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**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**  
*Accompanying the document*

**proposal for a Council Recommendation**

**on common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching**

{COM(2018) 23 final}

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

As President Juncker emphasised in his 2017 State of the Union address ‘Europe is more than just a single market. More than money, more than the euro. It was always about values.’<sup>1</sup> As stated in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, ‘The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between men and women prevail’. The Preamble to the Treaty refers to the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe which has inspired these values.

The common values have been fundamental in forming a Union that has bound countries, communities and people together in a unique political project, enabling Europe's longest ever period of peace. This has spanned overcoming Europe's deepest divisions immediately after World War Two to the peaceful transition to democracy in countries of Central and Eastern Europe after 1989. A peaceful, social and democratic Union is built on these values, which are not only valid within Europe, but are those that represent the Union in the world.

By global standards, European societies are prosperous and affluent places to live. They have the highest levels of social protection in the world and rank highly in terms of wellbeing, human development and quality of life. Yet, although the Union is experiencing strong growth and unemployment is at its lowest level since 2009, when asked about the future, many express anxiety and concern, in particular for future generations, in a context of growing threats and uncertainties both at home and abroad, increasing inequalities, a resurgence of racism and xenophobia and the viral spreading of misinformation and fake news.

High quality education, enhanced through mobility, transnational cooperation and structural reforms, is critical in reducing inequalities; fostering inclusive, stable and democratic societies; and making a success of migration and globalisation, all of which can help combat the risk that social challenges threaten our ability to maintain open, equal and cohesive societies.

Building common values into all learning environments can help mitigate intolerance, polarisation and divisive nationalism. Education is central, therefore, in safeguarding the foundations of our societies. It supports social cohesion, enhances the emergence of a common sense of belonging — be it at local or national level and strengthens people’s confidence in public institutions and in our democratic systems.

This is particularly true for the European Union. A widespread lack of awareness of its origins, its basic functioning and its *raison d’être* favour misinformation and prevent the formation of informed opinion on its actions and evolutions. Moreover, Europeans know little about the social, religious and cultural diversity, heritage and the political realities of their own countries and those of other Member States. This prevents both a deeper understanding of their respective realities as well as the emergence of a collective sense

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<sup>1</sup> State of the Union Speech, 19 September, 2017 — [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/state-union-2017\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/state-union-2017_en).

of belonging across Member States. The promotion of the common values embedded in Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union is vital to reverse those trends.

Education, at all levels, be it formal, informal or non-formal, is essential in ensuring social mobility and inclusive education, inculcating common values and in building a common sense of belonging at European level. Concrete steps have already been taken in that direction. On 17 March 2015, Member States' education ministers called for actions at all levels of government to reinforce the role of education in promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, strengthening social cohesion and helping young people become responsible, open-minded and active members of our diverse and inclusive societies<sup>2</sup>. More recently, the Commission recalled in its reflection paper on globalisation that 'equal access to high-quality education and training is a powerful way of redistributing wealth in a society. This should start with a high standard of basic education and access at all ages to training and skills'<sup>3</sup>. Finally, ahead of the Social Summit held in Gothenburg, the Commission published its Communication on 'Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture'<sup>4</sup>. The text stresses that 'it is in the shared interest of all Member States to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for jobs, social fairness, active citizenship as well as a means to experience European identity in all its diversity.

Against this background, this Recommendation seeks to create the conditions for a greater commitment of Member States and render their education systems more resilient, inclusive, and values based. The Recommendation is built on three main objectives: promoting common values at all levels of education, fostering more inclusive education as well as encouraging a European dimension of teaching. To achieve those aims, the Commission will take steps to increase virtual exchanges among schools, notably through the e-Twinning network and boost school mobility under the Erasmus+ programme. The European Structural and Investment funds can be availed of to support teacher training or fund physical infrastructure that enables inclusive education.

## **a. Political context**

### **i. Common values in the EU education and training agenda**

One of the objectives of the ET2020 framework for European cooperation in education and training, namely to promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship, has been established on the basis that education should promote intercultural competences, democratic values and respect for fundamental rights, combat all forms of discrimination, and equip young people to interact positively with their peers from diverse backgrounds.

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<sup>2</sup> Paris Declaration, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 - [http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20150316-paris-education\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20150316-paris-education_en).

<sup>3</sup> Reflection paper on harnessing globalisation, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 - [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-harnessing-globalisation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-harnessing-globalisation_en).

<sup>4</sup> Commission Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture; COM(2017) 673 final

ET 2020 was updated in 2015. The 2015 [Joint Report](#) of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) states that ‘*Education and training have an important role in ensuring that the human and civic values we share are safeguarded and passed on to future generations, to promote freedom of thought and expression, social inclusion and respect for others, as well as to prevent and tackle discrimination in all its forms ...*’ and, furthermore, proposed ‘*inclusive education, equality, equity, non-discrimination and the promotion of civic competences*’ as a new priority area for European cooperation in education and training. In this context an [ET 2020 Working Group on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education](#) was established.

Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning identifies the knowledge, skills and attitudes for personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability. Critical thinking, sense of responsibility, conflict resolution are identified as concepts transversally underlying all other competences.

In the ‘[Communication on Improving and Modernising Education](#)’ adopted on 7 December 2016 and subsequently the youth initiative adopted on 30 May 2017, the Commission set out its strategy for high quality, inclusive and future-oriented education with specific measures including School Development and Excellent Teaching for a Great Start in Life,<sup>5</sup> a Renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education<sup>6</sup> and a proposal for a Council Recommendation on graduate tracking.<sup>7</sup> Along these lines, the Communication proposed actions related to inclusive education and the promotion of common values including the continued professional development of teachers, the further development of the European Toolkit for Schools as well as the use of Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 funds to promote good practice in the area of inclusive learning (e.g. integration of migrant pupils and imparting common values).

The European Structural and Investment Funds also help to promote inclusive education, by supporting projects targeting education systems, teachers and schoolchildren. They finance initiatives to ensure young people complete their education and get the skills that make them more competitive on the jobs market. Reducing school drop-out rates is a major priority, along with improving vocational and tertiary education opportunities. In the 2014-2020 period more than EUR 39 billion are allocated to achieving that objective.

## **ii. Articulation with other initiatives and measures**

A number of initiatives at EU level are already in place, which highlight the need to support promotion of common values, to support integration and social cohesion.

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5 Commission Communication of 30 May 2017 on School Development and Excellent Teaching for a Great Start in Life; COM(2017) 248.

6 Commission Communication of 30 May 2017 on a Renewed Agenda for Higher Education; COM(2017) 247 .

7 Proposal for a Council Recommendation on tracking graduates; COM(2017) 249.

EU leaders meeting at the Social Summit in Gothenburg in November 2017, endorsed the Commission Communication on '[Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf)'<sup>8</sup>

The [Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals](#) highlights that integration is a precondition for an inclusive, cohesive and prosperous society and sets out the joint responsibility and common interest to work together on integration;

The [2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage](#) aims to raise awareness of common history and values and encourage people to explore Europe's rich and diverse cultural heritage;

The [European Agenda on Migration](#) develops President Juncker's Political Guidelines into a set of mutually coherent and reinforcing initiatives, based around four pillars, to manage migration better in all its aspects.

The [European Agenda on Security](#) guides the Commission's work in this area, setting out the main actions to ensure an effective EU response to terrorism and security threats in the European Union. Preventing and fighting radicalisation is one dimension of this agenda, where education has an essential role. As part of that agenda, the Radicalisation Awareness Network is an umbrella network connecting people involved in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism throughout Europe that has a [specific Working Group on education](#).

The Commission 2016 Communication on [Supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism](#)' put forth key areas whereby the EU can help support Member States in preventing and countering violent radicalisation leading to terrorism. This Communication proposes the need to 'promote inclusive education and EU common values' through specific measures including announcing this Council Recommendation, mobilising Erasmus+ funding, establishing a network of positive role models and awarding student credits for volunteering.

In July 2017, the European Commission set up a High Level Group on Radicalisation<sup>9</sup> to step up efforts to prevent and counter radicalisation, including through educational policies and to improve coordination and cooperation between all relevant stakeholders building on achievements so far. In November 2017, the High Level Group issued an interim report with preliminary findings and a set of first practical recommendations in different areas.

As regards education, the High Level Group has mainly recommended to instigate the use of opportunities offered by existing platforms (such as eTwinning) to promote fundamental values, democracy and citizenship and help develop critical thinking, as

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<sup>8</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-strengthening-european-identity-education-culture_en.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Commission Decision of 27 July 2017 setting up the High-Level Commission Expert Group on radicalisation. JO C252/3, 3.8.2017.

well as to develop the awareness of teachers and their ability to work in the best possible way within the school if there are signs of radicalisation.

Other EU initiatives are referred to in the ‘state of play’ sections in chapter 4.

## **2. CHALLENGES UNDERLYING THE PROPOSAL**

**Terrorism and social issues are a prominent concern of EU citizens.** In the 2017 Standard Eurobarometer,<sup>10</sup> terrorism is on top of the issues that citizens cite when it comes to challenges that the EU is currently facing, and the number one concern for the EU in 21 Member States while this was the case in one country only in autumn 2016. In the 2016 Eurobarometer report on ‘Future of Europe’, more than one third of respondents considered social inequalities to be the main challenge for the EU, alongside migration issues (both 36 %).<sup>11</sup> When asked to identify up to two areas they thought should be emphasised by society in order to face major global challenges, almost half (46 %) of respondents mention social equality and solidarity. A majority of respondents in 21 Member States think social equality and solidarity should be emphasised in order to face major global challenges.

**EU citizens are also very much attached to the EU values** as defined in Article 2. The EU’s respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities are seen as its main assets. Peace, freedom of opinion, social equality and solidarity, and tolerance and openness to others are the values considered to be best embodied by the European Union. Almost six in ten respondents say the EU best embodies peace and freedom of opinion (both 57 %), while 55 % say this about social equality and solidarity and 52 % about tolerance and openness to others.

However, since 2012, there has been a decline across the EU in those who think the EU best embodies these values. Furthermore, more than half of Europeans (52 %) feel that their voice does not count in the EU. This is also reflected in participation in European Parliament elections, with a voter turnout of 43 % at the 2014 elections, and only 28 % of people aged between 18 and 24. When looking in details, the evidence shows that common values are not at a level where they should be.

### **a. Low achievers: a challenge for common values**

#### *The EU is lagging behind in the latest PISA survey*

The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)<sup>12</sup> is the basis for the ET 2020 benchmark on underachievement of 15-year-olds in basic skills.<sup>13</sup> This benchmark, which aims to increase equity in education,<sup>14</sup> states that the share of 15-year-olds who are low achievers in reading, maths or science should be less than 15 % in the EU by 2020.

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<sup>10</sup> [Standard Eurobarometer 87](#), Data collected in May 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Special Eurobarometer 451, [Future of Europe](#), Data collected in autumn 2016.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Low achievers are students who do not reach competence level 2.

<sup>14</sup> See also [https://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20161206-pisa-2015-eu-policy-note\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20161206-pisa-2015-eu-policy-note_en).



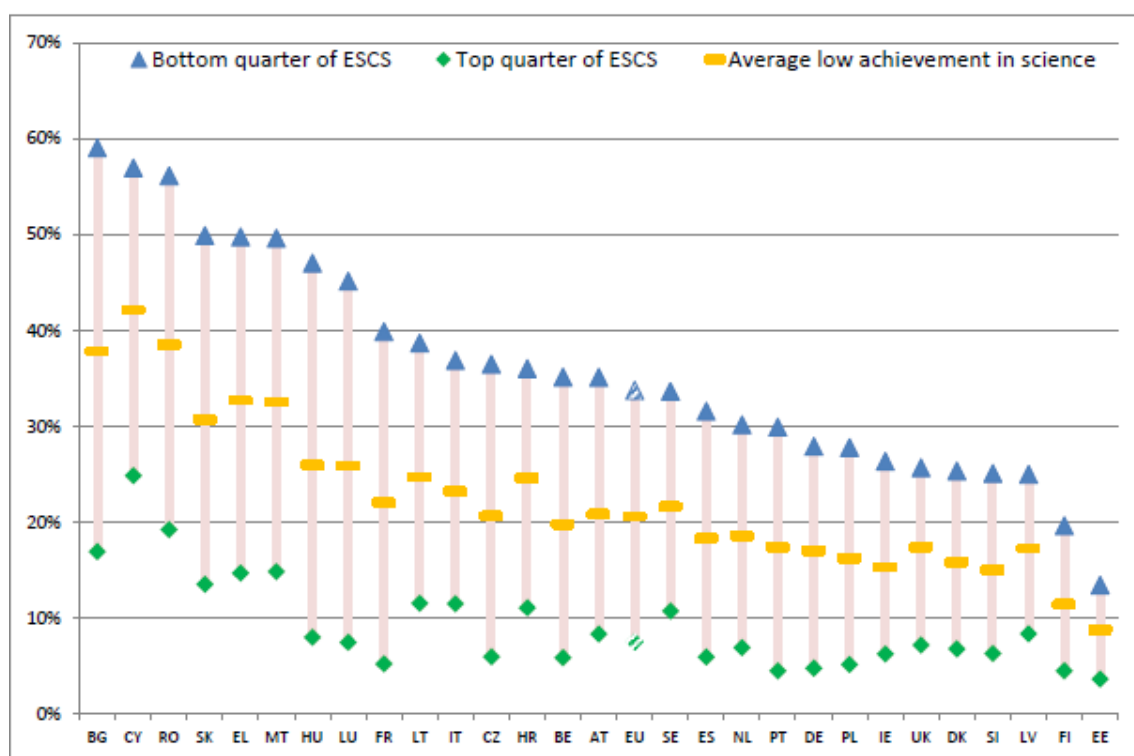
In the PISA 2015 results, very few Member States have met the 2020 benchmark: 4 in reading, 3 in maths and 2 in science. But most importantly, the EU as a whole is seriously lagging behind in all three domains and has taken a step backward, compared to the PISA 2012 results (science: 20.6 %, +4.0 percentage points; reading: 19.7 %, +1.9 percentage points; maths: 22.2 %, + 0.1 percentage point). Low achievers cannot successfully complete basic tasks that are required in modern societies and the consequences of this underachievement, if it is not tackled successfully, will be eminent and costly in the long run for them individually, but also for societies as a whole.

*The socio-economic gap in low achievers is much bigger in some EU countries*

In many countries, schools tend to reproduce existing patterns of socio-economic advantage, rather than contribute to a more equitable distribution of learning opportunities and outcomes. Socio-economic status continues to be a strongly influential factor for 15-year-old students’ achievement in science, with much higher shares of low achievers among the lower social groups than among students of higher socio-economic status.

The figure below shows the share of low achievers in science in PISA 2015 in the bottom quarter of PISA’s socio-economic index and the share of low achievers in science among the upper 25 % of this index; thus, this comparison includes half of the student population that took part in PISA 2015 and is not just a comparison of extremes.

**Figure 3.8. Low achievement in science by socio-economic status, 2015**



Source: OECD (PISA 2015). Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of the average share of underachievement amongst the bottom quarter of the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS).

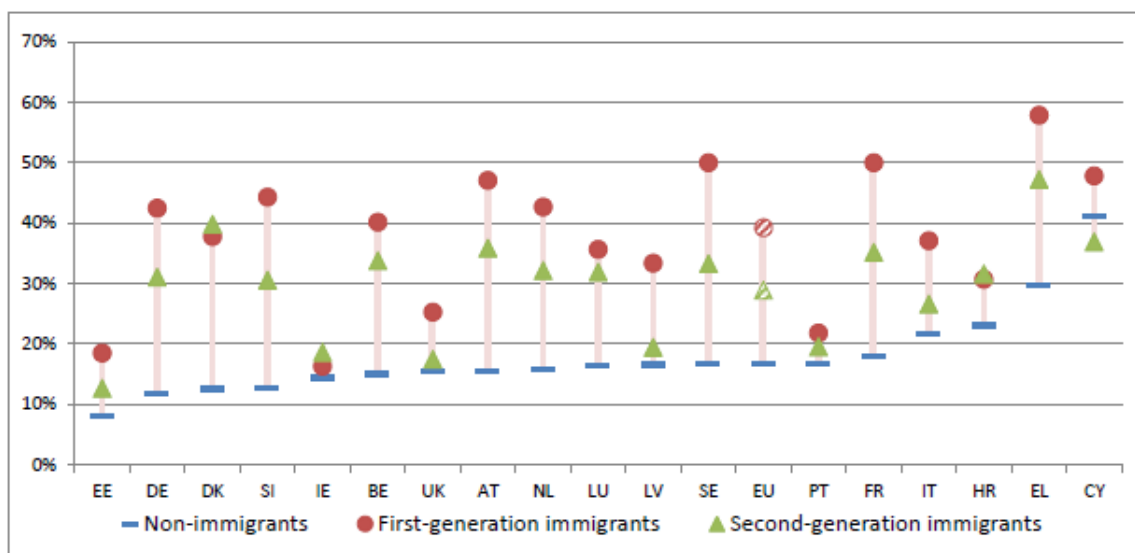
Also, the gap among the upper and lower social quarters is very different across EU Member States: while it is 26.2 percentage points in the EU average, it is especially large in BG (42.1 percentage points) and above 35 percentage points in LU, HU, RO, SK and MT.

EL. There are, however, countries that are able to combine both low levels of low achievement with a low level of reproduction of socio-economic patterns.

Too many students with a migrant background do not achieve the necessary basic skills

A student’s migrant background is an additional factor that is related to high shares of low achievers in most EU Member States. Even after taking into account the effects of socio-economic background, too many students with a migrant background do not achieve the necessary basic skills, and a gap remains among children of migrants who were born in the country where the test was taken.

**Figure 3.10. Share of low achievers in science by migrant status, 2015**



Source: OECD (PISA 2015). Note: Countries are ordered by the performance of non-migrant students. Countries are ordered by the performance of non-migrant students. EU average based only on results of the countries included in this figure (Table 3.9).

In almost all of the Member States shown here with relevant shares of migrants among their student population, the difference in the share of low achievers between migrant students and their non-migrant counterparts is quite large. In most EU Member States with more than 3 % second generation migrant students, the share of low achievers among second generation students is lower than among first-generation students, except in DK, IE and HR but a gap remains between second generation migrants and students without a migrant background.

Low achievers are less likely to feel a citizen of the European Union

Even if feeling like a citizen of the European Union is not similar to sharing EU values, it can however be considered as an indicator. **66 % of respondents feel they are citizens of the European Union.**<sup>15</sup> The proportion of respondents reporting this feeling is declining in some Member States and in some Member States not feeling a citizen of the EU is quite high: 45 % of respondents in the UK say they do not feel citizens of the EU, a figure that is higher still in Cyprus, Bulgaria, Italy and Greece.

More importantly and reflecting the contribution of education, a **clear majority of respondents who studied up to the age of 20 or beyond feel like EU citizens (76 %**

<sup>15</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 85, [European citizenship](#), Data collected in Spring 2016.

versus 23 %), **while those who left school at the age of 15 or earlier are evenly divided** (49 % versus 49 %).

## **b. Sense of belonging and social cohesion**

### *PISA 2015 data on the sense of belonging*

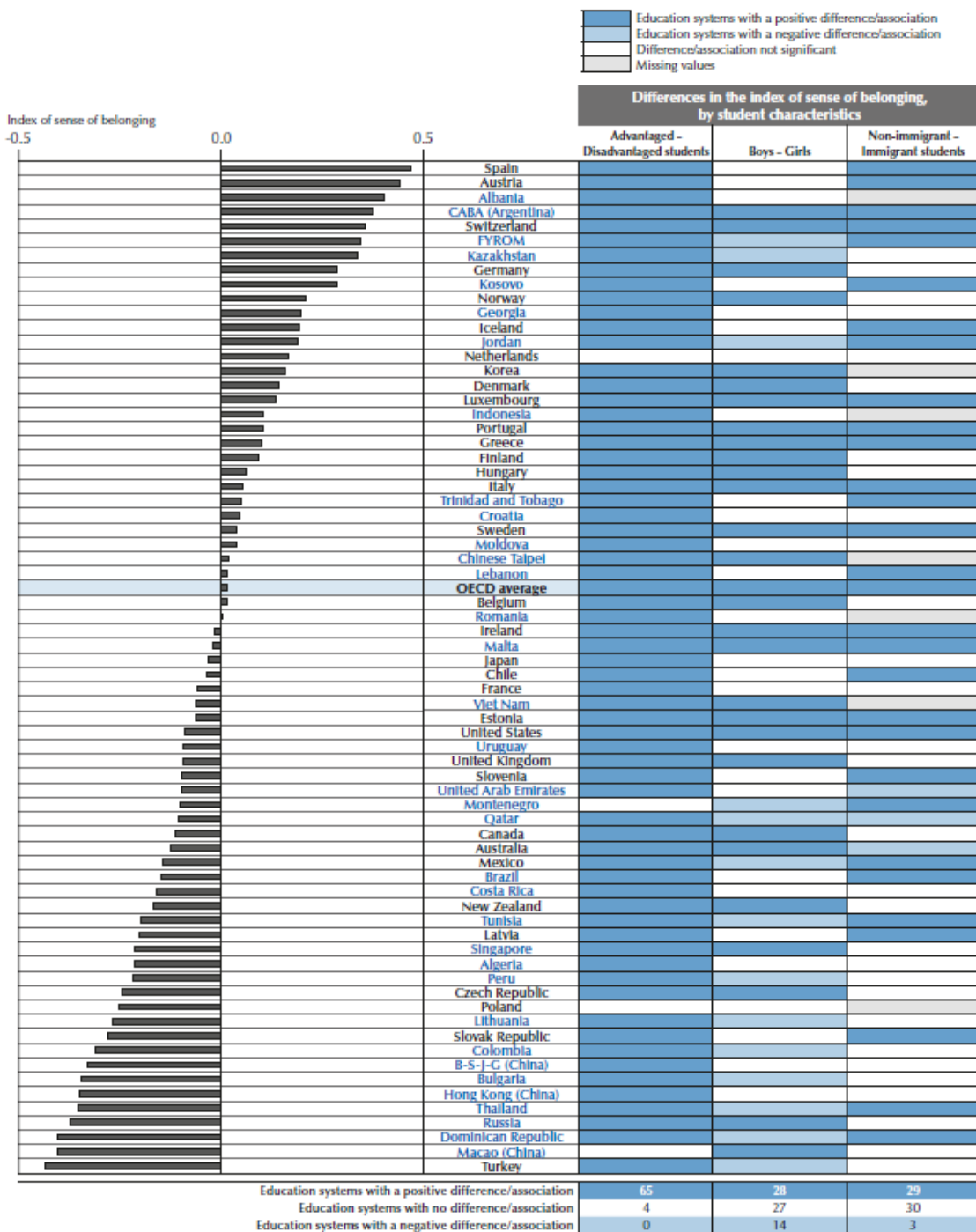
The ‘sense of belonging’ as used in the PISA 2015 data is defined as feeling accepted and liked by the rest of the group, feeling connected to others and feeling like a member of a community. In school, a sense of belonging gives students feelings of security, identity and community, which, in turn, support academic, psychological and social development.

The majority of students in the PISA 2015 survey feel that they belong to the school community.

Advantaged students tend to feel more socially connected at school than disadvantaged students. On average across OECD countries, disadvantaged students were 7.7 percentage points less likely than advantaged students to report that they feel that they belong at school.

In the table below, students’ responses to these questions were used to construct the index of sense of belonging. Positive values on this scale mean that the student has a greater sense of belonging than an average student in OECD countries.

Figure III.7.2 ■ **Index of sense of belonging, by student characteristics**  
Results based on students' self-reports



Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the index of sense of belonging.

Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table III.7.6.

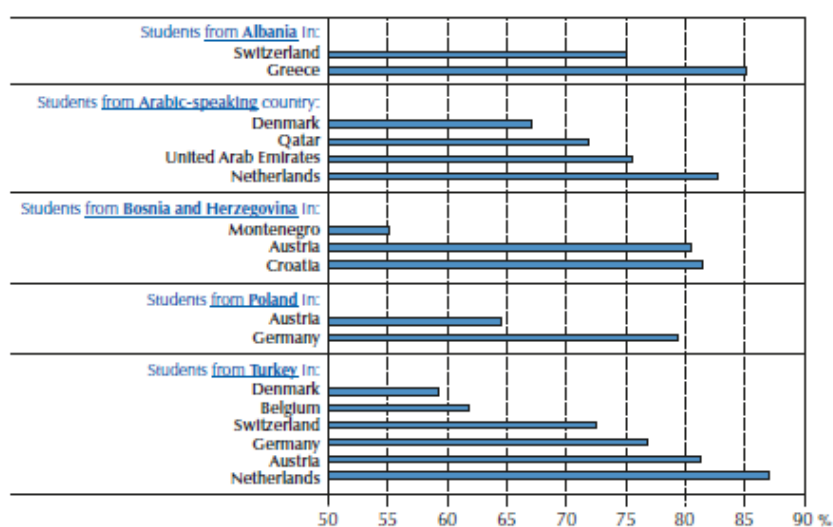
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933471487>

Migrant students are less likely than students without a migrant background to feel a sense of belonging at school. In Latvia, Luxembourg, Spain, and Sweden (for EU countries), migrant students reported the greatest sense of alienation from schools compared to students without a migrant background. Second-generation students expressed a stronger sense of belonging at school than migrant students, particularly in Austria, Spain and Sweden for EU countries (Table III.7.6).

Figure III.7.3 shows the percentage of migrant students who reported that they feel that they belong at school, by country of origin and country of destination, taking into account differences in the socio-economic status of students from the same country of origin who settled in various countries. Around 83 % of students who were born in, or whose parents were born in, Arabic-speaking countries and who settled in the Netherlands reported feeling that they belong at school, but only 67 % of students from Arabic-speaking countries who settled in Denmark reported the same.

Figure III.7.3 ■ **Immigrant students' sense of belonging at school, by countries of origin and destination**

Percentage of students with an immigrant background who reported that they feel like they belong at school, adjusted for differences in socio-economic status



Notes: The estimates are obtained from pooled data from the PISA 2012 and 2015 databases. Only countries where the percentage of immigrant students in PISA 2015 is higher than 5% are shown.

The estimates are adjusted for differences in socio-economic status by assigning the same value of socio-economic status to all students of one origin group independently of the destination country.

The coverage of destination countries is limited by the fact that only some countries collect detailed information on immigrants' country of birth. Results are only shown for pairs of origin and destination countries/economies with data for 20 or more immigrant students.

Sources: OECD, PISA 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015 Databases, Table III.7.9.

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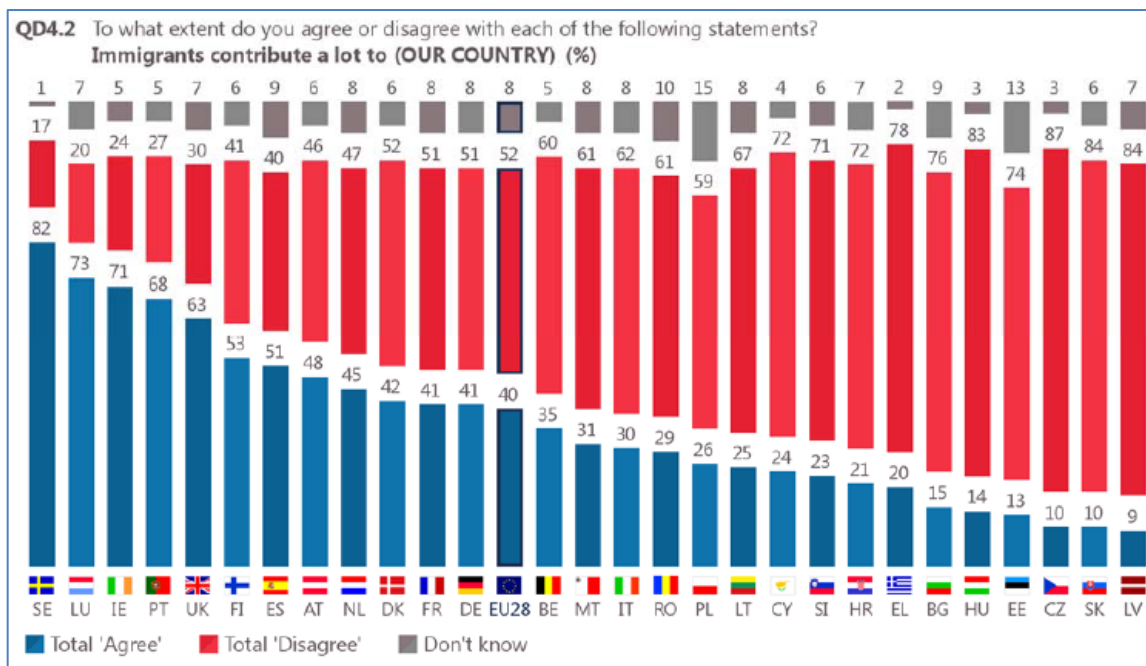
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These results suggest that schools and communities have an important role in supporting students to integrate and in improving their well-being. Providing dedicated support to migrant students to help them integrate into their new school community can strengthen the overall performance of education systems; this is especially relevant for those countries that recently saw a surge in migrant inflows.

### Diversity linked to immigration seen as an issue rather than an asset

The fact that more than half of Europeans disagree that ‘migrants contribute a lot to (OUR COUNTRY)’ (52 % total ‘disagree’, +2), with great variations between Member States<sup>16</sup> makes it even harder for migrants students. This results in perceptions of globalisation as a threat, and to potential for a lack of social cohesion between communities.

<sup>16</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 85, [European citizenship](#), Data collected in spring 2016.



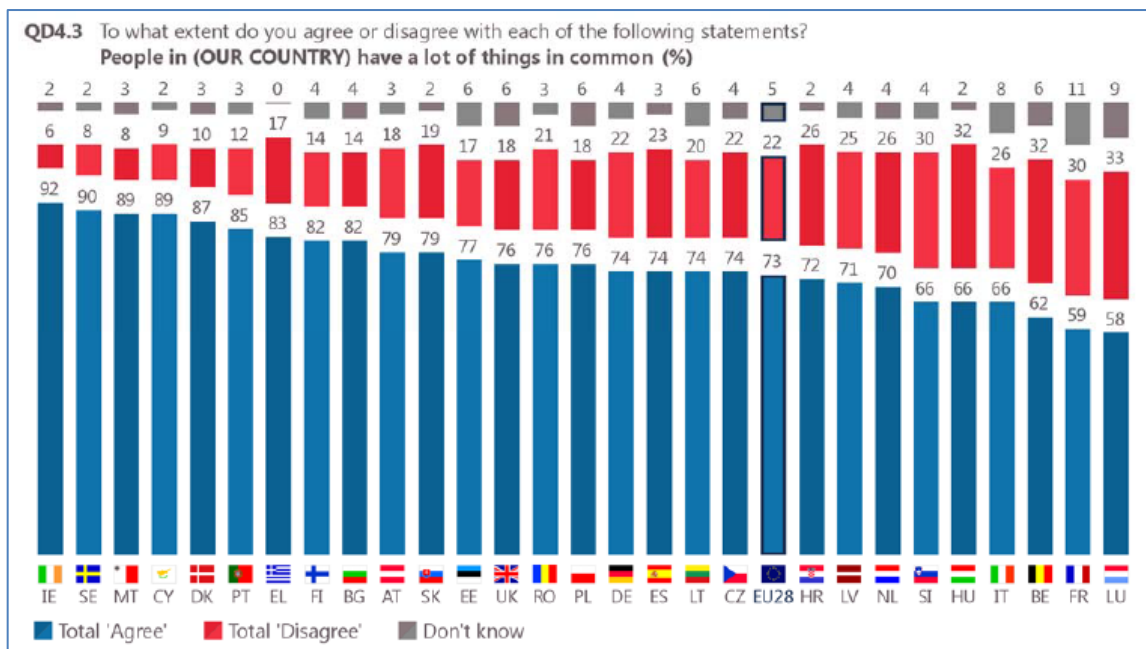
In contrast, 8th grade students interviewed in the 2016 ICCS study expressed more tolerant opinions. 93 % of them agreed that migrant children should have the same opportunities for education as other children. 88 % agreed that migrants should enjoy the same rights as everyone else in the country. Educational approaches that build on these tolerant attitudes have potential to contribute to sustaining greater openness among adults later in life.

Social cohesion a challenge in some EU countries

This question from the Eurobarometer echoes in the general public the figures on the sense of belonging among students presented earlier.

Across the EU more than half of respondents agree that people in (OUR COUNTRY) have many things in common.<sup>17</sup> Agreement is highest in Ireland (92 %) and Sweden (90 %) and lowest in Luxembourg (58 %) and France (59 %), the only two countries where it is below 60 %. Since autumn 2015, the belief that people have a lot in common in the respondent’s country has declined in 19 Member States, most noticeably in Belgium (62 %, -13 percentage points).

<sup>17</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 85, [European citizenship](#), Data collected in Spring 2016.



### c. Students' civic attitudes

A 2017 Eurobarometer study<sup>18</sup> highlighted that education and training is one of the areas in which EU citizens think the EU should take action to encourage young people to express solidarity (68%). Furthermore, a large majority of respondents (89%) agree that national governments should strengthen school education about rights and responsibilities as EU citizens. For 83%, learning about European matters should be part of compulsory school education.

The IEA International Civic and Citizenship Survey 2016<sup>19</sup>, in which 14 Member States participated, offers a unique opportunity to investigate students' civic knowledge and attitudes as well as the role of the educational systems in promoting educational outcomes related to civic and citizenship competences. ICCS collected data from 13-14 year old students, their teachers and schools. It reports on student achievement using a test of conceptual knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship. It collects data about students' values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and behavioural intentions related to civics and citizenship.

#### Students' perceptions of good citizenship

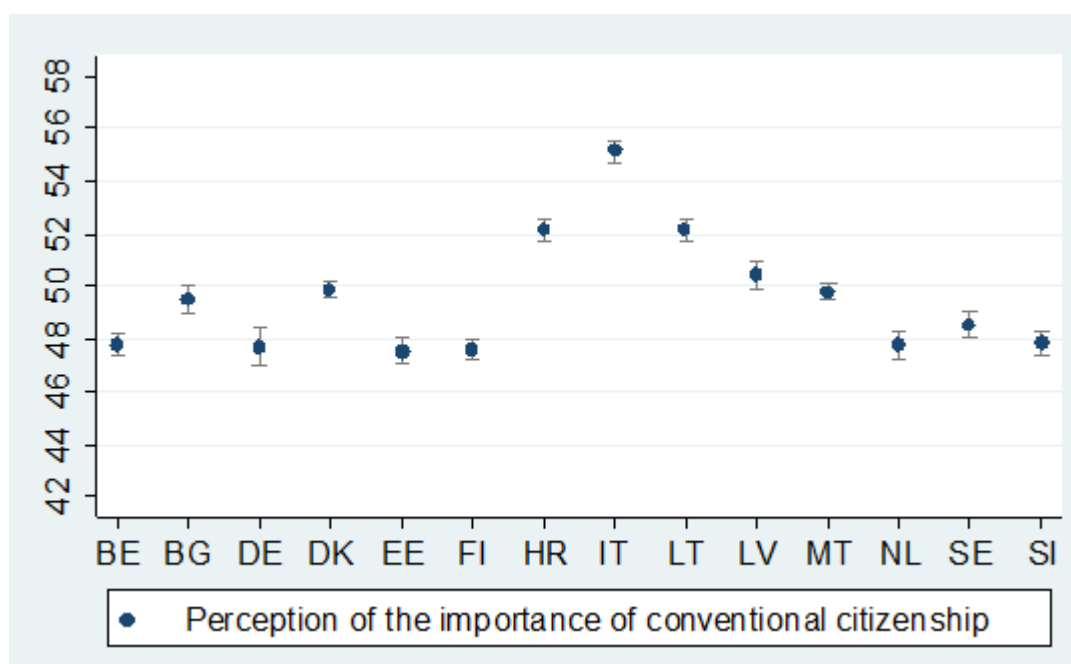
**Students' perception of the importance of citizenship** is based on 6 Likert-type items that rank the importance students give to certain behaviours in order to be a good adult citizen, including: (1) Voting in every national election; (2) Joining a political party; (3) Learning about the country's history; (4) Following political issues in the newspaper, on the radio, on TV, or on the internet; (5) Showing respect for government representatives;

<sup>18</sup> Flash Eurobarometer survey FL455 European Youth.

<sup>19</sup> <http://iccs.iea.nl/home.html>

and (6) Engaging in political discussions. The answers range from ‘Very important’, ‘Quite important’, ‘Not very important’ to ‘Not important at all’.

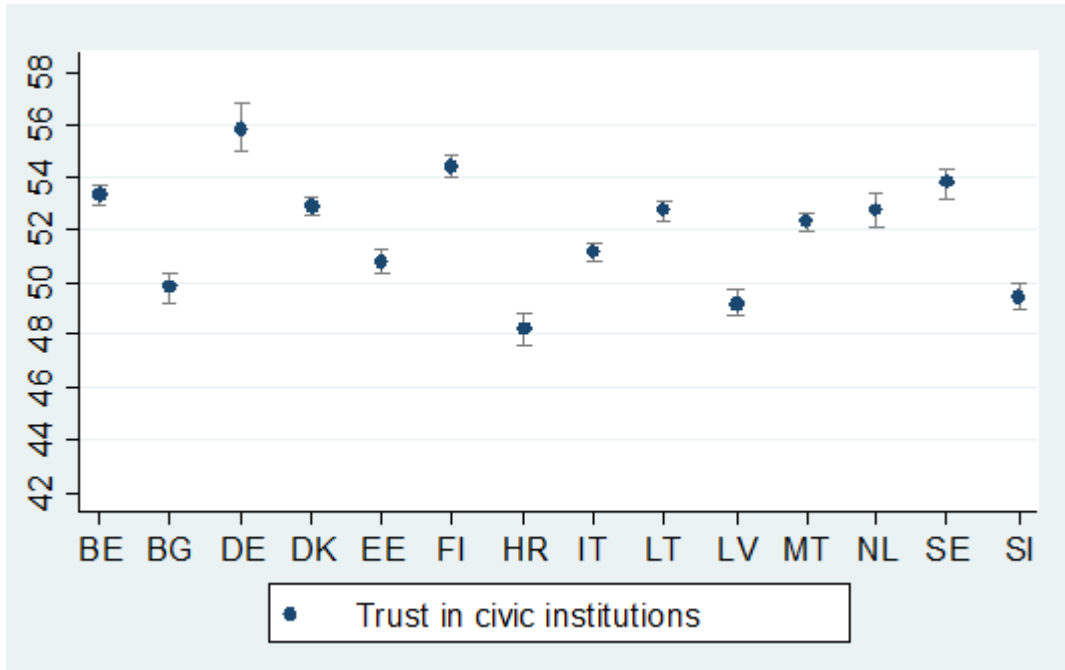
**Only four countries, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania and Latvia, have students with above average perception of the importance of conventional citizenship.**



### Students' trust in institutions

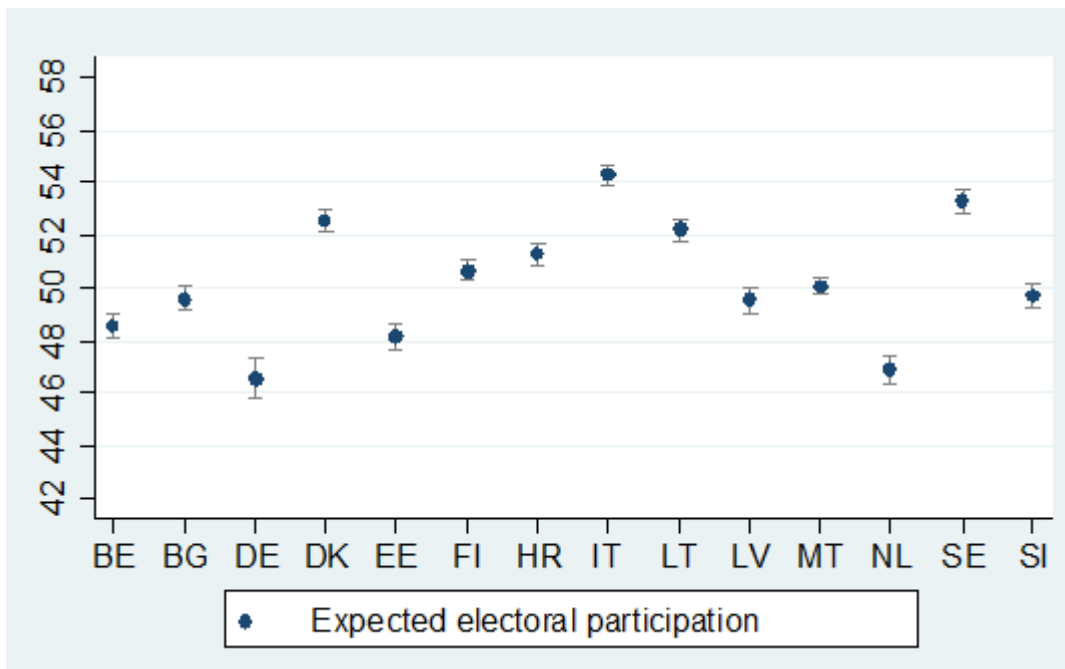
**Institutional trust** reflects students' feelings of trust in a variety of state and civic institutions in society, and relates mainly to civic society and systems. The institutions listed in the questionnaire include (1) the national government of the country; (2) the local government of the own town or city; (3) courts of justice; (4) the police; (5) political parties; and (6) the national parliament. Likert-scales were used and students were asked to indicate whether they ‘completely trust’, trust ‘quite a lot’, ‘a little’ or ‘not at all’ these institutions. Students in most countries indicate above average trust in civic institutions in general. The exceptions are Croatia, Latvia and Slovenia.





Engagement: Students' expectations of electoral participation as adults (behavioural intention)

The scale for measuring students' **expected electoral participation** was based on 3 Likert-type items (4 response categories: 'I would certainly do this', 'I would probably do this', 'I would probably not do this', and 'I would certainly not do this') about their future intentions of: (1) voting in local elections; (2) voting in national elections and (3) getting information about candidates before voting in an election. Students in 6 countries indicate above average intentions to participate in future elections, namely DK, FI, HR, IT, LT and SE, with BG, LV, MT and SI on average.



### **3. RESULTS FROM THE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

In 2016, the Commission initiated a broad consultation process to support the proposal for a Recommendation on common values through education, training and non-formal learning.

A series of dedicated consultation meetings at different political levels as well as expert seminars have been held. A dedicated ET 2020 Working Group<sup>20</sup> was launched in February 2016 specifically on that issue and has reported to the High-Level Group on Education and Training, a Group composed of Member States policymakers. DG Higher Education and DG Schools have also been consulted.

High level reporting on the implementation of the Paris Declaration and policy debates took place at the Council meetings in February 2016, May 2016 and February 2017. Large-scale events, where input from stakeholders have been gathered include a Jean Monnet conference, a Colloquium hosted by Vice President Timmermans on ‘Tolerance and respect: preventing and combating anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe’, a Colloquium hosted by Commissioner Navracsics on Promoting Inclusion and Fundamental Values through Education, the European Education Training and Youth Forum (ETY) and dedicated meeting with Civil Society. Finally a public online consultation was held from May to August 2017.

The main findings of this process were that respondents felt unanimously that inclusive education which addresses the needs of all learners should be promoted, while only 16 % feel that education is currently achieving this; and revealed virtually unanimous agreement (95 %) that education should help young people ‘understand the importance of and adhere to shared values’ and that the EU should help Member States in this task (98 %).

This chapter will summarise the key findings of the consultation process. A complete report on the consultation process can be found on the consultation website.<sup>21</sup>

#### **a. Online public consultation**

The consultation was launched on 19 May 2017 and was open until 11 August 2017. In total, 1 124 responses were received from respondents all over Europe and beyond, submitted by respondents replying in either an individual capacity (866), and on behalf of an organisation (258). 203 respondents also included position papers.

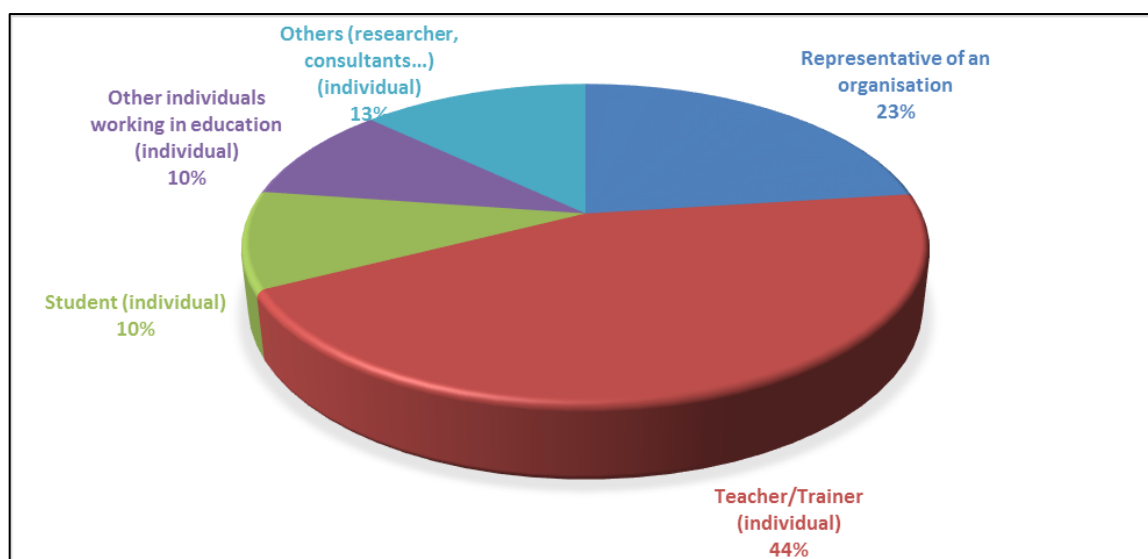
Data on the background and main area of activity indicated that a majority of respondents were working in education and almost half of the respondents as teachers and trainers.

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<sup>20</sup> See Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) New priorities for European cooperation in education and training (OJ C 417, 15.12.2015) for an explanation of the ET2020 governance structures.

<sup>21</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-recommendation-promoting-social-inclusion-and-shared-values-through-formal-and-non-formal-learning\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-recommendation-promoting-social-inclusion-and-shared-values-through-formal-and-non-formal-learning_en) .

## *Profile of respondents to online survey*



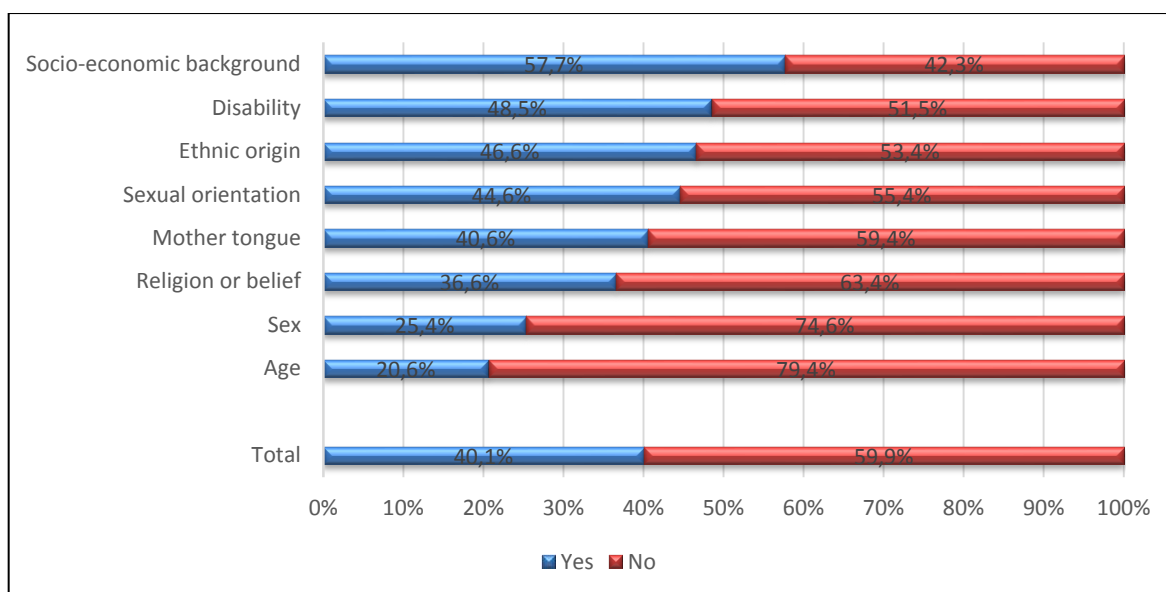
In terms of geographical balance, responses were received from individuals and organisations across Europe and beyond. Most responses by far came from Mediterranean countries: in particular, Spain (294), Italy (156) and Portugal (123). They were followed by a high number of respondents from West European countries: in particular Germany (93), France (78). A good response rate was also received for Belgium (36), South-Eastern European countries [in particular: Greece (59) and Romania (34)], the UK and Ireland (35). Responses were also received from Nordic Countries (21), Candidate Countries (36) and Other Countries (23).

The consultation showed strong support for the proposal. More than 90 % of respondents acknowledged the importance of education in helping young people understand and adhere to shared values. In addition, the vast majority (97.8 %) of survey respondents felt that the EU should support Member States in that goal.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) (75.6 %), primary (77.6 %) and secondary education (73.6 %) are seen as quite effective to transmit shared values. Higher education (69.9 %), vocational education and training (68 %) and adult learning (66.5 %) are seen as less effective.

Overall 40.1 % of respondents consider there is some form of discrimination against learners in education and training institutions. This is particularly true for discrimination based on learners' socio-economic background, disability and sexual orientation.

## Discrimination for learners in education and training institutions



When asked to indicate whether education should offer support to all learners according to their needs, respondents almost unanimously (98.6 % overall) replied this should be the case. However, only 16.6 % of respondents observed that the support is currently being provided.

### Effectiveness of policy approaches, tools and methods

When asked about the most effective policy approaches when it came to teaching and learning content, respondents put forward **citizenship education** (81.8 %), **curricula that focus on different cultures, religions and beliefs** (81.5 %), **intercultural understanding** through arts and culture (81.4 %) and curricula to enhance knowledge and understanding of shared values (80.5 %).

### *Effectiveness of teaching and learning content: average by type of respondent*

	Teacher/ Trainer	Representative of an organisation	Student	Other individuals working in education	Other (researcher, consultant...)	Overall
Offering citizenship education	82.8%	81.6%	83.2%	77.6%	80.5%	<b>81.8%</b>
Using curricula that promote knowledge of different cultures, religions and beliefs	82.9%	81.8%	81.2%	78.0%	78.9%	<b>81.5%</b>
Promoting subjects/courses on culture and arts to enhance intercultural understanding	83.5%	82.0%	73.6%	78.4%	81.6%	<b>81.4%</b>
Using curricula that enhance knowledge and understanding of shared values	82.5%	81.9%	76.4%	78.9%	75.4%	<b>80.5%</b>
Offering courses/subjects on ethics	74.6%	74.8%	78.0%	74.8%	74.6%	<b>75.0%</b>
Providing additional support to learners in their mother tongue	75.6%	75.5%	70.8%	69.5%	73.3%	<b>74.2%</b>
Offering religious education in one's religion	57.6%	57.1%	59.3%	51.3%	51.5%	<b>56.3%</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>77.1%</b>	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>74.6%</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>73.7%</b>	<b>75.8%</b>

When asked about the most effective policy approaches when it came to empower and support teachers, respondents put forward a focus on innovative pedagogical approaches (89.2 %), **dealing with diversity** (88.7 %), **open classroom climate** (88.1 %), transmitting shared values (85.7 %), recruiting teachers from diverse backgrounds (80.5 %).

*Effectiveness of actions to empower and support teachers: average by type of respondent*

	Teacher/ Trainer	Representative of an organisation	Student	Other individuals working in education	Other (researcher, consultant...)	Overall
Support teachers in learning innovative pedagogical approaches, for instance to promote group work, critical thinking etc.	90.8%	90.7%	79.8%	90.7%	86.7%	<b>89.2%</b>
Empowering teachers and educators to deal with difference and diversity in the classroom	89.0%	90.6%	86.6%	87.2%	87.0%	<b>88.7%</b>
Supporting teachers and educators to create a space for dialogue on controversial issues to encourage self-reflection and mutual understanding	88.0%	89.8%	84.4%	88.8%	87.8%	<b>88.1%</b>
Empowering teachers to transmit shared values	87.5%	86.7%	82.6%	85.3%	80.9%	<b>85.7%</b>
Recruiting and training teachers from a wider variety of backgrounds	79.7%	82.6%	81.0%	81.0%	78.5%	<b>80.5%</b>
Empowering teachers to transmit the national culture and identity of where one lives	79.2%	76.5%	70.6%	74.5%	72.8%	<b>76.5%</b>
Creating incentives to attract the best teachers to "challenging" schools	77.8%	77.7%	61.9%	76.4%	72.6%	<b>75.4%</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>84.9%</b>	<b>78.1%</b>	<b>83.4%</b>	<b>80.9%</b>	<b>83.4%</b>

When asked about the most effective policy approaches when it came to create inclusive learning environments, respondents put forward **creating opportunities for civic engagement and volunteering** (87.3 %), **participation in extracurricular activities** (86.6 %), **democratic learning environments** (86.6 %), participation in cultural activities (85.9 %).

*Effectiveness of actions to create inclusive learning environments and links with the local communities: average by type of respondent*

	Teacher/ Trainer	Representative of an organisation	Student	Other individuals working in education	Other (researcher, consultant...)	Overall
Creating opportunities for civic engagement and volunteering	88.1%	88.7%	81.9%	87.5%	85.8%	<b>87.3%</b>
Encouraging participation in extra-curricular activities such as music, sport and youth activities	87.1%	87.6%	87.4%	85.3%	83.2%	<b>86.6%</b>
Supporting a democratic learning environment to allow learners to experience democracy and mutual respect	87.5%	88.1%	83.2%	86.9%	82.9%	<b>86.6%</b>
Encouraging participation in cultural activities to promote cultural awareness and an understanding of different cultures and of the national culture and identity of where one lives	87.4%	86.7%	83.3%	85.6%	81.8%	<b>85.9%</b>
Encouraging socio-economic, ethnic and cultural mix in schools	83.5%	85.9%	83.4%	86.3%	80.2%	<b>83.9%</b>
Offering guidance for families on how to support their children's learning	84.1%	84.2%	78.9%	85.9%	80.5%	<b>83.3%</b>
Involving teachers, parents and learners in the running of schools	82.9%	83.1%	73.9%	81.8%	78.7%	<b>81.4%</b>
Encouraging the use of mediators and school assistants to build stronger links between school and the local communities	81.0%	82.1%	71.2%	82.4%	78.0%	<b>80.1%</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>85.2%</b>	<b>85.8%</b>	<b>80.4%</b>	<b>85.2%</b>	<b>81.4%</b>	<b>84.4%</b>

**b. Position Papers — Key Themes**

The position papers highlighted the need to build **inclusive education systems** to fight social exclusion, create democratic environments and build resilient, active and socially engaged citizens capable of tackling the multiple challenges society is faced with today, and in the future. For this a multi-level and multi-actor approach is needed including the following:

- **Empowering and strengthening the role of teachers** (e.g. initial teacher training (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) so they are able to teach about citizenship, human rights, the functioning of the European Union and the values highlighted in the Lisbon Treaty and lead open discussions with pupils on sensitive and topics such as radicalisation, social exclusion and discrimination and other challenging teaching tasks related to dealing with diversity in the classroom.
- Adapted **school curricula** which focus on the transversal issues of citizenship, democratisation and human rights, and that take into account the needs of individual learners, teacher expertise and local specificities. Diverse, innovative and learner-centred teaching methods should be used to develop key competences and citizenship — using the Key Competences Framework as a guiding tool.
- **Supporting disadvantaged learners** by providing mentoring and peer guidance as a way of preventing early school leaving and social exclusion. Several papers

also mentioned the importance of providing financial support to migrant and refugee students, ensuring a mix in classrooms of students from different backgrounds and cultures to avoid segregation and foster inclusiveness, and recognition of prior learning, especially with reference to skills, competences and knowledge gained abroad or in different (often non-formal) learning settings.

- Relying on **non-formal learning** with actors in the field of non-formal learning trained and made aware of their role in promoting shared values; and likewise, teachers inside formal education and training should encourage the participation in extracurricular activities as a way of bridging and increasing cooperation between formal and non-formal education providers.
- **Importance of involving the wider community** in the promotion of EU values and social inclusion. Parents, families, local authorities, social services and third sector organisations should be involved to support the development of ‘whole-school’ approaches for creating democratic environments where cooperation among all community actors takes place and people learn to live together in mutual respect for each other’s culture, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation and expression.

### c. Overall feedback from public consultations

Overall the public consultation is supportive of the four themes identified in the Recommendation:

- Respondents support citizenship education, curricula that focus on different cultures, religions and beliefs, intercultural understanding through arts and culture and curricula to enhance knowledge and understanding of common values and to create a democratic learning environment with opportunities for civic engagement and volunteering as a key objective.
- Respondents are very supportive of targeted actions towards disadvantaged learners.
- Respondents are very supportive of initiatives that would increase understanding of the European Union.
- Respondents support the need to empower teachers to develop innovative pedagogical approaches, to be able to deal with diversity (88.7%), and they support an open classroom climate.

#### **4. SUPPORTED POLICY POINTERS**

Education institutions are seen as among the most significant socialising factors for students to become well-informed, socially integrated, active and responsible young individuals capable of contributing to the well-being of the society in which they live. It is also acknowledged that students' civic knowledge and civic engagement is linked with individual's characteristics and activities outside the school (family, peers, local community and, recently, social media).

The results from the ICCS survey show that although more than half of the explained variance for non-cognitive civic outcomes is attributable to individual characteristics, school characteristics and policies can make an impact. School characteristics have a moderate impact in particular on students' trust in civic institutions as well as on their perception of equal rights for migrants. In-school practices (participatory governance, student councils, etc.) contribute to the variance explained in students' expected electoral participation, their perception of the importance of personal responsibility for citizenship and their perception of the importance of active forms of citizenship such as participating in peaceful protests or engaging in environmental protection. In some countries, in-school practices explain a much bigger share of the variance on expected electoral participation, as for instance in the Netherlands.

However, civic and citizenship knowledge together with civic self-efficacy (e.g. one's perceived ability and self-confidence in promoting one's views on civic issues) remain more important predictors of the students' civic attitudes, behavioural intentions and openness for diversity (e.g. non-cognitive outcomes), than the pure educational factors. Civic self-efficacy is consistently positively related to all the eight non-cognitive outcomes across all the countries. Civic knowledge is positively related to the students' attitudes on the importance of active forms for citizenship, to their feeling of personal responsibility for citizenship issues, to their intentions for future electoral participation and to their positive attitudes towards ethnic minorities and migrants.

From this rather complex argument a picture emerges: Any education system that aims to improve students' civic attitudes needs to foster students' formal civic and citizenship knowledge and their civic self-efficacy. Both efficacy and knowledge remain influential on students' civic attitudes after taking into account a wide range of school and educational factors. These two individual characteristics seem to be crucial to foster positive civic attitudes.

Research confirmed by ICCS 2016 has identified three channels through which education institutions can most effectively improve such civic attitudes:

- **Formal learning of civic and citizenship education** improves civic knowledge and skills, and by promoting a broader understanding of social processes can lead to openness and tolerance, as well as increased support for democratic values;
- Informal learning taking place in the learning environment, in particular through an **open classroom climate**, allows students to experience the right to have their say and to openly discuss sensitive issues improves civic knowledge as well as political self-efficacy, and institutional trust;



- **Informal learning outside the learning environment**, for instance through unpaid service activities for the wider community, can also have a positive impact.

The chapter below sets out a selection of thematic approaches through which education policies and practices can help to support social cohesion and create a sense of belonging. Each theme is presented in three main sections, covering the state of play, an explanation of the content and scope of the theme, and suggestions with regard to its implementation, including national case studies.

#### **a. Promote common values**

The first approach is to **promote common values**. In democratic societies citizenship education supports students in becoming active, informed and responsible citizens. The aim is not to create parallel societies but make young people able to take responsibility for themselves and help them to develop a sense of belonging and prevent feelings of rejection and alienation from society.

Despite various policies developed and adopted at the EU and national levels, indicators of intolerance, discrimination and racism have not shown any significant decrease across Europe in recent decades (see also chapter 2).

According to the ICCS survey, formal learning impacts positively on several non-cognitive outcomes in the 14 participating EU Member States. In seven Member States formal learning of civic issues is associated with attitudes towards conventional citizenship (BG, DK, HR, IT, MT, NL and SI). Formal learning is associated with trust in civic institutions in BG, DK, FI, HR, MT and SE, and associated with intentions of future electoral participation in BE, DK, SE and SI.

However, the knowledge, skills and attitudes a student needs to become an active citizen is not only something that can be taught in school. The lived experience, both inside the learning environment and outside, tends to be one of the most powerful influences on young people's attitudes towards citizenship. Learning to be an active citizen within the school environment is an important factor in the equation, alongside the influences of family, peers and neighbourhood.

Values cannot be successfully conveyed in the classroom by 'preaching' what students should think; if a student does not feel that values which are preached correspond to his/her own values, this can lead to a blockage and a rejection of the set of values being promoted and potentially — on a wider level — lead to a disconnect with society. A range of classroom and teaching practices can more effectively promote and convey core values including exercises, role plays, debates and methods to deconstruct negative values or stereotypes.

The rise of populism and extremisms in particular generates a need to learn how to address controversial issues in the classroom. 'Containment' (not addressing these issues for fear of opening Pandora's Box) is harmful as extreme opinions are left unaddressed and those holding minority opinions can feel marginalised, which can impair confidence and sometimes leading to more extreme behaviours.

Learners need to be given opportunities or platforms to discuss, in an appropriate manner, sensitive and ‘burning bridge’ issues that divide communities, weigh on children and encourage simplistic views of the world and others. By creating safe spaces for constructive dialogue, where learners experience non-conflictual discussions on controversial topics, education systems help learners develop a personal understanding of complex issues and question their own assumptions and those of others.

Education is also a means to combat polarisation and equip learners with the tools to deal with increasing volumes of information, be aware of risks related to the reliability of the information sources, help distinguish fact from fiction, and exercise sound judgment. Such media literacy and critical thinking contribute to active and responsible citizenship, employability and personal development.

The advent of the internet and information technology is creating a revolution in the lives of young people and also in education. It provides both opportunities and threats. According to a recent study, some 90 % of EU households have access to the internet,<sup>22</sup> which allows students to access information almost without boundaries. At the same time, research is increasingly showing that the internet and social media can promote intolerant acts and cause psychological harm. Cyberbullying is a real danger to young people in today’s classrooms, as is exposure to extremist ideas and hate speech. Furthermore, extremist groups benefit from the opportunities they get on the internet and through social media to influence young people and recruit new members, as well as reinforce divisions and existing prejudices.

The concept of digital citizenship encompasses a range of competences, attributes and behaviours that harness the benefits and opportunities the online world affords while building resilience to potential harm.

### State of play

[Council Conclusion on inclusion in diversity to achieve a high quality education for all](#) from 2017, in which Member States and the Commission agreed to put measures in place to promote a democratic and inclusive school culture, develop measures that allow the early identification and prevention of social exclusion and encourage closer cooperation between education and other relevant areas, such as culture, youth, sports, employment, welfare, security and other channels of work on social inclusion.

[Council Conclusion on the role of youth work in supporting young people's development](#) from 2017, in which Member States and the Commission agreed to strengthen the cooperation, peer learning and exchange with regard to the promotion and development of life skills among young people.

The Expert Group on Youth has prepared a document with specific focus on the prevention and the contribution youth work and youth workers can make. It is very important to state that radical ideas are not in themselves problematic. This changes when radical ideas develop into violent extremism. Violent radicalisation jeopardises first and foremost a young person’s future and wellbeing and with that our European project.

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<sup>22</sup> Eurostat (2015) [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Proportion\\_of\\_households\\_with\\_access\\_to\\_computers\\_and\\_the\\_internet\\_at\\_home,\\_EU-28,\\_2007%E2%80%9314\\_\(%C2%B9\)\\_\(%25\)\\_BYIE15.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Proportion_of_households_with_access_to_computers_and_the_internet_at_home,_EU-28,_2007%E2%80%9314_(%C2%B9)_(%25)_BYIE15.png).

Youth work has a role to play in building democratic resilience and empower young people to become active citizens with our European society.<sup>23</sup>

Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning<sup>24</sup> identifies the knowledge, skills and attitudes for personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability.

**The Council Conclusions of 25 November 2014 on a Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018** prioritises EU policy collaboration on the contribution of culture to social inclusion, building on the commitments to cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the European Agenda for Culture.

**A comprehensive survey on Citizenship Education at School in Europe has been carried out by Eurydice and published in October 2017<sup>25</sup>.**

The report shows that all countries have ambitious curricula to develop a number of competences related to interacting effectively and constructively with others, acting in a socially responsible manner, acting democratically and thinking critically. The report also documents that citizenship education appears to be an issue, which is currently in the spotlight in a number of countries across Europe. Countries have increased the number of teaching hours, the curricula have been revised, teacher initial and professional training have been upgraded and improved guidance and support material is more widely available.

Furthermore, despite progress in recent years, nearly half of the countries surveyed in the Eurydice study on civic education still have no regulations or recommendations on the development of prospective teachers' citizenship education competences through initial teacher education. Furthermore, although the majority of education authorities organise or support opportunities for teachers' continuing professional development in this area of learning, similar opportunities for school heads are rather limited.

In almost half of education systems, there are no central level regulations or recommendations on suitable methods for classroom assessment in this area of learning.

[Council Conclusions on developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training](#) It is one of the four pillars of the Paris Declaration to strengthen 'children's and young people's ability to think critically and exercise judgment so that, particularly in the context of the Internet and social media, they are able to grasp realities, to distinguish fact from opinion, to recognise propaganda and to resist all forms of indoctrination and hate speech'.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0ad09926-a8b1-11e7-837e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

<sup>24</sup> Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/6/68/215\\_EN\\_Citizenship\\_2017\\_N.pdf](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/images/6/68/215_EN_Citizenship_2017_N.pdf)

The November 2017 Council conclusions on Smart Youth Work<sup>26</sup> focus on how youth work can help young people fully benefit from recent technological developments.

The European Solidarity Corps<sup>27</sup> is a new European Union initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe.

The EU research Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020 and FP7) have funded a substantial body of research on issues related to education, social inclusion and youth participation<sup>28</sup>. Their results have been discussed in the conference (Brussels, 2016) "Great start in life – The best possible Education in the early years", that brought together about 300 researchers, policy makers, teachers and early education and care practitioners to explore the best possible provision for children from birth to the end of compulsory primary schooling.<sup>29</sup>

Horizon 2020 will support in 2018 research projects on the inclusion of children in migration within EU education systems (Societal Challenge 6, Work Programme 2018-20).

### Implementation

Measures to deliver on this approach could encompass:

- ensuring the provision of **citizenship education** that combines dedicated subjects; citizenship issues integrated into other subjects and learning materials that reflects different perspectives;
- creating a **supportive learning environment**, where all learners are respected, listened to and supported where learners can voice their thoughts and concerns without being criticised and can learn to understand the beliefs, interests and viewpoints of others;
- **promoting a democratic school culture**<sup>30</sup> that actively engages all members of the school community, where diversity is encouraged, recognised and respected;

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<sup>26</sup> <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14205-2017-INIT/en/pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en)

<sup>28</sup>

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project\\_synopses/ki-01-16-979-en.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project_synopses/ki-01-16-979-en.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project\\_synopses/kina27205enc.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project_synopses/kina27205enc.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

<sup>29</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/great-start-in-life\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/great-start-in-life_en)

<sup>30</sup> The whole-school culture and approach to citizenship education can be an important factor in successfully implementing the subject at class level and thereby have a positive impact on individual

- developing **media literacy and critical thinking** in a proactive manner through curriculum development and innovative teaching approaches relevant to all learners such as experiential project-based learning, role plays, collective deconstruction of media content and structured analysis of disinformation propagation; training educators in innovative teaching methods and resources to help learners exercise sound judgment on media messages; and involving media experts and organisations and other stakeholders from the cultural and arts sectors in developing learning resources;
- creating **synergies between formal, non-formal and informal learning**, for instance through harnessing the power of social media influencers with the aim of educating social media users in critical evaluation technique;
- building structures to ensure the active participation of all members of the learning community in the **governance** of education and training systems and institutions, including learners, parents and educators;
- enabling educators to build **close cooperation with civil society**, youth, sport and cultural organisations, local authorities and the business sector;
- supporting **learners’ civic engagement activities** through incorporating them in teaching and organised activities and, in higher education, through the allocation of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) points. Particular attention could be paid to creating pathways for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to access extra-curricular youth empowerment and cultural activities; and
- developing comprehensive national/regional strategies and effective implementation tools underpinned by the necessary resources.

**Austria: UNESCO school houseboat Bertha von Suttner**

83 Austrian schools are members of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPNet), including the school houseboat Bertha von Suttner, which aim to promote learning as an activity-focused process, pursuing an interdisciplinary, intercultural approach to cooperation, applying an integrative style of education with diversity as a key component in its pedagogy and practising democracy is a pre-eminent educational goal.

**Belgium: Muslim Expert Network**

To encourage more critical thinking — particularly in relation to messages that may be propagated by (social) media networks — and address more complex issues, schools in Belgium have been given access to networks of experts. One such network is a network

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learners. Research shows that there is also a myriad of benefits at school level from a stronger community feeling and sense of belonging within the school to improved behaviour and attitudes leading to increased student engagement and motivation. The whole-school approach can also take the school into the wider community, to break down barriers and connect young people to community life.

of Experts on Islam. The network (which is in operation since 1 October 2015) consists of experienced experts on Islam (volunteers with exception of the coordinator) who have a thorough knowledge of Islamic theology and who are at the same time familiar with the world and the experience of young people. The goal of the network is to frame and interpret Islam and Islamic norms and values for youth, class groups and/or frontline workers (e.g. teachers, youth workers). The network has three goals: (1) Give frontline workers and teachers the confidence and knowledge to address Muslim students and/or their parents; (2) On demand of schools, the network can carry out preventive work by addressing school groups, guiding class discussions and facilitate dialogue between different life views and beliefs; (3) The network can also help if teachers or frontline workers suspect radicalisation or are confronted with an escalating situation. During these interventions, educational opportunities are provided for students, class groups, frontline workers, teachers and, on demand, parents.

From 2017 in **Denmark**, the Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Equality has provided tailored guidance to schools by hiring learning consultants, who support schools and municipalities in promoting democracy and citizenship and in preventing radicalisation and extremism at school.

**Finland** provides general guidelines with the national core curriculum but indicates a number of national and international resources organisations where support materials are available, including UNICEF and Council of Europe. UNICEF runs a well-established programme of global citizenship education linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on the areas of global advocacy and policy dialogue, global measurements of progress, peace and human rights education, preventing violent extremism through education and education about the Holocaust.

### **Finland: Student Councils**

In Finland, student councils are set up at every educational level. Learners can for example make decisions about what to do with funding or how to manage school public spaces. The Project to Support Student Councils in Finnish Comprehensive Schools (SPOT) started in June 2014 and is a cooperative project to support student councils in promoting a communal working culture at schools. The project has collected methods supporting participation and student councils' work, and has also planned methods, processes and practices on how to promote a participatory and communicative culture at schools which are appropriate for different age groups of children. A web-based service offering tools and material support for teachers responsible for student councils was launched in January 2015.

*For further information:*

[www.opinkirjo.fi/en/activity/citizenship\\_education/pupil\\_council\\_activities](http://www.opinkirjo.fi/en/activity/citizenship_education/pupil_council_activities)

In **France**, the *Loi 2013 pour la refondation de l'école de la République* outlines a new programme of civic education, demonstrating a renewed emphasis on citizenship education within the new academic pathway of all students through a 'Citizenship Journey' [Parcours Citoyen]. Addressing regions, schools, teachers and curriculum, this is supported by a broad selection of guidance and resources hosted on the national Eduscol website.

#### **France: Citizen reserve**

The 'réserve citoyenne' initiative, launched by the French Ministry of Education in 2015, offers the opportunity to all citizens and all actors from civic society to volunteer alongside teachers in extra-curricular activities to promote republican values in schools.

#### **France: Press and Media Week at School**

Each spring, teachers of all levels of education and in all disciplines are invited to participate in the Press and Media Week at School (*Semaine de la presse et des médias dans l'école*). The week involves over three million students and over 200 000 teachers. The aim of the week is to help young people of all ages to understand the media system, to develop their critical thinking, to develop a taste for current affairs and to forge their identity as a citizen. Each year, some 1 900 media organisations sign up to the event, which is organised by CLEMI (Centre for Liaison between Education and Media), part of the Ministry of Education. CLEMI provides a series of teaching resources every year including: a pedagogical kit, a tablet application on media education, exhibitions, six interactive games, events, publications and workshops. This year (2016), the 27th edition of the week, will be devoted to freedom of expression, deliberately chosen in the wake of the terrorist attacks.

*For further information: [www.education.gouv.fr/cid54348/semaine-de-la-presse-et-des-medias-dans-l-ecole-%C3%83%C2%82%C3%82%C2%AE.html](http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid54348/semaine-de-la-presse-et-des-medias-dans-l-ecole-%C3%83%C2%82%C3%82%C2%AE.html)*

#### **Netherlands — Mira Media**

Mira Media is an independent cooperative body founded in 1986 by the major national migrant organisations in the Netherlands, which aims to achieve more diversity and 'ethnic' pluralism by supporting the participation of migrants in radio, television and the interactive media. Mira means looking in different languages, mirror and reflection. The name stands for the efforts of the organisation to ensure that the media in the Netherlands are a good reflection of society. Mira Media has no broadcasting time but closely cooperates with Dutch national and local (public and commercial) broadcasters. Mira Media uses media as a tool for intercultural dialogue and social cohesion at the neighbourhood level and encourages citizens to engage in active media participation. It works with many partners in the social field and in the media in order to achieve comprehensive and sustainable programmes. Mira Media also focuses on improving digital literacy and media educational support to vulnerable groups such as older people

and (migrant) parents.

*For further information: <http://www.miramedia.nl/over-mira-media.htm>*

### **Sweden — Swedish Media Council**

The Swedish Media Council is a government agency whose primary task is to promote the empowering of minors as conscious media users and to protect them from harmful media influences. The Media Council gathers relevant research and disseminates information on media development, media effects and media use regarding children and young people. The Council also classifies films for public screening. The ratings reflect whether the films are liable to harm the well-being of children. The Swedish Media Council operates the Swedish Safer Internet Centre for a safer use of the Internet and other digital media among children and young people, and represents Sweden in the pan-European network Insafe. The project is run in collaboration with BRIS (Children's rights in Society) and is co-funded by the European Commission's Connecting Europe Facility.

*For further information: <http://statensmedierad.se/ovrigt/inenglish.579.html>*

### **b. Provide inclusive education**

The second approach could be to promote inclusive education for all learners. Equality in education tends to be built on an assumption that students should be treated in the same way, according to the 'one size fits all' approach. There is evidence, however, that this approach can have unintended discriminatory effects and even lead to segregation. The OECD has pointed to the fact that, for instance, early streaming of school pupils, though perhaps seen as value neutral, has discriminatory consequences for migrant students and those from lower socio-economic background.<sup>31</sup>

#### *State of play*

[Council Conclusion on inclusion in diversity to achieve a high quality education for all](#) develop measures that allow the early identification and prevention of social exclusion and encourage closer cooperation between education and other relevant areas, such as culture, youth, sports, employment, welfare, security and other channels of work on social inclusion;

Studies have shown that learners' support should be based on a principle of differentiation, where teaching approaches are tailored to the specific needs of an individual or group of learners and to specific circumstances. This is especially relevant for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, learners with a migration background or

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/50293148.pdf> .



from ethnic minority groups such as Roma. Some EU Member States also face difficulties in providing pupils with disabilities access to inclusive, quality education.<sup>32</sup>

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights argues in its 2017 report<sup>33</sup> on segregation of migrants that possible solutions to such segregationist tendencies can be to distribute migrant children to different schools and to reach out more to migrant parents to empower them. In such cases, migrant parents are supported in becoming more involved in the schools their children attend. The report identified systematic policy efforts to reach out and engage with migrant parents in only 4 of the 14 member states covered in the report.<sup>34</sup> Only 12 Member States have adopted legislation prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of nationality or migrant, or foreigner status, according to this report.

The Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States (2013)<sup>35</sup> specifically recommends the Member States under point 1.3 on ‘Access to education’ to take effective measures to ensure equal treatment and full access for Roma boys and girls to equality and mainstream education by such measures as ‘a) eliminating any school segregation’ and ‘b) putting an end to any inappropriate placement of Roma pupils in special needs schools’.

Other EU reference documents are:

- A 2015 Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies with a particular focus on misdiagnosis and transfer of Roman children into special schools for children with mental disabilities.<sup>36</sup>
- A 2015 guidance note by the European Commission providing recommendations on the efficient use of European Structural and Investments Funds (ESI Funds) in tackling educational and spatial segregation based on the EU legislative and policy frameworks.<sup>37</sup>

### Implementation

Measures to deliver on this approach could include:

- Initiatives to increase access to good quality **early childhood education and care**, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- taking steps to ensure **access to education**, training and non-formal learning for learners from various socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and those with special educational needs;

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<sup>32</sup> United Nations, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2015), Concluding observations on the initial report of the European Union, CRPD/C/EU/CO/1 of 2 October 2015. .

<sup>33</sup> <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/fundamental-rights-report-2017>

<sup>34</sup> Denmark, Finland, France and Portugal. .

<sup>35</sup> Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States, EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY, HEALTH and CONSUMER AFFAIRS Council meeting, Brussels, 9 and 10 December 2013.

<sup>36</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma\\_communication2015\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_communication2015_en.pdf).

<sup>37</sup>

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/thematic\\_guidance\\_fiche\\_segregation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/thematic_guidance_fiche_segregation_en.pdf)[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/thematic\\_guidance\\_fiche\\_segregation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/thematic_guidance_fiche_segregation_en.pdf).

- implementing individualised active and collaborative methods to allow **those having special educational needs** to realise their full potential. Examples include additional pedagogical assistants in the classroom, after-school support schemes, language support for newly arrived migrants and the use of mediators;
- early diagnosis of **risk factors for early school leaving**, together with effective prevention, outreach intervention and compensation measures, in line with the Recommendation on Early School Leaving;<sup>38</sup>
- facilitating the **integration of newly arrived migrants** into education as soon as possible after their arrival, together with other measures to ensure the assessment, validation and recognition of their skills and qualifications, including for those who have no documentation to certify their qualifications; and
- **removing structural barriers and dead ends** between various educational levels and sectors in the education system, facilitating flexible learning pathways and providing adequate guidance on educational and career choices, particularly through financial and mentoring support to disadvantaged learners.

For children with special needs, the entry into force in 2015/2016 of the ‘M-decree’ in **Belgium (Flanders)** is a major step towards increasing inclusion in the mainstream system. From September 2015, every child, including those with special needs, has the right to enrol in a mainstream school, provided this is possible with reasonable adaptations. Around 180 full-time staff specialising in special education provide support to teacher teams in regular education (Crevits 2015a). Initial results show a greater proportion of students with special needs participating in mainstream rather than special education.

In **Ireland** a new DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) scheme, will draw on international best practice for using the education system to increase opportunities and outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. In January 2016 the Minister for Education and Skills launched a new consultative forum on developing an updated literacy and numeracy strategy for the period up to 2020. The review outcomes support further emphasis on tackling disadvantage for students for whom English is a foreign language and other groups.

In **Sweden**, asylum-seeking children must join school within one month of arrival, and their previous schooling and academic knowledge are assessed within two months. Special introductory classes for newly arrived children are limited to two years, and students also have a place in mainstream classes, where they can take part in accordance with their proficiency in different subjects. Swedish teaching is combined with teaching in mother tongue. Education providers receive increased financial support in neighbourhoods with large migrant populations.

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38 Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 on policies to reduce early school leaving.

### c. Promote a European dimension of teaching

This approach concerns encouraging a deeper knowledge and understanding about the origins and functioning of the EU; diversity and cultural identities in Europe, the main developments in national, European and world history; the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies, and how having a national cultural identity is compatible with a European identity.

Fostering understanding that a national or regional cultural identity is compatible with a European identity could help young people develop a sense of belonging to the European Union as well as to one's locality and country. The Union has a significant effect on the lives of all Europeans, and to fully benefit from and participate in the democratic construction of the European Union knowledge of it and clear understanding of how it has developed is needed. Education has a major role to play.

#### *State of play*

Within the framework of the Erasmus+, numerous projects have been financed in relation to EU facts and knowledge, particularly in the context of the Jean Monnet strand of the programme.

The 'Europe for Citizens Programme' through its strand 1 "European remembrance" and strand 2 "Civic participation and democratic engagement" has provided support to several projects dealing with European integration; in some cases concerning the primary and secondary education sector.

Every year, the Commission organises information on the European Union at school level and its Directorate General for Communication has established a network of school correspondents in all Commission Representations in the Member States. They inform teachers and pupils and promote repositories such as: the 'Teachers Corner'<sup>39</sup> where material on the EU is made available.

Since 2011 and following the request of the European Parliament 'the [Erasmus+] programme should include measures to promote civic education (teaching and learning) on European Democratic Citizenship including studies of Europe and the European Union in the European Member States' secondary schools.'

The Directorate General for Education and Culture has designed and implemented a specific action in the framework of the Jean Monnet activities named '**Learning EU at School**'. A study collected information and data at the level of the Member States on the state of the art in the European countries' legislations, rules and practices on the way EU is taught at school and was followed by an EU conference. An annual call for proposals supports projects for developing teaching of EU in general education and in VET.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://europa.eu/teachers-corner/>

In spite of the effort done the general level of knowledge of the European Union, its policies and its institutions remains less than optimal, with a large part of the population having little or no knowledge or information on the Union.

This is particularly valid for young people and it is reflected in the lowest turn-out rate (42.5 %) at the 2014 EP elections. More than 70 % of young people did not vote. Young people are also the age group which feel strongest that more information about the EU institutions is needed.

The knowledge deficit includes a basic lack of understanding of the European Union itself, with only 20 % of adults being able to answer correctly simple questions on the Union (e.g. number of Member States, functioning of the presidency, and elections of the EP).

### Implementation

Measures to deliver on this approach could include:

- enhanced initial **teacher training** in order to prepare teachers for teaching about the EU;
- the provision of age-appropriate textbook material and other **teaching resources**;
- participation in projects, cross-border activities and **networking** including through Erasmus+;
- involvement of **external speakers**; and
- **visits** outside of the school or youth organisation.

#### **Italy: View on EU, A visual easy window on European Union, by Alma Mater Studiorum — Universita di Bologna**

Content on the EU prepared by university professors is brought to pupils by an association of young committed communicators. The general aim is to make the history of European integration and the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty comprehensible and accessible to young students in order to strengthen a sense of belonging to the EU. The project produced a booklet in Italian and English and twelve commercials made by the students involved in the workshops; a website contains a downloadable version of the products. <https://www.facebook.com/ViewOnEu/>

#### **Portugal: YED — Young Europeans for Democracy, by Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro**

This project proposes an immersion into a democratic environment, giving pupils the opportunity to understand and practice their role as European citizens, by:

- Conceiving virtual 3D islands to experiment, discuss and show democracy;
- Enhancing teachers' competence in promoting Education for Democratic Citizenship;

- Innovating in resources and methods, towards a more collaborative way of society building.

During 12 months, UTAD will go inside secondary schools, bringing knowledge and an interdisciplinary team committed to guiding teachers and pupils in the route of participation in Europe's history.

#### d. Support teachers and teaching

This approach concerns supporting **teachers to deal with diversity and create an open classroom climate**, in recognition of the fact that the teacher's role goes beyond transmitting knowledge and includes communicating common values and acting as role models themselves.

Teachers need to take up these issues, and be supported. However, teachers do not feel empowered to deal with diversity and make change happen. Too often, only certain specialists are trained in inclusive principles, while all teachers would need to know how to integrate the principles of inclusive education into teaching practices. There is also considerable burn-out among teachers across the EU and too many leave the profession prematurely. This is especially the case in schools in traditionally underserved communities.

Democratic leadership should be promoted at all levels of the school, viewing teachers and other staff as facilitators of student learning instead of carriers of all knowledge. Teachers need ongoing support when taking on new roles in the classroom and school. A sense of belonging can be improved through a dedicated emphasis, constant promotion of parental and student involvement and quality of the teacher-student relationship.

According to the ICCS survey, an open classroom climate stands out as having the most consistent positive relationship with students' civic attitudes across all the various education factors. Students who experience an open classroom climate where they feel they can express their opinions, ask questions and contrast different opinions are more ready to accept various citizenship values, trust democratic institutions and anticipate they will vote later. Students' participation in school has a more specific function in fostering expected later participation.

#### State of play

[Council Conclusions on inclusion in diversity to achieve a high quality education for all](#) develop measures that allow the early identification and prevention of social exclusion and encourage closer cooperation between education and other relevant areas, such as culture, youth, sports, employment, welfare, security and other channels of work on social inclusion.

The Radicalisation Awareness Network<sup>40</sup> has introduced two guidance documents to empower and support teachers and to equip them with pedagogical tools to handle discussions with students on perceived injustice, radical ideas and even extreme opinions. The idea behind the guide is that schools should provide a safe place, allow students to engage with developments in society guided by trained teachers, and prepare young people to be democratic citizens.

#### Implementation

Measures to deliver on this approach could encompass:

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<sup>40</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en)

- **initial education and continuing professional development** of teachers and youth workers to address inclusive teaching practices, avoid discrimination, raise cultural awareness, create an open classroom climate that offers space for dialogue on controversial issues, deal with linguistically diverse classrooms and support learners with special educational needs. Also useful are guidelines for teachers on how to assess students in citizenship education. Opportunities for school heads' continuing professional development in this area of learning should be offered more systematically;
- **exchanges and peer learning programmes** among teachers, guidance, mentoring and other support schemes; and
- **Promoting diversity within the teaching profession itself**, through fostering the recruitment and career development of teachers from migrant and/or minority backgrounds, can facilitate a greater awareness of global citizenship among students, other teachers and the wider school environment (e.g. parents, governors, partners, local decision-makers), and make teachers aware of their own (potential) subtle biases and how these can impact students.

**Netherlands: Teacher training ‘Dialogue under pressure’**

In order to discuss difficult and sensitive topics within the classroom, teachers should have social, pedagogical and didactic competences. To help vocation education teachers to professionalise in this regard, the Foundation School and Safety offers a free in-school training ‘Dialogue under pressure’, financially supported by the Dutch Ministry of Education. Comparable trainings have been developed for primary and secondary school teachers

**Austria: Training specialists in Global Citizenship Education (GCED)**

The Alpen-Adria Universität<sup>14</sup> in Klagenfurt provides a three-year Masters programme in GCED which trains specialists in GCED who can serve as resource and multipliers for other teachers and educators, as well as schools.