

# Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education. Five Central Questions

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## Team

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GEFÖRDERT VOM



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für Bildung  
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# Outline

- Education for Sustainable Development – Challenges
- Implementation of Sustainability at HEI through the Lens of Educational Governance
- Five Central Questions

# Education for Sustainable Development

„Education can, and must, contribute to a new vision of sustainable global development.“ (UNESCO 2015)

- Sustainable development requires
  - transformation of how we think and act
  - knowledge, skills, values and attitudes
- Education is crucial to achieve these goals
  - empower individuals to reflect on their own actions and to act in complex situations (UNESCO 2017)

# Education for Sustainable Development in Universities

These objectives can be an integral part of courses in many studies, e.g.

- education
  - political science
  - science
  - economy
  - history
  - engineering
  - ...
- 
- interdisciplinary courses
  - transdisciplinary projects

# Education for Sustainable Development - Challenges

challenges due to  
objective itself

challenges due to  
HEI as specific organisations

challenges due to  
management issues

# Education for Sustainable Development - Challenges

- knowledge about problems of non-SD is not sufficient
- (E)SD is still in need for explanation
- academic freedom in research and teaching
- modularization of studies
- hybrid structure and functioning of HEI
- lone wolves doomed to failure
- need for SD cannot be prescribed

# Implementation of Sustainability Through the Lens of Educational Governance

inquiry of underlying processes and structures, actor constellations and sensitivities of SD implementation at HEI – the sustainability governance – is rather rarely dealt with (Baker-Shelley et al., 2017; Dlouhá et al., 2016; Mader et al., 2013; Spira et al., 2013)

research seems to have payed “minimal attention to either critical strategic level dynamics or reflexive activities that could facilitate and accelerate change” (Stephens and Graham, 2010)

# Implementation of Sustainability Through the Lens of Educational Governance

## Governance Perspective

- SD is a normative goal, but advocating for SD does not necessarily lead to good governance
- We refer to an analytical understanding of governance
  - narrow: intended change of political regulation
  - wide: (emerging) form of social co-ordination of heterogeneous actors

## Research Heuristic

- functional demands of co-ordination → Governance Equalizer  
politics, profession, organisation, knowledge, publicity



# Implementation of Sustainability Through the Lens of Educational Governance

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Politics</b>     | From selective support... to a long-term agenda setting                             |
| <b>Profession</b>   | From a narrow professional perspective... to multi-professionality                  |
| <b>Organisation</b> | From projects ... to networking and collective action                               |
| <b>Knowledge</b>    | From isolated use of data ... to joint and reflexive perspective                    |
| <b>Public</b>       | From little attention for sustainability ... to public discussion and high interest |

# Implementation of Sustainability Through the Lens of Educational Governance

How do you ensure the...

|                     |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|
| <b>Politics</b>     | From selective support... to a long-term agenda setting                             | <b>...embeddedness and legitimacy of teaching ESD?</b>                              |
| <b>Profession</b>   | From a narrow professional perspective... to multi-professionality                  | <b>...interconnectedness of professional perspectives when teaching ESD?</b>        |
| <b>Organisation</b> | From projects ... to networking and collective action                               | <b>...cooperation and collaboration on ESD within the HEI?</b>                      |
| <b>Knowledge</b>    | From isolated use of data ... to joint and reflexive perspective                    | <b>...gaining and usage of necessary knowledge and competence for teaching ESD?</b> |
| <b>Public</b>       | From little attention for sustainability ... to public discussion and high interest | <b>...awareness of the need for teaching ESD?</b>                                   |

# Thank you!

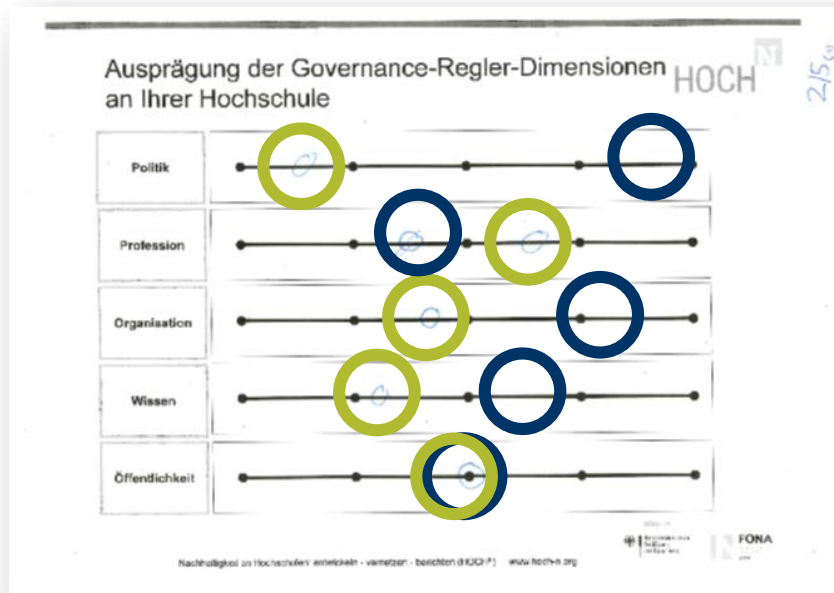
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<https://www.hochn.uni-hamburg.de/en.html>  
(joint project)

<https://www.hochn.uni-hamburg.de/en/2-handlungsfelder/01-governance.html>  
(partial project on governance)



# Methodological approach



- concordances and discordances
  - analytical identification of reasons,
    - e.g. world-views, acknowledgement, historicity, path-dependence, ...
  - counselling
    - e.g. switchpoints for supporting effective transformation (blind spots, dialogue, common goals...)?