

Sustainable Development at the Upper Secondary Technical School (htl) Donaustadt, Vienna, Austria (www.htl-donaustadt.at)

Sustainable development is an important part of our school's culture at Donaustadt. Aspects of sustainability are reflected in numerous projects, diploma theses and through accreditation with the environment management system, ISO 14001.

Besides a high quality technical training, our students acquire specialised knowledge in the area of 'corporate' environmental protection by gaining experience and qualifications as representatives for waste, environment, and sustainability, and simultaneously acquire valuable social skills. Because of this novel and contemporary approach to education and training, our alumni are highly sought after by future employers.

The integration of sustainable development into the everyday life of our school is demonstrated in several ways. For example, enterprise students are actively involved in delivering and maintaining certification under ISO 14001. [*Under ISO 14001, the school is viewed as an "enterprise" with all its ecological, social and economic effects; students are engaged in this 'ecologisation' - or sustainable greening – process.*]

In another project, students implement, in a participative fashion, the 3 'Ls' of sustainability - lehren (teaching), lernen (learning), leben (living) – and utilise ergonomic principles to arrange their workspaces and class rooms on a daily basis. Throughout the year the school organises film and discussion days during leisure time, focusing on sustainability themes. These events are attended by a high number of students.

The selection of topics for diploma theses and projects ranges from optimising waste management to the development of a "reminder-calendar" for vaccination prevention in companies. The htl Donaustadt and its highly motivated students also support regional nature protection projects like the resettling of tawny owls, adopting practical solutions.

A modern company culture needs also to take into account the quality of life of its staff and students. The school has a communication platform "wir_für_uns" ("we for us"). In a technical school with a high percentage of male staff members and students, an active approach to gender equality further demonstrates commitment to the social goals of sustainability; for this the network "Frauen-Technik-Zukunft" (women-technic-future) has been developed.

htl Donaustadt plays a role in disseminating culture and information throughout the region and organises events to which people of the surrounding district are invited. Highlights of this activity were the “Long Night of Sustainability” (“Lange Nacht der Nachhaltigkeit”), the “Donaustädter laughing club” (a cabaret), a courtyard party “Hoffest“, and cooperation with “wirtschaftsagenda”, a local business agenda 21 initiative, in their information events.

Since 2005 these projects and activities have been documented in our sustainability reports. The report of 2006 gained the Austrian Sustainability Reporting Award ASRA. This documentation allows us to analyse out strengths, identify areas for refinements, and act accordingly. This continued improvement has led to numerous awards like the Environment Award of the City of Vienna, the Austrian Sustainability Reporting Award, the Hubertus Award, the Mobility Award, and the Eco profit Award.