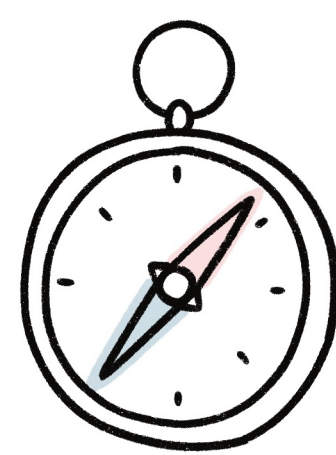
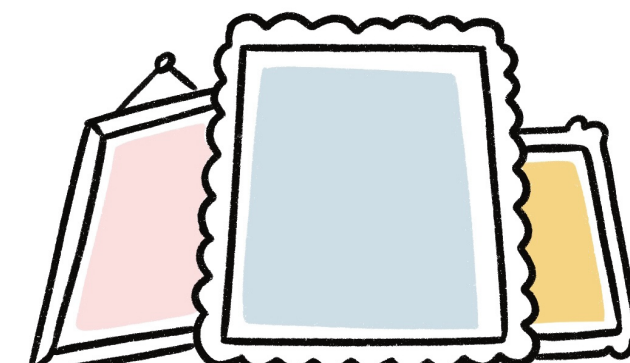


# RECOMMENDATIONS

## BASED ON THE ESDEUS PROJECT RESEARCH REPORTS



### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS



**ESD is not a universal concept – its meaning is always locally grounded.**

Educational practices take different forms depending on cultural, social, and historical context. In Poland, they are often acts of resistance and critical reflection; in Sweden, a component of integrated public policies; in Portugal, part of social inclusion strategies and local community activities; and in Italy as a process that supports conscious, responsible and participatory social action.

**Values are key to the development and legitimization of ESD.**

Justice, equality, solidarity, well-being, and care for the future are not just slogans but real principles that initiate and invigorate grassroots actions, as well as influence their quality and sustainability. Any attempts to implement ESD must be rooted in the values of local communities.

**Partnerships and cross-sector collaboration are a prerequisite for the effectiveness of ESD.**

Successful educational activities are those that integrate the resources and competencies of various environments: universities, NGOs, local administration, cultural institutions, and the residents/citizens themselves. ESD cannot be the domain of a single sector.

**Systemic frameworks are helpful but not sufficient.**

The SDGs and ESD strategies adopted by European and national institutions create a context, but they cannot replace the genuine engagement of local actors. In many cases, the most effective actions develop on the margins of official policies or in opposition to them.

**There is a need to recognize and support grassroots informal, incidental, and civic education.**

The reports repeatedly emphasize that education for sustainable development takes place not only in schools and universities but also in community gardens, cultural centers, galleries and museums, cooperatives, and neighborhood groups. These activities should be systematically supported and funded.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

#### FOR UNIVERSITIES

Develop and implement ESD strategies in a horizontal manner, integrating them with the university's mission, educational programs, and third mission activities;

Support and document cooperation with NGOs, local communities, and public institutions in ESD projects;

Promote education based on values, experience, and participation instead of solely knowledge transmission;

Involve academic teachers, researchers, students, and doctoral candidates in projects related to climate education, social justice, and social innovation.

#### FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Recognize and support grassroots ESD initiatives as part of the local sustainable development strategy;

Integrate ESD into urban policies, spatial planning, and participatory budgets;

Create collaboration forums with universities, schools, and NGOs for joint development of educational activities;

Promote and share examples of good practices within national and international networks.

#### FOR SOCIAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Continue activities related to civic, climate, and equality education, even if they are not formally recognized as "ESD";

Build coalitions with other entities to increase the impact and scale of actions;

Engage youth, older adults, migrants, and other groups underrepresented in ESD projects; strengthen intergenerational and inclusive learning;

Document and disseminate local practices (e.g., incidental learning) as models of alternative and transformative education.

#### FOR PUBLIC POLITICS AND EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

Provide financial support for ESD activities regardless of their institutional form (formal/informal/non-formal);

Promote the recognition of education as a lifelong process occurring in multiple spaces;

Take local practices and values into account when designing European educational and climate strategies;

Facilitate access to international networks and cooperation programs for small, grassroots neighborhood and civic initiatives.

- The report prepared within the ESDEUS project demonstrates that education for sustainable development is not merely a technical task of implementing the SDGs, but a process deeply rooted in values, social contexts, and relationships between people. It emerges as a space for resistance, dialogue, cooperation, and social imagination.
- Sustainable development, understood not as a set of goals but as a way of thinking and acting, requires a new language of education—a language of community, care, justice, and action for future generations. The analyses presented indicate that, regardless of the country, the most promising educational initiatives are those that arise from local needs, are conducted collaboratively, and are anchored in real cross-sectoral relationships.
- In this sense, education for sustainable development becomes not only a goal of educational policy but also a necessary condition for building a more resilient, aware, and just Europe.



based on: Ewa Kurantowicz, António Fragoso (Eds). 2025.  
Education for Sustainable Development in the European Local Communities.  
Wrocław: DSW University of Lower Silesia Press. ISBN: 978-83-65408-80-8

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