



EDUCATION FOR INTERCULTURAL AND GLOBAL COMPETENCES IN THE POST- PARIS SCENARIO

When the Paris Declaration¹ was signed by all EU Ministers of Education in March 2015, EEE-YFU joined the large number of organisations welcoming this strong and clear political message: education plays a crucial role in promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination.

Two years later, looking back at the actions undertaken at the European and national levels², we commend the initiatives of most Member States to translate the principles of the Paris Declaration into practice, but at the same time we recognise that a more comprehensive educational approach is needed, in order to foster intercultural and global competence in young people.

OUR CALLS FOR ACTION

In light of recent developments and challenges ahead we call on relevant stakeholders, at the European and national level, to:

- ▶ **Integrate newer approaches to intercultural learning and intercultural education** in both classrooms and youth work settings, in order to promote a wider vision of cultural diversity that can help young people to learn to avoid “othering”, stereotypes and ultimately discriminatory behaviour.
- ▶ **Provide more support to actions that develop synergies between formal and non-formal education sectors**, and encourage the formal education system to further integrate methodologies coming from the non-formal education field (like peer-to-peer learning, group work, and experiential learning), with a view to create inclusive environments in school settings.
- ▶ **Dedicate greater focus and more investments to learning mobility below the age of 18**, in order to make it truly inclusive and accessible for everyone, not only to university students. This includes creating an enabling environment for mobile pupils and non-for-profit organisations, through allocation of more resources to school exchanges (**at least 4 times more than the current budget in Erasmus+**), and through academic/formal recognition of school periods abroad.
- ▶ **Embed the concept of “global competence”³ in education and training policies and initiatives**, thus granting greater role and better recognition to “global citizenship education”⁴ with a view to empower learners to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world.

¹ “Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education”, Paris, 17 March 2015.

² An overview of measures undertaken by Member States is provided in the report “Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education: Overview of education policy developments in Europe following the Paris Declaration of 17 March 2015”. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

³ “Global competence is the capacity to analyse global and intercultural issues critically and from multiple perspectives, to understand how differences affect perceptions, judgments, and ideas of self and others, and to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with others from different backgrounds on the basis of a shared respect for human dignity”. (Global competency for an inclusive world, OECD, 2016).

⁴ The UNESCO identifies three core conceptual dimensions of global citizenship education: Cognitive: to acquire knowledge, understanding and critical thinking about global, regional, national and local issues and the interconnectedness and interdependency of different countries and populations. Socio-emotional: to have a sense of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and

THE RATIONAL BEHIND

Integrate newer approaches to intercultural learning and intercultural education

As European societies continue to shift and evolve, trends have become apparent in the field of diversity and multiculturalism. The normative-multicultural policies that were put in place in the 1970s where culture is seen as fixed, with rigid collective (national) identities, have in some ways served to fuel nationalism and xenophobia. They failed to take into account that cultural diversity is not only about minority ethnic backgrounds, it is also about diversity in terms of parents' education, religion, household family form, socioeconomic status, lifestyles, values, attitudes and abilities/disabilities. Ethnicity and nationality are only one part of the equation.

Indeed, multicultural education that promoted tolerance (as opposed to dialogue) can be seen to have been dangerous, often promoting learning about the other with fixed characteristics, thus promoting stereotypes and communitarianism.

In the field of youth work, intercultural learning has been present, but has too often been superficially implemented. Even during intercultural learning mobility and exchange encounters, when educational support is lacking and/or of insufficient quality, young people can be led to an overly national perspective on diversity and difference, creating stereotypes.

Provide more support to actions that develop synergies between formal and non-formal education sectors

In school settings, teaching methods are often traditional and lack participatory and experiential approaches, which can be invaluable for the development of intercultural competences. Partnerships between formal and non-formal education providers have proven to be highly beneficial for both sides, by exposing educational actors to new thinking, perspectives, and methodologies. Unfortunately, the development of intercultural learning and intercultural education practices, respectively in non-formal and formal education contexts, has been done in separate educational spaces, with little to no awareness of the other sector.

Learning happens within and outside the formal educational sector; as such, a comprehensive approach that encompasses all forms of learning and promotes permeability of learning experiences is highly needed.

The Network of Experts on Social Aspects of Education and Training NESET II Report⁵ highlighted that teachers themselves need training to deal with diversity in the classroom. Intercultural training for teachers can be delivered by non-formal education providers, who have extensive experience in diversity issues.

Dedicate greater focus and more investments in learning mobility below the age of 18

The highly positive impact of learning mobility on youth has been proven, recognised and supported via concrete measures and programmes⁶ that demonstrate Europe's willingness to place learning mobility high on the educational and youth agendas.

diversity. Behavioural: to act effectively and responsibly at local, national and global levels for a more peaceful and sustainable world. ("Global Citizenship Education - Topics and Learning Objective", UNESCO, 2015).

5 "Education Policies and Practices to Foster Tolerance, Respect for Diversity and Civic Responsibility in Children and Young People in the EU (Analytical Report)", NESET II, March 2016.

6 2014-2020 Erasmus+ Programme, 2011 Council conclusions on a benchmark for learning mobility, 2011 Council Recommendation 'Youth on the move' — promoting the learning mobility of young people, 2009 Green paper on Promoting the learning mobility of young people, 2009 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council

The 2017 European Parliament resolution on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values recognises that exposing children to other cultures at a young age helps them obtain basic life skills and transversal competences, such as problem-solving, creativity and initiative, necessary for their personal development, future employment and active EU citizenship.

Indeed, learning mobility at school age increases independence, self-confidence, and psycho-emotional maturity; contributes to the acquisition of foreign languages; strengthens intercultural competences; stimulates openness to foreign cultures and decreases fear in intercultural encounters.⁷

Nevertheless, the pupil mobility strand currently only benefits from 4,5% of the overall Erasmus+ budget.⁸ Also, scholarships provided by public authorities are often insufficient to cover the demand. Pupil mobility definitely deserves more investments and prioritisation.

Embed the concept of “global competence” in education and training policies and initiatives

Education, both formal and non-formal, helps develop social and civic competences that allow individuals and communities to thrive and prosper in our increasingly interconnected societies. Acquisition and development of social and civic competences cannot disregard understanding of global issues, ability to make connections between the local and the global levels, and ability to engage in constructive interactions with people from different backgrounds (within and beyond the European borders), with an open-minded and value-based attitude.

In order to create more socially cohesive and inclusive societies, it is crucial to recognise the interdependence between local, national, European, and global realities. Adhesion to European shared values implies a sense of belonging to a common humanity, as well as responsibilities, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity.

Embedding the concept of “global competence” in education and training policies would also allow for pertinent alignment with the OECD’s PISA assessment, which will include “global competence” as a component starting from 2018.

on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), 2006 European Quality Charter for Mobility.

⁷ The “Impact Compendium on Youth Exchange”, published by Intermundo in 2015, compiles several studies on secondary school exchanges, including the Educational Results Study (Hammer, 2005), the AFS Long Term Impact Study (Hansel/Chen, 2008), Students of Four Decades (Bachner/Zeuschel, 2009), and the Impact of Living Abroad Project (Geeraert, 2012).

⁸ Erasmus+ Programme Annual Report 2015.