

Environmental Literacy of ISCED 2 Pupils in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Germany

Mgr. Ing. Silvie Svobodová

ABSTRACT

The concept of environmental literacy is based primarily on the principles of environmental education. It is a measure of environmental knowledge, attitudes, sensitivity and environmentally responsible behavior. It represents a relatively broad multidimensional construct, which can be summarized into three main dimensions (cognitive, affective and conative). This dissertation is focused on the environmental literacy of ISCED 2 pupils in the Czech Republic and selected Central European countries. The main contribution of the work lies in the construction and verification of a sophisticated authorial analytical tool for comprehensive testing of environmental literacy and its application in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Austria and Germany. The tool is based on a range of tools established and published abroad, the applicability of which in the Czech environment has been verified, namely the Middle School Environmental Literacy Survey and 2 Major Environmental Values. The research analyzed the relationship between the dimensions of environmental literacy and the identified significant determinants that can fundamentally predict the level of environmental literacy, in the context of education and with demographic variables. The connection between environmental literacy and school profiling, gender, age, year and leisure time of the respondents was determined. In the Czech Republic, more than two thousand respondents took part in the study, in Slovakia almost a thousand, in Poland over three hundred, and in Germany and Austria there were small research samples. With a few exceptions, the results were the same in all countries. In line with a number of studies, a moderately strong positive relationship between environmental attitudes, sensitivity and environmentally responsible behaviour was demonstrated, in contrast to a negligible relationship with knowledge. Analyzes showed that environmental literacy is significantly determined by gender, age and leisure activities, especially outdoor activities. In general, girls achieved higher values, and knowledge increased with each school grade whereas attitudes and responsible environmental behavior decreased. Higher levels of environmental literacy were seen mainly among pupils who spend their free time outdoors.