency development, and value education in a comprehensive manner.

The Department of Regional Studies and Tourism is one of the traditionally experienced departments at Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman. Today the department provides its own set of educational programmes in Regional Economics and Local Governance, Tourism, **Environmental Economics**, City Economics and Urban Studies, along with **Green Economics**.

The mission of the Department is to actualize, generate and popularize academic and practical knowledge and innovations in the field of regional/spatial/urban economics and sustainable development. The main goal of the department is a realization of university-wide strategy of the fundamental methodological, analytical and practical training provision for students in the field of Economics through proposed by our full and associate professors set of courses in Regional and Spatial Studies, along with introduction of modern educational undergraduate and graduate programmes in Green Economics [7].

Thus, the most important tasks of KNEU in the sphere of ESD can be formulated as follows:

- conducting fundamental research in the field of sustainable development and the introduction of scientific results in the educational process;
- organization of conferences, seminars and round tables in the field of green economics; continuous improvement of educational and methodological developments and updating of courses on the basis of modern world educational products as well as preparation of textbooks, manuals and lecture notes and elaboration of guidances for students to fulfill their creative tasks in the aforementioned areas;
- learning foreign languages for professional fields;
- strengthening the relations with business entities and profile departments of other universities, research centers, associations of sustainable development;
- co-operation of the department with state and local authorities and obtaining feedback on sustainable development of environmental initiatives.

**Conclusion.** KNEU is on the right way to allow students to open its horizon to sustainability. The above advantages of the ESD can be contributed to achieving the SDGs by, first, developing crosscutting sustainability competencies that are needed to deal with many different sustainability challenges and to relate the different SDGs to each other. Second, ESD can equip learners with the specific cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural learning outcomes that enable them to deal with the particular challenges of each SDG.

To make it possible for everyone around the world to take action in favour of the SDGs, all educational institutions must consider it their responsibility to deal intensively

with sustainable development issues, to foster the development of sustainability competencies and to develop the specific learning outcomes related to all SDGs. Therefore, it is vital not only to include SDG-related contents in the curricula, but also to use action-oriented transformative pedagogy.

**The perspective of further research.** The Coronian problems have added a lot of **acuteness** to the research conducted in the sphere of Education for Sustainable development. At present, the universities are expected to provide solutions and foresee the problems of academic processes in the long run. Subsequently, organization of *space-independent learning* or generation of the *universal design of learning* may become the most **topical** trends for future research. We are sure that such research is likely to consider the concept of Education for Sustainable development and new standards for quality learning should be generated. Covid-19 has had a significant impact on universities across the world. The eco-system of universities has been paralyzed. Higher Education institutions had to respond to the pandemic very quickly by moving teaching and learning online, which has received mixed feedback from the students and teachers. Questions have been raised on the university's readiness and willingness to adopt new approaches in these challenging times. Will this change the role and function of universities in the long run?

What do we need to do to be prepared for the future of universities and to meet new expectations from students and employers? How can soft skills be taught distantly? How should students' campuses and hostels be organized? In other words, how to develop a new system of universities' sustainability? The concept of ESD is acquiring new meanings. These are the questions the authors are going to focus on in future.

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