

Integrating Green Skills in Humanities and Social Sciences: A Critical Dimension of the Ecological Transition

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Abstract

An interdisciplinary educational response beyond conventionally eco-focused fields is required due to the urgency of tackling climate change, environmental degradation, and resource shortages. The humanities and social sciences (HSS) are still underutilised in promoting ecological transformation despite technological disciplines having long incorporated green competencies. Based on the Erasmus+ KA220-HED project HEI GreenPath: Shaping HEI Environment for a Sustainable Tomorrow, this abstract explores the critical role that green skills play in HSS. The project emphasises the development and institutionalisation of green skills—the knowledge, values, and attitudes supporting sustainable living—within non-technical higher education curricula.

Environmental challenges, including pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change, go beyond STEM disciplines and require comprehensive social involvement. Green skills are frequently linked to technology proficiency, but they also include critical thinking, ethical engagement, civic engagement, and social norm-shaping talents fundamental to HSS fields. Graduates in these disciplines significantly impact governance structures, environmental information dissemination, and group behaviour. In order to prepare future professionals to effectively bridge the gap between science, policy, and public involvement, green skills must be incorporated into HSS curricula.

Humanities disciplines—including philosophy, history, literature, and cultural studies—offer fundamental viewpoints for analysing the ethical aspects of sustainability and the relationships between humans and nature. Students can question unsustainable narratives and help create new ecological imaginaries when green skills are incorporated into these

subjects. A values-based educational strategy that links individual accountability with group change is made possible by this intellectual realignment.

The social sciences, including economics, political science, and sociology, also provide analytical tools for comprehending the socio-institutional aspects of environmental crises. By embedding green competencies into these programs, universities can prepare a generation of policymakers, administrators, and communicators capable of designing inclusive and effective climate strategies.

The social sciences and humanities are fundamental to the ecological transition, necessitating their active incorporation into green education agenda.

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