



Youth Participation and Global Citizenship: Challenges and Recommendations for Future Youth School Forums

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With Input from Project Partners



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I Executive Summary

The overall purpose of this report is to identify the needs of the Future School Youth Forums on youth participation and global citizenship education. The study synthesizes information from Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and the United Kingdom in order to understand similarities and differences, and compare them with wider European trends to understand transversal needs across Europe. It discusses in greater detail the current application of global citizenship youth forums and global citizenship/youth participation in each of the 5 countries – and therefore across 7 national systems (as Wales and Scotland have their own systems), and also transversally across Europe. The report will help Partners to better understand the project's needs, so that they can design project outputs more effectively.

National analyses showed that there is a tendency to diminish youth participation within the policy and practice of education. In the case of both formal and informal school education there are not enough opportunities for developing such skills as leadership, motivation, engagement, self-expression, creativity, or entrepreneurship. It is also noticeable in a number of countries that there are no opportunities for teacher training on how to cultivate students' skills and promote global citizenship education, which would promote active youth participation.

The autonomy of teaching methods, organization and school programs in all national systems affect global citizenship education policy and practice in different ways. Although there is a range of initiatives and programs concerning global citizenship education at the policy level, the global perspective is not an explicit requirement within the curriculum in a number of countries, and its formal position has weakened since 2010. Global citizenship education in primary and secondary curricula incorporates such ideas and concepts as human rights, equality, solidarity and acceptance of diversity, social justice, peace, poverty, unemployment, sustainable development, and environmental issues.

National analyses exposed lack of a formal definition of what “youth at risk” means. The term has a strong intuitive meaning and, when used, refers to indicators such as socio-economic background, migration or minority background, learning disabilities and special educational needs, school failure (they have earned no “pass” marks or grades). However, the term has no consistent definition and can be viewed as it is widely used. This report first gives an overview of the problem in 7 national contexts (England, Wales, Scotland, Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, Poland), and then we present the point of view of teachers from the countries mentioned above.

The focus groups with teachers evidently showed that youth participation is connected with such skills as creativity, critical thinking, leadership, communication skills, leadership, public speaking, citizenship skills, critical thinking, and research skills. What seems significant for youth participation at school level is the relationship built between the student and school teachers, support, motivation, and the development of the ability to speak up, despite shyness or lack of self-confidence.

The need for more time within the curriculum to develop youth participation and engagement in global issues during both curricular and extra-curricular activities was a very significant and recurrent issue of discussions throughout the focus groups with teachers. In the opinion of teachers, young people have a thirst for learning more about global issues which the school doesn't seem to satisfy. In the classroom, all teachers felt there was a strong focus on subject specialisms and preparing students to exams, with little space to build on young people's passions and interests. Some teachers identified a correlation between a strong focus on the curriculum and academic achievements and lack of wider interests of young people outside of school. This was also attributed to teachers not having enough time to explore or encourage personal interests of young people. When considering global citizenship education in the classroom, teachers explicitly saw the importance of developing skills rather than knowledge about global issues.

At-risk pupils, in teachers' perception, are foreign speakers having learning disabilities and special needs, lower school grades, financial difficulties, and family issues. Often, the youth at risk don't have enough motivation and confidence to speak up – raise their voice to have their opinions heard. Teachers did broadly feel that providing “youth at risk” with opportunities for civic engagement may be directly correlated with an improvement in their self-confidence and motivation for active participation in different school activities. Although it is a tangential link, teachers also felt that offering young people, including “at-risk youth”, opportunities for civic engagement, may translate into an improvement in their grades.

The focus group with the youth component of the project sought young people's ideas and voices how to gain a satisfactory level of their participation as global and local citizens. The focus groups were designed to solicit young people's ideas and their current experiences of participation in school or out-of-school activities, including their vision of a perfect school. The section including the young people's point of view is divided into 5 subsections: the youth about the Perfect School, about learning and skills, about opportunities there are to take part, about

Global Citizenship, and about making a change. An analysis of responses from all the groups revealed categories based on the discourse employed by the participants in their responses and their explication of their current local and global participation, in the way they reflected on their roles and responsibilities as citizens, but also in the way they reflected on their position in schools and their point of view about school as an institution.

II Introduction, Purpose of the Study, Methodology

The overall purpose of this report is to identify the needs of the Future School Youth Forums Project on youth participation and global citizenship education in Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and the United Kingdom. The Partner organizations of the Project played a critical role in gathering data for this report and reviewing known literature and policy documents in their countries concerning young people's participation, global citizenship education, and the youth at risk of early school leaving. The approach taken in this transnational report with regard to the review of literature was to look at not only academic materials, such as books or journal papers, but also practice-based materials found in reports, websites or information articles in relevant educational or development publications. The policy documents were mainly documents valid at the national level and school internal documents setting internal rules and regulations.

The qualitative interview analysis of the teacher and youth focus groups was conducted between March and May 2016 and based on an educational need analysis conducted nationally along with national focus groups interviews. For both sections, 3 tools were created: (1) the Questionnaire for the National Needs Analysis, (2) Guidelines for the teacher focus groups, and (3) Guidelines for youth focus groups. The national education needs analyses and focus groups, conducted in Partner countries, were aiming to (1) review national policies on youth participation within global citizenship education, (2) identify opportunities in schools in Partner countries to engage young people in developing their participation skills, (3) explore skills that are important for young people to develop in order to engage with global issues, and finally (4) to identify intervention measures to support youth at risk of early school leaving.

All focus group interviews were conducted by moderator(s) and held in national languages. One of the moderators was nominated to ask questions, while the other was responsible for making field notes. After each focus group the moderator would type up their field notes and produce transcripts which were then translated into English. The set of questions asked during the focus groups was developed by the University of Łódź. It included three types of questions: initial questions, main questions, and prompt points. The aim of initial questions was to create a relaxed atmosphere and help young people to start a discussion. The main questions focused on topics interesting from the perspective of the project. The moderator was obliged to ask both types of questions. The role of prompt points was to help the moderator lead the discussion, and they could be reviewed and modified depending on the situation during the focus group

session.

Interviews with teachers were conducted as a focus group discussion aiming to bring together teachers with similar background or experience from a school to discuss a specific topic of interest, which was the application of global citizenship youth forums and youth participation in each of the Partner countries. All teacher focus groups were guided by a moderator (a representative of a Partner organization) who introduced topics for discussion and helped the group to have a lively and natural discussion. The focus groups with teachers were aiming to gather information in four areas: (1) participation & skills development, (2) opportunities to encourage participation, (3) global citizenship, (4) children at risk.

The University of Łódź used the youth focus group approach to examine the way young people (aged 12-18) from different European countries (Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, UK) understand global citizenship issues and their role as citizens as well as the attitudes and beliefs of students. All focus groups were kept small (4-6 participants). This approach was adopted to achieve in-depth responses and give each participant a chance to respond to each question. Each focus group was limited to 1 hour and took the form of an informal discussion. The first topic that was discussed during teacher focus groups was connected with young people's skills of "participation" including showing initiative, public speaking, leadership, expressing their own opinions, leading groups, and taking part in extra-curricular activities. The second question referred to opportunities or programs available at school, which engaged young people in developing their "participation" skills. The aim of the next topic of the teacher focus groups was to find out what skills applied to global citizenship education in the classroom. Finally, we wanted to look at youth who are at risk of failing academically and some intervention measures to support them. Focus group discussions with the youth included 6 questions concerning the following issues, important from the perspective of the project: the youth's view on a perfect and real school; learning about skills; current opportunities there are to be taken in school and out of school by the youth; global citizenship: what young people know and how important this issue is to them; and making a change, which refers to young people's ideas about how to develop and improve their community, school, and the world.

The University of Łódź is underpinned by an analytical framework for the content analysis. This approach allowed the researchers to report on and categorize the voice of each participant and to compare and identify participants' responses across the focus groups. The data was subject to initial and preliminary coding in order to identify key categories and highlight the critical

discourse. Based on the coding and reflection on the focus groups, the researchers produced each focus group's responses to the research questions.

For each national discussion and teacher focus group a national case study approach was selected, which allowed in-depth, multi-faceted exploration of the youth's participation, global citizenship education, and the issues of the youth at risk in their real-life settings.

All research involving human participants conducted by the Partners met the ethical standards of research involving human subjects. Before the interview, teachers were informed about the notes and/or recording, and they were given an explanation about the context of the study as well as the use that would be made of the data collected. The interview data was anonymized so as to make sure neither the respondents themselves nor other people they referred to could be identified. Interview transcripts and quotations in the report contain no information providing a link back the interview data to the responses of individual focus groups. To further preserve the anonymity of the interviewees, in the beginning of each chapter on focus group findings, only simplified characteristics of our interviewees (such as the names of course providers, years of experience, etc.) are given.

The paper is structured into three main sections. The first chapter presents the national discussion on education policy related to youth participation within education policy and global citizenship education and the youth at risk in Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and the United Kingdom. Chapters two and three include the data from the interviews with teachers and the youth on the Future Youth School Forum Project. The concluding section makes specific recommendations to the Project and some more general suggestions for education policy aimed at developing young people's participation within global citizenship education. The report ends with a bibliography and an annex.

III Future Youth School Forums – National Discussion

Cyprus

Youth Participation within Education Policy

In Cyprus, after the reform of the national educational curriculum covering all educational levels, youth participation is a part of national education policies. Since 2010, most of the educational subjects have incorporated the principles and the values of active citizenship among young people. After the educational reform, which focused on the improvement of teachers' recruitment, evaluation, and professional development processes, Cyprus has implemented several reforms regarding the professional development area. The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) is now offering "novel forms and patterns of professional development courses and seminars, such as school-based training and distance/online training" (Teacher Policies in the Republic of Cyprus, 2014, pg. 8). Also, as mentioned above, the CPI provides specific training seminars to all in-service teachers and headmasters in Cyprus, aimed at educating teachers at all educational levels about the new curriculum and its aims. Beside the trainings and seminars mentioned above, the education policy in Cyprus does not offer any specific training on the topics of young people's participation, young people's leadership, civic engagement and active citizenship, or cross-curricular skills. However, relevant opportunities for professional development are offered by universities and teachers' unions, and those programs are also approved by the Ministry of Education of Cyprus (MoEC).

Global Citizenship Education within Education Practice

In Cyprus, global citizenship education (GCE) is related to the development of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), aiming to develop human rights, social justice, diversity, and gender equality democracy. Since 2010, after the reform of the education system and the development of the new national curriculum, global citizenship education has become one of the main issues of the Cyprus Education. The national curriculum of Cyprus gives great emphasis on global education in general, and more specifically on the values and skills of global citizenship education. Most of the school subjects, both at primary and secondary education levels,

incorporate ideas and concepts such as human rights, equality, solidarity and acceptance of diversity, social justice, peace, poverty, unemployment, sustainable development, and environmental issues.

Young People at Risk – National Context

In Cyprus, the youth at risk are considered to be young people / students with special visual, audio and mobility needs, learning difficulties, family or psychological-emotional issues, or financial issues as well as immigrants, students from different countries, and foreign speakers.

According to Michaelidou-Evripidou (2012), it seems that:

- Certain schools have higher rates of students “at risk”;
- More boys face literacy problems than girls;
- The socioeconomic background of the students “at risk” is a factor which is highly associated with literacy problems.

There is a programme in Cyprus against early school leaving, school failure, and delinquency in called Educational Priority Zones. Participating schools, as has been explained to the Education for All 2015 National Report the “*Zones of Educational Priority*” have had “positive results, such as a reduction of pupil dropouts and school failures (referrals and repetitions), as well as an improvement in school success. An indicative result of this innovation is the fact that in 2003 the percentage of early school leavers was 17.3%, which dropped to 11.2% in 2011 and to 9.1% in 2013 after the introduction of this institution” (pg. 25).

Italy

Youth Participation within Education Policy

In the field of youth participation in schools, there are no strategies nor national programs in Italy aimed at teaching or providing active citizenship and participation skills, and the Ministry of Education has not adopted any unique approach yet.

In Italy, the Chamber of Deputies has recently approved the new school reform law “The Good School” (13th July, 2015, No. 107)¹. This law establishes many primary training goals and, despite being far from defining national programs, it strengthens the autonomy of schools.

Therefore, although education for active citizenship is considered one of the educational priorities, there is no unique approach to teaching it nor to inserting it into the curriculum: this choice is made by the teacher or the school head.

Global Citizenship Education within Education Practice

Great freedom of choosing teaching methods, organization and school programs in Italy affects global citizenship education (GCE) education policy and practice in different ways. The GCE policy is present in internal school regulations rather than the national law. The national law, however, in a lot of cases adapts European regulations on GCE. The most significant national decrees include the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the European Council (2006/962/EC) that has been incorporated into the Ministerial Decree 139/2007. The document lists key citizenship competences that need to be developed within compulsory education. Another example of an implementation of EU law into national education policies is the incorporation of the Recommendation of the European Union Council (2012/C 398/01) into 92/2012 Law and Legislative Decree 13/2013. This Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning refers to the validation of learning outcomes, namely knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning. This can play an important role in enhancing employability and mobility as well as increasing motivation for lifelong learning, particularly in the case of the socio-economically disadvantaged or the low-qualified. With the adaptation of regulations within the framework of public policies on education, training, employment, competitiveness, welfare and active citizenship, these two decrees (92/2012 and 13/2013) allow the promotion of lifelong learning as an individual right, and ensures everyone has equal opportunities for recognition and valorization of the competencies acquired.

The main Italian national law that refers to GCE contains the guidelines for citizenship education (The Ministerial Circular 86/2010) for the first cycle (6-11 years) and the second cycle (11-19 years). In addition, the National Guidelines for the second cycle are regulated by the Presidential

¹

<http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15G00122/sg>

Decree 15.3.2010, and they set principles for activities carried out by education institutions, providing the necessary skills for an active and responsible civic life. Finally, the 169/2008 Law “Citizenship and Constitution” provides for a number of actions on awareness-raising and staff training, aimed to acquire knowledge and skills related to “Citizenship and the Constitution” issues in primary and secondary schools.

In conclusion, some of the challenges for GCE in Italy are including global issues in the curricula to a greater extent and promoting GCE at the national policy level. Another need that refers to GCE within the Italian education practice is the improvement of GCE teacher training, so that it is an opportunity to raise teachers’ awareness of the importance of implementing transversal curricular activities tackling global citizenship issues throughout different subjects.

Young People at Risk – National Context

In Italy, the term “the youth at risk” refers to the so-called *school dropout phenomenon*. There is no specific definition of “the youth at risk”, however, this term is usually associated with “young people at risk of early school leaving”. The Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) defines school dropout as “the totality of phenomena that cause a decline in the formal educational path; non-fulfilment of school duties; leaving a compulsory or post-compulsory school during or at the end of the year without getting a diploma”. The National Institute of Statistics suggests five categories of school dropout: repeating students; over-aged pupils compared with the attended grade; school-leaving (both officialized and non-officialized); irregular attendance – students that are not promoted at the end of the year because of too many absences; students that receive fail credits (only in the case of upper secondary schools).

Risk factors causing school dropout include: the student’s school performance (almost failure), school mobility due to the family’s transfers and, in the case of girls, early pregnancy, migration background, and youth who come from low income families and/or have other family issues.

Lithuania

Youth Participation within Education Policy

The education system in Lithuania is comparatively young. The education concept was created only in 1992. The last education reform was carried out during 1990-2002. A new national education strategy was adopted for 2003-2012, and another one for 2013-2022. There were no

major shifts in the education strategies or system, there was more emphasis on improving the existing system, focusing on specific problem areas and bringing about positive changes in them. In Lithuania, the education policy is implemented in a national context, and it affects all regions and education subjects. According to the national education strategy for 2013-2022, “the basic needs of the public are identified in the State Progress Strategy ‘Lithuania: Progress Strategy *Lithuania 2030*’, which outlines an intelligent vision of Lithuania. The society has to become active, loyal, united (solidarity), and constantly learning. Everyone should be open to change, and be creative and responsible. Only in this way the Republic of Lithuania could become one of the 10 most advanced European Union Member States. Each person has to become a responsible citizen, able to self-generate their success and connect with the international and global community, an advanced economy and a distinctive national culture. Therefore, the education policy and indicated directions of change must motivate the education community to continuously learn in order to reach the goal of equal opportunities for all. According to international research on citizenship education and citizenship, the areas that require improvement in Lithuania are active participation of pupils in the community and initiating changes. According to the same research, pupils tend to get involved in activities within their school rather than outside of school.

Global Citizenship Education within Education Practice

According to the document “Citizenship Education Policy: Goals, Resources and Outcomes” prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science (2013), citizenship education is one of the most important goals of the education system in Lithuania. The importance of citizenship education is also emphasized in the Law of Education, which states that “Lithuanian general education schools, by helping students develop life skills and become active members of the civil society, seek to create conditions that are necessary for developing each person’s basic values enabling them to become patriotically-minded, impart the basics of national and ethnic culture, develop a mature national identity, establish such civic and political culture that embodies democratic principles, and gain experience and competences that are necessary for a person being a competent citizen and a member of the European and world communities and a multicultural society”.

According to the Law of Education, educational goals referring to global citizenship education (GCE) (1) expand citizenship education in schools into informal practical civic activities, (2)

attract more attention to such elements of citizenship education as creating opportunities for pupil involvement in making school-related decisions and in community activities, and (3) do not limit activities to obligatory lessons (citizenship education) in the 9th and 10th grades.

The Law of Education, when considering global references, is in line with the National Education Strategy for 2013-2022. One of the main goals mentioned in this document is “to make Lithuania’s education a sustainable basis for the enhancement of the state’s wellbeing and the education of dynamic and independent personalities responsible for the creation of their own, their country’s and world’s futures”.

Young People at Risk – National Context

In Lithuania, there is no specific definition of the term “the youth at risk”, however, its meaning refers to such indicators as young people punished for crimes in disciplinary institutions and likely to re-offend; who have committed law violations recorded in inside affairs institutions, who have pedagogical notes recorded in school’s internal documents; who display signs of asocial behavior; who come from low income families and/or have other family issues confirmed by child protection services; and those who have experienced sexual or other types of abuse.

In Lithuania, no data is collected about at-risk young people, and it is also difficult to find relevant statistical data. More attention is paid to social risk families than individual children.

Poland

Youth Participation within Education Policy

Governance of the education system in Poland is a shared responsibility of central and local authorities. The national education policy is developed centrally, mainly in the Ministry of Education (MoE). The whole education policy referring to youth participation and global citizenship education is developed in the MoE. Youth participation at the school level in Poland is founded on the main education law – the Act on the Education System, adopted in 1991. The Act creates the obligation for pupil councils to be established in every school (Paragraph 55). Pupil councils may make proposals and give opinions to the school board, give advice to teachers and/or the school principal, regarding in particular the implementation and protection of the fundamental rights of pupils, and make decisions about school events or school clubs. Pupil councils are independent organizations of students that build school-wide communities of

learners (Paragraph 55). Pupil councils are seen as self-governance bodies², which means that individuals (pupils) create the standards of co-existence in a group. These standards are set by the group that possesses and governs the eligibility to make bottom-up decisions inside the group, has the ability to collectively defend the interests of the group, and acts autonomously within the government bodies or informal peer communities. Apart from being members of pupil councils, pupils have the right to organize cultural, educational, sports and entertainment activities in schools depending on their needs and the organizational capacity of the school, in consultation with the school principal. The report issued by the Batory Foundation³ (2013), analyzing pupils' self-governance in Poland, emphasizes the importance of youth self-governance as a tool for citizenship education and young leadership.

The role of pupil councils and youth participation in Polish schools is also stressed in the core curriculum of general education (2008). Its introduction sets requirements for schools, which are obliged to ensure students an actual impact on selected areas of the school life. Another reference in the national curriculum concerning youth participation is the development of values and attitudes that determine efficient and responsible activities in the contemporary world.

In conclusion, although pupil councils are supported through two main education policy documents, youth participation in Polish schools is not a priority of education at local and national levels, which results in lack of measures encouraging or even obliging school principals and teachers to support youth participation.

Global Citizenship Education within Education Practice

Similarly to youth participation, active citizenship is mentioned in the main legal basis for education in Poland – the Act on the Education System. The first paragraphs emphasize the role of school as a provider of necessary conditions for the development of each student, preparing them for fulfilling their obligations in the family and the society, in line with principles of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, justice and freedom. The role of the teacher is to foster pupils' moral and civic attitudes (Paragraph 4). According to Paragraph 90u, the national government

2 Śliwerski, B. Diagnoza społeczeństwa publicznego szkolnictwa III RP w gorsecie centralizmu, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Krakow 2013

3 Fundacja Batorego. Samorządność uczniowska w Polsce. Analiza sytuacji i próba sformułowania propozycji rozwiązań. http://www.ceo.org.pl/sites/default/files/news-files/samorzadnosc_uczniowska_w_polsce.pdf [accessed on 28.02.2016].

can adopt programs in schools, designed to support civic education. Global education within the education policy was mentioned for the first time in 2011, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Education and selected NGOs signed an agreement on the promotion of the development of global education in Poland. The agreement contains a declaration of actions aimed at popularizing formal and informal global education in Poland. Global education in Poland doesn't have its own curriculum, however it is sometimes incorporated into school subjects such as History and Social Education.

Young People at Risk – National Context

In Poland, the term “at risk” has a strong intuitive meaning. There is no definition of at-risk pupils in Poland, however, the meaning of the term refers to indicators such as socio-economic background, school failure (no promotion to the next class), high rates of absenteeism, suspension, tension in contacts with teachers and other school staff, behavioral problems and anger management issues. The term is strongly connected with “social exclusion”, and in this context it refers directly to pupils at risk of leaving school before graduation.

It is difficult to measure the scale of early school leaving (ESL) in Poland. However, using the so-called Early School Leaving indicator⁴, in the Polish context ESL means “discontinuing the compulsory education”, “leaving school before graduation” of compulsory education until 18 and/or compulsory schooling until 16 years of age. It means that early school leavers in Poland are young people who do not take up education and do not complete compulsory education, or people who have not completed any form of compulsory schooling and have not obtained a school diploma. In Poland, research tends to associate ESL with NEET⁵.

⁴ B. Fatyga, A. Tyszkiewicz, P. Zielinski, Skala i powody wypadania uczniów z systemu edukacji w Polsce. Raport z badań odpadu szkolnego na terenie 32 gmin. Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2001.

⁵ A NEET or neet is a young person who is "Not in Education, Employment, or Training"

United Kingdom

Youth Participation within Education Policy

England

In England, there are two distinct strands of regulation shaping youth participation in English schools. Neither strand works predominantly through the school curriculum. This key factor limits formal opportunities for youth participation.

The first strand of regulation is contained in the Policy Paper “2010 to 2015 Government Policy: Young People” (2015)⁶. The paper outlines three overarching policy priorities for young people with social action falling within the remit of the third and final priority. The three priorities are 1) improving education, 2) supporting more young people to study beyond the age of 16, and 3) providing greater opportunities, including opportunities for social action, participation and voice.

The second strand of regulation is contained in the statutory guidance “Listening to and involving children and young people” (2014) issued to local authorities and maintained schools by the Department for Education⁷. Unlike the initiatives outlined in the first strand, this guidance is legally binding upon maintained schools (although not Academies or Free Schools) and is issued directly by the Department for Education. It is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)⁸ to which the UK Government is committed to pay “due regard”. The guidance defines “pupil voice” as “ways of listening to the views of pupils and/or involving them in decision-making” and outlines the benefits of pupil voice as encouraging “pupils to become active participants in a democratic society” and “contributing to achievement and attainment.”

In England, there are numerous semi-formal opportunities for youth participation and voice in schools. These include Model United Nations General Assemblies (MUNGA) organized under the umbrella of the United National Association-UK (UNA-UK), the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DoE)⁹ and debating competitions organized by the English Speaking Union (ESU).

6 <http://bit.ly/1L6h1OG>

7 <http://bit.ly/15rZQZu>

8 <http://uni.cf/1tPmZMw>

9 <http://bit.ly/1y9lrkn>

Wales

The policy landscape in Wales is significantly less austere than in England. In 2015, Professor Donaldson published “Successful Futures” recommending active citizenship as one of the core curriculum purposes¹⁰. The Welsh Government accepted all the recommendations of the curriculum review in June 2015¹¹ and a new curriculum is being developed with 120 “pioneer schools” to be implemented by schools from 2018.

Scotland

The “Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014¹²” requires a holistic understanding of well-being. The Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) see children and young people as “agents for change” and Goal 4.7 specifically highlights Education for Global Citizenship, Rights and Learning for Sustainability. Global citizenship education gives people of all ages the chance to think critically about complex global issues and empowers them to act for a fairer future. The Scottish Government has already demonstrated its commitment to this area of education through its work in implementing GIRFEC¹³ (Getting it Right for Every Child) and new duties in relation to UNCRC in which young people have the right to express their views freely and have their views listened to in all matters affecting them. This is reflected in the Learning for Sustainability Report 2012¹⁴ and through How Good is Our School 4th Edition (HGIOS4)¹⁵.

Global Citizenship Education within Education Policy and Practice

England

The status of global citizenship education in England has shifted and diminished from being “recommended” and centralized before 2010 to becoming “voluntary” and decentralized since 2010. With the exception of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) and “British values”, which cover a broad range of learning outcomes other than global citizenship, there is no requirement for The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspectors to report on global citizenship activities unless schools draw it to their

10 <http://bit.ly/1Tg2BmG>

11 <http://bit.ly/240GR1N>

12 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

13 www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright

14 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/OnePlanetSchools/LearningforSustainabilityReport>

15 <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/h/hgios4/introduction.asp>

attention in their School Evaluation Forms. In the meantime other pressing issues – the academic curriculum, accountability and budgets – have intensified in their level of importance. They increasingly occupy schools’ attention. Unless global citizenship directly helps to meet schools’ other priorities, its status risks becoming marginal and disembodied.

Wales

Similarly to the English context of GCE, the status of global citizenship education in Wales has been changing over the last decade. One of the first documents introduced at the policy level was the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) Strategy for Action (2006), followed two years later by providing schools the guidance how to deliver ESDGC. Since 2010, the support for ESDGC has declined. One of the latest documents on ESDGC comes from 2014 and contains recommendations for schools and local authorities how to improve the ESDGC practice. Another significant document was Successful Futures¹⁶ (2015), which reviews the curriculum and assesses arrangements in Wales. The report offered a number of recommendations for developing new curriculum for Wales including four purposes for the curriculum. One of them was “that children and young people develop as ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world”.

Scotland

One of the main sources of the GCE policy in Scotland is the Curriculum for Excellence. The education in Scotland, according to the document “should open the doors to opportunities which enable children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society”. An entitlement to learning for sustainability complements the purpose of the Curriculum for Excellence and sends a clear message that in the context of the broad general education and the totality of children and young people’s experience through their education, sustainability and development as responsible global citizens should be an expectation for all.

Sustainability and global citizenship in England are embedded in the experiences and outcomes. Young people can develop skills, confidence, knowledge, attitudes and values through learning for sustainability, which helps equip them for jobs and life. It is important to take forward

16 <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150225-successful-futures-en.pdf> [accessed on 1.03.2016]

education with a strong commitment to fairness, equity and social justice with responsibility for our social, economic and environmental impact.

The educational practice shows innovative approach initiatives towards learning how to become citizens of the world. Some Scottish local authorities have introduced testing for pupils in English and Maths with the idea that testing is marginal to the emerging world. The focus of teaching, according to Professor Graham Donaldson¹⁷ “needs to be moved towards deeper conceptual understanding, creativity, problem solving and help young people develop their ethical understanding and value systems such that they can become responsible twenty-first century citizens”.

Young People at Risk – National Context

In the United Kingdom, there is no agreed definition of “young people at risk”. However, the term “young people at risk” applies to the youth who achieve D-G grades at GCSE, as it most closely reflects the European Commission definition of the young person’s “highest level of education or training attained being ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short.” Finding the total number of GCSE candidates in England for any one year is surprisingly difficult. However, media reports suggest that between 700,000 and 750,000 is a reasonable estimate. Therefore, the scale of the “at risk” phenomena has an upper range of between 350,000 and 450,000 young people per year.

National Discussion – Summary

The national discussion shows a tendency to diminish youth participation within the policy and practice of education. In both formal and informal education there are not enough opportunities for developing such skills as leadership, motivation, engagement, self-expression, creativity, entrepreneurship. What is also noticeable in a number of countries, is that more attention should be paid to teachers’ education and training on how to cultivate students’ skills and promote global citizenship education, as this would promote active youth participation.

The autonomy of teaching methods, organization and school programs in all national systems affects global citizenship education and education policy and practice in different ways. Although there is a range of initiatives and programs concerning global citizenship education at

¹⁷ <http://learning.gov.wales/news/sitenews/successful-futures/?lang=en> [accessed on 1.03.2016]

the policy level, the global perspective is not an explicit requirement within the curricula in the 7 national systems in question, and its formal position has weakened since 2010. Global citizenship education in primary and secondary curricula incorporates ideas and concepts such as human rights, equality, solidarity and acceptance of diversity, social justice, peace, poverty, unemployment, sustainable development and environmental issues.

The national discussion exposed gaps concerning the formal definition of “the youth at risk”. The term has a strong intuitive meaning, which refers to indicators such as socio-economic background; migration or minority background; learning disabilities and special educational needs, and school failure (they have earned no “pass” marks or grades). However, the term has no consistent definition and can be viewed as it is widely used.

IV Future Youth School Forums – Teachers’ Perspective

Cyprus

Teachers Reflections on Participation and Skills Development

One of the main reasons for conducting this research was to learn from teachers what participation is in their opinion and what is needed to support participation among the youth. During all four focus groups, teachers’ discussions of participation and skills development were nuanced and complex. Interviews with teachers from B’ District Gymnasium and the discussions held afterwards did not result in any clear understanding of what participation among pupils is, including examples of active participation in school and out-of-school activities. One of the teachers described it as follows: “Students don’t really understand what it means to be a student. In most cases they think that their role as students ends when they are off school. They cannot understand that what they learn at school can be implemented during their daily activities. They don’t care about how they can multiply what they have learnt at school or how they can implement their knowledge and maybe influence others. They expect that the school will take action and ask them to take part in something, so there is no need for them to think of actions or suggest any ideas for activities.”

Based on the results of the Flash Eurobarometer survey “European Youth” (No. 408) (European Youth Report, 2015), there has been an increase in the percentage of the youth in Cyprus involved in organized voluntary activities from 2011 to 2015, from 30% to 38% (pg. 30). Most of the Cypriot young respondents (71%) also mentioned that in most cases those activities focus on charities, and humanitarian and development aid, and 18% said that they don’t really participate in activities relating to education, training or sports (pg. 36). According to 46% of the respondents, most of those activities are aimed at Cyprus (pg. 32).

It needs to be mentioned, however, that lack of understanding of what participation in everyday school life means doesn’t concern all school community members. According to teachers, there are pupils who are supported by their families in being active members of school life, showing

initiative in participating in social activities. “Often, students come to school promoting ideas that they have learned from their family members,” said one of the teachers.

Teachers told us that to them the curriculum is a source of opportunities for participation development. The change of the educational policy in Cyprus towards promoting participation and active citizenship started 2010, with the introduction of the National Curriculum. To give examples of teaching aims, below there are some extracts from the National Curriculum (National Curriculum, 2010)¹⁸ that refer to principles and values of participation and active citizenship:

To understand the relationships of individuals and local communities with the global community... to take responsible position on global issues such as poverty, unemployment, social exclusion, ecological destruction, social and racial racism, social inequality, educational inequalities, peace etc. To critically evaluate issues regarding freedom, peace, equality, justice, human rights and obligations in society. To strengthen national and cultural identity through awareness and respect for diversity. (Civic Education)

To realize that their “own voice” and action can contribute to the shaping of sustainability models at local and global levels. (Environmental Education)

To raise awareness on energy issues and energy saving. To use Renewable Energy Sources in various practical constructions. To identify environmental problems and suggest ways of tackling them. (Design and Technology)

To realize the value of friendship, solidarity, altruistic loyalty, cooperation, tolerance, peace, and to consolidate the democratic ethos. (Greek Language)

To critically analyze diversity ... To work out ways of conflict resolution, effective communication, respect for rights and maintaining friendship... to strengthen positive relationships, acceptance of diversity and reduce violence. To take responsibility for their part in the decision-making processes, actively and democratically intervene in society targeting the changes needed for sustainable development. (Health Education/Home Economic)

To become partakers of the major problems that mankind is facing today... to function as citizens with criteria of solidarity, understanding, acceptance,

18 Ministry of Education of Cyprus (2010). National Curriculum for Public Schools of the Republic of Cyprus. Accessed on 15 February 2016 at http://www.paideia.org.cy/upload/analytika_programmata_2010/0.siniptikaanalitikaprogrammata.pdf

cooperation and communication with others and other nations. To respect the rights of all people to equality. To participate in seeking solutions to local, regional and international problems. (Geography)

To adopt a positive attitude towards the equality of sexes, races, nations and languages. To promote peaceful human coexistence and solidarity. (Religious Education)

Teachers strongly recommended skills that are related to participation, such as (1) collaboration – “students don’t know how to collaborate and work together having a common goal”, (2) discussion and public speaking – “most of the time our students are afraid to express their ideas and thoughts, or speak in front of an audience”, “they are not able to listen to different opinions or discuss them. They think that their opinion is more important than the opinions of others”, (3) critical thinking – “they think that in school, teachers are supposed to give them all the information and knowledge, so there is no need for them to think critically. Maybe in some cases this is our fault as well, because we do not ask our students to express their opinions and thoughts as much. We need to trust them more and let them know that their opinions do matter”, (4) leadership – “some of the students have the skills needed to become good leaders but some of them don’t know what it means to be a leader. They definitely need some guidance on that.”

Participation was mentioned by Cypriot teachers not only with reference to pupils. Focus groups with teachers from Cyprus and the discussions held afterwards suggest the need for the development and conducting of training sessions with teachers, aimed at the development of leadership skills at the school level. Teachers admitted the need for training that would contribute to the development of active participation in school and the understanding of the leadership idea. The reason for this might be the teacher training policy in Cyprus.

After the educational reform within teacher education, which focused on the improvement of teachers’ recruitment, evaluation, and professional development processes, Cyprus has implemented several reforms regarding the professional development area. The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI), which was given the task to train teachers in Cyprus by the Government, offers “novel forms and patterns of professional development courses and seminars, such as school-based training and distance/online training”¹⁹. The CPI also provides

¹⁹ Teacher Policies in the Republic of Cyprus, 2014, p. 8.

specific training seminars to all in-service teachers and Headmasters in Cyprus, aimed at educating teachers of all educational levels about the new curriculum and its aims. The Ministry of Education has the authority to set educational goals and monitor the National Curriculum. It also prepares guidelines for teachers regarding the skills that students should cultivate as part of all subjects at all educational levels. Then the teachers' tasks are evaluated with the use of internal and external evaluation methods. However, teachers are free to make decisions about the implementation of teaching methods. "Teachers are required to participate in teacher professional development, but only for two mandatory days at the start of the school year in the case of primary school teachers and at the start of the calendar year in the case of secondary school teachers."²⁰ Beside the trainings and seminars mentioned above, the education policy in Cyprus does not offer any specific training on the topics of young people's participation, leadership, civic engagement, active citizenship or cross-curricular skills. However, relevant opportunities for professional development are offered by universities and teachers' unions, and those programs are also approved by the Ministry of Education of Cyprus.

Apart from training sessions, teachers would welcome support from schools offering them opportunities to "promote ideas and develop skills not considered as part of the curriculum". The focus on the curriculum and lack of time for other activities with students was mostly mentioned as one of the reason why pupils don't have many chances at school to develop active participation and leadership skills. According to teachers, such training should focus on skills that have to be promoted among pupils, including certain methods. As one of the teachers explained: "We would like to have some guidelines or maybe materials that could be easily implemented in the curriculum and used during lessons." Another issue that could be covered by training sessions is leadership, which, as one of the teachers said and as other teachers agreed, should explain "how to encourage students to be more active and how to support their engagement". Training materials should be comprehensive and include not only the theoretical background but they should also support interaction, practical activities, games, videos, if possible translated into Greek.

²⁰Teacher Policies in the Republic of Cyprus, 2014, p. 19.

An important reason for conducting this research was to find out from teachers what opportunities or programs are available in their schools to involve young people in developing their “participation” skills. During focus groups, there was a strong consensus among participants about “School Clubs” as opportunities that exist in schools, developing engagement and active participation. Based on the experience that teachers gained during cooperation with School Clubs, when looking for the potential for activity such as the Youth Forum, one should focus on them. Within lower secondary education, School Clubs are not compulsory, so teachers organize them together with pupils and work jointly as their members. These are bottom-up initiatives of teachers and pupils, which create activities according to their own plans and aims, however, the school administration needs to approve of all the ideas. According to what teachers said, “School Clubs” ensure “pupils’ willingness to get involved and participate in activities concerning global issues.” All they need is interest, willingness and motivation to stay after school with their friends and undertake activities in school in their free time.

Teachers Reflections on Global Citizenship

Teachers from Cyprus made several suggestions as to how to develop knowledge and skills connected with global issues within curricular and non-curricular activities. They recognized a lot of opportunities to develop knowledge and skills required to become a global citizen during classes, and they are willing to use the opportunities that the curriculum offers, in different ways referring to global problems within the subject they teach. In order to illustrate this, here are some quotes from teachers: “I teach Design and Technology and we focus on environmental problems and problems connected with the issue of technology and poverty”; “We try to include global issues in the lessons of Greek Language. Based on the new national curriculum, we promote global issues such as poverty, hunger etc.”; “Sometimes we organize lectures at school, inviting experts or people who work on those issues. A couple of years ago we organized a lecture by a priest who had been working for years in Kenya, helping children there.”

Global citizenship in the curriculum, as teachers indicated, refers to the national education policy in Cyprus that promotes global citizenship. After the reform of the educational system and the development of the new national curriculum, global citizenship education has become one of the main issues of the Cyprus Education. Most school subjects, both at primary and secondary education levels, incorporate ideas and concepts such as human rights, equality,

solidarity and acceptance of diversity, social justice, peace, poverty, unemployment, sustainable development and environmental issues²¹. However, in some cases the national curriculum refers to global citizenship education (GCE) through the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Overall, it can be said that global citizenship in Cyprus serves as a vehicle for sustainable development, since they both aim at the development of values and skills that are based on the concepts of human rights, social justice, diversity, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

Due to the unique characteristics of the Cypriot political context, the development of the country's national policies on global education and the development of the civil society are affected by the general context. Therefore, many young people in Cyprus still feel the need and responsibility for dealing with the internal division in Cyprus²². According to the Cyprus Human Development Report (2009), majority of young Cypriots agree that they have the responsibility to help find a peaceful solution in order to end the island's division, however, many don't know how to do this or they believe that opportunities to become active in supporting a solution are limited for young people. With the Cyprus Problem still unresolved, many national and international NGOs look at youth civic participation as a possible means of promoting peace-building in the country. In this respect, a number of projects supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) over the years centered on reconciliation, especially in the area of the youth and civil society development. Thus, it seems to be really important for the education policy of Cyprus to focus on young people's skills that will promote their active participation and civic engagement. To conclude, national NGOs are active in the area of global citizenship in and outside of schools. A closer relationship and coordination between the state authorities, ministries, local authorities, teachers, parents and NGOs/NGYOs will facilitate the cultivation of active global citizenship and active youth participation among students. NGOs that are highly active in the field of global citizenship can provide students with knowledge and

21Ministry of Education of Cyprus (2010). National Curriculum for Public Schools of the Republic of Cyprus. Accessed on 15 February 2016 at

http://www.paideia.org.cy/upload/analytika_programmata_2010/0.siniptikaanalitikaprogrammata.pdf

22 The Cyprus dispute or the Cyprus issue is an ongoing issue centered on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus. Although the Republic of Cyprus is recognized as the sole legitimate state, governing the whole island, the north is de facto under the administration of the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is under the control of Turkish Cypriots and Turkish Armed Forces.

opportunities for developing active citizenship in non-formal learning environment and closer to real world situations.

Describing the level of awareness of young people in relation to global issues, teachers were impressed by pupils' performance and their eagerness to take part in classes connected with global problems. Topics that, according to teachers, are particularly relevant to their pupils include environmental problems "because they have been learning about them since primary school" and poverty issues, however, this topic "is a little bit more difficult for them to understand". As one of the teachers explained: "They don't realize that there are countries that do not have the basic utilities, i.e. electricity, water, etc. They know that there are shortages in some countries but they cannot understand that people in developing countries are actually in real need of those things. It is something they have never experienced, so they can't understand it."

Teachers Reflections on Youth at Risk

The last main question referred to the issue of the youth at risk of early school leaving. Teachers from Cyprus mentioned 4 main categories of "at-risk youth" in their school. These are (1) foreign speakers, (2) students with learning disabilities and special needs, (3) students with lower grades, and (4) students with family issues / financial difficulties. The school where teachers work offers several programs that help the youth at risk to re-engage. Examples include the "Support and Literacy Program" for students with learning disabilities, groups helping foreign speakers, and the "Social Work Program" for students displaying delinquent behavior.

Cypriot teachers also suggested that "the youth at risk usually have equal opportunities to the rest of the students but in some cases they don't feel confident enough to express their thoughts and participate in activities like the rest of the students." Asked to take part in extra-curricular activities or express their ideas, they show the same involvement and willingness as others. "Sometimes, those students participate in some activities more eagerly than the rest of the students because they feel they need to prove what they can achieve," said one of the teachers. Another added: "They don't lack of skills or competences. They just need to be motivated and to understand that their teachers believe in them". In addition, from the teachers' perspective, at-risk youth seem to have "the same, or even greater skills than the rest of the students."

The curriculum reform mentioned above wasn't only aimed at developing youth participation and global citizenship in Cyprus. A distinct link to the youth at risk can be found in the introduction to the document, explaining other curriculum aims, such as "prevention of any negative consequences that often accompany disabled children, difficult family environments, financial difficulties and different cultural backgrounds"²³. The "youth at risk" are considered in Cyprus to be young people with special visual, audio and mobility needs, learning difficulties, family or psychological-emotional issues, and financial issues as well as immigrants, students from different countries, and foreign speakers. According to the research of Michaelidou-Evripidou (2012)²⁴ conducted in Cypriot schools, it seems that (1) certain schools have higher rates of students "at risk", (2) more boys face literacy problems than girls, and (3) the socioeconomic background of the students "at risk" is a factor which is highly associated with literacy problems.

Italy

Teachers Reflections on Participation and Skills Development

A different perspective on participation and skills development emerges from focus groups with Italian teachers and the youth. When considering participation and skills development among pupils from IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School, the participants of the Italian focus group expressed the need for teacher training. Teachers felt being left on their own when extracurricular activities or educational innovations were introduced in the school. They jointly agreed about "lack of training on such topics as participation" and about the fact that even "pre-service training doesn't equip teachers in Italy with skills in promoting youth participation". Apart from participation and skills development training, teachers emphasized the need for training related to classroom psychology in order "to set objectives and create inclusive pedagogical programs that will foster students' creativity and leadership in their learning". In this context, teachers referred to the recent educational reform and the decree la Buona Scuola, which provides a set of new objectives and competences for schools in general, but particularly for teachers.

²³ National Curriculum, 2010, p. 6.

²⁴ Michaelidou-Evripidou Athena (2012). Literacy policy in practice: the case of the Cyprus Educational System. Presented at the "Literacy for all" conference, 5-6 September 2012, Nicosia, Cyprus. Accessed on 15 February 2016 at <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/file/SqZMWmWXKEP2nxXo9+AUZw>.

Teachers pointed out the need and importance of in-service training because, as one teacher explained: “the times are changing and the youth change over time, so each generation has different needs as far as teaching is concerned”, as a result of which teachers “need to accordingly update their teaching methods and knowledge how to teach in general.”

There are two particularly important points identified during the Italian education policy needs analysis, which have to be mentioned here. Firstly, as articulated by the focus group participants, there are no strategies in Italy supporting national programs for youth participation in schools. Secondly, active citizenship isn't a priority in the national education policy. Although active citizenship isn't an education priority at the national level, the promotion of skills and knowledge how to be an active citizen is present in Italian schools. The Italian education system is given great autonomy in relation to teaching methods, organization and curriculum. This allows schools to decide about activities they support. As far as IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School is concerned, two examples were mentioned by the focus group teachers. The first example refers to the Buona Scuola national reform, which supports participation and encourages the youth through IT (the so-called “digital educators”). The second example is the Content and Language Integrated Learning model of teaching (CLIL) that “promotes active participation of students, but it is not widespread at the national level”. At the national level, active citizenship is mentioned in the Italian Citizenship and Constitution 169/2008 Law that regulates a number of actions on awareness-raising and staff training, aimed at acquiring knowledge and skills related to “Citizenship and the Constitution” issues in primary and secondary schools. The National Guidelines for the first cycle (6-11 years) set in the Presidential Decree of 16.2.2012 state that the skills developed within individual disciplines contribute to the promotion of greater transversal skills. The objective of this cycle is to lay the foundations for active citizenship. The Presidential Decree of 15.3.2010 for the next cycle (11 – 19 years) states that further consideration should be given to the issues of citizenship and Republican Constitution through activities carried out by educational institutions, providing the necessary skills for an active and responsible civic life.

In Italy, there are no strategies or national programs aimed at developing participation skills. That is why a supplementary question related to participation was asked with the aim to find out if and how IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School supports youth participation at the local level. Teachers jointly agreed that “the school supports youth participation” and gave such examples

as the Oxfam Youth Ambassadors model. They also mentioned general cooperation with other institutions and different local authorities “to raise awareness in different areas, such as MDGs, recycling, fundraising, environment, and startup enterprises”. Teachers noticed that IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School is exceptionally good at supporting the youth’s involvement, at the same time expressing some concern that not all schools in Italy are like that. This is why Italian schools “should pay more attention to how to motivate and engage teachers in active participation in the school life”. Even if IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School supports youth participation, there are some improvements needed, such as “promotion of clearer communication in relation to the existing initiatives and opportunities for the participation of both the youth and teachers in school life”. Another issue raised by teachers was improvement in the strengthening of collaboration between teachers towards supporting participation.

When considering the Future Youth School Forum Project in their school, teachers in Italy gave several examples of activities that had been recently implemented in IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School. Teachers referred to the already mentioned “Youth Ambassadors” program aimed at involving young people in developing their “participation” skills, “Telephone green line against gender violence” and the “Legacy project” conducted in their school. When estimating the effectiveness of such programs, teachers mostly appreciated “team activities where students can be the protagonists and organize themselves in connection with topics relevant to them.” These activities promote “integration among students with disabilities and migrant background,” added another teacher. Examples of good practice related to opportunities offered by IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School for fostering young people’s participation were the “so-called ‘open days’ for the graduates of lower secondary schools, conducted by students in order to promote enrolment in the school based on the graduates’ specific skills.” Importantly, teachers voiced some concerns that although “all the activities have an impact on formal curricula, unfortunately, they are not integrated into class activities.”

Teachers welcomed the idea of implementing another project that develops youth participation. Future Youth School Forums could potentially support an active role and responsibilities of the “Youth Advisory Board and class representatives” that operate in the school.

Teachers Reflections on Global Citizenship

During the focus group, Italian teachers were also asked about the introduction of global citizenship education into the classroom. They admitted that whenever possible they introduced global issues into curricular activities, however, they didn't know if other teachers working in their school did the same as "we don't collaborate with each other and don't share experiences as often as we should". Another teacher mentioned that "in lessons alternative to Religious Education, teachers work on global citizenship but without any specific competence in that." Extracurricular activities focus on global education and have an impact on formal curricula but they are not incorporated into classroom activities. Teachers added that global, social and civic issues in Italy are mostly delivered by third sector organizations in partnership with schools. Global citizenship education isn't a priority of the Italian national policy. It is perceived only as a transversal competence and doesn't have any dedicated time or curriculum.

It is interesting, however, that in 2015 the education policy on global citizenship education changed and now schools should more extensively promote research, experimenting, didactics innovation, participation and active citizenship within annual courses, including interdisciplinary activities. The innovation in the educational policy in Italy from 2015 refers to the curriculum's triennial plan developed by teachers based on the planning of the teaching content, content development, and projects within curricular activities. The school's responsibility is to choose which courses (subjects) will be available for their pupils, including extra-curricular activities.

Teachers Reflections on Youth at Risk

The main reasons for children's underachievement in IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School mentioned by teachers, are (1) socio-economic situation (many students work while studying), (2) low level of class attendance, (3) low level of the applicability of their learning, (4) a large number of students per class, and (4) didactic continuity (keeping the same classes over time). When trying to define "the youth at risk", teachers emphasized in particular pupils with migration backgrounds. The main reason for them being at risk, according to teachers, is the fact that they don't know Italian or their knowledge of the language is insufficient. The youth at risk also have "special education needs and specific learning disorders." Another significant feature of "at-risk youth" is the economic situation of young people. In many cases, "they go to school in the

morning and afternoon, and they work in the evenings or at weekends. Their school attendance rates are low and the quality of participation in class is not the best.” The third characteristic of the youth at risk is their family that “doesn’t support young people in the transition from childhood to adulthood in an efficient way.”

When referring to the youth at risk, Italian teachers told us that there was a need to involve the youth from IIS Leonardo Da Vinci School “in multidisciplinary projects making use of multimedia.” Teacher added that such non-academic interventions “might foster their capabilities. Special emphasis should also be put on giving pupils from the Leonardo Da Vinci school some responsibilities.” In order to support the youth at risk, one would have to support “the collaboration that refers to both collaboration between teachers and collaboration with parents of the youth at risk.” Lack of cooperation between teachers in different areas was emphasized by all teachers taking part in the interviews. Such cooperation, in the opinion of the focus group teachers, would allow them to share experiences and examples of good practices how to support the youth at risk. Teachers pointed out that staff meetings might be a good opportunity for teachers to share such experiences and promote cooperation between teachers. Describing the current situation from their own experience, one of the teachers said: “During teachers’ meetings we only discuss bureaucracy and procedures, and not the teaching contents or planning.”

What is interesting when considering the youth at risk in the Italian context is the fact that one of the main education goals set by the Italian government is the fight against early school leaving. ESL. In July 2015, Italy introduced a new reform concerning the national educational system. Preventing early school leaving and school dropout is now one of the law’s goals, but a “strategic vision” of how to fight these phenomena is still missing. Yet, some of the measures provided for by the new law can be seen as a step in the right direction. In the context of the FYS-Forum project, two of the measures should be mentioned. The first one is the strengthening of the link between school and work. Therefore, each student will be able to create an individual educational path, develop their passions and increase their capabilities, get to know the world of work and see themselves from a different perspective and in a different role. The law introduces the minimum duration of internships during the last years of upper secondary schools (at least 400 hours in polytechnic and professional institutes and 200 hours in secondary schools). The second one is the creation of a network of schools at the national level (by June

2016). Setting up a network of schools will help to define and manage them in a more coordinated and synergistic way, which will make it possible to optimize the available resources.

Lithuania

Teachers Reflections on Participation and Skills Development

Lithuanian teachers believe that participation is connected with skills such as creativity, critical thinking, leadership, and communication skills. Citizenship engagement, as one of the teachers explained, is “everyday ‘active citizenship’”, which means “for example, picking up litter in the corridor, taking care of first graders”. This social skill should be learnt by pupils from other pupils or from teachers within the school community “where the same rules apply to everyone”. Another teacher introduced their own understanding of citizenship, combining it with helping each other, and explained it as follows: “What I mean by helping each other is, for example, when I ask a group of pupils to help me with something and then others also come and say they want to join in and are willing to help as well. Pupils do this in my school when taking part in various actions, such as collecting litter and cleaning the environment, or supporting charity.”

In order to develop participation and public speaking skills in pupils, teachers’ participation and confidence about public speaking are essential. “Each teacher has to overcome their fears and develop these skills. Nowadays, not all teachers are even able to talk freely in front of an audience and not everyone can express their opinion freely, not because they don’t have an opinion but because they don’t have the confidence.”

The second main question referred to the vision of the Future Youth School Forums Project in Jonas and Petras Vileisiai School and skills that are needed to implement it. The first issue indicated by teachers from Kaunas was the necessity to develop skills of critical thinking and communication in pupils. The teachers also mentioned leadership as a skill that needs to be paid particular attention to when considering skills that should be supported by schools. However, leadership also refers to other members of the school community.

During the focus groups teachers indicated leadership skills of both pupils and teachers as crucial factors behind running a Youth Forum in their school. To them, good opportunities are “seminars and training courses that are helpful”, and particularly “seminars where we are

trainers ourselves (...) as only a leader can create another leader". According to teachers, opportunities to develop active participation skills in both teachers and pupils include project participation, broadening horizons abroad, communication with people from different countries, and building self-confidence. Another opportunity taking part in training courses and seminars abroad, involving face-to-face interactions with teachers from other countries. To illustrate this point, one of the teachers said: "When you go abroad, you realize that people elsewhere are the same, and sometimes you even have more knowledge but you are too shy to speak up and express yourself. It helps you overcome your fears and makes you realize that you are capable of different things." Another teacher added: "Internships abroad are very good because you can go and see everything yourself, expand your horizons, see how it is done elsewhere and ask yourself – why can't I do this in my job? Most of the time it doesn't require any special equipment or resources, you just have to have lots of ideas in your head and be creative." Teachers also mentioned practical experience, including participating in projects and conducting seminars as good opportunities for developing skills such as participation and engagement.

Teachers pointed to the fact that the Future Youth School Forums Project has got potential in schools where being active and engaged is seen "as a norm", as it is the case in Jonas and Petras Vileisiai School, where everyone can participate and participation in school events isn't exclusively for the "best" or the "most active" students. One of the teachers gave the following example: "Now my pupils have to do a recording for St. Valentine's Day and the 8th graders have offered to edit the recording, even though they don't know each other very well." The everyday "active citizenship" mentioned above is initiated in the school because "pupils see the behavior of others, and we have become a community where the same rules apply to everyone," added another teacher.

Participants frequently expressed the sense of importance connected with the fact that the school management supports activities suggested by teachers or pupils. The school's Headmaster was described as empowering and superior to the whole school community, which is important for the whole school community. Supporting active participation by the school's Headmaster was mentioned as a precondition for the development of participation within the school community. In Jonas and Petras Vileisiai School, "the principal has regular meetings with pupils and representatives of the pupil council". The school principal supports other activities

and projects, where pupils are given opportunities to learn about engagement and global issues, like the STEAM²⁵ project that “focuses on these subjects through experimental/research activities and through developing pupils’ competences.”

Considering pupils’ school governance within formal education in Lithuania, one of the options are “Pupil Councils”, mostly created in primary and secondary schools. In general, pupil councils in Lithuania are involved in different school events, being rather less involved in representing pupils’ interests before the school management. Pupil councils from local schools form one national “Lithuanian Pupils’ Association”. Apart from school councils, there are “Regional pupil council forums” attended by pupils as well as representatives of local authorities. The activity of council forums focuses on the strengthening of pupils’ self-governance. The last opportunity includes “Debates” or “Debate Clubs”, popular in primary and secondary schools, mainly led by English teachers. Pupils taking part in local debates have an opportunity to participate in international events and/or competitions. In addition to opportunities for the Youth Forum within formal education, there are at least 2 organizations that unite students in Lithuania, being part of non-formal education. One of them is the “Lithuanian Council of Youth Organizations”, the largest youth NGO in Lithuania, Member of the European Youth Forum, with approximately 200,000 members. The main activities of the Council involve the organization of forums, assemblies, and working groups, and leading projects at regional, national and international levels. The other opportunity is the “Lithuanian Students’ Union”, which is a non-governmental organization. It represents the rights of Lithuanian students and unites higher education institutions’ student unions from all over the country. The LSS organizes seminars and forums and provides consultancy to the members of local Students’ Unions.

Teachers Reflections on Global Citizenship

In the opinion of Lithuanian teachers, global education requires certain knowledge of global issues and phenomena, considered from the local perspective and accompanied by the development of active participation skills. According to teachers, global citizenship education focuses on “learning about sustainable development”, “the impact of global phenomena on local actions, including the opportunity to understand the global issue itself”, and the meaning of “being responsible not only for yourself, but also feeling responsible for your community, city,

25 STEAM the acronym stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math

country, and even the whole world.” Beside the responsibility, important skills include “critical thinking, active participation, creativity, and communication.” What is interesting is the fact that the term “Global Citizenship” isn’t often used in the educational context in Lithuania. The term used instead is “Global education”.

As global education is supported by the school management, teachers feel they are given proper attention and most teachers include it in their lessons, declaring experience in teaching global issues. Support at the level of school management results from the policy of the Lithuanian government aiming to build “the society that has to become active.” According to this strategy, each society member “has to become a responsible citizen, able to self-generate their success and connect with the international and global community, an advanced economy and a distinctive national culture. Therefore, the education policy and indicated directions of change must motivate the education community to continuously learn in order to reach the goal of equal opportunities for all.”

In the opinion of teachers, pupils in their school demonstrate considerable knowledge of global issues, even though they might not be familiar with the terms of global education and global citizenship or do not know the theory and rationale behind them. Most teachers include these subjects in their curricula in different ways, however, as all five teachers admitted; sometimes they feel they need more resources and ideas how to incorporate global issues into their lessons. Their favorite ways of introducing global issues and engaging pupils are watching films and videos related to these issues and discussing them afterwards, and holding discussions about these topics. An example of a good practice related to the national policy involving global issues is integrating one hour a week into English as a foreign language classes, referring exclusively to global education. Giving global education priority is explained in the document “Citizenship Education Policy: Goals, Resources and Outcomes”²⁶ issued by the Ministry of Education and Science. According to this document, citizenship education in schools should be expanded into informal practical civic activities, paying more attention to such elements of citizenship education as creating opportunities for pupils’ involvement in making school-related decisions and organizing community activities. In addition, there should be no limits to activities that are supplementary to obligatory lessons (citizenship education) in the 9th and 10th

26 <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/legalAct.html?documentId=b1fb6cc089d911e397b5c02d3197f382>
[accessed on 5.04.2016]

grades²⁷, and we should also grasp the opportunities provided by the local community and local organizations and acquaint pupils with the possibilities of active civic participation outside of school.

The importance of citizenship education is also emphasized in the Law of Education of the Republic of Lithuania, which states that “Lithuanian general education schools, by helping students develop life skills and become active members of the civil society, seek to create conditions that are necessary for developing each person’s basic values enabling them to become patriotically-minded, impart the basics of national and ethnic culture, develop a mature national identity, establish such civic and political culture that embodies democratic principles, and gain experience and competences that are necessary for a person being a competent citizen and a member of the European and world communities and a multicultural society”.

Acting as active global citizens seems to be emphasized when discussing global problems in the classroom. Teachers recommended involvement in international education projects conducted in cooperation with schools from abroad, traveling, and communication with people from other countries. All this will be conducive “to developing global citizen awareness among pupils.”

Teachers suggested some possible improvements in the areas of global education and active citizenship at the school level. In teachers’ opinion, the weak point of global education in Lithuania is not the knowledge of global issues but lack of skills how to put this knowledge into action. School doesn’t offer many opportunities for skills development, however, the development of knowledge within global education in Lithuania is strongly present in schools. Teachers in Lithuania have a variety of opportunities for pre- and in-service training. In-service training is obligatory for all teachers. As it is explained in the National Education Strategy, one of the areas of teachers’ qualifications should focus on “social competences such as civic and democratic awareness, active social participation, and social empathy, including the ability to organize charity and support the disabled and those from social risk groups.” Areas that need the most improvement include in particular young people’s participation and global citizenship, however, governmental centers for qualifications in education, such as the one in Kaunas or the Kaunas Education Development Center, in 2015 didn’t offer any training courses that would be directly connected with youth participation and global citizenship. Still, there are NGOs and

27 15-16 years of age.

other organizations, such as Jaunimo Karjeros Centras, which serve as teacher training centers supplementary to the governmental ones and offer such training courses, but there aren't many of them.

Teachers Reflections on Youth at Risk

In teachers' opinion, pupils at risk from disadvantaged areas live under permanent stress and feel "pressure from other people who require them to do things that should be done by adults, and not children, such as looking after their siblings while their parents are at work, cooking for the family, and other things that should not be the responsibility of children. And when they try to be adults and talk about their rights, they are deemed inappropriate. Children from families forcing them to behave like adults make up one of the at-risk groups in schools because when they come to school they also don't act like children, they don't have a normal childhood. For example, children usually find exploring a natural and spontaneous activity, but these children say 'we have more serious problems than taking part in global education activities and getting interested in environmental issues'."

The other group is pupils living in one of the poorest areas of Kaunas (Lithuania), where a lot of families live in poverty and children face difficult living conditions. Both groups of children are overwhelmed by difficult family lives and having to play the role of adults in their families. The school organizes several campaigns in order to help at-risk children, introducing programs that are aimed at developing social and emotional skills. Teachers and assisting staff also support these children in different ways, paying extra attention to them and providing them with counselling after school. Even though there are many such pupils in the school, teachers generally feel that they are making some progress and that they leave the "street culture" outside the school, as one of the teachers said.

When talking about "youth at risk", teachers were more concerned about developing their basic skills and helping them with homework and studying rather than including them in social or school management activities. It may have something to do with the severity of the problem and, as was already mentioned, the fact that these children have so many difficulties at home that it is hard for them to get motivated and care about anything else, let alone global issues.

Considering the youth at risk of early school leaving, the main reason for this phenomena in Jonas and Petras Vileisiai School is the socio-economic situation of the pupils' families. According to the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (2013), the main reasons for social risk are alcohol and drug use and lack of social skills. There are two main groups of pupils "at risk" in Jonas and Petras Vileisiai School in Kaunas: one of them are pupils whose parents immigrated, leaving their children with relatives in Lithuania. One of the teachers pointed to the fact that "migration is one of the most important reasons" for the underachievement of pupils at risk, and another one is "the environment itself –there are some places in the neighborhood where you can find syringes and alcohol bottles lying around." The Ministry of Labor and Social Security has implemented a program "Children and the Youth at Risk", focusing on (1) the establishment of children's day centers, (2) opening youth centers, (3) supporting daytime centers with an open youth area, and (4) developing competences.

United Kingdom

Teachers Reflections on Participation and Skills Development

Participation and skills development were very significant and recurrent issues of discussions throughout the focus groups from Woodside High School, London. Participants expressed frustration with the need to concentrate on the curriculum, while other non-curricular activities were as important in terms of participation and skills development. In the classroom, all teachers feel there is a strong focus on subject specialism's and preparing students to exams, with little space to build on young people's passions and interests. Focusing too much on the curriculum results in having not enough time to explore or encourage the personal interests of young people. One teacher described it in this way: "From Year 9²⁸ its pure GCSEs²⁹, and you start to think that you just have so little time to do stuff unrelated to the curriculum that builds that interest and passion. It is just on to the next thing, next thing, next thing...". Among the interviewed teachers there were also those that identified a correlation between a strong focus on the curriculum and academic attainment and lack of wider interests of young people outside of school. Discussing this, one of the teachers stated: "I think the curriculum sometimes gets in the way of them knowing what interests them outside of school, they're probably at home

²⁸ 14 years of age.

²⁹ GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education.

watching TV and seeing the news, and you don't necessarily have the opportunity to explore how they're feeling about certain issues. I think that's really important because it's a way for students to develop who they are and have their voice heard, sometimes it is overshadowed by the curriculum and they don't necessarily expect to go out on a trip." Another area where teachers were encouraging critical thinking was related to the media, however, this seemed tokenistic rather than being embedded in their teaching and more could be done to help students understand sources, context and reliability of information. Teachers also spoke of the need to shape the way young people view the world and felt they had an important role to play in "guiding them".

The focus on the curriculum and knowledge rather than skills might result from the adaptation of a more "traditional" approach to education, favoring core "knowledge". The new 2014 National Curriculum for England explicitly emphasizes "essential knowledge" as opposed to skills. Another significant issue when considering youth participation and curriculum in England is a limited requirement for youth participation within the formal curriculum.

The focus group participants clearly saw the importance of developing skills the youth need in order to develop engagement and active participation, within both curricular and extra-curricular activities. An example from one of the teachers: "We have a whole range of debates that students can get involved in and a whole range of competitions. They are well encouraged and quite supported across the school." Another example is a CPD³⁰ program where teachers are "encouraged to look at strategies to develop independence, participation and engagement in the classroom."

Teachers from Woodside High School identified in their school many "smart" and "brilliant" kids who are "under the radar" academically. Teachers felt this was partly due to the categorization into sets (lower / higher) and that even when students had great ideas and a thirst for learning about the wider world there wasn't enough opportunity for them to explore such ideas. There was little demonstration on how these young people were nurtured or opportunities for them

30 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) „refers to the process of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience that you gain both formally and informally as you work, beyond any initial training „ (<http://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/managing-your-career/1318/what-is-continuing-professional-development-cpd>)

to take part in participatory activities, as the “same students” were selected for extra-curricular groups, which caused frustration for many of the teachers. In the opinion of the interviewed teachers, there are subjects like English where they can speak to each other and have discussions but in Science and Maths it’s harder to build that in. Good opportunities are offered by more creative subjects like Art, Drama or Music, where it is easier for teachers to realize different sides of actively participating pupils. In general, in academic subjects students seem to inhibit themselves in terms of expression because, as one of the teachers explained: “they think ‘I need to get it right otherwise people will look at us like we got it wrong’ whereas for drama, I see a lot of them come out of their shell and I see a different side to them because technically nothing is wrong.”

What is interesting is that the relationship of Teaching Assistant to Student was widely acknowledged as being more personal than Teacher to Student. Teaching Assistants (TAs) seem to get more opportunity to build non-curricular skills, as like one of TAs said: “we don’t look at the whole class, we look at specific kids so then we have more time to speak to them and say ‘this is inappropriate, if you want to do this, you should say it like this, you don’t want to cause offence by saying it like that – I know you don’t mean it’.” So we probably have more of an insight into that type of area with our kids than as form tutors where we don’t really have that much time, again we’re not seen as a teacher, they’re not scared of us, we can coach them through situations”.

Teachers expressed frustration that not all children get to participation. In that case the role of the teacher is trying to overcome pupils’ fears and stimulate engagement. Sharing their own experience in work with pupils from Woodside High School, teachers emphasized that shy kids only initially don’t want to participate, “unless somebody is really bright and they do see themselves as someone who can get involved in forum speaking.” Another teacher added: “Our kids are quite timid in terms of taking that lead and responsibility. You give them a task in lesson, for example, on your table, and you take a lead and you don’t know what the others are doing. Not all of them, but some of them are quite timid especially when literacy is involved.”

Having provided the teachers’ perception of participation and skills development, the second main question focused on the topic of opportunities that existed in Woodside High School to encourage participation. All teacher participants consistently reported school activities as opportunities for developing civic participation. The focus group participants explicitly saw

success for children in school, with participation in Future Youth School Forums as an opportunity to develop participation and motivation as key skills to become a global citizen. Woodside High School can be seen as a good practice example when considering activities aimed at the development of youth engagement and participation. The leadership team within the school have initiated a broad range of opportunities including the Debating Club, Equalities Group, School Council, Year Council, Youth Ambassador Group, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Prefects and the Eco-Group. Young people participate in a broad range of extra-curricular activities which are highlighted in the school's Quarterly Magazine 'Woodside Voice'.

Although there are opportunities for participation in Woodside High School, it is significant for the teachers' opinion that not so many pupils show willingness to participate even if they need it the most; "in fact it is a struggle to get a wider range of pupils involve," explained a teacher. Other teachers reported that the same set of higher achieving pupils take part in the range of extra-curricular groups, so those who may truly benefit from being involved in them don't have the opportunity to participate and are disengaged and unwilling to put themselves forward to participate.

All teachers expressed their frustration at this and wanted to see other students participate in such activities. Being aware of that, teachers try in different ways to select not all the same pupils and take the risk to involve those who are "brilliant but never noticed". This experience was described by one of the teachers as "challenging". The teacher stated it the following way, and all other teachers shared this view: "It was challenging but I have seen them change and it has been beneficial for them, so it is something I will try to do more, it's just you spend so much time with them it does get tiring. That has shown me that I do need to take more risks because there are kids that are badly behaved in lessons but they want to shine and they love it."

Many of the teachers spoke of the importance of helping young people to understand they have a valid voice and they can speak up and out. They felt it was important to give these students the confidence and a platform to speak out, and then to focus on developing the skills to refine what it is they are saying. This is the approach they primarily take with students who have a louder and perhaps more narrow voice at times, whereby teachers try to encourage more sensitivity and respect in the way they speak out.

Giving pupils voice in England has been recommended by the Department of Education, in the statutory guidance “Listening to and Involving Children and Young People” (2014) issued to local authorities and maintained schools. It is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to which the UK Government is committed to pay “due regard”. The guidance defines “pupil voice” as “ways of listening to the views of pupils and/or involving them in decision-making” and outlines the benefits of pupil voice as encouraging “pupils to become active participants in a democratic society” and “contributing to achievement and attainment”. A further outcome of the “voice” not explicitly referenced in the guidance but referred to elsewhere in the literature is its role in making public services more efficient and responsive to user needs, particularly during an era of austerity. This functional purpose sits at odds with the aims of Future Youth School Forums and other more democratic and developmental visions of participation. There are numerous other semi-formal opportunities for youth participation and voice in English schools. These include Model United Nations General Assemblies (MUNGA) organized under the umbrella of the UNA-UK, the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DoE) and debating competitions organized by the English Speaking Union (ESU).

In Scotland, “giving pupil’s a voice” is part of the holistic understanding of pupils’ well-being. The “Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014” requires, as mentioned in “The Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs), to see children and young people as “agents for change”. One of the aims of global citizenship education in Scottish schools is to give people of all ages the chance to think critically about complex global issues and empower them to act for a fairer future. The Scottish Government has already demonstrated its commitment to this area of education through its work in implementing Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and new duties in relation to UNCRC, in which young people have the right to express their views freely and have their views listened to in all matters affecting them. This is reflected in the Learning for Sustainability Report 2012 and through How Good is Our School 4th Edition (HGIOS4).

Teachers Reflections on Global Citizenship

During the focus groups, English teachers referred to the fact that young people at their school lived in “a bubble” and lacked knowledge or understanding of certain global issues. One teacher referred to terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015: “If you hear some of the perspectives

they have on some of the events, particularly Islam-related, some of them think it's funny. Some of them thought what happened in Paris was funny... So it is really important that we address these things and help them to make sense of the world, even if we play devil's advocate." Another teacher highlighted a select few students who think more critically, for example, quietly questioning why the school decided to have one minute of silence for Paris and not for what was happening in Lebanon or Syria. The students expressed this not as criticism, but as an attempt to ask questions in order to deepen their understanding.

The lack of understanding of global issues, as teachers admitted, doesn't apply to all pupils at Woodside High School. There is a group of students that have a thirst for learning more about global issues which the school doesn't seem to satisfy. One teacher described it this way: "In relation to being more expressive, when they are in their subjects, if at any point you ask the question "what do you think?" they run wild with it and they want to give their opinion, and they then have loads of questions about it but it's hard because you need to stay on task." Here is another example from teacher interviews: "The problem is that they then want to ask a million questions, but if you can do it well it's something that can be really beneficial."

Both the ignorance about global issues and a thirst for learning about global issues might indicate that global citizenship isn't a priority within the education policy around the UK. The overall status of global citizenship education in England has shifted and diminished from being 'recommended' and centralized before 2010 to becoming "voluntary" and decentralized since 2010. There is no requirement for Ofsted³¹ inspectors to report on global citizenship activities unless schools draw it to the inspectors' attention in their School Evaluation Forms. In the meantime other pressing issues – the academic curriculum, accountability and budgets – have intensified in their level of importance and increasingly occupy schools' attention. Unless global citizenship directly helps to meet schools' other priorities its status is now marginal and disembedded.

In England, over 10 years ago, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), responsible for education, published the document "Developing the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum". The document's contents had the status of "recommended", meaning that schools

31 Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. We inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Ofsted is a non-ministerial department.

had a strong incentive to follow its guidance. This represented a top-down and centralized example of global citizenship education policy that came to an abrupt end when the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government came to power in 2010. Since 2010, support from the DfE for global citizenship education has diminished. There are no longer specific curriculum links to global learning, such as those provided by the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum document, and other education policy shifts outlined above make the formal education environment for global citizenship austere.

In Wales, before 2010 the Welsh Assembly Government supported Global Education in different ways. One of the examples were strategies such as the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship³². (ESDGC) Strategy for Action published in 2006 and 2008. ESDGC is a statutory, cross-curricular framework which applies to education across the sectors (formal, youth, community, adult etc.) and relevant Common Understanding guidance is provided for the different sectors. However, since 2010, support for ESDGC has declined. In June 2014, Estyn³³ published a review of ESDGC in schools which outlined a number of recommendations for schools and local authorities to improve the ESDGC practice. Currently, ESDGC is prominent within Personal and Social Education, highlighted in Science, Design and Technology and Geography. It features strongly in the Foundation Phase unit “Knowledge and Understanding of the World”. Within the new Welsh Baccalaureate, global citizenship is one of the four challenges learners have to complete. In March 2015, Successful Futures, a review of the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, was published. The review outlined a number of recommendations for the development of a new curriculum for Wales including four purposes for the curriculum. One of them was “that children and young people develop as ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world”.

Likewise in Wales, some shifts in educational priorities in Scotland have influenced schools’ abilities to deliver education. The three priorities for schools are developing literacy, numeracy and reducing the impact of poverty on education attainment. In 2014, the Schools Challenge Cymru program was introduced to challenge and support schools that face challenging circumstances and are underperforming. Schools are supported by a number of “Challenge Advisors”. The changing focus in Scottish schools has led to changes in how schools are

32 <http://bit.ly/1LkAaw3> [accessed on 18.03.2016].

33 Estyn is ‘the office of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

managed nationally. All Local Authority posts which supported global citizenship education have now been lost following restructuring. There has been reduced capacity at the Local Authority level and school improvement is supported through the formation of four “regional consortia”.

Considering the opportunity to help young people develop skills allowing them to engage with global issues, teachers reported both curricular and non-curricular activities. Drama classes are one of the chances to focus on political education and discussions about current affairs. Another example was given by a Science teacher, where using the “topic of bacteria and virus cells, the teacher started off by asking what the Zika virus looks like”. In addition to Science and Drama classes, global issues have been made topics within the reading program through quiz solving or daily newspaper topic overview.

A good practice example of including global citizenship education within the curriculum has been recently set by the Department for Education and Skills in Wales. The recent review of the curriculum published in 2015, “Successful Futures” by Professor Donaldson, recommended active citizenship as one of the core curriculum purposes. The Welsh Government accepted all recommendations of the curriculum review in June 2015 and a new curriculum is being developed with 120 “pioneer schools” to be implemented by schools from 2018.

The new Welsh Baccalaureate qualification was launched in September 2015 for Key Stage 4 and 5 and further education colleges. All schools and further education institutes are expected to offer the Welsh Baccalaureate, which comprises three challenges (global citizenship, community and enterprise, and employability) and an Individual Project. The global citizenship challenge includes “raising awareness” of the global issue and the Community Challenge enables learners to contribute to their community³⁴.

Another good practice example of education policy that supports global learning is provided by the Department for International Development (DFID) through their funding of four Global Learning Programs (GLPs) in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England alone, £17 Million have been invested in the GLP-England, with the target to involve 50% of schools by 2017. The GLP differs from its predecessor the Global Dimension by being a bottom-up, peer-led and voluntary program. Schools sign up to participate because the program is seen as meeting their needs and provides opportunities for school improvement.

34 Welsh Baccalaureate From 2015 available at <http://bit.ly/1SLroiS> [accessed on 18.03.2016].

Tutor time has been identified by teachers as the time that they can discuss global issues with their students. Tutor time, in the opinion of one of the teachers, which is characteristic of all other teachers sharing this view, is “the only time when we get freedom to do that and it’s not unless you’re in a drama class where the opportunity is at that time that you can think right, now I can relate it”. Tutor time offers teachers “flexibility” and “freedom” to choose topics and activities their pupils need. When talking about skills that are needed to engage pupils in global issues to a meaningful extent, teachers mentioned such challenges as shy, quiet kids that don’t have enough self-confidence to speak up. Tutor time in school is then, in the teachers’ opinion, the optimal time to encourage pupils to participate.

Participation, leadership or critical thinking mentioned by teachers conflates with “cross-curricular skills” and the report “Does Participating in Social Action Boost the Skills Young People Need to Succeed in Adult Life?” prepared by the Behavioral Insights Team in 2016 and commissioned by the Cabinet Office. The report evaluates the impact of cross-curricular skills upon “employment and adulthood” (Behavioral Insights Team – 2016 pg. 3). This echoes the broader debate generated by the business community and employers about whether education is “fit for purpose” rather than the more specific concerns of civil society. The discussion is therefore not only about citizenship but wider processes of employability and economic well-being. The cross-curricular skills, or characteristics, the report examines as central to employability are empathy, problem-solving, cooperation, grit and resilience, a sense of community and (positive) educational attitudes. These characteristics are considered not to be directly observable in mainstream public examinations and school tests (Behaviour Insights Team – 2016, pgs. 13-14). In the broadest sense, these characteristics are relevant to global citizenship. However, education for global citizenship goes much further. For example, the knowledge, understanding, values, attitudes and skills by which Oxfam³⁵ defines the young global citizen are much more comprehensive and specific than the six characteristics reviewed by the report.

The Cabinet Office and the Education Endowment Foundation also commissioned the Institute of Education to report on “The Impact of Non-Cognitive Skills on Outcomes for Young People” (Gutman & Schoon – 2013). The report takes the form of a literature review and draws the

35 Oxfam (2015) – Education for Global Citizenship: A Guide for Schools, pp. 16-21 at <http://bit.ly/1OpWWXV> [accessed on 18.03.2016].

distinction between “cognitive skills”, such as literacy and numeracy, which are assessed in school tests, and “non-cognitive skills”, such as motivation, perseverance and self-control, which are not formally assessed. The report challenges assumptions that the teaching of non-cognitive skills generally leads to a causal improvement in cognitive skills. The evidence is mixed and the area is under-researched. The report calls for further research. In conclusion, the area of global citizenship of interest to this Project is viewed in the limited literature as a sub-set of a wider set of characteristics or “soft skills” that include employability, academic aptitude and desirable personal attributes. These characteristics are generally under-researched.

What is most surprising is that few of these debates are generated from within the education system itself. The ever narrowing focus of education upon acquiring core knowledge and performing well in tests suggests there is a compelling need for learning to prepare young people more comprehensively for adult life, including living responsibly as citizens in a globalized society, and for this need to be addressed more explicitly in the school curriculum.

Education policy in Scotland, in particular through the Curriculum for Excellence, emphasizes the need for the development of the responsible global citizen. “Children and young people’s educational experience should open the doors to opportunities which enable children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society.”

This is not a new demand on teachers and it is consistent with the Curriculum for Excellence and work to improve the full spectrum of teacher education further to the recommendations of the Teaching Scotland’s Future including the new General Teaching Council Scotland professional standards.

The document “Learning for Sustainability: The Scottish Government’s Response to the Report of the One Planet Schools Working Group” (2013) explains that “sustainability and global citizenship are embedded in the experiences and outcomes. Young people can develop skills, confidence, knowledge, attitudes and values through learning for sustainability which help equip them for jobs and life. It is important to take forward education with a strong commitment to fairness, equity and social justice with responsibility for our social, economic and environmental impact.”

Teachers Reflections on Youth at Risk

In Woodside High School, there are a number of reasons why young people fail academically including (1) missing support of the family: “They go home and there is no encouragement, have you done your homework today, what do you need to do,” explained one of the teachers, (2) lack of fluency in English “They go home and there is no encouragement, have you done your homework today, what do you need to do”, and (3) finances.

The reasons why pupils in Woodside High School are failing academically, mentioned by the teachers, refer to another issue that has been recently brought up in the European context: Early School Leaving (ESL). An early school leaver, in the understanding of the European Commission, is as a young person whose “highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short”. This classification refers to the International Standard Classification of Education, a statistical framework devised by UNESCO for comparing transnational education outcomes. According to Schneider (2008), “ISCED 3c short” is the equivalent of Grades D-G at GCSE in the English education system. Therefore, a young person at risk of early school leaving, as defined by the European Commission, is one whose highest level of examination achievement lies within the D-G grade range. In 2015, 31% of GCSE entries resulted in a Grade D or lower. Although the methods of measurement vary (for example different metrics either include or exclude Mathematics and English results), between one third and one half of students fail to achieve the benchmark of five or more A*-C grades. Finding the total number of GCSE candidates for any one year is surprisingly difficult. However, media reports suggest that between 700,000 and 750,000 is a reasonable estimate. Therefore, the scale of the “at risk” phenomena is between 350,000 and 450,000 young people per year.

A widely used proxy indicator for social disadvantage in the UK is whether a child is eligible for free school meals (FSM). Local Authorities are legally required to provide a free lunch to students whose parents are on a low income or who claim social security benefits. Nationally, 15% of students are eligible for free school meals. In 2014, 65% of students at Woodside High School, the Project’s Hub School, were eligible for free school meals, placing the school in the highest quintile for FSM eligibility and indicating widespread social disadvantage, and therefore “risk of ESL”, in the local community.

Teachers voiced concern that mostly pupils at risk show emotional resilience which comes with the fear of failing. “If they see something that looks hard they won’t even try. They don’t want to hear that they’ve done something wrong – it might cause a big blow-up and they don’t want us to sit and talk with them to help them understand what they can do to correct it.” According to teachers, one of the reasons for this is lack of independence and support from the TAs as well as teachers.

Teachers argued that non-academic interventions, like giving them opportunities for leadership – running one of these student forums, or participating in it, interacting with other schools, and organizing actions, have an impact on academic achievement. It changes pupils’ attitudes towards “how they look at everything once they do something” and “how they view the school and certain teachers”, and “therefore it could impact their grades because they’re trying and accepting different ways of doing things, and seeing things from different perspectives and different viewpoints”. Their literacy might not necessarily be improved, “but it might help them make more of an effort and give them more confidence”.

Although it is a tangential link, teachers also felt that offering young people, including “at-risk youth”, opportunities for civic engagement may translate into an improvement in their grades. This was primarily through an improvement in their attitudes, how they view school, providing them with different opinions and viewpoints, and importantly for their teachers, providing them with an increase in confidence, which might help young people to “make more of an effort”.

V Future Youth School Forums – Youth Perspective

This part of the report aims to examine the ways young people (aged 12-18) from different European countries (Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania, UK) understand global citizenship and their roles as citizens as well as their attitudes and beliefs. The conclusions presented are based on focus groups conducted in all countries mentioned above. Data from 4 focus group discussions were analyzed in the following way: the data was subject to initial and preliminary coding in order to identify key categories; based on the coding the researchers produced each focus group's responses to the research questions. Responses of each participant were identified and compared with other participants' responses across the focus groups.

Youth's Reflections on the Perfect School

When asked about their perfect school, students found it difficult to give answers, which could be connected with their belief that their ability to take the lead and make decisions is limited. However, despite some difficulties, they were able to suggest some changes in their schools. They generally agreed that while there may be a place for school uniforms for the purpose of mass identification (for example, on the way to school or during school trips), they felt that not wearing a uniform allowed them freedom of expression and identity. This suggestion was expressed by the participants as follows: "No uniforms but lots of trips which would be the only time we wear uniforms." "We wouldn't have uniforms."

In an increasingly globalized economy, students also felt there was a space for more creativity in school, either in a stronger focus on Arts or in the ways they manipulated and integrated digital technology into their school work. Generally, they all seemed content with the current curriculum but wanted an additional focus on skills development to help them in their later (adult) life. This was expressed in the following way: "What we're learning about doesn't have to change much, I'm happy with the curriculum." "And a small change to the curriculum: we're coming to an age where STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) are important but I'd increase focus on Arts to make people more creative."

The students also discussed the importance of a strong teacher-student bond and the significance of one-on-one time to develop these relationships. *"Interactions with the teachers could be different, so that we don't have so many arguments with them if we get in trouble; we would have our reasons, they would have theirs."* "I think that maybe with better relationships between pupils and teachers. For example, I know that pupils hate one teacher, I don't know why, to me she seems normal, so I think they could be better."

During one of the focus group discussions, a suggestion was made to change the way students are examined. Students said that exams shouldn't be continued at school any more: "We wouldn't have exams." "Instead of exams we could have projects or oral exams."

It is meaningful that the point of school uniforms is questioned and emphasis is placed on the fundamental principles of school organization. All participants claimed that their schools were totally different from the perfect school they were thinking about, which was expressed in the following way: "It is totally different." "Everything that we mentioned before has nothing to do with our school." "In our school we follow a very strict program based on the curriculum and have no opportunities or freedom as students."

Youth's Reflections on Learning about Skills

Most focus group participants reported that they expected school to help them to acquire certain skills.

The most frequently mentioned skills that might be learnt at school were:

- Critical thinking,
- Self-criticism,
- Collaboration,
- Public speaking.

Other skills identified included:

- Artistic skills.

Students were able to provide examples of lessons where they have the opportunity to learn skills that are important from their perspective. At the same time, some of the participants complained about the quality of these lessons, and claimed that they weren't able to use the skills developed in normal life. They provided a number of reasons for such opinions, e.g.: "Most

of the time those skills are promoted during our lessons but that doesn't mean that we are able to use all those skills." Some of the participants tended to consider the impact of the education policy on the curriculum from the point of view of their teachers. From the students' perspective, some teachers tended to put far too much emphasis on the need to follow the curriculum, which limited the possibility of developing others skills and the youth's freedom. "I think that we can collaborate with our classmates and we can discuss some issues or have a debate, but our teachers don't trust us or don't think that this is necessary. Sometimes they think that it is more important to follow the curriculum and the books instead of giving us some freedom during the lesson."

The responses of all focus group participants revealed a link between "skills they have to get" and school achievements. Young people tend to define their "required skills" thinking about how they are able to help them to achieve success in school. It seems that these skills are much more expected and needed by teachers and the youth would like to meet these expectations in order to achieve personal success. "It also helps in exams, so when you write a paper in an exam, having the confidence to speak out helps you explain the question more. You have improved your knowledge of English and speaking, so it will help you answer those questions in an exam."

Only a small part of the participants emphasized skills that are "unimportant" from the school perspective. "I like expressing myself through dancing as well, which helps to show what we mean and we can give an explanation using our body and not just our voice." Almost the same small part of the respondents saw a connection between courses offered by the school and their future life. "I think they do, there are things like debate clubs, they give you opportunities to speak in competitions, which boosts student's confidence to speak in front of crowds, to win prizes which give you more confidence in the future..."

Youth's Reflections on Opportunities to Take Part

This question provoked responses about the weaknesses of the current Education Policy in individual countries. All groups, when answering the question "*What opportunities are there to take part?*", raised the issue of lack of time to engage in extra-curricular activities, explaining

that they had numerous school duties. It seems that only a small recurring group of students *benefit from and participate in extra-curricular activities. However, these activities are somehow still connected with school (for example: activities recommended or offered by school), which means that out of a small group of students who take part in additional activities, only a little part of the youth are engaged in something that from the beginning was their idea. "We have several school clubs in our school and most of us are members of at least one of those clubs."*"We also publish a school newspaper. We have a lot of freedom in this club. We decide about the subject of the next issue and we usually carry out interviews and write articles."

As can be seen, school involves the youth in activities it offers. This could be explained in many different ways, including lack of time, which was mentioned by many participants. Considering the above, school can be perceived as a full-time job."We don't have time. Because of after-school activities."

Youth's Reflections on Global Citizenship

All of the focus group participants identified the issue of global citizenship as one of interest, which could be interpreted in two ways: as a strong belief that the issue of global citizenship is important to them, or as a need to meet with the expectations of the moderator or teachers who selected pupils for focus groups.

The most important global citizenship issues mentioned were:

- Human and Civil Rights and racism (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT), "warmer relationships with other people"),
- Islamophobia,
- Global Warming,
- Economic problems,
- Refugees,
- Wars,
- Poverty,
- Hunger,
- Child labor.

An analysis of responses across all the groups revealed two categories of participants. These categories are based on the discourse employed by the participants in their responses, their explication of their current understanding of the global citizenship issue, and their current level of engagement.

Experience-Oriented Versus Learning-Oriented

In the case of most focus group participants, the main responses to this question were a feeling of interest in and importance of the issue of global citizenship. But we observed some differences between the explanations of the importance of the global citizenship issue. Some of the participants perceived this issue as influences that affected their personal life and they were interested in it – they were called “experience-oriented”. Other participants explained the importance of the issue referring to school lessons – I called them “learning-oriented”.

“Experience-Oriented”

Experience-oriented participants of focus groups are involved in a wide range of community activities. They are involved in volunteer work. Their responses reflect their personal (direct or indirect) experience in, for example, Civil Rights and racism. This was expressed in the following way: “Black people still get insulted today. I’ve discussed this with my best friend and parents and my best friend said how unfair it was back then, all those people who seemed to make racism an actual thing, they deserved to die a long time ago. I thought violence isn’t always the answer. I thought at one point, maybe if you try to talk to somebody and say that racism isn’t a good thing, then they could change their mind on how white people and black people see things.” “I am not a Cypriot, so I would like to have the opportunity to present my country to the rest of the school. We have many kids from other countries in our school, so it would be nice if we had the opportunity to present our history and learn about other places in the world.” The “experience-oriented” group of participants have a much deeper and greater understanding of the global citizenship issue. Their responses referred to school subjects they were familiar with, such as Geography.

“Learning-Oriented”

This group of participants had some difficulties when trying to think about what global citizenship meant. At the same time, these participants, like all others, listed some issues of

importance to them, such as climate change or human rights. However, as can be seen from the answers below, the global citizenship issue is important to them for other reasons than those mentioned by the “experience-oriented” group. Their comments in this particular context reflect their perspective on the significance of the curriculum and subjects where global citizenship is present and has to be passed. This group of participants agreed that they had discussed and learned about the suggested global issues during various lessons, and thought they were interesting to know about, however, they were not that different from other lessons and also they were quite difficult subjects. The discussion seemed to suggest that pupils were used to discussing global issues in their lessons and it was just a part of their normal learning.

Here are some comments:

“Did you like learning about those issues? Do you think they’re relevant?”

3 – It was quite difficult.

1 – Well, it was like a normal lesson, just a different subject. Like always.”

“We have discussed climate change so many times that I don’t want to learn any more about that issue.”

Youth’s Reflections on Making a Change

Most focus group participants reported that they expected to make a change. Some of them expressed the need to be politically engaged, perceiving it as a matter of importance, and they already acted for the people and the community. Some responses conveyed a strong sense of personal responsibility for the community. “I’ve joined an anti-racism association but people won’t take leaflets; you just have to stop them, not just try and hand it out to them, but you have to stand in front of them or run into some people. A conversation helps with some people, they might listen to what you’re saying but then they might throw it in the bin. It just goes in one ear and out the other. But all those people who try to hand something out should come together and make picket signs or something... Maybe form one big group to try and explain how serious this is....” “The students all seemed well versed in action of this type (albeit it limited) they would take if they wanted to make a change within school. They all talked about the power of collective action, of writing letters or signing petitions, and identified ways of working successfully as a group by focusing on individual skills in order to be more effective and efficient.” “Get quite a few people involved, write letters; explain why this should be changed

so it won't be just me, so there are other people who also say they want something to be changed."

Interestingly, they were able to identify who the right person to approach was in order to try and make a change, homing in on the person in power, who they felt would be the one to help them make a difference. "You need social skills to get to different people, you might tell them how they might influence others. You should organize different tasks depending on people's personalities. Like if someone is good at something, they can take the lead in that thing."

Many also started to question sources of information in order to get to the facts, however, there are still major challenges related to encouraging young people not to take everything they read online as a fact." Regarding having their voice taken into account, the students feel that their voice and opinions are taken into account in school. They were able to provide numerous examples of having an opportunity to speak up, expressing their needs, or engage in actions the main goal of which was to make a change. However, the pupils also said that not everyone who wanted could participate in various student-governed activities, as they lacked information. In general, lack of information was stressed by pupils as the main weakness.

"I just think that maybe there needs to be more information about these events, for example one time there was a meeting, and I was told about it only one day before. I had to prepare a presentation for it, so I had to spend three hours doing that, and it was horrible. So maybe just more information about school events and others would also participate. For example, there are a few girls in my class who really want to participate but they don't have enough information such as when, where and how they can get involved."

It also seems that pupils can be quite independent when organizing various school events and already have some experience in this area. According to them, they "only need a little help" with these activities. "I think that most students have the skills necessary to take the responsibility and organize events and activities."

VI Teachers & Youth Perspective – Summary

In the opinion of teachers from Cyprus, Italy, Lithuania and England, youth participation is combined with skills such as creativity, critical thinking, leadership, communication skills, leadership, public speaking, citizenship skills, critical thinking and research skills. Teachers assessed teamwork (with other teachers and school management) as essential for the development of youth participation in their schools. Another area for improvement in school is communication about the existing initiatives and opportunities for youth participation. Due to lack of collaboration and communication between teachers, they would welcome any meetings dedicated to good practice examples connected with global citizenship education. When talking about support for youth participation, other areas of cooperation mentioned by teachers included external organizations, such as NGOs, and involvement in programs and projects with other schools in the country and abroad.

The focus groups with teachers clearly showed that in order to support the development of youth participation at the school level, teachers need to have appropriate knowledge and skills. Teachers from some of the countries expressed their concern about lack of training related to a whole spectrum of teaching issues, such as methods, tools, curriculum development, knowledge construction, learning support, psychological aspects of teaching and learning, and pedagogical inclusive programs fostering student's creativity and leadership in their learning.

What seems to be widely acknowledged as important for youth participation at the school level are the relationships built between pupils and school teachers, which support the development of motivation and confidence to speak up, even despite shyness or lack of self-confidence. Many of the teachers spoke of the importance of helping young people to understand they have a valid voice. Teachers felt it was important to give these students the confidence (and a platform) to speak out, and focus on the development of skills in order to refine speaking skills.

The curriculum was a very significant and recurrent topic of discussions throughout the focus groups with teachers. In the teachers' opinion, the curriculum is not flexible enough for them to teach global issues and develop skills such as participation and engagement in civic matters. Teachers emphasized being overburdened with the obligatory curriculum, which results in lack of time for extra-curricular activities promoting participation. All teachers felt that in the

classroom there was a strong focus on subject specialism's and preparing students to exams, with little space to build on young people's passions and interests. Some teachers identified a correlation between a strong focus on the curriculum and academic attainment and lack of wider interests of young people outside of school. This was also attributed to teachers not having enough time to explore or encourage the personal interests of young people. Whilst many teachers felt that young people at school lived in "a bubble" and ignorance or lacked understanding of certain global issues, they highlighted a select few students who thought more critically. These students expressed their opinions not as criticism, but as the need to ask questions in order to deepen their understanding.

From the teachers' perspective it is not difficult to include global issues in different school subjects, despite lack of opportunities due to the teaching contents. In the opinion of teachers, although students have a good level of knowledge of global issues, they lack active engagement. Focus group participants clearly saw the importance of developing skills rather than knowledge of global issues.

In the opinion of teachers, young people have a thirst for learning more about global issues which the school doesn't seem to satisfy. Teachers encouraged critical thinking in relation to the media, however, this seemed tokenistic rather than embedded in their teaching and more could be done to help students understand sources, context and reliability of information. Teachers also spoke of the need to shape the way young people viewed the world and felt they had an important role to play in "guiding them".

When describing "youth at risk of early school leaving", teachers mostly emphasized language difficulties (migration backgrounds), learning disabilities and special needs, lower school grades, and family issues / financial difficulties as factors behind failing to get good grades. Teachers pointed to lack of motivation and/or confidence to speak up – raise their voice in order to have their opinions heard as other reasons for being at risk of early school leaving. Teachers did broadly feel that providing "youth at risk" with opportunities for civic engagement may be directly correlated with an improvement in their self-confidence and motivation for active participation in different school activities. Focus group teachers were aware of the fact that students' voice is not heard as much as students would like to. Solutions to these problems seem to be numerous extra-curricular activities such as the Future Youth School Forums Project. In the teachers' opinion, students would like to have more opportunities for being engaged in

school activities, even if those activities are organized during extra-curricular time. Although it is a tangential link, teachers also felt that offering young people, including “youth at risk”, opportunities for civic engagement, may translate into an improvement in their grades.

When referring to the responses of young people, it has to be pointed out that young people generally show a limited understanding of the need to participate in local/global actions. At the same time they express some interest and wish to take part in them, but in most cases this results from external motivation, which means that they recognize their value because they allow them to achieve some personal benefits, e.g. a good note at school. They described their involvement in developing skills in a similar way: in terms of improving their position in school and in general in their future life, and this was the only part connected in any way with work.

The “learning-oriented” participants provided numerous examples of “skills required” to become a good employee. They came up with a range of ideas about direct application of these skills. In contrast, the “experience-oriented” participants made a series of specific suggestions connected with direct actions and activism. They responded to questions by identifying changes in the educational system, community and the world they would fight for and encourage as a way of being more involved in the problems faced by the world, such as islamophobia, refugees, wars, poverty and others. The way “learning-oriented” participants perceive engagement could be questioned as being in opposition to the idea of human solidarity and other norms and values stressed by the global citizenship perspective. This point provoked a question about reasons for the current situation, and the text below provides some hypotheses. There are many multifaceted factors affecting the engagement of young people. These include, for example, elements already mentioned by teachers during focus groups such as the curriculum and the whole education system, social factors, environmental factors, and motivational variables which all impact upon the engagement and participation of young people. As some evidence suggests, there is a limited space for young people to learn about themselves or their needs and from the very beginning they try to meet the expectations of others. This situation does not create a good environment for the development of such skills as creative or critical thinking but prepares and teaches students to find themselves a satisfactory place within the system.

The perspective of teachers and the youth clearly shows that there are not so many opportunities in schools to participate in global issues, and those available are insufficient. Both teachers and the youth know their schools very well and they are aware of strong and weak

points of participation in global civic matters there. Teachers and the youth gave some suggestions how participation in their schools might be improved. Both perspectives involve the view that participation within the school life might positively affect the motivation to learn. Engagement in participation is distorted by engagement in learning.

Teachers and the youth are realists when it comes to opportunities for participation in their schools. Both groups make suggestions and imagine direct actions and activism, support engagement and motivation that enrich participation in civic matters, support the development of the FYS-Forums project, and have similar opinions on participation in global civic matters. However, the teachers' perspective focuses on skills, while the youth's perspective points to the need for action and experience.

All focus group participants identified important issues such as the curriculum, participation and skills development. When referring to the curriculum, teachers and the youth suggested increasing its flexibility and offering extra-curriculum activities. Both groups of participants believe that the existing policy does not encourage or value their additional participation and/or extra-curriculum activities. They see the current education structures, particularly at the state and federal levels, as complex and creating barriers to meaningful extra-curriculum actions. Moreover, the responses of teachers and the youth highlight reflection about the need for improving the current education system. Even if the youth did not say it directly, they expressed ideas for changes in their schools that would be connected with the education policy in their countries.

In the opinion of teachers and the youth, focusing on the curriculum has a significant influence on decisions and orientation actions. Both groups of participants recognized the curriculum as important but at the same time limiting their possibilities for development.

VII Recommendation for the Future Youth School Forums Project

Based on the national needs analyses and the teacher & youth focus groups, we can give the following recommendations regarding the education policy, preparation and implementation of the Future Youth School Forums Project in schools, and resources that will be produced within the Project.

Future Youth School Forum and Education Policy

It is recommended to:

- Include the development of skills such as leadership, participation, and collaboration in both pre- and in-service teacher training,
- Give the youth “voice” by offering them time within curricular and extra-curricular activities to express their thoughts and views,
- Support youth participation at the school level by developing cooperation with school management among teachers and the youth.

Preparation and Implementation of the Future Youth School Forum

It is recommended to:

- Focus on building leadership skills; what should be emphasized is the “getting active” part of the forums, so that teachers and pupils see real opportunities to act and feel engaged,
- Explain teachers how participation is defined for the purposes of the Project through regular face-to-face meetings with Future Youth School Forum’s participants,
- Offer both teachers & the youth time to express their thoughts and views about the Future Youth School Forum in their schools,

- Delegate responsibilities regarding the organization and development of the Forum in schools to the youth; the role of the school management & teachers should rather focus on the support of the youth's activities,
- Offer the youth opportunities for discussion about what they read, watch, and hear regarding global issues, with the aim to encourage critical thinking on information coming from the media,
- Involve teacher assistants, school psychologists, and social service employees, if available, in the preparation and implementation phases of the Forum,
- Capitalize on the pockets of freedom within extra-curricular activities, such as tutor time to deliver bite-sized curriculum activities to the whole school,
- Encourage “new” students to get involved in the preparation and implementation phases of the Forum,
- Provide wider opportunities for “genuine” student leadership, for example in relation to creating and leading assemblies, listening to what young people need and help them to achieve it. Activities of young people should focus more on different ways of participation,
- Develop sensitivity to global challenges among the youth,
- Encourage the youth to experience their community and find better life in their neighborhood.

Future Youth School Forum and Resources:

It is recommended to:

- (a) Develop curriculum resources that can be implemented within all school subjects. The resources need to be planned for both shorter and longer sessions, so that they can be used in tutor time or within the curriculum,
- (b) Focus, when developing resources, on peer learning, mentoring and coaching among teachers,

- (c) Translate resources into national languages,
- (d) Include videos, digital activities, and ICT in the recourses,
- (e) Plan some time for sharing thoughts and ideas regarding global issues in small peer groups, and for discussions to clarify unclear issues,
- (f) Create references, whenever possible, to the curriculum in order to help teachers integrate learning resources into their lessons.

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Annex

Information about the Hub Schools

Cyprus – B' District Gymnasium, Nicosia

Teacher and youth focus group took place in B' District Gymnasium of Nicosia, Cyprus, in February 2016. In the school year 2015/16, the school was attended by approx. 400 pupils, taught by 56 teachers. The interviews were facilitated by Mrs. Yolanda Frangou from CARDET, Nicosia, Cyprus, who also transcribed the interviews. The interviewees were Greek language teachers (4), a Biology teacher (1), and a Design & Technology teacher (1) (6 participants in total), with work experience at school ranging from 7 to 13 years. The youth focus group included in total 7 students aged 12 – 16. The students were nominated by teachers.

The B' Regional High School of Nicosia celebrates its twentieth anniversary (1996-2016). Innovative and pioneering, in 1996 awarded for its modern architectural design. Today, 401 students from 25 villages of the Tamasos area, aged 12 to 15 study at the school. It has 15 classrooms, two labs for Design and Technology lessons, two workshops for Healthy Life Lessons, specially designed classrooms for Art, Music, Languages, History, Mathematics, and labs for Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and ICT lessons. There are also a Multi-Purpose Room, a Library and modern stadiums there. By participating in indoor school events and national public celebrations, students develop skills and cultivate the principles of modern active citizenship. The school was awarded the label "Safe School for the Internet" for its policy against the dangers of the Internet. It also takes part in three EU Erasmus+ programs and the interstate environmental program run by Greece and Cyprus "golden-green leaf" to protect endangered, indigenous species such as the Cypriot water snake. This year, the Astronomical Group has been established in school in order to observe celestial phenomena at night and visit the planetarium.

Italy – IIS Leonardo Da Vinci, Rome

The teacher focus group took place in IIS Leonardo Da Vinci, Rome, Italy, in February 2016. The interview was facilitated by Mrs. Federica Cicala from Oxfam Italy, who also transcribed the interviews. Two teachers took part in the focus group where one of them has been teaching

Computer Science for over 30 years and the second teacher has got 19 years of experience as an Italian literature teacher. During the interview teachers showed engagement and commitment to answering the questions. In order to raise the number of teachers interviewed, Oxfam Italy's co-workers arranged additional telephone interviews with 4 teachers, all from lower and upper secondary schools, with working experience ranging from 8 up to 35 years, teaching English, Maths, Science, and Business Economy. The youth focus group took place in IIS Leonardo Da Vinci, Rome, Italy, in February 2016. The interview was facilitated by Mrs. Federica Cicala from Oxfam Italy, who also transcribed the interviews. The focus group included 8 students aged 17-18. The students were nominated by teachers.

The Institute "Leonardo da Vinci" was founded in 1871 as "Regio Istituto Tecnico Leonardo Da Vinci", and it was the first technical-business school with scientific focus in Italy.

Located in the city center, near the most important ancient monuments such as the Colosseum and the Imperial Fora, it is very easily accessible by public transportation. The school has an important historical library with approximately 1,500 books and a very interesting museum with ancient and valuable scientific collections. Moreover, there are several smart boards in classrooms as well as many laboratories for all kinds of scientific applications. The school has approximately 1,000 students, divided between two buildings and different branches of studies, such as Administration, Finances and Marketing, Business and Trade, Business Information Systems, and Human Sciences. There are morning and evening classes. The Institute promotes the enrolment of students in initial classes, fostering the integration and assessing cognitive potential through individual learning strategies; the attention to details as well as inclusiveness and integration of students with special needs, especially deaf and blind students, are supported by teachers' experience and dedication to such difficulties. Beside the cultural development, the curricula have another important priority: to educate students to become active citizens, responsible and aware of being part of a wider global community. Finally, particular attention is paid to the continuous development of a more efficient multimedia methodology, using digital pedagogical tools.

Lithuania – Jonas and Petras Vileisiai School – Multifunctional Center, Kaunas

The teacher focus group was conducted in the Jonas and Petras Vileisiai school – a multifunctional center in Kaunas, Lithuania, in February 2016. The focus group was facilitated by

Mrs. Greta Gedgaudaite from JKC, Kaunas, Lithuania, who also transcribed the interviews. Five teachers took part in the interviews, with experience in working at school ranging from 3 to 20 years, teaching English (3) and Biology (1). The fifth participant of the focus group was the school psychologist and deputy headmaster of the school.

The youth focus group was conducted in the Jonas and Petras Vileisiai school – a multifunctional center in Kaunas, Lithuania, in February 2016. The focus group was facilitated by Mrs. Greta Gedgaudaite from JKC, Kaunas, Lithuania, who also transcribed the interviews. The focus group had 6 participants aged 12-13. The students were nominated by teachers.

The Jonas and Petras Vileisiai school – a multifunctional center is a school in Kaunas, Lithuania, which incorporates pre-school, primary and basic education levels. This means that there are pupils from pre-primary ages to 18 years of age. There are approximately 500 pupils enrolled in the school. The schools' main areas of activity are:

- Improving the educational process by encouraging pupils to realize their intellectual potential and skills during formal and non-formal educational activities.
- Collaborating with pupils' parents in order to include families into the school's social and academic life, encouraging common responsibility.
- Collaborating with social Partners by implementing educational projects and programs.
- Creating and improving educational environments by creating space for non-formal education.

The school actively participates in national and international projects and is one of the first schools in Lithuania to officially introduce global education as a part of their English lesson curriculum. There are currently 54 teachers employed in the school.

Activity related to youth participation: Pupil council is the most active body involving many pupil-led activities such as event organizing and meetings with the school principal. Activity related to teacher-led youth participation: Traditional events, like "A week against bullying" and "Ecofashion", organized and implemented by students. STEAM project activities. Various one-time projects or campaigns. Activities supporting global citizenship education: Global education integration into English language curricula, charity events, environment cleaning, ecology-related events. The STEAM project is related to and looks at similar skills and values. Previous projects on global education, where the school collaborated with JKC, focused more on individual teachers and integrating GE curriculum.

United Kingdom – Woodside High School, London

The teacher focus group was conducted in Woodside High School, London, UK, in February 2016. The interviews were facilitated by John McLaverty, Will Essilfie and Nicci Hawkins from Oxfam GB. The interviewees were 7 teachers (4 teaching assistants, 1 English teacher, 1 Drama teacher and 1 Science teacher), with work experience between 6 months and 9 years. Throughout the transcription the teachers were referred to by numbers.

The youth focus group was conducted in Woodside High School, London, UK, in February 2016. The interviews were facilitated by John McLaverty, Will Essilfie and Nicci Hawkins from Oxfam GB. The focus group had 6 participants aged 12-15. The students were nominated by teachers.

Woodside High School is a comprehensive Academy school for secondary students aged 11-16 based in north London, UK. In January 2015, they had a total of 809 students of which 435 were boys, 375 girls. The Department of Education classified 57% of pupils over the last 6 years as “Disadvantaged” meaning that they are receiving or have received Free School Meals (FSM). Free School Meals is the standard proxy and indicator of pupils being at risk of poverty and social exclusion. In 2014, 49% of all pupils attained five GCSEs grade A* to C including English and Mathematics. In 2015, this dropped to 45% compared to a 53.8% average across all schools in England. The current national benchmark for England is a pass rate of 40%. Despite results going down, the progress that students make from point of entry is within the top 1% of all schools in the UK – in part due to the value added during the student’s school career (the value added is based on the APS which they track from primary school, see further down in context). The school are also showcased nationally for the work that is being done. They have a robust inclusion provision including a school nurse on site 1 day a week; an educational psychologist; 2 counsellors; a speech and language therapist; an occupational therapist; a behavior consultant; an art therapist; safer schools police officer; mentors (both adult and peer); and student support services. Some of this support is the reason why this school is so successful.

Woodside High School has the same values and high aspirations for each student. Haringey (the London borough in which Woodside High School is situated) is within the top 5% of the most deprived areas of London, however, the school is actually situated more in the 1% deprived area of the borough. Students usually come from within 1 mile of the school. Some students that live out of the borough have been rehoused and so commute to continue their education. Over 60 languages are spoken by students in the school.

RAISEonline (published by Ofsted) states that the school is in the highest percentile for Free School Meals, the number of ethnic minority groups, Special Educational Needs and school deprivation. APS is a Points Score per student related to Attainment and Woodside High School students had the lowest attainment on entry for any school in London for 2014. Despite this, Woodside has been rated as “Outstanding” by Ofsted, who have said that: “teachers [at Woodside High School] have the highest expectations for their students”.

Woodside High School do not have any groups or clubs that have been founded by young people but the leadership team have initiated a broad range of opportunities including the Debating Club, Equalities Group, School Council, Year Council, Youth Ambassador Group, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Prefects and the Eco-Group. Young people participate in a broad range of extra-curricular activities which are highlighted in the school’s Quarterly Magazine Woodside Voice.

The school is at the heart of its community and believes in an emphasis on high standards and achievement, a love of learning and courtesy and respect for others. Woodside High School aims to create a fair and just school community that promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality that respects diversity and which challenges and acts upon all forms of discrimination and inequality. Central to Woodside High School’s working ethos is the success of every student, which means providing a high quality learning experience in every classroom, and excellent behavior at all times. Collaboration is essential to the school’s development and work within the local community. In their focus to build their students as global citizens, the school has been awarded the International Schools Award (ISA) for its work in embracing the curriculum from different countries. They are also a member of the Global Learning Program England (GLP) and Oxfam’s World Shapers Program.

Research Tools

Table 1. Teacher focus group questions

<p>QUESTION 1</p> <p>(PARTICIPATION & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT)</p>	<p>This first topic we'd like to discuss looks at young people's skills of "<i>participation</i>", and by this we mean showing initiative, public speaking, leadership, expressing their own opinions, leading groups, taking part in extra-curricular activities... etc.</p> <p>To what extent are you encouraged as teachers to develop these skills in young people and how equipped do you feel to be able to do this?</p> <p>What does your school do to encourage this form of "<i>participation</i>"?</p> <p>What else do you think schools could do?</p>
<p>QUESTION 2</p> <p>(OPPORTUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION)</p>	<p>What opportunities or programs are there in your school to engage young people in the development of their "<i>participation</i>" skills?</p> <p>Are you involved in any of these?</p> <p>Yes/ What do you think is their effectiveness?</p> <p>No/ What are the barriers to taking part?</p> <p>Do any of these activities have links with the formal curriculum?</p>
<p>QUESTION 3</p> <p>(GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP)</p>	<p>We are now going to think about applying some of the skills we've just discussed to global citizenship education in the classroom.</p> <p>Do you (and if you do, how do you) connect global citizenship or global issues in general with your teaching?</p> <p>Are there any particular skills you think young people need to develop in order to engage with global issues?</p>

<p>QUESTION 4</p> <p>(CHILDREN AT RISK OF FAILING)</p>	<p>We want to now briefly look at children who are at risk of failing academically and some intervention measures to support them.</p> <p>What do you feel are the main causes of children underachieving in your school?</p> <p>Within the context of what is already in place in your school (super-boosters... etc.), does your school make, or do you know of any non-academic interventions that could make a difference to these children's academic or social needs?</p> <p>Have you seen / heard of any non-academic interventions which young people have been involved in that may have led to an improvement in their motivation and engagement within school?</p>
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Table 2. Youth focus group questions

INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS (I)	<p>I.1. Can you tell me how you imagine your perfect school? Please explain your opinion.</p>
INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS (I)	<p>I. 2 Let's keep thinking about school, but now let's think about your school. Think about your lessons, teachers, relationships you have with your peers. How is your school similar to or different from the perfect school you imagined?</p>
LEARNING ABOUT YOUR SKILLS	<p>Q.1 We want to find out what you think about a number of skills you might be acquiring at school. These include things like public speaking, leadership, expressing your own opinions, leading groups, taking part in extracurricular activities. The first thing is:</p> <p>Prompt points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does your school help you develop these types of skills? - What does it do, what has been your experience? - Do you think your school does this? - What else do you think schools could do? - Are there any other skills that you're not acquiring?

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO TAKE PART?	<p>Q.2. Do you take part in extra-curricular activities either in school or in your local area? They might include volunteering, campaigning, fundraising.</p> <p>Prompt points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tell us about what you've done... b) Did it benefit you...? c) What other opportunities to get involved there might be in the future...?
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP	<p>Q. 3 What do you think I mean by active global citizenship?</p> <p>Prompt points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have you ever learnt about climate change/ litter/ inequality...? b) If yes: What are the issues you'd like to explore more with other young people? c) If not: Do you want learn about it...?
MAKING A CHANGE	<p>Q. 4 . To what extent can you demonstrate leadership skills that would make adults listen to you?</p> <p>Please give me some examples.</p> <p>(facilitators should provide examples)</p> <p>Having a voice heard...</p>

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This report outlines similarities and differences in the context of global education within the UK, Poland, Lithuania, Cyprus and Italy and compares them with wider European trends. The report suggests ways to create an inclusive, sustainable, networked model of EU wide, curriculum linked, global citizenship youth forum through qualitative analysis of teacher and youth focus groups, along with an analysis of desk research grounded in educational policy from each country. The report aims to help education stakeholders, policy makers and Partners to better understand the Project's needs, so that they can design project outputs more effectively.

Future Youth Schools Forums (FYS-Forums) is a cross-field strategic partnership, which aims to create a model for Global Citizenship Youth Forums to be run by schools, for schools. FYS-Forums bring together a broad range of Partners spanning academic, global education and youth work disciplines. The Project builds on existing approaches to globally focussed youth forums which are generally informal in nature, and aims to integrate a more sustainable model into formal education. In this way, the Project will ensure each Youth Forum is participatory and inclusive, and encourages young people to take action on a global issue. The FYS-Forums model applies high quality informal youth work principles enabling the Project to be both innovative and complimentary to existing work.

For further information, please visit: <http://www.fys-forums.eu/>

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