Global Citizenship Education in Europe

A Comparative Study on Education Policies across 10 EU Countries
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Authorship

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Guidelines for publishing Country Policy Analysis

If published, Country Policy Analysis should specify that data have been collected in the framework of the comparative policy analysis on Global Citizenship Education educational policies in 10 EU countries, coordinated by Massimiliano Tarozzi (University of Bologna), for the Training Centre for International Cooperation based in Trento. The research has been conducted within the Global Schools project, co-financed by DEAR programme. It should be indicated that this study broadly aimed at analysing existing educational policies in Europe to ascertain whether, to what extent and how GCE is integrated in formal primary education. Furthermore it should be reported a short abstract of the research.

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Abstract

The EU-funded project Global Schools’ research activity is a comparative qualitative analysis of educational policies of 10 European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Spain, Portugal, UK) that support the introduction of Global Citizenship Education in primary school curriculum.

The analysis focuses on four main topics: 1) identification of key actors and definition of their roles, 2) conceptual and terminology analysis, 3) levels and modes of implementation of GCE in primary school, and 4) identification of barriers to introducing GCE in the primary school system.

The research has highlighted that political actors, not only governmental ones, play a crucial role in implementing GCE policies, as well as in promoting GCE more generally, and in facilitating links between different actors, which in some countries may otherwise have little institutional coordination with schools.

The conceptual analysis points out that, besides the choice of different wording of GCE national terms, the main topics composing GCE are very similar. The specific terminology often reflects the history, will and political discourse of the organisations promoting GCE in the different countries.

The ways in which GCE has been implemented either in the primary school curriculum or in the school practice in the observed countries can be grouped in three policy clusters:
1) Bottom up (AT, LV)/top down (CR, IT-PAT)
2) Centralised (FR, CR, PT)/decentralised (IE, UK, ES)
3) Through one major teaching subject (ES, FR, IT)/through dissemination in several channels (UK, PT, IE).

The main barriers to policy implementation identified are referred to: attitudes, curriculum, teachers’ training, resources and system structures.
**Acronyms**

AT: Austria  
BG: Bulgaria  
CICL: Camoes – Institute of Cooperation and Language (PT)  
CIDAC: Centro de Intervencao para o Desenvolvimento Amilcar Cabral (PT)  
CoE: Council of Europe  
CONGDE: Coordinadora de ONGs para el Desarrollo de Espana  
CR: Czech Republic  
DE: Development Education  
DEAR: Development Education and Awareness Raising  
DFE: Department of Education (UK, IE)  
DFID: Department for International Development (UK)  
DEFRA: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (UK)  
DGE: Direcao-Geral da Educacao (PT)  
Edusosol: Plateforme francaise d’education au developpement et a la solidarite internationale (FR)  
ES: Spain  
FI: Finland  
EYD: European Year for Development  
EU: European Union  
FR: France  
GCE: Global Citizenship Education  
GENE: Global Education Network Europe  
GL: Global Learning  
IE: Ireland  
IT: Italy  
LAPAS: Latvijas Platforma Attīstības Sadarbībai (LV)  
LOE: Ley Organica de Educacion (ES)  
LV: Latvia  
MFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
ME: Ministry of Education  
OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
PAT: Provincia Autonoma di Trento (IT)  
PT: Portugal  
SMSC: Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development  
UK: United Kingdom
Global Schools project

Started in 2015, Global Schools is a European project delivered in 10 EU countries by 17 partners, led by the Autonomous Province of Trento (PAT, Italy). It is co-funded by the DEAR Programme of the European Commission. Global Schools brings together research, policy and teaching practice and aims at integrating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as a cross-cutting theme, and approach, to all existing subjects of primary school programmes in the partner countries. In the long term, it strives for a cultural change in schools and in the society at large, aimed at the emergence of a new generation of world citizens motivated by values of solidarity, equality, justice, inclusion, sustainability and cooperation. The project works at 3 levels:

- political: it aims at integrating Global Citizenship Education into educational policies and curricula
- practical: it supports teachers’ confidence and understanding of global issues, so that they can integrate GCE into their everyday teaching practice
- social: it promotes the EYD and the Agenda 2030 as vehicles to gain the involvement of teachers, parents and the wider community.

www.globalschools.education
1. Introducing GCE

The current prominence of GCE can be linked to the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), launched by the secretary of UN Ban Ki-moon in September 2012. The UN Secretary General explicitly prioritises the aim of fostering global citizenship. Although many scholars suggest that GCE has recently become prominent in Europe and the Americas in government, civil society and educational discourses (Andreotti & Souza, 2012), the global or international perspective in education has a much longer, although non-linear, record; as proved by a number of conferences organized around the theme, accompanied by an increasing amount of academic publications about global education and related topics. Growing interest in global citizenship has resulted in increased attention to the global dimension in citizenship education as well, and the implications for policy, curricula, teaching and learning. (Banks, 2004; Peters, Britton & Blee, 2008; Richardson & Blades 2006; O’Sullivan and Pashby 2008; Abdi & Shultz 2009, 2011; Dower, 2003). However, the approach toward GCE is different worldwide and the approach taken in Europe and North America is far from a standard that is accepted worldwide. (UNESCO, 2014).

With the UN establishing the global relevance and function of education and the new global scenarios reinforcing the urgency of this shift, many other international educational agencies have further promoted and developed the semantically and epistemologically weak concept of global education. Among them UNESCO, Agenda 21 and the Council of Europe have made fundamental contributions:

1) UNESCO played a vital role in this effort from the early Seventies (UNESCO, 1974) and then again in the mid Nineties (UNESCO, 1995). The recent Incheon declaration to be included by the Assembly of the UN in its post-2015 development goals reaffirmed this commitment.

2) The Agenda 21 document produced after the Rio de Janeiro UN Conference on Environment (Agenda 21, Chapter 36: Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training, United Nations Conference on Environment &. Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3 to 14 June 1992), has been decisive for further developments of GE and for prioritising questions around the global environment and a sustainable future. A number of initiatives, projects and conceptual elaborations were developed during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014. This, in turn, followed the Decade of Human Rights Education, therefore promoting and consolidating a significant number of educational projects worldwide.

3) The Council of Europe has also embraced a similar definition of GE. The 2002 Maastricht Global Education Declaration put forward the notion of an: “education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the globalized world and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and Human Rights for all.” (Council of Europe, 2002).

1 www.globaleducationfirst.org retrieved August, 27th 2015
Three key antecedents of GCE can be highlighted, namely global education in its different meanings worldwide, Intercultural Education, Development Education and Education for Sustainable Development. These concepts have been established in scholarly debate and in educational practices since well before 2012.

1.1 Global education

Global perspectives in education are not a new idea. While the debate about global education has increasingly involved political theorists, activists and scholars throughout the 1990s, its origin can be traced back hundreds of years. Historically, in Europe, with few exceptions, GE and the use of other people’s knowledge, lands and political situations were used as a way of maintaining and justifying their colonial position.

More recently, with the establishment of the supranational institution of the European Union, GE has become a manifold container, encompassing several topics such as: Development Education; Human Rights Education; Education for Sustainability; Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education. In 1997, the Council of Europe adopted the Global Education Charter. This was followed, in 2002, by the 1st European Congress on Global Education, which took place in Maastricht. The Congress, elaborated the framework for a European strategy on GE, outlined in the Maastricht Declaration (Forghani-Arani, et al., 2013).

In 2001 the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) was established to facilitate the sharing of policy learning across EU member states. GENE, the network of Ministries and Agencies with national responsibility for Global Education in European countries, adopted a broad definition of GE, taken from the Maastricht Declaration: “Global Education is education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. GE is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship.”

In Britain, where “world studies” were practised for decades, also to maintain its geopolitical and post-colonial position in the world, global education, better known as “global learning”, was conceptually elaborated more in details than elsewhere as demonstrated by the seminal work by Graham Pike and David Selby. Global Teacher, Global Learner (1988) by Graham Pike and David Selby, influenced OISE at the University of Toronto, when the authors moved to Canada. In Canada, the inclusion of global issues in education was already well established among political theorists and practitioners, thanks to the activities of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the pioneering Alberta Global Education Project.

On a different scale, there are two different discourses underlying the current political approach of GCE: on the one hand, the development on a global scale of the topic of citizenship education, especially in a diverse society (Banks, 2004; Tarozzi, 2008), which in the EU has been intertwined with intercultural education; on the other hand, the
traditions around development education (Su-Ming Khoo, 2011) and education for sustainable development, which includes many of the concepts inherent in environmental education.

1.2 Intercultural education

Intercultural education is currently considered by the EU as the official approach to be used in schools for the integration of immigrant students and ethnic minority groups (European Council, 2008). It is a model widely developed in many European documents that creates a regulatory framework which highlights how EU institutions and many member states have opted for a clear political direction about the type of reception, integration and management of cultural differences to be taken in schools. It considers cultural difference as an educational resource rather than a problem to be solved, and prioritizes the development of the cultural identity of students (not only migrant ones). The intercultural approach aims to foster dialogue between cultures as a priority goal to establish social cohesion in multicultural societies. Over the years, this approach has been increasingly developed and widely promoted on the basis of a consistent and coherent set of guidelines, recommendations and norms promoted by various European bodies and many other institutions and supranational organisations at international level, starting with UNESCO. The latter, in 2006 defined intercultural education (outlined within the UNESCO theme human rights education) as follows:

“The existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect. It presupposes multiculturalism within the society and it promoted a dynamic exchange between cultures at local, regional, national and international level”. (UNESCO, 2006: 17).

In this vein, intercultural education can be defined as an approach rooted in a dynamic conception of cultures, always seen in mutual synergy aimed at improving and facilitating cultural production and relationships, starting by recognizing diversity, and then promoting dialogue and exchange. Its key concept is cultural mediation, seeking to negotiate among cultures viewpoints, assumptions, values, and beliefs (Tarozzi, 1998, 2004).

1.3 Development education

Development education emerged in the early 1970s to foster cooperation projects with the global South, and aimed to bridge the gap between a rich North and an “underdeveloped” South. It started to enhance an idea of an education based on a new consciousness centred on solidarity and interdependency among all human beings. This attitude encompasses the knowledge of North/South inequalities and the need to understand other cultures and civilizations. Over the years the same notion of
“development” has been widely criticised, not only because there are different ways or times to reach “development(s)” which should be just and equitable; but also because there is a need to re-establish a concept full of contradictions and conundrums. There is now a wide awareness around the need to promote policies aimed at endorsing development under criteria different from neo-liberal solely economic developmental indexes. Hence the growing success of the notion of sustainable development or sustainability which, after the Rio conference in 1992 and the adoption of Agenda 21 has become a globally recognised concept. Since then the two different political and educational discourses, traditionally referring to two different institutional bodies in national states, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have recently merged in the common idea of human rights, not only of the individuals but also of people and of the environment. In particular, the notion of the “environment” is no longer considered as a biological objective problem, but is considered a humanistic question, closely related with forms of coexistence and of intersubjective and intercultural relationship. That is why, under the umbrella of sustainability lie mutually interconnected, environmental protection, respect for human rights, education for a planetary citizenship and world peace.

1.4 GCE at a glance

As highlighted above in light of contemporary developments, GE can be considered an important antecedent of GCE. GE aims to build and disseminate global competencies that are informed by several approaches related to human rights, intercultural understandings, development education (international development, economic growth, poverty alleviation, sustainable environment), and future studies (Reimers, 2013; UNESCO 2015). Within this framework, GCE could have a unifying role, what UNESCO defines as a “framing paradigm” (UNESCO, 2014, p.9). Moreover, GCE introduces a special emphasis of the idea of citizenship to make the too abstract notion of GC a bit more concrete and closely related with notions of diversity, equity and social justice. The call for a global citizenship, beyond the extension of the citizenship’s concept from the national to the global level, has a clear ethical and political value, and by implication educational significance. GCE helps to make sense of and to frame different types of knowledge, abilities and values theoretically and methodologically.

GCE is an educative concept and dimension grounded in the assumption that today people are in the process of learning to live in an international context and interact at a global, though unequal, level. In a world that is increasingly interdependent, GCE promotes a sense of belonging to the global community emphasising a shared common humanity among people. But the community of destiny shared by all human beings, also involves the biosphere and natural environment. (Morin, 2014). GCE entails the need to enlarge the educational horizons within which to locate human identity and its belonging to a homeland-earth. Hence the need to also think of citizenship as belonging to an ecological world that relies on a new environmental ethic.
In sum, beyond the ideal call for a global education and the targeting of the symbolic identity of world citizen as educational aim, it is difficult to unambiguously define GCE. Not surprisingly, the launch of GEFI by the UN General Secretary has promoted several activities within this educational approach (UNESCO, 2014). Terminology is surely an issue (Oxley & Morris, 2013). Different languages and cultural traditions have established and consolidated various terms to define this same educational area promoted over the years by various NGOs worldwide. Despite its apparent semantic ambiguity and conceptual vagueness, GCE is not as vague as it might seem. In 2015 UNESCO defined global citizenship as: “Global citizenship refers to a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasises political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global” (UNESCO, 2015. P. 14; UNESCO, 2014, p. 14).

In general, GCE objectives are related to:
- Invite people in the process of learning to think of themselves as global citizens;
- Promote mutual understanding among individuals and cultures and by implications models of conflict resolution;
- Promote a set of common principles based on the Human Rights regime;
- Promote active participation at every level: local, regional, state, provincial, national, and global.

These goals refer to the idea of participation embodied in a concept of active citizenship stressing the importance of learners’ empowerment and of the transformative, rather than reproductive attitude. Its themes can be related to four main areas (Tawil, 2013):
- Human right issues (children, gender, and culture rights);
- Environmental issues (sustainability, patterns of production and consumption, climate change, biodiversity);
- Social and economic justice (poverty, health and well-being, inequality and discrimination, migrations);
- Intercultural issues (identity, cultural diversity, world heritage, indigenous knowledge systems, peace).

1.5 Critiques to GCE

Despite the wide global consensus surrounding the idea of, and the need for, global citizenship education, there have been also criticisms. First it can be argued that GCE, since it is uprooted from real contexts, communities or nations, is an abstract utopia, without an authentic meaning. In other words, it can be a perspective so far removed and unreachable that becomes insignificant for individual development. It is very easy to find a broad consensus around the idea that at some level we are all citizens of the world. But if the GCE is conceived as a utopian dream of a global ethical state in perpetual peace, governed by human rights as new constituent

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2 Technical consultation of GCE, September 2013, Seoul; international Forum on Global Citizenship Education, Bangkok, December 2013, then published in UNESCO 2014
principles of humanity composed of individuals of equal dignity, fails to accomplish its critical scope. Such empty global utopianism also makes very little sense for the redefinition of individual identity or to empower marginal people, and for the education processes that can favour them. It is therefore essential that GC is always rooted in national citizenships and, from an educational point of view, within local communities; both to make sure that it can give meaning and substance to an empty cosmopolitan utopianism, because communities are the space for acquisition and subjective organisation of knowledge, and to avoid that communities become closed in themselves, and in their traditional conservatism.

Secondly, related to the previous point, GCE is blamed for its naïf internationalism, aiming at pursuing a vague “international awareness”, if not even the expression of a masked colonialism (Abdi, Shultz, & Pillay, 2015; Andreotti & de Souza, 2012). Not surprisingly, some scholars observed that it is unclear whether the very notion of “global citizenship” is a metaphor, a paradox, or simply an oxymoron (Davies, 2006). Since it is not a real citizenship, but a fiction, in the end a fancy way to express a contradiction, an oxymoron at best. GCE risks to socially reproducing inequalities and global injustice, losing the critical dimension that enables it to be rooted in social justice. In other words, we advocate a GCE with a strong emancipatory and critical aim, and not a void call for an abstract ethical dimension, claiming the dream of a shared humanity based on the utopistic idea of human rights as global values.

Thirdly, GCE was also attacked by a traditional and vaguely conservative perspective (Standish, 2012). According to this standpoint, the attention to the global dimension misses the important reference to communities and nations. In these are traditions, moral values, beliefs where educational processes must be based, without wasting time and money in claiming for global values that do not belong to the nation.

In the current state of crisis of responsibility and political leadership, GCE fills the moral void and take over the national curriculum, imposing a perilous new global rationale for schooling which has degradated traditional education.

Fourthly, GCE, by enhancing human rights and global values, can be conceived as a universalistic moral direction, unable to manage diversity, difference and otherness, which are key notion of contemporary social world. This is a very important issue for the purposes of present book. In the following section we will argue, following Appiah, that GCE should be supplemented with diversity.

1.6 Post-colonial critique

Special attention should be paid to the above-mentioned post-colonial critique. In fact, the most substantial criticism to the mainstreaming of GCE currently undertaken by governments, organisations, NGOs and schools lies in its implicit “colonial” approach. Related to this, GCE has been criticised for its failure to critique or address neo-liberal agendas and economic growth models. While originally global education (or its antecedent, development education) in most industrialised countries emerged in response to the de-colonization process, GCE risks to be assumed and applied as a new
wave of colonialism, by critically embracing a form of neoliberal new global citizenship (Ong, 2004). The sharpest criticism, from a post-colonial view, has been raised by Vanessa de Oliveire Andreotti (Andreotti 2006, 2010, 2011; Andreotti & Souza 2008; Souza & Andreotti; 2009; Andreotti, et al., 2010; Andreotti & Souza, 2012) and others (Abdi, Shultz, & Pillay, 2015; Jefferes, 2012; Odora Hoppers, 2009). Andreotti claims that due to the lack of critical analysis of power relations and global inequalities, GCE often results in educational practices that unintentionally reproduce and reinforce an ethnocentric, ahistorical, paternalistic, approach (Andreotti & Sousa, 2012a). This is particularly serious for the purposes of this research because this unexamined and ethnocentric attitude tends to trivialize cultural differences and to ignore inequality. To avoid such a missionary and superficially benevolent attitude towards difference, post-colonialists stress the need that GCE should challenge global hegemonies and not to take for granted unequal distribution of wealth, power and labour in the world.

Another reason to endorse a radical post-colonial tradition that confronts GCE is the issue of indigenous rights and knowledge, and the need to preserve local languages against the hegemony of English. Lynette Shultz argues that indigenous knowledge systems will be undermined by proposing a GCE that is “racist, imperialist, and paternalistic, all destructive to civilizations’ wellbeing” (Schultz, 2015). Therefore, she claims for a Global Social Justice Framework to provide a decolonial and anticolonial lens on the processes, objectives, and aims of GCE.

To summarise, Vanessa Andreotti has distinguished two forms of global citizenship education, a “soft” form and a “critical” one (Andreotti, 2006). The “soft” model is based on the recognition and enrichment of a common humanity and a global world ethic as a moral point of view. In the “critical” approaches, the core concept is social justice underscoring an ethical premise framed by the regime of human rights. Moreover, nation-state citizenship education is too often conceived as a social reproduction tool or as an effective way to educate to the legacy of a common tradition, history, language, values of a population, which has been traditionally portrayed as culturally homogeneous. Global citizenship education is based on a strong and explicit emancipatory commitment.

As far as ethics is concerned, Tawil (2013) has divided the approaches to the GCE in three main directions encompassing different ethical approaches based on different emphasis:

1) Humanistic, based on the principles of common humanity, universality in diversity;
2) Environmental, based on the principles of sustainable development;
3) Political, based on the principles of social justice and equal rights.

From our perspective, global citizenship education comprises all of these emphases, more so when connected to education for sustainable development. However, it is relevant to the political emphasis as a framing concept or paradigm that could interrupt inequality. It addresses the social, civic and especially political function of education. It is conceived of as an ethical and political lens to examine education at all levels and multiple teaching and learning domains.