

# Good **practices**

promoting sustainable development  
in Vocational Education Training  
across Europe





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# Introduction

The Manual of Good Practices is intended to be a useful tool directed to tutors, teachers, educators, school directors of the VET field, and also to all those stakeholders such as decision-makers, policy-makers, and organizations that are interested and directly involved in the promotion of sustainability, especially in the educational sector.

The main purpose of this Manual is to share practices and concrete actions that can be implemented in a new teaching approach and methodology whose objective is to integrate the principles of sustainability in the educational activities. The methodology proposed allows awareness-raising on the necessity of taking action towards a more sustainable and just world not only from a theoretical perspective but also promoting a change in people's daily choices and behaviours in order to transform its values into concrete practices.

The partners of the project created this tool mainly thanks to the contribution of the tutors, teachers and educators in the VET field that have accompanied them during the entire implementation of the Stairway to SDG project. Their participation was crucial for the development of the educational tools included in the proposal, especially the SDG APP and the activities available on the webpage, and for their testing during the pilot experiences. Without the involvement of those professionals who chose to be Sustainability Makers since the beginning we would have generated a much lower impact.

The Manual consists of four parts. The first part is dedicated to the process of creation and definition of the educational tools content with the work groups. The second part aims to describe how pilot experiences had been carried out in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, and Greece. Each partner chose to describe one of the several experiences developed in its country. The third part illustrates the dissemination activities that also include participatory events in which not only professionals of the VET field, but also other stakeholders took part. On these occasions partners could both present the results obtained and gather opinions and suggestions for improving the outputs of the projects. The last part is a collection of recommendations and suggestions gathered from people involved in the project during all its implementation. In this section it is possible to find proposals for improving the educational tools and advice on how to continue working towards sustainability and, specifically, on the 2030 Agenda in VET centers.

Partners managed all the processes described in this Manual following some common and shared guidelines. At the same time, the experiences differed depending on the context, the nature and the working methodology of the partners' organization, and on the available opportunities in the country. For this reason, each part of the Manual includes five sections, each one describing the experience in a specific country.

We believe that this Manual can give some inputs and show an innovative approach for working the SDGs in the classroom and actually promoting a change towards sustainability.

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# Participatory *content* *definition* process with teachers

The aim of the participatory phase was to build some new teaching tools to bring the SDGs into the classroom. The idea was to translate the SDGs into measurable units which can help the students to find out how much impact they produced in their daily life. To do that, we wanted to work directly with the teachers in order to have direct contact with the real needs of the field and to build new networks between us and the schools.

For the focus groups, we have involved different teachers from several schools. We have worked with professionals who came from different fields, such as technical institutes, artistic, classical and scientific high schools in order to adjust the output for a wider target. In the workgroups we hosted we collected various ideas via brainstorming and found a way to make them work together in a way that could be sustainable for the class environment. At the end, we asked our educators for help in translating the different suggestions into real activities, providing all the structure, the materials and the instructions.

## Lessons learned together

The focus groups functioned as a safe place where different teachers, each expert in their own field, could collaborate as if they were colleagues for the same goal. It was an opportunity to share not only knowledge but also methods, advices and tips. Working together as a team had been the most fulfilling and fertile experience because the final output was the result of a common effort where everyone was a protagonist.

## Recomendations

Discussion and comparison between trainers and teachers who share the same objective is fundamental: everyone must be involved.

Experimentation is the key: every tool and every activity must be improved by the person who is actually using it as a mean to achieve an end. To teach sustainable development means not only to bring in class answers but also new questions because the world is changing really fast and so the problems and so the solutions.



From the beginning our idea was to involve the teachers actively in the process of building our platform and APP. This objective was coherent with the priority defined for the VET field in our application: Initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work-based settings. Beyond creating specific tools for them to work the SDGs in the class, we believe that the active participation in all the process of building the results was very important and formative for the people involved, our Sustainability Makers.

In order to develop the building phase we decided to proceed with work groups involving mainly VET teachers but promoting the participation of experts and teachers from other areas interested in the sustainability issue. From the beginning we made a big effort to present the project to different centres by talking with directors, head of studies or directly with teachers through personal contacts. Finally we got the support of 7 VET centres and 15 Sustainability Makers participating in the work groups. We developed 10 work groups during all of 2021 and the main goal was to create, share and evaluate the contents of our platform and APP keeping a real educational perspective certified for the teachers.

### Lessons learned together

All the participation processes are complex but are necessary if we want to empower people to be active citizens. The participation and the effort that this process needs is the key if we want to change behaviors and attitude in a sustainable way and if we want to give our contribution to the Agenda 2030. If our sustainability makers have this important task to spread a message into youth generations they need to live in person participatory experiences and consequently understand the difficulties and the opportunities inside this process.

### Recomendations

Experimentation is the key: every tool and every activity must be improved by the person who is actually using it as a mean to achieve an end. To teach sustainable development means not only to bring in class answers but also new questions because the world is changing really fast and so the problems and so the solutions.





The objectives of the participatory process with teachers were: the development of qualitative project outputs: better understanding of the teacher's needs, creation of support for implementation of education for sustainable development and SDGs in the VET center, teaching the teachers more about education for sustainable development and the SDGs, creation of a group of like-minded VET staff who wanted to learn more about and contribute to implementation of education for sustainable development in VET education.

We involved Odisee staff in our local work groups. We started with inviting Odisee staff from different campuses and different backgrounds and different fields of study. Most of the participants of the work groups were teachers, but we also welcomed some employees from our supporting services such as facility management and our international office. We organized the work groups as consecutive sessions. In the first session we gave more insights about education for sustainable development and SDGs, we shared good practices and we introduced the Stairway to SDG project. We also discussed how sustainable Odisee was at that moment. We repeated the first session several times in order for people from different campuses to be able to join. In the second session we gave insights in and discussed the whole institution approach. In the following sessions we collected sustainability cases for Odisee and we taught the participants techniques to work on these sustainability cases. The objective of this was to come up with interventions to make Odisee more sustainable and also to show the teachers how to work with tools based on the sustainability competences.

## Lessons learned together

Thanks to the work groups we learned there were a lot of people in Odisee willing to contribute to a more sustainable school. It made us feel there were opportunities to make Odisee more sustainable using a bottom-up approach and through empowerment of teachers. It led to continuous collaborations over campuses, fields of study and services. It also showed that the whole institution approach is crucial when it comes to implementing ESD. The work groups also confirmed the importance of implementation of the sustainability competences in the curriculum. Learning materials and tools to work with the students are certainly useful, but more is needed to make real changes. Collaboration, facilitating conversations, empowerment of staff and teach-the-teacher activities and gaining support at the top are also essential.

## Recommendations

The advantage of a mixture of profiles in the workgroups is the richness of conversation and the different perspectives. This creates the feeling among participants that they are not alone in wanting to fight for more sustainability at their institution. It makes them feel they are learning together and from each other.



# Athens Mediterranean Center of Environment

The objectives of the participatory workshops organised in Athens, Greece, by the Mediterranean Center of Environment were:

- to inform representatives of our target group about the project and the innovative approach proposed
- to engage them in the process of co-creation of learning content
- to guaranty the adequation between Stairway to SDG tools and the specific needs of VET trainers/teachers
- to develop a network of trainers and organisations willing to disseminate the project results"

From February 2020 to May 2021, 6 meetings - face-to-face and then online due to COVID19 pandemic -- were organised with Teachers from Professional High Schools, a representative of an Educational centre of Environmental Education, a representative of a NGO doing professional training and one pedagogue specialised in Sustainable development. After getting familiar with the approach and objectives of Strairway to SDG, they started co-create the learning content for SDG13, 14 and 15. The activities proposed were adapted by the MCE to be part of the platform content. At the end of the process, participants were introduced to the piloting test of the Stairway to SDG online tools

## Lessons learned together

There is a growing awareness of the necessity to integrate the challenges of sustainable development in the education of future professionals. The difficulty for trainers and teachers is to fit an additional learning content within the existing curriculum. Teachers are open to changes in their way of teaching and eager to find easy and useful educational material that could support this change.

## Recomendations

Trainers and teachers are full of ideas to share with their peers and put into practice. They often miss time and a proper environment to do so. Such participatory processes provide them with a good opportunity for exchange, creation and support for testing new methods and activities. The duration of the participatory process makes it difficult to ensure the stability of the group of professionals taking part in it. This requests an ability to adaptability to changes and the capacity to introduce new participants to the group and to the process through all its duration.





# Santa María da Feira Rosto Solidario

The initial phase of the project consisted of contacting VET centers with the aim to involve some teachers in the working groups. The main objective of these working groups was to collect information for the development of the contents and tools provided in the project (information on the SDGs, definition of action areas, questions for the APP, types of activities, etc.). The meetings sought to know the reality of teachers and VET centres, to know their experience in the SDGs, as well as to survey their needs. At the same time, this first activity sought to involve teachers in order to motivate them and take ownership of the project results.

In this phase teachers from two different schools were involved: Escola Secundária Serafim Leite and Casa Escola Agrícola Campo Verde. A total of 10 sessions were held with the working groups involving a total of 6 teachers. The first sessions consisted in the presentation of the project (objectives, activities and expected results) and of the proposed participatory process; identification of the needs and opportunities of the project from the perspective of students, teachers and the education system; thematic sessions on the SDGs 2, 4, 5 and 17; suggestions for types of activities to be developed; and also a reflection on the role of organisations in this context. These sessions were fundamental for defining the action areas, questions for the APP and developing the content of the electronic platform.

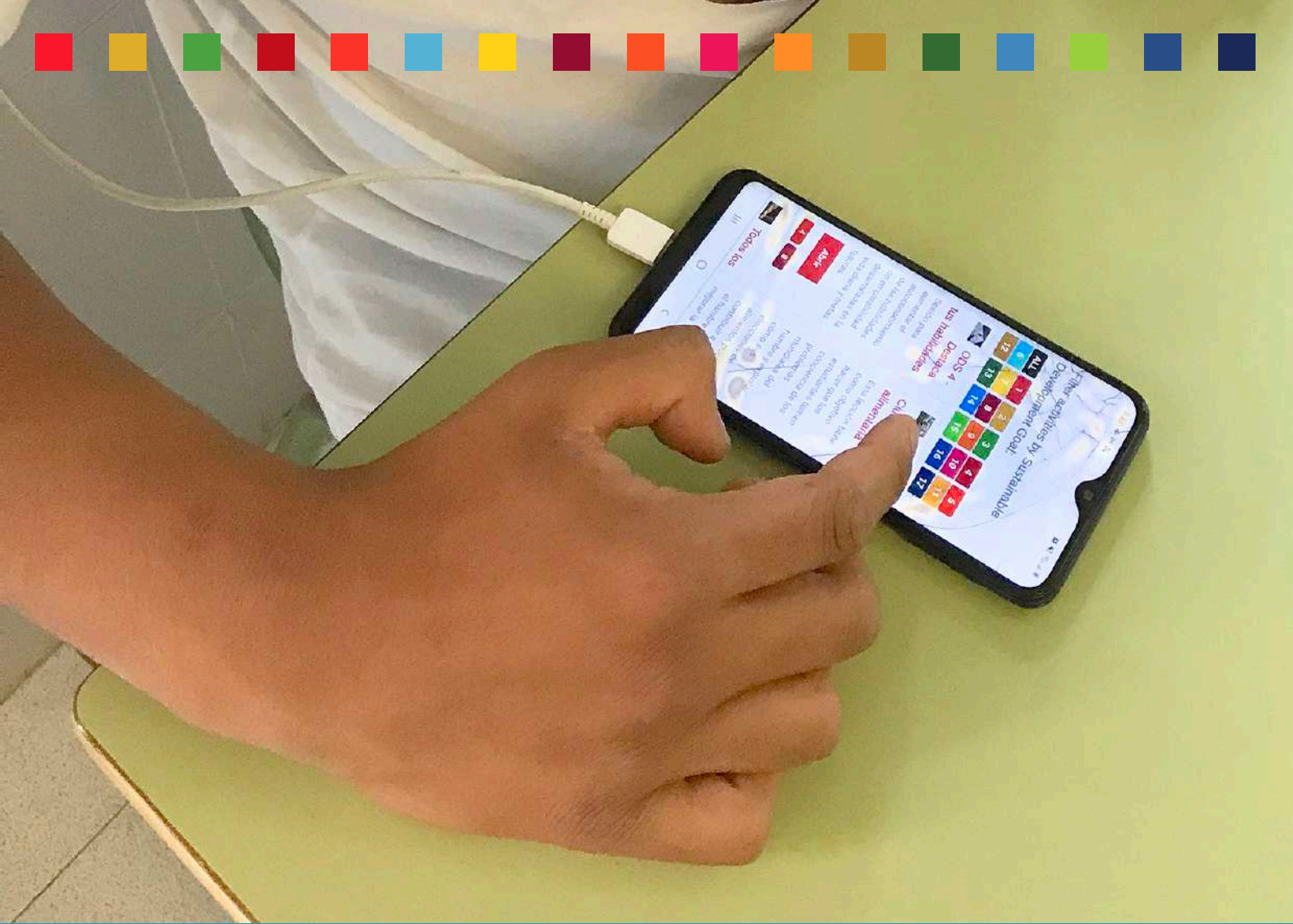
## Lessons learned together

The sessions were an opportunity for mutual learning between the teachers and project team. As RS is not a VET centre, it was essential to involve teachers in sharing their experiences which were the basis for the production of the content by the project team. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings with one of the schools were suspended for several months, although with the other school, it was possible to continue in an online format. In this case, the establishment of a frequency of online meetings, with set dates and times, was important to create a routine and a commitment.

## Recomendations

“Regarding the sessions with teachers, these were organized to include a formative first part about each SDG, their targets, some results already achieved, clarification of some concepts and sharing of the learning objectives of UNESCO’s Education for Sustainable Development. The second part included some reflection questions for teachers, namely: Which topics can have a greater impact on students? What are the ideal behaviours related to the SDGs? What kind of questions can be asked to measure these behaviours?”

Due to the pandemic, some of the sessions held had to be adapted to an online format. We believe that virtual platforms can provide a great opportunity to involve teachers from different locations in sharing their experiences.



# Pilot experiences

*Click here to learn about the pilot experiences developed in the different countries*



Since training and teaching unaccompanied foreign minors is part of our mission, we involve them in the first pilot experience and we decided to exploit this moment as an opportunity to create something useful for them and for the new entries. We set the experience in Oikos school which is the place where we teach Italian language. With this project, the main competences which we wanted to work on with the class were: system thinking, normativity, critical thinking, collaboration skills. The idea was to build the Italian lessons around the subject of SDGs using the tools we developed in order not only to leave the message but also to improve the language level by simply using it.

The teacher we contacted was the Italian teacher of the internal school. The experience took place in the classroom of the community they live and study in. The SDG we choose to talk about was n.12 and in order to do that, we decided to make a video tutorial about recycling. This video would help to explain not only why we recycle but also how to do it, using a universal language: the audio-video language. In order to do so, we planned to follow the pathway A from the teacher's guide. After we introduced the topic and we met the SDG APP, we planned a few classes where we talked about the specific SDG, and then we worked on the call to action: as a team, we developed and shot the video. After that, we did the evaluation activity. The final output of the experience was in fact this video tutorial about recycling which we used in our community to explain the newest way we recycle.

### Lessons learned together

Cooperation is a key feature of the process: in order to create something great everyone must be involved and their ideas should be the starting point of the project; the brainstorming sessions were extremely useful in order to achieve the final result and to involve everyone in the process and during the call to action this level of engagement was taken to the next level: the students had to take responsibility for their idea and try to understand how could they work. That means they should exercise their problem solving and critical thinking skills if they want to achieve the result.

### Recomendations

Always start from the ideas that come from the class: motivation is important to let the learning process begin so a lot of effort must be put into listening and elaborating on new ideas. That's particularly true for the call of action. Work with reality tasks, start from what we know from our daily life and connect it with the bigger picture. That's already a great exercise. Take nothing for granted and let the students explore: that's the only way to find their limits and start working to overcome them.

The main objective of the pilot experiences was to test the platform and all the tools included in the educational proposal created during the project, i.e. the APP, the activities (with Call to Action), and the virtual community. The idea was that the educators would follow our educational proposal, but teachers were also invited to freely adapt the available tools and resources to their context and professional aims. Amycos followed a total of 12 pilot experiences that were carried out in 5 different VET centers located in both the urban and rural area of Burgos and in the city of Alicante. The objective was to see how pilot experiences would have been carried out in different contexts.

The first educator involved in the implementation of a pilot experience was Iria López López. She teaches Auxiliary Services in the Laboratory in the class 1º OBL of the VET center "IES.ENRIQUE FLÓREZ". Iria joined the work groups from the beginning. She decided to work on SDG 6 because it deals with a topic included in the course programme. Twelve sessions of about 1 hour each had been carried out in a little more than a month. The Call to Action implied: an analysis of water coming from different parts of the city, the design of posters and pamphlets used in a campaign for reducing water waste and contamination, and the conduction of several interviews in the educational center and in the streets. As a result, students could spread the knowledge acquired through awareness-raising activities both within and outside their VET center.

### Lessons learned together

Although Iria started carrying out the pilot experience in May and the available time for developing it was very limited, the activities generated a positive impact on students and the VET center. The fact that the teacher could integrate the activities for working SDG 6 in the curriculum because water was a topic that should be covered in class allowed her to deeply work on it with the students. The APP proved to be a useful and attractive tool to measure the sustainability of students' behavior and how it improved overtime, and the class enjoyed the possibility of taking an active role in the development of the Call to Action.

### Recomendations

Working on SDGs with students takes time. That's why it needs the recognition of the importance of knowing and contributing to the 2030 Agenda and commitment. A good way to solve this difficulty can be choosing an SDG that can be connected to some topics included in the curriculum. At the same time, students are more motivated to work on the SDGs if they are involved in the choice of the activities to develop. Particularly, they showed interest and enthusiasm in defining and carrying out the Call to Action. This part of the educational proposal is perhaps the most engaging because students can actually contribute to making a change with their actions.

The objective of this phase was to pilot the materials produced during the project: the platform and the app. This allowed us to test the materials in practice and to gather feedback. Odisee did 3 piloting events within the business administration department and agricultural studies. We chose to work with teachers who were already involved in our working groups because they had been involved in the previous stage of the project and had knowledge about sustainability. The teachers involved were highly motivated to work on sustainability in their classes.

Odisee did a pilot with the students of the first bachelor in Legislation on animal keeping and animal welfare. We worked together with a teacher in agricultural studies and her 110 first year students. The piloting was based on the activity of SDG8 'diving into a case'. But we allowed the student to choose the SDG they wanted to work on to develop their case. This was more motivating to the students and fits with the ESD-approach which is learner-centered. We needed around 8 hours to do the pilot and to guide students through the process. In addition, the students continued working on their projects outside the classroom. The students developed actions for the case on animal welfare. They also made a report on the work they did, reflecting on the positive and negative impact on the planet, people, prosperity and the relation with the SDGs. They also used the app to reflect on their personal behaviour related to the SDGs.

### Lessons learned together

Impact on students: Students learned to look at the wider context of the problems and to understand the impact on the planet, people, and prosperity. Students developed maturity and were very enthusiastic about the activity. There are big differences between students, some students struggle with the level of the activity and others flourish during this activity. Feeling of ownership and systems thinking influence in a positive way the maturity of students.

Impact on teacher: Coaching of first year students can have a big impact on the maturity of the students. The teacher also learned how to use tools for systems thinking and future thinking. Will be useful not only for teaching but also in other contexts such as policy advice. Everyone can have an impact on problems and on his/her living context. Everyone can contribute to the same goal, although everyone works in his/her own way. Nice to work together in Odisee with other colleagues on the same project. Nice to exchange knowledge and skills.

### Recomendations

The feedback from the teacher and students was positive. The learning activities made them more aware of the importance of sustainability and the SDGs. A recommendation: It could be useful to use the community as a space for students to show their work. This gives them an international platform to show their work and have a look at other students' activities. It also allows the teacher to see and possibly evaluate what students are doing.

The objectives of this pilot experience in Greece were essentially to test the Stairway to SDG tools with VET teachers and get their feedback for potential improvement. It also aims at better prepare the way the Mediterranean Centre of Environment could involved other Professional Schools and training organisations in the process.

The 1st Evening professional high-school of Tavros, Athens was one of the schools involved in the piloting test of Stairway to SDG in Greece. With the support of the Mediterranean Center of Environment, and after an introduction to the project and to the tools provided, a core team of teachers decided to work on SDG15 and selected one of the activities proposed. Five Departments of the School developed the same activity, with their group of learners in 5 different sectors: Electrical/Electronic Engineering Automatics; Mechanical engineering; Administration and Economics; Health, Care and Wellbeing; & Informatics.

Learners were asked to identify the categories of waste produced by their professional activity; to learn about their destination and the way they are managed ; and think about possible waste reduction at the source, in order to preserve our natural environment.

## Lessons learned together

The experience proved that vocational teachers and trainers can become 'Sustainability makers' and spread the messages carried by the 17 SDG. Sustainability asks for new skills that can be developed in any sector of activity. The participatory approach proposed by the project and its focus to commitment are particularly adapted to vocational training. "

## Recomendations

Understanding sustainability goes with understanding complexity. It is therefor important to well prepare the activities with the teachers, going from global issues, the 17 Sustainable development goals, to specific ones (in our case, waste management and the environment).

The Stairway to SDG platform provides teachers with a tool box which can be adapted to various curriculum, agenda and publics. Partners of the project can help them to draw a learning pathway, using the modular Stairway content.





# Santa Maria da Feira Rosto Solidario

To test the educational process, the activities and tools produced, were organized some pilot experiences. This activity sought to raise awareness and to show the importance of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, in particular SDG 5 on Gender Equality; to promote participation through a call to action on gender equality; and also to assess behaviors and attitudes on this topic through the APP.

“This pilot experience took place in the class of 10th year of the youth technician course in the Agrupamento de Escolas da Arrifana, in Santa Maria da Feira in discipline “Youth Participation and Action Projects” with the teachers Fátima Soares and Inês Carvalho. The development of this experience consisted of an initial meeting with the teachers responsible who had already made a diagnosis with the students on their themes of interest, so it was decided to address SDG 5. Three sessions on the SDGs were held by a technician of the project team and the Call to Action and Evaluation sessions were held by the teacher responsible for the discipline. The results obtained on the evaluation of the pilot experience revealed that most students evaluated it positively.

## Lessons learned together

“The collaboration between schools and local NGOs is recognised as an opportunity to enrich students’ learning and to contribute to the development of competences expected from the “Profile of students on leaving compulsory education”. However, the planning of the sessions coincided with a phase in which students had several projects and events at the same time, which also involved other digital tools. This made the students a little confused about the project. It was suggested by the teachers, that the project team could also have been in the selection of SDG with students, in the call to action and final evaluation sessions.

At the end of this process, we tried to get students to answer the APP again. However, students could no longer remember their login, which caused some distraction. In this case, login information should have been saved and recorded at the beginning for this process.”

## Recomendations

From our experience, we consider it important to involve students to choose the SDG to work on, in order to promote their participation, motivation and interest in the topic, so as to promote student-centred learning. In relation to the virtual community, in the beginning of the process we recommend to ask students in what way they think it will be an added value to this experience and how they would like to use it. In the case of sessions facilitated by people from outside the school, it is important that teachers contextualise the project before the sessions. It is also important to continue the work on the topic throughout the lessons to create a greater impact.



# Dissemination activities

The main objective was to present the mission of the project by introducing the platform and its tools to an audience of teachers from the schools we worked with, inside and outside the current project. We create two workgroups in order to stimulate not only the curiosity but also the creativity of the audience involved and to have a first feedback. Finally, with the multiplier event, we also wanted to talk to the students in order to present the app and the community to the audience that was the ultimate users.

The first two activities were two workgroups we hosted. We contact teachers we work with from a national professional school, the ENAIP, two high schools, Liceo Scientifico G. Marinelli and Copernico, and Istituto Percoto and we set a round table in order to present the platform and to collect ideas and suggestions on how to use it. Then the multiplier event in the ISIS "Brignoli-Einaudi-Marconi" - ISIS BEM, another V.E.T. school. We did an introduction where we presented the mission behind the SDGs and the specific objective of this project; then, we presented the platform and its tools and we let the audience explore their possibilities. The teacher who carried out the second pilot experience presented the results to her colleagues with a video. Several students were invited. At the end, there was an informal moment which was essential to have some feedback. Several teachers participated in the event and many of them were interested in understanding more about the whole project. Some of them asked if the project will develop again and if we will involve also non-European countries in the future.

### **Lessons learned together**

Different teachers work in different ways: once again, the comparison proved to be a source of inspiration; this event proved to be not only a moment to disseminate but also an opportunity to collect and share new ideas and good practices.

Good information sometimes is already progress: usually, a teacher is left alone when he/she is preparing a lesson or an activity; just knowing that there are such instruments available makes the difference because it provides good quality work and good quality education.

Informal moments are also important, because they allow everyone to speak freely.

Involve the students makes them feel even more engaged.

### **Recomendations**

Three things proved to be important in our dissemination activity:

-to talk about the mission of the project: to explain the idea behind the platform and the instruments helped the audience reflect on the topic and its relevance.

-to demonstrate the platform's possibilities: the teachers were very happy to know that such a powerful instrument was ready and available at their service.

-the most important of them all, the testimony of the teachers who conducted the pilot experiences: photos, videos, and a short description of the experiences had been more efficient than a million words.

Through the dissemination activities we intended to promote and give visibility to our educational proposal and tools on one hand, and on the other, foster the participation of different stakeholders (teachers, tutors, educators, school directors, and decision-makers) in the VET field in order to gather opinions, feedback, and advice about how to improve the outputs of the project and find new solutions to encourage sustainability in this sector, at all levels.

We organized several participatory and dynamic activities with educators and school directors of the VET centers to promote a reflection on the need to integrate the SDGs, and sustainability in general, in school programs. During our project we adopted a bottom-up approach trying to enhance sustainability not only in the curriculum, but also at the infrastructural and institutional level. In these events we thus invited educators to think about possible measures to contribute to more sustainable educational centers with the support of management. We also involved decision-makers at the local, regional and national level in our multiplier event to share with them our work. At the same time, they exposed what are the existing policies and educational strategies for making sustainability the basis, the guiding principle of the organizations.

### **Lessons learned together**

The educators involved generally showed interest in the topic. They recognized the importance of including topics related to sustainable development in formal education and realized the urgency to take action. At the same time, they detect the need for pushing sustainability in their center advancing several proposals that can promote a change. However, we could notice that there are also teachers who are not particularly sensitive to the matter or who have little time available to work on that. As for the decision-makers' participation, it was positive to see that some institutions in Spain are committed to the implementation and fostering of SDGs in the VET educational field and that the 2030 Agenda has become an increasingly central issue in education policy. However, it is necessary to involve them in order to keep them engaged with sustainability issues.

### **Recomendations**

It is necessary to plan events in which it is possible to reach all the stakeholders involved. Also, dissemination activities have to be participatory. These moments give the opportunity to share ideas and gather opinions on the tools and education proposal of the project and how to improve them. In particular, it is also necessary to push for the participation of school management, institutional representatives and decision-makers. Their involvement is crucial since their support and engagement are essential for pushing sustainability at all levels.



The objective of this phase was to disseminate the output of the project to teachers, students inside and outside Odisee and other types of organizations. Odisee did several dissemination activities throughout the project. We focused on teachers from other organizations and from different countries. We also disseminated to project to students and a policy maker.

We had a lot of informal conversations with teachers and heads of departments. For the dissemination we focused on universities and universities of applied sciences. We presented the SDG Stairway project wherever we could, e.g. during the SDG-week for higher education, organized by the Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. We also organized a dissemination event for around 50 Odisee teachers and students. In addition, we presented the project to a staff member of Ecocampus, the workgroup on sustainable higher education from the Flemish department of environment. We also reached a lot of people from local and international universities or universities of applied sciences by providing training and sessions during Odisee's international week in 2021 and 2022.

### Lessons learned together

ESD and SDG's are very important and relevant topics in vocational and higher education. Teachers need support, training and expertise to work with ESD in their classroom. Some advice to other VET centers: The sustainability competencies should be integrated in the curriculum. To achieve this, additional training would be needed for teachers, including attention to attitude formation. It is important that this is supported within the organization. It is also important to raise staff awareness and to appoint ambassadors for sustainability. It is also important to communicate sustainability initiatives to staff and students (bottom-up and top-down).

### Recommendations

Some of the recommendations from the dissemination and multiplier events, proposed by the teachers were: Build (international) partnerships to stimulate exchange of good practices, support student exchange to stimulate good ideas, build courses together, give continuous training to teachers about education for sustainable development, give teachers space to experiment





# Athens Mediterranean Center of Environment

The objective of the Mediterranean Center of Environment is to disseminate the approach and the tools proposed by Stairway to SDG in the Professional and Vocational training sector in Greece. By doing that, we hope to further contribute to the spread of sustainable competencies and encourage behaviour change toward sustainability, both on a professional and on a personal level.

Dissemination started from information on the project objectives and issues through the Mediterranean Center of Environment's media. The involvement of stakeholders in the Focus group and in the pilot testing phase contributed to better adapt our communication to our target groups. In December 2021, the MCE organised a workshop on training and education on sustainable development, and introduced the Stairway to SDG platform to 15 additional stakeholders from various sectors (social workers, academics, NGOs, tourism trainer, library, etc). Finally, in March 2022, together with the 1st Professional highschool of Tavros, the MCE gathered around 50 trainers during an multiplier event named "Promotion of the Sustainable development through professional training".

## Lessons learned together

Stairway to SDG encourages trainers to become 'Sustainable makers'. They are also the best ambassadors of our new training tools on SDG. It is important to better inform trainers & educators through their own networks and to communicate on the project through these networks, social media, blogs and e-press. Example through practice and demonstration is the most convincing way to disseminate good tools in more and more classes and schools, and a very efficient way to spread the message of Stairway to SDG.

## Recommendations

Public authorities in charge of education have now the duty to introduce Sustainable development in general and the SDG in particular to the educational curriculums. They are looking for new methods and pedagogical material to implement this new responsibility. Regional and national educational VET public bodies of our countries could benefit from Stairway to SDG and they should be contacted.





# Santa Maria da Feira Rosto Solidario

Dissemination activities were developed with the objectives to make known the process and the tools produced in the Stairway to SDG project; to assess whether participants would be interested in the tools and how they would be used; to understand the needs for content, tools and professional skills that participants identify as important to develop; and to reflect on how the theme of sustainability can be further integrated into the education sector.

“Throughout the project, an effort was made to make the project and the tools created known to teachers and educational technicians. These dissemination sessions were carried out essentially in an online format. One of the sessions took place on 23 February, was attended by 50 people with different profiles: municipal technicians, technicians from civil society and teachers from basic, secondary and higher education. Another online session was held on 16 March for 41 primary school students from ISEC Lisbon. On March 23 we held a multiplier event with the theme “Educating for Sustainable Development Goals” attended by 22 people and on March 26 we held a second multiplier event attended by 10 people. The multiplier events were held in person, in Santa Maria da Feira.

## Lessons learned together

Many teachers, municipal technicians and technicians from civil society organisations recognise that content and digital tools can be used and integrated into existing projects, facilitating pedagogical processes. Several participants in the activities mentioned that the resources and tools can be used by the students themselves, in a logic of active learning. Some teachers feel the need to reflect on how these contents and tools can be integrated into the curriculum of their subjects, as they are very extensive and find it difficult to manage time.

## Recomendations

Since the dissemination activities were carried out in an online format, this allowed reaching a wider audience, from various regions of the country. The inclusion of group work moments during the sessions is important to allow a sharing of existing practices and projects among the various participants. These sessions were fundamental to analyse the participants' perceptions on the quality of contents and tools and to promote the sustainability of the project.





# Proposals for improving the promotion of sustainability development in education

## The more you do, the more you know

When you think of promoting the agenda 2030 for sustainable development as a teacher, the first thing that comes to mind is the amount of information, data and literature you have to study and translate into knowledge to teach your students. But in reality, this is the wrong point of view: the only way to teach the agenda 2030 is to live it.

Most of the good feedback we received from the students who tried this experience was about the APP, which they found not only useful but also captivating, and the Call To Action, the moment of the experience where they worked together as a team to make their own change. The more you do the more you know because to do something efficient you have to know the facts, the needs, and the power you possess to plan and act wisely.

Another recommendation: sometimes the real challenge is not to answer a question or a need but to know which one is the right question or the right need to be heard. Some questions the students found on the app helped them to reflect on the consequences of their daily life routines that they never thought about before. Finding the answers to these new questions was a challenge they have had to undertake by rethinking their own set of values and convictions. This is the exact moment when you start to learn.

## Working in a network

To continue to promote sustainability and the 2030 Agenda in the education sector and especially in the VET field, one of the main suggestions we collected was to create innovative digital tools for working the SDGs that can attract and engage students, such as the APP that obtained very positive feedback.

Also, it has been pointed out that creating collaborations with other organizations and educational centers in the city allows having a bigger impact. Working in a network would also enable teachers and students to take action and make a change in their own community and it can be useful for facilitating the organization of the Call to Action that has been so appreciated by our 'Sustainability makers'.

## News skills and competences

Long-term training for educators and professionals of the VET field on sustainability should be provided in order to raise awareness and provide the proper skills to accompany students in a learning process that will lead them to adopt more sustainable personal and professional behaviors.

Sustainable development asks for new skills and competences which are transversals, such are holistic thinking, critical thinking, multidisciplinary approach and participatory approach, etc. These are competencies that can be developed in any sector of activities and that can help us develop a better world, more inclusive and more respectful of our environment.

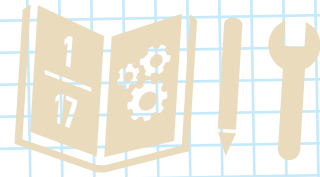
**VET trainers are ready to commit themselves in this way.  
They just need some support to go ahead with their learners:**

- being provided with clear methodology and easy to use training material
- being supported by the educational authorities in their effort
- being able to exchange practices with their peers





## SOME RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE YOUR VET CENTER MORE SUSTAINABLE



- Pay attention to sustainability on the campuses: attention to the use of sustainable materials and less consumption of raw materials, responsible purchasing, investing in a long-term vision for a sustainable campus, entering into partnerships with value-driven companies and organizations in order to achieve this. Look for support from the board so that sustainability initiatives are made concrete in the policy document.
- Provide staff with the means to behave in a more sustainable way. Make sustainable behavior easier: i.e. electric bikes for sustainable mobility, sustainable catering with local partners etc.
- Create a platform to share good practices: e.g. sustainable mobility, sustainable food, teaching practices with a focus on sustainability.
- Encourage employees to reflect on their own behavior and on the impact of their behavior on the institution as a sustainable/unsustainable system.
- Reward teams for sustainability efforts to create a dynamic of knowledge sharing and appreciation for sustainable actions.
- Set a good example at the organizational level and set ambitious sustainability goals, focusing not only on ecological but also on social impact.

### Recommendations from the participants

During the different activities of the project, some general recommendations emerged to continue to work on Agenda 2030.

From a teachers perspective, they recognize the need to have more training on the SDGs and related concepts. In particular, it will be important to train teachers on how to integrate these contents into the curriculum of the different subjects.

From a students perspective, it is recognised the need to place students as educational agents, in a co-learning process and to promote the development of a mindset necessary for change. Some suggestions at this level include defining central problems in which students have to use various tools and concepts through an integrated and transdisciplinary approach.

# OBJECTIVE

Promote the values of sustainability & increase global awareness to **CREATE SUSTAINABLE EVERYDAY PRACTICES**

# Stairway to **SDG**

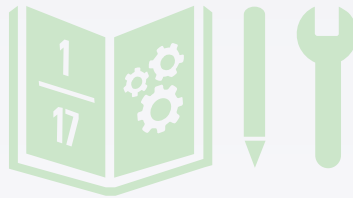


**ANCHORED IN THE 2030 AGENDA**



Co-funded by Erasmus+ of the European Union

MULTIDISCIPLINARY  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
**APPROACH**



to prepare & qualify our **SUSTAINABILITY MAKERS**



**6 COUNTRIES**

     
Belgium Greece Italy Poland

**+20 PILOT EXPERIMENTS**

Focus on teachers, educators & tutors

Shaping the world we need with the

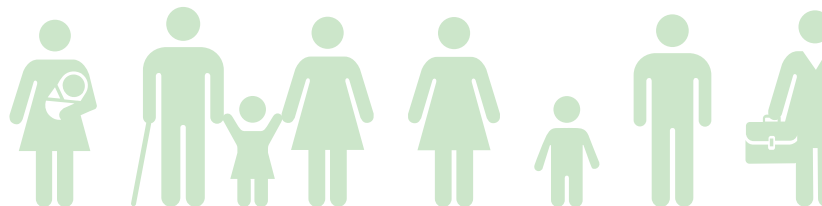


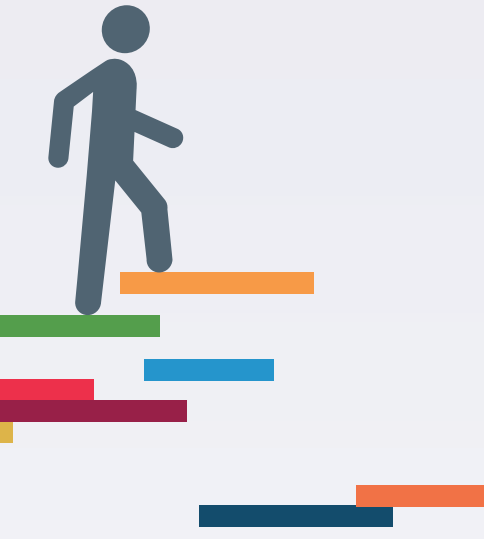
**EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**



**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING**

INVOLVED DURING THE WORKING LIFE





# Stair way to SDG TOOLS

1

## .Stair waytoSDG.eu

★ Online platform with useful educational work resources



★ +45 educational activities related to the SDGs



★ Proposals to develop different calls to action for students

by the Programme European Union

## 2 APP to measure attitudes & behaviours

regarding sustainable development and show **improvement** over time



### COUNTRIES



### EXPERIENCES



## 3 A vibrant ONLINE COMMUNITY

to share experiences & learning with educators from 5 countries

## EDUCATION

### WHOLE PROCESS



## 4 A practical GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

with an educational methodolog



5

## MANUAL OF GOOD PRACTICES

to inspire new experiences





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