CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Workshop on "Money and Sustainability: the challenge of Sustainable Finance begins at School"
Track 7. Assessing environmental and sustainability education in times of accountability
Organizers: Valentina Moiso, Elena Pagliarino (CNR-IRCrES), Mario Salomone (University of Bergamo)

The financialisation of the economy has a non-negligible impact on the daily lives of families. Having a bank account is necessary for operations which, in the past, could be executed elsewhere; the access to credit is increasing; the investments proposed to families include more complex products whose performances are related to the trends of financial indicators. At the same time, green and sustainable alternatives are proposed to families in terms of both investment and borrowing (cooperative banks, alternative money, crowfunding, peer to peer lending...) and trigger virtuous circles with the so-called green economy.

In view of these phenomena, for families the economic and financial literacy is crucial to understand the complex and heterogeneous forces that significantly affect the quality of their lives and to actively participate in building a more democratic and sustainable world. In particular, investments can be seen as tools to support individual change and to help create a more ethical and sustainable economy. Economic and financial education is part of only a limited number of specific high school programmes. Some pilot initiatives targeting children have been implemented by the banking system itself and, despite being noteworthy, they raise questions about which actors should be responsible for the economic-financial education of children and teenagers.

However, considering the asymmetry of information and power existing between families and operators, the rhetoric of education should not be used to ascribe all the risks deriving from the management of financial instruments to individual choices and relevant authorities should provide a set of rules for the system.

The objectives of the workshop are examining the different ways in which financial education is understood; highlighting the links between a responsible use of money and environmental sustainability, focusing on how important it is to provide children with the knowledge that how they manage their money will have an impact on their lives and the environment.

The workshop will focus on promoting a fruitful debate, creating networks among actors from different backgrounds, and drafting a planning document to support the WEEC network in future discussions on the links between education in environmental sustainability and economic-financial education.

This workshop will take stock of initiatives related to the financial education of children and teenagers, considering the complexity of the topic illustrated and promoting a discussion among financial operators, educators, and scholars.

How to participate? The participants can send an abstract of their experience, project, reflection (maximum 1,000 words) to valentina.moiso@ircres.cnr.it (deadline: 30 May 2015). The contributions will be discussed during the workshop and they will enhance a thematic publication.