

3. Outdoor education in European countries

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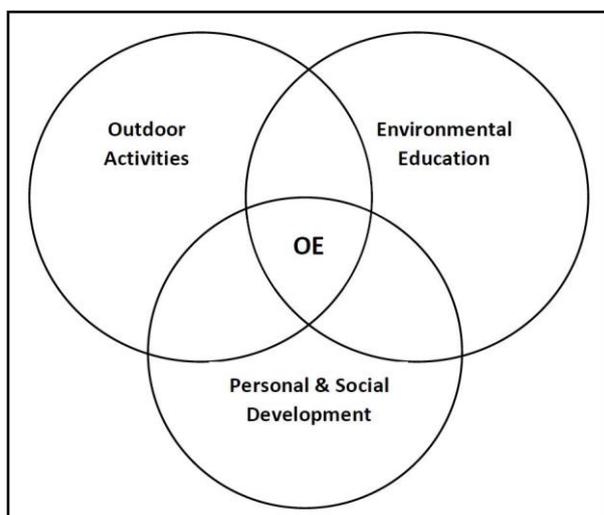
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Outdoor education in the UK – in the country of the oldest tradition

Today in the UK the term outdoor education stands for an approach to education, which through challenging situations in the environment develops in young people personal and social aspects and skills. According to Higgins & Loynes (1997) Outdoor Education is considered to be an educational approach which can permeate many curricular subject areas and at the time satisfy those supporting outdoor recreation, awareness and protection of the environment and personal and social development. Outdoor Education is “an approach not a subject drawing on three integrated areas of outdoor activities, environmental education and personal and social development” (Higgins & Loynes 1997, p. 6). It is expected that outdoor educators will be focusing attention on one or other of these areas, but all experience must take place within a framework of safety (fig. 1).

Fig. 1 The Range and Scope of Outdoor Education (Higgins & Loynes, 1997)

Safe and Professional Practice



Friluftsliv in Scandinavian countries

“Friluftsliv” (Repp, 1996), often translated as outdoor life, is a part of life of almost every Norwegian. It means “to travel and live in close contact with nature where the main purpose is to make experiences” (Ölman, 2001, p. 25).

According to Faarlund (2009) friluftsliv has many meanings: „friluftsliv is a Way Home“; nature is a real home and friluftsliv is a happy way home; friluftsliv is about the contact with nature, it is not an activity or sport, it belongs to art.

Most nursery and primary schools include one day of friluftsliv a week despite the weather. Since 2006 friluftsliv is one part of P.E. programme in secondary schools. It includes orienteering, work with a map and compass, trip planning, staying in nature overnight.

In Sweden, outdoor education – literary education and sensory experience – is understood as “a thematic and interdisciplinary field in the natural and cultural landscape” (Szczepanski, 2001, p. 19), and tries to animate the often abstract concepts of the scientific disciplines, and thereby create a local historic, ecological, and social sense of place among children and young people (Dahlgren & Szczepanski, 1998).

Almost 30% of teaching in Sweden is realized outdoors using the direct experience. It is included in all subjects.

Erlebnispädagogik in Germany

The Germans speak about “Erlebnispädagogik” (Ziegenspeck, 1992), a method of learning with the main aim of personal development, “addressing peoples’ competencies in different areas by *Erleben* (the act of having an *Erlebnis*) under professional standards and using spaces of *Erlenis*-Quality and institutional facilities and experiential media” (Stähler, 1998, p. 17).

Erlebnispädagogik is a tradition applied in other connections than outdoor activities. It was founded as an alternative and complement to educational approaches. It has foundations in the Reform pedagogy of 20th century. They wanted to depart from the one-side education of children and young people. Programmes are often connected with outdoor activities, which enable direct experiences.

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“Our landscape. Our home. Our school.” _____
Erasmus + project

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