

**Local hub of graduates of Daugavpils University
in Research and Education for Sustainability Education**
UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at Daugavpils University
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UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair Interplay of Tradition and Innovation for Sustainable development in lifelong learning at Daugavpils University (further – UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at DU) has been established based on global experience in preparation for DESD (2000-2004) and the implementation of DESD (2005-2014). UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at DU has joined SWEDES since 2012 and BSRESN from its establishment. UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at DU was established on the platform of global experience of DU which was developed during participation in the preparation stage (2000-2004) and realisation of the aims of DESD (2005-2014). In Nagoya (2014) the Chair, as an internationally recognised player, became an active participant in the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Global Action Programme (2015-2020) and joined the UNESCO Chairs' Network focusing on ESD as a partner for the realisation of GAP and SDG's.

Daugavpils University (hereinafter – DU) has an old tradition in research in Environmental education, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and ESD in teacher education, Higher Education and Education for all as well as research for social innovations. In 2002 DU established the Baltic and Black Sea Circle Consortium in Educational Research (further – BBCC) with the focus being on teacher education reorientation towards sustainability. Now BBCC as an open network has 10 years' experience and a perspective on the reorientation of Higher Education and research in education for ESD. DU has a focus on research for ESD and BBCC experience that was exhibited in the World's congress in Bonn (2009).

Goal and aims of the HUB: The purpose of the hub is to create a just and sustainable world in which every person can realise their rights. The Specific aim of the hub is to promote social innovation for SD through education by SD tools.

Activities and achievements of the HUB: The main activities of the hub are the following:

1. Discussions about human resources and selection of the head of the hub,
2. Decisions about the development of the teachers' network,
3. Hubs' network workshops in Research and Education for sustainability education (e.g. organisational meeting, pilot workshop, practical seminar for the introduction of action research)
4. Elaboration of the concept of the hub,
5. Partner meetings.

Target groups of the HUB, structure and collaboration: Hub's network is designed by diverse local teams of DU graduates (educators, representatives of other professions, local community leaders, etc.) who have an interest in maintaining cooperation with DU, participating in research, investigation experiences, collaborating with local stakeholders to promote social innovations for flourishing sustainability in local relations and life.

The hub is established by UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair with the support of the faculties of DU. Graduates from DU are included in the advisory board and invited to join the open network of the hub. In cooperation with the Faculty of Education and Management of DU the pilot network workshop for research and education has been organised. After the establishment of the hub such networks will be organised in other places if needed. During the establishment of the hub its

structure, process and network organisation, details in governance, collaboration, research and development strategy and research including the planning of support and development, will be formulated during a series of meetings with the hub's founders and network members.

Advisory board of regional stakeholders approved by the DU UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair is responsible for decision making and coordination of the whole process of initiatives in the hub. For sustaining the initiatives and decisions of the advisory board at a national level, cooperation with UNESCO LNC and the Ministry of Science and Education will be developed. Main activities of the hub will be based on participative action research that gives possibilities to regional stakeholders to join the open network. Thus, the findings of the research will go from the bottom up and will provide a generalisation of the ideas to be implemented in regional development. This approach allows one to identify the effective social innovations for the region and to make decisions regarding sustainability. Research and development coordination will be implemented by the hub's researchers and experts who participate in the process of the identification of network research and development needs through involving network members in the so-called Hubs' network workshops. These workshops will be organised according to the structure developed by the UNESCO Chair both at DU and in local communities that are members of the hub network.

Local, national, global and conceptual context of the HUB:

The activities of the HUB are compatible with the current global priorities introduced by the Global Action Programme (GAP), post 2015 and SDGs, and with national priorities introduced by the Strategy of Sustainable Development and agenda in Latvia. The scope of activities organised by the hub is global in order to truly address the global challenges faced by people worldwide. The hub also focuses its activities on developing an inclusive, open and transparent process of partnership with multiple stakeholders. SDGs will be the frame of reference for the hub in its research and social innovation activities.

Conceptual background of the activities organised by the hub is based on the notion of social innovation and methodology of participative action research. *Social innovation* is understood as the introduction of new ideas in response to social needs and creating a new quality of life. To ensure this vision the activities of the hub will advance and enable local stakeholders to reorient the development of education through social innovations, while at the same time meeting SDGs. Thus, effective innovations and decisions are authentic ideas and practices in the region, created by the participants of the hub's network.

The hub will also provide *participative action research* that will invite researchers, stakeholders from different levels and volunteers. Networking will open possibilities to explore findings from the bottom up and generalise ideas for implementation in education and educational research to reorient actions toward sustainability. Action research participants will be involved in (a) identification of research and educational needs, such as social, environmental and economic needs, (b) development of new solutions in response to these needs, (c) evaluation of the effectiveness of the proposed solutions, (d) scaling up of effective innovations and (e) distribution of effective innovations in local conditions.

Sustainability of the HUB: The process initiated by the establishment of the hub will be sustained after the deadline of the project by integrating the principles of sustainable development into DU policies and Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral study programmes and developing DU educators' sustainability competencies. The hub is going to focus its activities on developing an inclusive and open partnership with multiple stakeholders for meeting regional and national needs for a just and sustainable world where every person can realise their potential and live free from poverty.

Multiplication and publicity of the HUB's initiatives: The hub as a network has the potential to be developed as an umbrella network of several other networks and new hubs. Publicity of the activities of the HUB may be found on the web pages <http://du.lv/> and <http://www.ise-lv.eu/>. The stories of the success of the HUB will be disseminated in the Science Festivals of Daugavpils University, on the HUB's partners' home pages, in seminars with the students involved in Bachelor's, Master's and Doctor's level studies, and in international events and seminars where the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at Daugavpils University is represented.