

Learning all about trains, the Trenord-school agreement is launched

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Trenord (the regional rail company in Lombardy) and the Lombardy Regional Education Office (REO) have signed an Agreement Protocol today, with the aim of starting joint educational initiatives for students at schools in Lombardy. In the introduction to the protocol, it says “The Regional Education Office and Trenord agree **to promote a long-term program of common activities, to make young people aware of, and educate them about sustainable mobility**, with the aim of developing knowledge, abilities and skills, that will enable them to take an active part in the construction of smart cities and of smart citizens.” The Agreement Protocol was signed this morning by Trenord’s CEO, engineer Luigi Legnani, and by Dr Francesco De Sanctis, the director of the Lombardy Regional Education Office, in the presence of the Councillor for Infrastructure and Mobility, Maurizio Del Tenno, and the Councillor for Education, Training and Work, Valentina Aprea.

“Every day, we carry thousands of students on our trains; including those at university, students account for 30% of the travellers,” Luigi Legnani explained. “We are convinced that a commitment is necessary on our part, as well as on the part of the schools, to educate the new generations to rediscover the train as a common good and to spread the culture of intelligent, ecological and economically sustainable mobility, following the example of more advanced European Countries.”

“The Lombardy REO is developing strategic intervention plans to support schools in the organisation of courses on an active citizenry, also in the area of sustainable viability,” Francesco De Sanctis said. “These proposals are included in Lombardy REO guidelines on ‘Citizenries’, and will be adopted in the near future. The Protocol with Trenord stems from our desire to introduce innovative teaching models into schools, to give importance to significant experience gained by pupils thanks to practices implemented in the area, from both the technical-scientific and ethical points of view. Moreover, I would like to point out that this is the first Protocol that includes Technical

Colleges (ITS) in its planning activities, with a view to organising the curriculum vertically, and to achieving a professionalising exchange between the world of education and Trenord.”

“This is an important initiative because it involves young people, making them aware of using the train,” explained Maurizio del Tenno, the Councillor for Infrastructure and Mobility for Lombardy Region. “Thanks to the activities, which will start once the Protocol has been signed, young people will be able to **learn, first-hand, about rail transport and the complexity of a service that involves hundreds of thousands of people every day**. What we hope is that it creates **a new sense of belonging and respect for trains** and stations, which are the property of all of the people of Lombardy. At the same time, the young people will be able to realise how the train can, and must, increasingly become a privileged means, also because of its low environmental impact.”

The protocol describes a variety of areas of collaboration that Trenord and the Regional Education Office will start to develop in the early months of 2014.

Educating about mobility

The first aim is to guide the students, from elementary to high school, teaching them about, and getting them to reflect on a variety of topics, during school time, but not only, with the creation of different training courses for different age groups: primary schools – Safety, with the inclusion in school programs of **a module dedicated to railway safety and guided visits to stations and trains**, supported by teaching material.

Primary and first level secondary schools – Environmental education, with the proposal of a project dedicated to the subject, thanks to a booklet on the topic of transport and sustainable mobility, produced with the Lombardy Environment Foundation, and the website www.giocambiente.it.

Second level secondary schools – Awareness of the correct use of the train and of the topic of sustainable mobility, with teaching and coaching. The creation of “Mobility Teams” will be suggested in high schools, with the direct involvement of students who, in the classroom and on trains, will become the promoters of initiatives.

Technical Colleges – Involvement of students in projects, implemented during training periods, that encourage them to acquire professional skills in the field of sustainable mobility.

Learning about trains

Trenord intends to suggest company sites as destinations for school trips, to spread, among the younger people, knowledge of a green means of transport, like the train, and of the complexity of a railway system.

Learning with trains

In order to encourage use of trains by schools, the train routes, with special prices, to places of cultural and tourist interest, for school trips, will be worked out.

Moreover, the Regional Education Office will provide scientific support in planning initiatives and in teaching tests aimed at teachers, students and families.

At the Regional Education Office, presided over by the director, a workgroup on education about sustainable mobility will be set up, with the aim of planning and monitoring the activities that will be undertaken in the wider educational contest of teaching to the active Citizenry.

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