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Prof  ESus.eu  
discovering a sustainable mindset  
for a future-oriented lifestyle

# ProfESus Newsletter

## JANUARY 2019



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## EDITORIAL

### Dear interested Reader,

Do you think that Education could change our world?

Based on the **“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”** the ProfESus Team has worked since October 2016 to produce a blended-learning course to train teachers and educators how to educate learners and professionals to improve ecological, economic and social sustainability in home economics fields. 143 participants from 23 countries all over the world visited our European Education Conference and closing event of the ProfESus project with the title “Education 4.0 – Promoting sustainable development through innovative teaching” and discussed what Future Education should look like.

I want to say thank you to the whole ProfESus-Team for everyone’s commitment, the inspiring discussions and the great support, to reach our project aims successfully. Also to the European Commission and the Programme Erasmus+, with the cooperative team in different European countries we want to say thank you for financial and consulting support.

With this last ProfESus-Newsletter we will give you the possibility to get an insight in our International Education Conference and we want to surprise you with our great ProfESus outcomes which are available as open source materials and free to use for everyone. We hope our project results will inspire you.

Thank you for your interest!

Johanna Michenthaler  
Project Chair



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IFHE  
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
FOR HOME ECONOMICS



Latvijas  
Lauksaimniecības  
universitāte



# The future belongs to the disruptive thinkers

## Successful education conference on “Education 4.0 – Promoting sustainable development through innovative teaching”

Rector Dr. Thomas Haase was pleased to welcome 143 international experts in vocational and teacher education from 23 different countries to the University of Agricultural and Environmental Education in Vienna.

He introduced the topic of the conference with a quote from Nelson Mandela “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” and emphasized the importance of education for sustainability to shape our lives in such a way that survival is also possible in the future.



**Find all conference materials and speeches on**

<https://www.profesus.eu/about-us/multiplier-events/international-education-conference-2018-1/>

## Learning and demanding political action

Prof. Dr. Kai Niebert, researcher and Professor of Didactics of Natural Sciences and Sustainability, University of Zurich, impressed the participants with an excellent presentation under the heading “Education in the Anthropocene – Climate Change cannot be Negotiated – a Plea for a Green New Deal” regarding the urgency of the need for action at the political level to save nature and the environment. From his point of view, appropriate legal framework conditions are necessary to reduce environmental pollution in the oceans and the air as far as possible. He therefore sees a close connection between education for sustainability and education for political action.

### His recommendations for teachers:

- Strengthen the political perspectives of students  
The key question related to political action should be, what does it mean for me, my work, my life?
- Build on the experiences of the students
- Education should focus on forgetting/unlearning unsustainable behavior



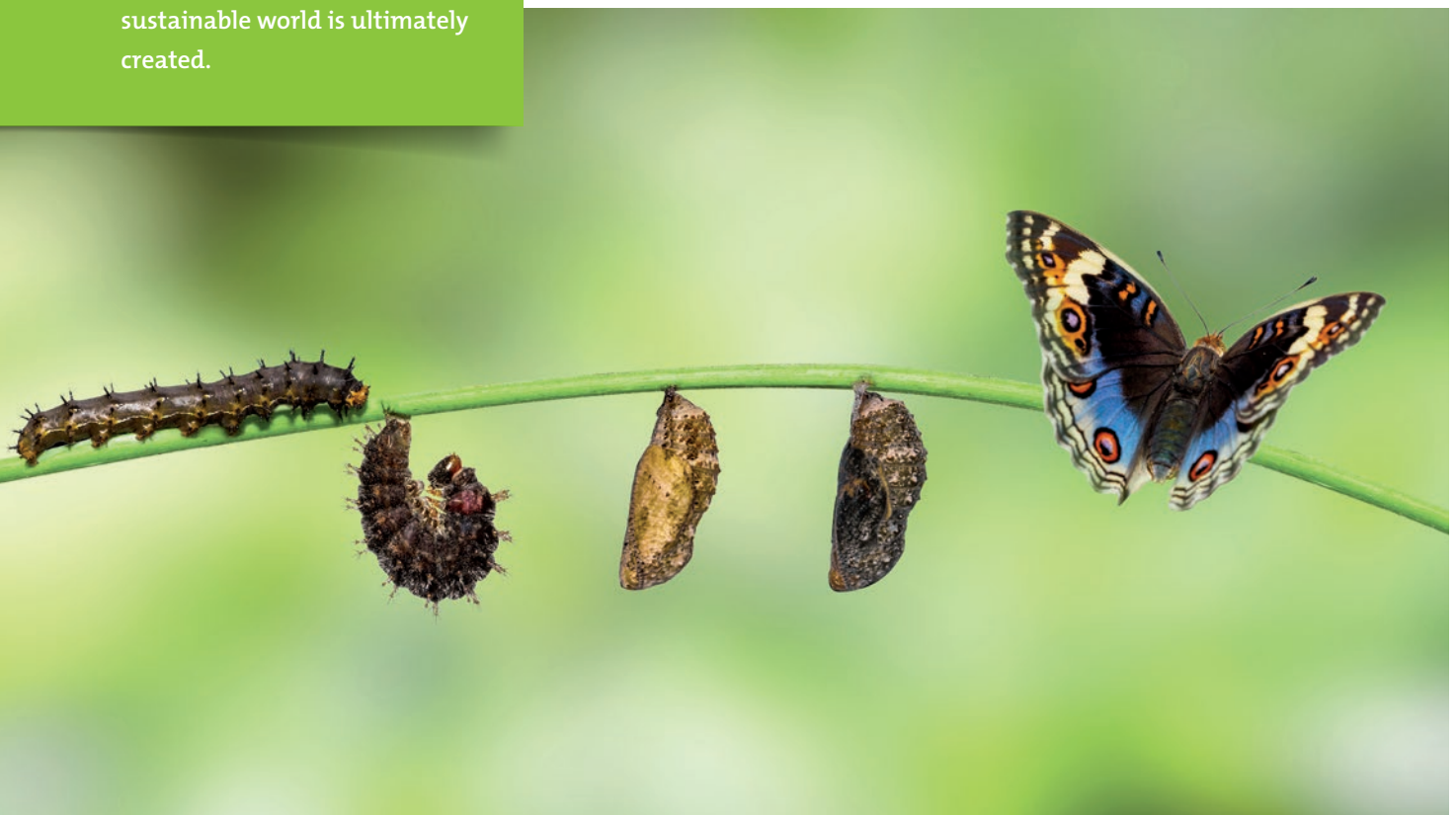
## Question everything

Prof. David Selby, founding director of Sustainability Frontiers and Professor at Dublin City University, Ireland, explained a whole new dimension of education for sustainability in his very interesting lecture “Transformative and Transnational Learning for a World in Transition – New Challenges in Education for Sustainable Development.” Prof. Selby referred to Matthew Harminet (Matthew Harminet al. 2017), stated Transformative Sustainability Learning:

- Calls for epistemological stretching, i.e. learning that, alongside the scientific, draws on vernacular, indigenized, non-rational – oral, emotional, intuitive, spiritual, and embodied – and other ways of knowing that have been marginalized
- Extends to listening to the voice of nature and other-than-human sentient beings as sources of knowledge, inspiration and revelation.

Based on his findings related the different scientific descriptions of transformative teaching/learning, Prof. Selby introduced his new concept **for Transformative and Transnational Learning for a World in Transition.** →

**Following the development process of a butterfly**, he sees the process “Metamorphic Learning Sustainability” as an opportunity to make a major contribution to sustainable development through education for sustainability. First, participants in the learning process should question their actions and processes and then flip systems and processes upside down, in order to develop new sustainable forms, strategies and processes, so that a more sustainable world is ultimately created.



**Prof. Johanna Michenthaler**, lecturer at the University of Agricultural and Environmental Education, presented the elements of a European project ProfESus under the topic Future-oriented specialists develop a mindset for sustainability.

**Download all free course materials and the Moodle course here:**

<https://www.profesus.eu/course/introduction-of-the-course/>

## ProfESus – Developing a sustainable mindset

In her very engaged presentation, Prof. Johanna Michenthaler convinced the participants of the innovative approach to integrate the desired competencies for sustainability at all levels and processes of vocational training. The ProfESus concept provides teachers with valuable support in implementing innovative educational approaches in education and training. Based on the pedagogical approach of constructivism, the ProfESus concept uses activating learning methods, the learning tools of PERL, UNECE Competences for Sustainable Action and the concept of Green Pedagogy of the University for Agricultural and Environmental Education.

In the second part of her lecture, **structure of the international ProfESus course and evaluation of the pilot run**, the participants got to know the design of the innovative blended-learning educational offer for teachers in education.

ProfESus Blended Learning Course (8 ECTS/ECVETS) – Structure

**Fig. 1: Discovering a sustainable mindset for future thinking professionals in household and guest oriented businesses**





# Find the right use of technology in the classroom to help your students progress!

## Learning to shape the future

Download all free course materials and the Moodle course here:

<https://www.profesus.eu/course/introduction-of-the-course/>

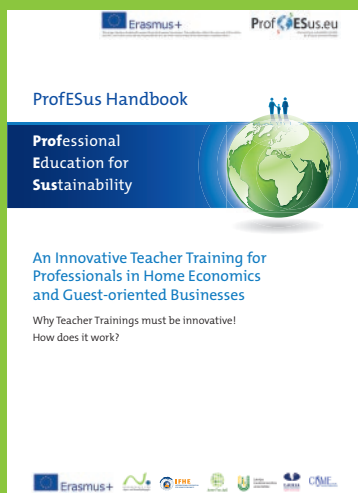
Professor **Wilhelm Linder**, lecturer at the University College for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogics gave a talk under the title **Learning to Arrange the Future – the Didactical Concept of Green Pedagogy and its Implementation in Vocational Education**. He comprehensively described the educational and methodical approach of the concept and used examples to illustrate the proceedings and successes of Green Pedagogy in agrarian and environmental education.

## The future belongs to disruptive thinkers Education 4.0 – Dynamics of Digital Learning in the Future

**Alexander Pinker**, medialist, innovation and marketing consultant, technology enthusiast and new media specialist, held this inspiring presentation, which took the participants on an exciting and informative journey into the future of the digital working world. Alexander Pinker was able to present the incredible development speed of digitalization in processes and systems as well their social changes in a realistic approach. In this way, the participants were able to realistically classify their idea of the unstoppable progress of digitalization and recognize the need for action in their field of work.

# ProfESus Handbook

## A valuable source for teachers in professional training



**Find the full ProfESus Handbook and summaries in 6 national languages here:**

<https://www.profesus.eu/resources/downloads-and-links/>

Since the start of the UN decade “Education for Sustainable Development” a lot of research has been conducted on this topic and many articles, books, presentations and videos have been published around the world. With a view to the urgent need for transformation of societies and new strategies for sustainable development in all economic, social and ecological areas, the topic “Education for sustainable development” is still one important key, in addition to political action, to support transformation processes globally.

The currently recognised pedagogies and recommended methods for successful education for sustainability should be implemented and used, especially in professional education for sustainability.

**The ProfESus Handbook** “Professional Education for Sustainability, Why Teacher Trainings must be innovative! How does it work?” summarises the most important background information, valuable competencies, methods and tools which support successful lesson planning and assessment in education for sustainability in professional trainings.

### Chapter 1

Related key themes for the ProfESus Course, current UNESCO approaches regarding education, Education for Sustainable Development, ESD and the role of Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production, ESC from the perspective of the United Nations Development Programme.

### Chapter 2

Introduces relevant educational theories and methods for ESD and ESC, which lead to the ProfESus Concept for teacher training. The key aspects are

- the pedagogical theory “**Constructivism**”, Vygotsky’s theory promotes learning contexts in which students play an active role in learning. Roles of the teacher and student are therefore shifted, as a teacher should collaborate with his or her students in order to help facilitate meaning construction in students. Learning therefore becomes a reciprocal experience for the students and teacher.





- the PERL (Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living) approach, which aims to educate individuals to recognise the influence they can have as stakeholders, citizens and fellow human beings; and to assist individuals in putting their principles into action through making more reflected responsible lifestyle choices and
- Geen Pedagogy – Concept for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogy, the readiness and ability “to learn one’s whole life, acquire new competencies, also to reconsider and revise convictions” (Achtenhagen and Lempert, 2000, p. 7)

must be developed. In the context of “sustainable” education, this fostering of the reflective dimension aims to help the application or supplementation of knowledge learned and the questioning of subjective patterns of interpretation and emotion (according to Arnold, 2007) from multiple perspectives.

Finally, chapter 2 includes methods and approaches which support learning as an active, constructive process such as situated learning and other innovative forms of teaching

### Chapter 3

Development of the ProfESus Concept: Pathway to Discover a Sustainable Mindset. Based on the above-mentioned findings, the ProfESus approach was directed to answering the following question for designing the ProfESus Course: how should teachers with UNECE competencies integrate the principles of the innovative pedagogical concepts with active learning methods and tools, the dimensions of education for sustainable development and the professional competences in a learning process?

The answers led to the development of

- The ProfESus Pathway – to Discovering a Sustainable Mindset,
- The ProfESus Learning-Activity-Plan (LAP) and
- The ProfESus Assessment of a Sustainable Mindset.



# You're More Powerful Than You Think

Eric Liu

## Chapter 4

A collection of “Learning Activity Plans for Sustainable Development”, which were conducted during the pilot run are presented in chapter 4. More can be found on the ProfESus website.

## Chapter 5

### Quality in the ProfESus course

Ensuring quality in the ProfESus course involved tools to find out if the learning outcomes had been met but also to evaluate its unique features which is its combining of the sustainability competencies described by UNECE, with the professional competencies in the home economics field. In addition to testing knowledge and skills, the main task was to discover whether mindset had changed in the direction of more sustainable professional behaviour. We favoured international and European standards and in using a range of tools, also aimed to triangulate the results rather than just relying on one main tool.

An external ProfESus **Quality Board** composed of acknowledged experts in education for sustainable development from different countries supported the ProfESus team at different phases of the project.

[The ProfESus Handbook can be downloaded from the ProfESus website.](#)



# How are ProfESus graduates using the course?

Six months after the pilot ProfESus course ended we contacted the graduates and asked them if they had made any changes in their work as a result of taking the course. Here is a selection of their responses.



## International

The international dimension was appreciated:

“I said that the course was helpful, because it opened my mind and showed, by giving that international perspective, how different people with different professional and cultural backgrounds view the topic sustainability.”

Some ProfESus graduates are not in a professional environment that is welcoming of the message, but despite this, our graduates find ways of putting what they learned into practice anyway:

“Professionally not much because of prevailing unsupportive environment and lack of management commitment. But personally, in my lesson plan or lecture I tell my students about sustainability concepts”

And on a personal level too:

“I exposed myself to several opportunities and techniques for better professional performance, embedded sustainability mindset, provided confidence in and support to my sustainability-oriented values and policies.”

The course itself is fondly remembered:

“The visits in Vienna were really exciting and inspirational; UN, the green hotel and the food distribution. I have talked a lot about them to colleagues and would love to start a mushroom business!”

“We learnt a lot”

“Since I have been involved with education for sustainability more informally this was a great way to be able to see overall and plan sessions with specific objectives”

And for some, the gains were greater than expected!

“I think I got a job due to the fact that I took part in this course.”





## Projects

A number of local projects have happened initiated by the ProfESus graduates:

“Right now it looks like that I am going to get the opportunity of leading a seminar about sustainability for my colleagues – which will start to happen in 2019.”

“Yes, our college organized a sustainable conference and I was asked to prepare presentation how sustainability was connected with nutrition and dietetics.”

“Direct result would be 2 workshops in local schools to which I was invited to conduct the lesson plan that I have created as a part of this project. – Initially I was conducting the workshop in youth center and school heard about it and contacted me”

“Working in the field of Global citizen education at the pedagogical University now. Constructing new lessons on sustainability in the context of SDG goal 4.7, target group primary, secondary and adult education. Trying to implement the didactics of green pedagogy there partially.”

“At school there is a sustainability group that has started. There are so many ideas in this small group from all sectors within the school.”

Several of the projects reached beyond the classroom:

“Assessed my college students and staff motivation and readiness for adopting pro-sustainability changes in teaching, learning and lifestyle through surveys.”

“Almost all of the staff and students consented to adopt pro-sustainability changes in teaching, learning and lifestyle”

“All the departments are enhancing the visibility of pro-sustainability components in their course-projects and didactic teaching e.g. arranged a ‘re-love gala’ that collected and sold used items; arranging recycling activity to clarifying the concepts of management”

“Arranged a conference on sustainability”

“Many departments have added new projects focusing on reuse and/or recycling of materials.”

“The student body as a whole has become cognizant of sustainability concepts e.g one student asked me ‘Mam as we want to promote sustainable life style can I wear my hoodie that is a bit darker in shade, instead of buying a new uniform colored cardigan? :)’ and of course I said yes!”

Thank you to the graduates of the ProfESus course who agreed to complete the survey that revealed these responses.



### In the classroom

There are examples of direct effects in the classroom:

“I teach Advanced Textiles at my Institute. In this course during practical work the students have to buy material to produce a project on Home Textiles, like a table runner, cushions, bags, wall hangings. This term I made the girls do this project with recycled material collected at the tailoring shop, or leftover pieces at home. The projects which the students made were very amazing. They made cushions and bags out of old neckties, cushions made of old pairs of jeans etc.”

# You should take a look!

## Relaunch ProfESus website

**The relaunched ProfESus website makes it easy to find the information about the ProfESus Project, its aims, the concept and the findings.**

The link to all ProfESus materials, on the Moodle platform and to all outputs including the directory to interesting sources.

[www.profesus.eu](http://www.profesus.eu)

All materials will be available latest by the end of March 2019

It includes the presentations of the keynote speakers, the Project newsletters with information about the steps and milestones of the project and the ProfESus video in different languages. Also the presentation of many sources related to education for sustainable development and education for sustainable consumption and the elements of the ProfESus project you will find on the ProfESus webpage.

**In keeping with Nelson Mandela's quote "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world" the ProfESus team invites all teachers and educators to take action through education for sustainability as the most powerful weapon to save our world.**

## IMPRINT

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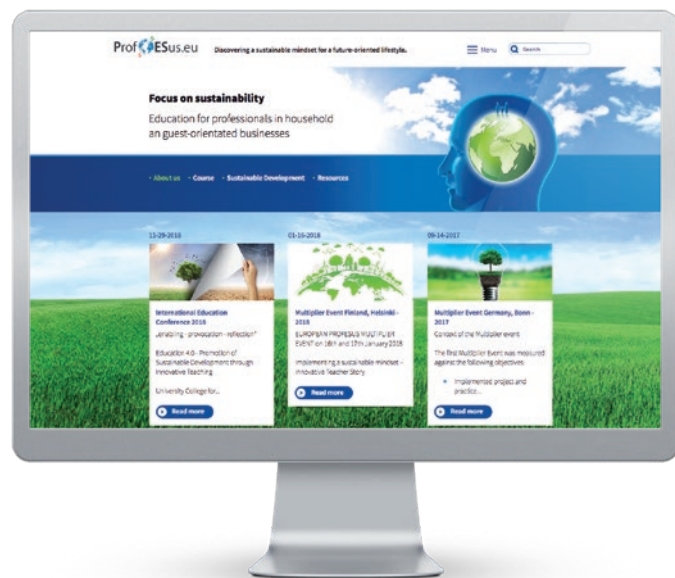
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