

Building Future Skills in Higher Education: An International Blended Project Seminar on Sustainable Development

Patricia Arnold¹, Jeannet Davids², Meret Reiser³

HM Hochschule München University of Applied Sciences,
Germany ¹

Hanse University of Applied Sciences Groningen, Netherlands ²

Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland ³

International Conference Future of Education 2024
Florence, June 22, 2024



Table of contents

1. "Social Europe Days 2024- We & the SDGs"
- An International Blended Project Seminar
2. Education for Sustainable Development & Future Skills
3. Educational Design
4. Discussion
5. Conclusion



"Social Europe Days 2024. We & the SDGs" – An International Blended Project Seminar

design case (Howard & Boling 2012, Boling 2010)



1. Blended Learning – Online & Offline Phases

2. Blended Intensive Programme (BIP), funded by ERASMUS+



3. Topic: UN Sustainable Development Goals



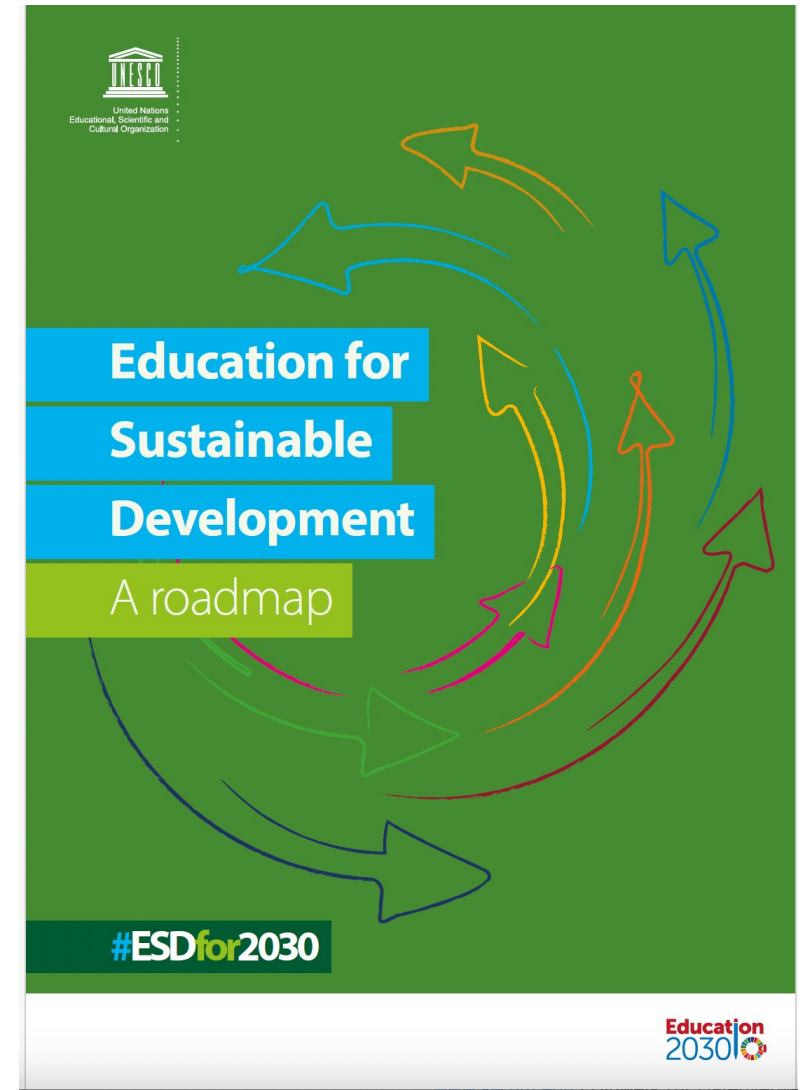
4. Online and offline student projects in International Multidisciplinary Teams (IMT)

5. Created by a European network of 10 universities



Education for Sustainable Development & Future Skills

- Complete transformation of our education systems (UNESCO 2014, 2020)
- Aim: learners acquire competences, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values to help reaching the SDGs
- Exceeds *environmental education* because it considers economic, social and political aspects in addition to ecological aspects
- Addresses in a holistic way “learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment” (UNESCO 2014, p. 12)



UNESCO 2020

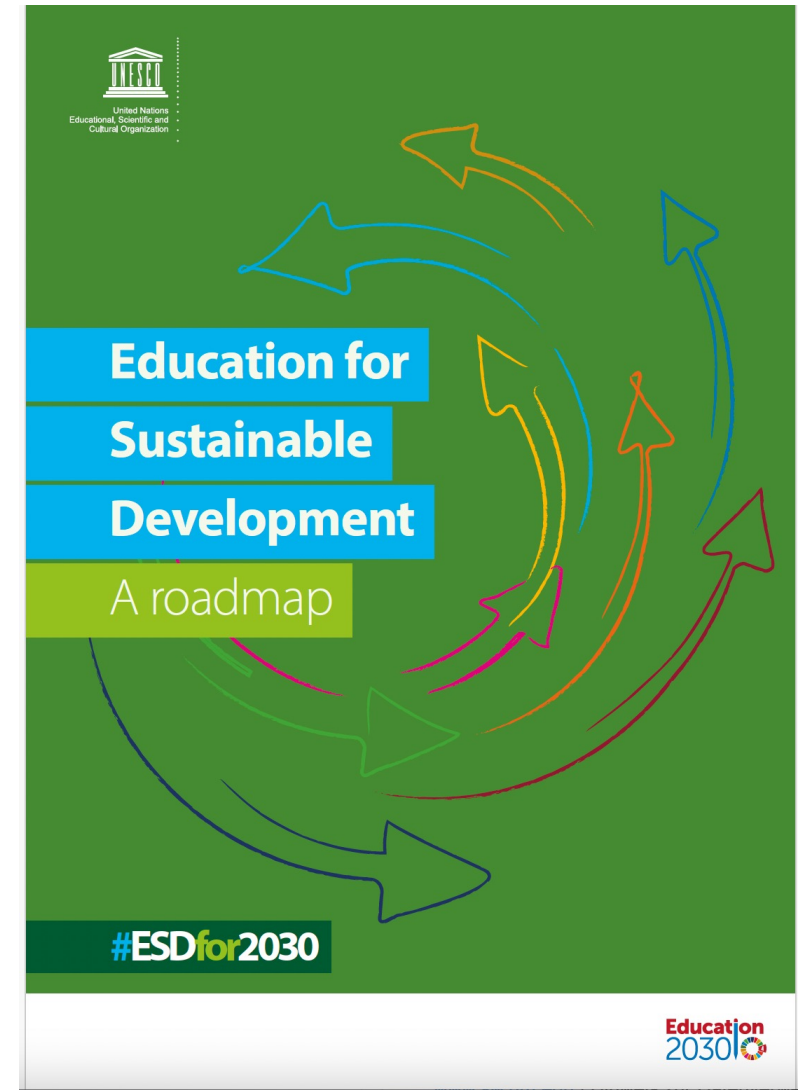
Education for Sustainable Development & Future Skills

- deeply linked to SDG Target 4.7:

“By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, amongst others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”

(UNESCO 2020, p.14)

- Educational designs and teaching practices for Education for Sustainable Development?
-> Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking and Creativity (4 Cs) (Bekteshi 2017)



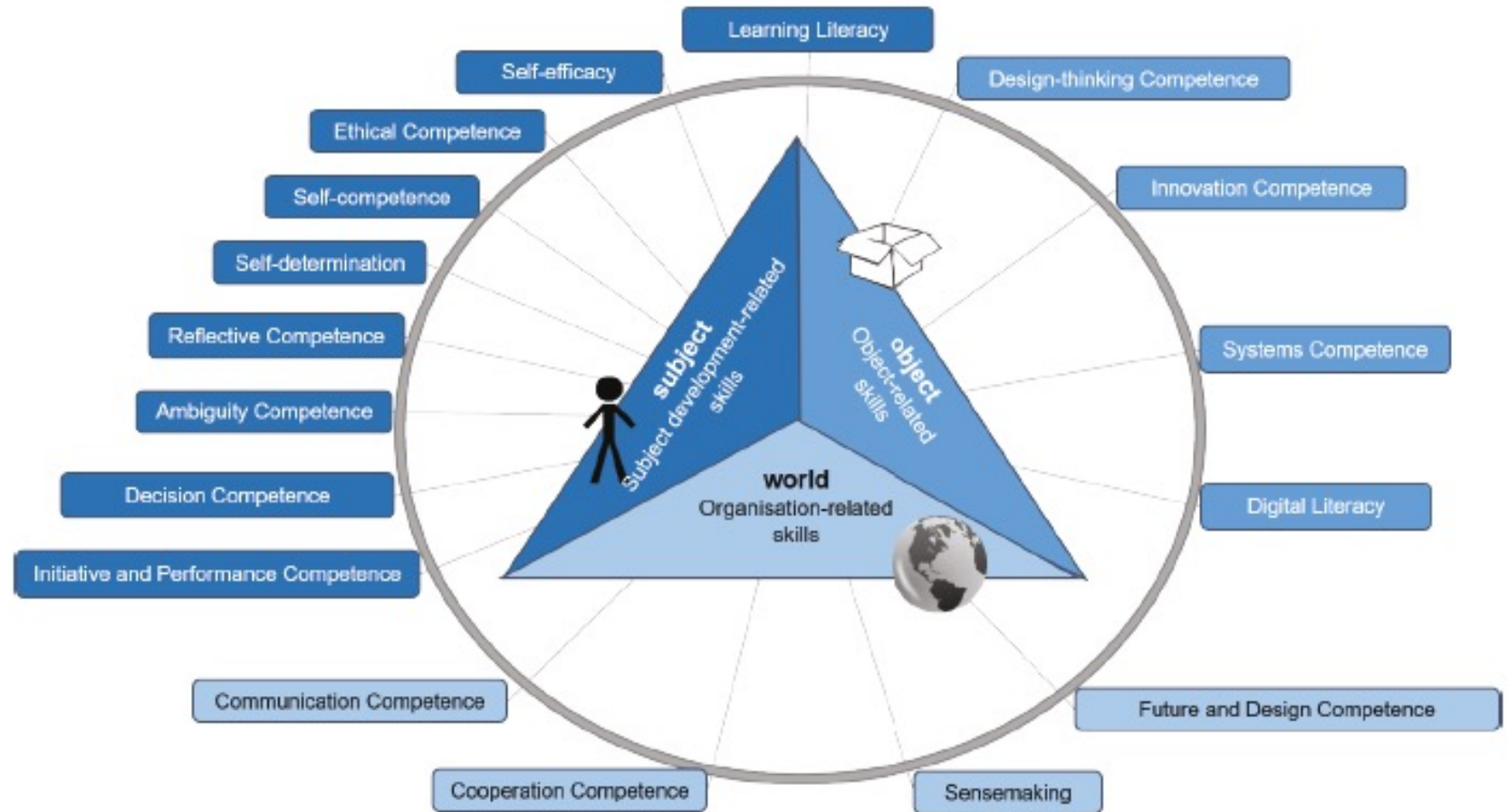
UNESCO 2020

Education for Sustainable Development & Future Skills

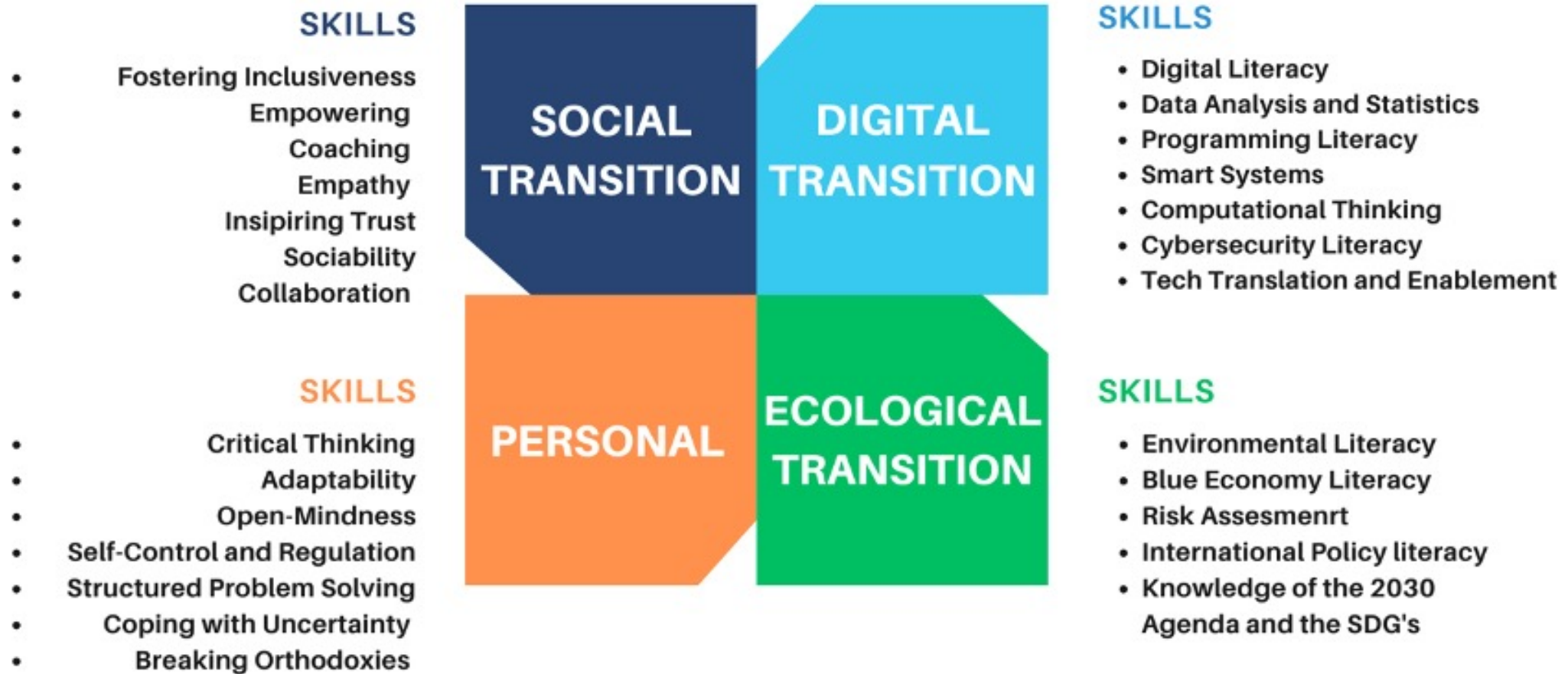
Future Skills: what competences and skills do students need in order to navigate an increasingly complex world ?

- a “term with a short history but an enormous career” (Ehlers 2020, p.24)
- a “heterogenous and evolving” field (Ehlers 2024, p.55)

many different skill frameworks have been developed, all contain a certain degree of arbitrariness



Education for Sustainable Development & Future Skills



UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean 2023 (Maury 2017)

Educational Design Social Europe Days 2024

Date	Program Element	Technology / Venue
April 08, 2024 10.00am – 17.00pm	Kick-Off Day <i>(Online, Obligatory)</i>	Zoom
April 09– May 12, 2024 self-selected times per IMT	Collaborative Work in International Multidisciplinary Teams (IMTs) <i>(Online, Obligatory)</i>	Zoom & self-selected digital tools
April 29, 2024 10.00am – 17.00pm	Guest Lecture Day <i>(Online, Optional)</i>	Zoom
April 09– May 12, 2024 self-selected times per IMT	Collaborative Work in International Multidisciplinary Teams (IMTs) <i>(Online, Obligatory)</i>	Zoom & self-selected digital tools
May 13 - May 17, 2024 Full Days	Hasselt Days <i>(Onsite, Obligatory)</i>	PXL Hasselt University, Hasselt, Belgium, with excursions to Brussels

Educational Design Social Europe Days 2024

Task for International Multidisciplinary Teams (IMT)

„Project outline that contributes to 1 or more of the SDGs and can be implemented at your university or at your local community

Design and realize an info booth at a marketplace of project ideas with a self-running presentation“

- Deliberately underdefined
- Teams of 5-7 students from different universities and study programs
- Online and onsite work



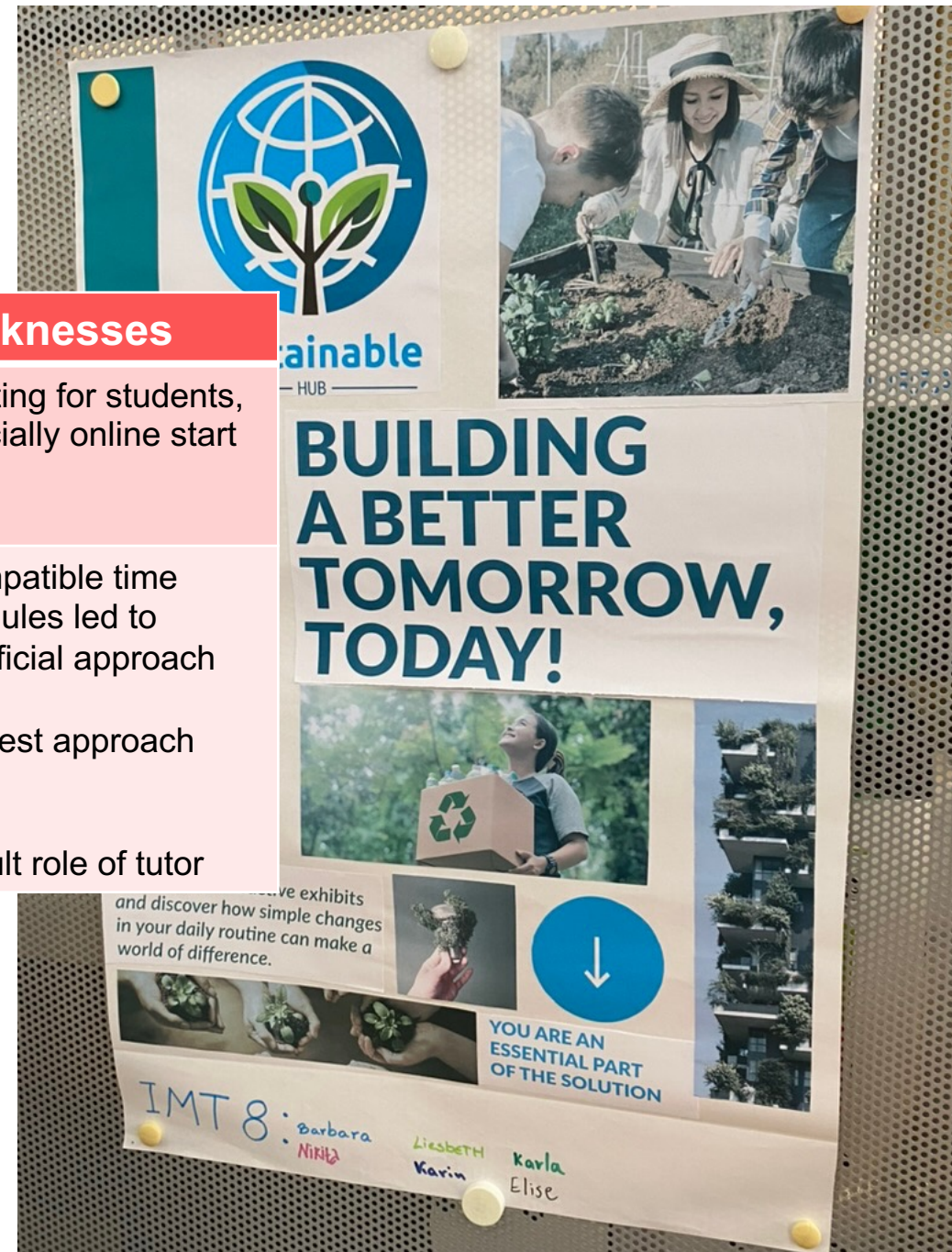
Discussion I

International Multidisciplinary Teams & 4 Cs (Bekteshi 2017)

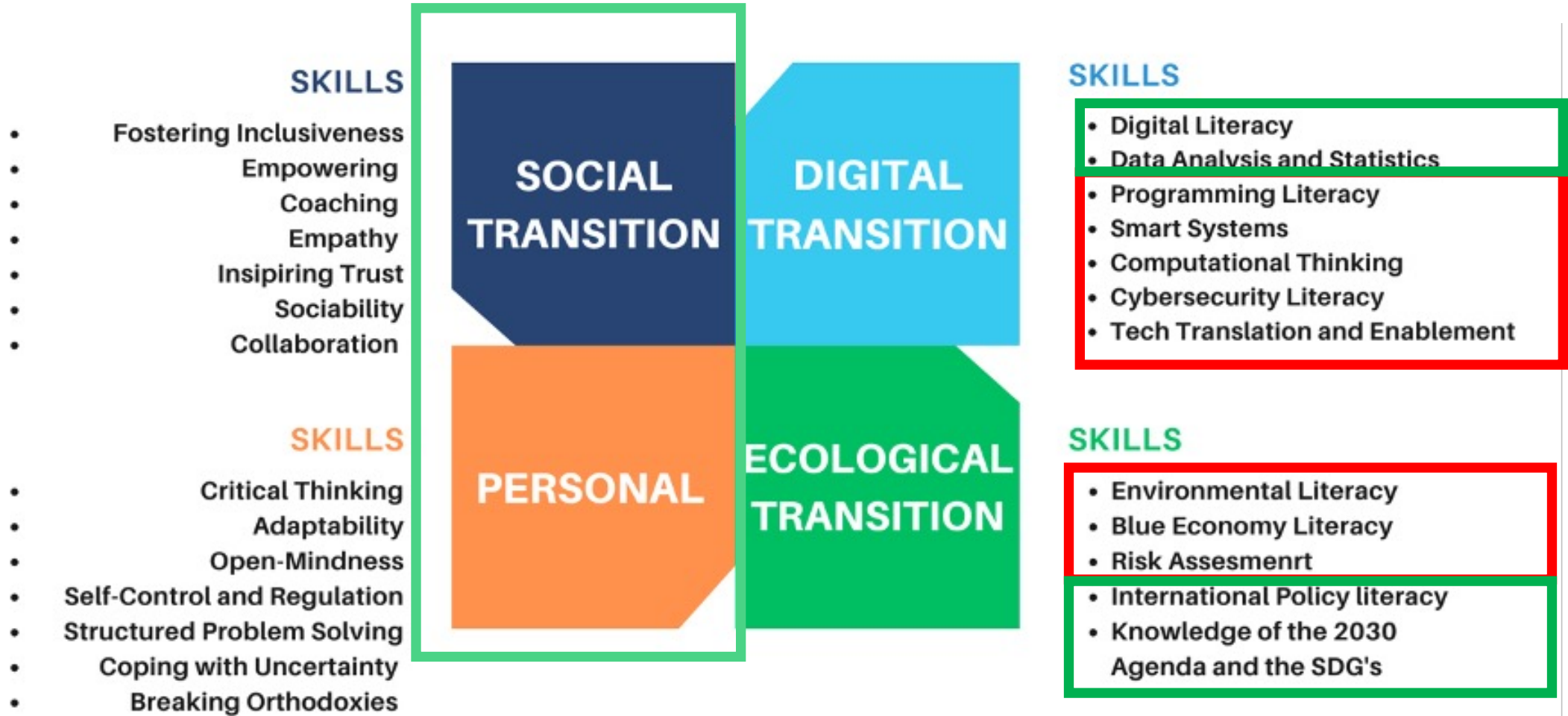
Element	Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Communication</i>	Online and offline communication in a diverse student group with an underdefined task, respect different approaches, reach consensus	Daunting for students, especially online start
<i>Collaboration</i>	Online and offline collaboration to define project idea and design info booth	Incompatible time schedules led to superficial approach
<i>Critical thinking</i>	Collaborative sensemaking with different disciplinary backgrounds	Quickest approach won
<i>Creativity</i>	Attract attention to the project, design poster, presentation	Difficult role of tutor

Methods:

- observation, planning and debriefing notes, evaluation survey
- *practice report, no research funding*



Discussion II



Conclusion

Summarizing: The educational design is suited to build Future Skills and contributes to Education for Sustainable Development.

Further research is needed

- to quantify skills and competences gained
- to investigate how to support students in detail in their learning processes during the different program elements.
- to explore the lecturer's side of this international collaboration:
 - how do teachers develop Future Skills and best contribute to Education for Sustainable Development?
 - how can teacher's international and multidisciplinary teamwork be facilitated and further refined?

REFERENCES

- Bekteshi, E. “The 'four Cs' - Collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity at The Faculty of Arts (FLUP), University of Porto, Porto, Portugal”, *Journal of International Social Research*, vol. 10, no. 50, 2017, pp. 56–62
- Boling, E. “The need for design cases: Disseminating design knowledge”, *International Journal of Designs for Learning*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2010, pp. 1–8, <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/209679/>
- Ehlers, U. “Future Skills – Future Learning and Future Higher Education. Zukunft der Hochschulbildung - Future Higher Education”, Wiesbaden, Springer VS, 2020
- Ehlers, U. “Towards a Future Skills Framework for Higher Education”, 2024, In Ehlers, U., Eigbrecht, L. “Creating the university of the future. A global view on future skills and higher education”, Wiesbaden, Springer VS, 2024, pp. 21–60
- Howard, C. D., Boling, E., Rowland, G., Smith, K. M. “Instructional design cases and why we need them. *Educational Technology*”, vol. 52, no. 3, 2012, pp. 34–38
- Maury, T. “The future of higher education: skills for the world of tomorrow”, UNESCO IESALC, 2023, <https://www.iesalc.unesco.org/en/2023/08/11/the-future-of-higher-education-skills-for-the-world-of-tomorrow/>
- UNESCO “UNESCO Roadmap for Implementing the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development”, Paris, UNESCO, 2014
- UNESCO “Education for sustainable development: a roadmap”, Paris, UNESCO, 2020



Contact

Prof. Dr. Patricia Arnold

Department of Applied Social Sciences

HM Hochschule München University of
Applied Sciences

patricia.arnold@hm.edu | patricia-arnold.de

ORCHID 0000-0002-2565-5658