

From Projects to Permanent Practice: Sustaining Microplastics Education through the Micro(μ)School Model

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Abstract

The Faculty of Environmental Protection has implemented four Erasmus+ KA2 projects – MicPlaPROB, EDU4PlastiCircular, GreenGate, and GreenGate2 – that collectively demonstrate how targeted educational initiatives can evolve into long-term institutional practice. Originally designed to raise awareness of microplastics, plastic pollution, and harmful chemicals in our daily lives, these projects have generated measurable societal impact by engaging more than 1,000 youth and adults through more than 20 online courses, hands-on workshops, digital tools, and community events. The activities fostered curiosity, critical thinking, and sustained engagement among diverse learner groups, while strengthening green and digital competences across educational levels.

A key sustainability achievement is the integration of project results into the faculty's strategic development through the creation of the Micro(μ)School – an interdisciplinary educational model that embeds microplastics and responsible consumption topics into ongoing teaching, outreach, and institutional practice. This model ensures continuity beyond funding cycles by systematizing workshops on textiles, cosmetics, and plastic pollution, while maintaining digital resources such as e-learning platforms, mobile apps, and methodological handbooks. The Micro(μ)School further strengthens policy alignment by operationalizing EU priorities outlined in the European Green Deal and the Council Recommendation on Learning for the Green Transition.

Through strong community engagement, media visibility, and collaboration across all three educational levels and youth organizations, the faculty has transformed Erasmus+ project outcomes into a sustainable educational ecosystem. This experience illustrates how

project outcomes can be embedded to ensure lasting societal impact and continuous environmental education – guided by the slogan “We protect the environment with knowledge”.

Keywords: Microplastics, Environmental Education, Sustainability, Green Skills, Youth Engagement, Erasmus+ Projects