

PROJECT: ECONOMICS OF SUSTAINABILITY (EOS) 2019-1-PL01-KA203-065050

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Erasmus+ Key activities 2 - Cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices, activity Strategic partnerships.

EOS partner consortium consists of partners from Poland (Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach as project leader), Croatia (RRiF Visoka škola za financijski menadžment), Lithuania (Vilniaus Kolegija), Slovenia (Univerza v Mariboru), Italy (Universita Degli Study di Firenze) and The Republic of North Macedonia (Integrated Business Faculty PU)



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The project Economics of Sustainability (EOS) was designed to address core sustainability issues which have been playing an increasingly important part in today's business activity, individuals' lives and have immense potential in contributing to the future development of the world.

Its focus was on identifying areas where sustainability issues are critical, followed by suggesting solutions to be practically implemented.

The first stage of the project involved partners' contribution to the development of the joint curriculum for the subject "Economics of Sustainability". Research was carried out by partners to name the most important sustainability

challenges from the perspective of their regions and countries, including environmental and employment relations, marketing and sustainable production and consumption, tourism, and hospitality industry, sustainability of businesses, sustainable finance and management, cultural and social sustainability, etc.

The intellectual output of this stage was syllabus of a new subject "Economics of Sustainability" to be introduced into the curricula of tertiary education institutions participating in the project. The syllabus dealing with general issues of sustainable development also incorporated local, country specific and cross-cultural issues. Such global and local approach will stimulate young generations' openness to different cultures, tolerance, and responsiveness to different needs, thus strengthening social potential.

The next stage of the project was involving a course book written by researchers following their findings in the first phase of the project. It targeted primarily students of the partnering institutions as a support material for the new subject introduced into their curricula. It is a PDF downloadable open-access resource to be used by students and teachers of other institutions worldwide.

Thus, the intellectual outputs catered educational needs of the contemporary societies to tackle core environmental and social problems. The Partners of the project believe that in the process of educating students of economics current issues need to be approached both globally as well as locally, and to meet this objective cooperation between tertiary education institutions is indispensable.

The essence of sustainable development although clear, is hardly ever realised by individuals. Activities towards CSR or sustainability definitely improve the company image while they are not likely to be one of the criteria taken into account by individual consumers. This lack of individuals' awareness may result in their ignorance of such beneficial actions and simultaneously in no positive feedback or support given to them. The technology diffusion is the root of behavioural changes which, on the one hand, lead to new expectations of product and service providers, and on the other hand, empower consumers to such an extent so as they get involved in co-creating or even creating market offerings themselves. However, people often lack creativity and therefore it should be stimulated and encouraged.

Modern technology proliferation plays the most important role in driving transition to sustainable development by, for example, the emergence of new business models, such as sharing/access economy that reflect social needs resulting from changing demographics and other megatrends. The new developing system is based on re-using, re-cycling, and sharing, all activities leading to reduction of environmental impacts and thus contributing to values of CSR and sustainability. The project strengthened and supported such positive behavioural trends.

At the final stage, the project's results were disseminated by creating an open-access platform where ideas for utilising game-dynamics were entered to be used proactively by business leaders as well as consumers willing to combine fun with socially and environmentally desirable activities. The innovative idea of the platform consists in gathering both novel and tested solutions in one place thus enabling quick and easy access to a variety of ideas with potential to enhance sustainable choices. By utilizing game-dynamics, which have been proved effective in encouraging consumers to behave in a desired way, businesses can gain important benefits from marketing success, relationship building to CSR- related merits. The platform is useful for consumers with sustainability- conscious mindset to help them find eco- friendly solutions, associate them with relevant business and support socially important initiatives.