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## OPEN CALL FOR A THEMATIC ISSUE

### **The importance of education for sustainable development**

The special edition aims to address a contemporary educational issue and stimulate much needed conversation about Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Providing space for dialogue and intellectual exchange on this particular topic is not only significant but also timely. The importance of ESD intensified with the current global crisis, which goes beyond health concerns. In fact, COVID-19 exposed variety of vulnerabilities in education systems around the globe and showed that short-term plans are futile and only long-term vision can lead to sustainable future we wish to create. In addition, the pandemic presented us with a valuable lesson that change is possible and that we can disrupt business-as-usual approach to protect our wellbeing. In short, status quo was challenged and we have been offered an opportunity to recognize the urgency to engage in sustainable development (SD) practices and projects.

The United Nations (1987) define SD as "...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." As indicated by da Silva Junior et al. (2018) the sustainability is a principle, while SD has to do with a social process involving choices and decisions towards sustainability. In other words, commitment to on-going SD is required in order to achieve and maintain sustainability in various social areas, including education. It is worth noting that sustainability is a reflection of social justice thus ESD provides awareness and reflection about human rights, social equity, protection of environment and sustainable practices.

Our current complex world calls for the expansion of knowledge about SD and change towards more sustainable actions. With fast changing 21st century, often human-caused to human life and the planet, there is a growing urgency to reflect on learning to be promoted for the benefit of sustainable societies. As reported by UNESCO (Humanistic futures of learning. Perspectives from UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks, 2020), dimensions of current world create new dynamics in which society has to function. The expansion of human knowledge along with goals to enhance quality of life and SD are dominant forces in society that drive quest for change. Times are changing and education sector needs to progress with the changing dynamics of the world and ensure nurturing of individuals and professionals who possess knowledge and skills to cope with increasingly complex cross-national and cross-disciplinary issues.

As evident in scholarly literature, it is imperative to transform learning systems and knowledge generation to support sustainable future. To that end, there is an urgency to reflect and re-evaluate vision and mission of ESD. In alignment with the aim of the journal, this is a current problem in the field of education, which should be discussed from various perspectives. This special issue offers an opportunity to open a discourse about the complexities of ESD and strategies for the way forward.

As accurately stated by Marshall McLuhan (2002): “There are no passengers on spaceship Earth. We are all crew.” Therefore, each of us is responsible for decisions and actions we take with sustainability in mind. ESD has the potential to show us the roadmap to betterment and how to build better in the post-pandemic area. We believe that the proposed theme would be a great follow-up and an extension of the journal’s recent issue related to education during the pandemic.

**Article submission timeline:**

15 July 2021: abstract submission (150-250 words)

15 October 2021: paper submission (4000-6000 words)

March 2022: publication of the issue

Notes for authors can be found at the journal website: <https://www.sodobna-pedagogika.net/en/for-authors/information/>;

Editors of thematic issue: Prof Ewelina K Niemczyk & Prof Klara Skubic Ermenc