

German example on integrating sustainability in dietetic courses

At a glance

- This project developed a handbook with 60 hours of ready-to-use coursework on implementing the Planetary Health Diet and educational formats on transformative action and sustainability in training dietitians in Germany.
- This project was funded by The German Federal Environmental Foundation (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, DBU) and run by KLUG e.V. (German Association on Climate Change and Health), VDD e.V. (German Association of Dietitians), and the School of Dietitians at the University Hospital Münster.
- Lessons Learnt: Topics of sustainable and healthy diets and transformative education can be implemented as a singular course or integrated throughout the training of dietitians.



Figure 1: Status of Planetary Boundaries 2023; Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, based on analysis in Richardson et al 2023

Background

Nutrition, health, and the environment are closely linked and mutually dependent. In Germany, common dietary patterns and the associated food production pose a significant risk to the health of the population and the climate and health of our planet. The Planetary Health Diet developed by EAT-Lancet provides crucial starting points for a healthy diet within planetary boundaries.



Figure 2: Planetary Health Diet; <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/the-planetary-health-diet-and-you/>

However, the scientifically based, holistic concept is still insufficiently applied in the nutrition and health sectors and is missing in dietetic education curricula. The potential of such a diet, not only in the fight against planetary crises but also for improving population health, is still little known and is not used strategically.

The project aimed to develop educational formats on the Planetary Health Diet and transformative action for training professionals in the nutrition and healthcare sector. The model and implementation were tested in a dietetics class.

After a successful trial of the model week on "Planetary Health and the Nutrition of the Future" with students from the School for Dietitians at the University Hospital Münster, the content was evaluated, revised, prepared and passed on to teachers at other dietitian schools in a train-the-trainer seminar with the purpose of scaling.

All materials are available to all schools via the VDD member area or the project lead of KLUG e.V.. Based on these elaborated materials and the evaluation, the design and implementation of a multi-part training course for already working dietitians and nutritionists (across associations) follows. In addition, an adaptation of the materials to the training of physiotherapists and occupational therapists is in preparation.



Figure 3: Implementation of the PHD in the teaching kitchen; own picture

What Else? Other Relevant Examples

- [Hot Topic Resource Cluster: University Dietetic Educators integrating SFS \(2023 Dec\)](#)

Food for Thought

Besides an increase in knowledge, students experienced an increase in drive, confidence, and assumption of responsibility towards fighting the climate crisis.

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