

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ADULT EDUCATION IN THREE SMALL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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The ideas on sustainable development became topical since the UN World Summit in Rio de Janeiro ten years ago. One of the key outcomes of the last Johannesburg UN World Summit in August – September 2002 was reaffirmation of the sustainable development as a central element of the international agenda. Special attention was been paid to the partnerships for sustainable development.

Since the August 2002 partners from three European countries (Latvia, The Netherlands, and Belgium) started a GRUNDTVIG 2 project “Sustainable Development and Modern Information Technologies in Adult Education (SDIT)”.

The main aims and objectives of the project SDIT are:

- Creating a framework for small-scale co-operation among the partners from Netherlands, Belgium, and Latvia ,
- Gathering and mutual exchange of information and experience about two aspects of adult education in the localities elected by the partners: **sustainable development** (environmental and social aspects) and **availability of modern information technologies** for the needs of adult learners,
- Joint development of proposals to improve the situation in particular by implementation of learning materials in the form of distance education packages, CD ROM and on-line learning,
- Analysis and implementation of the ways to foster co-operation between local authorities and adult education organisations,
- Dissemination of information among local people and organisations about the activities carried out in the framework of the project.

The Blackboard virtual learning environment is used as learning and communication platform.

During the fulfilment of the project two workshops has been held – kick-off meeting in Riga (Latvia) and very successful workshop at Mol (Belgium) New Media School.

Several interesting topics were discussed at Mol.

- Sustainable Development: testimony by a participant of the Johannesburg UN World Summit Ms. Nathalie Draulans, president of Youth Water parliament.
- Splash is a project for schoolchildren which by now has an all-European coverage (about 300 schools, participants are from 12 to 18 years old). In this framework The Youth Water Congresses are held from the year 1999 in France (with 80 participants), the 2nd Congress took place in the Hungary (with 150 participants), and 3rd will be held in Geel, Belgium (with 500

participants expected). More detailed information about Splash can be found on address www.greenbelgium.org/splash!

- Adult education report for Netherlands by Henk Kiesebrink.
- Adult education report for Latvia by A. Ruplis.
- General situation in education and in the adult education particularly in Belgium (Flanders) – report by W. Aerts. Report was based on the abundant material available at the EURIDICE and CEDEFOP sites (<http://www.euridyce.org> and <http://www.cedefop.gr>) where information about all Europe and specific countries can be found.

Several study visits were very useful as good examples of implementation of the ideas of sustainable development.

- Study visit to Netmobiel in Mol, a project of KHK.
- Presentation of the project Bridged in “social promotion”, formal adult education
- Study visit to KILTO at KHK Geel: presentation adult education in agriculture.
- Study visit to SPK, Strategic Planning Team Kempen, Turnhout. with the presentation of S.A.M., Regional Centre for Work & Environment and Cyberskills, co-operation with local authorities in adult training for unemployed people, visit: at the field workers of SAM in the woods.

Two main activities are planned for the year 2003 – in-service training and distance education course on sustainable development.