Didactic Forum 2026: Redefining Higher Education – Transitioning from Traditional Models to Future Best Practices

4 May 2026 | 15:00 – 18:00 | Room 306, Building A, ul. Bogucicka 3

Programme

15:00-15:15	**Opening of the Didactic Forum 2026** Regina Schalinski, MEd | Studio C
15:15-16:00	**Beyond One-Size-Fits-All:** **INCLUSIVE TEACHING METHODS** Rafał Rydzewski, MA, Researcher & Educator University of Economics in Katowice
16:00-16:45	**The Learn4Green project** Professor Susana Paixão, PhD Health School of the Polytechnic University of Coimbra
	Coffee Break
17:00-17:45	**Why Project-Based Learning?** **Authentic Learning in a Simulated Business Environment.** Beata Malik-Kozłowska, MBA, MA University of Economics in Katowice
17:45-18:00	**Summary & Closing** Regina Schalinski, MED | Studio C

Abstracts

Presentation 1

Beyond One-Size-Fits-All: INCLUSIVE TEACHING METHODS
Rafał Rydzewski, MA, Researcher & Educator | University of Economics in Katowice

Inclusive teaching is often misunderstood as simply treating every student the same. In reality, true inclusion - **equity-based education** - requires a proactive shift from equality to equity. This session explores the "not-so-obvious" methods of fostering a learning environment where every student has a genuine chance to thrive, regardless of their personal circumstances. The session will provide **examples of ready-to-go practical methods and tools** designed to dismantle barriers and ensure fair participation for all. By intentionally creating these conditions, we move beyond treating students equally to providing a genuine chance for every student to succeed.

Presented material was developed as part of the project **REACCT - Reflecting Economics And Climate Change in Teaching**, funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

Presentation 2

The Learn4Green project

Professor Susana Paixão, PhD | Health School of the Polytechnic University of Coimbra

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The Learn4Green (L4G) project is a European Erasmus+ Key Action 2 (KA2) Strategic Partnership, co-funded by the European Union, aimed at fostering innovation and exchange of good practices in higher education. The project brings together four higher education institutions: Haute École Bruxelles-Brabant (HE2B-ISIB, Belgium – project coordinator), Tartu Applied Health Sciences University (Estonia), Polytechnic University of Coimbra (IPC-ESTeSC, Portugal), and Velika Gorica University of Applied Sciences (Croatia).

These institutions collaborated to design a five ECTS international, multidisciplinary online course focused on environment, sustainability, and health. The course integrates online and face-to-face teaching, practical workshops, soft skills training, and international teamwork.

The three years centered around two thematic work packages: WP2 on the energy crisis, WP3 on environmental analysis methods and WP4 on Green smart factories. WP2 covered topics such as types of energy production, environmental impacts, and sustainability challenges. WP3 focused on technical and legislative approaches to monitoring air, water, soil, and noise pollution. WP4 focused on application of sustainability practices, for factories and companies. Each year included an online learning week, and a mobility week hosted by a partner university (Tartu in 2024, Coimbra in 2025 and Belgium 2026).

Courses were co-developed by teaching staff from all institutions, ensuring academic diversity and relevance. English and communication sessions supported technical vocabulary development and intercultural competencies. The Moodle platform served as a digital hub for materials, assignments, quizzes, and survey results.

Participation exceeded expectations, with 45 students joining in 2023, 71 in 2024 and 41 in 2025. Face-to-face activities remained capped at 40 students due to budget constraints. Budget flexibility allowed mobility for more students when partner institutions had fewer participants.

Project coordination and quality assurance included frequent management meetings, pedagogic planning, and satisfaction surveys. SWOT analyses and regular feedback led to continuous improvement, including the introduction of smaller debate groups and supplementary resources.

One logistical challenge was coordinating academic calendars across the four countries. Additionally, changes in teaching staff required substitutions, which were managed promptly by experienced faculty. To enhance the asynchronous experience, the consortium is developing audio-enhanced e-learning materials.

The project has gained visibility through presentations at academic events and conferences, such as "Crisis Management Days" in Zagreb, and through institutional dissemination channels. Internal communication has been consistent via Moodle and a shared Google Drive. The final

e-learning module and a methodological guideline book will be publicly disseminated upon project completion.

Impact assessments show strong positive outcomes: students improved in English, critical thinking, and awareness of environmental issues; academic and administrative staff gained pedagogical and intercultural skills. The project also fostered Erasmus+ internships and future collaboration among institutions.

The project will be completed in June 2026, in Croatia, with the organization of an international event on the topics covered. Overall, L4G demonstrates a successful international cooperation effort that fosters sustainability education, digital transformation, and pedagogical innovation in higher education.

Presentation 3

Why Project-Based Learning?
Authentic Learning in a Simulated Business Environment.
Beata Malik-Kozłowska, MBA, MA | University of Economics in Katowice

Why do students voluntarily choose demanding Project-Based Learning courses instead of more traditional classes? This presentation explores that question through the example of a course built around a simulated business environment called the "Class Market." In this setting, students work in international teams to design and develop startup ideas, recruit collaborators, and attract customers among their peers. Throughout the semester, student teams gradually develop their business concepts by engaging in a process of iterative business decision-making, informed by customer interviews, market feedback, peer discussions, as well as instructor feedback and ongoing reflection. The course prioritizes communication and facilitates collaboration, critical thinking, and public speaking. Transparency and accountability are supported through systematic project documentation in a shared digital workspace, providing students with opportunities to strengthen their digital literacy. Assessment is designed to emphasize learning and progress. A Contribution Factor based on anonymous peer evaluations is included in the final assessment to recognize individual contribution and to increase responsibility within teams. The presentation discusses how the PBL approach fosters communication skills, entrepreneurial thinking, teamwork, and reflective learning.