

Propagating EMAS for schools – the DIR-EMAS project

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The background (RO)

- Romania - candidate countries of the EU
 - adoption of the Acquis Communautaire
 - The environment sector - challenging chapter in this process
- The Romanian government –
 - set up environmental policies - EU policies
 - develop institutional structures - EU environmental requirements
 - EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme is part of this.
- EMAS legislation in Romania–
 - since January 2004
 - The Ministry of Environment and Water Administration through the Department of the Environmental Protection, is responsible with putting into practice the Romanian EMAS legislation.

The background (school)

- Colegiul National “Emil Racovita” - education that emphasizes academic excellence within a caring community.
- The school
 - promotes the appreciation of the diversity of persons and cultures,
 - provides an optimal environment for learning and teaching
 - offers a curriculum that inspires in its students the spirit of the EU.
- The school is committed to and values the protection of the environment.
- The school developed since 2001 lots of class environmental projects.
- In 2002, the management board of the school decided that it was the time to find a way of
 - improving continuously the environmental activities in the school
 - reducing the environmental problems
 - developing an environmental attitude in all school community members.

Why starting a Comenius school development project for reaching our school's aims? - “buts”

EMAS seemed to be perfect for our school aims, but:

- In 2002 there was not EMAS legislation in Romania;
- there was not Romanian expertise in this domain;
- only one Romanian company had a ‘quasi-EMAS-registration’;
- community efforts were poor in the environmental aspects;
- no teacher-training/ school training program for implementing management systems was offered on the Romanian training market.

Why starting a Comenius school development project for reaching our school's aims? - arguments

DIR-EMAS was/is the best solution for our school, because:

- the AT partner
 - EMAS registered
 - was interested in renewing the registration;
- the DE partner
 - interested in developing EMAS
 - had a wonderful environmental background;
- the SE partner
 - 'lives' in a very interested in environmental aspects community
 - interested in developing EMAS;
- the FI partner
 - experience in developing school training programs for implementing management systems in schools.

How the DIR-EMAS project helped us?

- Understanding of the EMAS process for schools, information about the next steps – AT;
- Materials developed by the partner schools – AT, DE, SE – adaptation;
- Good practice examples on EMAS implementation – project meetings in AT, DE, SE, FI;
- Critical feed-back on our work – AT, DE - confirmation for continuing the work;
- Good practice examples- community involvement – AT, DE, SE;
- Training materials – FI;
- Improvement our work – AT, DE, SE, FI – through
 - good practice examples from our partners,
 - receiving answers to our questions,
 - consultancy offered by our partners,
 - feed-back.

Which are the benefits of the school/ school community through developing this project?

- have an effective environmental team;
- have an almost effective environmental management system;
- involve school's community in implementing the environmental policy;
- develop an environmental – friendly attitude;
- involve community (the Local Council, NGOs, companies) for implementing the EMAS scheme;
- show that the school is committed to and values the protection of the environment;
- offer consultancy to other Romanian schools who want to develop and implement EMAS;
- be prepared (in some months) to get validation and registration (ISO 14001 / EMAS);
- get new friends which are helping us - and hope they will help us in the future- in getting and renewing EMAS validation and registration.

Impressions

“The collaboration with our partners had and still has a big influence on the school’s teachers and students. Visiting the partner schools, the contacts with other educational systems and new working methods, communication, idea and experience exchange have an extraordinary impact on the school.” – Adrian Magdas, deputy teacher



Impressions

“This project is the first one who gives chances to teachers, students and administrative staff to work together. The involvement of the students from the 1st to the 12th grade is impressive. They all participated (and are participating) in the “Environmental League” and even if only one class got the prize, all of them are the winners – because they all learned to be more responsible for the environment.” – Mihai Kulcsar, educational counselor, member of the environmental team.



Impressions

“Building the project team as a real team is one of the project’s products. The friendly atmosphere and the opened way of communication with our partners helps us in going on when we are passing through difficult moments.” – Camelia Moldovan, teacher, member of the environmental team.



Impressions

“By working in this project, I became more and more involved. I learned a lot and I learned how to apply knowledge learned during different lessons. The contact I had with teachers and students from the partner schools and also with Romanian companies from our local community that had implemented ISO14001 were real learning moments.” – Corina Cotroaza, ex-student of our school.



Impressions

“I’m very interested about the implementation of the DIR-EMAS project. If I’m remembering well, there is only one company in Romania that has a “quasi – EMAS – registration”. Colegiul National Emil Racovita from Cluj-Napoca is the first Romanian school which is implementing this environmental management system. It is a difficult project, but it is a challenging one. We already started with the school a partnership: we are offering consultancy – because we have some experience in implementing environmental management systems. We want to be part of this project’s success.” - Kőrösfőy Sándor, Executive manager of the NGO Floare de Colt.

