Green Paper
Transnational

Green Paper Transnational

Deliverable D2.2

SÜDWIND

Deliverable information

Project acronym	AELIA
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0.2	19/09/2023	SUEDWIND	Draft for partners´ review
0.3	04/10/2023	SUEDWIND	Final version

Summary of the Project

AELIA - Advancing Education for a Sustainable and Inclusive Green Transition

The AELIA project responds to the call for a more sustainable world, highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic effects. Aligned with the Sustainable Growth Strategy 2021 and the European Green Deal, AELIA aims to equip citizens with the skills for a green transition through innovative education. This comprehensive initiative brings together formal and non-formal education stakeholders, businesses, civil society, and the public sector.

The project AELIA is co-funded by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency of the European Commission (Partnerships for Innovation – Forward Looking Projects) and the Erasmus+ Programme. It is implemented by 8 partners and 1 associated partner in Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Romania and Serbia.

Key Components:

1. **INNOVATION:** AELIA pioneers sustainable teaching methods using digital tools and non-traditional techniques, tested in four countries, with potential for broader adoption. It also supports sustainability planning in education systems.

2. **COOPERATION:** Diverse stakeholders collaborate with expert guidance to ensure project success through workshops and strategic planning.

3. **IMPACT:** AELIA empowers educators to teach sustainability and produces a guide for sustainability plans. A White Paper aids policymakers globally.

Objectives:

• **Promote** sustainability in all education sectors through tested guidelines for sustainability plans.

• **Support** educational institutions' leaders in implementing sustainability plans through capacity-building.

• **Enhance** educational resources with inclusive stakeholder input.

• **Empower** educators to integrate sustainable development and green practices.

• **Empower** citizens to take climate action through knowledge and skills.

• **Promote** education for sustainable development and enhance policy learning through transnational cooperation.

Main Results:

AELIA's results include a guide to promote Education for Sustainable Development, a co-designed educational framework with resources, webinars, and a white paper on education for sustainable development. AELIA leads the way towards a sustainable and inclusive green transition.

Contents

List of abbreviations

Acronym	Description
CPD	Continual Professional Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
D	Deliverable
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GP	Green Paper
MESY	Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth
MSA	Multi-stakeholder Approach
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
PA	Priority Area
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEEP	Sustainable Environmental Educational Policy
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
T	Task
WIA	Whole-institution Approach
WSA	Whole-school Approach

Introduction to Green Paper (GP)

A Green Paper is considered to be a document that initiates/stimulates discussion on given topics. It is a means to engage stakeholders, solicit feedback, and facilitate dialogue before formal policy recommendations are made (EUR-Lex, n.d., UK Parliament, n.d., C.E.S. Franks, 2021). Within AELIA, the Green Paper serves as a catalyst for in-depth discussions on specific topics, engaging stakeholders, eliciting valuable feedback, and fostering meaningful dialogues prior to the formulation of formal policy recommendations. AELIA's Green Paper serves a dual purpose: it consolidates the research conducted during the stock study, and undertakes a detailed analysis of specific themes and subjects that will later undergo further scrutiny through our consultation process in the online consultation.

Structure of this document:

After the introductory section presented in this part, the document follows up with a brief paragraph on the methodological considerations of the Green Paper, and then the proposals are presented for each country. The Green Paper (hereinafter: GP) concludes with a sum-up of the main points included in this document.

Methodology and limitations

The GP has been based on the results of the stock study. In this, the main conclusions were utilised to provide the proposals that will comprise the GP. As the transnational report, on which the proposals are being based, may not in some cases represent the full extent of the national realities that came upon during the stock study, partners in the respected countries were also requested to provide additional proposals based on a specific format. The proposals that each partner suggested address all priority areas identified in the ESD for 2030 roadmap (UNESCO 2020). The description of the proposals takes into account the following aspects: the **country** presenting the proposal, the PA, the **type** of educational **institutions** and the **level of education** concerned, the **gap** observed, the conditions that would enhance the **success** of the proposed action, the **potential threats** to its effectiveness, as well as the **main actors** involved.

One significant limitation is that both document and field research were conducted only until May 2030. Potential changes in the implementation of ESD from that date in the countries are not accounted for. Additionally, in the specific case of Serbia, the attack on the Vladislav Ribnikar primary school in Belgrade (BBC, 04.05.2023) may have affected educational policies since then. Nevertheless, the GP presents specific proposals for stakeholders' consultation, aiming to collect and assess further input, revisions, and suggestions regarding the development of guidelines for incorporating ESD into educational institutions, which represents the subsequent phase of the AELIA project following the consultation process.

Green Paper proposal

Austria

PA 1 Enhancing ESD Policy

Proposal 1: Provide framework, guide, indicators and monitoring schemes for ESD	
Education level	all institutions of formal and non-formal education at all levels
Gaps addressed	Findings from the field study indicate that there is a need for a structured and customised framework to guide institutions and their engagement in ESD; clear guidance on strategy and implementation, indicators and Monitoring Tools to trace and support the advancement and coherence of ESD implementation. Educational establishments would benefit from an effective design, implementation and monitoring of policies that would guide their efforts toward sustainable development practices.
Factors of success	Involve educational leaders in the planning of a framework at the political level, their knowledge can improve efficient implementation of institutions´ ESD efforts and practices.
Risk factors	1) Lack of commitment and long-term involvement in ESD of policy makers 2) Limited resources and capacities of educational leaders to be involved in framework design and strategy planning
Who should act / implement?	Competent ministry in collaboration with institutional leaders

Proposal 2: Allocate budgets / financial support for programmes and institutional capacity building at all levels	
Education level	All levels and institutions of formal and non-formal education
Gaps addressed	Lack of and/or limited financial means to build up institutional capacities in ministries, federal administration, local collaboration and for networking. For adequate budget planning, head of institutions and stakeholders should be involved.
Factors of success	Participation of stakeholders, including universities and NGOs and business institutions. To include educational institutions leads in planning of budgets supports a needs-oriented process. Taking care of systematic data-collection ensures accurate resource allocation for adequate support of progressive implementation
Risk factors	1) Lack of resources and capacities at all levels 2) Lack of institutional will to support ESD initiatives
Who should act / implement?	Competent ministry in collaboration with institutional leaders

PA 2 Transforming learning and training environment

Proposal 1: Support transformative learning environment through curricula

Education level	All levels and institutions of formal and non-formal education / focus on formal education
Gaps addressed	The need for further support of ESD implementation with training, interdisciplinary approaches, student involvement, and collaboration with stakeholders. Adequate implementation of latest ESD integrated curricula need a quick and adequate provision of appropriate education materials like school books, handbooks and guidelines.
Factors of success	Cooperation with organisations outside the school and with external experts to support teachers in implementing the new curriculum. Exchange with trainers from outside the school system allows for a change of perspective and a broader range of aspects in ESD.
Risk factors	1) Lack of systematic approach for ESD implementation 2) Lack of institutional will to provide resources for change 3) Lack of capacities and ESD know-how
Who should act / implement?	Head of educational institutions (in collaboration with teachers/trainers)

Proposal 2: Re-organise infrastructure for transformative learning environment

Education level	All levels and institutions, formal and non-formal education (focus on formal education)
Gaps addressed	Findings from the field study indicate that there is a need to transform facilities and school buildings to align them with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). This requires substantial financial investment, but also inter-ministerial initiatives to address cross-cutting subjects like technical innovations, re-organised infrastructure, support of cooperation at local level.
Factors of success	The progress that has been made already in transforming the learning environment, like innovative and student-centred education or incorporation of technology has created a supportive setting for adaptation of infrastructure to ESD, practices of sustainability and cooperations.
Risk factors	1) Lack of political will to prioritise investment sustainable infrastructure 2) Lack of institutional will to provide resources for change 3) Lack of financial means
Who should act / implement?	(Ministries &) Head of institutions with support of the whole school

PA 3 Building capacities of educators & trainers

Proposal 1: Create a framework & monitoring scheme for systematic, initial and in-service training ESD teacher trainings	
Education level	All levels and institutions of formal and non-formal education
Gaps addressed	Educators´ (teachers, facilitators, trainers) knowledge and skills to incorporate ESD into their teaching practices should not only be based on the educator's individual interests but should be treated as a systematic skill enhancement and promoted and financed accordingly. Training should include ESD and 21st century skills to deal with challenges like digitalisation and sustainability as cross-cutting issues by definition.
Factors of success	Teacher-training colleges should collaborate for coordinated ESD teacher training, and course measures should be evaluated regularly. Regular and systematic ESD teaching and learning programmes will strengthen the educators' capacities and individual development opportunities: For enabling the empowerment of students, fostering creativity, critical reflection, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities.
Risk factors	1) Lack of ministerial responsibility for ESD teacher trainings 2) Lack of systematic ESD training framework 3) Lack of financial resources and capacities for trainings / education
Who should act / implement?	Head of institutions (& Ministries)

Proposal 2: Enhance compulsory ESD trainings for educational and for non-educational staff to assure capacity building	
Education level	All levels and institutions, formal and non-formal education (focus on formal education)
Gaps addressed	The compulsory educational staffs' training is seen as a key aspect to enhance ESD on a long-term basis across all formal education institutions. The interest in training could still be increased among teachers as well as among other institutions' employees to raise and strengthen awareness on ESD. Adequate training for non-educational staff should be included in institutions' capacity building efforts as other employees than teachers/trainers seldomly have the chance for specific sustainability training.
Factors of success	Compulsory ESD training for educators within their curricula would increase its impact. Financial resources for high-quality ESD training will help build up the targeted capacities. Adjustment of structures and capacity at the level of the ministries is needed to adapt the ESD training programmes accordingly. Allocation of financial means should assure the long-term basis for adequate offer of ESD teacher training and capacity building. Teachers (and other staff) should be encouraged to participate in ESD training on a yearly basis.
Risk factors	1) Lack of systematic ESD training framework and financial resources 2) Lack of professional trainers with sufficient ESD capacities 3) Lack of ministerial responsibility for ESD teacher trainings
Who should act / implement?	Head of institutions (& Ministries)

PA 4 Empower and mobilise youth

Proposal 1: Promote and support youth-led initiatives	
Education level	All levels and institutions of formal and non-formal education
Gaps addressed	Differences between formal and non-formal educational settings in the actual implementation of youth engagement and young student´s involvement request an adaptation of the assessment and monitoring tools applied to each of the educational sector. Even if there are activities in schools or educational institutions that promote youth empowerment, there is often a lack of follow-up measures that deepen such engagement and sustain interest.
Factors of success	Good practice examples of active student involvement and youth empowerment in formal education institutions already exist. In order to achieve a nationwide improvement in this area, it would make sense to integrate these examples into teacher training. Young people should be more involved in participatory decision making in educational institutions. It is essential that they are able to implement these mechanisms in their daily lives. Actual processes of participation in young people's everyday or political lives should be easily accessible to them in order to maintain interest in sustainable issues and participation in activities and political life.
Risk factors	1) Lack of institutional will to support youth-led projects 2) Lack of human and financial capacities to implement youth-led initiatives and follow-up projects 3) Lack of political will to listen to the youth (could result in frustrated youth)
Who should act / implement?	Competent ministry and Head of institutions Support organisations for youth and empowerment / participatory processes

PA 5 Accelerate sustainable solutions at local level

Proposal 1: Enable sustainable solutions at local and institutional level	
Education level	All levels and institutions of formal and non-formal education
Gaps addressed	Resource constraints and logistical challenges limit the extent of initiatives for promoting ESD and sustainability practices in educational institutions. In the field of education and ESD itself, institutions as role-models can play a crucial role such as sustainable school and university buildings, their procurement and mobility practices.
Factors of success	Promoting awareness for cooperation with local business, community initiatives, citizens and neighbourhood supports the implementation of ESD actions. Teachers and trainers need time to implement sustainable solutions and a network of organisations that can support with know-how, there also should be support in administrative and organisational tasks of project implementation.
Risk factors	1) Lack of institutional will to let change happen 2) Lack of human and financial capacities to start and supervise projects
Who should act / implement?	Decision-makers in education Head of institutions Relevant organisations

ESD: Whole-institutional and multi-stakeholder approach

Proposal 1: Incorporate the whole institution in transformation	
Education level	All institutions of formal education
Gaps addressed	Research identified a lack of national quality control for ESD in classroom teaching and a need for comprehensive analysis of the relationship between ESD, curricula, and cross-curricular principles. More strategic guidance is recommended to support institutions in realising the vision of a whole-institution involvement in ESD actions. (see also PA 1.1)
Factors of success	WIA should be grounded in its mission statement and integrated into the institution´s overall culture. In the context of the school development process, ESD should become a compulsory part of the programme. A positive and collaborative relationship among institution members is essential for its overall success.
Risk factors	1) Lack of institutional will to include all internal actors 2) Lack of work time on the part of all internal actors 3) Lack of prioritisation of ESD in the school development process
Who should act / implement?	Head of institutions

Proposal 2: Benefit from multi-stakeholder partnerships	
Education level	All institutions of formal education
Gaps addressed	Partnerships, interaction and cooperation with external stakeholders should be supported and promoted in formal and non-formal educational institutions. Creating an environment that encourages collaboration between educational institutions and stakeholders from various fields of activities, to foster a comprehensive and impactful approach to ESD.
Factors of success	Strategic planning, clear communication of objectives, and targeted efforts to engage and motivate all stakeholders are essential.
Risk factors	1) Lack of institutional will to enhance cooperation with external actors 2) Lack of human and financial capacities to start and maintain partnerships
Who should act / implement?	Decision-makers in education

Cyprus

PA 1 Enhancing ESD Policy

Proposal 1: "Sustainable development should be recognized as an integral part of the school's mission and vision and for this reason it should be enhanced and implemented via education policies and school plans that put SDGs at the core of the school and strengthen the implementation of concrete actions for the environment and sustainability in the school and the local community."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Findings from the field study indicate that even though Sustainable Environmental Educational Policy (SEEP) is acknowledged as an exemplary practice at European and international level, it is not effectively designed and implemented at public schools in Cyprus. As retrieved from data analysis, designing and implementing SEEP is obligatory for primary schools, but not yet for secondary schools.
Factors of success	Official educational authorities have to engage experts to provide guidelines, material, mechanisms and communication channels that will enable schools to adopt effective ESD related policies. Cooperations between formal education and non-formal education organisations, which are the ESD experts in Cyprus, would provide the required know-how.
Risk factors	1) Lack of commitment and long-term involvement in ESD of policy makers 2) Limited resources and capacities of educational leaders to be involved in framework design and strategy planning
Who should act / implement?	Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth (MESY)

Proposal 2: "Enactment of a transparent quality assessment mechanism that communicates the school's progress and achievements in education for sustainable development, enhances accountability and inspires further action."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Interviews reveal that schools try individually to establish policies that evaluate their institution's structures regarding sustainability factors as a self-assessment process. A transparent quality assessment mechanism should be developed on a central level to monitor and assess the school's progress and achievements in education for sustainable development, thus enhancing accountability and inspiring further action in the long-term.
Factors of success	The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY) must engage field experts on ESD to develop specific tools and mechanisms which will enable the effective monitoring and evaluation of the ESD's implementation. Official committees at school and national level, with school representatives, should constantly monitor and provide solutions regarding the actual procedures and the implementation of a WIA for sustainability at schools.
Risk factors	1) Lack of human and funding resources 2) Lack of will on part of the schools' communities
Who should act / implement?	Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

PA 2 Transforming learning and training environment

Proposal 1: "Challenge students to identify sustainability issues in their local community and design and implement project-based learning via a multidisciplinary and cross-thematic way for inquiring sustainability problems and propose solutions holistically through a critical and systemic thinking as well as through hands-on learning experiences."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Questionnaire findings reveal that a number of schools do not implement multidisciplinary and participatory approaches in education adapted to understanding and acting on environmental challenges. This recommendation aims to urge schools to promote sustainability ethos in place and engage in project-based learning in order to engage in a sustainability track. This will also enable schools to deal with sustainability issues in a holistic way, and engage schools and stakeholders in joint actions.
Factors of success	Training to promote sustainability awareness and effective ways to promote sustainability ethos at school, would benefit both school administration teams and teaching staff towards this effort. In addition, teaching staff needs to be trained on the positive impact of project-based learning in dealing with sustainability issues and its increased potential for real change
Risk factors	1) Lack of convincement of schools' administration and teaching staff to adapt learning standards 2) Probability of less effective and meaningful training for everyone
Who should act / implement?	Schools and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

Proposal 2: "Engage students and teachers in meaningful outdoor learning activities both at school and local environment which promote community engagement and foster a sense of civic responsibility, community pride and a sense of environmental stewardship. Organizing field trips and excursions to natural areas, parks, and sustainable businesses expose students to real-world examples of sustainability in action."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Schools seem to focus on indoor learning and fail to apply outdoor learning because of their daily learning procedure. In order to engage in outdoor activities, schools visit environmental centres (non-formal education). Schools must be trained to be able to develop their own outdoor programs both at school and at their local environment. The MESY should reform curriculum for all school subjects so as to adapt to outdoor learning standards.
Factors of success	Teachers must acquire outdoor teaching skills. At the same time, learning tools and materials should be created to support this learning approach. Environmental centres should provide expertise and facilitate schools in their effort to apply outdoor learning at their place and local area.
Risk factors	1) Lack of convincement of schools' administration and teaching staff to integrate outdoor learning 2) Lack of supporting mechanisms and educational materials
Who should act / implement?	Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

PA 3 Building capacities of educators & trainers

Proposal 1: "Develop a holistic professional development program on SDGs and ESD on school base, supported by an educational material bank/platform that would enable educators and trainers of all educational levels to engage more actively with ESD in school context."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Based on the field research, a significant percentage of (head) teachers do not feel secure and competent about ESD because of a lack of continuous support and staff training regarding ESD. A robust and holistic professional development training aiming at empowering educators for effectively applying ESD at their schools, based on their needs and concerns is required. This, accompanied with a national material bank/platform and a school-based supportive mechanism will enable schools to gradually switch to a whole school sustainability mode.
Factors of success	For this recommendation to succeed, the MESY should provide necessary funding so as to engage experts-stakeholders from relevant fields and engage in a continuous effort to support schools adapting to sustainability standards as described by this recommendation.
Risk factors	1) Lack of support and effective ESD staff training 2) Potentially it might be considered by teacher unions as an additional workload for teachers, if the MESY does not provide essential supporting mechanisms and materials.
Who should act / implement?	Schools and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

Proposal 2: "Recognize and reward educators who actively participate in ESD training and demonstrate a commitment to ESD practices in their teaching by providing incentives such as awards, grants, or professional development opportunities for outstanding ESD educators."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Based on research findings, teachers note that there are no rewards or motives for them to get involved in sustainability actions. In secondary schools, teachers state that there is too much pressure on the amount of knowledge they have to deliver. This recommendation suggests that school administrations and also the MESY should provide ethical and other incentives for anyone who is participating in sustainability actions and whole school transformation. International partnerships that share common concerns and interests will also boost the commitment and skills so as to deal with sustainability challenges. Especially in secondary education it is essential that students participate in a sustainability process.
Factors of success	Incentives, ethical and other must motivate school staff and students. Best practice examples of incentives provided in other educational systems will benefit outcomes.
Risk factors	1) Teachers and students may not consider the provided incentives as important to them 2) Lack of human and financial resources to implement the proposed actions
Who should act / implement?	Schools and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

PA 4 Empower and mobilise youth

Proposal 1: "Provide young people with opportunities for effective participation in decision-making processes regarding school and community life and encourage students and youth to actively engage in local forums, boards, communities dealing with sustainability issues."	
Education level	School education, higher education, vocational education and training, youth organisations
Gaps addressed	Research evidence revealed that schools recognise young people as key contributors and actors in all efforts to promote sustainable development and involve students in local community activities, but there are more things to be done so as to fully "include young people in the design, delivery and monitoring of policies and programmes on education and sustainable development and the securement of seats for students' representatives in its decision-making bodies at all levels". As teachers noted, this participation is usually limited in taking part in student councils and there is plenty of room to engage in a more active way in school life. Schools and local communities should foster the active and meaningful engagement of young people to local forums and boards dealing with sustainability issues.
Factors of success	Schools and local communities should be trained in how to actively engage students at decision-making processes. Additionally, they must form a plan of how this process will be effective and work properly i.e. definition of motives, call for participation, design of opportunities for effective participation.
Risk factors	1) Lack of promoting youth involvement in sustainability actions by schools/ local boards 2) Young people may feel that their opinion is not equal to others
Who should act / implement?	Schools and local communities

Proposal 2: "Train students and youth in order to acquire IT, sustainability and active citizenship skills. Motivate them to engage in learning and training, exchange opportunities on national, European and international level that will boost their interest and engagement in dealing with sustainability issues at high level. "	
Education level	School education, higher education, vocational education and training, youth organisations
Gaps addressed	Based on the project's research evidence, students suggested that advanced IT and active citizenship skills help them in engaging in sustainability actions. To achieve this, schools and local communities may promote their students and young people's participation in learning and training opportunities on a national, European and international level. This will boost their interest, get them in touch with experts and young people around the world, enlighten their awareness about sustainable solutions and help them acquire necessary skills.
Factors of success	Schools and local boards, associations, NGOs, communities must evaluate training opportunities, urge and guide students and youth to engage in meaningful training and learning activities that will boost their interest and skills regarding sustainability.
Risk factors	1) Lack of interest by students and youth. 2) Lack of impact: youth participates in training but doesn't get involved in sustainability decisions/actions afterwards.
Who should act / implement?	Schools and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

PA 5 Accelerate sustainable solutions at local level

Proposal 1: "Establish networks with local community authorities, enterprises, NGOs, Universities and other experts to jointly design, execute and monitor actions to address sustainability challenges. Promote stakeholders' involvement through effective communication channels, informational workshops and meaningful events."

Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Project research findings reveal that schools mostly cooperate with local community boards and do not establish networks with relevant stakeholders that will enable them to deal effectively with sustainability issues they face. Engaging relevant stakeholders will provide specific expertise and access to networks that will strengthen the efforts for dealing with sustainability challenges.
Factors of success	Evidence from this research indicates that non-formal education has a crucial role in order for this recommendation to succeed. Environmental centres can facilitate schools in their effort to establish networks with stakeholders and also serve as an expert stakeholder. School principals must actively engage in the formation of networks that will enable their schools to form and implement sustainability policies and cooperate with relevant stakeholders.
Risk factors	1) Lack of time and/or resources 2) Lack of stakeholders' will in participating in schools' networks
Who should act / implement?	Schools and various stakeholders

Proposal 2: "Undertake sustainable development initiatives, taking into account the unique and particular environmental, social, and economic issues of the school and community and develop plans that will accelerate actions for their solution."

Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Primary schools in Cyprus design and implement their Sustainable Environmental Educational Policy trying to deal with a sustainability challenge. In order to accelerate solutions at the local level, schools must be able to take into account the unique and specific characteristics of the local community. This will enable them to have a deeper understanding and increase participants' commitment in dealing with it.
Factors of success	Schools must be given certain tools and relevant training to be able to identify and clarify sustainability issues in the local area. Local challenges are of great interest to participants and as a result, the probability to find a more effective solution will be higher.
Risk factors	1) Lack of time resources 2) Lack of stakeholders' will in participating in schools' networks
Who should act / implement?	Schools and stakeholders

ESD: Whole-institutional and multi-stakeholder approach

Proposal 1: "Increase awareness regarding WIA's added value at school and enrol in training opportunities that will facilitate the transition to a whole school sustainable way of life. School administrations should be trained so as to guide and monitor their school's way to sustainable change. Towards this direction, the engagement of non-formal education organizations/civil society organizations which deal with ESD as facilitators would be crucial."

Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	The project's research evidence pointed out that sustainability is not embedded in all activities of the educational institutions, such as buildings and facility management, governance, partnerships and community relations. The field research highlighted the role of the non-formal institutions in assisting the way in finding solutions and proper actions to several sustainability issues. School administrations should be trained to guide and monitor their school's way to a sustainable change.
Factors of success	A good collaboration between the MESY, the respective school administrations and non-formal education organisations/civil society organisations which will be the facilitators in this guiding and raising-awareness process. In addition, the allocation of proper resources (financial, administrative and human) by the authorities would facilitate the process.
Risk factors	1) Lack of time to engage in awareness-raising activities 2) Lack of interest on the part of school administrations 3) Lack of participation of non-formal education organisations from all over the island
Who should act / implement?	Schools, local authorities and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

Proposal 2: "Train and provide all necessary knowledge, expertise and resources to schools for raising awareness on the positive impact of a multi-stakeholder alliance which in turn will help them apply ESD effectively at school and in their local communities."	
Education level	Early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training
Gaps addressed	Teachers at primary education level acknowledge that the SEEP is a way of applying a multi-stakeholder approach in schools. In order to motivate everybody in the institution to participate in the implementation of ESD, workshops and materials on sustainability issues and on WSA/WIA should be organised/developed both for teaching and administrative staff of all educational levels to be empowered. This will in turn benefit both the schools and the local communities.
Factors of success	Effective communication and collaboration between schools, the MESY and local administration/communities.
Risk factors	1) Lack of impact: Participate in training opportunities but not getting involved in sustainability actions afterwards. 2) Lack of autonomy from the part of the schools since decisions are mainly made centrally 3) Lack of necessary time and financial resources
Who should act / implement?	Schools, local authorities and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MESY)

Greece

PA 1 Enhancing ESD Policy

Proposal 1: Introduce ESD in the institution's mission, vision and goals	
Education level	All levels
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted in only 15% of the cases that their institution had reference to ESD within their mission. The survey also showcased that there is a lack of knowledge related to ESD in some cases, and to the need to incorporate ESD within the mission of the institution.
Factors of success	1) Small cost of realisation; 2) Enhancement of ESD visibility within the institution; 3) Effectuates all aspects of a SMART goal.
Risk factors	1) Very complicated procedure of adapting the institution's mission; 2) Superficial mention of ESD in the mission.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions, with public schools implementing this in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

Proposal 2: Create ESD workgroup within educational institutions and/or incorporate ESD in an existing workgroup	
Education level	All levels
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted in only 25% of the cases that their institution had an ESD-related working group. The incorporation of an ESD-related working group, or the inclusion of ESD-related topics within an existing working group, entails several challenges for the Greek context; nonetheless, it entails several benefits; those benefits are in the field of visibility, implementation and evaluation of ESD-related matters.
Factors of success	1) May be included with existing working groups; 2) Enhancement of ESD visibility within and outside of the institution; 3) Effectuates most of the aspects of a SMART goal; 4) Not very resource intensive.
Risk factors	1) Inactivity or low willingness due to other duties and work overload; 2) Difficulty in maintaining the group in the long run 3) Sense of redundancy due to other relevant activities being realised by other working groups.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions.

Proposal 3: Create and support existing ESD-related school labels/awards.	
Education level	Ministry
Gaps addressed	A lack of incentivisation from the central level was noticed during AELIA's fieldwork. Lack of positive selective incentives can hamper the realisation of ESD.
Factors of success	1) Positive incentivisation for incorporating ESD via recognition and validation of the efforts; 2) An initial evaluation mechanism (as a benchmark); 3) Increase awareness by providing a dissemination opportunity for the awarding via e.g., a ceremony; 4) Support the promotion of best/good practices; 5) Provide networking opportunities; 6) Showcase that the government/ministry is committed to ESD; 7) Incorporate several aspects into one initiative.
Risk factors	1) Superficial and not very rigorous use of the labelling and awarding system; 2) Very complicated procedure of labelling/awarding; 3) Requires an adequate amount of resources to initiate.
Who should act / implement?	Ministry of Education; Institute of Educational Policy (IEP).

PA 2 Transforming learning and training environment

Proposal 1: Students prepare action plans for the classes	
Education level	School level
Gaps addressed	The Greek fieldwork for AELIA showcased that students often are not viewed as main agents for the adaptation of their learning environments. For that reason, this recommendation attempts to involve students as actors who will create an action plan for their class, to consult, in terms of adapting their learning environment.
Factors of success	1) Small cost of realisation; 2) Involvement of two ESD PA (PA2 and PA4); 3) Effectuates all aspects of a SMART goal.
Risk factors	1) A high workload of educators might hamper their role as coordinating actors in the action plan; 2) Lack of realisable changes, or reciprocity from school administration might reduce student willingness and interest to participate.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions; Teachers.

PA 3 Building capacities of educators & trainers

Proposal 1: Promote and enrich existing ESD-related e-learning platforms and internal trainings	
Education level	All levels
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted in only 40% of the cases that their institution adequately promoted ESD for the educators. In addition, the materials that refer to the primary education level are more resourceful, in comparison to those for secondary (lower and upper) levels of education. It is important to promote the enhancement of the resources that refer to the secondary level. The promotion, centralisation and categorisation of e-learning courses from the Institute of Education Policy (IEP) and also the enrichment of the resources available for the secondary level of education can provide very concrete benefits such as: 1) Ease of access to ESD-related courses; 2) A blueprint for creating common activities; 3) Enhance the IEP institution and its role; 4) Support the promotion of best/good practices; 5) Showcase that the institution is committed to ESD; 6) Increase of available resources for secondary education level.
Factors of success	1) Centralised learning resources; 2) Categorisation of courses based on ESD priority areas; 3) Already existing institutions can undertake the work (i.e. IEP).
Risk factors	1) Resource-intensive initiative as it necessitates continuous updates and commitment of school resources; 2) Difficult-to-navigate platform will reduce the effectiveness; 3) Work overload poses a great risk.
Who should act / implement?	Ministry of Education and IEP.

Proposal 2: Incentivise educators who introduce ESD in their teaching at an educational institution level.

Education level	All levels
Gaps addressed	In general, a lack of incentivisation from the educational institution's level was noticed during AELIA's fieldwork. Lack of positive selective incentives at an organisational level can hamper the realisation of ESD. The creation and/or the promotion of positive selective incentives from educational institutions can provide very concrete benefits such as: 1) Positive incentivisation for incorporating ESD via recognition and validation of the efforts; 2) Support the promotion of best/good practices; 3) Showcase that the educational institution is committed towards ESD.
Factors of success	1) Positive incentivization; 2) Effectuates most of the aspects of a SMART goal.
Risk factors	1) Lack of a merit-based validation/incentivisation; 2) Very complicated procedure of incentivisation; 3) High load of work by educators.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions.

PA 4 Empower and mobilise youth

Proposal 1: Promote and enhance systems and procedures that include students in the decision-making	
Education level	School education, higher education, vocational education/training and adult learning.
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted in only 25% of the cases that their educational institution has realised a policy for involving youth in decision-making procedures. Moreover, in some cases, youth are not even recognised as an agent for change. All this takes place in a context where the educators note that students are deemed as active in their local communities (85% of the AELIA survey respondents). The creation of systems and procedures that include students and their representatives in decision-making procedures has several positive effects, such as: 1) Recognition and validation of youth as an active component of ESD; 2) Enhancement of communication channels between educators/school administration and students.
Factors of success	1) Not very resource intensive, as it mainly necessitates structural changes; 2) Incorporates several aspects into one initiative; 3) Promotes the inclusion of all school and ESD-related participants in the decision-making; 4) Effectuates most of the aspects of a SMART goal.
Risk factors	1) Superficial and not very effective involvement of youth and/or representatives; 2) Might require an educator intermediate in order to coordinate and facilitate the process
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions.

PA 5 Accelerate sustainable solutions at local level

Proposal 1: Support the creation of regional and local networks for ESD	
Education level	All + community organisations and municipal/regional authorities.
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted that the local and regional communities and authorities' support is vital for the effective realisation of ESD. The creation of regional and local networks for ESD has several benefits such as: 1) Provide opportunities for cooperation and local events related to ESD; 2) Increase awareness by providing dissemination opportunities; 3) Share common experiences and support the promotion of best/good practices; 4) Provide networking opportunities; 5) Showcase that the regional/local authorities are committed towards ESD.
Factors of success	1) Incorporates several aspects into one initiative; 2) Effectuates most of the aspects of a SMART goal; 3) Networking opportunities can have a multiplying effect.
Risk factors	1) Requires an adequate amount of resources to initiate and maintain; 2) Careful and tailored incentivisation system to provide the opportunity for some organisations to take part.
Who should act / implement?	Ministry of education; Municipal and local authorities.

Proposal 2: Participate as an observer in an international ESD-related network

Education level	All levels
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted that in most of the cases (approximately 50% of the respondents), their educational organisation did not participate in any international networks associated with ESD. By participating as an observer to an international network for ESD, educational organisations have the opportunity to obtain insights with little investment of resources (some networks necessitate a monetary contribution). The benefits of participating even as an observer to an international ESD-related network can be connected to the following: 1) Provide opportunities for cooperation with other actors; 2) Identify common experiences and adoption best/good practices; 3) Provide networking opportunities; 4) Provide insights for other ESD-relevant opportunities and developments.
Factors of success	1) Incorporates several aspects into one initiative; 2) Effectuates most of the aspects of a SMART goal; 3) Networking opportunities can have a multiplying effect.
Risk factors	1) In some cases, may require monetary resources which might not be available; 2) Requires a person/representative to follow the network developments.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions.

ESD: Whole-institutional and multi-stakeholder approach

| Proposal 1: Establish student-led sustainability clubs or councils.	
Education level	All + community organisations and municipal/regional authorities.
Gaps addressed	In only 25% of the cases, Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted that their educational institution has realised a policy for involving youth in decision-making procedures. This insight along with the mention that, in some cases, youth are not even recognised as an agent for change, creates a problematisation related to the whole-institutional approach. The establishment of student-led sustainability clubs or councils can make processes more inclusive and enhance communication channels between educators/school administration and students.
Factors of success	1) Effectuates most of the aspects of a SMART goal; 2) Effectively involves a crucial actor in the educational institutions processes.
Risk factors	1) Incentivisation for students is necessary; 2) Requires time from educators to initiate and maintain; 3) The sustainability of the initiative is difficult in curricula which do not provide adequate space.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions; teachers; local youth councils.

| Proposal 2: Advocate for community engagement meetings that involve local residents, NGOs, and businesses in ESD activities	
Education level	Public and private educational institutions, regional and municipal authorities.
Gaps addressed	Greek participants of the AELIA survey noted that the local and regional community's and authorities' support is vital for the effective realisation of ESD. This also relates to matters associated with multi-stakeholder approach. For this networking events organised by a regional or municipal level, and in some cases at school level, may provide the opportunity to advocate for the cooperation between all levels (public, private and non-governmental).
Factors of success	1) Networking events providing a multiplying effect; 2) May not require a high amount of resources - besides time and organisation; 3) Can bring together people from different fields and sectors.
Risk factors	1) Regional or municipal population, may be reluctant to such initiatives, due to lack of time or inconvenience; 2) Difficulty in organising such meetings due to high workload; 3) Limited awareness regarding the benefits of ESD; 4) Varying interests of community; 5) Lack of trust within the community.
Who should act / implement?	Public and private educational institutions; Municipal and regional authorities.

Romania

PA 1 Enhancing ESD Policy

Proposal 1: Establish a Comprehensive Funding Mechanism for Sustainability Education Programmes in Public Schools	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	To advance sustainability education in public schools across Romania, it is imperative to establish a dedicated funding mechanism that provides the necessary resources and incentives for schools to develop and implement sustainability education programmes and projects; this should inter alia support a) accessible funding, b) development of programmes, c) engagement of students;
Factors of success	a) A separate fund in the national education budget should be exclusively designated for sustainability education programs and projects in public schools, it should ensure equitable distribution, have clear criteria for eligibility and evaluation and consider factors like school size, location, and socioeconomic context. b) Interested Schools should get access to funding through submission of proposals aligned with criteria and guidelines of the funds. An independent panel of experts should evaluate the proposals based on predefined criteria (e.g. educational quality, innovation, community involvement, long-term sustainability. c) Schools´ approved sustainability education programmes should receive financial support, e.g. for curriculum development, teacher training etc. Schools that excel in sustainability education could be celebrated in awards, certifications, and public acknowledgment.
Risk factors	Potential challenges include budget constraints, administrative complexities, and ensuring the equitable distribution of funds. These risks could be mitigated e.g. by monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and periodic evaluations of the funding mechanism's effectiveness. Flexibility in adapting the mechanism is crucial.
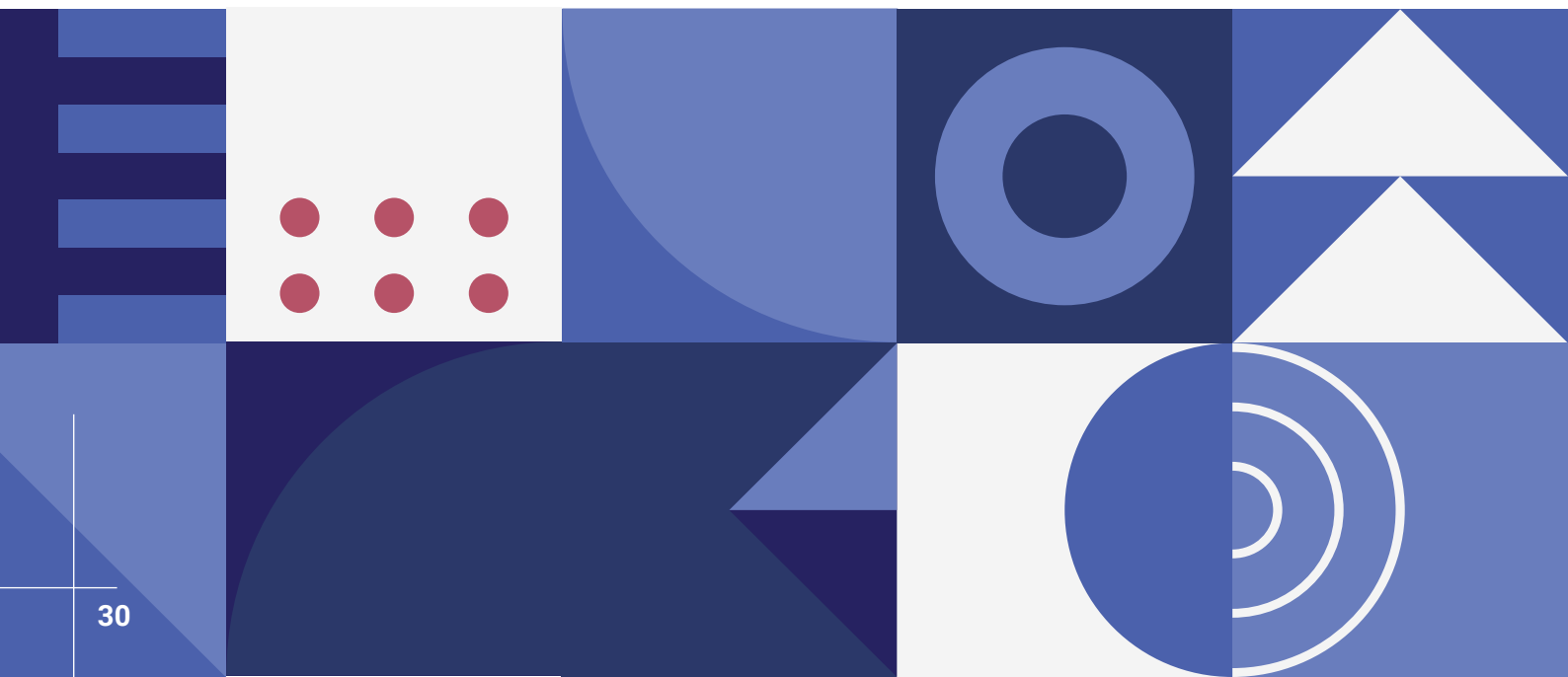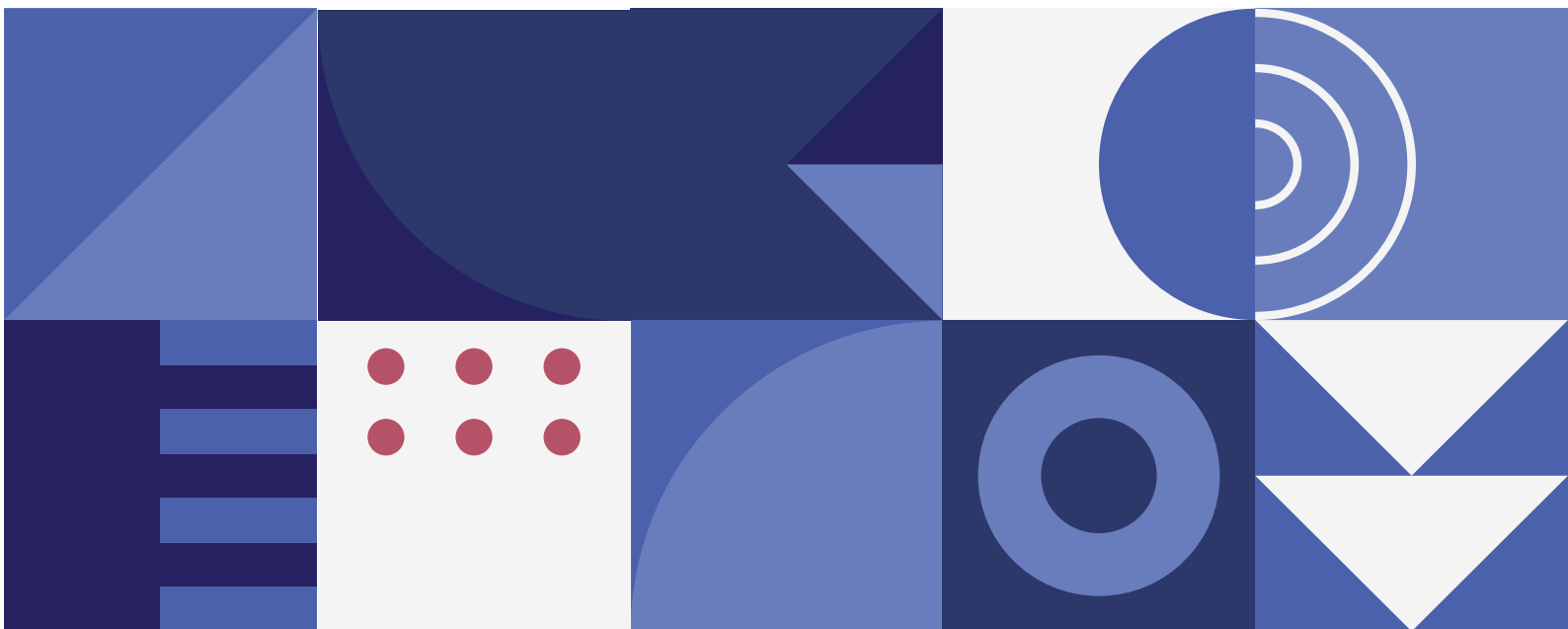
Proposal 2: Awareness campaigns on the importance of sustainable education goals among teachers and students	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Results of the survey indicated that not all actors in education are familiar with the objectives of sustainable education; starting an awareness raising campaign could fill this gap. The strategy for promotion of ESD should involve both students and teachers in conferences, awareness webinars, workshops or similar activities; the campaign could focus on one or more of the twelve environmental issues that have been approved in Romania´s Action Plan on Education for Environment and Climate Change 2023 – 2030.
Factors of success	Promoting and raising teachers' awareness about objectives of ESD on the websites of institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Education, such as the Arges County School Inspectorate, the Arges Teaching Staff House, as well as the pre-university education units in the county, as well as the information caravan organised both on Education Day (October 5) and on the occasion of teachers' meetings within pedagogical circles would be good starting points for a campaignPeople's awareness of sustainable education should be maintained permanently, through regular campaigns; to involve teachers and students could save a lot of time and resources for otherwise necessary mobilisation of crowds of volunteers.
Risk factors	Possible hesitance of teaching staff (e.g. to inquire about sustainable education, to listen and mobilise, other arising obstacles …).
Who should act / implement?	Arges County School Inspectorate, Europass Hub Association, pre-university education units in the county

PA 2 Transforming learning and training environment

Proposal 1: Establish accessible Funding and Resources for Teachers' Professional Development on Sustainability and the SDGs	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Currently, there is a need for dedicated resources and opportunities for professional development in ESD for teachers in Romania. This gap in equipping teachers with knowledge and skills to integrate ESD and SDGs in teaching practices hinders the delivery of comprehensive and impactful sustainability education in schools.
Factors of success	A dedicated funding pool within the education budget, along with transparent criteria and guidelines could facilitate integration of ESD in teaching practices. Another factor of success can be to work in Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and involve relevant stakeholders and create a collaborative environment that supports the effective implementation. Also, diverse learning opportunities by providing a range of professional development opportunities would make such an initiative more appealing and impactful. Providing teachers with resources like learning materials, toolkits, and online resources further enhances their ability to effectively integrate sustainability education into their teaching practices.
Risk factors	1) Adequate allocation of resources and striking a balance between equitable and sufficient distribution of funding; 2) Establishing a robust monitoring and accountability system with a structured approach 3) Potential resistance to change among teachers/educators 4) Funding to sustain over a long term 5) Ensuring a balance of equal access and in meeting regional needs

Proposal 2: Initiate and carry out outdoor activities to achieve sustainable education objectives	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Education policy currently includes sustainable school infrastructure, eco-certification programmes for schools and nature education; plans to expand the Eco-School network, create innovative learning spaces and involve communities could contribute to support ESD in schools
Factors of success	Partnerships with specialised organisations (e.g. Environment Agency, NGOs or business) could support promotion of sustainable education among pupils and teachers, and outdoor activities like gardening could promote ecology education. Partnerships with NGOs could also support pupils´/students´ achievement of social and civic competences.
Risk factors	Time-consuming bureaucracy, (documents attesting to the actual performance of activities, approving partnerships etc.).
Who should act / implement?	Arges County School Inspectorate, pre-university education units in the county, Environment Agency

PA 3 Building capacities of educators & trainers

Proposal 1: Establish Partnerships for Enriching Professional Development Programs	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Currently in compulsory education there is a gap in the availability of enriched content and resources that align with best practices and the latest research in ESD. Partnering with universities, research institutions, NGOs, and experts can provide teachers with access to specialised knowledge and resources in sustainability education; collaboration with expert organisations could ensure that training content, curriculum materials, and assessment tools are aligned with current best practices and the latest research in sustainability education.
Factors of success	1) Establish robust and collaborative relationships with institutions like universities, research bodies, NGOs and recognized experts 2) Develop a clear delineation of goals and objectives to ensure that all stakeholders´ efforts are aligned in enhancing professional development of ESD 3) A structured approach and open channels of communication are needed to enable co-designing of training content, curriculum material and assessment tools with expert organisations
Risk factors	1) Balancing and coordinating allocation of resources 2) Misdirection or misalignment of overarching goals of professional development 3) Sustaining long-term partnerships with expert organisations

Proposal 2: Monitoring and awarding examples of good practice and exchanges of experience among students and teachers	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Teachers are often hesitant to carry out extracurricular activities. To promote these, the Ministry of Education has created the Different School Week. To overcome the resistance to exchanges of experiences and examples of good practices, a closer monitoring of these activities and awarding of the most beautiful and interesting initiatives is proposed. That could change the attitudes towards extracurricular activities aimed at sustainable education.
Factors of success	Making use of media channels, social networks, websites of school institutions during Different School Week to promote good practices; projects could enhance the importance of ESD in schools and projects could also be disseminated in online journals.
Risk factors	1) Lack of adequate funds for extracurricular activities 2) Lack of extra time (and interest) of teachers
Who should act / implement?	Arges County School Inspectorate, pre-university education units in the county

PA 4 Empower and mobilise youth

Proposal 1: Establish Youth-led SDG Initiatives

Education level	All levels
Gaps addressed	Currently there is a lack of structured platforms for students to actively engage in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiatives in schools; this also leads to a gap in providing students with the opportunity to take a leading role in shaping and implementing projects related to the SDGs; establishing platforms for students initiatives entails many benefits, like empowerment of youth, students´ understanding grows from theory to practical application, they acquire critical thinking and problem solving capacities and students can cultivate leadership competencies.
Factors of success	Establishing clear guidelines and creating supportive environments for students´ initiatives, also mentorship and guidance by teachers is crucial to steer students through the process; and ensuring that students have unrestricted access to information and material support is an important factor for success.
Risk factors	Striking a delicate balance between granting students' autonomy in leading projects and providing them with necessary guidance

Resource allocation

Identification and mitigation of potential barriers for students (to propose and lead projects) |

Proposal 2: Volunteering and competition among students involved in extracurricular activities

Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Volunteering is not very popular among young people, while involvement of students in the extracurricular activities becomes an impediment to promoting sustainable education. So initiation of competitions at a county level is a possibility to get more students involved in projects for sustainability education;
Factors of success	Such activities carried out in Arges County School inspectorate indicate that schools at different levels as well as students benefit from it. Benefits entail inter alia offering diplomas, involving students in sustainability promotional activities of schools and becoming role models for their peers.
Risk factors	Busy schedule of students could impede volunteering;

Unequal funds of Parents´ Association available (unequal conditions of competition) |
| **Who should act / implement?** | Arges County School Inspectorate, pre-university education units in the county |

PA 5 Accelerate sustainable solutions at local level

Proposal 1: Promote Green Innovation Hubs	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	There is a gap in capacities for local areas to innovate and implement sustainable solutions to pressing environmental and social issues; there is also a lack of collaboration and coordination among local stakeholders, including businesses, educational institutions, and civil society organisations. This fragmentation limits the effectiveness of sustainability efforts within communities Green Innovation Hubs could serve as knowledge-sharing centres, can empower communities and could facilitate sustainable solutions as a centralised platform, beside a range of additional benefits.
Factors of success	Robust community engagement and active involvement of local stakeholders ensure a wide range of perspectives and expertise Adequate allocation of resources and providing sufficient financial support are crucial factors of success, this refers not only to physical space but also to equipment, access to experts, to research and development Collaboration and building of partnerships can foster synergies among stakeholders and would allow efficient sharing of resources
Risk factors	Potential resource constraints Lack of community engagement and commitment

Proposal 2: Collaboration with authorities in carrying out activities beneficial to all citizens, promoters of sustainable education	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Many communities lack the infrastructure, knowledge and resources to develop and implement strategies for sustainability. Therefore, local authorities and their representatives should be included in partnerships and the promotion of initiatives and projects of sustainability education.
Factors of success	Initiatives being supported by local authorities, like green corners arranged by schools, awareness raising campaigns, festivals where sustainable initiatives are presented; Allocating funds from budgets and/or attracting sponsors can facilitate school initiatives;
Risk factors	1) Sponsorships might be difficult to conclude for individual schools 2) Reluctant attitude of beneficiaries of projects with authorities
Who should act / implement?	Arges County School Inspectorate, pre-university education units in the county, Pitesti City Hall, General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection Arges, Golesti Museum

ESD: Whole-institutional and multi-stakeholder approach

Proposal 1: Cultivating Sustainable Values in Romanian Schools	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Currently, many schools in Romania do not have a systematic approach to integrating sustainability into their culture and operations. This gap hinders the development of environmentally conscious and socially responsible practices within the educational system. A clear emphasis on sustainability allows students to receive adequate education and exposure to environmental issues and strengthen their ability to become informed and engaged global citizens. Schools incorporating sustainability principles, undergo a cultural transformation and makes environmental and social responsibility become integral part of the institution's identity.
Factors of success	School leaders' active support and commitment is essential, this includes administrators and principals alike. Heads of schools should champion the cause of ESD, provide resources and give guidance. Transparent communication should ensure equal levels of information of stakeholders and help to maintain trust.
Risk factors	1) Resistance and/or hesitance from (certain) stakeholders to embrace sustainability as core principle 2) Inadequate funding or resource allocation 3) Lack of proper training and support for teachers and staff

Proposal 2: Promoting the values of sustainable education, fruit of collaboration between school, family, authorities	
Education level	All levels of education.
Gaps addressed	Principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability are important for education provided both within and outside the institutionalised setting. The effects of sustainable education are impactful, both for students and citizens; it's important to create learning experiences at all levels, starting with students, to become informed and engaged, responsible global citizens.
Factors of success	Commitment involves adaptation and changes to curricula and a range of consecutive steps of rearranged processes including allocation of resources which should all be supportive to sustainable education and supported by school's decision. The involvement of supporting decision-makers, and promotion of sustainable education in the media, are among the range of other factors that pursue the objectives of environmental, social and economic education and can facilitate and ensure the success of projects.
Risk factors	Parts of the population, directly or indirectly, may be reluctant to such initiatives, due to lack of time or inconvenience, which they could invoke.
Who should act / implement?	Arges County School Inspectorate, pre-university education units in the county, Pitesti City Hall, General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection Arges, Golesti Museum, Environment Agency, Europass Hub Association

Serbia

PA 1 Enhancing ESD Policy

Proposal 1: Revision of the national sustainable development strategy (2008) – NSDS	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) was adopted in 2008, and has not been revised ever since. Therefore, it is proposed that the strategy be revised by putting a special focus on ESD.
Factors of success	Serbia´s process of accession to the EU and adjustment of the majority of its laws could enhance the update of NSDS and align a new strategy to the needs of the time in the field of education.
Risk factors	1) Lack of institutional capacities to initiate and finalise the process of revision 2) Lack of human and financial resources for the process of updating and revision 3) A new election cycle which could significantly postpone the process
Who should act / implement?	Government (line ministries)

Proposal 2: Development of a Strategy for ESD	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Serbia has not adopted the Strategy for ESD yet. Regulating all aspects of ESD at different education levels would enable educational institutions to include all aspects of ESD in institutional policies and practices.
Factors of success	ESD is present in formal and non-formal education, but implementation still depends on the enthusiasm of individual educators and/or leaders when it should be supported through the system of education and become obligatory at all levels of education.
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities to initiate and finalise the development of the Strategy Lack of human and financial resources in the process of drafting the Strategy A new election cycle which could significantly postpone the process
Who should act / implement?	Government (line ministries)

PA 2 Transforming learning and training environment

Proposal 1: Improving the physical environment for all actors in education

Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	A safe and sustainable environment would elevate the ESD topic from the level of a story to the level of action, following the principle of practice what you preach; experiencing sustainability in action would significantly make it easier for students to grasp the key idea of ESD and start practising its postulates.
Factors of success	Actors in education would tremendously benefit from an improved physical environment and it would be in their best interest to continue advocating and striving for a safer and more sustainable environment in which they spend a significant portion of their work day.
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities and of (institution´s) external support Lack of human and financial resources, (especially in regard of the high number of educational institutions in need)
Who should act / implement?	Government, local self-governments, heads of institutions

Proposal 2: Systemic transformation of teaching and learning approaches / methods

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Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Currently, topics of sustainability are mostly reduced to themes of environment protection. Therefore, it is recommended to resort to curriculum development which implies the following: 1) infuse sustainability concepts and practices into curricula across all subjects; 2) shift to active learning methods that engage students in hands-on experiences; 3) incorporate activities that connect students with local environments and communities; 4) further integrate technology and digital platforms to enhance ESD delivery; 5) develop methods to evaluate also skills, attitudes, and behaviours for sustainability; 6) implement sustainable practices within educational institutions; 7)extend ESD beyond formal education to lifelong learning opportunities for all; 8) offer adult education programmes, community workshops, and online courses
Factors of success	The Strategy for ESD would facilitate the process, provide a wholesome framework for all educational institutions and a clear path in defining institutional goals.
Risk factors	Lack of human and financial resources in the process of devising and/or revising the existing teaching and learning approaches/methods Lack of institutional capacities to initiate and finalise the process mentioned above
Who should act / implement?	Within the provided ESD framework (the Government), this should be implemented by heads of educational institutions, the teaching staff, trainers, educators (in both formal and non-formal contexts)

PA 3 Building capacities of educators & trainers

Proposal 1: Provide CPD/Training programmes on sustainability	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Lack of knowledge and skills among teachers in both formal and non-formal education relating to ESD; it is proposed that a thorough needs analysis be performed to identify gaps and areas that need improvement in educators´ understanding of sustainable development concepts and teaching methodologies.
Factors of success	In Serbia the Institute for the Advancement of Education and Upbringing has a significant role to play in professional development; it is one of the partners on the AELIA project and one of the factors that could boost the implementation of the proposal.
Risk factors	The CPD training programmes would have to be devised and designed by experts in ESD, therefore, additional resources would have to be provided in order to obtain the sufficient number of properly devised CPD/ training programmes in ESD
Who should act / implement?	Government & the Institute for the Advancement of Education and Upbringing

Proposal 2: Introducing institutional support, motivation and recognition for invested ESD efforts	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	Adopting institutional policies which would officially support and recognise efforts of those staff members who promote and implement the principles of ESD. This could come in the form of awarding staff members with CPD points, providing suitable teaching and learning conditions, providing certificates and/or some other incentives.
Factors of success	At the present moment, there are no legal obstacles for institutional leaders to apply similar measures in support of teachers practising ESD.
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities to initiate such practices Lack of financial resources
Who should act / implement?	Educational leaders/heads/principals; governing bodies of educational institutions (School Councils)

PA 4 Empower and mobilise youth

Proposal 1: Raising awareness of sustainability at an early age

Education level	Pre-school education / Higher education (of pre-school teachers)
Gaps addressed	There are timid attempts to introduce future pre-school teachers more thoroughly to the concept and goals of sustainability which remain solitary efforts of enthusiastic individuals. It is recommended that these efforts become obligatory for all colleges that educate prospective pre-school teachers.
Factors of success	Serbia has adopted a new pre-school curriculum framework Years of Ascent, which appears to follow the principles of sustainability from a comprehensive perspective. This is a potential framework for introducing a comprehensive turn in their study programmes, devoting more space to sustainability as a holistic concept.
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities to guide the process of necessary changes towards raising awareness of sustainability at a very early age.
	Lack of human and financial resources to initiate the proposed actions
Who should act / implement?	Heads of Teacher Training Colleges, teaching staff, experts, relevant college bodies (Councils)

Proposal 2: Include the young (students) in the process of drafting strategic plans and local action plans.

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Education level	All levels of education: active participation of young, even the youngest student population should be included
Gaps addressed	The participation of students and their responsibilities should go beyond the topic of environmental protection towards the inclusion of other important sustainability topics: poverty, hunger, quality education for all, gender equality, decent work, peace, justice and strong institutions, to name but a few.
Factors of success	Serbian society generally seems to be aware of the necessity to have young people included in different social processes. The young in general become increasingly aware that their impact and opinions matter. This constitutes a good basis for turning the proposal into action
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities
	Lack of human and financial resources
Who should act / implement?	Heads of educational institutions; Student Parliaments; Student Clubs/Councils
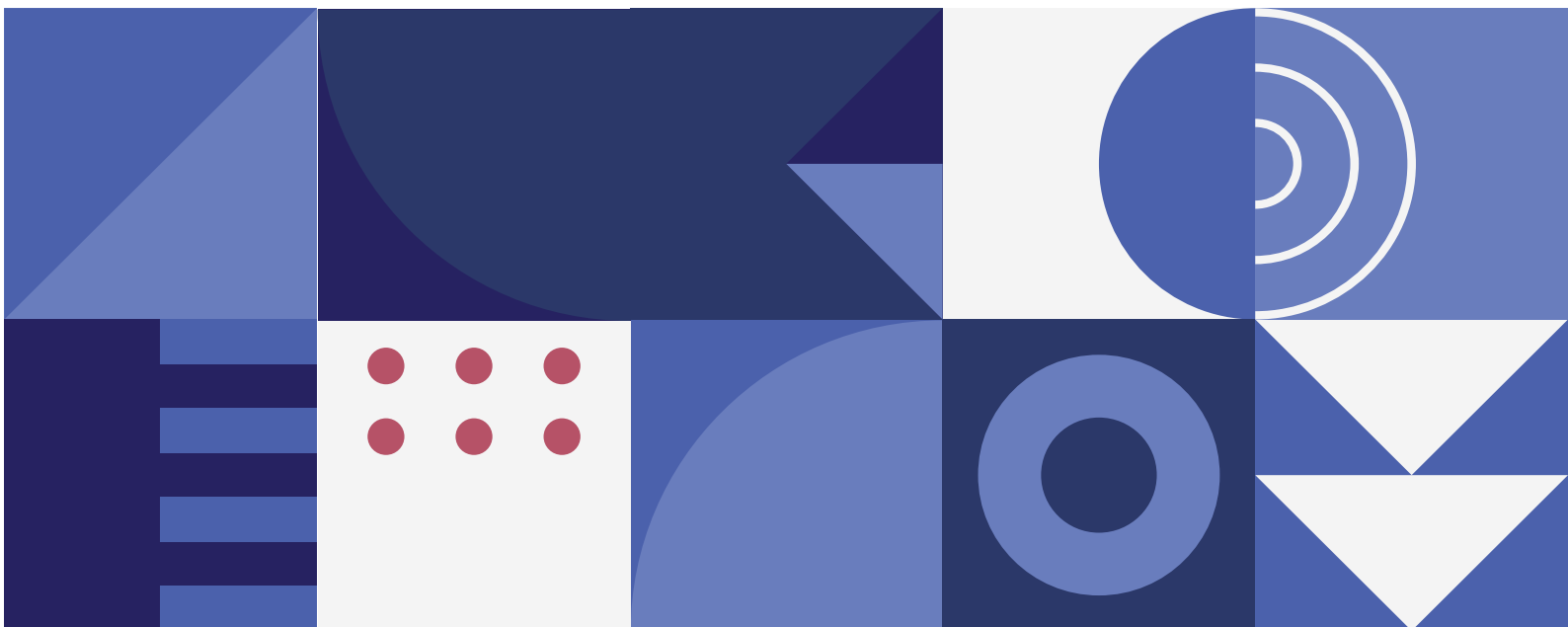
PA 5 Accelerate sustainable solutions at local level

Proposal 1: Encourage sustainable development campaigns in formal education at the local level	
Education level	All levels of education
Gaps addressed	PA5 is the least addressed priority of ESD in the Serbian context. Among the most conspicuous drawbacks is a notable lack of inclusion of formal educational institutions in sustainable development campaigns.
Factors of success	According to research, non-formal education organisations have experience with different kinds of campaigns relating to sustainability. Joint efforts of the formal and non-formal education sectors could make this proposal work.
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities to support different aspects of campaigning, such as establishing close ties with the community due to a possible complexity of the process Lack of human and financial resources
Who should act / implement?	Heads of educational institutions/organisations (both formal and non-formal), local self-government, staff.

Proposal 2: Encouraging membership in ESD networks or even starting an ESD network	
Education level	Primary Education; Secondary Education; Higher Education; Non-formal education organisations.
Gaps addressed	Research indicates neither formal nor non-formal educational institutions are members of some wider ESD network. Some of the benefits of ESD networks would be collaboration and partnership among individuals, institutions, organisations, shared knowledge and innovations in teaching and promoting sustainability, gained access to a larger knowledge and information basis for ESD, joint forces to advocate for policy changes and/or to raise awareness, etc.
Factors of success	Benefits mentioned above constitute reasonable argumentation for educational institutions (formal and non-formal) to join and/or create such community
Risk factors	Lack of institutional capacities and/or short-sightedness of institutional leaders to joining an ESD network. Lack of human and financial resources for joining and maintaining activities within a network.
Who should act / implement?	Heads of educational institutions; directors of NGOs and CSOs; Government bodies at local and national levels.
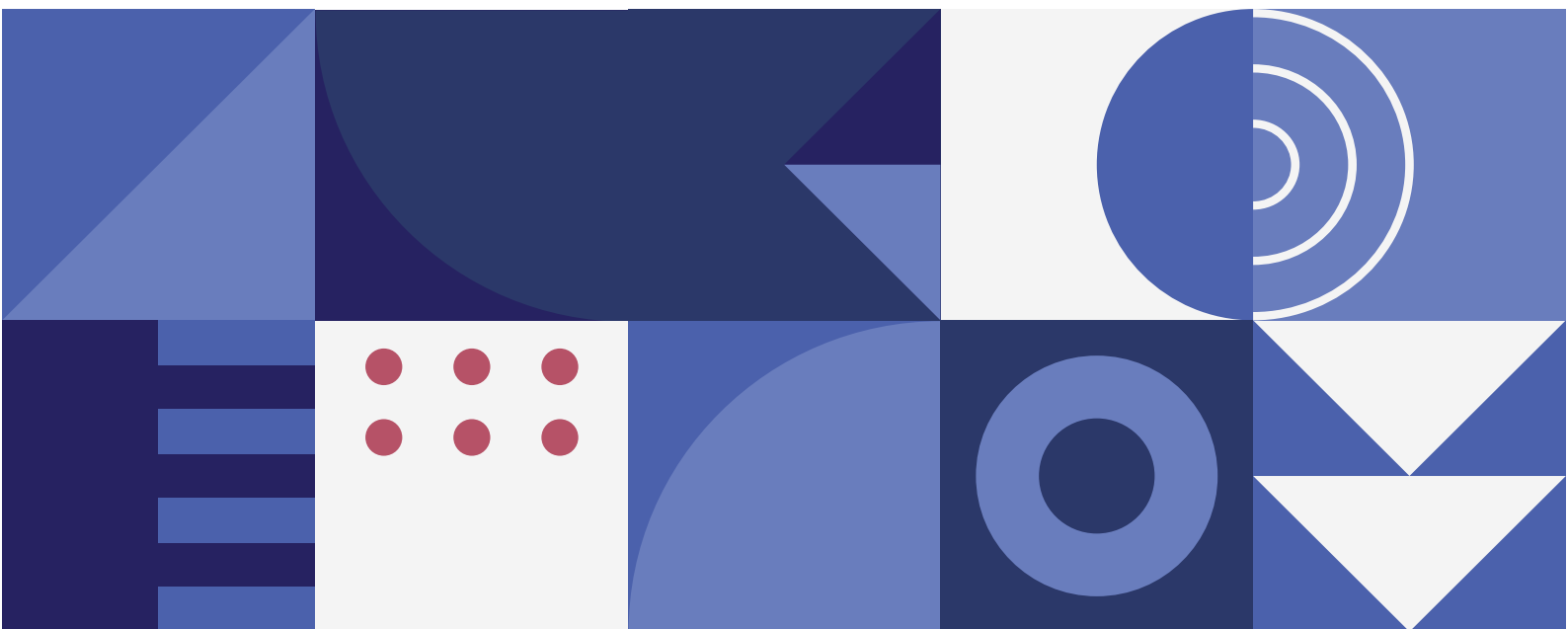
ESD: Whole-institutional and multi-stakeholder approach

Proposal 1: Establishing boards for sustainability	
Education level	Primary Education; Secondary Education; Higher Education; Non-formal education organisations
Gaps addressed	The vast majority of formal/non-formal education institutions have not established boards for sustainability. This is recognised as a shortcoming in the process of ESD. The establishment of such a board for sustainability could benefit the whole institution.
Factors of success	Forming a Board for Sustainability mainly depends on the leadership of an educational institution. For this initiative to be launched one should be informed about the importance and potentials of such a body.
Risk factors	Lack of institutional will to create such a body at the level of an institution Lack of human and financial capacities
Who should act / implement?	Leadership/administration of educational institutions; environment/sustainability experts; community representatives

Proposal 2: Encouraging cooperation with different community organisations in the Diaspora	
Education level	All levels of education.
Gaps addressed	Research indicates that educational institutions have established cooperation with CSOs and partnerships in programmes like Erasmus + but cooperation of formal and non-formal education institutions from Serbia and the Serbian communities in the diaspora is not very common. This cooperation could support efforts for ESD with a wide range of benefits.
Factors of success	This particular proposal and its potential implementation depend on individual organisations and their management. Furthermore, this proposal could be realised through shared vision and goals, mutual benefits, and open communication.
Risk factors	Lack of will and/or capacities on either part to engage in this kind of cooperation Lack of human and financial resources to maintain the cooperation in the long run
Who should act / implement?	Government agencies and Ministry of Education; Diaspora organsations; educational institutions; NGOs and CSOs, etc.

Brief sum-up of proposals

Through desk and field research, AELIA project partners have analysed existing national poli-cies, collected examples of good practice and interviewed heads of institutions, teachers/trainers, students and non-teaching staff from both formal and non-formal education institutions. As a re-sult, partners have drawn conclusions and addressed gaps that they have found or been presented with. Proposals to fill these gaps and to improve ESD in the participating countries are presented in this Green Paper.

For a whole-institution approach, the whole institution should be involved in the transforma-tion of educational institutions towards ESD, and values of sustainability should be cultivated. To demonstrate the added value of WIA for institutions, awareness should be raised among all internal and external stakeholders and training opportunities should be provided to facilitate the transition to an integral sustainable educational institution. It is also suggested to establish sustainability committees in institutions to make ESD a more collective and shared effort.

A multi-stakeholder approach (MSA) is an integral part of WIA, and therefore of ESD, from which educational institutions can and should benefit. To successfully integrate an MSA, institutions should be provided with all the necessary knowledge, expertise and resources to raise awareness of the positive impact of multi-stakeholder alliances. The values of sustainable education and the benefits of collaboration between institutions, families and authorities should be promoted. An MSA should also encourage collaboration with various community organisations in the diaspora, where available.

For the improvement of ESD policies (Priority Area 1), it is clear that the five countries (Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Serbia) in which AELIA research was conducted all have policies in place, but many of them lack either an adequate framework and/or guidelines that could be used as a reference to show progress or advanced implementation. Proposals range from the establishment of a national strategy for ESD to the establishment of a national framework with indicators and monitoring systems for all educational institutions.

Another set of proposals focuses on improving the operationalisation of policies, such as in-cluding ESD in the mission and vision of institutions, supporting ESD labelling and/or awards, or establishing appropriate quality assessment mechanisms for ESD progress in schools. Other sug-gestions from partners relate to finances and the importance of ensuring adequate budgets in order to overcome financial constraints that may arise during implementation.

In Priority Area 2, transforming the learning and training environment, partners' proposals are very diverse, reflecting also heterogeneous national realities. Some proposals address the physical learning environment, such as the necessary reorganisation of infrastructure for environmental sustainability (e.g., improving energy systems) or improving the safety of school buildings. Partners also suggest involving pupils in outdoor learning activities, where they can see real examples of sustainability actions and develop their civic responsibility. The creation of action plans by and for classes is a proposal for student-centred learning, a principle mentioned in many partners' proposals. Having local communities as a field of action where students can acquire problem solving competencies in multidisciplinary projects is another proposal for transforming the learning environment. Other partners suggest compulsory integration of ESD in curricula or/and financial support for teachers' professional development.

For capacity building of educators and trainers (Priority Area 3), a framework, guidelines, indicators and monitoring system for systematic and regular ESD teacher training should be developed. One partner also proposes to strengthen compulsory ESD teacher training to ensure capacity building. For invested ESD efforts, institutional support, motivation and recognition should be introduced, and teachers who integrate ESD in their teaching at the educational institution level should be incentivised, and outstanding ESD teachers should be rewarded. The development of a holistic professional development programme on ESD, supported by an educational platform for trainers at all levels, is proposed, as well as the promotion of existing ESD-related e-learning platforms and in-service training. The establishment of partnerships should enrich professional development programmes, and examples of good practice and exchange of experiences between students and teachers should be promoted.

In the area of youth empowerment (Priority Area 4), partners propose to promote and support youth-led (SDG) initiatives.   Young students should be involved in the process of drafting strategic plans and local action plans; this should be enhanced by providing opportunities for young people to participate in sustainability decision-making processes in educational institutions and in community life. Students and young people should be trained to acquire IT, sustainability and active citizenship skills and be motivated to engage with sustainability issues at a high level. Competitions could be organised for students involved in extracurricular activities and volunteering should be recognised and awarded. The partners also propose to start raising awareness of sustainability at an early age with appropriate ESD pre-school programmes.

In order to accelerate sustainable solutions at local level (Priority Area 5), the partners propose to enable sustainable solutions at local and institutional level, or another specific proposal is to undertake sustainable development initiatives, taking into account the specific problems of the educational institution and its community, and to develop plans to solve them. Sustainable development campaigns in formal education at local level should be encouraged to promote and accelerate sustainable solutions. Collaboration with public authorities and other promoters of sustainability, such as the media, is recommended when carrying out activities for the benefit of all citizens. The creation of regional and local networks for ESD should be supported and membership of ESD networks or even the creation of an ESD network should be encouraged. It is also suggested to participate as observers in international networks related to ESD. To address sustainability challenges, networks should be established with different stakeholders (local authorities, businesses, NGOs, universities, etc.) to jointly design, implement and monitor actions. Similarly, one partner suggested promoting Green Innovation Hubs, which could encourage students and citizens alike to get involved in sustainability actions.
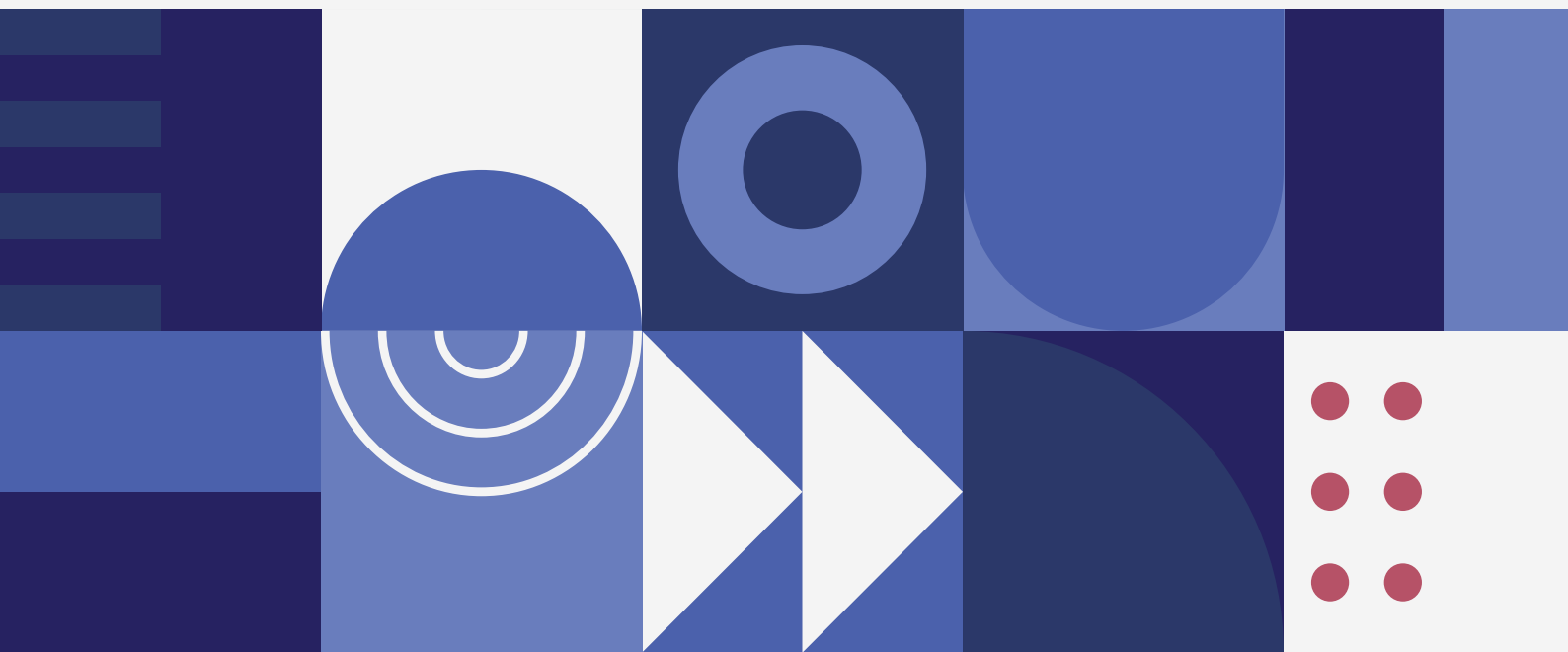
This is a brief summary of proposals, suggestions and recommendations from partners in Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Romania and Serbia. In the coming weeks, the country-specific proposals will be discussed with experts and stakeholders in public consultations. The consolidated results of the consultations will feed into guidelines for applying a multi-stakeholder and whole-institution approach to ESD.

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