

Study on Active Citizenship Education

DG Education and Culture

Final Report submitted by GHK

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The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture.

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 4 |
| 1 INTRODUCTION..... | 7 |
| 1.1 Why this study on active Citizenship?..... | 8 |
| 1.2 What is being presented in this report? | 9 |
| 1.3 Remainder of the report | 9 |
| 2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE STUDY AND THE WORK CARRIED OUT..... | 10 |
| 2.1 A very wide scope | 10 |
| 2.2 Methodological approach and main stages of the study..... | 11 |
| 3 ANALYSIS OF 57 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES AND 10 CASE STUDIES ACCORDING TO THE KEY STUDY QUESTIONS | 17 |
| 3.1 Introduction | 17 |
| 3.2 Key characteristics of 57 practices | 17 |
| 3.3 Addressing the key questions of the study through different levels of analysis | 22 |
| 4 UNDERSTANDING OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP..... | 55 |
| 4.1 Introduction | 55 |
| 4.2 Definitions of active citizenship | 55 |
| 4.3 Teaching active citizenship | 60 |
| 4.4 Understanding of active citizenship based on the findings of the study | 63 |
| 4.5 The effects of active citizenship education based on the findings of the study | 69 |
| 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... | 72 |
| 5.1 Planning a project | 72 |
| 5.2 Developing the methodological approach and project strategy..... | 73 |
| 5.3 Setting up management and coordination structures | 74 |
| 5.4 Working with partners | 75 |
| 5.5 Involving the wider community | 76 |
| 5.6 Making projects a lasting success | 77 |
| 5.7 Identifying the successes and lessons learnt of projects..... | 78 |
| ANNEX A COMPENDIUM OF CASE STUDIES | 80 |

ANNEXES ATTACHED AS SEPARATE DOCUMENTS:

ANNEX B - Compendium of 57 Good Practice Examples

ANNEX C - Detailed tables on Active Citizenship practices

ANNEX D - - List of Information sources

ANNEX E - - Analytical tools used for the study

ANNEX F - Case Study template and guiding questions for interviews

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The importance of active citizenship as part of lifelong and lifewide learning is widely acknowledged, and is being increasingly recognised in education and training. However, little is known about **how** active citizenship education works, and whether there are common strategies which lead to successful practice. The idea behind the study presented in this report, was to look at active citizenship from a qualitative viewpoint. The study is based on an extensive literature review and a pan-European search for good practices in the area of active citizenship education. More than 100 practices were identified, 57 of these practices underwent a detailed examination, involving direct contact with persons responsible for their success. Finally, case study visits were organised to take an extensive in-depth view on 10 selected practices. This report pulls all this activity and information together.

Understanding of Active Citizenship Education

The study aimed to explore all possible facets of active citizenship education by choosing a highly varied sample of examples, including all target groups, both in terms of age and socio-economic features, and all types of education. The analysis of the practices was further supported by a review of trends, identified through existing research. Based on both elements, active citizenship education can be understood as a process of acquiring knowledge, attitudes and skills based on community values.

Main findings from the analysis of 57 good practice examples and 10 case studies

The overall mandate for identifying good practices in active citizenship education was to ensure coverage of 33 countries, various types of education, education providers, target groups, themes, types of activities, methods, etc.

The studied sample targeted groups from society at large, among them teacher trainers; administrators, ethnic minorities, immigrants other vulnerable groups. Small projects involving less than 20 participants to projects reaching over 2000 people were included.

From the variety of themes it becomes clear that active citizenship is not only about exercising civil rights and democracy but also about socio-cultural issues, including the integration of minorities and including multicultural issues. Empowerment and "giving people a voice" as well as taking responsibility and leadership were frequent topics.

The vast majority of all practices reviewed, included an awareness raising component, often in combination with an element of activating the participants, such as "learning by doing", "discussions or debate, or "learning new skills". Nearly one third of the practices aimed to activate people in the near future by focusing on expanding their contacts and networking.

In terms of results and outcomes, most practices reported a change in the attitude of their participants as the most common effect of their activity. It is the most direct effect

that active citizenship education can have. Another result often mentioned was the acquisition of new skills by individuals and their activation through further involvement. In a number of cases, the practice resulted in the development of new products, such as educational material, handbooks but also artistic objects. Other practices led to the creation of new organisations or networks

Success factors – what works, where and why in promoting active citizenship?

When asked which factors contributed most to the success of the projects, most interviewees cited the democratic involvement of participants, followed by the method used and the personal motivation of the participants. This confirms that the participants themselves are key to the success of activities - the more influence they have on the organisation of activities the more they commit to project. **Governance is a key issue for successful active citizenship education: most methods used by projects required the involvement of participants in a democratic way and included aspects of self-regulation.**

Partnership building was a very common element in the majority of examples reviewed. The vast majority practices also involved the wider community, especially those that were of mixed implementation levels, providing mixed types of education and working with mixed age groups.

Conclusions and recommendations – developing activities to promote active citizenship

The conclusions and recommendations follow the lifecycle of a project from its conception to completion.

Planning a project. It is useful to undertake a mapping or needs assessment prior to setting up a project, to better understand what the potential partners consider important, what their educational needs are, and what their level of existing knowledge is.

Developing the methodological approach and project strategy. When developing a methodological approach, it is important to consider what effects the educational process should achieve. Whatever method is chosen, it will greatly benefit from involving the participants in its use and elaboration, and letting them “steer” the work programme

Setting up management and coordination structures. Small-scale local projects benefit from a single interlocutor which may make use of specific inputs when required. Projects that are more complex and with wider coverage benefit from working with partners which complement each other in terms of expertise and skills, or establish a central management function while leaving the specific design and implementation to individual partners.

Working with partners. Partnerships serve to put the project on the map, to raise awareness, and support the involvement of the wider community. Partners can have expert thematic or technical knowledge. It is important to predefine what is expected from the partners and agree on roles and responsibilities at a very early stage.

Involving the wider community. Community involvement is an essential aspect of active citizenship and has a multiplier effect. Especially projects at local and regional level should place particular efforts on establishing contacts with their surroundings.

Making projects a lasting success. Projects should at an early stage focus on transferring these practices to other organisations and to a wider context.

1 INTRODUCTION

In 2001, the Lisbon European Council agreed on the ambitious goal to make Europe “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”. The Council also invited the Education Council to “to undertake a general reflection on the concrete future objectives of education systems focusing on common concerns while respecting national diversity”.

The Education Council took up this challenge by defining three main objectives for the future of education:

- (1) Increasing the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems European Union
- (2) Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems
- (3) Opening up education and training systems to the wider world.

These objectives were further elaborated in the European Council’s “Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe”, adopted in February 2002. The work programme spelled out the three main objectives into 13 strategic objectives and related key issues. The work programme introduced the open method of coordination to achieve these objectives, thus relying on three methodologies for comparing countries and policies: exchange of good practice, peer review and indicators and benchmarks. Different Working Groups were set up in January 2003 to accompany and facilitate the open method of coordination process. Two of these, namely “Open learning environment, active citizenship and social inclusion” and “Basic skills, entrepreneurship, and foreign languages” actively deal with active citizenship.

The importance of active citizenship as part of lifelong and lifewide learning is widely acknowledged, and is being increasingly recognised and enforced in formal education. However, little has been done to extend the concept to other types and other levels of learning. Interest in education for active citizenship has been growing, as it has been widely acknowledged that a high level and quality of active citizenship carries special social benefits necessary to maintain and improve the EU’s global competitiveness and a safe and successful market economy. Learning active citizenship is part of fighting discrimination by including all citizens without discrimination, underlining the importance of the citizenship dimension and bringing into force the anti-racism directive. The knowledge economy also needs citizenship skills including private and public services, consumers as well as individuals. For this reason, there have been several initiatives in the field in Europe and at international level to promote active citizenship.

There is also still a lot to learn about how active citizenship education works, and what its effects are. Several studies have therefore been launched in the area, such as a number of pan-European research projects carried out by the Council of Europe, the IEA (International Education Association) and Eurydice. Recently, research has also

begun to focus on the development and use of indicators to monitor and evaluate active citizenship and citizenship education, to enable comparative research in the EU. The Commission has financed several projects in this regard.

The idea behind the study presented in this report is to look at active citizenship from a qualitative rather than a scientific or quantitative viewpoint. The study has identified and analysed a range of interesting and successful strategies to promote active citizenship through education and training (in curricular and extra-curricular activities).

1.1 Why this study on active Citizenship?

Through this study, DG Education and Culture of the European Commission wanted to:

- Provide a deeper, more qualitative insight into active citizenship education in 33 countries in Europe (EU, Accession and Candidate countries and EFTA-EEA countries) through a step-by-step approach, starting with a wide sample of successful and innovative approaches and narrowing this down to a total of 10 case studies presenting real “success stories”¹.
- Present a reflection on the concept of active citizenship and its various understandings.

The study looked in particular at good practice in the promotion of active citizenship education which:

- Showed successful inclusive approaches and methods that triggered a sense of commitment, encouraged the acquisition of civic skills and helped people to put the democratic way of life into practice.
- Were successful in promoting and teaching active citizenship thanks to their organisational setup, such as their management structure, cooperation arrangements, communication or community involvement strategies.
- Made use of the potential of new media for promotion of active citizenship or of online resources to stimulate learning.

The analysis of the different practices, together with a review of existing literature and research on the topic, helped to further elaborate the different understandings of what active citizenship means.

Throughout the project, representatives of the Commission’s services, organised in a Steering Group, were consulted and provided valuable contributions to the methodology and the selection of the good practices.

¹ The Terms of Reference required the study to cover the 25 EU Member States, the three EFTA-EEA countries (NO, ISL, FL) and the 4 Candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Turkey). The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was added as a Candidate Country in the course of the study. The study had to identify at least two examples of good practice at national or local level per EU Member State. Out of these examples at least 10, covering at least 8 EU countries, were to be presented in more detail.

It is hoped that the study will help decision-makers, teachers and other practitioners to foster active participation of the learners in the community at large by actively contributing to society.

1.2 What is being presented in this report?

This report is the end product of the study, which included an extensive literature review, a pan-European search for good practices in the area of active citizenship education and an analysis of more than 100 identified practices. 57 of these practices underwent a detailed examination, involving direct contact with persons responsible for their success, and case study visits were organised to 10 practices.

This report pulls all this activity and information together. In addition to briefly explaining the method used to collect the good practices to foster active citizenship, it presents, more importantly, the key outcomes of the different analytical stages. For those interested in the specific characteristics of some of the most successful practices that were identified, separate stories on these have been annexed.

By combining theory with concrete examples, it is hoped that the report will provide a resource for education and training stakeholders to discover and learn from a variety of successful and innovative approaches to active citizenship education.

1.3 Remainder of the report

The remainder of final report is structured as follows:

Section 2 provides a quick overview of the methodological approach and the work carried out, including a presentation of the main tools used for undertaking the study.

Section 3 analyses the 57 good practice examples and 10 case studies according to the study questions, presenting the key characteristics of the practices that underwent a more detailed examination and a discussion on the examples organised around the key questions of the study.

Section 4 reflects on the understanding of active citizenship education. It looks at what active citizenship means in different contexts, countries, etc and includes considerations on the different forms of education and training to encourage people to become active citizens. It refers to existing research in the area and shows what emerges from the study, looking at common strands and patterns that have been found in terms of organisational structures, type of activities and methods.

Section 5 presents the overall conclusions and recommendations. This last section is meant to be a practical guidance tool for policy makers and practitioners interested in developing activities to promote active citizenship. It reviews the key elements of successful approaches and include the do's and don'ts for making new practices a success.

The detailed data on the studied examples are presented in the annexes:

2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE STUDY AND THE WORK CARRIED OUT

It is important to clarify upfront that the main purpose of the study was to undertake a qualitative and descriptive piece of research focusing on identification of key success factors of concrete education and training actions to promote active citizenship. It is by no means a scientific exercise that would enable the drawing of generalised, evidence-based conclusions on active citizenship education. However, exactly because the study took a “snapshot” of practices in many different countries, with even more diverse cultural, social and economic contexts, it has the advantage of illustrating the many different dimensions of active citizenship education in terms of themes, people addressed and type of activity organised. Equally, this diversity helps to gain a better idea of what active citizenship means in different circumstances.

2.1 A very wide scope

The study looked at active citizenship education in the widest sense of the word, covering different types of education, target groups and themes in a great variety of countries. In practice this meant that not only that the study identified and collected examples of good practice in 33 European countries², but that the practices examined also took place at different implementation levels (from grass-root to international projects).

Contrary to most other research on citizenship education, which examines involvement of one or more particular groups, such as youth or immigrants for example, the study examined projects which altogether covered a very wide range of different target groups. It should be underlined once more that the practices selected reflect this multiplicity rather than being representative of a trend or country.

The studied examples present a good spread of activities focused on various age groups – children, youth and adults. Attention was paid to including practices of activities targeted at groups with specific characteristics and needs, such as ethnic minorities or immigrants, women, marginalised and disadvantaged groups, particular professions such as teachers, civil servants or police officers.

As specified in the Terms of Reference the study focused on lifelong learning and lifewide education projects from all formal, non-formal and informal contexts. The definition of learning is as used by Eurostat³:

“Any activities of an individual organised with the intention to improve his/her knowledge, skills and competence.”

² The 25 EU member states, the 3 EFTA-EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), two accession countries (Bulgaria, Romania) and three candidate countries (Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey).

³ “Classification of learning activities – Manual” Eurostat, 2006 edition.

This means that the learning activity is intentional (as opposed to random learning), “premeditated” and in some way “organised” by the learner, involving a transfer of information in a broad sense (e.g. messages, ideas, knowledge, etc)

The definitions of the three types of learning used for the present study are:

- **Formal learning:** education provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other formal educational institutions that normally constitutes a continuous “ladder” of full-time education for children and young people, generally beginning at age of five to seven and continuing up to 20 or 25 years old. In some countries, the upper parts of this “ladder” are organised programmes of joint part-time employment and part-time participation in the regular school and university system: such programmes have come to be known as the “dual system” or equivalent terms in these countries.⁴
- **Non-formal learning:** any organised and sustained educational activities that do not correspond exactly to the above definition of formal education. Non-formal education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions, and cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out of school children, life-skills, work-skills, and general culture. Non formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the “ladder” system, and may have a differing duration.⁵
- **Informal learning:** is intentional learning, but less organised and less structured. It may include for example learning events (activities) that occur in the family, in the work place, and in the daily life of every person, on a self-directed, family-directed or socially directed basis.⁶

Several of the practices studied were “borderline” cases and not easy to classify. This was especially the case between the categorisations formal and non-formal learning. The decision to classify some of the practices (e.g. “Policing in a Multicultural society”, “Civil Dialogue” or “Citizen project”) as formal learning could be argued against, as the “ladder” structure was not present or because the examples were not designed and delivered by an educational institution. However, importance was also given to the fact that these practices were in most cases fully mainstreamed into training programmes and institutionalised in the organisational structures, which made them rather different from most of the non-formal learning practices identified.

2.2 Methodological approach and main stages of the study

The study was organised in five main stages:

Mapping and review of information sources

At the start of the study, but also during the identification of the good practices, an extensive “mapping” and collection of relevant information sources was undertaken. This enabled the identification of organisations and actors that could refer to interesting examples and literature / research that either cited practices in the area of active

⁴ ISCED 97 glossary, page 41

⁵ ISCED 97 glossary, page 41

⁶ As defined in the report of the Eurostat TF/ MLLL (paragraph 32, page 12)

citizenship education or that considered contextual and definitional issues around the study's theme. The full list of information sources, including contacts, websites, links to online databases, reports, studies and any other sources has been included as Annex D to this report.

Identification of good practice examples

The identification of good practices happened at different organisational levels. Based on the initial mapping exercise, contact was made with different actors involved in education and training in the 33 countries but also in several international organisations. They were asked to suggest interesting approaches to active citizenship education or to refer the researchers to particular projects they were aware of. The call was meant to have a "snowball" effect in the sense that it counted on the fact that other organisations, not directly contacted but hearing from others about the search for practices, would propose a practices on their own initiative.

The different actors contacted were:

- International organisations such as UNESCO, OHCHR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), Red Cross, International Youth Volunteers, Youth Forum, etc.
- DG Education and Culture (DG EAC) staff of different units involved active citizenship (units A4, A5).
- National Ministries of Education
- Various NGOs, training providers and research centres. These were identified through recommendations from the above three types of actors, through umbrella organisations such as the European Youth Portal, the Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE) network and the Network for Intercultural learning, or through a review of these organisation's websites.

Following these initial contacts and "spontaneous" proposals of practices, in majority of cases short telephone interviews with project organisers were arranged. Alternative, a documentary review was undertaken. This process resulted in an initial long list of examples, containing 129 practices. Information on projects was entered into a Basic Information table gathering key details such as the title of the project, the organisation responsible, the type of learning, target group and contact details. A short description on the practice main objectives, activities and results was also added. Annex E includes outlines of all analytical tables used.

Based on the phone interviews and project descriptions, each practice was assessed according to set of criteria agreed between the study team and DG EAC. The template for the telephone interviews can be found in Annex E. The answers to these questions were entered into a Scoring table which automatically calculated the total score for each practice, according to the following sets of criteria:

- Set 1 - identification of innovative characteristics and inclusiveness

- Sets 2 and 3 – acquisition of the sense of commitment and of the democratic way of life
- Set 4 - refers to lifelong learning
- Set 5 – wider recognition of the project
- Set 6 - information on community involvement, education impacts and its potential use as a good practice
- Sets 7 and 8 – the potential of new technologies in active citizenship education

For each of the practices a Scoring Table was completed. A model Scoring Table is included in Annex E. A total of 57⁷ practices were subsequently selected for further examination. It should be noted that the scoring used as an indicative measure to help the selection committee to choose the good practices. It was not used as an elimination tool. The committee was composed of members of the group steering the study (DG EAC officials and the GHK study team).

The selection took account of issues such as:

- The score of the practices
- The need to ensure a good geographical coverage
- The need to ensure a good target group coverage
- The need to look at different themes, types of activities, etc.

Further analysis of good practice examples

The 57 good practice examples provided the necessary information for the analysis of different trends and approaches to active citizenship education. Detailed information on these practices was obtained through in-depth phone interviews with project organisers and a more detailed literature review. The interviews followed a strict structure based on a Detailed Information Template, to ensure consistent inputs and high quality information.

The template also served to construct a database in which all responses were entered. The interview questions paid particular attention to the description of objectives, teaching methods, organisational arrangements, innovative characteristics and success factors.

A compendium of the 57 practices, presenting the entered information in short information sheets, is displayed in Annex B. It also shows the detailed structure of the

⁷ The initial number of practices to be further examined was agreed at 58. However, whilst initially proposed by DG EAC for inclusion in the long list of practices and selected for detailed analysis, it proved to be impossible to reach the organisation responsible for one of the examples. It seems that they have ceased to exist. It also proved to be impossible to find a practice in Estonia which met all criteria.

template and the different entries and fields that could be ticked / completed. An overview structure is also included in Annex E. It would be worthwhile to explore ways of turning the database into an online tool for people to search for different practices.

Case studies

Ten of the 57 good practices that underwent a closer examination were subject to a case study. The purpose of the latter was to collect additional information and to analyse their approaches to active citizenship education in-depth, obtaining the viewpoints of different actors involved. The selection of the case studies was carried out during a meeting with DG EAC, going through the additional information gathered on each project.

The criteria for this choice were similar to those used for the selection of good practice examples: obtaining a good country spread (North-South, East-West, old MS, new MS, not MS), ensuring the presence of different target groups (different age groups, different disadvantaged groups), different types of education (formal, non-formal, informal) and innovation. The study team had prepared a briefing note prior to the selection meeting setting out its preferred 10 examples, and the client had also been requested to prepare a preferred list.

With the kind support of the project managers, the case study visits were organised. In as far as possible, the members of the research team tried to interview the following categories of actors:

- The project organisers (project manager and other persons responsible)
- The teachers/ trainers or educators involved
- Participants and other beneficiaries
- External actors if these were involved, such as the local community, or if the project took place in a different structure the leading organisation, e.g. a school or a university, someone from this structure.

The involvement of different actors ensured that the viewpoints, self-assessments and judgements of all relevant persons could be taken into account. It was positive to note however that there was broad consensus amongst the actors when asked to comment on the benefits and success factors of the practice. In none of the cases there were clear contradictions in the views expressed. The participants and other direct beneficiaries clearly elaborated more on their personal experiences and development rather than on the practice as a whole, but their views fitted well into the broad picture sketched by the organisers and teachers.

The interviewees were asked open-ended questions structured as follows:

1. Background to the approach – how and why it developed, contextual information etc.
2. Definitions / concepts of active citizenship used in the approach.
3. Main features and strands of the approach

4. Methods and type of Activity
5. Key outputs and impacts and added value of the approach
6. Key competences/ personal dimension of the impacts/ outcomes
7. Success factors and Issues and barriers to success.
8. Approaches to engaging the target group.
9. Approaches to using new media and online resources (if applicable).
10. Organisation and management.
11. Funding
12. Evaluation review
13. Transferability and Future plans
14. Documentary review

The full case study template and “guiding” questions used to interview the persons involved are included in Annex F. Together with DG EAC, it was decided that the case studies would be written up in a “journalistic” style accessible to different types of readers.

Case study visits were undertaken to the following 10 practices:

- Land Ahoy (Belgium)
- Education for Tolerance in a Multicultural society (Czech Republic)
- Promoting Civil Dialogue through Intercultural Competence Development (Germany)
- Innovation of Student Council Activities (Denmark)
- Training of Fathers and Mothers (Spain)
- Women’s Leadership Project (Croatia)
- 100 streets to play on (Italy)
- To Make a Difference (Sweden)
- Empowerment of Rome voice (Slovakia)
- European Citizenship in a Multicultural Union (UK)

The reports on the case studies have been included as Annex A - Compendium of case studies.

Final analysis and reporting

The final analysis of the information collected through the detailed examination of the 57 practices and the case studies focuses basically on “what works, where, how and why?” In addition, the study addressed several specific questions which were highlighted in the Terms of Reference. These questions are presented and analysed in section 3 below. Together with the literature review, the analysis also informs the reflection note on what active citizenship means and entails, as elaborated in section 4.

3 ANALYSIS OF 57 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES AND 10 CASE STUDIES ACCORDING TO THE KEY STUDY QUESTIONS

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the analysis of the 57 good practices that were the subject of a detailed examination. As described in section 2 above, the practices were selected on the basis of a set of qualitative criteria from a larger sample of 129 examples that were identified in the first stages of the study. The analysis is enriched by in-depth information accessed through the 10 case studies.

It should be once more emphasised that the sample of practices that is being analysed is not intended in any way to be representative for active citizenship education in Europe. The sample is used for the more general purpose of identifying and illustrating common strands and patterns in active citizenship education in a variety of contexts. It is aimed to be both analytical, including a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the most interesting characteristics of the practices, and descriptive, highlighting successful approaches that made active citizenship education work.

The first part of this section (3.2) provides an overview of the main characteristics of the practices that were collected and analysed. The second part (section 3.3) analyses the practices in relation to the key questions of the study. Annex C to the report includes more detailed tables further supporting the qualitative comments made in this section. Each reference to a Figure or Table starting with the letter “A” (of Annex) followed by a number can therefore be found back in Annex C.

3.2 Key characteristics of 57 practices

The overall mandate for identifying good practices in active citizenship education was to ensure an interesting spread in terms of coverage of 33 countries, type of education and education providers, target groups, themes, types of activities, methods, etc. The following charts and figures illustrate the diversity of the sample in terms of types of organisation involved, funding, levels of implementation, type of learning and target groups. Other relevant characteristics are presented in section 3.3, when discussing the study’s key questions.

3.2.1 *Type of organisation responsible*

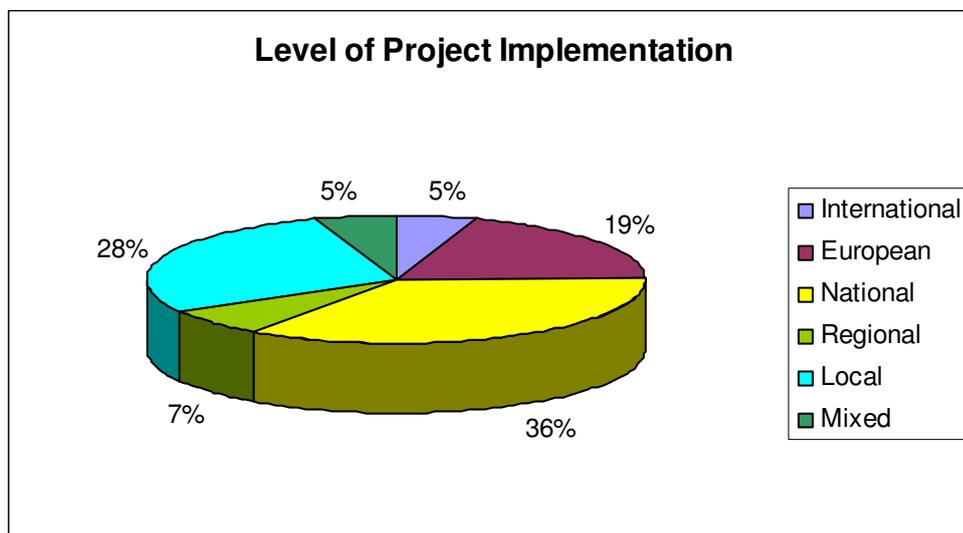
More than half of the studied practices were implemented by non-governmental organisations (57%), as shown in Figure A1 (in Annex C). This is partially a result of the method used to identify good practices. When launching the call for interesting practices in the area of active citizenship education, NGOs, training institutes and other actors reacted enthusiastically and were quick in putting forward interesting examples. National Ministries responded less fast and in lower numbers to the call. Only in a few countries the Ministries actually referred the research team towards concrete examples. In most cases they explained how the national curriculum addressed active citizenship education, did not keep records or databases on specific approaches. As the Ministries were asked to propose examples in formal education, the number of schools represented in the sample is also relatively lower.

3.2.2 Level of implementation

The figure below shows that amongst the 57 practices examined, most of the practices are developed and run at national level (more than one third). However, this remark should be interpreted with care: in some cases it also meant projects covering more than one region but not necessarily the full national territory. More than a quarter of the practices was implemented at local and grass-root level.

Nearly one fifth of the practices were implemented at European level, meaning that they involved two or more European countries. A small part (5%) of the practices concerned international initiatives, in the sense that they were developed by two or more countries of which at least one was outside Europe.

Figure 5 – Levels of implementation

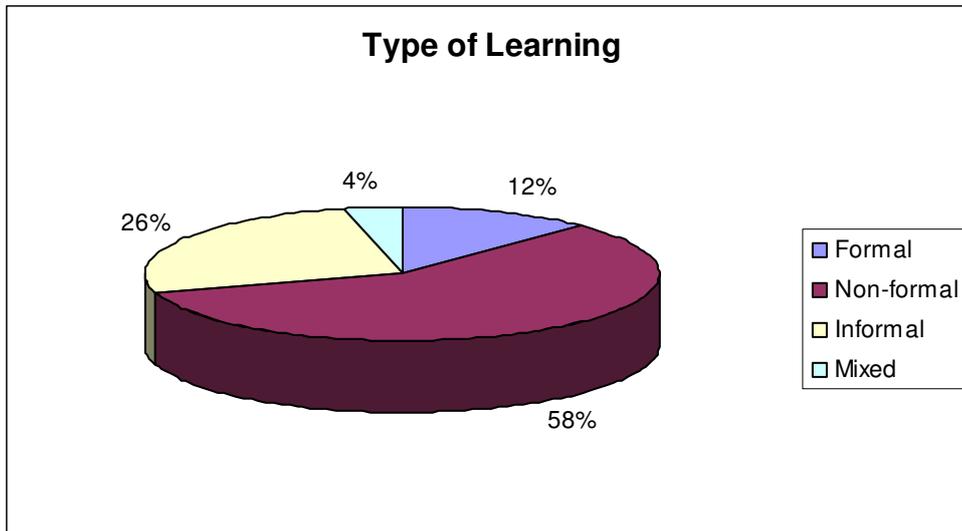


3.2.3 Type of learning

Of the 57 practices included in the analysis, more than half concerned non-formal learning. While this is partly due to the large proportion of NGO projects making up the sample, it is also interesting to notice that some organisations which normally deliver formal education, such as schools, put forward examples of informal and non-formal learning. For example, Land Ahoy in Belgium developed a simulation game taking place both in the classroom and outside of it.

Within the sample, it seems that overall, active citizenship is less taught through formal education (i.e. involving a “ladder structure” and an institutionalised environment). This point will be discussed further in sections 3.3.2 (type of activities and learning environment) and 3.3.3 (methods).

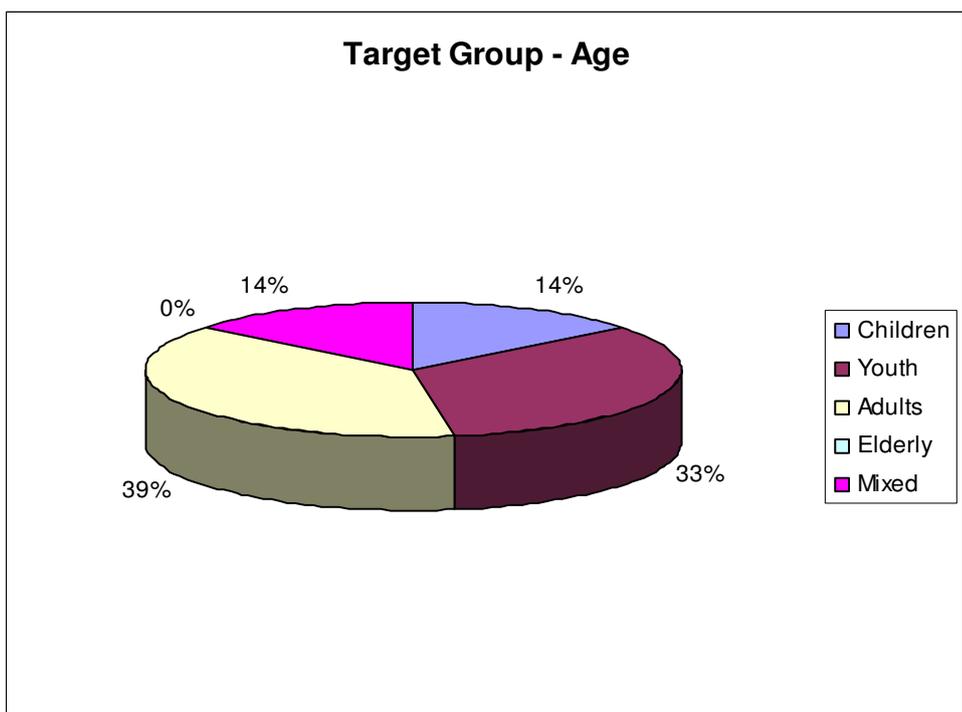
Figure 6 – Type of Learning



3.2.4 Target groups

With the exception of the elderly, who were not specifically addressed as a target group in any of the projects (but who may have been participating in mixed projects of practices for adults), the study targeted groups from society at large. For example, projects such as Citizen On-line in Italy addressed “hard-to-reach” groups including elderly who felt isolated from society. A bit more than one third of projects focused on adults and another third on young people.

Figure 7 – Target group according to age



Half of the studied projects (28) mentioned a specific focus on target groups with particular socio-economic or cultural features. Nearly a quarter of these projects worked with ethnic minorities or immigrants. Eight focused on other vulnerable groups, such as women, disabled and other types of disadvantaged persons.

Whilst not a group with particular socio-economic features, the study also sought to identify which of the practices examined had a “train-the-trainer” focus. A total of four projects specifically developed educational activities to help those interested in or already active in teaching citizenship. The sample also included target groups with “particular professions”. A first analysis showed that some practices tried to make civil servants and other professionals more active citizens, such as the policy officers in the Austrian project “Policing in a Multicultural Society”.

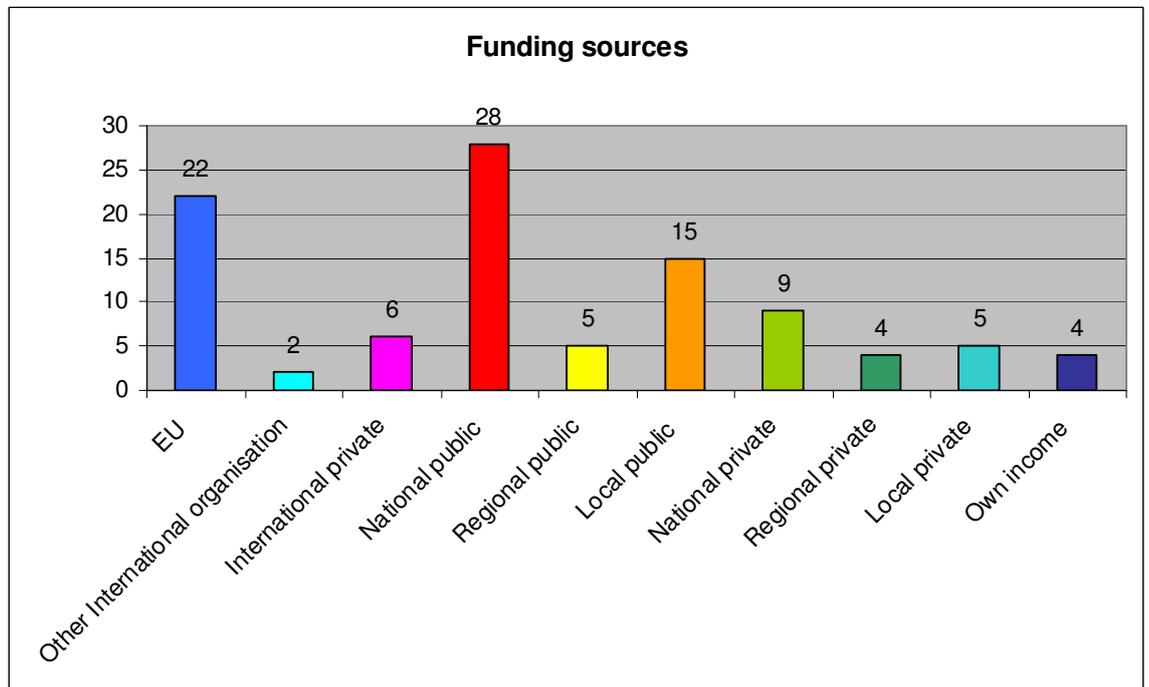
3.2.5 Financial resources

The interviews and case studies proved that it was difficult for organisations to determine the overall costs of a practice. For 13 projects, organisations were unable to give an indication, either due to the small scale of the interventions requiring a minimum in terms of material and using voluntary inputs (e.g. the Talking Book project in Malta), or because they were part of a wider programme / set of activities which made it difficult to estimate their budget share (e.g. the Swedish-Romanian Study Circle "A Wealth for Europe - Activating an Educational wealth for Europe through Citizens' Initiatives and Adult Education").

The resources used for developing the remaining 44 practices ranged between 2,000 euro and 1,200,000 euro. Around 15% of the practices worked with a budget of more than 100,000 euro (see also Figure A2 in Annex C). More than half of the practices, (including those who could not estimate their budget) had less than 50,000 euro at their disposition. The majority of the more costly projects were large scale initiatives, often with a national coverage and a participation of either European or other sources of public funding (e.g. national or regional). In general, practices with the smallest coverage such as those undertaken by individual schools, required the lowest resources (all less than 10,000 euro). Projects with national coverage, European or international aspects proved to be the most resource-intensive ones.

When looking at the source of funding, overall projects most benefited from some form of public financing. Within this category most frequently mentioned sponsors were national authorities, followed by EU institutions and local public bodies. Figure 8 below illustrates the sources of financing accessed by the 57 studied examples, taking into account that most projects received funding from more than one source (which is especially typical for EU funded actions requiring co-financing).

Figure 8 – Funding sources



3.2.6 Participation

Another factor showing the scale of a project relates to the number of people that directly participated in the educational activities. This varied strongly from small projects involving less than 20 participations to projects reaching over 2000 people, and in a few cases even higher numbers took part. It should be noted that in many cases projects covered much higher numbers indirectly, for example through community involvement, dissemination, involvement of parents in activities destined for children and young people, etc.

3.3 Addressing the key questions of the study through different levels of analysis

This section addresses the key questions of the study. The main purpose of using the research questions is to identify the main characteristics of successful approaches and to analyse what contributed to their success. In addition, the questions are helpful to identify what dimensions of active citizenship, and which education patterns, have been adopted across the examples. Finally, they enable a qualitative and comparative analysis of the sample of practices on which detailed information was collected.

The key questions were the following:

- **How is active citizenship defined in the approaches considered?**

This question considers the main themes that were addressed through the 57 examples of active citizenship education. It also reviews the more in-depth considerations provided through the case studies.

- **What works, why, where and how, in promoting active citizenship?**

This multi-dimensional question looks at the different types of activities developed as part of the educational practices. It reviews what the persons responsible for the projects identified as the main success factors and further elaborates on the discussions in the case studies. In order to identify what works and why, due consideration is also given to the outcomes and impacts of the practices.

For the sake of clarity this question has been further subdivided into the following sub-questions:

- Which activities are the most recurrent in promoting active citizenship?
- Which factors contribute to the success of activities promoting active citizenship education?
- What are the outcomes, results and impacts of successful activities?

- **What are the main successful methods and strategies?**

This question relates to the methods used for developing the educational examples and the way in which these were delivered. The extent to which actors allocate importance to the method as a precondition for successful active citizenship education becomes evident when counting the high number of projects that marked it as a specific success factor. Further elaborations on the methods used in the case studies are also provided.

- **What are common patterns and themes emerging across the countries covered in the study in promoting active citizenship in education and training?**

This question looks at patterns in terms of themes and seeks to identify whether some contexts pay higher attention to certain (groups of) themes than others. The same approach is used for the methods used. The size of the sample makes it however difficult to answer this question.

- **What are successful organisational structures as well as co-operation, communication and community involvement strategies?**

This question reviews the different management, coordination and partnership arrangements set up for running the educational projects, including internal communication and dissemination. It also looks at the extent to which the wider community and other actors were involved.

- **What is the potential of new media to promote active citizenship? What are concrete examples of the use of such media across the countries covered in the study?**

This question looks at online resources and other media use.

The four levels of analysis used in most of the questions are the following:

1. **Level of implementation** (International, European, national, regional, local, mixed)
2. **Type of learning** (formal, non-formal, informal, mixed)
3. **Target group - age group** (children, youth, adults, elderly)
4. **Target group – other features** (disabled, disadvantaged, ethnic minorities, parents, particular professions, teachers / trainers / educators, university students, women)

Each of the following subsections starts with a box including the main points emerging from analysing the key question. This is followed by the full analysis of the major points and, where relevant, reflections on the different levels of analysis. Illustrative examples from the case studies but also from the sample of 57 projects have been inserted to clarify findings. As mentioned earlier, only the most significant tables are included in the body of the text in this section - detailed figures and tables presenting all levels of analysis are included in Annex C.

The tables included in this section and Annex C should be read as follows:

- On the horizontal axis: the first figures in the top row correspond to the number of examples that satisfy the criteria. On the vertical axis, the percentages shown relate to the above first figures.
- Numbers in **bold** are those that are mentioned first in the paragraphs discussing the relevant tables. In the majority of cases, they are the highest scores.
- Numbers marked in **grey** are discussed second, and mainly concern issues of particular interest.

It should be also mentioned that most of the categories like “Themes addressed”, “Type of activity”, “Methods used” or “Success factors” were multiple choice questions. Therefore one practice could combine several of them.

3.3.1 *How is active citizenship defined in the approaches considered?*

Prior to describing the different themes addressed by the practices examined, it is important to mention that the study did not start with a predefined definition of what active citizenship includes. It sought however to identify its different dimensions by asking project leaders, organisations and authorities to put forward what they considered a good practice in active citizenship education, and to specify the main themes addressed through this education. This led to the sample being thematically very broad and to some interesting insights into what active citizenship means in different contexts. More detailed considerations are included in section 4, which includes reflections on a common understanding of active citizenship.

From the variety of themes mentioned by the project organisers it is clear that active citizenship is not only about exercising civil rights and democracy. Actors emphasise the importance for active citizenship education to focus on socio-cultural issues, including integration of newcomers and ethnic minorities, and multiculturalism. In addition, active citizenship should be empowering, as this is a first step towards giving people a voice and the “courage” to stand up for themselves and the group they represent. The active component of citizenship is mainly understood in terms of participation, interaction, taking responsibility and leadership.

When asked to prioritise the main themes covered when providing active citizenship education, Figure 9 below shows that the vast majority of interviewees chose democratic participation (63%), followed by social cohesion / integration, empowerment and multiculturalism.

Figure 9 – thematic priorities in active citizenship education

| Themes | Total | % |
|-------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Human rights | 9 | 16% |
| Childrens rights | 7 | 12% |
| Civil rights | 10 | 18% |
| Democratic participation | 36 | 63% |
| Multi-culturalism | 22 | 39% |
| Social cohesion / integration | 26 | 46% |
| Consumer rights | 4 | 7% |
| Prevention | 7 | 12% |
| Empowerment | 26 | 46% |
| Peace / conflict resolution | 10 | 18% |
| Other / additional themes | 30 | 53% |

Democratic participation is considered in the broadest sense possible – projects often referred to the participation of beneficiaries in the planning of activities, ensuring that their voice is heard during the implementation phase and to encourage participants to reach consensus and jointly take actions forward. Other aspects referred to under the Democratic participation theme were: participation in the community and participation in social and political life. It is interesting to notice that actors attribute relative low importance to more “classic” citizenship issues such as human and civil rights. In the sample examined only a few projects actually focused on civil rights themes such as,

for example, the right to vote. This, however, is partially due to the selection criteria for the 57 good practice examples among which innovation was considered an important criteria.

The activities addressing the social cohesion/ integration theme were usually targeted at a particular, often disadvantaged group. The practices usually focused on encouraging this group to become more actively involved in society. They often had a double purpose: empowerment and activation of the disadvantaged individuals and raising the awareness of the wider public. For example, the “Somali refugee network” and the “Romaverzitas” project motivated members of particular ethnic minorities to speak up and to participate in activities perceived as “majority-driven”. “Romaverzitas” aims to increase Roma attendance at Universities through working with young Roma in secondary schools. These youngsters are often marginalised twice: firstly because they are discriminated by the wider society and second because their own community considers success at school a sign of denying their origins. Three quarters of the practices that took place at local level placed a high emphasis on social cohesion and integration, which may reflect that grass-root approaches often aim to stimulate community development.

Similarly, many of the activities particularly focusing on empowerment (see also Figure A5 in Annex C) are designed to help underrepresented groups such as ethnic minorities or women. Interestingly, studied empowerment activities also addressed groups which may not seem to be in need of empowerment, such as parents. The project “Training of Fathers and Mothers” tried to empower parents who see their authority over their children decline. This project gives them the tools for an open discussion with their children and also a public space to meet other parents and exchange experiences.

Active citizenship is often linked to multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is another often mentioned theme. Practices dealing with multiculturalism often tried to “open” participants’ horizons to different ethnic or national groups living in their country or more generally in Europe. Several projects were addressing particular professions who have frequent contact with people from different origins. Such professions included teachers, police officers or public servants – all having one common feature: authority. The practices wanted to teach people that authority should not be biased nor fed by prejudices. The “Policing in a multicultural society” practice for example challenged the prejudices of high rank police officers by making them meet and interact with refugees. In the studied sample it appeared that projects implemented at European level put most focus on multiculturalism (46% of European examples addressed this theme). This could be explained by the actual involvement of different nationalities in these activities.

Multiculturalism is also a very popular theme among three quarters of the projects targeted at children (see also Figure A4). Projects like “Land Ahoy” and “Arts for multiculturalism” demonstrate how children are sensible to the idea of different cultural identities. Both of these projects present cultural diversity to children as something exciting. By stimulating their imagination, multiculturalism becomes for them a playground to discover and explore.

Additional themes mentioned as part of the “other” category included three projects focusing particularly on European Citizenship (these were all funded by an EU programme dedicated to this theme) and two practices putting emphasis on the rights of minorities as part of human and civil rights. Two others saw housing and urban environments as important elements of active citizenship, whilst sustainable development, culture, healthcare and tolerance were all mentioned once.

Are specific themes taught through specific forms of education? Within the studied sample, formal education practices placed a high focus on multiculturalism, as well as on prevention, conflict resolution and human rights (see also figure A3 in Annex C). This tendency shows how classroom teaching seems to be moving away from the classic topics on citizen’s rights and responsibilities and democratic values only. Several projects examined as part of this study illustrate how other themes are also being inserted in the formal curricula. The project “Education for tolerance in a multicultural society” developed several university courses for future teachers, aimed at increasing their tolerance and open-mindedness towards cultural differences. An interesting point of this course is that the same methods which are used to work with the university students can also be used for younger persons. Hence the project not only teaches future teachers to become more tolerant but also gives them methods to subsequently teach the same to children and young people.

Adult education pays higher than average attention to empowerment. This is understandable given that the objectives of empowerment are to give someone the means and self-confidence to claim authority or responsibility. These are more adapted for youth and adults, rather than for children.

Specific interpretations of active citizenship that emerged from the interviews with the different actors during the case studies include:

- **Understanding all the facets of democracy.** Practices placed emphasis on the fact that democracy not only gave certain rights to people, but that it also implied the “obligation” to respect the views of others. This was seen to be particularly important for children and young people, to teach them that they had to take account of the interests and wishes of other persons. In addition, many examples sought to make people understand that in order for any democratic process to work, it was essential to participate in these processes.
- **Respecting the rights of other people** and embracing diversity; being aware of gender issues. Being an active citizen meant for many practices being open-minded to views and traditions that may be different than the ones people were accustomed to.
- Being informed beyond the mere official viewpoints and open to discussion. Practices encouraged participants to “**think for themselves**”, and to be ready to “challenge” opinions (and to be willing to “defend” theirs) in order to reach consensus.
- Being autonomous and **taking responsibility** and ownership for actions.

- Being able to **work with others** towards a commonly agreed goal.
- **Being aware of the rights** one has and how these can be used for the benefits of a group / the wider community.
- **Working towards consensus** and decision-making through dialogue and collaboration.
- Having confidence to act and to fight for changes.
- Improving the quality of life of the community and the environment.

The understanding of active citizenship is further elaborated in section 4.

3.3.2 *What works, where, why and how, in promoting active citizenship?*

The vast majority of all practices reviewed included an awareness raising component, often in combination with an element of activating the participants, such as “learning by doing”, “discussions or debate, or “learning new skills”. Nearly one third of the practices aimed to activate people in the near future by focusing on expanding their contacts and networking.

As can be expected, given that the majority of the practices were from non-formal and informal education, most of the educational activity took place in participants’ free-time. On the other hand, when looking at the information on learning contexts it appears that nearly one third of activities took place in schools even though only a few projects were organised directly by schools.

From the analysis of success factors it appears that the democratic involvement of participants is by far the most cited success factor, followed by the method and participants’ motivation. The findings of the case studies confirm that the participants themselves are key to the success of activities and that the more influence they have on the organisation of activities the more they commit to project. Successful projects report a wide variety of outcomes and impacts. In terms of tangible outcomes, these include the creation of new organisations and networks, participants engaging in new activities, improvements to the local community and mainstreaming of practices.

3.3.2.1 *What activities are most recurrent in promoting active citizenship?*

The sample of practices includes a large variety of approaches to developing the different dimensions and themes of active citizenship as discussed in the previous section. This part of the section looks at the type of approaches and activities implemented, in terms of scope (e.g. what is the practice about: learning new skills, networking, volunteering, etc) and action (e.g. what does the practice consist of: a campaign, an exchange, the development of support materials, etc).

Figure 10 below shows that nearly two thirds of the studied practices included an element of awareness-raising. This does not mean that they focused exclusively on changing the public opinion: most of actually linked their awareness-raising component to other activities such as learning by doing or debates.

Projects such as the Italian “100 Streets to play one”, with awareness raising as their core activity, were quite rare in the studied sample. The project gathers inhabitants of particular streets and quarters around the idea of organising a day where streets could be given back their “traditional” life without cars and with children playing there. The major objective of the project is indeed to raise awareness about urban environment issues. However, an important number of the studied projects had a different use of awareness-raising: often they worked closely with a smaller group of people and then disseminated this work through larger awareness-raising events. For example, the project “Intercultural dialogue in libraries” worked closely with library employees on topics like how to orientate foreigners towards resources about the Czech Republic. At the same time many activities targeted at the wider public were organised in these libraries presenting the various foreign cultures living in the country.

Figure 10– type of activities in active citizenship education

| Type of activities | Total | % |
|---|-------|-----|
| One-off | 11 | 19% |
| Campaign | 7 | 12% |
| Networking | 18 | 32% |
| Awareness raising | 36 | 63% |
| Exchanges | 9 | 16% |
| Learning new skills | 28 | 49% |
| Mainstream education/ training | 11 | 19% |
| Learning by doing/ project implementation | 25 | 44% |
| Discussion/ Debate | 28 | 49% |
| Volunteering | 11 | 19% |
| Online activity | 7 | 12% |
| Support materials | 12 | 21% |
| Service Education | 3 | 5% |
| Other | 23 | 40% |

Awareness raising activities were often designed to reach important numbers of people. Therefore, most of the large scale practices like European or national projects (see Figure A6) included a sensitisation element. Sometimes the target group of these activities was specific, like the “local inhabitants” in “Streets for playing” or young people in “Youth advisor training” but the activities were always meant to reach a wider public at the same time.

A relatively high share of practices also indicated discussions or debates as one of their activities. For example, the project “Voice to Women” organised a country-wide debate about involving women in politics in the three participating countries. Conferences and workshops on this theme were organised by leading feminist organisations and supported by women politicians. Similarly as for awareness raising activities, discussions and debates were often organised as part of the dissemination of a project. It should be noted that most often the discussions were a tool rather than a core activity. This will be further explained in section 3.3.3 analysing the methods used by the practices. As in the case of awareness-raising, the discussions and debates that took place in the practices examined were mostly designed for the wider public.

The most recurrent core activities of the sample of projects were learning by doing or project implementation (44%) and learning new skills (49%). Both these types of activities are focused on enhancing participants' competences and understanding as well as the actual "mastering" of the themes taught. Many of the practices put individuals in concrete situations where they would somehow benefit the public sphere. In the "The talking book" project, participants produced recordings of books to be used by the visually impaired. Most of them realised through this very simple action how a minor effort could constitute a great help to others. It is interesting to note that the focus of such learning activities was higher in small-scale projects than in larger ones (Figure A6 in Annex C). This is most probably due to the fact that the former were more demanding in resources than for example awareness-raising or debating. The direct application of learning and the acquisition of new skills were also particularly popular among projects focusing on ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups (see Figure A9).

Other practices encouraged participants to actually design their own projects with the purpose of improving the community. This was the case for practices such as "Women leaders in local communities", "Empowering Roma voice" or "Human rights workshops for students". The aim of these activities was to make their participants active citizens by teaching and helping them to design, finance and implement a community action. The projects were usually designed for a small group of participants who had first passed a selection process. Given the relatively long-term character of these projects (several months up to a year) and their costs, it was crucial to select participants who could make the most of such an initiative.

Therefore, unlike the activities discussed earlier, the projects focusing on project implementation usually worked with a target group of persons already "aware" and motivated to contribute, but who were lacking the necessary skills. For example, the "Promoting Civil Dialogue through Intercultural Competence Development" project chose appropriate target groups for whom the training they provided was crucial or highly relevant – civil servants working closely with migrant groups or migration issues and/or responsible for external communication; and representatives of migrant organisations that are highly motivated and committed to improving the situation of migrants. A further discussion on how different "categories" of active citizenship education fit different target groups in terms of awareness and motivation to act is included in section 4.

Do different types of activities better fit certain educational forms?

The analysis of the sample reveals an interesting though not surprising tendency (see Figure A7 in Annex C). Formal education practices⁸ place a higher focus on mainstream educational programmes (72%) and the development of support materials (72%), awareness raising and stimulating discussions and debate than on learning new skills. This is probably due to the fact that formal education has up until recently focused on traditional basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, which means that the understanding of other (and relatively newer) basic skills such as civic competences are not yet as well-developed. On the other hand, learning new skills ranked second highest for non-formal learning. The latter confirms that this type of learning has

⁸ Under mainstream educational programmes were understood classroom lectures focusing on formal knowledge

witnessed an increased focus on the development of new skills - also called “soft skills” - including those necessary for becoming an active citizen.

The development of support materials has in some cases not only helped to engage participants, but also served to “materialise” the project experience and to make it available to other organisations/ institutions. It could therefore be described as in-between activities and results. For example, the production of a video in “Young visions for Europe” (an EU-wide network) was an attractive media for young people, both for those who participated and for those who saw / will see it. Another good example is the “Talking book project” where again the production of materials was both an activity that directly involved participants and a project result. Materials were mostly produced on topics where projects identified a gap in available resources. For example, “Education for Tolerance in a Multicultural society” publishes an annual review which includes articles written by the participating lecturers on themes linked to multiculturalism, a field which is very poorly covered by other publications in the Czech language.

It is worthwhile to quickly review which types of activities are more used in certain learning contexts (Figure A10). School-based practices mainly involve discussions and debates, mainstream training and learning by doing. This is complementary to the comment on formal education above. The analysis also shows that schools also develop activities which involve more skills-oriented practices. Sometimes these take place outside the formal education curricula. Learning-by-doing was scarce among formal education projects (see also Figure A7) but nevertheless well present in school environments. Practices that were implemented in the free time of individuals tended to include a broad mixture of activities, ranging from awareness-raising and learning news skills to learning by doing, debating and networking.

As can be seen from Figure 11 below, overall, practices involving adults mainly take place in their free time. The sample involved little on-the-job training. The three examples identified focused on adults in public sector employment, such as civil servants, police officers, or social workers. This may suggest that the private sector is still lagging behind in the provision of active citizenship education.

Figure 11 – Learning contexts for different age groups

| Learning context | Target Group - A | Total |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Free - time - voluntary | Adults | 13 |
| | Children | 2 |
| | Mixed | 6 |
| | Youth | 11 |
| Free - time - voluntary Total | | 32 |
| Mixed job/ free time | Adults | 1 |
| | Mixed | 2 |
| Mixed job/ free time Total | | 3 |
| Mixed school/ free time | Adults | 2 |
| | Children | 1 |
| | Youth | 5 |
| Mixed school/ free time Total | | 8 |
| On the job - linked to the job | Adults | 3 |
| | Youth | 1 |
| On the job - linked to the job Total | | 4 |
| School based | Adults | 3 |
| | Children | 5 |
| | Youth | 2 |
| School based Total | | 10 |
| Grand Total | | 57 |

3.3.2.2 Which factors contribute to the success of activities promoting active citizenship education?

What elements did interviewees considered important to the success of their practice? Figure 12 below shows the list of success factors identified. These include factors which are based on the main characteristics of a project (e.g. its method, its theme) and additional success factors which were drawn up in consultation with the client.

Figure 12 – Main success factors identified

| Success factors 1 - concerning key characteristics | Total | % |
|---|-------|-------|
| Main theme | 17 | 29.8% |
| Type of Activity | 23 | 40.4% |
| Learning context | 21 | 36.8% |
| Target group | 20 | 35.1% |
| Objectives | 12 | 21.1% |
| Method | 29 | 50.9% |
| Funding - type or extent | 4 | 7.0% |
| Community Involvement | 15 | 26.3% |
| None of the above | 2 | 3.5% |
| Success factors 2 - other | | |
| Level of participation | 19 | 33.3% |
| Participants motivation | 25 | 43.9% |
| Democratic involvement of participants | 28 | 49.1% |
| Participants proximity with issues | 18 | 31.6% |
| Involvement of different actors | 13 | 22.8% |
| Needs addressed | 6 | 10.5% |
| Challenges encountered and overcome | 10 | 17.5% |
| Other | 44 | 77.2% |

Most practices consider that a good method is key to a successful project. The practice “Innovation of Student Council Activities” was built on the need of a clear method and a structure to let pupils conduct Council or class meetings. This method is meant to give the students skills which they can also use in their everyday life, for example as a tool for conflict resolution. Other projects such as “Strengthening women’s leadership skills” and “Empowering of Roma voice” underlined the importance of an interactive method which gradually hands responsibilities over to the participants. The type of activity that is being implemented comes second. The activity needs to be attractive and motivating while being educative at the same time. It also needs to fit the purpose of the project and the expectations of the target group.

Interviewees also attributed high importance to the context in which learning takes place. In the project “Streets for playing”, for example, the urban context and more particularly the streets are central to the discussions about automobile pollution. Similarly, the organisers of the project “Training for fathers and mothers” stressed the importance of a different context for parents’ meetings than the schools where their children go. The latter may inhibit their expressions of feelings and ideas. Being on “neutral ground” allowed parents to express themselves freely and it also permitted them to see what is going on and how problems are dealt with in other schools.

It is clear, however, to half of the practices, that the democratic involvement of participants in the projects is essential. While democracy was actually used by the

study team and Steering Group as one of the criteria for selecting the 57 practices, it is positive to note that the projects confirm that the democratic involvement of their participants was also a determinant factor for the success of their practice. This illustrates that active citizenship education can only work when it is based on basic values such as democracy and equality, and when actors are steering their learning experiences – thus making these better fit their needs and interests.

When asked to specify the benefits of democratic involvement, interviewees referred to the pedagogical benefits of participants learning more about project management, decision-making processes and organisational issues. These characteristics were particularly underlined in projects aimed at implementing concrete actions and teaching participants how to design their own initiatives. In addition, democratic participation is an occasion to implement the underlying values of many of the projects such as tolerance, equality and participation. Another aspect of democratic involvement is the development of belonging and ownership over the project activities and results. Participants who feel “responsible and liable” for a project are much more likely to take an active role in making the project a success than those who feel the project is being imposed upon them from above. Even though a bottom-up approach in the development and implementation of a project may be more lengthy and difficult to achieve than a top-down approach, it makes the initiative much better tailored to the needs and expectations of participants. The majority of examples undertook regular consultations of projects activities with their participants.

The above discussion is closely linked to the motivation of participants, which is considered a success factor by 40% of the practices examined. Only people that are motivated will feel encouraged to participate, make their voice heard and take leadership. They will also fully dedicate themselves to the project activities and may keep some of these alive after the project has ended. It is however not always easy to keep participants motivated – their democratic involvement in the project is clearly one way of achieving a high and continuous level of motivation. It enables participants to express their eventual doubts or frustrations and to take action. Another dimension of what interviewees qualified as “participants’ motivation” is actually the motivation of those who implement the project, such as the trainers. Several projects underlined that the enthusiasm of those in contact with the group is crucial for participants’ motivation and hence the project’s success.

Do the success factors vary depending on the type of activity that the practices are implementing?

An analysis of the practices (presented in figures A16 and A17) show some interesting differences. Half of the examples that developed support materials for active citizenship education rather logically considered that the theme chosen for these materials contributed to their success. A well-focused document or tool, with an interesting theme, is more likely to attract the attention of learners. This is especially relevant given that, as discussed earlier, most of the support materials were meant to make up for gaps in literature or other materials.

Mainstream education considered their methodological approaches to teaching active citizenship as critical for their success. This may be due to the fact that mainstream education is mostly “institutionalised”, designed to last over a longer period. The methods therefore need to be robust and clearly articulated as many different teachers should be able to deliver it. The method should also be clearly structured so that the

education is accessible to different target groups. This is for example the case for formal education activities like “Education for tolerance in a multicultural society” which is implemented in several universities by lecturers who did not participate in the design of the method. However, some non-formal activities such as “Study circles” also require precise methods. Their approach is both very simple and clear and could therefore be applied by any group of people sharing the same interest.

When looking at the specific success factors, as mentioned earlier, nearly all activities (with the exception of campaigns) depend on the motivation of participants and their democratic involvement, as is confirmed in Figure A17 (Annex C). But some types of activities depend on other factors, such as the level and extent of participation, (mentioned for example by nearly half of the practices developing exchanges). Examples that included volunteering activities, mentioned that the way they (and their participants) had overcome challenges was amongst the most important success factors. Volunteering experiences are not always easy, but in general participants gain confidence once they have dealt with a problematic situation.

The case study evidence confirms most of the analytical findings presented above. Especially in projects that are meant to become long-term, the dedication of the teachers / trainers and the motivation of the participants is considered crucial. The case study “Empowerment of Roma voice” draws attention to the fact that teachers and trainers should not only be highly committed, but also show a certain “proximity” to the participants in order to build trust and to develop an environment in which individuals feel at ease.

Nearly all 57 examples and case studies emphasise the need for participants to take ownership of the project. This is why their democratic involvement is a key success factor, as having a voice and being able to adjust things which do not work increases this sense of ownership. With regard to the method, most interviewees – both in the wider sample and the case studies – emphasised that the most effective approaches were built around participative methods, which were considered to be crucial for successful learning.

3.3.2.3 *What are the results, outcomes and impacts of successful activities?*

After a discussion of which factors contributed to the success of the sample of practices, it is useful to also look at what these successes consisted of. From the analysis of the practices the following categorisation of impacts emerges:

- **Positive feedback** from participants (e.g. through evaluation, feedback forms, informal contacts, etc)
- Participants gaining **new skills** (and **making use of them**).
- A **change in attitudes** of participants.
- Participants **engaging in further activities** (within or outside the original organisation).
- Development of **new materials and products** (e.g. educational material and tools, handbooks, etc)

- **Increased demand for participation** in the practice / for obtaining the products developed by the practice
- **Increasing capacity of the organisation** (e.g. better skilled staff or more human resources)
- Creation of **new dialogues and partnerships** (e.g. with local authorities and other institutions)
- Increased **interest from the wider public** (e.g. more requests for information, media attention, etc)
- **Mainstreaming** of the practice (e.g. accreditation of the learning process, development of similar initiatives elsewhere, etc)
- **Changes to the community** (e.g. higher acceptance of certain target groups, development of new initiatives by other community stakeholders, etc)
- Creation of a **new network or organisation** (as result of the project)

Figure 13 below shows that most practices reported a change in the attitude of their participants as the most common result. It is the most direct effect that active citizenship education can have. The interviewees elaborated on how during the project they noticed changes in the view, attitude and general outlook of their participants. This was mainly the case for projects with a mid or long-term character where the same group of participants was in regular contact with the project organisers. Such a change is more difficult to observe and assess in short-term projects or projects designed to address a very large audience, such as awareness-raising campaigns.

Another type of results mentioned often is the acquisition of new skills by individuals and their activation through further involvement. Again this type of results is more easily measured in small-scale and long-term projects. For example, the participants of “Women leaders in local communities” all designed their own projects and most of them are continuing the initiatives started as a result of their training. Because of the good relations that they developed during the project, they also regularly inform the managing organisation of their activities.

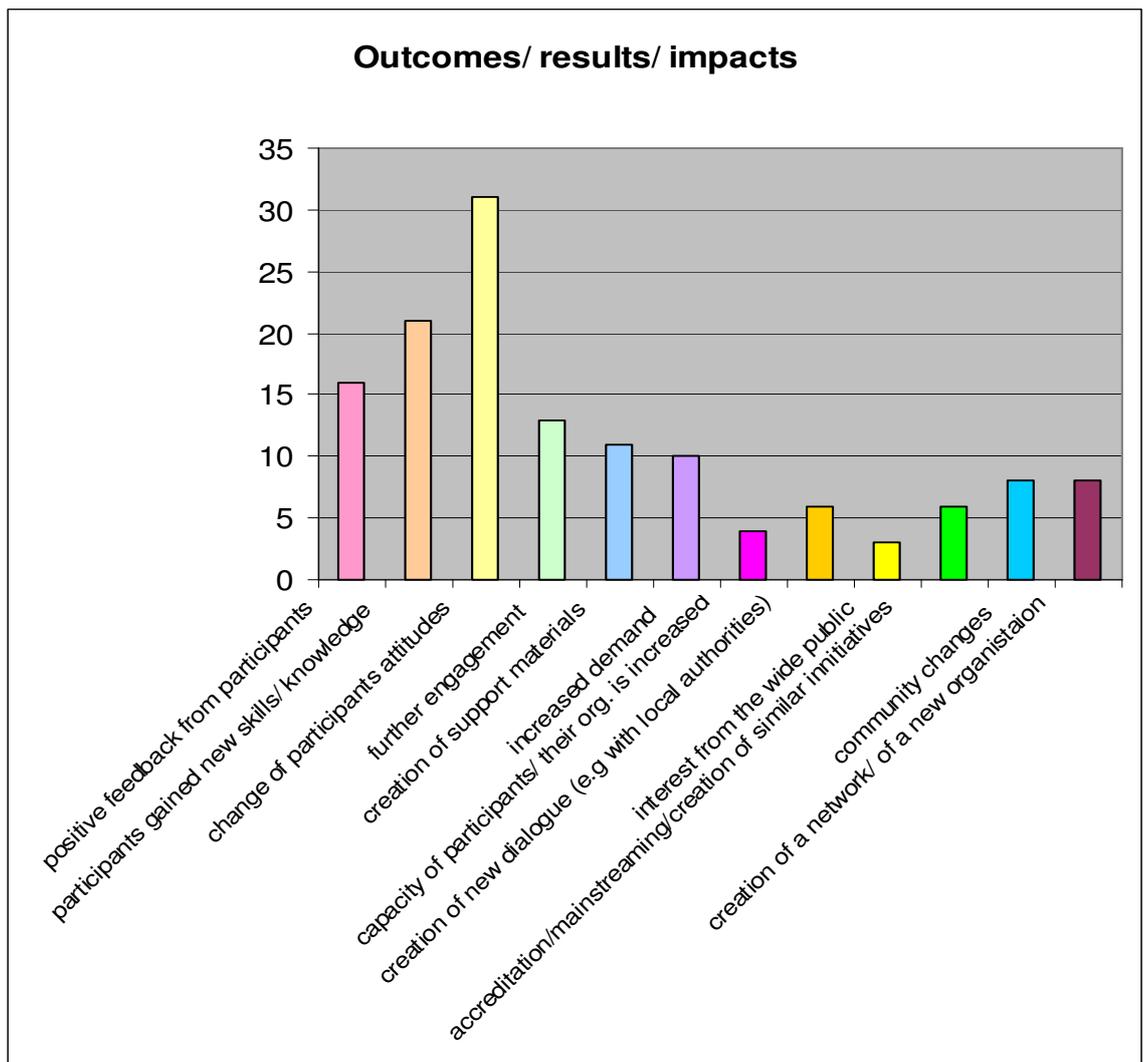
As outlined above, the type of impacts cited by interviewees is to some extent linked to the scope of the project and the type of activities it developed. For example, short-term projects (e.g. “Swedish-Romanian Study Circle -A Wealth for Europe”) implementing practices aimed at achieving increased knowledge and “behavioural” changes rather than tangible outputs (e.g. community works, a guide, etc) emphasised the positive feedback they received from their participants and their changes in attitude. Projects which required a more intense contact with the organisers and placed a higher focus on following up the effects the educational experience had on their participants emphasised this closer link by drawing attention to the new skills beneficiaries had gained and the further activities the latter had undertaken making use of these skills. Examples are “Arts for Multiculturalism” in Portugal and “Themis” in the Netherlands.

The materials produced as part of some of the projects can be considered a project activity, a tangible result and an outcome, provided the participants were involved in their development and that the end product is being used by others. This is clearly the

case for practices such as the “Talking Book”, which was developed by the participants during the project and is now improving the lives of the visually impaired. Another often mentioned concerned the creation of new organisations and networks initiated by the participants inspired by the project activities and themes. For example, participants of the project “Olympia human rights” created an international network called ARIADNE which combats human trafficking.

Practices with a clearer and more practical focus reported more concrete results and outcomes. For example, Empowerment of Roma voice” aimed to launch new community works. The purpose of “To Make a Difference” in Sweden was to create an exchange of experience among the member organisations and to record it in an online database of good practices. For many large scale practices, the increased demand for participation and products was a measure of the project’s success. This was typically the case of awareness raising activities designed for the general public, based on one-off events where it is more difficult to measure impacts, e.g. in the EU project “Voice to women”.

Figure 13– Main effects of the practices



As part of the analysis of successful activities the study team also looked at what competences learners gained, using the categorisation and definitions of key competences developed by the European Commission DG EAC in *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – A European Reference Framework*⁹. From the eight key competences, among which two are divided in important subsets, only those explicitly addressed by the studied practices were included in the database (leaving out mathematical literacy, scientific literacy and communication in foreign language). It should be mentioned that the project organisers and other interviewees were not asked directly to report on the type of competences they addressed, but rather to comment on what they gained from the project experience. The categorisation below has been made by the study team based on an analysis of the project objectives, outcomes results and impacts.

The key competences most explicitly related to active citizenship and addressed by all projects (see also Figure A18 in Annex C) are:

*Civic competences: These can be described as the set of competences that allow the individual to achieve participation in civic life. The scope of civic competences is broader than that of interpersonal competences by virtue of their existence at societal level..*¹⁰. This was the scope of nearly all of the practices examined.

Together with civic competences, interpersonal, intercultural and social competences were very often addressed by the selected projects. *Interpersonal competences cover all forms of behaviour that one must master as an individual in order to be able to participate in an efficient, constructive way and resolve conflict in social life, in interaction with other individuals (or groups) in personal, family and public contexts.*¹¹ The analysis of the selected sample confirms how these two sets of competences are very closely linked. For example, through participation in the project “Land Ahoy” pupils gained understanding of basic concepts such as democracy but also acquired skills which enabled them to relate to their classmates in a respectful and tolerant manner.

Close to one third of projects also focused on the competence to communicate in their mother tongue. This competence *is the ability to express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form in the full range of societal and cultural contexts — work, home and leisure.*¹² The majority of examples targeted at children also concentrated on communication in their mother tongue. This competence was less developed in practices involving youth and adults. An example focusing on communication is the “Innovation of student council activities” project which promoted dialogue as a means for efficient decision-making by giving pupils the skills to conduct effective discussions.

Another competence which was noted several times is Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship has an active and a passive component: the propensity to bring about innovation oneself, but also the ability to welcome and support innovation*

⁹ Key competences for Lifelong learning – A European reference framework; European Commission DG EAC; November 2004

¹⁰; Ibid; p.17

¹¹ Ibid; p. 16

¹² Ibid; p9

*brought about by external factors. Entrepreneurship includes welcoming change, taking responsibility for one's actions (positive or negative), setting objectives and meeting them and having the motivation to succeed.*¹³ Some empowerment projects focused not only at giving participants' knowledge of opportunities and new skills but also encouraged entrepreneurship. Figure A19 in Annex C shows that acquiring entrepreneurship competences is more important in education of youth and adults. As part of the project "Women leaders in local communities" in Croatia, for example participants were asked to design and implement actions which would raise awareness of gender issues or promote women's engagement.

The following three competences were less often addressed by the studied sample. Cultural expression - *Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, corporal expression, literature and plastic arts.*¹⁴ Cultural competences were more present in projects aimed at children. This may be linked to the fact that cultural activities are attractive to them and served as a tool to get children involved. (e.g. "Arts for Multiculturalism" in Portugal)

Learning to learn - *'Learning-to-learn' comprises the disposition and ability to organise and regulate one's own learning, both individually and in groups. It includes the ability to manage one's time effectively, to solve problems, to acquire, process, evaluate and assimilate new knowledge, and to apply new knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts — at home, at work, in education and in training. In more general terms learning-to-learn contributes strongly to managing one's own career path.*¹⁵ Figure A20 suggests that learning to learn competences are more often developed by non-formal and informal learning activities. This may be due to the fact that these competences are related to self-learning and the critical thinking, time-management and motivation. Within the present sample they are also clearly targeted at more "adult" target groups (see Figure A19 - e.g. "Dolceta" or all the projects based on study circles methodology)

Digital Competences - *Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technologies (IST) for work, leisure and communication. These competences are related to logical and critical thinking, to high-level information management skills, and to well developed communication skills. At the most basic level, ICT skills comprise the use of multi-media technology to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in networks via the Internet*¹⁶ For example, the EU project "Hagiography in the Internet" - or "Citizen-online" in Italy were projects based on ICT.

¹³ Ibid; p.18

¹⁴ Ibid; p. 19

¹⁵ Ibid; p.15

¹⁶ Ibid; p.14

3.3.3 *What are the main successful methods and strategies?*

The choice and use of a good method is one of the most often mentioned success factors (mentioned by nearly half of the practices). The analysis showed that most practices are based on a mix of methods, combining a cognitive component used to pass on factual knowledge to the participants with more participative methods focused on engaging participants, such as simulations, applications to real problems and other forms of interactive learning. It should be mentioned that most of the methods used were not formalised or scientifically based – they were mainly developed ad-hoc or build around the needs the project was aiming to address.

Governance is a key issue for successful active citizenship education. Confirming the findings of the previous section which stated that democratic participation of participants is the most important success factor, most methods used by projects required the involvement of participants in a democratic way (nearly one quarter of all practices reviewed) and included aspects of self-regulation (nearly half of the practices). In practice this meant that participants could influence both the content and the structure of their educational experience.

This section reviews the main methodological approaches that were used in the educational examples and the different ways in which these were delivered. It also looks at the extent to which actors interviewed consider their method to be pivotal to the success of their practice, by reviewing how many examples marked the methodological approach as a specific success factor.

Due attention should be paid to the fact that the majority of the methods did not follow a scientific or formalised approach, nor were they based on existing, “recognised” methodological approaches and instruments. Many were “inspired” by the problem that the practices were seeking to address, and built around the specific context, target group and objectives of the project.

Figure 14 below shows that the majority of the sample of practices (74%) included a cognitive approach, in the sense that participants were given theoretical information. In most cases, this approach constituted the first phase of a practice, followed by more participative and interactive elements. The extent to which this informative element has been formalised varies a lot among the practices. Some used traditional lecturing, which was mostly the case of formal education projects such as “Human Rights workshops for students”. Others inserted informative elements in wider activities. For example, the project “Empowerment of Roma voice” which was designed for a very mixed target group with some participants having only a basic level of education, included the provision of information on project management into “learning-by-doing” activities. They had chosen this approach as their participants were not interested nor used to following theoretical courses. Instead, they were keen on implementing activities directly. When they came across a problem or obstacle in the implementation of the latter, the project organisers would teach them how to best deal with it. A similar method was followed by the project “Innovation of student councils activities”. The cognitive element was particularly important among the formal education practices (see Figure A22 in Annex C).

Discussions and debates were another important component in the methods used, applied by more than two thirds of the practices examined. In some cases, discussions formed a core methodological tool, for example in study circles which by their nature

consist of organised discussions on selected themes. This is illustrated by, for example, “Swedish-Romanian Study Circle: A Wealth for Europe - Activating an Educational wealth for Europe through Citizens' Initiatives and Adult Education” or “Study circles” in Slovenia”. Debates often supporting other methods, like lectures or workshops. They are a “softer”, less intensive version of participants’ involvement. Debates are also an important component in interactive learning (63%), usually complementing other instruments such as the use of DVDs or practical sessions. For example the project “Residents’ housing workshops” aimed to involve ethnic minorities in local decision making, in particular concerning the renovation of their neighbourhoods. The project developed a highly interactive process during which inhabitants came forward with proposals, designed renovation plans and subsequently presented these to their local authorities.

Discussions and debates were used in projects at all implementation levels, but it seems that larger scale practices used it more frequently than local projects (Figure A21 in Annex C). On the other hand, interactive learning was more applied in local and regional practices (75%).

Application to real problems was another very popular method applied by nearly two thirds of the practices examined. This confirms the importance of using concrete issues and problems to activate participants. When confronted with real problems, participants seem to have fewer difficulties to assimilate new knowledge and acquire new skills. This method is more used in non-formal education (see Figure A22) and in particular in the training of target groups with specific features, such as the disadvantaged, social excluded and ethnic minorities (See Figure A23).

The project “Themis – an alternative approach to integration”, for example, worked with immigrant women with low education levels who lived in isolation in a society they did not know nor understand. The practice used language training as the main tool to improve their integration, but realised that this would not be sufficient to make the participants learn more about the society they now lived in. A major challenge was to make the group speak up and interact with each other, the teachers and the outside world. For this purpose, the organisers chose to build the project around a few very concrete, personal and at the same time urgent topics such as health and public services. This encouraged the women to ask questions and discuss their experiences in the new language. The application to real problems method was slightly more used locally than at other levels (three quarters of the local practices - see also Figure A21 in Annex C) which may suggest a strong link of this method to the local context.

Peer and intergenerational learning were somewhat less applied but still constitute an important method (42%). Some projects, such as the “Youth advisors’ training”, “To make a difference” or projects using study circles methodologies” used peer learning as one of their key methodological tools. It helps to adapt the themes and activities of a project to the particular needs of the target group and to match their expectations. It also activates the group, as participants have direct responsibility over the training delivery. Especially when dealing with sensitive issues, peer and intergenerational learning can facilitate the acceptance.

When asked about which method they used, the organisations interviewed were also requested to indicate whether these were delivered in collaboration with the participants. Nearly a quarter of the sample of examples included elements of self regulation, meaning that the participants given a high responsibility for running the

projects, whilst 77% were run in a democratic way, involving participants in important decisions to be taken during the course of the educational experience. Typical self-regulated practices are study-circles but also activities developed by self-governed entities like “Foreige Citizenship programme” an organisation for young people run by young people.

The extent of democratic involvement of participants varied according to the type of projects with self-governed activities as the most intensive form of involvement and the establishment of a system enabling participants to feedback on the project as a weaker form. In the “Somali refugee network” for example, all activities are designed and run by the refugees with the project leader, the Danish refugee council, only having an advisory role, thus making the practice highly democratic.

Top-down approaches are more common in formal education activities where a curriculum is followed. However, some practices show that although not very flexible, there is still space for participants to comments and influence their content. For example, in the project “Education for Tolerance in Multicultural society”, most of the themes are decided in advance, but participants can suggest alternative themes and are regularly requested to evaluate the project. Other activities start with a needs analysis, through interviews or wider surveys. For example, the NGOs involved in the European Citizenship in a Multicultural Union project of the Leeds Development Education Centre developed a menu of innovative themes and interactive teaching methods for active citizenship education following an extensive consultation process with schools, representatives of minority organisations and local authorities. The menu was offered to schools which had to insert citizenship into their curriculum. The project also provided guest speakers and other contributors to enliven the debate in classes.

Figure 14 – Type of methods in active citizenship education

| Type of Activity | Total | % |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Cognitive/ giving information | 42 | 74% |
| Discussions/ Debates | 38 | 67% |
| Peer/ intergenerational learning | 24 | 42% |
| Simulations | 15 | 26% |
| Applications to real problems/ issues | 36 | 63% |
| Use of New media | 13 | 23% |
| Games | 22 | 39% |
| Interactive learning | 36 | 63% |
| Facilitation / mediation | 12 | 21% |
| Additional characteristics | | |
| was run in a democratic way | 44 | 77% |
| was self-regulated | 14 | 25% |

When looking at the different types of education, Figure A22 confirms that formal education mainly makes most use of cognitive learning methods followed by discussions and debates. It also uses relatively more “softer” interactive activities like games and simulations. Non-formal education confirms the general trend in methods adopted, but shows a relatively high incidence of new media use (30%). Informal approaches favour interactive learning, games and application to real problems together with cognitive learning.

Figure 15 below confirms that children benefit more from methods with “recreational” and imaginative elements such as games (87.5%), simulations and interactive learning (both 50%). The project “Land Ahoy” proved very successful among the pupils mostly thanks to the very interactive character of activities involved. Children were constantly stimulated to think about wider social issues through simulating various situations which were presented in an attractive form to them. Other practices focused on children, like “Arts for Multiculturalism” or “Let’s discover Vietnam together”, link creative activities children are familiar with and new subjects, like minorities or exclusion. The highest incidence of cognitive learning methods is found in practices focusing on adults (82%), and on young people (79%) who are better able to process conceptualised information than children.

The application to real problems is undertaken by a high number of examples focusing on adults (64%), young people (69%) and mixed projects (63%), illustrating the need of active citizenship education to be relevant and beneficial to society. Many of the practices for young people included facilitation and mediation (32%) as a learning method. The purpose was to stimulate young people to take responsibility for the projects they took part in whilst providing some guidance and mentoring to make sure that they were heading in the right direction.

Through the case studies it appeared that application to real issues is a very important method when dealing with heterogeneous groups (Figure A23 in Annex C), involving people with different educational backgrounds as has illustrated earlier. Both practices “Empowering the Roma voice” and “Strengthening women’s leadership skills” combined cognitive elements of teaching with tasks where participants had to apply their newly acquired knowledge in their own communities. This allows participants not only to practice their skills but also to get advice from the trainers and to see how they can link their activities and the community interests. In the project for Roma leaders the connection with everyday issues was crucial given that some participants have rather low levels of education and have difficulties linking theoretical considerations with their community problems. Linked to this is the fact that, compared to other groups, projects aimed at the disadvantaged and ethnic minorities make a relatively lower use of cognitive methods.

Figure 15 – Type of methods by age group

| Target group - age | 22 | | 19 | | 8 | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-------|----------|-------|---|-------|---|-------|
| Type of Activity | Adults | Youth | Children | Mixed | | | | |
| Cognitive/ giving information | 18 | 81.8% | 15 | 78.9% | 4 | 50.0% | 5 | 62.5% |
| Discussions/ Debates | 12 | 54.5% | 15 | 78.9% | 5 | 62.5% | 6 | 75.0% |
| Peer/ intergenerational learning | 8 | 36.4% | 8 | 42.1% | 4 | 50.0% | 4 | 50.0% |
| Simulations | 5 | 22.7% | 4 | 21.1% | 4 | 50.0% | 1 | 12.5% |
| Applications to real problems/ issues | 14 | 63.6% | 13 | 68.4% | 3 | 37.5% | 5 | 62.5% |
| Use of New media | 6 | 27.3% | 5 | 26.3% | | 0.0% | 2 | 25.0% |
| Games | 4 | 18.2% | 7 | 36.8% | 7 | 87.5% | 3 | 37.5% |
| Interactive learning | 14 | 63.6% | 10 | 52.6% | 5 | 62.5% | 6 | 75.0% |
| Facilitation / mediation | 2 | 9.1% | 6 | 31.6% | 2 | 25.0% | 1 | 12.5% |

The issues of self-regulation and democratic running of practices were introduced earlier in this section. It is interesting to see which types of methods appear to lend themselves better to the active involvement of participants and which seem to work less well. Figure 16 below shows that practices that were run in a democratic way mainly used methods such as interactive learning (71%), discussions and debates

(68%) the application to real problems and issues (64%) but also cognitive methods (66%). Methods that were less subject to democratic involvement included simulations, the use of new media and facilitation. These lower scores may be because simulations and new media are methods that are usually developed / set up in advance before being applied to / used by individuals.

Self-regulation followed a similar pattern, occurring most in methods such as discussions and debates (77%), application to real problems (72%) and interactive learning (72%). Peer / intergenerational learning methods were also often regulated by participants (64%). Methods that involved less self-regulation are the same as those listed for the democratic involvement of participants (simulations, use of new media and facilitation / mediation), most likely for the same reasons as mentioned earlier. The fact that these methods lend themselves less well to democratic running and self-regulation does not mean that projects applying these were less open to these issues: as already mentioned above, most practices used a combination of methods to ensure active citizenship education.

Figure 16 – Type of methods by democratic involvement and self-regulation

| Process | Was run in democratic way | | Was self-regulated | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | | | | |
| Type of Activity | | 44 | | 14 |
| Cognitive/ giving information | 29 | 65.9% | 7 | 50.0% |
| Discussions/ Debates | 30 | 68.2% | 11 | 78.6% |
| Peer/ intergenerational learning | 21 | 47.7% | 9 | 64.3% |
| Simulations | 12 | 27.3% | 4 | 28.6% |
| Applications to real problems/ issues | 28 | 63.6% | 10 | 71.4% |
| Use of New media | 10 | 22.7% | 2 | 14.3% |
| Games | 16 | 36.4% | 6 | 42.9% |
| Interactive learning | 31 | 70.5% | 10 | 71.4% |
| Facilitation / mediation | 9 | 20.5% | 3 | 21.4% |

In the previous subsection, it was already mentioned that many of the practices considered the method chosen to be key to the success of their project. Figure A24 below shows that in most cases, these practices had made use of discussions and debates to stimulate learning (nearly half of all practices considered it a success factor), cognitive learning methods and application to real problems. It is worthwhile to note that game methods, used by more than one third of the practices, were identified by less than 20% of these practices as a success factor.

When looking at the level of implementation, mixed practices, taking place at multiple levels, mentioned the method as a determinant factor for the success of their project. Examples that provided a mix of different types of education all cited their methodological approach as a factor of success, whilst only 42% of the examples delivered through non-formal education made the same observation. This illustrates the challenges of applying a methodological approach to learning which is typically experiential.

Projects focusing on young people attributed a high degree of success to the methods applied, directly followed by practices for adult learners. When looking at specific target

groups, projects working with ethnic minorities, parents, university students and women all claimed to have benefited from the methodological approach taken.

It should be noted that overall, the methodological basis of projects included in the sample are very different. Some are based on explicit methods, using tools particularly designed for their project, while others, mostly from informal education, are a mixture of activities where learning is not necessarily intentional.

One interesting point that emerged from the case studies and seemed to be confirmed by several practices included in the sample is that projects tend to develop their work programme and methodological approach on the basis of a needs assessment, undertaken through a mapping exercise, a survey or through interviews. For example, the project “Education for tolerance in Multicultural society” in the Czech Republic, aimed at teachers and future teachers, was based on survey to assess the needs and interests of the target group in terms of course themes and content. Through the survey, the project learned that most potential participants were interested in receiving further training on topics such as multiculturalism and minorities. The project “Training of Fathers and Mothers” in Spain followed a similar approach. In addition to asking parents to specify their preferred topics for discussion, questions also invited potential participants to describe their concerns in relation to their adolescent children. This helped the organisation to better plan and structure their activities. Finally, the “Innovation of Student Council Activities” project in Denmark was part of a large research project where project coordinators noticed the need for more structured and effective council meetings which would empower and give responsibilities to students.

3.3.4 *What are common patterns and themes?*

The themes addressed by the practices have been discussed in a previous section. Democratic participation is one of most cited themes, followed by social cohesion and integration. When looking at the types of activities developed and methods used by the practices analysed, there are no evident links between the choice of a theme and the decision to implement a certain type of activity or a certain methodological approach.

The choice of a theme is not considered a precondition for a successful practice. However, practices implemented at national level attribute more credit to the thematic focus as a potential success factor.

The thematic breakdown of the sample of practices has already been extensively discussed under section 3.3.1 above. The section concluded that the vast majority of projects were multi-thematic. The most often mentioned theme was democratic participation (63%), followed by social cohesion / integration, empowerment and multiculturalism. Additional themes mentioned as part of the “other” category included European Citizenship, minority rights, housing and urban environments, sustainable development, culture, healthcare and tolerance.

This section explores whether there are any particular links between the choice of themes and the activities implemented in practices, as well as the link between thematic focus and the choice of methods. It also reviews, where themes were mentioned as the main success factor of a good practice, which themes seemed to have been considered successful and which received less acclaim.

When looking at which themes occurred in which types of activities, there are some issues that are worth noting (see also Figure A25 in Annex C): The theme of prevention has a relatively high coverage in campaigning activities whilst conflict resolution receives more attention in direct exchanges. For example, the “Involveyourself” campaign aimed at raising awareness among Norwegians aged 15-25 to encourage young people to come forward and involve themselves more actively in international issues and human rights. Each year the campaign focuses on a different topic. International issues, north/south division and human rights are always at the heart of the Involveyourself campaigns. The theme of 2005 campaign was “war”. As this topic was complex, the main goal of the campaign was to present the theme in a way that would stimulate the target group to get actively involved and to undertake action to prevent war and armed conflicts.

Exchanges also focus on multiculturalism and social cohesion / integration. Discussion and debate activities appear to mainly address children and human rights, whilst projects which are built around learning by doing more attention is paid to themes such as empowerment and social cohesion / integration. However, none of the themes jumps out for its strong ties to a particular type of activity. When exploring the links between the thematic focus of a practice and the methods, no clear patterns can be discerned between the methods applied and the themes addressed (see Figure A26).

The theme chosen was cited as a determinant factor for the success of the practice by 17 of the 57 examples that were examined, which is relatively low in comparison with

the other success factors. The most successful themes were considered to be democratic participation and multiculturalism (both mentioned by 11 practices).

When looking at the level of implementation, the majority of examples undertaken at several, mixed levels (67%) considered that the choice of the themes contributed to their success. Six national projects, accounting for 35% of the total national examples felt the same. In terms of type of education, formal and non-formal education providers considered the thematic focus crucial for the success of their practice. As for the age groups, practices focusing on adult education attribute a relatively high importance to the themes addressed in order to make their education a success. When looking at target groups with specific features, two of the three examples working with specific professionals considered the thematic choice of importance.

Figure 17 – Themes indicated as success factor

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| Theme as succes factor overall | 17 | 29.8% |
| Per Theme | | |
| Human rights | 5 | 8.8% |
| Children rights | 4 | 7.0% |
| Civil Rights | 4 | 7.0% |
| Democratic participation | 11 | 19.3% |
| Multiculturalism | 11 | 19.3% |
| Social cohesion / integration | 6 | 10.5% |
| Consumers rights | 3 | 5.3% |
| Prevention | 3 | 5.3% |
| Empowerment | 6 | 10.5% |
| Peace/ conflict resolution | 3 | 5.3% |
| other - specify | 10 | 17.5% |
| Per level of analysis - organisation level | | |
| European | 3 | 27.3% |
| International | 1 | 33.3% |
| Local | 4 | 25.0% |
| Mixed | 2 | 66.7% |
| National | 7 | 35.0% |
| Regional | | 0.0% |
| Type of Learning | | |
| Formal | 4 | 57.1% |
| Informal | 3 | 20.0% |
| Mixed | 1 | 50.0% |
| Non-formal | 9 | 27.3% |
| Target group - age | | |
| Adults | 8 | 36.4% |
| Children | 4 | 50.0% |
| Mixed | 2 | 25.0% |
| Youth | 3 | 15.8% |
| Target group - particular characteristics | | |
| Disabled | | 0.0% |
| Disadvantaged | | 0.0% |
| Ethnic Communities | 1 | 12.5% |
| Other | 1 | 33.3% |
| Particular profession | 4 | 80.0% |
| Teachers/ Trainers/ Educators | 2 | 40.0% |
| Women | 1 | 33.3% |
| University Students | 1 | 50.0% |
| Parents | 1 | 50.0% |

The project “Education for Tolerance in a Multicultural Society” (Czech Republic) owes its success partially to the actuality of the treated theme. It was quickly spread to other universities and became part of vocational training for teachers thanks to the fact that “multicultural education” became one of the priorities of the Czech Ministry of Education. But choosing a very popular theme may also be a source of difficulties given that there are probably other projects in that field already. For example, the organisers of “Empowerment of Roma voice” mentioned that despite their good track record and a unique method, they faced difficulties to obtain financing for their projects due to the large number of already existing activities for Roma integration in Slovakia. The experience of these two projects shows how the popularity of a theme can be both an obstacle and an advantage.

3.3.5 *What are successful organisational structures and cooperation strategies?*

The extent to which practices have been developed and organised through cooperation with different stakeholders depends on the scale of the practice. Small-scale practices were more often managed by single organisations, whilst larger-scale projects tended to directly team up with partners from different levels.

Partnership building was however a very common element in the majority of examples reviewed. Nearly three quarters of all interviewees indicated that they relied on collaboration with other organisations. Of these, two thirds made use of existing partnerships. This trend applies to both non-formal and practical types of cooperation and the more formalised collaboration structures.

More than 80% of the examples reviewed had involved the wider community to some extent. Such involvement was most practiced when projects were of mixed implementation levels, providing mixed types of education and working with mixed age groups.

This subsection looks at how practices were organised and what cooperation strategies were established. It includes a review of partnership arrangements at the different levels of analysis, and explores the extent to which the community was involved. Finally, a descriptive analysis is included of typologies of organisation structures, project management, coordination and communication between those running the practices.

Figure 18 below shows that the vast majority of practices included some form of partnership. Most often these were based on partnerships that existed before the practice was conceived and developed. When looking at the structures of the partnerships, most concerned forms of non-formalised, practical, operational cooperation between actors, with each partner having its own role and responsibilities. Another high proportion of examples were classified as “classic” partnerships between different types of stakeholders, with some formalised agreement, sometimes of a more strategic nature, to steer or monitor the intervention. More than a quarter of partnerships were defined as larger networks of organisations cooperating.

Figure 18 – Types of partnerships

| | | |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Partnership - overall | 41 | 71.9% |
| pre-existing | 27 | 64.3% |
| structures: | | |
| Associated organisations | 2 | 4.8% |
| Cooperation | 17 | 40.5% |
| Network | 12 | 28.6% |
| Partnership | 16 | 38.1% |
| Additional characteristics | | |
| Democratic involvement as success factor | 28 | 49.1% |
| Involvement of different actors as success factor | 14 | 24.6% |

Whilst the use of partnerships to run projects appears to be common practice, the involvement of different actors in its implementation is only cited as a success factor by one quarter of the interviewees. Higher appreciation was shown, as already discussed earlier, for the democratic involvement of participants and other actors in the running of a project, identified as a success factor by nearly half of the practices.

Does the implementation level of a practice influence its organisational structure and partnership building?

Most international examples make use of networks, as they involve different countries which may be spread over the world. Umbrella organisations and other international bodies can be very helpful to reach out to potential participants and to keep track of who is participating. They can also help to obtain information on specific contextual issues. The “DOLCETA - Development of Online Consumer Education Tools for Adults” project for example is a consortium with partners with specific national and thematic skills in the area of consumer protection.

At European and national level, preference seems to be given to the more “classic” form of partnerships, which are more of a strategic than of a practical nature. In fact, most EU funded programmes usually include the requirement to set up partnerships, which explains why over 82% confirmed that they had a group of partners. However, both the EU and the local level practices also involve more direct forms of cooperation with partners. The latter is also the most adopted collaboration method of locally developed practices (see also Figure A27 in Annex C).

When looking at the type of education, it appears that nearly half of the formal education approaches enter more formal and classic forms of partnerships, whilst non-formal education providers appear to rely more on practical forms of cooperation or networks (see also Figure A28). This is for example the case of the “Promoting civil dialogue through intercultural competence development” project, which was by the German Institute for Adult Education in collaboration with Centres of Adult Education.

Informal and mixed approaches seem to have established relatively less partnerships than the other educational types. The involvement of other actors in the implementation of a project is most appreciated by non-formal education providers, as nearly one quarter identified such involvement as important factor for the success of their practice.

Figure A29 in the Annex C shows that all practices focusing on children were developed in partnerships, whilst just more than half of the projects focusing on young people did the same. The variance between these two is hard to explain, but may be due to the higher number of schools included in the youth examples. More than one third of the practices working with adults established the more “formal” partnerships, and half of the active citizenship projects for children and the mixed practices involved direct cooperation with other actors.

More than half of the mixed examples also identified the involvement of other actors as an important element for the success of their practice, which is high when considering that none of the other age groups cited this more than one quarter. Working with people from different ages may indeed pose more challenges and benefit more from collaboration with (specialist) partners. Compared to the other age groups, a relatively low share of practices for children considered democratic involvement of participants a success factor, even though this might be explained by a rather “strict” interpretation of such involvement, given the young age of the target group.

Most of the practices in the sample noted that they had involved the community in the implementation of their project (more than three quarters - see Figure A31 in Annex C). It is interesting to note that such involvement was most practiced when projects were of mixed implementation levels, providing mixed types of education and working with mixed age groups. This strengthens the initial consideration that in order to deal successfully with diversity it is useful to involve other, possibly specialist, stakeholders. Whilst more than half of the practices at different implementation levels and working with different age groups considered the involvement of the community an important factor in the success of their approach, those examples that delivered different forms of education did not consider it a key element.

European level practices could perhaps improve their level of community involvement, although this may not always fall within their scope. The same applies to those that delivered formal education, as it is not easy to involve the community in practices that often consist of class-room related activity. A similar low score on community involvement, although not highly representative, is noted in practices that provided education to teachers and trainers. These often had the very specific aim of preparing individuals to educating and trainers others, which makes community involvement in these learning experiences less evident.

Involvement of the community can have different facets. In some projects, the community is involved by financing (e.g. a local authority), whilst in other cases projects are supported through non-financial means (e.g. using community infrastructures). Other practices were implemented in cooperation with local associations or NGOs. Many practices, mainly those focusing on engaging participants in concrete actions, were addressing community problems. Some projects, as mentioned in the section 3.3.2 on outcomes, have succeeded in creating new dialogues between local authorities and some particular group of population (often ethnic minorities).

The practices reviewed confirmed that the involvement of the community is an important element of active citizenship education. More than one quarter of the examples considered it a key to their success (see Figure 12). Many emphasised the enlarging and multiplier effects that such involvement can have on a project. For example, in many cases local communities were very interested in taking an active part

in certain project activities (especially those projects which required participants to go out into the “real world”) and to promote the project during local festivities (e.g. community fairs). The involvement of the community was also positive to break down barriers for participants to become involved in local political and decision-making processes. It also favoured the integration and participation of certain groups (e.g. women, minorities) in the area covered by the project.

For example, the project Citizens' meeting in Amfreville, sponsored by the EU, organised exchange visits for school children and their families to learn about the history of the World War II and the landing of Normandy “on the spot”. The project required active involvement from the whole community as host families accommodated participants from Belgium, Germany and the UK. The village has 1200 inhabitants and 120 persons were accommodated. Meals were prepared together, a buffet was organised, and other receptions were held during the week.

Further considerations on organisational structures and management

The discussions on organisational arrangements and project management during the telephone interviews and case study visits showed that broadly, arrangements can be categorised according to the division of responsibilities and roles in the project. These categories are as follows:

- Projects combining partners with different resources / skills sets / types of expertise.

In many of the practices reviewed, one partner developed and supplied the methodology while the other(s) implement the project and / or provide participants. This management structure allows small or medium-sized organisations to combine their specific competences and resources. In a number of cases a project was initially developed by an NGO who subsequently run its activities with the help of another organisation, for example within a school. The examples “Innovation of student council activities” (Denmark) and the project “Let’s discover Vietnam together” (Slovakia) illustrate how a school can take advantage of an external expertise to develop innovative approaches or extra-curricular activities. A slightly different, but still interesting case is “Somali refugee network” project which was set up directly by participants with professional guidance advice from other external bodies.

NGOs also often teamed up with independent training providers, professional training bodies or other professional associations. For example, the practice “Promotion of civil dialogue by developing intercultural competence” (Germany) was designed by an institution which specialises in research and development of training methodologies but implemented by several adult education centres and city councils. The project “Intercultural dialogue in libraries” (Czech Republic) was developed in cooperation with the association of librarians which enabled the project promoter, an NGO, to benefit from relevant expertise, thus also gaining more credibility.

- Projects with one clear leading organisation in partnership with other organisations

As already mentioned above in the discussions on the different types of partnerships, international and European practices usually involve several partners. The higher number of partners is often a logical choice for projects whose main purpose usually relates to the exchange of experiences and transfer of practices. Different management and cooperation structures have been identified:

- One leader organisation with pre-selected partners, working with a clear work programme and a predefined division of roles and tasks. This applies mainly to EU funded projects where one organisation is financially responsible and liable to the EU sponsor.
 - Network arrangements where each of the partners is responsible for designing and implementing their own set of activities.
 - Umbrella organisations where the members each implement a similar activity or practice, based on a framework developed by the leading organisation and often using “platforms” for training or exchanges of experience.
- Projects receiving specific support

Some small scale projects indicated that rather than intensively cooperating with other organisations, they required “logistic” assistance from other bodies. In most cases, these were small-scale organisations such as NGOs or individual schools that did not have sufficient resources, infrastructure or equipment to cover all aspects of the project. For example, the project “Land Ahoy” in Belgium worked with a local artist association and the Slovak project “Let’s discover Vietnam together” made use of psychology and drama students.

Considerations on communication between partners and project results dissemination

The majority of organisations interviewed used a mix of communication tools. Communication mainly took place on an informal basis, using email exchanges and telephone calls. Some projects emphasised the importance of face-to-face meetings (depending on the proximity of the partners involved and the specific activities that were being implemented). Only a minority of organisations mentioned the use of a discussion forum or other online tool to enable communication between partners.

Many of the organisations highlighted the benefits of working with partners with whom they had collaborated already in the past. This made it easier to know what each partners could best do and made communication faster and clearer.

Nearly all projects used more than one channel for project dissemination. Some medium to large projects developed communication strategies which covered all the different implementation phases. Projects with many different partners sometimes decided on separate communication strategies. Many practices already disseminated

information on the project prior to its launching in order to recruit staff, volunteers and participants. Most of the practices however exclusively focused on the dissemination of their results.

Most dissemination was undertaken through printed documentation. These took various forms, from “advertising” material (e.g. leaflets, flyers and posters), to articles in professional journals, reviews, published reports and books. The type of dissemination material used depended on the financial resources available, but also on the public which the project was trying to address. Universities and research institutes mostly published in professional journals, whilst NGOs often focused on a much larger and more varied audience.

A relatively large part of the practices developed multi-media products such as films, DVDs or CDs and had specific project web-sites. Others sought to involve the media through press releases and the organisation of press conferences, but only few practices monitored whether their activities were actually being reported on.

National and international conferences constituted another opportunity for organisations to disseminate information and promote their projects. The latter were mainly used by medium to large scale projects. On a smaller scale, projects mentioned presentations at seminars and on the occasion of other formal or informal gatherings.

3.3.6 Use of new media and its potential

This section reviews the extent to which the practices made use of new media to teach active citizenship, and which examples set up other online facilities such as websites and portals.

Figure 19 below shows that nearly half of the projects promoted their activities through the website of the leading organisation. 15 examples analysed created a website which was specifically dedicated to the educational practice itself, providing information on aims and objectives, progress, results and contact information. These websites have proved to be very useful resources to collect information on the content and purposes of the examples identified.

Only four projects developed a specific online tool with the purpose to stimulate learning. One examples is the “DOLCETA - Development of Online Consumer Education Tools for Adults” project, financed by DG Health and Consumer Protection. Dolceta consists of several interactive on-line consumer education modules to be used in adult education. It is an interactive tool of information, counselling and training for consumers. The website gives the consumers the necessary competences to compare products and services on the market, to decide on purchases and to defend their rights as consumers. The legal and practical information is adapted to the national characteristics of each country. Another example of online learning was the Swedish-Romanian study circle, an international self-regulated learning activity fully conducted online. The organisation managing the project, the Swedish Agency for Flexible learning, made use of software it already possessed to create online forums.

As part of the project “To make a difference” an online database called “knowledge bank” has been created. This is a web-site specially dedicated to advice and good practice examples on themes which are of interest to LSU member organisations, e.g.

advocacy, communication, methodologies, etc. It is created in parallel with the training activities on these themes and it unites various types of resources. The contributors to the knowledge bank are mostly LSU members. Currently only the Swedish version of the site functions but an English version should be ready soon.

From the sample examined, it seems that the use of specific online tools is not yet a widespread practice. They have the advantage of being easily accessible by a wide range of people but the inconvenient of being resource intensive for organisations (in terms of personnel who need to have adequate training and time). On the other hand many organisations use their web-sites or project web-sites to disseminate their activities. It also seems that larger projects are more likely to develop online learning tools (see also A32 in Annex C). This might be due to two factors. On the one hand, such projects have a larger budgets and can invest more in such a tool. On the other, they have to reach partners, beneficiaries or a larger audience which is spread around a whole country or even a continent. These can be more easily reached and brought together by internet than physically. It also appears that online resources are mostly used by practices involving non-formal and informal education (Figure A33). Formal education still seems to make less use of online resources than others. In addition, most of the online tools developed by the studied projects were targeted at adults (Figure A34) who may require more the more flexible education schemes which e-learning can provide.

In addition to the use of the internet, other new media used by the studied practices are mostly video and sound records. However these are mostly dissemination tools or products.

Figure 19 – Use of new media and online resources

| Online resources | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| No | 12 | 21.1% |
| online tool | 4 | 7.0% |
| organisation web-site | 26 | 45.6% |
| project web-site | 15 | 26.3% |
| Used online resources - Total | 45 | 78.9% |

3.3.7 Innovation, transferability, evaluation and future plans

Already in section 2, explaining the criteria for selecting the good practices, it was made clear how particular attention had been paid to examples which included some element of innovation. Given the different traditions of teaching active citizenship in the countries covered by the study, such innovation was mainly of a contextual nature (i.e. new to the local / national context or being applied to a new target group).

Innovation often involves a mix of different aspects. Figure 20 shows that two thirds of the practices considered the method used as an innovative element, when comparing it to the mainstream methods to teach active citizenship in their country. Whilst the method itself would not be highly innovative, it would be the first time that projects applied such a method to a specific theme within active citizenship, or to a certain target group, or used a combination of methodological tools which enabled them to deliver a new training programme. For example, the project “European citizenship in a

multicultural union” (UK) produced a new training guide and materials for teachers who want to undertake the training in their classes.

Nearly one third of practices mentioned that they were developing a new type of network. Many were creating networks around new thematic interests or new target groups. For example the “Olympia human rights programme” managed to set up a new international network – ARIADNE– which combats human trafficking. Or the project “Empowerment of Roma voice” which, apart from developing community based actions, tried to bring various local Roma organisations into regional networks.

Relatively little practices mentioned the use of new technologies as an innovative element in their project. From the 13 examples that used new technologies (see also Figure 19 above) only 6 considered this use to be innovative.

Other innovative elements mentioned by the interviewees (but not reflected in the Figure below) included:

- the scale of the practice – e.g. developing a project which would concern the whole country
- the mix of themes – e.g. rather than having one new theme mixing different themes together (e.g. “European citizenship in a multicultural union”)

Figure 20 – Innovation factors

| Innovation factors | | 57 |
|---------------------------|----|--------------|
| New type of network | 17 | 29.8% |
| New target group | 16 | 28.1% |
| New strategies | 17 | 29.8% |
| New methods | 38 | 66.7% |
| New problems adressed | 9 | 15.8% |
| New technologies | 6 | 10.5% |
| New themes adressed | 15 | 26.3% |
| New objectives | 12 | 21.1% |

As explained in section 2, the sustainability and transferability of practices were two of the criteria used to select the practices for further examination. Nearly two-thirds of the projects indicated that they had already ensured, or were in the process of ensuring, the transfer of their successful practices. These mainly concerned:

- The transfer and adaptation of the whole project concept to another country, mostly through a partner organisation
- The application of the methodology used in a different project or for a different target group
- An expansion of the project within the same country, to different cities or regions.

When queried about their plans for the future, most interviewees were hoping to use the experience they had gained from the project in new activities. Many of the

organisations mentioned that they were focusing on mainstreaming the practice or promoting its application elsewhere. Some were promoting a transfer of the successful practices to other local, regional or even national contexts, whilst others were aiming to feed the project lessons and recommendations into policy making (e.g. “Education for tolerance in a multicultural society” in the Czech Republic).

Other frequently mentioned future plans were:

- Using the practice for a different target group – e.g. the project promoter of “Themis” in the Netherlands plans to use the same methodology to train Dutch illiterate people or people with low levels of education
- Repeating the same activity on a larger scale or in a slightly modified version
- Building a completely new project based on the experience gained

Many organisations, mostly NGOs, stressed that their future prospects were dependent on the extent to which they would be successful in attracting further funding.

Two third of the projects indicated that they had undertaken some form of evaluation of their activities. Organisations mainly based their assessments on feedback received from participants (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, etc). Others used self-assessments to gain a better understanding of the effects of their projects, and to formulate lessons learned. However, the extent of detail of these evaluative exercises varies greatly, with some only asking the participants to provide their overall opinion on the learning experience without specifically querying on whether and how it made them more “active citizens”. Around one fifth of the practices launched some form of independent evaluation – however, most of these evaluations only looked at specific parts of the project (e.g. its methodology) rather than assessing the full experience from the start to its completion.

Nearly a quarter of the practices have been cited as a good practice by third parties, in publications, reports and websites. Such external actors were mainly Ministries, research institutes or international organisations such as the European Commission, DARE, the EAEA and the Council of Europe.

4 UNDERSTANDING OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to review “what active citizenship means”. It draws on the evidence gathered from an examination of practices undertaken in a variety of contexts and work with different target groups. This section also includes considerations on active citizenship education, and the key factors that make such education a success.

The first part of this section, comprising subsections 4.2 and 4.3, includes a review of the existing literature, research, studies and other information sources accessed, in order to describe and consider past and recent thinking on active citizenship. The sources accessed can be found in the relevant column in Annex D of this report. The second part of the section, consisting of subsections 4.4 and 4.5, look specifically at the findings that emerged from the examination of the practices that were identified as part of the study’s information collection and analytical exercise, as presented in detail in section 3 above. They seek in particular to identify and describe, on the basis of the findings, some of the main concepts used for active citizenship and some of the main building blocks of active citizenship education.

It is emphasised once more that the sample of active citizenship examples is not sufficiently representative to enable the formulation of generalised conclusions on active citizenship; this was not the purpose of the research. Rather, the research has been used to illustrate trends and thinking that have already been identified through other research and policy developments.

4.2 Definitions of active citizenship

The complex debate about active citizenship could be, in a simplified way, interpreted as “defining the borders” of the concept. The following brief literature review tries to highlight the main points emerging from these ongoing discussions in order to compare views, identify trends and complement these in the second part of this section, with the findings of this study. Given the enormous amount of literature on the subjects of citizenship and citizenship education, it is impossible to review all definitions (Davies, for example, has counted over 300 definitions of citizenship)¹⁷. However, these subsections seek to analyse those that appeared to be particularly relevant to the scope of this study on active citizenship.

To unpick the complexity and understand what exactly active citizenship means, it is useful to first look at what it means to be a citizen. The term citizenship is used to express three different concepts which can be used at the same time:

- what a citizen is, i.e. his or her status;
- what a citizen can or cannot do, i.e. in terms of rights and duties; and

¹⁷ ¹⁷ L. Davies *Comparing definitions of democracy in education*; in Compare 29(2) cited in D. Kerr *Citizenship education in England: the making of a new subject*, Sowi online journal; 2003 - http://www.sowi-online.de/journal/2003-2/england_kerr.htm

- what activities a citizen undertakes, i.e. a set of practices that demonstrate his/her or membership of a society.

These three concepts are closely linked. However, as the first one is a rather descriptive concept, focusing on who is and who is not a citizen, it will not be considered here. The other two are helpful to clarify the concept of active citizenship given that they touch upon what citizens do. Further discussion will show how they are strongly interlinked.

Citizenship as a set of rights and duties

In the past, research and debates on citizenship mainly focused on the status of individuals and their place in society. Active citizenship was therefore looked at from a very narrow point of view, relating to the rights and duties as set by the judicial order in the country where an individual lived. It related to being a member of a community, and to the entitlements and obligations deriving from this membership.

For example, the British sociologist, T.H Marshall says that “*Citizenship is a status bestowed on all those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed*”¹⁸. Michael Walzer, stressing the communitarian position, also focuses on the idea of “membership” and belonging to a community. He indicates that citizenship can be seen as the term according to which an individual is recognised as a “*member of a political community, entitled to whatever prerogatives and encumbered with whatever responsibilities as are attached to membership*”¹⁹.

The above definitions illustrate how the relationship between the individual and the community is at the core of the discussions on citizenship. They describe citizenship as a membership, as a sense (and a status) of belonging to a certain community and agreeing with the boundaries set and opportunities provided by the latter.

Certainly any individual, in order to exercise citizenship, needs to understand what his or her membership includes – but is this enough to become an active citizen? Concepts based on knowledge of judicial rights and duties give no indication on how these should be exercised. As noted in the Regioplan study: “*Having the right to participate in economic, political and social life is not equivalent to doing so in practice, nor indeed being equipped to do so on equal terms.*”²⁰ The latter also underlines the importance of certain skills parallel to the knowledge of rights and duties.

The “borders” of active citizenship should be set well beyond the mere status, rights and duties of citizens. As stated by Cesar Birzea during a pilot course on European citizenship, organised by the European Commission and the Council of Europe “*Citizenship is the active membership and participation of individuals in society who are entitled to rights and responsibilities and who have the capacity to influence politics.*”

¹⁸ Marshall, 1973.

¹⁹ Walzer quoted in “Multiculturalism and inter-culturalisms”. Colm O’Cinneide in Re-situating culture. Council of Europe, 2004.

²⁰ European Commission, ‘Learning for Active Citizenship: A Significant Challenge in building a Europe of Knowledge’ 2005, Foreword by Edith Cresson, http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/archive/citizen/citiz_en.html

Therefore citizenship has to be more than a political and juridical status: it also has a social role²¹.

Participative democracy and active citizenship

At EU policy level, there is overall agreement that active citizenship is indeed about belonging to a certain community (especially when the latter is democratic) but that it also includes an essential active component. In a recent policy document, the European Commission stated that *“Practicing active citizenship involves empowering individuals, enabling them to feel comfortable in democratic culture, and feeling that they can make a difference in the communities they live in²²”*. This definition addresses three major issues, namely:

- The relationship between individuals and their community
- Democratic values
- Involvement / participation

By insisting on “making a difference to the community”, the definition places emphasis on the fact that participation is both a fundamental element for democracy and key to active citizenship. The notion of citizenship is no longer reduced to a one-way relation where the state provides a set of guarantees, with respect to civil rights, to its citizens, it rather becomes a reciprocal process in which citizens feel stimulated to exercise their rights and make use of the opportunities offered.

Another definition which includes such notions of commitment, responsibility and participation was put forward by the study on the indicators for active citizenship by Regioplan: *“[Active citizenship is] political participation and participation on associational life characterised by tolerance and non-violence and the acknowledgement of the rule of law and human rights²³”*. It is interesting to note that in this definition no longer refers to democratic values only, but addresses a set of much wider values in relation to “the rule of law and human rights”.

However, the Regioplan definition limits active citizenship to involvement in politics or participation in civil society. One could object that there are other dimensions in which citizens can exercise their engagement. This is, for example, reflected in the larger vision of the ETGACE projects, which sees active citizenship in terms of an individual who has experience and active engagement in one or more of four domains, namely: 1) the state (formal politics), 2) the work place; 3) civil society; and/or 4) the private domain.

²¹ T-Kit on European Citizenship. Council of Europe, 2003.

²² European Commission, ‘Learning for Active Citizenship: A Significant Challenge in building a Europe of Knowledge’ 2005, Foreword by Edith Cresson, http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/archive/citizen/citiz_en.html

²³ Indicators for monitoring active citizenship and citizenship education – final report. Regioplan, 2005.

Beyond participation –comprising attitudes, knowledge and skills

As mentioned earlier, the work place and the private domain are also considered to be important dimensions to express active citizenship. Not only do they provide opportunities for involvement but they are also areas where personal attitudes manifest themselves more strongly. Some definitions of active citizenship recognise that in addition to the participative component, other more personal and emotional factors are also important. These relate, for example, to attitudes, awareness and knowledge.

The Grundtvig 2 project on European active citizenship states that: *“Active Citizenship is a constant interchange between personal development and society reached by the awareness, responsibility and participation in the economic, social and politic life of the community²⁴”*. A complementary definition insisting on respectful and non-violent attitudes was put forward by the Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning (CRELL), part of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission: *“[Active citizenship is] participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy.²⁵”*

The issue of skills and competences is also closely linked to active citizenship. In order to participate, one needs to be able to do so. The European Commission working group on Key competences identified the competences needed to become an active citizen as “Civic competences”. However, it could be argued that other competences such as “Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences” or “Entrepreneurship” are also important to enhance active citizenship²⁶ (see also subsection 3.3.2 on results and outcomes).

On the basis of the above, one could say that the widest understanding of active citizenship, and the values associated with being an active citizenship, do not only take account of an individual’s participation and involvement in civil society and community life, but also includes his or her position and actions in everyday situations. As Ichilov wrote in 1998 *“Citizenship is a complex and multi-dimensional concept. It consists of legal, cultural, social and political elements and provides citizens with defined rights and obligations, a sense of identity, and social bonds.²⁷”*

Multiculturalism and active citizenship

O’Cinneide²⁸ stresses that traditionally European countries used a model of citizenship based on “unitary citizenship”, with citizens sharing the same or very similar sets of common citizenship rights. They enjoyed equal legal, socio-economic and political rights without any special rights or obligations. Universality, equality and neutrality were the main pillars of this model. However, such a model proved to be unsustainable

²⁴ An Intercultural Approach for an European Active Citizenship – Grundtvig 2 – Report from the 1st meeting. 2005.

²⁵ Active Citizenship for Democracy - report from the first network meeting. CRELL; p. 5

²⁶ For detailed discussion on Key competences see “Key Competences for Lifelong learning. A European Reference framework”. European Commission DG EAC, November 2004. <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/basicframe.pdf>

²⁷ Patterns of Citizenship in a Changing World. O. Ichilov, 1998.

²⁸ O’Cinneide. Op. cit.

in cases where existence of new groups in society could not exercise equal citizenship unless particular issues were taken into account or unless special rights were given to them. Women, through feminism, were the first to criticise the concept of unitary citizenship. Immigrants also face problems, as the model itself required assimilation instead of integration, and was therefore discriminating.

The relatively limited definitions and concepts taking into account legal rights and duties only, no longer seem to work in a society which, as a whole, is becoming more and more complex. Migration has strongly impacted on the ethnic, cultural and religious composition of European countries. The increased fluidity of employment relations is also changing the way in which individuals interact with society and with each other. Another important element influencing the meaning of citizenship relates to the expansion of interactive communication technology. These factors together have led to a huge rise in encounters and relations between individuals, as well as the diversity of individuals involved in these encounters and relations²⁹.

Recent models and concepts of citizenship reflect the need for multi-cultural societies to recognise the specific experiences and socio-cultural differences of its “members”. However, at the same time they also need to ensure that these specific experiences and socio-cultural differences do not conflict with basic equal and fundamental values and rights, and that the latter are interpreted in the same way by the wider variety of members of the society.

Geopolitical differences in understanding of citizenship

Whilst an expansion of the term is reported in several studies throughout Europe, there are also marked differences in the understanding of citizenship and active citizenship between different European societies, which seem to reflect their varying historical experiences and traditions. In countries with a relatively recent established or re-established democratic government, the role of citizenship to achieve social transformation seems to be emphasised. Active citizenship in these contexts often refers to getting involved in democratic social changes, establishing democratic structures which are based on general values such as human rights and solidarity.

In countries with longer established democratic traditions, there is a different emphasis. As already mentioned earlier, many are faced and dealing with an increased variety of cultures, religions and ethnic backgrounds. But the majority are also experiencing “erosion” or changes to traditional structures and values as a result of rapid changes in society and the move towards an information society. It is therefore becoming more and more challenging for these countries to motivate citizens to be active in the political process (as can be noted from the strong declines in participation in elections) and to engage themselves in wider society (as can be concluded from the decreased participation in civil society, such as associations, clubs, etc).

However, as the socio-economic differences are reducing between the European countries, the above differences in participation seem to follow. The new democracies are unfortunately “catching up” with the older ones in terms of low participation in elections and an increase in “individualism”. In addition, the new democracies are

²⁹ See also “Citizenship – made in Europe: Living together starts at school.” Dutch Ministry for Education, Culture and Science for the Dutch Presidency, 2004.

starting to face similar challenges in relation to immigration and multiculturalism as the older ones (albeit still at a smaller scale).

A final phenomenon which is interesting to mention is the fact that citizenship seems to be less and less restricted by national boundaries or linked to national contexts. Societies have changed, with probably the most evident example being the continuous strengthening of the European Union with the concept of European citizenship as a result. But there are many other levels and types of contexts in which individuals live, which are, for example, linked to ethnicity, religion and cultural background not necessarily limited by national borders.

In summary, it is difficult to define the “borders” of active citizenship. The concept involves different sets of values and a wide variety of components. The definitions discussed can be distinguished by the basic values they refer to (e.g. democratic values or fundamental rights) and the type of citizen’s participation they promote (e.g. civic attitudes, community involvement). Some definitions present a much narrower understanding of the concept of active citizenship than others.

The above considerations based on the literature review are all highly relevant to this study on active citizenship, as its specific mandate was to look at active citizenship education in a wide variety of countries (25 Member States, 2 accession countries, 3 candidate countries and 3 EEA-EFTA countries), contexts, target groups and environments. Parts 4.4 and 4.5 of this section will discuss how the diversity of educational practices that have been examined reflect the different understandings and definitions.

4.3 Teaching active citizenship

How does one become an active citizen? This is an essential question given that, across Europe, declining engagement in traditional democratic processes (at multiple levels) is causing serious concern amongst governments and other relevant organisations. The distance between citizens and their political representatives seems to be increasing. Individuals appear to be less and less willing to become involved in decision-making processes within their community, at work, at a higher political level, or in any other environment. Whether this trend is due to a lack of interest, awareness, motivation or other factors is an issue that, despite many studies, is difficult to determine and seems to vary across the different societies of Europe.

This decrease of engagements also raises concerns about democracy. The fundamental principle of democracy is the participation of citizens in processes that aim at reaching decisions that reflect consensus by the majority, whilst preserving minority rights. It can be questioned whether a democracy still works when such participation is only exercised by a few.

In addition to the decrease in political engagement, the growing levels of individualism also negatively affect solidarity and interest in community development. Many different activities and actions are being organised to (re)motivate people to become active citizens. As the ETGACE project rightly mentions in its final report: *“active citizenship is a lifelong learning process. Learning citizenship is interactive, and deeply embedded in*

specific contexts.³⁰, stressing therefore the fact that becoming an active citizen is a continuous process. The same report also suggests that the sense of citizenship is a very personal experience, formed by life history and relations with others. Childhood experience seems to have an important function as the predisposition to become an active citizen often seems to be formed early in life.

Addressing different age groups

There are many ways to stimulate individuals to become active citizens and to enhance their interest in learning about becoming an active citizen. When looking at the different phases in life of an individual (i.e. pre-school children, children in elementary school, young people / adolescents in secondary school, young adults, adults and the elderly), there is a vast body of research looking at the education of people in compulsory schooling, and the education and training of adults. However, less attention seems to be paid to the “before school” and the “retirement” phases. This observation can be partly explained by the fact that these last two target groups are far more difficult to reach through “normal” research.

When looking at the different age groups, it seems that different types of education and learning environments may better suit individuals at a certain phase in their lives. As already mentioned before, early childhood experience is very important for laying the basis for active citizenship. Evidence from the ETGACE research project’s final report suggests that children learn how to become an active citizen in the private domain, the family and community. The report states that “*the crucial importance of family and home in citizenship learning is insufficiently recognised*”³¹. Pre-school children do not receive formal education, and learning is therefore mainly non-formal and informal. Children take the example of their parents, of other members in their family or people in their direct surroundings. Others take part in associative life, such as scouting and sports.

Active citizenship education at schooling age, both primary and secondary levels, takes many different forms and is learned in many different environments. Across all the countries examined by the study, active citizenship is addressed in primary and secondary education. In a number of countries, schools provide it as a separate subject, but in the majority of cases it is either a cross-curricular theme or integrated into other subjects³².

Although provided in a formal environment, more successful teaching involves a variety of methods and activities as opposed to cognitive learning / didactic instruction only, including debates, discussions, class-room projects, and sometimes even through activities outside the classroom. Research suggests however that extracurricular activities are more successful in stimulating active citizenship as opposed to “just” learning about citizenship at school, especially those giving students

³⁰ Lifelong learning, governance and active citizenship in Europe. Final report ETGACE research project. University of Surrey. 2003

³¹ Ibid.

³² Citizenship education at school in Europe. Eurydice, 2005.

a voice in the educational institutions they are registered (e.g. through class representatives, school councils, etc)³³.

However, school is certainly not the only environment in which children and young people are stimulated to become active citizens. For young people, the peer group plays an essential role, and the reactions, activities and choices of friends will influence the extent to which young individuals will develop their civic skills and identity. Other important learning takes place in associative life (e.g. youth organisations and community associations) if young people chose to take part in the latter. Whilst highly effective, the act of stimulating young people to participate when they have little motivation or interest to join such groupings themselves, is already an educational effort in itself.

Several of the studies and other documentation accessed agree that adult education is not accomplished through the conventional, teacher-student teaching style. An interview with the European Association for Adult Education (EAEA) fully confirmed this view. Adults prefer an informal, learning-by-doing approach, which makes them active participants in their own learning process, and which provides them with tangible results and outcomes. They wish to lead or at least steer their learning, and focus on obtaining those skills that they consider most relevant for their own personal development. Education can therefore take place in different environments, in community organisations, through voluntary work and participation in political groupings.

The elderly seem to be a more difficult age group to reach and study. Whilst many, by tradition and culture, tend to have a more “natural” disposition to at least being active citizens in some aspects (e.g. participation in community life, church associations, etc), they show, on the other hand, a much lower interest in the more political aspects of active citizenship (e.g. voting, participation in political parties). Also, a high proportion of the elderly are concerned about the rapid changes to society, especially with regard to the changing demographic profile and the rise of the Information Society, and tend to feel threatened or excluded from certain developments.

Reaching different socio-economic groups

Increasingly, active citizenship education also takes account of non-age related target groups, focusing, for example, on disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities and immigrants, and on people with special needs. In fact, when looking at groups on the basis of their socio-economic, cultural or ethnical background, other issues emerge with regard to active citizenship education. When looking at less disadvantaged groups, for example, the IEA citizenship and education study notes that: “*that there are important differences in civic knowledge between students from homes with ample educational and economic resources and those from homes that are less well endowed*”³⁴. Individuals with a less favourable social or economic position therefore seem to face more difficulties in becoming actively involved in society.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries. International organisation for the evaluation of educational achievement, 2001.

Ethnic minorities also face particular problems, especially when they belong to communities which, due to historical or cultural factors, have their own “subculture” and traditions. They seem to be less accepted in the societies they live in, and are not given an equal voice. Another group experiencing difficulties is that of newcomers, especially those from third countries who may not be familiar with the basic values, history, socio-cultural features and institutional functioning of their new society. Women, and perhaps especially migrant women, are another group who have been more excluded from active involvement in society.

Active citizenship education for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups includes elements of outreach work, in terms of enhancing awareness and convincing individuals to participate. Teaching is often community based and, in the majority of cases, of an informal or informal nature, as often participants are not comfortable with or not used to class-room based learning. Flexibility of teaching methods and environments to match the needs and possibilities of the participants is another important factor. Education focuses on empowering people, and giving them a sense of equality. For example, the Speaking Up programme (run by Exeter CVS for carers, people with mental health issues and learning difficulties) aims to provide learners with the skills and confidence to speak up where it counts, and represent their own and their interest group's issues³⁵.

The above considerations on teaching, based on a review of existing literature, are highly relevant to this study on active citizenship as the study looked at different types of education (formal, non-formal, informal), in different environments, through different activities and methods, and for different target groups. The considerations therefore provide some interesting insights as to what kind of education works best for whom, as is further elaborated below.

4.4 Understanding of active citizenship based on the findings of the study

Given the wide coverage of the study and the method of selection chosen (see also section 2 above), the sample of examples of active citizenship education examined was extremely varied. It included all target groups, both in terms of age and socio-economic features, and all types of education. This section will discuss what active citizenship meant for the different practices that were examined, drawing in particular on the evidence emerging from the in-depth case studies. These differences in understanding will be considered in the light of the previous discussions on the concept and definitions of active citizenship in other research and projects.

A first observation, already pinpointed in section 3.3.1, concerns the low representation of practices addressing traditional citizenship issues such as civil rights in the sample. This can partly be explained by the fact that the criteria for selecting the practices placed a strong emphasis on innovation and variety in terms of content, themes and learning processes, meaning that most approaches focusing merely on political awareness and using traditional class-room teaching fell outside the choice of the 57 practices for further examination.

Such traditional approaches are however still very widespread, as confirmed in the Eurydice report studying school curricula on citizenship education: “*objectives*

³⁵ Active learning for active citizenship. ALAC national network, 2006.

*concerned with developing political literacy ... are clearly very important and feature prominently in the curricula or other official documents of almost all countries, whether explicitly or in implicit references.*³⁶ A few practices that did take place in more traditional environments or were based on traditional approaches were however included in the selection because of their originality or creativity in terms of themes or methods used, such as “Life Skills” in Iceland, “Land Ahoy” in Belgium and “Innovation of Student Council Activities” in Denmark.

The main stages of active citizenship

Based on the theoretical discussion in the above subsections, the following key stages are proposed to help identify and comment on the main differences and similarities in the understanding of active citizenship that emerge from the present study:

- The underlying values of the practice
- The benefits to participants in terms of
 - Knowledge
 - Attitudinal change
 - Skills
- The context in which the practice is developed

When looking at values that the examples have been addressing, the analysis shows that the concept of active citizenship used is often influenced by the values the practices were focused on (i.e. democracy, multiculturalism, gender equality, etc.). When looking at the competences and skills gained, these relate to the three categories as introduced above: knowledge (i.e. awareness, comprehension and familiarity with certain issues), attitudes (i.e. a mindset, feelings and personal conviction on certain issues) and skills (i.e. ability to put learning into practice)³⁷. It is also interesting to consider the context within which the learning activities are developed. The figure shows how these categories were addressed (mainly based on the case studies).

³⁶ Citizenship Education at School in Europe, European Commission, DG Education and Culture – EURIDYCE, 2005, p.25

³⁷ See Eurydice survey - Key Competences – A developing concept in general compulsory education, DG EAC – Eurydice, 2002; p.15 and Key Competences for Lifelong learning, *ibid.*

Figure 21 – Summary of the active citizenship topics emerging from the 10 case studies

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Values | Cultural diversity/ Multiculturalism; Democracy; Human Rights; Gender equality; Minority Rights; Environment and quality of life |
| Knowledge | Understanding specific terminology and main characteristics of certain values; Awareness of civic rights and duties; Awareness of gender issues; Understanding diversity |
| Attitudes | Tolerance; Responsibility and autonomy; Cultivation of interpersonal relations; Curiosity; Motivation; Valuing diversity; Confidence to act, empowerment |
| Skills | How to raise issues; How to design action; Problem definition; Strategic thinking; Project design and management, Organisational Skills, Leadership; Facilitation, Dialogue; Making changes; Team work; Demand driven action |
| Contexts | Local community, School |

This demonstrates that the concept of active citizenship is understood in a variety of ways in the practices examined. The nature and type of the values that are being addressed depend often on the specific focus and context of the organisation managing the project. For example, women organisations, logically, tend to take a gender perspective (e.g. “Women leaders in local communities” in Croatia), like organisations dealing with immigrants or ethnic groups focus more on integration, multiculturalism or minority rights (e.g. “Empowering of Roma voice” in Slovakia). The same applies to education of professionals working with migrants and ethnic minorities, which in addition place emphasis on tolerance and cultural diversity (e.g. “Promoting civil dialogue through intercultural competence development in German).

At the same time, however, the different values are by no means exclusive and many projects addressed multiple issues. For example, the project “Education for tolerance in a multicultural society” (Czech Republic) aims to familiarise participants with multiculturalism but also with human and minority rights. In summary, it is not possible to define a single or predominant underlying value in active citizenship. Rather, they come in a “package” of many, all to a large extent linked to or determined by the main focus of the organisations leading the project.

Figure 56 shows that, in terms of attitudinal changes active citizens are expected to become more informed, tolerant and responsible through the teaching of active citizenship. The European citizenship in a multicultural Union project (UK), for example, aimed to make young people not only aware of their rights and duties as citizens, but also to make them more responsible and motivated to change things they felt were unjust or unequal.

When looking at the particular skills sets active citizens should acquire, they should be able to define problems, design and implement actions through the involvement of others. They should also feel more comfortable to lead initiatives and to work in teams. Important skills with regard to the latter include the ability to facilitate and negotiate.

Projects such as “To Make a Difference” (Sweden) have trained young people, already active and considered “promising” by the NGOs they worked for, in management and advocacy techniques to further increase their potential and make their actions even more effective.

The different components of the educational process

The delivery of education and training in the sample of practices is a process which can be broadly broken down into three main categories:

- Cognitive component
- Affective component
- Behavioural component

Figure 22 below shows the different types of approaches that fall under these categories. The majority of projects had a cognitive component focusing on increasing the basic knowledge of participants. The case studies confirm that the understanding of key concepts and values are a first essential step for participants: only by realising what these imply can individuals become informed citizens and undertake targeted actions. Cognitive learning therefore lays the first basic foundations for the further educational process towards active citizenship. For this purpose, many of the projects included one or more (short) theoretical parts setting out the basic values and principles of the practice. For example, the Danish “Innovation of Student Council Activities”, practically fully self-regulated by the students themselves, was started with an informative session in which the teacher would explain how the new council would work. The teacher also requested “timeouts” when debates became heated to offer factual information.

Figure 22 – Summary of the main educational components

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Cognitive component | Lectures, introductory and information sessions, timeouts, theoretical courses |
| Affective component | Interactive learning, simulations and role plays, games, discussions, debates, meetings |
| Behavioural component | Application to real problems, learning-by-doing, democratic involvement, self-regulation |

Although the majority of practices delivered cognitive information, this was often provided in combination with interactive exercises or practical applications. Purely theoretical lectures were rare among the studied practices. For example, the theoretical courses within the project “Empowering Roma voice” (Slovakia) were always kept very “down-to-earth”, with concrete suggestions to participants as to how they could use the information in practice. Also in practices providing formal education, where theoretical lectures are more common, the lectures were complemented with interactive games or simulations. Examples of the latter include projects such as “Education for Tolerance in Multicultural society” (Czech Republic) or “Human rights workshops for students” (Poland) which strongly insisted on getting participants involved in discussions, relating the theory to their proper experience and trying to

make them experience the issues discussed through simulations or meetings with people concerned.

A great deal of practices stressed the importance of “touching” their participants, albeit in the non-physical sense of the word. Instead of just assimilating new information, projects hoped to affect the way participants felt about certain issues. When discussing the aims and achievements of the projects, for example, the majority of organisers often highlighted the fact that their participants had become more tolerant and respectful of diversity. An obvious example of changing attitudes is the “Empowerment of Roma voice” project which not challenged the prejudices of both Roma and non-Roma. Equally, the “Promoting civil dialogue through intercultural competence development” put civil servants and representatives of migrant organisations in the same course to enhance their mutual understanding. The attitudinal changes were mainly the result of a providing people with a wider perspective as well as their increased critical thinking on the values that had been taught.

In addition to increasing awareness and changing attitudes, projects also considered that the educational experience had to “activate” participants. For example, project organisers attributed high importance to the democratic involvement of the participants (see also section 3.3.2), an issue which was also emphasised in the case studies. Even though not all projects incited participants to implement particular actions as part of their learning experience (44% of projects proceeded through learning-by-doing and project implementation – see section 3.3.2). Those who did usually insisted on enhancing the organisational skills of participants, in terms of planning and implementing activities. This included defining the problem that an activity should address, formulating the strategy to address the problem and agreeing on actions to resolve or at least deal with the problem.

The “activation” of participants started in many of the practices examined at a very early stage. Often participants had responsibility for or were involved in the design of the project and its implementation. The majority of practices emphasised the importance of designing training that was based on the real needs of participants. The extent to which such needs were addressed was often measured at the end of project through (self) assessments. Within several projects participants were invited to plan and implement their own actions, thus taking full responsibility and ownership. Examples of such engagement were projects focusing on community related actions and awareness raising, such as “Strengthening women’s leadership skills” (Croatia) or “Empowering the Roma voice” (Slovakia) but also, even though to a lesser extent in the case of projects dealing with children, such as the “Land Ahoy” (Belgium). These three practices all stressed the importance of team work and using locally available resources (local authorities, etc.).

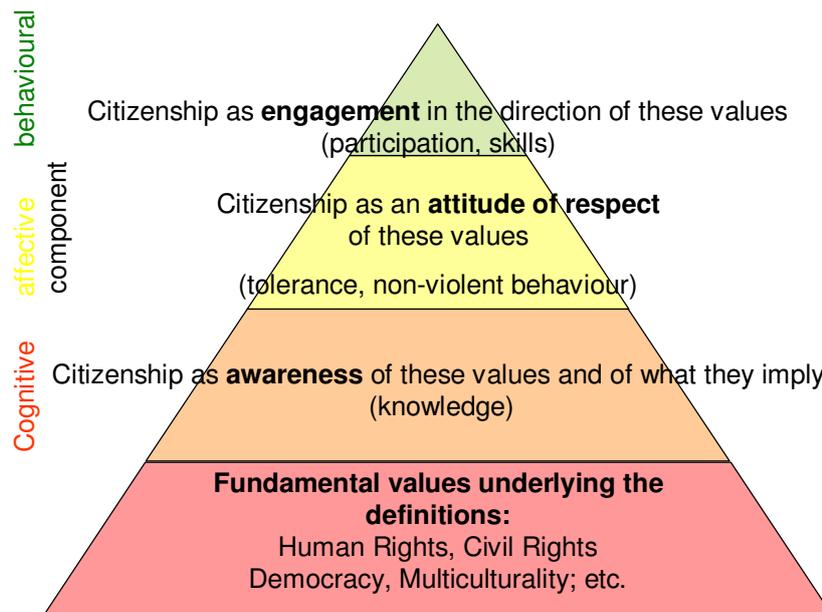
The building blocks of active citizenship education – stages of active citizenship and main components of the learning process

From the above considerations and project examples, active citizenship education can be defined as a combination of three key learning processes (1. cognitive, 2. affective and 3. behavioural learning) and four main stages through which an individual passes when learning to become an active citizen (1. The fundamental values underlying active citizenship; 2. the awareness of these values and of what they imply; 3. the attitude towards and respect of these values and 4. the engagement and activation to

promote these values). Together these form the building blocks of active citizenship education, which range from simply “knowing” the shared values to acting upon them.

Figure 23 schematises how, based on the above considerations, active citizenship education can be understood as a process of acquiring knowledge, attitudes and skills based on community values.

Figure 23 – Building blocks of Active Citizenship Education



The cognitive component helps to increase the knowledge and awareness of the values and rules that are considered fundamental in a community or wider society (covering stages 1 and 2), of the basic relations between these values (e.g. multiculturalism touches upon issues of human rights and democracy, etc) and the implications of such rules and values. The cognitive component therefore enhances understanding and has an impact on people’s viewpoints.

The affective component of education influences attitudes, opinions and feelings which enable a peaceful co-existence of citizens in a community and wider society. Important attitudinal elements are mutual respect, tolerance and non-violence. The third stage is also about empathy and relations with other people. It is however a rather “passive” stage: individuals may change their thinking patterns to take account of what they have learned, but do not necessarily act upon it.

Finally, the behavioural component is expressed through engagement and participation in the community and the wider society. Individuals become (pro)active in making themselves heard, are committed to making a difference and to supporting their community.

4.5 The effects of active citizenship education based on the findings of the study

The study findings suggest that the effects of active citizenship education seem to be linked to the size and composition of the target group. In order to discuss the different types of effects, practices examined can be roughly divided into the following three categories:

Category 1: Projects which focus on the wider public and undertake activities which are mostly about awareness raising, such as information campaigns and large scale events. The size of the target group is large and its composition is heterogeneous. The work with the group is usually short-term or even one off.

Category 2: Projects that focus on a more defined target group brought together on the basis of some common criteria. Activities focus on changing the attitudes and behaviour of participants. The target group includes participants of a concrete profession, members of a specific ethnic community, etc. the size group is small to medium, its composition is usually homogeneous (although there are cases where the group was mixed). The duration of the practices are medium to long term

Category 3: Projects which focus on a very specific target group which is selected on a set of clear criteria which aim to identify those participants that are already, to some extent, active citizens (e.g. interested in taking leadership, commitment to launching activities to develop the community, etc). The target group is usually small. The work with the group is in most cases long term and tends to go beyond the “standard” project duration (e.g. participants taking ownership and taking certain activities forward autonomously).

Category 1 – Large heterogeneous target groups

The project “100 streets to play on” (Italy) falls within the first category. It does not work with participants individually but rather aims to reach a large audience, providing people with the opportunity to think about issues which concern them and the wider society. The impacts of such an event or a campaign are difficult to measure on an individual level and on the short term. The event as such is rather a first step to further mobilise people and bringing them together. But as the project continues over years concrete results are appearing (e.g. mobilisation of residents into community groups, the creation of new pedestrian areas, etc). Other projects which fall within this category are for example:

- “Voice for Women” (Czech Republic) – a large media campaign focusing on women’s representation in politics. One of the key outcomes was the establishment of an NGO specifically and exclusively focusing on this theme.
- “Somali refugee network” activities (Denmark) – raising awareness of the wider public about the conditions in which refugees live. This campaign for labour market integration of refugees had as main outcomes the creation of new job opportunities and the activation of refugees in terms of looking and applying for jobs.

Category 2 – Medium sized, more homogeneous target groups

“Promoting civil dialogue through intercultural competence development” (Germany) is a project which falls within the second category. It was designed for two specific target groups, namely civil servants from local authorities and representatives of ethnic communities living in the area. Participants were trained in medium-sized groups. The meetings and exercises that were part of the training were meant to help participants understand the “other” group. Civil servants learned about the particular difficulties the ethnic communities may have in accessing services, or understanding procedures. Those from the ethnic community learned to understand what civil servants could do for them, and why communication was not always easy. More importantly, the courses increased mutual respect and understanding. The project contributed to a change of attitude of participants. In the longer term, civil servants and administrations adapt themselves better to the needs of the ethnic communities living in the area.

- “Policing in a multicultural society” (Austria) was designed for policemen in order to change their attitudes with respect to refugees and immigrants. The training enabled the policemen to meet refugees on an equal-to-equal basis and got them involved in group activities. As a result, many policemen abandoned the prejudices they had on this part of the population. Many of the foreigners realised that policemen were there to protect and help them instead of being a threat. The encounters changed the behaviour of both groups.
- “Resident’s housing workshops” (Netherlands) aimed to get ethnic minorities involved in the planning for urban regeneration. Through working in mixed groups, the project lowered the barriers for non-Dutch residents to entering the local associational life and to mixing with the “native” populations.
- “European citizenship in a multicultural union” (Czech Republic) was delivered through the provision of training to teachers and students in order to raise their awareness of multicultural issues. As a result, schools became more open and partnerships with local NGOs dealing with multiculturalism were established, with the prospect to cooperate as part of citizenship education.

Category 3 – Small-scale, homogeneous target groups

The third category identified focuses on the engagement of participants in concrete actions. A good example is the “Strengthening Women’s leadership skills” project (Croatia). Participants in this project were selected on the basis of their motivation and commitment to completing the training. They were expected to have some prior knowledge of certain themes and issues. The training was aimed to further develop the existing skills of participants and to help them gain new skills. Following a series of workshops, participants were encouraged to design and run projects within their local communities. Most of the participants succeeded in implementing their projects. Several managed to launch actions which required long term involvement, beyond the project’s lifetime (such as setting up a local women’s organisation).

Projects of this type are often run over a longer period and the activities are developed in small groups. Continuity of the practices is important to enable an ongoing learning

process and skills development, and to follow up the actions and progress of participants. By selecting participants it is possible to make training more effective and better adapted to the group. Other comparable practices are:

- “Human rights workshops for students” (Poland) – students were selected on the basis of their motivation and concrete future plans (how would they make the training beneficial to the wider community). They first received theoretical training and were then assisted in the development of community actions. As a result many of them became increasingly involved in community life.
- “Empowerment of Roma voices” (Slovakia) – the project delivered training to potential “leaders” of the Roma communities (i.e. persons that were already active within the community), encouraging them to involve as many people from their group as possible in community plans. The project tried to create sustainable local NGOs with dedicated and skilled people.
- Study circles – several examples base on the methodology of study circles were included in the sample. These are self-regulated learning activities which are entirely under the responsibility of the participants. Study circles are a means for participants to develop their skills and knowledge but also to pass theirs on other participants.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final section of the report draws conclusions on the basis of the findings in the previous sections, and the case study results, and seeks to come forward with practical recommendations for those that work in the area of active citizenship education, and for those that are involved in decision and policy making with regard to citizenship. The conclusions and recommendations are presented taking account of the different levels of analysis used. The structure of this last section follows the lifecycle of a project from its conception to completion.

5.1 Planning a project

What are the key issues to take into account when setting up a project? The analysis has shown that increasingly, active citizenship is not “just” about values concerned with human and civil rights, democracy and political participation. A high proportion of projects placed specific focus on a wider set of values that included socio-cultural and economic themes such as integration and multiculturalism.

In a society where some groups are hard to reach, it is important to first empower people. Having a voice and daring to speak up is a first step towards becoming an active citizen. For many, it is just a matter of gaining confidence to go out and approach people and organisations. When setting up a project, especially for vulnerable and more excluded groups, high emphasis should be placed on empowering pupils, for example through interactive exercises and simulation.

In addition to the values and empowerment, active citizenship is also very much about developing knowledge and developing new skills, such as participation, interaction, taking responsibility and leadership. When setting up a new project, it is important to consider which educational approaches could best enhance such skills.

The thematic coverage of an active citizenship is not a determinant factor, but there is scope in considering which themes might be of most interest for the target group one wishes to reach. The choice of target groups will be largely determined by the knowledge and interests of the organisations interested in setting up an active citizenship project. Most of the practices reviewed focused on adults and young people. More than half addressed a target group with specific features, such as ethnic minorities, teachers / trainers, etc. It is important in whatever context the practice is to be developed, to make the target group as relevant as possible to the problems and needs of the target group.

The vast majority of the practices included a combination of activities, with awareness-raising, learning new skills, and debating being amongst the most popular types. Nearly half of the examples also specifically engaged participants in a “learning-by-doing” process, encouraging them to implement and take responsibility for their own projects.

Most of the practices were delivered through non-formal and informal education. Whilst this is not a pre-condition for setting up a successful project, the analysis does suggest that active citizenship is something that is best taught in environments and through methods that fully engage the participants, and that make them an active role in their

learning experience. More flexible forms of education therefore may work better. Also, formal education has up to recently placed a higher focus on traditional basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic.

The scale of a project, and the composition of its target group, has some influence on the type of active citizenship education that can be delivered. This is important to take into account when planning a project. Large scale projects addressing a wider public will be best suitable for awareness-raising, such as events and information campaigns. Small projects focusing on a very specific target group will be better suited to work directly with the individuals, to require them to take responsibility, and to monitor and follow up their progress.

It is useful to undertake a mapping or needs assessment prior to setting up a project. This will help to identify the problems that are to be addressed and to set the objectives of the practice. It will also help to gain a better understanding of what the potential participants consider important, what their educational needs are, and what their level of existing knowledge is.

Whatever the type of education chosen, the work programme should be flexible and encourage participants to engage and take initiatives. However, depending on the size of a project, and the target group one wished to address, some types of education and activities will be better suited than others.

5.2 Developing the methodological approach and project strategy

A very high number of practices considered the choice of their methods key to their success. When choosing the method, it is important to consider the effects one wishes to achieve. Cognitive learning methods are useful to provide a first basic knowledge and understanding. Other, more interactive methodological approaches, such as debating and simulations, will help to achieve attitudinal changes. By encouraging beneficiaries to discuss and challenge each other, and by making them look at “real life” situations, they will become more interested and engaged. Finally, methods that are based on the “learning-by-doing” principle, encouraging beneficiaries to apply what is learned to real problems and issues, will support their activation and participation in the community / wider society.

Many practices consisted of making participants work on real problems and issues (e.g. improving a community centre, helping people that are hard to reach), which had the double benefit of increasing their skills whilst having an impact on the community they worked in. This method proved to be successful for engaging actors outside the project and in raising awareness.

Nearly all of the projects reviewed had adopted a mix of methods, combining cognitive learning to pass on factual knowledge with participative methods to engage pupils and to encourage them to put their new knowledge and skills into practical action. The use of a “scientifically proven” method or the development of more ad-hoc, informal approaches did not seem to have great influence on the success of practices.

The transversal issue of governance is also essential. The democratic participation of the beneficiaries in their own learning experience has been identified as the most important factor for making a project work. This links back to the point made earlier that

active citizenship education should encourage people to engage and take initiatives. A high number of practices were also self-regulated.

What is even more important than the type or number of good methods chosen when setting up a project, or the extent to which democratic participation is encouraged, is that its overall strategy is coherent and addressing the needs and interest of the participants. A good strategy will help to ensure a robust and workable mix of methods, a relevant and feasible set of activities and participation of beneficiaries. It is therefore important that when formulating the overall strategy to ensure that there is a clear and logical link between the problems and needs that are being addressed, the objectives set to deal with the problems and the activities required in order to achieve the objectives.

Projects need an overall strategy to ensure a logical link between its aims, actions and needs it is addressing. A good strategy will make the choice of method(s) and activities easier. Incorporating the goal of governance into the strategy at the onset helps to make democratic participation real.

When developing a methodological approach, it is important to consider what effects the educational process should achieve. Combinations of different methods seem to work best to increase the understanding of participants, change their attitudes and make them take responsibility.

Whatever method is chosen, it will greatly benefit from involving the participants in its use and elaboration, and letting them “steer” the work programme. Self-regulation is very positive, but benefits from some form of facilitation and guidance by trainers to ensure that the participants do not sidetrack and understand the common objectives of the project.

Projects can obtain the double effect of providing people with new skills and involving the community when the method chosen makes participants work on real problems. By dealing with an issue in “real-life”, participants feel more responsible committed, as they realise that the solution of a problem depends on their individual efforts.

5.3 Setting up management and coordination structures

With the majority of practices being relatively small (more than half of the practices had less than 50,000 euro at their disposition), the management and organisational structures were in most cases rather informal. Very small-scale projects were often managed by single organisations, whilst larger projects teamed up with other organisations (see also “working with partners” below) or where undertaken as part of networks. However, in nearly all cases one organisation was made explicitly responsible for leading and supervising the project.

When setting up a management and coordination structure, it is useful to take the following into account:

- Small-scale projects that are being implemented at local level or often led by a single organisation which “buys in” specific support when needed. This could relate to logistical inputs (e.g. the provision of infrastructure), artistic inputs (e.g. an intervention by an artist to enhance the creative value of a project) or psychological support to accompany participants in their learning process.

- Small to medium-sized organisations implementing projects that are more complex benefit from a management structure which combines the strengths and resources of different actors, each having a specific role in the project. For example, one organisation has specific responsibilities for developing and / or providing the methodology, a second organisation will manage the implementation of the method (e.g. through running a course, organising and event, etc), whilst a third organisation would deal with identifying and involving the participants.

In terms of coordination and communication, a similar structure demands a clear agreement on roles and responsibilities beforehand and ongoing liaison throughout the project to make sure that each partner delivers (as their actions are strongly inter-linked and interdependent).

- Larger-scale interventions were often undertaken in partnerships and through networks of different partners or umbrella organisations. Such projects were managed in different ways. When a practice was undertaken by a heterogeneous partnership, a leading organisation was appointed and a work programme was developed which allocated clear roles and tasks to each of the participating organisations. The leading organisation was also, in the majority of cases, responsible for the financial and administrative management of the project.

Where projects were undertaken by networks or implemented through umbrella organisations, the role of the leading organisation was more focused on coordinating the other actors, whilst providing a “framework” for the overall project. In these cases, partners had often more responsibility for the design and implementation of their own sets of activities within this framework.

Coordination and communication within such structures is more focused on monitoring to make sure that the interventions of each partner are delivered on time and on exchanging experiences so that partners can learn from each other’s successes and obstacles encountered.

The management and organisational structure of a project depends on its size and level of implementation. In all cases, the appointment of a leading organisation to take care of overall management and coordination, as well monitoring, is important to ensure the successful delivery of a project.

Small-scale local projects benefit from a single interlocutor which may make use of specific inputs when required. Projects that are more complex and with wider coverage benefit from working with partners which complement each other in terms of expertise and skills. These have to work with a clear work programme allocating roles and tasks. Larger scale projects may use a management function providing the overall framework for the project and coordinating the networks or partnership, leaving the specific design and implementation of activities up to the individual partners.

5.4 Working with partners

Very few organisations were alone in developing their practice. Nearly three quarters of all practices reviewed were undertaken through some form of partnership, most of which had already been in existence before the project. Projects confirmed that

partnership building was not only important for steering an intervention and obtaining expert inputs, but also to help raise awareness, increase dissemination, link to policy and decision making and ensure mainstreaming.

Different forms of partnerships were identified (the first form being most recurrent, the last form least mentioned):

- Operational forms of cooperation between actors, with each partner having its own role and set of tasks within the project.
- More “classic” forms of partnership between different types of stakeholders to supervise and steer a project, based on some formalised agreement. Often these partnerships combine “operational” organisations with more “strategic” partners which are chosen to link to policy and decision making.
- Larger networks, often pre-existing or not established exclusively for implementing the project (i.e. with a wider remit)
- Partnerships through cooperation between associated organisations.

International projects made most use of partnerships, as their activities were undertaken in different countries which may spread over the world. At European and national level, more “classic” partnerships were encountered. Local level projects used more direct and operational forms of cooperation, or worked with already associated organisations.

Partnerships are important for active citizenship education. They can serve to put the project on the map and to raise awareness, and support the involvement of the wider community. Partners can have expert thematic or technical knowledge. It is important to predefine what is expected from the partners and agree on roles and responsibilities at a very early stage. Is their role strictly operational? Are they meant to monitor or take responsibility over certain activities? How much inputs are expected from them? For larger partnerships and cooperation structures, there may be scope in putting a partnership agreement in writing.

5.5 Involving the wider community

More than three quarters of the examples indicated that they had involved the wider community in the implementation of their project. Especially “mixed” projects, taking place at different levels, for different target groups and providing mixed types of education, considered community involvement of high importance. As mentioned earlier, such involvement seemed to have been mainly obtained by participants going into the “real world” as part of their learning experience. The community is often both “participant” in the practices (e.g. supporting the organisation of local events, sponsoring activities) and “recipient” or “indirect” beneficiary (e.g. when the focus of the educational examples was specifically on community development).

The interest of the community in the active citizenship educational practices was in most cases very high. Many local authorities or community associations came forward, out of their own initiative, with proposals as to how they could further promote the practice, or integrate the latter into activities they were planning. For example, local authorities made available additional infrastructure for events, courses and exhibitions.

Community associations dedicated part of their festivities to the theme of a certain project. And perhaps even more importantly, local and regional politicians and decision makers became engaged and were willing to listen to participants and create opportunities for ongoing dialogue and consultation.

Community involvement is an essential aspect of active citizenship and has a multiplier effect. Especially projects at local and regional level should place particular efforts on establishing contacts with their surroundings. This can not only be achieved by having participants work on real problems, but also through campaigning, awareness raising, exchanges, volunteering and the organisation of events.

5.6 Making projects a lasting success

The success factors most cited by organisations related to the democratic involvement of the participants in the learning experience and the methodological approach used for implementing the educational practice. Both of these have been discussed above. The practices also attributed high importance to the type of activity that was being developed and to the choice of target groups, as well as the level of participation of pupils.

What kinds of activities appear to be successful? The vast majority of projects included an awareness-raising component. This shows the importance of practices to reach out to the wider public. Discussions and debates are also considered useful activities to make participants share their views, defend their standpoints and discuss courses of action. Activities that stimulated “learning by doing”, i.e. making participants responsible for the implementation of projects and actions, are also often used to stimulate active citizenship.

Activation and participation are key elements to making projects a success, as already mentioned above. Activities and methods should focus on changing the attitudes and enhance the critical thinking of participants, providing them with new skills, and making them engage in further activities. A one-off experience is not enough to make people active citizens – only their further actions will show what they have learned and how they apply it,

At the same time, practices should also focus on achieving some form of continuity, for example through the development of products that can be used by others, by creating new dialogues and partnerships or through mainstreaming the good practices that arose from the project.

New projects should carefully consider how they will raise awareness and preferably plan activities to sensitise the community and the wider public beforehand. Dissemination materials such as websites and leaflets are good but work best in combination with an event that attracts the attention of people to the results and products of the project. Many projects also obtained positive media attention, which helped them to promote their mandate and objectives. Projects should not hesitate to use their partners as channels to inform other stakeholders.

Projects work best when they manage to activate people and make them take responsibility for their own learning experience. Both the methods and types of activities that are being developed for active citizenship education should take this into account. It is not necessary to only implement methods and activities that are

“participative by nature” (e.g. learning by doing) – what is important is that organisations responsible for the methodological approach and planned activities involve the participants in their elaboration and stimulate participants to lead and steer project implementation. This can also apply to methods which seem to stimulate less involvement such as cognitive leaning and the development of support materials.

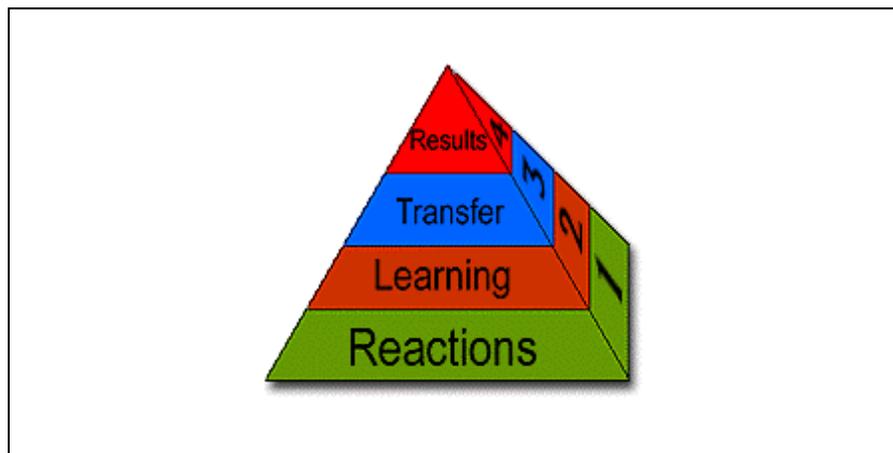
It is useful to plan dissemination and mainstreaming well ahead. Projects with innovative and good practices should at an early stage focus on transferring these practices to other organisations and to a wider context. This can be achieved through the organisation of events but also through direct consultation.

5.7 Identifying the successes and lessons learnt of projects

Only very few projects had undertaken any formal evaluation of the impacts and outcomes of their practices without which it is difficult to build an evidence base of what is effective in active citizenship teaching and training. Of course, given the wide variation in budgets and resources of the projects examined, the scale and nature of evaluation needs to be commensurate. However, more effort needs to be devoted to understanding the efficacy of the activities that are undertaken.

This does not need to be exhaustive. Also, the means of evaluating education and training projects is well established and provides a useful framework for consideration of what needs to be done. One of the most widely utilised models for evaluating the effectiveness of training and development activities is the one developed by Kirkpatrick (1994)³⁸. This is based on four levels (see figure 24 below), and according to the model, evaluation should begin with level one, and then move sequentially through levels two, three and four as time and budget allows. Information from each prior level serves as a base for a more precise measure of the effectiveness of the programme

Figure 24 - Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of training evaluation



³⁸ Kirkpatrick, D., (1994), Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, CA, USA.

Level 1 Reaction – is simply whether the training was well done, whether the trainers were good and the materials used helpful. It is simply assessed, by means of a simple questionnaire of learners that are participating.

Level 2 Learning – is whether learners have gained new knowledge, learning and awareness; in this case of specific aspects of active citizenship that they did not know before. Again this can be simply assessed by means of questionnaires or small group working with participants.

Level 3 Transfer - This level measures the transfer (also referred to as transposition) that has occurred in learners' behaviour due to the education or training programme. Evaluating at this level attempts to answer the question - Are the newly acquired skills, knowledge, or attitudes in relation to active citizenship being used in the everyday environment of the learner? To many researchers, this is the truest assessment of a project or practice's effectiveness. However, measuring at this level can be difficult, as it is often impossible to predict when the change in behaviour will occur, and thus requires important decisions in terms of when to evaluate, how often to evaluate, and how to evaluate.

Level 4 Results – in this context refers to changes in society but it is highly unlikely that this can be measured in relation to the scale of active citizenship projects covered in this report.

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| Thought should be given to how the effectiveness of the project will be evaluated in order that learning of what works in active citizenship education can be advanced and shared. |
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ANNEX A COMPENDIUM OF CASE STUDIES

LAND AHOY – THE KINGDOM DIVERSIA

Creating a new world at school

Imagine a world designed and run by children, how do you think that would look like? Colourful, populated by superheroes, creatures from the world of our dreams, fairytale people and other fantastic creations. Free, allowing anyone to be who they wanted to be without the limitations of our real lives. Peaceful, with the most breath-taking populations living together and respecting each others choices and particularities. Inclusive, providing an equal warm welcome to the creatures living under the ground, those preferring to spend their lives at bottom of the sea and those finding joy in flying around.

“We wanted to show to our children what it meant to run a country like our politicians do everyday and to make them understand how a democracy works” says Annie Poelmans, director of the World School. *“But at the same time, we wanted to stimulate their fantasy and their enormous creative potential”*. For this purpose, the school developed the Land Ahoy project in 2002.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of learning: non-formal / informal

Learning environment: school based

Target group: Children between 6-12 years

Themes: Civic and children’s rights, democratic participation, multi-culturalism

Duration: The project started in 2002 and was ended in 2004. However, the concept of Diversia and several components are still being continued.

Funding: A few small grants (up to 2000 euro) were secured supporting the artistic contributions and the printing of materials

Funding agency: The project was financed by national and local public funding, such as the Dynamo programme and the BKO (Belgian Art Education).

A changing neighbourhood – a changing school

The World School is located in an old, busy, traditionally working class neighbourhood of the beautiful and historical city of Antwerp. The neighbourhood was amongst the first parts of the city to provide a home for immigrants, a trend which steadily increased up to the nineties. In 1997, SILO 5 (the former name of the World School) had become a nearly “single-race” school, hosting over 95% of children from Moroccan and Turkish origins. The school realised that this imbalance created several problems and cultural conflicts, and looked out for ways of ensuring a more even distribution of pupils.

When in 1998 several local and national initiatives were started to obtain a better spread of children in schools, the World School enthusiastically took this opportunity to attract pupils from other origins. It started with projects called “From concerned to prepared” and “The school of the future”. Soon after that, the school changed its name into the “World School” and started a well-targeted publicity campaign in and around the neighbour hood, in collaboration with a large group of enthusiastic parents. At the same time, the city area itself also became the subject of a process of regeneration, attracting many new, young families looking forward to make this part of town their new home. Land Ahoy was one of the key projects contributing to this change: today, the school population of 220 pupils in 11 classes consists for 40%, of children from Belgian origins, with another 60% of pupils coming from all parts of the world, such as Morocco, Turkey, Poland, Russia, China, Mexico, Bosnia and many other countries.

Box 2 – Objectives

- To enhance participation and create opportunities to participate
- To encourage children to take responsibility
- To make them understand how governments and other political processes work
- To teach children how to work together in order to achieve something
- To help them understand diversity
- To stimulate creativity and artistic expression
- To engage the local community

The Land Ahoy project

The Land Ahoy project provided an opportunity for children to design and develop their own country, in order to better understand democratic and political processes, cultural diversity and respect for others.

“At the end of each school year, we would traditionally prepare a project for next year. While sitting together and brainstorming, we came up with the idea of developing a country, each of the classrooms being a city or a region. We would leave it up to the children to decide what kind of country and culture they wished to have, and what kind of people they wanted to be”, tells Annie Poelmans. The preparations for the project were substantial. In terms of governing the country, national and local elections were organised to choose the King and the Queen who together would rule the country, to select the Ministers and to elect the Mayor and the representatives of the city council of each class. The first elections were also used to vote on the name of the country, which was agreed to be “Diversia” by a vast majority of its population.

As part of Land Ahoy, each class was asked to design and develop its city. This included its name, its culture and traditions, a language, laws and a specific identity card for each class. The children loved the idea of making all this up, and came forward with the wildest suggestions. Newly born cities and regions included Neptunia, land of the fierce water creatures, Nightmare town, inhabited by dark and scary beings, Dream country, full of fantastic and unimaginable persons and Smallville, inhabited exclusively by direct descendents from Superman.

The elections were taken very seriously by all the children involved and several turned out to be born politicians. With some creative help from their parents, pupils drew up their national or local government programme, handed out flyers and organised small meetings to convince their fellow classmates to vote for them. *“It was amazing to see how seriously they took their mission”* says a teacher from the first class, *“but what was even more remarkable was their realistic approach to becoming elected. Of course some promised free ice-creams all year long, but most referred to much more down-to-earth issues such as improving the school yard and setting up a toy exchange system”*.

The day of the elections was a day full of festive activities and constituted Land Ahoy’s official introduction to the local community. After communicating the names of the chosen King, Queen and other political leaders, parents and children were invited to attend a Fashion show, where pupils from each class proudly presented the traditional clothing of their cities and regions. The Mayors of each town made a short presentation and revealed their local flags. Finally, the whole school went outside for a parade in the neighbourhood, with the King and the Queen in front. One of the parents lent his beautiful convertible car to drive around the royal pair in style. In her final class paper, before going to secondary school, the four-times elected Queen recounts *“We were getting into the backseat of the car, but when sitting down we discovered that we were too small to be seen from the outside. From everywhere, people came with big cushions so that we were finally seated at the right height to be able to salute and wave at the people”*.

Naturally, Diversia also needed its own newspaper, which came out three to four times a year. Pupils and teachers prepared articles on the different events and activities that had taken place in and around school, and updated the other classes on what was happening in their cities and regions. Of course superheroes, dream creatures and underwater beings lead busy lives, and live wild adventures which children were more than happy to share with their friends. Based on a beautiful drawing by one of the children, showing a map of Diversia with all its cities and regions, a local artist painted a huge map of the newly founded country on the school wall. A musician wrote Diversia’s’ national anthem.

And Diversia kept growing. *“In the second year, on the first day of school, the children discovered that the school entry had become a border control post”* one of the teachers says. *“They were officially welcomed to Diversia. New pupils were told that they would soon be provided with a passport to get into school.”* Several other activities put the country further on the map. As part of the “Not everything is what it seems” subproject of Land Ahoy, children were made journalists and asked to go and interview people in the neighbourhood. They talked with the local Moroccan shopkeeper about the country where he was born and with the old lady living on the corner about the devastating effects of the Second World War. A DVD was made collecting the different stories. Another project encouraged children to discover art by inviting local artists to present their work at school and by asking people in the neighbourhood to invite pupils to their homes where they would tell a bit about the history and the meaning of their paintings, sculptures and other objects.

But like any other country, Diversia was also faced with more difficult periods and political instability. A question posed by many states today, is whether a monarchy is still required in a modern society. And people in Diversia were no different, which led to a few cities conspiring to change the kingdom into a republic. Demonstrations were held, with passionate debates on the future of the country. Most inhabitants were

shocked by these unexpected developments, and demanded a democratic vote on the issue. A referendum was held which confirmed that the vast majority of Diversians were perfectly happy with their Kind and Queen, and preferred the country to stay a monarchy.

Box 3 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

What are the main dimensions of Active Citizenship addressed by the practice?

Taking responsibility and initiative. Paying attention to the environment. Helping other people. Democratic awareness. Creative thinking. Respect for others. Understanding different cultures. Involving the local community.

Box 4 - Method and approach

The World School develops each year a project focusing on a specific theme. In general, all projects are aimed at stimulating active participation and creativity of the children.

Land Ahoy was conceived in 2002. The teachers worked on the overall concept, which was subsequently communicated to the parents prior to the start of the new school year. The latter were invited to come forward with suggestions as to how to “fill” the project, in terms of events and activities.

On the basis of this consultation, a work programme was developed with activities, clear milestones and deadlines. Four times per year, a meeting was organised to discuss progress, obstacles and future activities.

Each teacher had the responsibility for promoting and developing Diversia in their class and to help the pupils in setting up their respective cities and regions. The project uses a mixed-method approach, combining simulation and role plays with games, interactive learning and learning by doing. The themes addressed in the classroom were adapted to the age of pupils.

Given that the creation of Diversia was such an enormous success, it was decided to continue the project for one more year. In fact, the country still exists and the new projects are embedded in the overall concept of Diversia.

Results, outcomes and impact

The success and enthusiasm surrounding Land Ahoy did not go unnoticed. The school was invited to present the concept and method of Diversia on the occasion of several conferences and seminars and was quoted as a best practice by the Flemish Ministry of Education. Several university researchers visited the school and the concept was transferred to another school in Antwerp and to one as far as South Africa.

“The project has made a real difference at school and in the local community” adds Annie Poelmans “but it has also had a strong impact on the teachers and parents. The different activities that were being developed as part of Land Ahoy required intensive

collaboration between colleagues and regular exchanges with parents. People feel like a team now, and are truly interested in further developing Diversia.” Parents were enthusiastic participants in Diversia, proposing new activities, lending materials for events and carrying out small jobs such as graphic design, filming and photography.

“In a certain sense, Diversia is continuing automatically and growing organically, based on the initiatives of teachers, parents and people from the neighbourhood” confirms one of the teachers. Each year, the school is invited to participate in local festivities such as street markets and fancy fairs. Diversia itself also organised a market with traditional food and objects prepared by its inhabitants. The local currency, the “Oen” was the only money that could be used for purchasing goods. In its third year, the school organised a trip around the world, with pupils from different cities and regions organising official visits to other towns in Diversia.

But Diversia’s greatest impact was on the children. By encouraging them to take responsibility and to take leadership, for example by becoming elected as a Minister, Mayor or city council representatives, the pupils became actively involved in the school’s day-to-day management. *“The children take their role very seriously, because they realise that the school direction really follows up their requests”* says Annie Poelmans. *“We have a Ministers of Culture, of Education, of Finances etc who are all concerned with what is going on at school. School politicians have successfully put forward concrete proposals, for example to renovate the school yard or to organise a day for going to the movies. Teachers are using the Council of Ministers to pass on messages to their citizens. Children get in touch with their Mayor when they wish to propose a change and parents, in their turn, ask their children to put forward a proposal in the Council”.*

The atmosphere at school has greatly improved as a result. Pupils see their school less as a daily obligation and more as a place where they can be creative and make a difference. It is hoped that later on in their lives they will realise how important and useful it is to take initiatives and to stay actively involved in their community.

Box 5 –Management and organisation

A small team of teachers is appointed to monitor the work programme and to take care of the overall coordination of the project, including liaison with external actors. Several people from outside the project provided specific contributions, such as an artist involved to ensure the creative dimension of the project and a musician to help write the national anthem.

Whilst the costs of Land Ahoy are relatively low (2,000 euro per year), substantial inputs are required from the teachers to organise and implement the project. These inputs are quite often also provided outside their working hours. It is estimated that on average teachers spend 10-20 days per year on Diversia, with peaks when organising events such as the Fashion Show.

Success factors and innovation

What made Land Ahoy such a successful initiative? From the very start, the teachers organising the project made the children directly responsible for the newly created country. They were strongly encouraged to take initiatives and to be creative. Firstly, the pupils could become actively involved in governing Diversia through a democratic election process. Every child who was chosen to represent their class or the country overall felt truly responsible for defending the interests of the group he or she spoke for and for coming forward with proposals to improve Diversia.

Second, the children were left completely free in deciding what their country or city would look like. Some classes opted for positive, idealistic towns whilst others, often more older pupils, developed less inclusive and dangerous places. Whatever the design or concept of the cities and regions chosen, the process of developing a culture and traditions helped children to understand that not everyone shares the same background and the same beliefs. And even more importantly, they learned that it is necessary to respect such differences.

Land Ahoy also consciously reached out to the local community. By introducing Diversia to the neighbourhood and involving local people in various subprojects, there was great interest in the activities of the school, which in return was often invited to participate in events and other initiatives launched by local organisations.

Finally, the last success factor is even simpler: the enthusiasm of the teachers and parents in organising Diversia. After all, we have all been children once, and what would sound nicer when being young: going to your own country each day, as a Queen or a Mayor, or having to go to school?

What next?

The project has generated quite some media interest and articles on Diversia have appeared in the local and regional press. It was assessed and put forward as a good practice by the Flemish Ministry of Education and presented at several other meetings.

The World School will continue Diversia as it has become an integral part of the school itself. New projects are always linked to concepts finding their basis in this multi-cultural country. For example, the school has recently developed a Diversia card game which in series of cards addresses issues such as identity (city / region of origin), feelings (sadness, happiness, jealousy), challenges and many other themes.

Contact details and information sources:

Wereldschool
Brederodestraat 119
2018 Antwerpen
Belgium
Email: lager.brederodestraat@stad.antwerpen.be

Publications:
De Wereldschool (information sheet from the Flemish Ministry of Education)

EDUCATION FOR TOLERANCE IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Enhancing teachers' skills, knowledge and changing their attitudes

“Education for tolerance in a multicultural society” (ETMS) is a framework training programme for teachers and teachers-in-training. It prepares them to work in a mixed and multicultural environment by giving them knowledge and experience of minority cultures present in the Czech Republic. This programme is implemented as an optional university course for future teachers or, in a slightly different and more targeted version, as vocational training for teachers. It is a multidisciplinary programme whose major innovation is to bring together themes which are rarely touched upon in teachers' training. ETMS is a mix of cognitive and participative teaching methods aimed at changing students' and teachers' attitudes, making them more open-minded and tolerant.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of education: formal

Learning environment: university based

Target group: Adults / University students and Teachers. The programme focuses on teachers and students training to become teachers, but also on students of other disciplines.

Main theme: multiculturalism together with human, children's, minority and civil rights

Duration: 1 year – the program lasts one year (64 teaching hours) and is running since 2001

Funding: 35,000 Euro is the approximate annual budget. This mainly covers lecturers' travel expenses and fees, printed materials and partially, also management fees.

From a mono-cultural to a multicultural vision

As the name indicates, the Human Rights Education Centre (HREC) first started with programmes more explicitly focused on human rights issues. With projects such as “Equity in variety” (“Equality in diversity”?) or “Let's live here together”, designed for schools but also NGOs, aimed to deliver training and raise awareness among teachers and Czech civil society. *“We wanted to reach those who were at the origin of it all [attitudes towards different groups]”* says Alena Kroupova, director of the centre. This was more than 13 years ago. During all these years of work with schools, the centre has gained experience and identified gaps in teachers' training. Traditionally in the Czech Republic, the latter is mostly focused on giving teachers the knowledge they will pass on to children. Teachers' training is often reduced to learning about various teaching methods and often aspects on teachers' attitudes towards pupils are neglected. This, in a society which until recently used to be very monocultural and where minorities were not discussed, leads to teachers having difficulties to face and react to cultural differences among their pupils.

In the past, the only significant ethnic minority in Czech Republic were the Roma, who had very different attitudes towards learning than Czech children, and required particular attention. School teachers were not prepared to work with these children and “awaken” their learning potential. Therefore the Roma, but also other kids with learning difficulties, would be systematically put in “special schools”. Here they received special attention but at the same time they were stigmatised and isolated. These special schools were often filled with Roma children which contributed to the segregation of this population but also to increased prejudice of the non-Roma inhabitants. From the point of view of teachers, only those teaching in special schools were taught how to deal with children’s difficulties and how to reach special ethnic groups such as the Roma. Other teachers were completely unprepared for mixed and multicultural classes. This was a situation that had to change in the context of increased political willingness to fight intolerance and improve the integration of Roma and immigrants.

With the entry of the Czech Republic in the EU and increased economic prosperity, the need to teach an increasing number of children from different cultural backgrounds became an important issue. The concept of “multicultural education” became one of the new priorities of the Czech Ministry of Education. At this point it appeared that few actors within the teaching community knew how to promote this topic. The idea to offer teachers’ training on “tolerance in a multicultural society” was born. Building on its previous experience and its location at Charles University, HREC received financial support from the ministry to design, run and disseminate such a course.

Box 2 – Objectives

The major objective of ETMS is to develop methods, skills and knowledge which would enable the successful development of a multicultural society. These goals can be broken down into:

- Increasing the quality of teachers’ training
- Increasing the civil and legal consciousness of students on subjects of human, children and minority rights
- Promoting the tolerant cohabitation of different cultures
- Developing participants’ interest in active citizenship
- Enabling participants to run human rights or democratic education courses in their own situations.

Education for Tolerance in a Multicultural society.

The programme was first launched during the 2001/2002 school year at Charles University as an optional subject for students of the pedagogical faculty. It was then quickly spread to other universities in Ceske-Budejovice (South-Bohemian University) and in North-East Bohemia (Ostrava University). All these universities have important pedagogical faculties. In South-Bohemia the course is open to all students within the university, “*however we mostly have students from the pedagogical and theological faculty who take the course,*” says Salim Murad, professor and one of the initiators of the programme at the South-Bohemian university. “*Among those from the pedagogical faculty we rarely see students who are taking scientific subjects. It is mostly students of*

civic education and history who take the course,” he adds. Open to all students on a voluntary basis in all three universities, it became a mandatory subject for students of civic education in Ostrava and Ceske-Budejovice.

As mentioned above, this programme is a multidisciplinary course. It combines subjects such as history, psychology, pedagogy, sociology and politics in addressing topics such as: *Intercultural dialogue, How to work with minorities, The possibility of inter-religious dialogue*, etc. The lecturers need to be very careful when addressing the students. A majority of them have little background on the subject and need to be introduced to it by connecting it to their own knowledge and experience. Therefore the course unites cognitive and participative methods, giving factual information but also using debates, games and simulations to get students involved.

Contrary to what could be understood, ETMS is not a course on how to teach multiculturalism but rather on how to teach in a multicultural environment. It is focused on challenging prejudice and negative opinions that Czech students and teachers might have concerning groups of people such as immigrants, Roma, Muslims, etc. It also gives them the interactive tools and methods they are taught during the course, which they can then put to use in their respective classes (mostly when it comes to future teachers of civic education).

Box 3 – Concept of Active Citizenship

The basic definition on which the programme is based is the following:

*ETMS consists in the elucidation and explanation of terms, characteristics and attitudes, to support human rights through the **cultivation of interpersonal relations**. The decisive educational tool is a clear and simple approach which is acceptable and understandable by children of different ages and cultural backgrounds ?¹*

¹ Alena Kroupova: *Vychova k lidskym pravum ve skole – priklad multikulturalni tolerance a interkulturalni komunikace* in Kapitoly z Multikulturalni Tolerance ; 2002 EIS UK SVPL Praha; p.15

Each university which adopted this programme adapted the content to the local environment and needs. For example, the South-Bohemian University focuses more on issues linked to migration since it is situated on an east-west migration axis. It is also a region where there were previously very little inhabitants from other ethnic origins and it was found that those who migrated to the region were poorly assimilated. On the other hand, in Ostrava, close to the Polish border, the programme focuses more on the Polish minority and inter-religious dialogue. The latter is due to the fact that it is one of the few regions in the Czech Republic where religious belonging is strong.

Box 4 - Method – Concrete actions, responsibility and continuity of support

At a first glance the structure of the course looks like any other university programme. It is composed of lectures and seminars. There are two requirements to pass the course:

- maximum three absences
- writing of an essay on a topic students can choose

The innovation of the course consists in the fact that it is taught by various people, all of them experts on the topic they cover. Some are academics but others are professionals in fields such as social work, development aid, etc. Beyond the fact that they are experts they also need to be able to combine traditional lectures with interactive methods.

Among the methods used are games and simulations which require personal involvement in the course. Especially successful are simulations where students in groups have to take decisions on borderline cases and they justify their decisions in front of the rest of the class. This enables them to realise and touch on issues they would never come across otherwise. These games and simulations are often very simple and participants can use them during their own classes in the future.

Students of civic education who follow this course as a mandatory part of their training to become teachers also have a practical component added to the programme. As part of their teaching practice they have to go to a school and teach a class where they use the knowledge, skills and methods acquired through ETMS.

The programme is regularly monitored. This is a way to feed results, new ideas and other feedback into the course content.

Courses for teachers are very similar to this model but are more focused on one subject and usually take place over several days.

Results, outcomes and impact

Since its implementation in 2001/2002, several hundred students have already undertaken the course. Each year between 20 and 50 students participate at each university. The number of students who apply regularly surpasses the number of people who can participate, which proves that the interest for the programme is increasing. New universities are in the process of adapting the content to their students. The faculty of humanities of Charles University, under the initiative of Maria Dohnalova together with HRED have designed a course on multiculturalism for their students of "Civil sector". Other universities who would like to offer this programme to their students are Masaryk University in Brno (Moravia) and West-Bohemian University in Plzen. Another important success is that HREC has been accredited by the Czech Ministry of Education to deliver vocational training to teachers within the field of human rights and multiculturalism.



Picture 1: A lecture in South-Czech University in Ceske Budejovice

“The impact on participants’ attitudes is clear when we see how their vocabulary evolves,” explains Salim Murad. *“At the end of the programme, their positions are better thought-out and based on arguments.”* For example, there is a general negative view of Russians and people from the ex-USSR due to Czech history. But people from this region constitute one of the most important immigrant populations in the Czech Republic. Every year, as part of the course, the university organises a debate with children of the Russian and Belarussian elite living in the Czech Republic. Through this personal contact, the Czech participants meet members of these communities who defy stereotypes, and whose existence they completely ignore. *“They have a tendency to think that all the Russians and Belarussians living here are builders which is discriminatory.”*

Every year a review entitled “Chapters from Multicultural Tolerance” is published which summarises lecturers’ participation in the programme. Given the lack of support material in the Czech language on this subject, these publications are very welcome and used as references for further teaching. Besides publishing activities, other initiatives have been launched as a result of the ETMS programme and the opportunities created by it. Thanks to the contacts between HREC and the South-Bohemia University, the latter has improved its capacity and became a centre of expertise on migration. They are currently coordinating a Comenius 3 project called “Learning- Migration” in Czech Republic.

Box 5 – Organisation and Management

As long as the programme is subsidised by the Ministry of Education it is owned and coordinated by the HREC. The centre cooperates with other universities and faculties when it comes to the implementation of the course and its adaptation to the needs of particular groups of students.

The Human Rights Education Centre suggests certain lecturers. Others are brought in by the hosting universities. However, the renown of the Centre helps to attract experts and well known actors as lecturers, and hence guarantees the high quality of the course.

Success factors and innovation

The success of ETMS lies in a combination of factors and circumstances. It is filling a gap and responding to the demand from students and teachers but also the Ministry of Education. All these are making it a sustainable programme which is slowly being mainstreamed. The use of traditional lectures combined with participative methods is another guarantee of successful teaching but also of participants' interest. It makes students enjoy the course and activates their acquired knowledge and skills. At the same time it is flexible enough to be taken on board by a university which has strict requirements for course delivery. Last but not least, the "social capital" of HREC ensured that quickly very well known experts and professionals have been involved as lecturers in the programme which guaranteed the quality of the programme.

What next?

In the very near future the HREC is planning, as already mentioned, to spread the course to two other universities. If this succeeds the programme would already have a very good geographical spread, covering nearly all the regions of the Czech Republic: Centre (Prgaue), North-East (Ostrava), South-East (Brno), South (Ceske Budejovice) and West (Plzen). Given that the grant from the Ministry of Education will only continue only for one further year, in the next stage universities will become more and more autonomous in financing and designing their courses. But as confirms Salim: *"We definitely will go on with the programme. There is a lot of demand for it and the costs (mostly lecturers' travel and fees) are sustainable."* In the next phase, HREC would like to focus on introducing programmes on ETMS directly into elementary and high schools. The Ministry of Education is preparing such a programme for secondary schools and HREC would like to participate in its design.

Contact details and information sources:

Human Right Education Centre of Charles University in Prague
Alena Kroupova – director
Jeruzalemska 9, Praha 1, Czech Republic
Alena.kroupova@eis.cuni.cz
00420 224 228 534

Online sources:

HREC:

<http://www1.eis.cuni.cz/svlp/index.htm>

South-Bohemian University, Pedagogical faculty, Human Sciences Department:

http://www.pf.jcu.cz/stru/katedry/spol_vedy/

Comenius 3 project "Learnin-Migration

<http://home.pf.jcu.cz/~comenius3/>

Ostrava University, Pedagogical faculty, Human Sciences Department:

<http://pdf.osu.cz/ksv/>

Charles University, Faculty of Human sciences, Civil Sector Department:

<http://www.fhs.cuni.cz/kos/>

they are working on a project Czechkid (Czech version of Britkid
www.britkid.org) which will be available on www.czchkid.cz

TOWARDS MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC SERVICES

Introduction - Problem

Germany is a country that has accommodated large numbers of immigrants for the last half a century. *“Today, more than 20 per cent of the country’s population has an immigration background, including mixed families, second generation “immigrants” and others. However, it is only recently that the Federal Government has recognised Germany as an “Immigration country” and cultural diversity as a social reality,”* says Matilde Grunhage-Monetti, one of the founders of the *Promoting Civil Dialogue through Intercultural Competence Development* project from the *German Institute for Adult Education (GIAE)*. Before, immigration was considered a “passing” phenomenon - immigrants were mainly perceived as a temporary workforce filling in the gaps on the labour market. Consequently, in the past little efforts were made to offer immigrants who settled down and brought along their families a possibility to develop new competences necessary for a sustainable integration in the new host country. Even less focus was placed on adapting state administration structures to the needs of these new residents. The failure to face the reality of immigration has resulted, among other things, in a segregation of German and foreigner communities, wide raging stereotyping about ethnic groups as well as a Kafkaesque perception of the German administration by the immigrants.

Box 1 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

What are the main dimensions addressed by the practice?

Active Citizenship education is addressed from a perspective of helping public administrations to adequately respond to the new needs of the “Migration society” and of empowering people with a migration background.

The concept of Active Citizenship used focuses on intercultural learning. It is promoted by the Intercultural Competence training in the sense that through better intercultural competences civil servants are able to compile a better offer of public services to people with various ethnic backgrounds, thus increasing the possibilities of participation of the latter. In return, migrants find it easier to understand how to take part in democratic processes and what they can expect from public administrations.

Context and Scope

In 2000, *GIAE* started to elaborate a training scheme aimed at building the intercultural competences of civil servants in the town halls of middle- sized German cities. *GIAE* choose to promote the dialogue between public administration and migrants at the local level as these contacts have the most direct impact on the everyday life of people. This initiative was conceived in a time when the issues of organisational intercultural development were high on the political agenda – there was nationwide political debate on how to make state administrations more “open” and some of the biggest German cities were already working on increasing the intercultural communication skills of their public servants. The aim of the *GIAE* was to develop, implement and test an innovative training scheme that would promote intercultural

understanding and generate awareness about the importance of intercultural dialogue between civil servants and migrants also in Germany's regions.

Promoting Civil Dialogue through Intercultural Competence Development

The concept *Promoting Civil Dialogue through Intercultural Competence Development* received funding from the *European Union (EU)* in 2001 and with it, the green light to proceed with the testing of training activities.

Box 2 – Key Characteristics

Type of education: Mixed

Learning environment: On the job - linked to the job

Target group: Adults - Civil Servants in public administration and representatives of migrant organisations

Theme: Prevention / Empowerment / Consumer rights

Duration: October 2001 until October 2004 – some parts are being continued

Funding: €121.697

Funding agency: European Commission (Grundvig project)

As *GIAE*'s specialisation is limited to the development and piloting of training courses, it needed a few established and enthusiastic partners to implement the training activities. These strategic partners were found through the Regional Umbrella Organisation of the Centres of Adult Education (CAE) in North-Rhein-Westfalia. The CAEs already had well established structures for providing training to adults and civil servants. In addition, they were part of the City Hall administrations and thus had easy and direct access to their colleagues in departments responsible for the training of civil servants.

The possibility to use pre-existing structures and relationships strongly helped *GIAE* to overcome the first major challenge - convincing the Town Halls of North-Rhein-Westfalia of the necessity of the newly developed training. The institutionalisation of the new Intercultural training module also had to pass a second obstacle: the budget concerns of most city administrations. *GIAE* addressed these concerns by proposing to shift and combine training courses rather than seeking additional resources in the budget for the new training – some existing courses for civil servants (like seminars on Communication) could easily be integrated in the new Intercultural training scheme.

By appealing to these synergies and the ability of CAE to convince colleagues of the need for the training in Town Halls, *GIAE* succeeded to secure the participation of the administrations in Bielefeld, Bochum and Mühlheim a. R. as well as the Council of the Wetterau district for the pilot phase of the project³⁹.

³⁹ In 2005, 11 Centres of Adult Education and Town Halls carried out the training scheme including: Herten, Bergisch, Gladbach, Solingen, Bad Salzuflen, Gelsenkirchen, Arnsberg, Wetterau while Bielefeld, Bochum and Mühlheim a. R. cities are now offering the training regularly.

Another important challenge was to ensure the direct participation of the representatives of the migrant organisations – a vital precondition for establishing a direct dialogue between public servants and migrants. The face-to-face interaction between the two main target groups was one of the most innovative aspects of the training, and key to breaking down stereotypes, building awareness of cultural differences and seeking grounds for mutual understanding. However, this proved to be a difficult hurdle to take: while most trainers and public servants were remunerated during their training activities, the representatives of the migrant organisations had to do it in their spare time, having to reconcile training with their professional activities. This inequality was addressed through the development of a formal contract between organisations representing migrants and Town Halls – while the former engaged themselves to secure migrant participation, the latter ensured that the costs of attendance were covered.

Box 3 – Objectives

- produce recommendations (developed by the participants) for civil dialogue between public authorities and organisations run by migrants for migrants
- enable meta-communication between parties involved
- counteract ethnocentrism
- develop sensitivity for the problems of migrants
- modernise administration and improve the quality of their services
- empower migrant and ethnic organisations in the representation of their clients

With the technical and organisational problems overcome, a few cultural and personal issues arose when the two groups – the public servants and the migrants – were about to meet each other. Discussions often became very passionate: during the first Module of the training, aimed at introducing the goal and the approach of the training separately to the two main target groups, often the very same questions emerged – questions that showed how little people understood each others “realities” and how stereotyping was embedded even in the language they used to express themselves. It required a great deal of courage and good conflict management skills from the side of the trainers to deal with these emotionally charged discussions and to make their pupils stick to the content and structure of the course. What certainly helped was that some of the trainers had previously taken part in the Intercultural Competence training themselves, and had evolved to their current position by building on their Conflict Management skills through a “Train the trainers” scheme⁴⁰.

Doris Hens, the organiser of Intercultural Competence training in Bochum seeks to rationalise these issues: “*We have to be careful not to “ethnecise” personal and social problems.*” Jörg Jäger, former training participant, who is a civil servant leading an Asylum reception centre in one of Germany’s social hotspots, agrees that one must try to avoid the ethnical interpretation of the social problems that is often abused by the politicians in demagogic discourses and by people who try to help migrants by

⁴⁰ Until 2006, “Train the trainers” scheme has been carried out three times, including an intensive seminar in Mönchengladbach. In North-Rhein-Westfalia a further row of seminars is planned for 2007, including a transfer-seminar for the trainers who already possessing the relevant qualifications.

dramatising their situation. He admits: *“The skills that I gained through GIAE vocational training simply enabled me to do my work better.”*

Box 4 - Method and approach

GIAE training scheme was developed to promote the dialogue between Town Halls and migrant organisations to improve the services of the public administrations. The inspiration for the Intercultural (Communication) Competence training programme was drawn from similar activities in United Kingdom and several large German cities. The training scheme underwent a 2 years testing period in 4 middle-sized German cities; 3 of which are now providing the courses regularly. After the pilot phase, the training has been transferred to 7 more cities.

The training consists of 5 standardised modules:

1. Module 1: “My Culture – A Foreign Culture?” a seminar for separated groups of public servants and representatives of migrant organisations
2. Module 2: (Intercultural) Communication
3. Module 3: (Intercultural) Conflict Management
4. Module 4: Solutions to Problems and Recommendations
5. Module 5: Evaluation with Detachment

The seminars are 1 ½ to 2 days long and take place with maximum 4 weeks of intervals, which give the participants a chance to test the newly gained skills in practice. Participants were also invited to provide actual examples of conflict and miscommunication from their daily work and to which explanations, interpretations and solutions were sought during the training.

Participants are invited to present and reflect on their and other people’s perception of social reality and integration. Theories of communication and reasons underlying stereotypes are illustrated by role plays, games, painting, etc. The methods used place a high focus on activating participants. The interactive parts of the training were followed by reflection and analysis of participants’ reactions.

The training uses games, simple stories and manual activities to make the two target groups interact, thus building relationships that will counteract misperceptions. An example often used is the story about the tadpole and the fish growing up together in a pond. When the tadpole turns into a frog and goes out of the water it sees birds, cows and people. It then returns to the pond and tells fish all about it. The fish of course imagines everything that is being described in resemblance to itself and the environment around it.



Picture 2 : Fish and tadpole

Fish and tadpole: imagining the perception of others

This story illustrates how the perception of reality depends on differences in cultural backgrounds and how these "biases" communication and understanding of oneself and of others. Other activities, like the game of cards, are used to offer participants a taste of how it feels to arrive in a new society with strange rules and with limited resources to learn what these rules are. In this game, participants are asked to circulate among groups that play cards: each group is using different rules for playing the game, but the participants are not aware of this and are not allowed to use words to find out what is different. The game is a good way of showing the attitudes of the group towards the newcomer that "does not play by the rules" and for understanding the feelings of the newcomer facing these reactions.

However, the public administration is not the only party that has to change its attitude. Ms. Khonafa Hajo, a former participant of the training from the migrant group asserts that there is a lot to be done to promote migrants' understanding of democracy, the possibilities it offers and the responsibilities that it entails. This work is especially challenging with people coming from authoritarian countries, who have not been educated in democratic systems and have a different idea of how the state and communities should function. She brings up an example of a town quarter almost totally abandoned by "Germans" in which an older lady made a remark about a crying child to which the mother of the child answered: *"If you don't like us, then move out!"*

Ms. Hajo, who is now employed as a trainer in IFAK e.V. (Multicultural Youth, Family and Senior Work), organises round table discussions on the ways migrants from different groups and ages could live together in more harmony. She says that through

the Intercultural Competence training she was not only able to develop new skills for effective democratic participation but also to improve her communication with other ethnic communities.

Results, outcomes and impact

“I was always depressed when I had to interact with the public administration. Now I am motivated by the prospect of working with them and I am asking my friends to reconsider their stereotypes about civil servants” says Heschmat Yaghmaie, a former participant of Intercultural Competence training that has used her newly gained skills to found an Iranian Culture Association. Ms. Yaghmaie, together with Ms. Hajo, have also created an Intercultural Women’s Association and Forum intended to facilitate the dialogue between representatives of different cultures. Their initiatives clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the training course in engaging migrant representatives in democratic processes as well as in building their self confidence and professional abilities. The participants now spread the message of intercultural dialogue and tolerance further, acting as mediators to their communities and among different groups of migrants. More specifically, the representatives of the migrant organisations are now much more aware of what exactly civil servants in different administrative departments can offer to them, and no longer blame them for injustices of the system in general.

As a civil servant, Mr. Jäger confirms that he has gained new skills and experience in intercultural mediation, crucial for his work in the Asylum reception centre. In addition, there is evidence that after training, employees in public administration view representatives of migrant organisations more as colleagues. This is confirmed by Mr. Jäger: *“When we receive someone with a problem that is not within the competence of our administration, we now have contacts and know where to seek assistance.”*

Besides developing intercultural competences and challenging pre-established thinking patterns, the training provided public servants with a toolset to make “bottom-up” improvements to the services they offer. Monika Corte, working in the Wattenscheid district (Bochum), affirms that she now makes use of intercultural communication techniques: *“I have learned to speak slower, repeat and inquire whether I have been understood. One sees the situation with other eyes after the training.”* Sometimes this personal development may come at a high price, as it entails being in the forefront of changing the organisational culture. This may have some negative side-effects when looking at the reactions from colleagues or superiors accustomed to the “old” way of doing things (cynical remarks such as: *“Our Miss Integration!”* or *“Oh, here’s our expert for migrants!”*). To address these issues, GIAE, in cooperation with the Centres of Adult Education, offers awareness-raising courses to different levels of public management. The courses aim to complement the development of Intercultural competences of staff and to trigger mainstreaming of these competences into the organisation as a whole.

Finally, the training has raised awareness about issues and prompted developments in the Town Halls that are not only beneficial for migrants but also for other groups in society highly dependant on public services. To give just two examples of a changing administrative culture: several Town Halls are actively combating the vicious circle of public servants passing the client from once service to another. Second, the insights developed during the training have triggered a policy for the simplification of the administrative language on official documents. The combination of extremely long

compound words with incomprehensive abbreviations in the “classical” administration jargon is not only making the lives of migrants unbearable but also those of public servants themselves (not to mention the difficulty it constitutes to tourists, foreign students, first time service users, elder people, etc).

Box 5 –Management and organisation

The training scheme *Promoting Civil Dialogue through Intercultural Competence Development* was developed and introduced by the *German Institute for Adult Education (GIAE)*.

GIAE is supported by the Regional Umbrella Organisation of the Centres of Adult Education in North-Rhein-Westfalia and the Centre for Migration Studies of North-Rhein-Westfalia. These partners disseminate information about the project, market the training programme, coordinate and support the trainers.

The Institute has a collegial form of partnership with the Centres of Adult Education, which helped with the infrastructure and resources in the pilot phase of the project and continue to carry out the concrete training activities.

After the trial phase (financed by the EU) all training is further financed by the Town Halls – the bodies responsible for the public administration of the city. In some cities the Intercultural Competence training for public servants has been fully institutionalised.

Success factors and innovation

The instigators of the intercultural training scheme - *GIAE* and those that implemented the scheme – regional Centres of Adult Education summarise the success factors in two categories – institutional and training:

Success factors in relation to institutional organisation:

It is essential to ensure the support of strong partners, especially given that the activities in field Active citizenship education do not generate tangible returns in the short term. As *GIAE* specialises in the development and piloting of training, the transfer of the training concept to other partners also ensures the further development and implementation of the training.

Finding the right time for introducing a new training scheme – the training was conceived and proposed at a time when development of personal and organisational Intercultural Competences was high on the country’s agenda.

Development of the CD-ROM with the aim of disseminating the training concept and its methods and piloting of a “train-the-trainers” scheme accredited by the CCS-XPRT Certification of the German Association of the Centres of Adult Education. Both initiatives intended to ensure the sustainability of the training concept and practice.

Success factors for training:

Choose appropriate target groups for whom the training is crucial or highly relevant – civil servants who work closely with migrant groups or migration issues and/or who are

responsible for external communication; and representatives of migrant organisations that are highly motivated and committed to improving the situation of migrants.

Training included direct participation of representatives of migrant organisations and was carried out in cities that had no precedents of Intercultural Competence building activities. The possibility of direct, personal dialogue between civil servants and representatives of the migrant organisations provided by the training programme not only created understanding, sympathy, mutual identification and new contacts between Town Hall administrations and migrant organisations, but also between different groups of migrants.

The possibility of direct application and analysis of the real life examples – the training sought solutions to the daily problems of participants and relied substantially on the analysis of the examples provided by them.

The training is constantly evolving by taking in the feedback of participants and conclusions of trainers.

What next?

In 2007, *GIAE* is planning to spread the training scheme to other German Federal States through the Umbrella Organisations of the Adult Education Centres. Cooperation has already been established with (Free State of) Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, as both have the financial framework to support these developments. Negotiations have also been started to implement the Intercultural Competence training activities in the city of Aachen.

Mülheim am Ruhr is among the cities where the Intercultural Competence for civil servants and Awareness raising seminars for leaders of public administrations are carried out regularly. The City's Centre of Adult Education is at present starting a new course, entitled "Mülheim the Intercultural City", for the civil servants working in close relation with immigrant issues. The training should provide them with the necessary intercultural skills for a professional carrier development in this field. Furthermore, the participants of the first training in Mülheim have formed a network and underwent additional certification that is now enabling them to negotiate new responsibilities to become "Intercultural Anchors" within local administrations.

In some City Halls the Intercultural Competence training has opened a more in-depth debate on the capacity of local administrations to deal with ethnic minorities and migrants. Bochum CAE has managed to ensure the support for the training not only from the city administration - the Town Hall, but also the political support from its mayor. Some other cities like Mülheim am Ruhr have institutionalised the training as part of their standard training programme for public servants.

Last but not least, the Intercultural Training in these German cities has triggered a process of intercultural mainstreaming. There is increased overall awareness, at the organisational level of the public administrations, on the need to become more interculturally competent, to promote understanding between different ethnic groups and to offer services that are better adapted to the specific needs of various stakeholders, including immigrants. The German Institute for Adult Education has recently applied for Gruntvig funding to support precisely these developments through a new project, which will focus on the intercultural development on the organisational level.

Contact details and information sources:

Matilde Grünhage-Monetti
German Institute for Adult Education
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 38
53113 Bonn
Germany
Tel.: +49 (0)228 3294-256
Fax: +49 (0)228 3294-399
Email: gruenhage-monetti@die-bonn.de
Web: www.die-bonn.de

Publications:

Book and CD Rom (in German): "Intercultural Competence in Migration Society" by
Matilde Grünhage-Monetti (2006)

INNOVATION OF STUDENT COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Encouraging students to become more active at school

“When we decided to run this project we wanted the students to really experience a school where democracy is a part of everyday life.” says Allan Feldskou, the headmaster of Abildgårdskolen, one of the schools that participated in the project “Innovation of Student Council Activities”. While nearly all schools in Denmark have student councils, the effectiveness of these structures are very different from one school to another. In some cases, like the one of Abildgårdskolen, students are disappointed by the lack of concrete results. That is where the project “Innovation of Student Council Activities” (“Innovation of SCA”) is trying to fill a gap and transform the functioning of well established activities of student councils and class meetings to make them become real participative bodies.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of education: informal training activity or extracurricular learning

Learning environment: school-based

Target group: Pupils in higher secondary education (10-16 years old).

Main theme: democratic participation, multiculturalism, empowerment, peace/conflict resolution

Duration: The pilot project was run for one year (in 2004) but the approach is still continued in the two schools involved.

Funding: 20,000 Euro

Funding agency: Danish Ministry of Education and the City of Odense.

Democracy education in Denmark

Of course democratic values are taught in schools in Denmark. However, as Birte Kjaer Jensen from the Danish Ministry of Education has confirmed, the concept of active participation was not addressed explicitly by the curriculum until recently. It was assumed that, given the democratic structure of schools, students would have a direct experience of democracy. Among such structures are student councils, compulsory since 1986 in Denmark, but in existence since the 60's. Each school has its own tradition with implicit rules. Students have little understanding and no influence on the way student councils are run. This is one of the reasons for, according to the project organisers, students' disappointment of student council activities. Unlike democratic institutions, student councils in many schools are considered as a “final product” which needs no further elaboration, no argumentation and little explicit formulation of rules.

The “Innovation of SCA” project was part of a wider research programme entitled “Democracy” undertaken by the CVU FYN (university training future teachers). Most of

the activities within this framework were research projects on themes such as: understanding of democracy in schools, psychological aspects of this, student councils and conflict resolution. The “Innovation of SCA” project was the development part of the framework. A project which, on the basis of previous findings, attempted to design a council activity, which students would consider as their own and not as belonging to the school.

Among the findings which inspired this project was the different expectations of students and teachers when it comes to democratic participation in schools. Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Graf, both professors at CVU FYN, and project organisers, found that while teachers want students to learn how to discuss, reach consensus and get along with each other, students, on the other hand, want to defend their interests and see things change. In other words, while teachers see the process as the most important, students are focused on the outcomes.

Students’ disappointment with council activities and hence their lack of interest in them was another important observation which came out of the research. Among the conclusions was a proposal that a more specific and explicit tool for students’ participation was needed. It should have rules which students accept and could be subject to change if students feel it is necessary. Such a tool would be applied to a student council or class meeting (both are participative activities but at different levels). Students would design, lead and develop a sense of belonging through actions they would themselves plan and implement. This is the need that the project “Innovation of SCA” tried to address. As Stefan Graf pointed out: *“We wanted to teach democracy “on the road” not as a “final product.”*

Box 2 – Objectives

To design a framework for a student council (or class meeting) which would ensure real participation. In order to achieve this, the student council should:

- have explicit rules which students feel are justified
- these rules should be subject to change if the participants decide it is necessary in order to support discussion and debate.
- rules should not be too restrictive to allow for concrete results

Teachers but also students should also be able to distinguish between the two different spheres a school represents and their different roles in them. These are:

- the didactical sphere (students as learners)
- the personal sphere (students as affective beings)
- the political/ social sphere (students as citizens)

Innovation of Student Council Activities

Given the fact that “Innovation of SCA” was a pilot project with limited resources it was run only in two schools. In one school, the methodology was applied to student councils and in a second it was used during class meetings. The general methodology which could be used in any particular context of student organisations where decisions

are made was developed by the project organisers (Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Graf).

In this approach students are at the core of all action taken and the role of teachers is very different than that in the classroom but also than is usually the case in student council activities. Both class meetings and student councils are usually led and moderated by a teacher or by a student guided by a teacher. This has certain consequences and side-effects like the fact that more inhibited students do not participate, teachers have a tendency to correct students' errors and a lot of the potential educational effects of these meetings are lost, since students only have partial responsibilities. The suggested model, on the contrary, is based on making students responsible for all the aspects of the meetings and the actions taken as a consequence.

Box 3 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

“Innovation of SCA” clearly addresses issues of participation in a close community, here in a school context. In order to be active members of their community, pupils are encouraged to raise issues they would like to see improved and design actions which will resolve them. Dialogue is seen as a central tool for decision making. The key skills this project develops are responsibility-taking, team work and autonomy.

According to this model, student councils should have a quite straight-forward structure. There should be a “Chairperson” - always a student, and this function is either elected or rotating. His/her role is to ensure that the discussion is constructive and to the point, that everyone contributes and that a consensus is reached at the end.. The second role is the “Minute-man” who writes meeting minutes which are read at the beginning of the next meeting. At the end of the meeting an agenda for the next meeting is drawn up. Each student has the right to bring forward an issue to the agenda. As Thomas Christensen, one of the teachers involved, explained: *“During the meetings teachers have to stand back,”* and let the students manage the meeting. He intervenes if things really go wrong and reminds them of the rules for an efficient discussion. Since the organisers identified students' need for concrete actions, it was important to give them the tools which would lead to efficient decision-making. Therefore detailed guidelines in the form of a checklist for conducting meetings were developed and given to students. Arif, one of the members of the student council in Abildgårdskolen explains: *“I learned how to break down problems to smaller issues in order to undertake actions and this also helps me in other activities.”* [Arif became a member of the local Youth Council and is a popular rapper in his town.] It is assumed that any student should be able to hold the position of chairman.

Another possibility when a teacher can intervene is the so called “Time out”. It can happen that students discuss topics which are linked to wider issues such as human rights, for example. During a “Time out” the teacher can briefly explain the wider context and hence the practical educational element of the student council can be linked with information students receive in other classes. Edith Hjuler, a participating teacher, explains how she used the “Time out” function: *“During a class meeting my pupils were discussing a very sensitive issue and the meeting was becoming very aggressive, partially due to poor understanding of the topics discussed. There are a*

few non-Danish students in the class who took the habit of speaking their native language among each other even when playing with the rest of the class. Some pupils considered this as very offensive since they felt that they were being laughed at. During the "Time out" I explained how this example related to human rights but also which were the values at stake – such as politeness." Even though such an intervention will not solve the problem it enhances the students' understanding of it.

One of the particularities of this approach is that the teachers should not influence students' decisions. Even though they know that a particular decision is not the best one they should let the pupils discover alone that there is bias and where it lies. It is the only way to make students responsible and enable them to feel that it is really their decisions that are being implemented and not the teacher's.

Box 4 - Method – Giving power to the students

Students hold key roles – chairman or minute-man- and learn how to be responsible and impartial.

Students decide on actions to be taken from A to Z. In order to enable them to take decisions efficiently, checklists were developed. They are invited to analyse a problem, come up with solutions on their own, as much as they can and to delegate to others - work in teams.

Some points from the checklist on the management of meetings:

- Before: what is the agenda, what is the time available, what documents can be used
- During: start and finish on time, present the reasons for meeting, check who is present, read the minutes from the last meeting, make sure that the most important subjects are discussed, try to come to a decision.
- After: make sure minutes are written at the latest by the next day and circulated to the participants

Points from the checklist on treated issues:

- In what stage is the issue now (open, some suggestions exist, etc.)
- What information is needed
- What action can be taken, in what form, who can do what, how to ask for help
- Who will follow the development

The teachers' position in this project is somehow non-traditional given that they are not expected to intervene in students' decisions.

Even though the method for the meetings is the same in the context of student councils and class meetings, it does have a slightly different dimension in the two cases. In student councils, pupils are mandated by their classes and usually decisions taken in these councils concern issues linked to the organisation of larger school events. In class meetings the method can also serve a different goal which is conflict resolution. Edith Hjuler, who uses this approach in her class meetings, observes that even though

the discussion does not always lead to conclusions, as was the case with non-Danish students speaking their mother tongue in school, the fact that the issue is brought to the “public sphere” and discussed openly clearly eases the conflict. *“During the first class meeting on this subject, there were very violent verbal exchanges among pupils. Already the second one was much calmer.” “We have not decided anything in particular about this issue but if we hadn’t talked about it so much we would have got nowhere,”* comments Jakob, one of Edith’s pupils.

Results, outcomes and impact

As mentioned, the above project was run as a pilot in two schools in Odense and already during the pilot phase it appeared to be successful. In Abildgårdskolen, where students first felt very pessimistic about student councils and where, as Thomas Christensen commented: *“Student councils achieved no results”*, students *“became much more active and involved”* confirms Allan Feldskou. They implemented several actions among which a football tournament with other schools from Odense. Abildgårdskolen is a particular school where the vast majority of students are from non-Danish origins and it is believed to be a “difficult school”. Therefore the students’ initiative to “improve the schools’ image” through the organisation of a football tournament was welcomed with enthusiasm by the teachers and the direction. Other smaller actions concerning the canteen, the school environment – e.g. improving a playground, and the organisation of a trip were designed and realised thanks to the student council. In order to achieve results, the council activity increased, and at one point students asked the headmaster to let them run the student council meetings more often (once every 2 weeks rather than once per month). In order to enhance students’ participation the headmaster approved this step despite the fact that student council meetings are run during school time.

In both, Abildgårdskolen as well as in the Vestre Skole, where Edith Hjuler uses the method for class meetings, the approach has survived the project phase and is now in use for more than three years. An anecdote from Edith Hjuler’s class shows how students have become “attached” to their meetings. *“I was ill for a short period and was replaced by a teacher who did not know that twice a week at a precise time we always hold short (maximum 15-minute) class meetings. Students requested the replacing teacher to hold the meeting and they were apparently able to hold it on their own. Also the first thing they asked me when I came back was whether they will have the class meetings again.”* It is not only the students, but also the teachers who appreciate this approach. Edith Hjuler, whose class revealed many conflicts from the beginning, tried other approaches before, such as psychological mediation. She has decided that she is definitely going to continue using this approach for class meetings with her other classes.

Very quickly this approach seemed to remove barriers for students to express themselves. As Stefan Graf observed during class meetings, even more inhibited students very quickly wanted to participate and be the chairman. Jakob mentions that through the class meetings he has *“become much more open to discussions with others and now he really understands the necessity of group work.”* Arif had a similar experience and besides becoming more receptive to different positions he also became more active, taking part in the Youth Council of his city and organising activities independently for these two organisations.

Box 5 – Organisation and Management

This project is based on a very clear division of roles. While CVU Fyn developed the method, the two schools implemented them. Even though the project was part of a larger programme within CVU Fyn, the two organisers, Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Graf, were free to develop the programme in cooperation with the participating teachers.

During the project phase the two councils were closely followed by the organisers, who discussed all developments and particularities with the two teachers, Thomas Christensen and Edith Hjuler. Given that in both cases the teachers dedicated part of their working time to the council activities it was necessary to have the support of the schools' administration.

Project organisers were in contact with the two schools during the research phase and at this time identified these two teachers who with the support of their headmasters were very interested in implementing this new approach to their students' meetings. The method developed was a combination of research findings and discussions with teachers.

Success factors and innovation

"It is a success to see that activities we launched in these two schools continue two years after the project phase," comment Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Graf, "but we do not know what would happen if the teachers we worked with left." All the actors involved in the project agree that the dedication and motivation of teachers to work with their pupils on extra-curricular activities are unconditional for the success of this approach. *"Other colleagues in my school run class meetings [they are not compulsory] but most of them are not really interested in how to improve their course and enhance their effects,"* mentions Edith Hjuler. Therefore Stefan Graf recommends that *"the teacher in charge of student councils should not be just any teacher but someone who really wants to do this kind of work with pupils⁴¹ and he/she should have the support of the school."*

Teachers' commitment is closely linked to other important features of this approach which are continuity and regularity. Regularity is a fundamental part of the framework students need in order to express themselves. They need to know that each week (or every other week) at a given time they will have the possibility to speak out and they can prepare for it. Given that the councils and meetings are a means of informal education where the learning process is not tied to a certain curriculum intentional and is done progressively, continuity enables them to obtain results and to acquire new skills and competencies.

And what do students think is the success of this approach? *"We all agree that that this is the most effective way to make decisions in class. Everyone has a possibility to speak up,"* says Jakob. The way the approach is designed, making students responsible for their decisions, creates a stronger feeling of belonging compared to traditional methods where students feel that they are led by the teacher or the school.

⁴¹ There is always one teacher in the school who runs student councils as part of his/her duties..

What next?

It has become clear that once the teachers become convinced about this approach it becomes sustainable. Both Edith Hjuler and Thomas Christensen are trying to recommend it to their colleagues, but at the same time it is a long process given that each teacher is free to decide on how to work with pupils. *“Some colleagues ask me how I manage particular situations. There is also an internet forum for student council leaders where we can exchange experiences, but I have to say that my priority is work with pupils, not spreading the method,”* says Thomas Christensen.

Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Graf continued to be in contact with the schools after the project ended. Following developments they are now thinking about how this experience could be applied beyond the scale of research articles. They have presented the project and its results at several national and international events. Also, every year their institution runs an international three-month course for future teachers from various countries on the topic of “Teaching and Learning for Democratic Citizenship”. They also hope to be able to use the acquired experience in the new curriculum for future teachers, which includes a new subject on moral, social and citizenship issues. They will continue their project activities and next year will run a new project on the school-parents connection, building on prior experience..

Contact details and information sources:

Jens Peter Christiansen – jech@cvufyn.dk

Stefan Ting Graf – stgr@cvufyn.dk

CV FYN

Asylgade 7-9

5000 Odense

Denmark

Tel: 0045 7020 8393

The only online information on his project is available in Danish on the online journal www.folkeskolen.dk

A website on Danish Student Councils (in Danish):

<http://www.eleviodense.dk/wm1>

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MOTHERS AND FATHERS BACK TO SCHOOL

Creating bridges between families

“My mother doesn’t understand me. She gets all upset when I come home only half an hour too late and accuses me of everything under the moon”. “My father does not realise that I am nearly an adult. I have a girlfriend and we are seeing quite a lot of each other, but he keeps on dropping hints about life-threatening sexual diseases and waiting until I am older. It is nearly funny but I would like to tell him that there is no need to worry” “I don’t know whether my daughter is enjoying school, and if she is doing well. The teachers are always so busy and I would like to ask them more about the educational programme and what my daughter is actually learning.” “I know that many parents of the young people that go to school with my son live in the neighbourhood. We sometimes see each other, but we don’t really know each other. It is strange; because I am sure we have the same worries about our children, the school and the local community”.

Do these comments sound familiar to you? Do they make you think of how it was when you were young, or do they refer to a situation you are actually living as a parent? The Institute of Education of the city of Barcelona started up a project with a few very ambitious goals – it wanted to improve communication and understanding between parents and children, whilst at the same time strengthen the local associational tissue and community life. For this purpose, the “Training of Fathers and Mothers” project was created. The project organises short training courses for parents, sometimes involving their children.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of learning: non-formal / informal

Learning context: free time

Target group: Parents

Themes: Social cohesion / integration, empowerment, prevention and democratic participation

Duration: The project started in 2004 and is still ongoing.

Funding: Approximately 15,000 euro (in 2006). Each seminar costs on average 1,000 euro.

Funding agency: The project was financed by the City of Barcelona, as part of Dimension 8 of its City Education Project. The latter consists of eight key dimensions, ranging from Immigration, Mobility and Sustainability to Values and Active Citizenship (i.e. Dimension 8).

Making Barcelona an Educating City

Big urban conglomerations such as Barcelona are often faced with similar challenges and problems. Increased migration has led to cultural tensions, racism and social exclusion of those that have most difficulties to find employment and to make use of services and facilities. Big cities show an overall lack of social cohesion, with

inhabitants meeting each other every day on the streets, living right next door but never taking the initiative to actually meet and communicate. The decreasing levels of involvement in political and associational life are worrying. The educational system does not take account of the demographic changes and is insufficiently aware of the new needs of their population. And like many others, Barcelona decided to develop a proactive strategy to tackle these problems and threats.

The concept of the Educating City was first developed in 1990. The main idea behind the project was that lifelong learning is the key factor bringing together citizens and their families, cultural organisations, leisure associations, city departments, the media and any other stakeholders operating in the city. Without education, in whatever form, people are not open to new experiences, are unaware of new developments and lack the capacity to fully understand these. The Educating City also emphasises the joint 'moral' responsibility that all citizens and organisations have to educate and to learn.

The City Education Project was started in 2003 and was divided into eight main dimensions. These included themes such as mobility, sustainability, non-formal and informal learning and immigration. The eighth dimension, entitled Values and Active Citizenship, sponsored projects with a specific focus on enhancing the civic participation of Barcelona's inhabitants and on exploring and discussing the values of a multi-cultural society.

Local communities, associations, educational institutions and other stakeholders were encouraged to apply for funding under the different dimensions, and the interest in the opportunities offered was overwhelming. Initiatives financed ranged from large-scale interventions to small, local activities with a particular focus on engaging communities. One of these projects, which has been running for several years now, is the Training of Fathers and Mothers. It addresses the increasing alienation and distance parents feel with regard to the lives of their children, and the education their sons and daughters receive.

"In today's society, parents feel that they are losing the contact with their children when they enter puberty. So many external factors, including television, video games and friends seem to take up all the time of their offspring. In addition, many parents are divorced or are both working full-time, thus not seeing their children every day. They wonder what kind of messages school is giving to their sons and daughters, and how to avoid that in this very experimental phase of their lives they end up in dangerous situations", explains Asun López Carretero, project manager on behalf of the Barcelona Institute of Education.

Box 2 – Objectives

- To help parents and children to better understand each other and to strengthen the connections between family members
- To empower parents to become better and more informed educators
- To increase their self-confidence
- To make children aware of basic issues such as mutual respect, critical thinking and of some of the dangers of society
- To promote intercultural learning
- To increase participation
- To strengthen the local associative tissue

The Training of Fathers and Mothers project

Start of the scene: A young girl comes home late at night. She tries to enter silently, without waking anyone up but fails badly: her mother is still awake and very angry. It is not the first time that the girl comes in much later than what was agreed. A heated discussion follows, where both parties soon become emotional and use arguments which have nothing to do with the late arrival. The scene ends. The actors ask the audience, which consists of parents and their children, to describe their reactions to this short theatrical performance. Most of the attendees can recognise themselves in what was just shown. After this short debate, the facilitator asks one girl and one mother to repeat the scene they have just witnessed, but changing the roles: the girl has to act the part of the mother, and the adult woman has to become the daughter.

“Our method is built around the concept of experience-based learning” says Pablo Rivarola, facilitator and co-developer of the project. “By making people a spectator of their own reality, and by asking them to react on what they have seen in either a short theatre play, on video or through other media, they are forced to reflect on their own behaviour. We also often subsequently invite them to repeat the scene they have observed, or to discuss it in detail in smaller groups of participants.”

The project organises regular courses for parents and children in nearly all 10 municipal districts of Barcelona. They take place outside the “normal” living environment of the participants (i.e. not at school, nor in a building where parents would meet for other purposes), and include participants from different districts throughout town. The aim is to get people out of their normal habitat so that they are encouraged to express themselves freely. Between 25-30 persons take part in each course. The courses treat different themes, which are however all somehow related to attitudes, values and overall problems parents and their children encounter. For example, one course centred on violence in and outside the family. Another one focused on how to ensure that family rules are reasonable to and respected by children.

Each course is provided in three to four sessions. The first session consists of an introduction so that the people can get to know each other, find out how the course will work and what is expected from them. This is followed by a sketch, a video or a written medium to set the scene, showing the theme and issues that will be discussed. Often the participants are asked to take part in the role plays and / or comment on the video

messages. One example of such an introductory session is that of the short theatre play with the girl returning home too late.

The second session requires an even more intensive and active participation of the attendees. The facilitators present the leading questions that are to be discussed and then split up their class into smaller groups of four to five persons. The questions sometimes require participants to comment on hypothetical situations, for example a child that refuses to go to school, or seems to have been involved in a fight. Others ask parents to describe their reactions problematic situations. The participants are asked to reflect on the questions, to share their feelings and to come up with suggestions on how they would deal with certain issues. *“It is always amazing to see how, when being placed in smaller groups, even the shyest people dare to make themselves heard”* says Asun López Carretero. *“They are naturally interested in the subjects that are being discussed, but they also have the courage to take a stand. The smaller group discussions sometimes become quite emotional”*.

During the third and possibly fourth session, the course participants are asked to present their considerations on the leading questions. Substantial time is then dedicated to “reconstructing” the central theme of the course. The participants are asked to reflect on what they have learned, and to describe how perhaps they would handle things differently when being faced with a certain situation. Each course is concluded with a short evaluation exercise.



Picture 3: Guide to support families in education of their children and adolescents

Preparations for setting up the project and developing the courses were substantial. In order to make sure that the content and themes matched the needs of the parents, the Barcelona Institute of Education undertook a needs analysis which aimed to identify the main issues and concerns that fathers and mothers would have with regard to their teenaged children and the education these received. The analysis was undertaken through questionnaires to parents and local associations, in combination with a review of existing and relevant research. Once the results had been analysed, the structure and content of the first batch of courses was developed as well as a work programme to help with the planning and organisational aspects.

Box 3 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

What are the main dimensions of Active Citizenship addressed by the practice?

Empowerment. Active participation. Gender awareness. Respect for others. Understanding different cultures. Involving the local community.

“People become active citizens from the moment they feel heard. People who feel that no one pays attention to them will not actively participate in society.”

Box 4 - Method and approach

The project set up a series of courses for parents in nearly all municipal districts of Barcelona. Each course consists of three to four sessions which would last between two to three hours. The method of the course is built around four phases:

- The syntactic analytical phase. In this phase, participants are encouraged to analyse what parents and children say to each other and how messages are being communicated.
- The semantic analytical phase. This phase asks participants to look at the way in which communication comes across: what messages parents wish to convey and how this is, in reality, interpreted by their children (and vice-versa).
- The pragmatic phase: As part of this phase, participants are requested to discuss their reactions and the consequences in case communication fails and their messages are not taken up.
- The reconstruction phase: In the final phase, participants are encouraged to come forward with better and clearer ways of communicating, based on the discussions in the previous phases.

A wide variety of techniques are used to provide information and to actively engage participants in the learning experience. These include cognitive information, role play, simulations, games, debating and games.

The venue of the course and the composition of the group are both important factors. They are provided in “neutral” places where participants would not usually come. The course participants are usually from different districts in the city, so that most attendees are new to each other.

Results, outcomes and impact

The interest and participation in the Training of Fathers and Mothers project is overwhelming. It started with a first pilot course early 2004, but soon the news about this interesting initiative spread and requests for information on the project and the next course dates kept coming in. *“Word by mouth has been our best tool to promote the project”* notes Asun López Carretero *“Parents spoke to friends who also had children, explained how the course had helped them to better deal with certain typical problems, and before we knew it these people were contacting our local partners to find out more about the training”*.

Today, more than 2,000 fathers and mothers have followed the more than 60 courses which have been provided throughout the city of Barcelona. And their reactions are very positive, as one of the participating mothers testifies: *It was such an enormous relief to realise that I wasn't the only one who had doubts about how to deal with my children. During the first session, some other parents and I just couldn't stop laughing and talking about how similar our concerns were, and how we had never expected to share these problems with other persons”*.

The vast majority of parents felt understood for the first time, but more importantly, they also felt that through the sessions and discussions with other fathers and mothers they were able to find practical solutions to their problems. *“I realised that part of the problem was the way I reacted to the behaviour of my son”* explains another mother, *“the more I tended to be overly concerned or anxious, the more my son would literally run away from me, and refuse to discuss matters with me. Now I really make an effort to talk things through calmly, listening to him without judging. He seems to open up as a result of this”*. The courses are very empowering to parents, helping them to see things in a different light. The training is often a first step to further networking between participants, and in more than one case parents joined forces to start a local initiative, e.g. working on improving the neighbourhood or creating a new association.

Another interesting aspect of the courses is the interaction between men and women. Whilst unfortunately the majority of participants are female, fathers are also increasingly finding their way to the project. This helps to combat some serious traditional thinking and stereotyping that is still very much alive in Spanish society. *“Most mothers still think that they have sole responsibility for successfully getting their children through secondary school. Fathers, even when they would like to get involved, are told that it is not their business”*, says one of the course participants with a smile. *“Men are getting more and more emancipated but it is a slow process – we find it hard to move away from our traditional roles”*.

Box 5 –Management and organisation

The project is managed by the Institute of Education, in partnership with the educational councils in the various districts of Barcelona and several parental associations that also exist in the districts.

Within the Institute of Education, one person is responsible for the overall coordination of the project and for leading the training courses. She is assisted by an external pedagogical expert who also acts as a facilitator in the courses. Other external contributors, such as actors and teachers, are involved depending on the content and theme of the course that is being developed.

The work programme for the training is developed by the Institute of Education, in collaboration with the district councils. The latter consults the parental associations and other relevant local organisations on the work programme. Both the district councils and the parental associations inform their members and other actors of the courses and identify participants.

Success factors and innovation

“Before we developed the project, there were no initiatives in town that focused on helping families while at the same time strengthening their links with local community” states Asun López Carretero. *“The courses we provide are part of much larger scheme focusing on actively involving and empowering parents in the political, social and economic development of their neighbourhoods and beyond.”*

When looking at what made the Training of Fathers and Mothers such a successful project, a few things easily come to the mind of its organisers. *“The courses have to be provided by qualified teachers with a solid background”* stresses Pablo Rivarola. *“The teachers we used all had very good communication and facilitation skills. They had to know how to steer a group while at the same time making the participants feel in control. They had to deal with a few pretty stressful and emotional moments”.*

The theme of the courses was also very important. The needs assessment that the Institute of Education carried out gave a first reliable idea of what kind of themes potential participants would be interested in. Further discussions during the courses, and consultation with the local associations helped to identify additional themes, or to refine those that had already been chosen. What appears to work best are ‘day-to-day’ issues linked for example to education, school and activities of children outside school, and ‘areas of concern’ for parents, such as setting rules, drugs or violence.

The partnerships that were formed at the level of municipal districts proved to be a key factor in the success of the project. Only real, operational partnerships can make this type of interactive training a success: the local associations helped to promote the project and identify suitable participants, and took care of most of the logistical arrangements. In addition, their knowledge of the local territory helped to define the themes and approaches to the courses.

The methods and techniques used in the training courses were tailor-fit to the needs and interests of the participants. Whilst this was not always an easy task, when developing over 60 courses in eight different districts of a large city, the positive

reactions to the project illustrated the importance of matching the supply with the demand for training.

What next?

The Barcelona Institute of Education is currently working on the creation of “train the trainer” courses. These should help those that are now running the project to cope with the ever increasing demand and perhaps give new teachers and facilitators a particular thematic focus and / or link them to certain districts. The Institute is also looking into the possibility of setting up mentoring schemes for parents.

Local partners have also asked for similar courses for other target groups, such as young people. Whilst some of the courses that are currently provided to parents do involve the adolescents, it would be interesting to create a learning experience particularly aimed at young people, encouraging them to come together and discuss their concerns and interests.

The continuing interactions between the fathers and mothers that have participated in a course have also made the Institute of Education consider the option of establishing a community network to enhance civic participation in the districts. This would stimulate cooperation and consultation between the city’s districts, and help to identify problems and needs that could be addressed through common city-wide interventions.

Contact details and information sources:

Training of Fathers and Mothers

Asun López Carretero – Pablo Rivarola Padrós

Institut Municipal d'Education

Plaça d'Espanya n. 5

Barcelona

URL : <http://w10.bcn.es/APPS/wprcemp/html/index.jsp>

Publications :

<http://w3.bcn.es/fitxers/educacio/educaresestimarcatalainternet.300.pdf>

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Introduction

The Centre for Education, Counselling and Research (CESI) in Zagreb, Croatia has trained women from different regions of the country and walks of life to be the leaders of tomorrow. The idea behind the Women's Leadership Project was to give women the knowledge and skills to empower them and develop their leadership potential. An innovative training programme was developed to encourage women from different regions, backgrounds and sectors to plan and implement social actions in their local communities. By giving them the necessary tools and skills, women have been able to start up activities and actions on their own initiative in their local communities. *'If I didn't have the opportunity to participate in CESI's leadership training programme, I would have chosen to do just any full-time job,'* explains Gordana Corić. *"The programme gave me new skills which opened up new opportunities for me. I have started my own consulting company and I am also a lecturer at Croatia's first college for entrepreneurship. The fact that I work in different fields has been inspired by the programme, because I realised this was possible."*

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of education: non-formal

Learning environment: free-time / voluntary

Type of learning: democratic participation/empowerment

Target group: Adults / Women

Theme: democratic participation / empowerment

Duration: This 2-year project started in 2003. There were 2 rounds.

Funding: €50,000.

Funding agency: This project was financed by the Academy for Educational Development – a partner of USAID. The second round is being funded by the Balkan Trust for Democracy which is part of the German Marshall Fund.

Problem and context

"Women are not sufficiently represented in leadership and decision-making positions in Croatia," explains Sanja Cesar of CESI. *"The number of women in such positions is quite low."* Croatian society is characterised by strong family values based on traditional gender roles, conservative attitudes and strong patriarchal values when it comes to gender and sexuality. This has been reinforced by the country's experiences of war, nationalism and the growing influence of the Catholic Church following independence and the fall of communism.

Also, there is still progress to be made on equal opportunities for women. A law on gender equality was put in place only fairly recently (in July 2003). Though the Gender Equality Law protects from discrimination and promotes sex equality and the creation of equal opportunities for men and women, it is not enforced.

In order to increase the political representation of women, there is a need to have more women in leadership positions. A good leader is someone who is motivated and assertive and has the necessary knowledge and skills. The training programme developed under the Women's Leadership Project was designed to provide future women leaders with the necessary tools to make an impact at community-level.

Box 2 – Objectives

- To increase leadership skills and capacities of local women.
- To encourage women in local communities to undertake leadership roles.
- To empower and support women members of political parties, local government, women's groups and civil initiatives within local communities.
- To increase gender awareness in local communities.
- To enhance inter-sector cooperation among politicians, the business sector and civil society.

Women's Leadership Project

The training programme provided the practical tools and necessary leadership skills to women who wished to take a proactive role in their own communities but did not know how to go about it.

Aïda Bagić, one of the trainers who also helped to design the training programme explained how the methodology was developed: *"We started by looking at experiences taken from previous training programmes and examining manuals on facilitation and leadership developed for the training of trainers by women's organisations in Serbia and in Macedonia. Though the needs to address were clear – developing the leadership skills of women – it was a challenge to assess the specific needs and existing knowledge and skills of the participants."* In order to determine this, candidates were asked to complete a questionnaire asking them to state their interests and needs, as well as previous training.

A call for participants was made via websites, mailing lists, and through contact with civil society organisations. A real effort was made to invite women from outside urban areas working in local communities. Applications were received from more than 60 women who were interested in developing their leadership skills. 20 were selected for the training programme.

Training was provided through four specific modules, each lasting four days. These modules covered: organisational and leadership skills (including facilitation and communication skills), community advocacy and lobbying (covering the history of the women's movement and women's human rights), working with the media and basic

training methodology and skills (how to design and implement an action plan). In between each module, the participants were given specific assignments to put their newly learned skills into practice.

After completing the training modules, each participant came up with an action plan for an activity which she would put into action in her own community. The action plans addressed the needs which each participant identified at the local level. Examples of activities put into action have included the organisation of workshops on topics such as economic empowerment, community needs assessment, and gender awareness for secondary school students. Some of the participants gave presentations and lectures on topics related to gender equality, while others organised campaigns encouraging the political participation of women.

Other examples of activities successfully put in place include:

- A medical student set up a student organisation and project on reproductive health.
- A women's business project was set up for the production and sale of lavender oil.
- A fair was organised for self-employed women to sell their products.
- Local branch offices were set up for the Serbian democracy forum.

A follow-up evaluation seminar gave participants the opportunity to evaluate the skills they had acquired as a result of training and exchange their experiences of organising community actions.

Box 3 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

What are the main dimensions addressed by the practice?

The practice addresses issues related to gender equality and the promotion of women's leadership. The Women's Leadership Project has encouraged and empowered women to take an active leadership role in their local communities. At the same time, the awareness of gender issues increases in society as a whole.

Box 4 - Method and approach

A training programme to develop and promote women's leadership skills was developed to address the disproportionate number of women in leadership and decision-making positions in Croatia. The content of the training programme took its inspiration from previous training modules and manuals developed by other civil society organisations.

Four training modules were offered covering the following topics:

- Organisational and leadership skills
- Community advocacy and lobbying
- Working with the media
- Training methodology and skills

In between each of the modules, participants were given assignments to put their newly learned skills into practice.

During the last stage of the training programme, the participants were given the challenge to design an action plan based on an assessment of needs in their local community which they would then implement.

Follow-up workshops were held with the participants after the end of the programme to exchange experiences and information on the results of their

Results, outcomes and impact

The evaluation carried out by an external expert at the end of the project assessed the results and the impacts of the projects implemented at the local level. Many women who participated in the training programme showed a keen interest in the content of the programme and were especially motivated to take a leading role in creating new initiatives and developing activities. There was a very high completion rate, as 19 women successfully completed the training programme. Also, 70% of the participants were able to successfully implement their planned activities.

As a result of the actions and activities put in place by the participants, there have been several concrete results:

- In Split a women's organisation was set up which works on projects such as women's health and women and politics. This is noteworthy because Split is a big town and previously there were no women's organisations.
- New women's organisations were formed in Zagreb and Zagarje.
- One of the programme's participants has become a board member of CESI.

Gordana was able to apply her experience of the Women's Leadership Project by introducing gender issues in her teaching at the college of entrepreneurship. As a result her students have been encouraged to think from a gender perspective and many have, for example, used gender issues as a topic for their dissertations. This is

one example of how there has been an effective impact on the awareness of gender issues.

Feedback received from participants revealed that they have been able to greatly benefit from the knowledge and skills they have gained as a result of the programme. They have also experienced increased self-confidence.

Box 5 –Management and organisation

The project was managed by CESI who launched the call for participants, oversaw the smooth running of all aspects of the project and provided support to the participants. A consultant designed the training programme and elaborated the content of each of the modules. Each training module was covered by an experienced trainer specialised in the topics covered. At the end of the programme, an evaluation of the project was conducted by an external consultant.

Success factors and innovation

The success of the training programme is due to several factors. First of all, the high completion rate shows that the right participants were chosen to take part. Also, the fact that 70% of the participants successfully implemented their planned activities reveals a high level of motivation and that they were effective in putting their newly acquired skills into practice. The project was also very successful in reaching out to women from different regions of the country and from a wide variety of sectors.

Participants found the training programme well planned and organised, and appreciated the diversity of the group as it taught them to listen to and consider different perspectives. Planning an action and bringing it to fruition was an empowering experience for many of the women, giving them the confidence they need to be proactive and take advantage of their new skills and make a contribution to their own communities. *“The experience was very beneficial and empowering for me. Being selected in the first place as a potential leader is empowering in itself!”* explained Gordana. *“The programme responded to a need and provided a space for real dialogue in a safe environment. The session on presentation skills was very useful for many and improved their self-esteem.”* Participants also had the opportunity to write articles for publications such as the manual on women and leadership – an activity which allowed them to put their new skills to use.

There were other beneficial aspects which came out of the project. Relationships and contacts were formed within the group which proved to be invaluable and have continued after the end of the programme. Also, many participants were empowered and inspired to create new opportunities for themselves. *“The historical background provided on feminist organisations in Croatia was inspirational for many,”* Aida, one of the trainers, pointed out: *“They saw that many women’s organisations which are now well established and influential had very modest beginnings.”*



Picture 4: "Empowered" participants

What next?

The project has generated lots of media interest and articles on the programme and project activities have appeared in national and local newspapers. As a result of the project, a manual on women and leadership was produced and published with contributions from the participants as well as the trainers and other associates. The manual presents the theoretical basis of women's leadership, analyses the social, economic and political contexts, and offers a methodology for leadership training for women. The manual was promoted at a launch event during which several participants were able to take the floor. One of the project participants also successfully promoted the launch of the manual in Split via her organisation.

Round two of the training programme started in early 2006 and will finish at the end of the year. Based on the experiences from the first round, there were some changes made: there are only 2 modules instead of 4. This is for budgetary reasons as the travel costs for participants and trainers take up a significant part of resources. Recommendations were taken on board to include the topic of fundraising as part of the training. Also, it was recommended that in the future participants with equal levels of knowledge and experience should be chosen.

Contact details and information sources:

CESI – Centar za edukaciju, savjetovanje i istraživanje (Centre for Education, Counselling and Research)
Filipovićeva 20
10 000 Zagreb
Tel. +385 1 24 22 800
Email: cesi@zamir.net
Web: www.cesi.hr

Publications:
Women's Leadership (2004)

STREETS FOR PLAYING, STREETS FOR LEARNING

A groundbreaking initiative to improve citizens' life

Imagine for a moment a city with streets closed to traffic, where children and people of all ages could meet, gather, discuss and play. Today this seems unfeasible: our cities are more and more invaded by cars, traffic jams and pollution while green spaces per capita are decreasing drastically. In order to tackle a problem that is becoming more and more evident, Legambiente, the biggest environmental NGO in Italy, came up with an original and innovative idea: close the roads to traffic once a year in most Italian cities to allow citizens of all ages to “take possession” of their spaces.

“100 streets to play on”, celebrating this year its 12th birthday, is a very popular and wide-spread initiative: every year 2,000 streets or squares are closed to traffic in more than 200 participating cities in Italy. Every year, children and citizens of all ages have the opportunity to gather together and organise activities, re-discover their cities and spaces and become aware of their environmental and social rights. In other words, they have the opportunity to become active citizens!

Box 1 - Key characteristics

Learning environment: Streets and squares

Type of learning: Awareness raising, social learning

Target group: Children and all other residents

Theme: Improving the quality of urban life, democratic participation.

Duration: The project started in 1994.

Funding: Volunteering and participation of different local associations

More cars than green spaces: a sad reality

Italy is the first country in the EU as far as the highest number of vehicles per capita is concerned. There are 103 cars circulating in the country per square kilometre, a very high rate compared to 65 in Germany and 57 in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, for every newborn baby, 4.4 cars are registered. Cities are becoming less and less people-friendly: pedestrian and green spaces per capita are decreasing, obliging people to meet and socialise in restricted spaces such as pubs or gardens.

“Our cities are losing their “social” role, there are few meeting places left, squares and streets are dangerous and green spaces are disappearing,” said Amedeo Trolese, an environmental assessor at the municipality of Rome.

This problem is felt even more in a country like Italy where the role of squares, seen as public and social places, has historically and traditionally been very important. The town square is a constant feature of Mediterranean town-planning, since the Greek

Agora and the Roman Forum: it was where citizens used to gather, discuss, take political decisions, exercise justice or, more simply, play traditional games and celebrate festive days.

With “100 streets to play on” Legambiente wants to rediscover the true value of these social places and encourage citizens to assume a more conscious and active attitude towards the quality of their lives.

“We certainly do not want to go back to the Stone Age. We know that nowadays a world without cars would not be possible,” said Luciano Ventura, the person responsible for the project, *“anyway, we wish to improve the awareness of citizens, their quality of life and engagement towards the place where they live.”*

Box 2 – Objectives

- To allow citizens of all ages to “take possession” of their public spaces by closing roads to traffic.
- To make citizens more engaged within their neighbourhoods/cities, giving them more responsibility and power to take decisions.
- To make citizens more aware and conscious of the environmental problems affecting their spaces.
- To change the mentalities of citizens and other actors deployed on the ground (associations, public bodies and administrations).
- To motivate citizens to take an active role towards environmental change.

The city of dreams at everybody’s hand

The principle of “100 streets to play on” is very simple but somewhat revolutionary: banning vehicles from one street or square in the city for a whole day to let citizens gather and organise common activities outdoors.

The event usually takes place on a Sunday in early-spring: a good opportunity to welcome the first few sunny days. The date is usually proposed by Legambiente headquarters in Rome and agreed on by the local offices spread across Italy. The choice of the public space is left to both the local Legambiente offices and the public authorities and is guided by a number of criteria: it has to be an important place, a major crossing or a busy street. It could also be a symbol of the city, like a main road or major traffic junction.

Closing an area of the city for one day is certainly not a simple task, but a significant undertaking requiring 3 to 4 months of organisation. First of all, an agreement with the local administrative bodies has to be reached concerning the date and place of the event. Sometimes the authorities can refuse or ask for a “public occupation tax” to be paid. This can go up to 500 Euro for a big city such as Milan. In certain cases, cooperation with the administrative bodies goes pretty smoothly and common objectives and common grounds of teamwork are easily found.

As Amedeo Trolese explained: *“The initiative of Legambiente fits perfectly within the environmental agenda of the municipality. Public authorities should focus on these*

positive synergies and overcome traditional and inflexible ways of thinking. Initiatives of this type have the power of strengthening actions of public administration towards citizens”.

After having sorted out practical arrangements with the local administrations, the second step is the organisation of the event itself: the types of activities planned, actors involved, timing and themes. Legambiente is not the only actor involved in the organisation of “100 streets to play on”: local associations, other NGOs such as the World Wildlife Fund, sporting organisations, ethnic minority organisations, schools as well as ordinary citizens work together to set up the agenda of this event which gathers more than 300,000 persons across Italy annually. Anybody can propose an activity, theme for a workshop, game or show: “100 streets to play on” is an event organised by the citizens and for the citizens!

The activities organised are wide-spread and most of them are targeted to young children. An especially important place is given to the street games which have been passed on from generation to generation. Other activities include artistic and creative workshops, music, theatre and stands set up by associations and dedicated to various themes: the environment, animal protection, ethnic minorities. The idea is that “100 streets to play on” is a day to spend together having fun but also an opportunity for citizens to learn something new, express a concern or share a problem.

Stands and games are usually focused on environmental issues: how to use recycled materials, save energy, be environmentally-friendly, fight pollution... Children are taught to play with recycled materials: for example, a bowling match was organised with used milk bottles and a giant shanghai game was arranged using broomsticks. Nothing is sold during the event - cakes and fresh orange juice are prepared by mums and local tradesmen offer their products (for example, a baker offered freshly-baked bread and pizza to all the children). In this way, citizens are encouraged to do something for the community. In other words, “100 streets to play on” fosters not only the sense of active citizenship but also that of solidarity and a cooperative spirit.

As Tiziana, one of those responsible for the organisation of the event, said: “*100 streets to play on can be seen as an observatory for original and constructive initiatives.*”

Box 3 - Definition / concept of active citizenship

Active citizenship is the willingness of citizens to act and make a change by fostering the quality of their lives and demonstrate their attachment to the environment. Being active citizens means becoming actors in society and taking a leading role in the process of transformation of the status quo. Furthermore active citizenship stimulates reflection, curiosity and motivation.

Box 4 - Method and approach

Closing a street or a square, even if only for one day, is not an easy task. The entire coordination and organisation of the event requires 3 to 4 months of work and comprises 3 main stages. As the event takes place every day, the allocation of responsibilities and the procedure to follow have already been tested out.

- The first step in the organisation of a “100 streets to play on” day entails contacting the local administrative bodies, setting up a date and a place and sorting out all the practical arrangements. This is usually arranged by Legambiente headquarters and regional offices across Italy.

- The second step in the organisation involves all the local associations, circles, social and environmental organisations, schools and citizens themselves. All these actors propose and jointly decide the type of activities that are going to take place in the “100 streets to play on” event. The decision is therefore democratic, citizens choose what, how, who and when. This “self-governing” process fosters not only a sense of active citizenship but also that of solidarity and a cooperative spirit.

The activities organised are wide-spread: traditional games, concerts, theatre and circus acts but also stands and information counters where citizens can learn more about different themes (pollution, animal protection, civic education, ethnic minorities...). “100 streets to play on” is an event developing intercultural and intergenerational dialogue as well as citizenship knowledge.

- The third stage is the “100 streets to play on” day itself: everybody is invited to join in the activities and last-minute shows, exhibitions or games are improvised by the participants.

A change on the ground, a change in citizens’ minds

The first edition of “100 streets to play on” was a big success: 100 streets were closed for one day across the whole country. Since 1994, the number of streets closed, as well as cities and citizens participating in this initiative did not stop growing: up to 2,000 streets closed and a total of 300,000 persons taking part in the activities across Italy!

But apart from these exceptional numbers, the strength of “100 streets to play on” is its results and impact on citizens and other local actors.

Why can we consider “100 streets to play on” to be a sustainable project? Since its beginning, Legambiente’s initiative has made big steps towards the permanent pedestrianisation of a number of streets and squares across the country. Furthermore, the project has contributed noticeably to the development of a dialogue on urban mobility and quality of life with public authorities.

In the capital, the first edition of “100 streets to play on” was organised in via dei Fori, one of the most important and central streets in Rome, skirting the most beautiful Roman forums and the Coliseum. After the event, citizens pushed for the pedestrianisation of the avenue, which nowadays is closed every weekend.

Another striking example of the project’s sustainable results is the birth of a new pedestrian area: square Agosta, which no more than three years ago, was a big thoroughfare for the capital’s traffic. Here the dynamic was quite significant as the citizens were directly involved in the decision through a public consultation. Square Agosta was initially closed for a “100 streets to play on” day. Citizens’ reactions to this event were very positive: they finally discovered the true meaning and value of a corner of the city without cars! They therefore decided to ask the municipal authorities,

with the help of Legambiente, for the permanent closure of the square. The administrative authorities then decided to consult the residents – thus launching a public consultation that lasted two weeks. For this purpose, a tent was installed in the middle of the square, welcoming residents to give their opinion and possible suggestions for future urban developments. The outcome of the consultation was pretty clear: 75% of the residents polled were in favour of the pedestrianisation of square Agosta!

The newly established pedestrian area has been inaugurated by the mayor of Rome in January 2004. Today it is a place where children, teenagers and citizens of all ages can meet safely and where all sorts of social events are organised regularly.

Box 5 - Management and organisation

“100 streets to play on” is only one of the initiatives of Legambiente. The NGO is the biggest environmental association in Italy, with more than 110,000 members and 1,000 local circles. This decentralised organisation is the strength of Legambiente as it allows for local cooperation all across the country. Within the “100 streets to play on” project, Legambiente offices cooperate with a wide range of local associations as well as with local administrative authorities. The organisation of a “100 streets to play on” day is difficult and long: associations and public authorities have to convene on a certain date for the event, which has to be the same for all participating cities. The associations also have to find money for financing the event: taxes for occupation of a public space, police, traffic signals and metal barriers. These costs can go up to 2,000 Euro in big cities like Rome and Milan.

The practical tasks are shared between the associations participating in the organisation: everyone carries an equal weight of responsibilities.

Success factors and innovation

The success factor of “100 streets to play on” is the active participation of citizens in the organisation and running of this event. The project is open to all those wishing to participate and contribute no matter their age, gender or ethnic origin or type of activities proposed. At least once a year citizens have the possibility to “express” themselves, putting across and sharing with others their desires and ideas for a healthier city. In this sense, “100 streets to play on” is more than just a social event: people of different ages and cultures get together to make a change, and take a step towards a better quality of life.

Since the first edition, citizens have reacted very positively to “100 streets to play on”. As Luciano Ventura said: *“I have received lots and lots of letters from people saying how great it was. They would like us to organise more days like this during the year. Nevertheless, we think that this should not become a regular event, otherwise people would not pay the right attention to it and “100 streets to play on” would just become an initiative like many others.”*

For the promoters of the project, “100 streets to play on” is more than a mere event. It is a tool for citizens to think more about their cities, children and future. It is a means to

rediscover the importance of socialisation and that of citizens' rights. And, furthermore, it is a way of breaking out of routine by making a visible change to everyday life.

"100 streets to play on" is a ground-breaking initiative. Although, as Luciano Ventura explained, *"There is nothing new in playing and meeting in the streets of our cities. It is just like it used to be!"*.

What next?

Given the great success of the project, the promoters decided to make this event a regular occurrence: "100 streets to play on" has been organised every spring since 1994. What are the plans for the future? As the promoters of the project said: *"Our goal for the future is to see the number of participants and actors involved in the organisation of the event grow every year. We would like to welcome more initiatives and proposals coming from citizens themselves and feel that "100 streets to play on" is making a change in citizens' minds."*

Box 6 - Contact details and information sources

Luciano Ventura

l.ventura@mail.legambiente.com

Legambiente headquarters

Via Salaria 403

00199 Roma (RM)

tel.: 06 86268 1

fax: 06 86 21 84 74

legambiente@legambiente.com

<http://www.legambiente.com>

EMPOWER LOCALLY, ACT GLOBALLY

Introduction

What can you do to promote active citizenship education in a country like Sweden, where most of the people are already involved in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)? The answer of the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations, the LSU, is simple – you can provide a platform for youth organisations to express their opinions, share experiences and to run projects with the goal of exercising their influence on national and international communities and policy making. This role, however, becomes a challenge considering that LSU is a coordinating body of almost 100 Swedish youth organisations representing the diverse interests of about 1.5 million young people.

But there is nothing that good management, almost 60 years of experience and a democratically organised structure can not handle. LSU operates on three interlinked levels (national, European and global), addressing a multitude of issues, with emphasis on development and environment. It mediates the positions of a large range of youth organisations “from the party-political youth organisations, student movements, religious organisations and environmentalists to chess players⁴²”. Åsa Bjerling, the president of LSU points out: *“The active citizenship issues are in fact the only common denominator of the member organisations united in LSU – we talk about political involvement, participation, development and environmental responsibility.”*

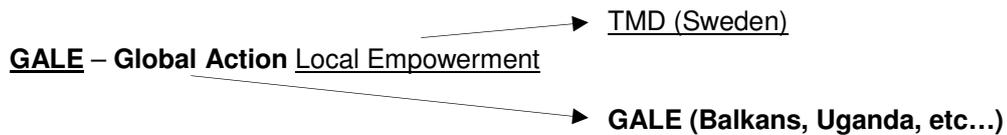
The LSU in context

Ms. Bjerling summarises the role of the LSU in promoting active citizenship education as providing answers to few short questions: *“What does it mean to be a young Swede in the global context? How do I participate? How to get my (organisation’s) ideas across? How to set up a project? How to find funding? How do I work against norms I do not agree with?”* The LSU addresses these questions by providing information and training on capacity building and project management on the national, European and global levels. *“We have many knowledgeable people among our members and our national and international partners,”* says Ms. Bjerling: *“All we need to do is to find a way to involve them and make them share their ideas and experience.”* She also stresses that LSU activities create new links and cooperation between different organisations. They benefit both “the teachers” and “the taught” in the process of becoming an expert in their particular field. The LSU also arranges a platform for youth organisations to meet young people, something that is done only through “To Make a Difference” (TMD) project.

To Make a Difference

TMD represents the total of LSU activities taking place in Sweden as part of a larger framework of cooperation on issues of gender equality, sustainable development, youth policy, and capacity building with different youth organisations all over the world, entitled GALE – Global Action Local Empowerment.

⁴² “Brief history and legal status” LSU website: <http://www.lsu.se/In%20English.aspx>



The vision of GALE is a strong civil society built on democratic values and good governance in which young people are active participants. The LSU is helping to turn this vision into reality by supporting the development of stronger national youth organisations in Eastern Europe, Balkans, Lebanon, Uganda, Ghana, South Africa, Cambodia and the Philippines through 14 different projects. These projects are financed by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and supported by LSU member organisations.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of education: Non-Formal

Learning environment: Free - time - voluntary

Target group: 10 top people from the member organisations of LSU

Theme: Democratic participation / Multiculturalism / Empowerment

Duration: 2002 – 2005, 2005 – (new 3-year-long programme)

Funding: € 334.000.

Funding agency: 90% Sida and 10% LSU member organisations

TMD consists of two main components: in the framework of the first one training is provided to high level representatives of LSU member organisations and partners the second component, entitled “What do I do?” consists of biannual two-day seminars for young people who are not yet involved in youth organisations. The ensemble of this training is bringing global issues closer to the Swedish youth and in turn projecting ideas and expectations of local youngsters into national and international policy making. In this context, TMD is a capacity building tool that helps to channel the voice of the Swedish youth to Swedish government bodies and international organisations striving to influence the policy outcomes that will have an effect on youth in Sweden and in the countries with which LSU has bilateral partnerships.

Per Olsson, responsible for advocacy in LSU explains the strategic importance of this two-way information flow: *“LSU offers capacity building courses in the same areas in which our representatives are sent out to work externally (in meetings with Ministers, international conferences, the UN, etc.). In this way, we can bring information home from where the policy decisions are made and bring member ideas into the national, EU and global policy making with more success.”* For example, there is a person representing the Swedish youth organisations in the country’s delegation to the United Nations, who has the final voice in defending the position of the Swedish youth every October when the UN General Assembly is voting on the *World Programme of Actions for Youth*.

The LSU equally works towards a better representation of the interests of its international partners in the Swedish Strategy on Global Development⁴³. Mr. Olsson illustrates this with the example of Cambodia – a country that has 65% of young people among its population. The needs and opinions of the people there must be taken in account when elaborating Swedish Development policy. The LSU training and mainstreaming activities are both improving the capacity of its partner organisations in other countries and informing the Swedish government through LSU about the needs of youth world-wide. Succeeding in this advocacy work, claims Mr. Olsson, provides “proof” that the voice of youth is heard in the national and international arena. It also serves as a strong motivational factor for the active members of the youth organisations and those wishing to join them. *“Decreasing the gap between policy making and implementation,”* he says: *“is really promoting active citizenship.”*

Box 2 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

What are the main dimensions addressed by the practice?

With the TMD training activities the LSU is enhancing the capacity of youth leaders from its member organisations to mainstream their position into country’s (or global) youth policy. The LSU is shortening the distance between youth participation and policy outcomes, and thus gives an even stronger impetus for active civic engagement of young people.

TMD also provides LSU member organisations with a platform from which to address young people who are not yet active in civic movements. During TMD meetings with youth, the various LSU member organisations have the possibility to inform young people about the national and international issues they are working on. Young people are provided with choice of organisations they may take part in and with information how to get involved.

However, international partners are not only there to seek assistance, they are a crucial part of TMD training, providing specialist knowledge and hands-on experience on issues high on the global development agenda. For example, during the 2006 Global Conference, which was discussing the role of youth in different aspects of peace, security, development and conflict resolution, a lot of knowledge came specifically from the international partners. For example SADC, the Youth Movement of South Africa, attended the conference with a presentation on how to mainstream AIDS work in other fields of activities. An initiative, in line with the political focus of the LSU: to become involved also in fields of activity that do not necessarily have “youth” in their title, and yet have a crucial impact on young people globally.

⁴³ This Strategy is jointly developed by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sweden’s International Development Agency.

Box 3 – Objectives

The project "To make a difference" is a component of the "Global Action Local Empowerment" (GALE) programme. The objective of the project is the exchange of skills and experience in areas of project management and advocacy, among people from different organisations (mostly youth councils, associations and NGOs, members of LSU) and also from different countries. An additional aim is to develop methods for cooperation with and within various youth organisations. These new synergies have a great potential to generate new insights into contemporary issues, solutions to common challenges and innovative policy messages.

Adam Axelsson, the Vice President of the LSU, evokes the crucial importance of the adequate choice of participants for the TMD training: *"When we invite members, it is very important to specify who should come and what they can expect."* The participation in the training is voluntary, provided that the candidate matches the specified target group (people related to the theme of the training, country, specific participant interests: e.g. project management). Each member organisation may put forward two participants out of its 10 top people – leaders who can further spread their knowledge to thousands.

Box 4 - Method and approach

The TMD programme is based on peer learning and uses interactive methods. Training is divided in two broad sub-themes - "Advocacy and Policy Making" and "Capacity Building and Leadership". Workshops are given by LSU member organisations with relevant experience in the theme (as well as presentation skills) and with a strong interest in passing on their knowledge.

In the framework of TMD, LSU provides the following training regularly:

1. (International) Project Management (twice a year) – management and advocacy on national and international levels.
2. Evaluation / learning organisation (once a year) – use of newly gained knowledge to improve your project / organisation

In addition, LSU proposes training on new themes, which are elaborated by the LSU secretariat (taking account of the current issues and previous training evaluations), member organisations and Zenit (Sida Department for Youth Information).

Twice a year the LSU offers the two-day training course "What can I do?" to Swedish youth (17 to 23 year-olds). The training includes exercises and seminars on development, inspirational lectures, a choice of two (out of six) 75-90 minutes long seminars on the theme of participant's interest, and a possibility meet face to face with the representatives of 10 LSU member organisations, providing information of their activities and ways to get involved.

To ensure the quality and relevance of the training, LSU brings in as many different member organisations' perspectives as possible, equally relying on its international partners' (UNDP, Forum Syd, Amnesty International, the Swedish UN association. etc) expertise and knowledge.

Results, outcomes and impact

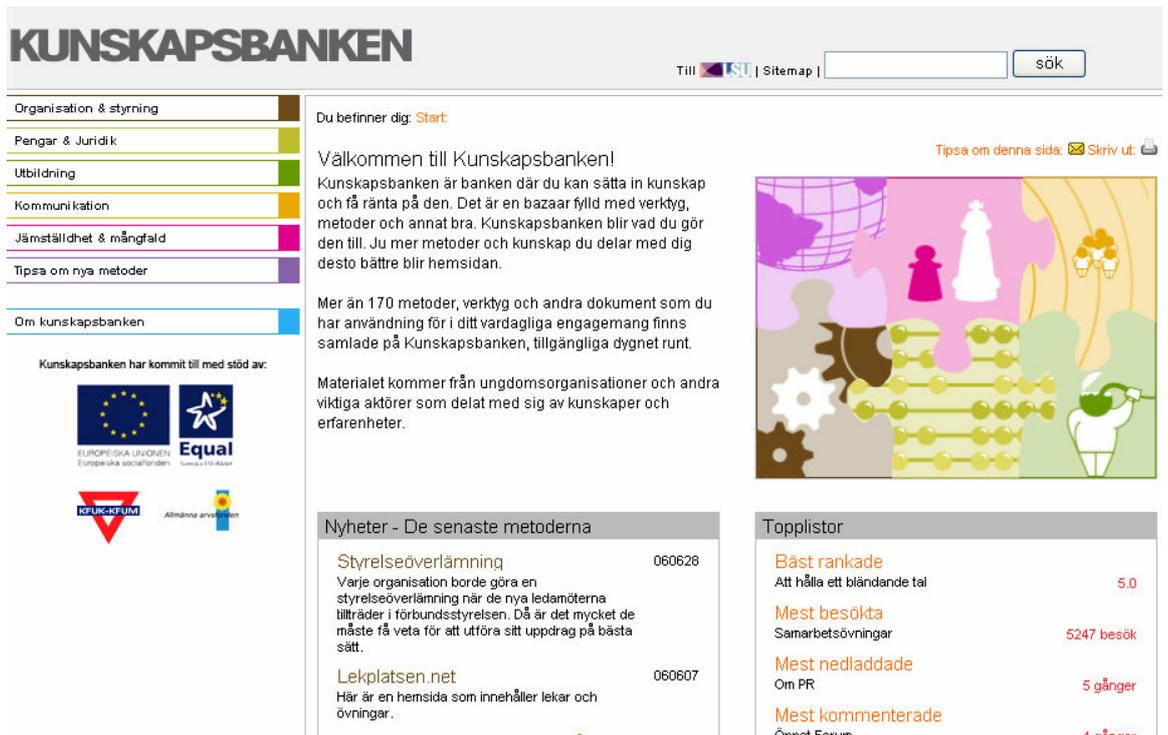
In the period from 2002-2005 approximately 1000 representatives of around 70 LSU member organisations have received training in the framework of the TMD project. Up to this day, the knowledge and experience has been passed through them to more than 10 000 activists in youth organisations and beyond, while the LSU has reached around 20 000 young people through its website. The Vice President of the LSU is pleased to see the results achieved, Mr. Axelsson argues: *“For us, it is more important to have 1000 young people engaged rather than 10 really skilled. The development agenda is more likely to be furthered by a thousand than a dozen.”*

Fredrik Engström, a former participant of the TMD training, now a board member of the LSU and a president of Sverok⁴⁴, argues that quantity has not been achieved on expense of quality: *“As evaluation has been standardised in the LSU, you can compare the feedback of the participants in different training courses across themes and between various periods of the TMD training. Participants’ satisfaction is very high - 5 out of the maximum of 6 - and has been relatively stable over a long period of time.”*

As one of the founders and the ex-president of the organisation of Swedish Youth Press, Mr. Engström also compliments LSU network of presidents. *“There is a very good network of presidents that helps you to improve your performance as a head of a youth organisation,”* he says, *“It provides you with different solutions to the challenges you may be facing and gives you tools for problem solving.”* LSU has set up a variety of networks (including one for press, secretariat general, etc.) between representatives of its member organisations with the purpose of sharing information, exchange of good practice and professional experience.

As part of the TMD project, LSU has also developed a "knowledge bank" – an online database of projects and methods, which is freely available on the LSU website. This site consists of four different databases with references to reports, books, lecturers, etc. for the use of LSU members and other interested parties. This knowledge bank includes information about international co-operation, leadership and organisational development, methods to achieve equality and mainstream youth policy. In co-operation with international partner organisations, the English version of this tool will be launched shortly.

⁴⁴ Sveriges Roll- och Konfliktspelsförbund (the Swedish Role Playing and Conflict Gaming Federation) is a Swedish nationwide umbrella organisation for gaming clubs and one of the largest members of the LSU with approximately 100 000 young activists nationwide.



Picture 5: Screenshot of the knowledge bank

Finally, by using TMD training and online tools as a medium, LSU has been able to listen more attentively to the messages coming from its members and in return has been more successful in introducing new perspectives among the organisations it assembles. LSU is challenging the traditional idea of who is an expert on development issues by inviting a large number of representatives from its partner organisations in developing countries as trainers for the TMD project.

New contacts for international cooperation, lobbying and dissemination possibilities gained through the TMD course have further influenced the way Swedish youth organisations perceive their role on the national and international scene. *“What LSU has done is to help us understand that we are a part of a much bigger, interesting, global perspective,”* says Mr. Engström on behalf of the organisation of Swedish Youth Press that he presided. *“For example, when we discussed the freedom of press with people from Byelorussia, during the 2006 Global Conference, it made us realise that the separation between national and international issues does not really exist. The problems we face are interrelated. It is the LSU that has brought us this understanding.”* This interconnection of levels of activities has been integrated in the new TMD work programme, developed during 2005, which has shifted its focus away from the division between national and global towards an integrated TMD promoting capacity building and youth policy. Ms. Bjerling, the president of the LSU underlines: *“There are no longer global or local issues. There are just issues of human importance. And TMD is an excellent illustration of this.”*

Box 5 –Management and organisation

The broad guidelines for the TMD training themes are elaborated by the LSU secretariat and approved by the managing board. Training is predominantly by the LSU member organisations, with the coordination assistance from the LSU team.

The project is coordinated by two persons in LSU, one is the project leader and the second supports the project manager.

There are two ways how the TMD training courses are organised: (1) Either a member organisation who wants to organise a workshop on a certain theme manifests its wish to do so, or (2) LSU asks member organisations who have an expertise on a certain subject of common interest to organise a workshop on this topic.

Courses are available for all LSU members but also for their partners elsewhere in the world. TMD tries to bring in maximum of expertise from its members, partners and international organisations in order to bring new perspectives in the training.

“What can I do?” two-day seminar for young people relies heavily on Sida support, in terms of housing and its pre-established channels of dissemination.

Success factors and innovation

Julia Daniels, the LSU responsible for international project coordination and evaluation, views the success of TMD as result of the optimal utilisation of knowledge and resources from the inside (member organisations) and the ability of LSU to attract and valorise the inputs of external experts (according to the theme either the relevant representatives of Ministries, the UN, Sida, Zenit, etc.). This combination of using relevant and competent trainers and making the right choice of speakers who not only have thematic but also presentation experience, ensures the high professional level and quality of the training.

“We have learned, and made this a part of our strategy, to use members as organisers and not only as participants or trainers, offering through shared participation their involvement, motivation, skills, and inspiration,” says Ms. Daniels. The method based on involvement and exchange of experience is very accessible to the member organisations, they practically own and organise the training themselves. This approach not only improves LSU’s cooperation with its members and ensures their commitment, but also helps to maintain the quality and the relevance of the themes chosen for the training.

As LSU has a relatively constant number of members and a stable basis of financial resources, the new partnerships and cooperation established between member organisations through TMD strengthen its position and ensure the growth of the project.

The synergies of members, partners and international experts working together also result in original training and working methods. For example, the LSU tries to spread out its work geographically to avoid areas oversaturated with information, addressing towns and regions where there is high demand among youth for information on how to get involved. Accessibility of information materials produced by the LSU is another issue where the organisation is drawing heavily on the expertise of its members. It has

learned new ways of how to appeal to youth and how to present the information in a way it would be easy for them to interpret it and make choices.

What next?

When Mr. Axelsson, the Vice President of LSU, formulates the political vision of the organisation for the next years he touches upon both the very essence and the limitations of democracy. *“LSU is moving away from the role of umbrella organisation that communicates consensus towards a discussion arena of diverging opinions,”* says Mr. Axelsson: *“LSU is becoming less a national council on top and more a platform to launch members’ ideas.”* The philosophy of the organisation is no longer to find a single conclusion or consensus, but rather to present a list of members’ propositions from which the decision makers can draw recommendations of youth for policy and institutional reforms.

The president of the LSU, Ms. Bjerling illustrates this new approach by a following TMD scenario: *“Take the discrimination issue. For example, when the Turkish representatives sit together with Gay and lesbian youth association and Swedish young social democrats the synergy is great. And we expect some outstanding results from these meetings in a year or two.”* Furthermore, the LSU can assist small organisations or members with limited mainstreaming capacity to get their ideas, overflowing from the TMD training into the large LSU pot, out into the public sphere.

The LSU is already mainstreaming the national experience gained through “To Make a Difference” training activities internationally through world-wide networks of “Global Action, Local Empowerment” (GALE). The contacts made during the last LSU Global Conference will, for example, allow closer cooperation between the organisation of Swedish Youth Press and its peer organisations in Republics of Namibia and South Africa. The new partnership is planning to contribute to the freedom of speech in various countries of southern Africa by hosting partner organisations’ articles on Swedish Web servers as well as extending the existing databases of articles, ideas and methods to include the information from these newly gained partners.

Contact details and information sources:

Åsa Bjering
National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations
Pustegränd 1-3
S - 118 20 Stockholm
SWEDEN
Tel.: +46 8 440 86 70
Fax: +46 8 440 86 80
Email: asa@lsu.se
Web: www.lsu.se

Publications:

- LSU Info (monthly newsletter)
- Outlook (annual magazine targeting foreign embassies in the Nordic countries, Nordic embassies abroad, international organisations and agencies)
- Reports
- Inspiration books (creative and accessible information compilations on issues highly relevant for the youth and member organisations)

EMPOWERMENT OF ROMA VOICE

Roma do not just sing and dance!

“Before the project, whenever we would propose or ask something from the local authorities, they would think that Roma could only sing and dance. They would not take us seriously” says Slávka, one of the participants in the project “Empowerment of Roma voice” (ERV). ERV proves that the opposite is true. It put all its efforts on activating and mobilising Roma communities, not only by helping the local Roma NGO’s to become self-sufficient and autonomous but also through investing directly in the personal development of Roma leaders. Quite uniquely, the project gave direct responsibilities to the Roma leaders, enabling them to be taken as serious partners in the dialogue with authorities. SPOLU, which means “together” in Slovak, is the non-governmental organisation that has been running the project since its creation two years ago.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Type of education: non-formal

Learning environment: free-time / voluntary

Target group: Adults / Ethnic minorities. More specifically the project focused on Roma leaders and the wider community (Roma and non-Roma in around 10

Main theme: empowerment, community development

Duration: 3 years. The project is in its second year

Funding: 53,000 euro for the first two years, covering the inputs of 2 project managers and regional leaders, and financing of small-scale community activities

Funding agency: SPOLU Foundation Netherlands

Roma projects in Slovakia

The Roma community is the second largest minority in Slovakia. It is estimated that there are 320 000 Roma living in the country, making up for nearly 6% of the total population. From these, it is estimated that only half are truly integrated and interacting with the non-Roma population. The other half are concentrated in communities which are relatively isolated, ranging from a block of houses in a city neighbourhood to remote and isolated settlements. The dangerous combination of living in isolation and being heavily discriminated has led to poor living conditions, high levels of unemployment and poverty. The only way towards solving such problems is to make Roma and non-Roma inhabitants work together and learn to understand each other.

Until the late 90’s, Roma integration programmes were mainly about cultural activities. It was thought that emphasising the cultural heritage of ethnic groups would increase acceptance and understanding. Sadly, these activities were the root of the prejudice that Roma are only good at singing and dancing. But the approach also gave rise to

some more positive developments. For the first time, it was widely acknowledged that there was indeed a problem with the Roma communities, with debates at political level and in the media as a result. This attracted the attention of international donors. But more importantly, the integration programmes helped Roma communities to set up their first local associations. Even though the first associations mostly worked with children and youth, they provided an important basis for further community development.

The integration of Roma and community work really took off towards the end of 90's. Accession funding gave rise to a multitude of programmes for Roma but their quality and relevance differed. Anton Bobák, one of the organisers of ERV, and active in Roma projects since 1993 comments: *“Most of the projects were (and still are) led either by consultancies or by non-Roma organisations, with the disappointing result that many courses were not adapted to the needs of the target group, did not include any follow up of what happened with participants once they had completed their training, and was taught in a fashion which did not always suit participants. The educational initiatives of non-Roma organisations were often not accepted by the Roma communities, whilst purely Roma organisations met the hostility of the non-Roma population.”*

He adds *“International donors often came with a fixed idea, concept and method on what Roma should be learning and doing without leaving any initiative to them and without giving them any responsibility”*. Beata, one of the participants of ERV, confirms these difficulties: *“In our community, we had a proposal for training activities as part of a European Social Fund project but it was all set in advance without knowing what Roma do and need. People were simply not interested in it”*. She adds: *“This project is different. Before donors would come, take a few pictures of us and disappear again without even talking to us.”* SPOLU, on the contrary, insists, in all its projects, on working with the local communities and with the non-Roma population.

The ERV project was born as a reaction to a particular political situation in Slovakia. In winter 2004 the Slovak government decided to lower the social benefits for people living below the poverty line and to make it harder for people to obtain these benefits. The Roma population, with very high unemployment rates, was hit hard by these decisions. For the first time, Roma mobilised themselves to make their concerns heard by the government. From the way these actions were organised, and from the way they were supported by the Roma people, it was already possible to identify who were potential community leaders. And it were exactly these leaders that ERV wanted to reach.

SPOLU was interested in what triggered the events and launched a case study of the 2004 events. Together with the “leaders”, SPOLU identified the needs of the community and the reasons why their demands were not met. This was due to lack of knowledge, leadership skills and experience. They also identified leaders who had the potential to gather and mobilise Roma as well as the will to work on a voluntary basis for the improvement of their situation. ERV started to work with this group of leaders, but the group was not static. Some left the project after they realised it required a lot of involvement, while others joined in later. The intention of the project is to reach out not only to the wider local community of Roma but also non-Roma inhabitants.

Box 2 – Objectives

The overall objective of all SPOLU activities is the improvement of relations between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants.

Particular objectives of the ERV project can be broken down to:

- Mobilisation and activation of Roma populations through community works
- Investment in human capital of Roma leaders – training and project implementation
- Render the local leaders responsible and make them become credible partners for local and other authorities
- Reinforcement of community structures
- Bottom-up networking based on solid grassroots organisations

Empowerment of Roma voice – building positive examples

The underlying idea of the project is that in order to achieve long term changes and to create sustainable Roma organisations at all levels (local, regional, national) work has to start at the very bottom, at the grassroots, and create positive models for the rest of the community. Roma have often been criticised of not acting as a coherent group and subject to internal conflicts which jeopardise their claims. One of the reasons for this is that so far no Roma organisation has developed grassroots activities and as a result are not well established locally. This project is trying to build sustainable community organisations and regional networks with credible leaders by developing very concrete activities within communities. Hence the importance of insisting on local leadership. As Darina Tököliová explained: *“So far those who were considered as leaders were those who spoke well and knew the mayor. The project has put forward as leaders those who are devoted to community needs and able to mobilise people for collective action.”*

Box 3 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

The ERV project aims to make Roma active citizens who are aware of their rights and their duties as citizens of their country, who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to use these and will actively do so in order to improve the situation of their community.

As already mentioned, the project started with the local leaders who were instrumental in the social movements of 2004. But they are not the only ones who participate in project activities. Depending on the focus and the budget of the task at hand, other community members also participate. Given that the target group in this project is very heterogeneous, with participants aged between 18 and 50, with very different levels of education (from university to basic education), an individual approach is sometimes necessary. *“A traditional pedagogical approach would be to split them into groups, but this would be counter productive. It would negatively affect the unity and equality which prevails so far,”* remarks Anton Bobák.

Another distinctive feature of ERV is that it gives responsibilities to the leaders – something other organisations are unwilling to do, especially when it comes to financial responsibilities. *“But how can I teach someone how to manage the bookkeeping of project activities if at the end they never touch any money?”* asks Anton Bobák. For this reason, SPOLU has allocated a small budget for the activities communities implement on their own (see the box “Method”). Of course it could happen that something goes wrong and the money would not be used in the way it should have, *“But this is the risk we have to take,”* Anton Bobák states. *“That is the reason why we give them a very small sum.”* In case of an error, such as the bad timing of activities or shoddy management, it is used as an example to learn from for all the participants involved.

Making leaders responsible and – thanks to the results of their actions – credible in they eyes of their peers and the non-Roma community is what ERV tries to achieve through a slow and continuous process.

While empowering leaders, the project is also creating a network of community members. By attending meetings together, the leaders get to know each other and realise the possibilities of exchanging experiences, but also of having more power vis-à-vis the authorities. This has so far been achieved in the Kokava area, where 5 communities have formed a network which meets regularly, is in frequent telephone contact and has a regional leader. The regional leader is a more experienced and well respected person, whose role is to advise and support others but also organise regional actions when this is not possible at the local level. *“We appreciate the creation of a regional network since it enables us to rely on the support of others working in different projects,”* affirms Drahoslava.



Picture 6: *“We appreciate the creation of a regional network, it enables us to rely on the support of others”*

Box 4 - Method – Concrete actions, responsibility and continuity of support

ERV was designed to be a three year project. It works in six-month phases. For each phase a work plan is designed. This is done in collaboration with the Roma and more and more by the Roma themselves. Only the first plan, in spring 2005, was actually designed by the organisers because the leaders had no experience in doing so, but it was based on the needs identified in the case study mentioned above. In a six-month period, the leaders undergo two or three training activities on themes such as: how to identify local needs, how to prioritise, how to communicate and negotiate, etc. But most importantly, these training activities are organised with the objective to immediately implement concrete actions where leaders can use newly acquired skills.

The leaders were asked to consult their communities and come up with a list of five issues people would like to address. Among these five issues, are a number which the Roma themselves, through their own involvement, could work to improve. One issue is then chosen and a simple work plan is drawn up on how to proceed. At this stage the leaders are delegate work to other people within the community and involve as many of them as possible, as well as, if necessary, the local authorities. Once the plan is ready to be implemented, different roles and tasks are assigned to different people. The leaders receive a very modest sum of money (20 000 SKK ~ 500 EUR) which they have to use to implement this action. At first the money was actually given to the regional leader who was responsible for the bookkeeping, but afterwards the leaders themselves had to keep accounts of the project expenses.

These activities are continually monitored, discussed in groups and evaluated once finished.

Results, outcomes and impact - What the Roma can achieve on their own

“Now people know that our promises are not just in vain,” agreed several participants of the project. Through the implementation of small scale projects many leaders have strengthened their positions and achieved various results, even though so far only two thirds have been achieved.

There have been several concrete outcomes of project activities implemented in different communities. Several communities have undertaken reconstruction and renovation work, such as cleaning and re-painting the common spaces in a block of houses in Poltár, the repair of pipe work which used to be the cause of floods in houses in Kokava, or roof replacement in Levoča. Others have created local community centres. In Hnúšť such a centre focuses on work with children, their parents and youth. They provide support to students experiencing learning difficulties and explain the importance of education to their parents. They also organise extra-curricular activities such as dance classes.

The fact that organisations were inspired and empowered to undertake activities other than those initiated by ERV is proof of the sustainability of the project – this shows that its effects go beyond the project stage. An example is an action implemented in Poltár. In the three blocks of flats inhabited by the Roma, residents had problems paying for

water and were eventually cut off from the water supply. In reaction, Beata, the leader, gathered all the people involved and convinced the local authorities to negotiate. *“Before they did not take us seriously but when they saw that we can make suggestions and organise ourselves to take action they agreed to help us.”* As a result the authorities have accepted a new payment schedule and the water supply has been restored.

In Hnúšť, the young people involved in the project organised the distribution of clothes. Recognising the pressing need for clothes and shoes, the leaders got in contact with a charity who provided second hand clothes. These were distributed to Roma in Hnúšť and in another neighbouring commune. *“At first, we were not sure of what would happen, we had no experience of such activities. That is why we distributed the clothes for free. At the same time we were telling people that next time we will sell the clothes for small sums, from 5 to 30 SKK (less than 1 euro), to raise some money and they were very positive about it,”* commented Monika. *“But next time the focus should not only be on the Roma population, the whole town should also be involved. There are poor people among the non-Roma as well,”* advised Darina Tököliová. And indeed this seemed like a good idea to the whole group who is preparing a new fair for the upcoming months.

When we question the participants about further impacts they agree that they got a lot out of the project. First they have gained confidence and are more empowered to act. *“Before if they went to the local authorities, they would have been told “No” or “Not possible” and they would have turned and left. Now they know what their rights are.”* mentioned Anton Bobák. Other positive impacts participants have cited include: unity in their community and also among different communities, trust of the rest of the Roma community but also the non-Roma population.

Box 5 – Organisation and Management

SPOLU Slovakia is a part of the wider ERGO network. Part of this network is the Spolu foundation Netherlands, who is the donor of the project.

SPOLU identified leaders in several communities in Central and Eastern Slovakia. These receive training and advice delivered by SPOLU but also serve as multipliers since they work with their local communities. The leaders develop their activities within small local NGOs. Some of these NGOs existed prior to the project and dealt with cultural activities. They have their own teams and coordinate the design and implementation of local activities.

A regional centre was successfully created in Central Slovakia with one person as a regional leader. His role is to advise the leaders and to organise regional activities where local action is not sufficient. Such a centre should also be created in Eastern Slovakia.

Success factors and innovation

Even though the project is not yet complete, positive results reveal that there is a good chance that the activity will go beyond the project phase in at least some communities. As Darina Tököliová explained: *“If only half of the community organisations and the regional network survive, and continue with the type of activities we have launched, it will be a success.”* So far it seems possible even though it is not always easy. Slávka

points out one of the difficulties Roma organisations face: *“We wanted to cooperate with the town administration in the reconstruction of the road and a playground in our community. At the beginning they were willing to do this, but when they saw we could find financing from other sources, they started to demand money for services they first wanted to offer, like waste removal.”* It is still a real challenge to address such attitudes.

Despite such challenges, the project approach appears to be a success. The good results are surely due to a combination of factors which could be linked to the management, method and type of activity. It is very important to implement the project while in continuous discussion with the local communities, in order to address their real needs. Another success factor is that the project is managed at several levels: SPOLU trains the leaders and the leaders then involve “their” people. The fact that leaders are trained through very practically oriented tasks is also crucial to the success of the approach. And last but not least, organisers highlighted that effective communication among all the people involved is of vital importance in order to motivate the whole team. Frequent contact, continuity and follow up of the project help participants feel that they have external support and can face any difficulties they meet.

What next?

As is often the case, the future of the project depends on the availability of financial support. The project was originally designed to last for a period of three years, but more work could be achieved if financing was secured for the next stage. In the future, organisers would ideally like to focus more on networking activities and work in other regions. They would like to see local organisations become more and more autonomous, also financially. The creation of a regional centre in Eastern Slovakia could be envisaged and the network reinforced. For a certain time there was a regional leader in the East but unfortunately the person left the position and it has been difficult to replace him. Organisers would also like to link the ERV network with other existing networks even though these are structurally different. When participants are asked whether they would like to continue they all respond positively. And this even if project activities would cease.

A similar project, based on grassroots community development and work with leaders, has been transferred and adapted to the different local situations in two other countries, Bulgaria and Romania. SPOLU Slovakia, together with Bulgarian and Romanian partner organisations, and organisations from Albania and Moldova, is a member of ERGO, an international network of Roma organisations. The secretariat is in Netherlands run by the Spolu foundation Netherlands. The network was very interested in the developments in Slovakia in 2004, as well as the experience acquired through the case study and the ERV project which followed. This was also very positively welcomed by all the member organisations and the donor. SPOLU Slovakia hopes that financing for the next stage of the project could be secured.

Contact details and information sources:

Združenie SPOLU Slovakia

Darina Tököliová, secretary general

Anton Bobák, vice-secretary

Address: Križkova 391/6 , 967 01 Kremnica, Slovakia

Tel: 00 421 45 6744 549

Online resources:

www.spolu-slovakia.sk

On the ERGO network:

www.ergonetnetwork.org

www.spolu.nl

EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP IN A MULTICULTURAL UNION: LEEDS DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CENTRE

Introduction

The European Citizenship in a Multicultural Union project offered a series of interesting educational activities aimed at improving the teaching of active citizenship in schools. The Leeds Development Education Centre (DEC), an education charity providing resources and training for teachers, coordinated the initiative in partnership with other key stakeholders working in the education field. The aim was to use innovative and interactive teaching methods to make children and young people aware of their rights and responsibilities in an ethnically diverse Europe and of issues related to justice and equality within the wider world.

The project was designed in a highly democratic way, with statutory education institutions, civil society organisations and schools getting together to discuss the best way to deliver the programme and identify the key relevant themes of European citizenship in a multicultural society. As a result, workshops and training sessions were available for schools on a variety of topics, such as human rights, racism, identity, refugees, conflict resolution and global trade. The educational activities were co-funded by the European Union, and were delivered for free to schools for one academic year.

Box 1 – Key Characteristics

Learning environment: schools

Type of learning: formal learning based on a highly interactive and participative approach

Target group: teachers and students from primary and secondary level schools

Theme: active citizenship in a multicultural and diverse society

Funding agency: European funds and Local Education Authority

Problem and context

Leeds is a city located in West Yorkshire in the North of England. It is the second largest Metropolitan District in England and has a population of over 725,000. The city presents a rich diversity of languages, faiths and cultures, hosting more than 75 different nationalities. A significant part of this population comes from the Indian subcontinent and Caribbean, and recently a number of asylum seekers and refugees has also found their home in the city.

The multicultural aspect of the city is well reflected in school attendance. About 13% of children and young people are from ethnic minority groups, with 1% being refugees from all over the world. Diversity is highly valued in Leeds and it is seen as a strong

point. At the same time, potential conflicts and tensions that might arise from different social and religious norms and expectations are acknowledged.

Educational institutions play a crucial role in dealing with the challenges of a multicultural society and in promoting harmonious relationships and mutual understanding between the different communities. Schools have a special mission in making pupils and young people aware of the benefits of diversity, in fighting racist attitudes and in rebalancing misconceptions and stereotypical representations of minority groups and asylum seekers.

In recent years the English national curriculum has introduced the teaching of active citizenship in secondary schools (ages 12 to 18) and of active participation in the community in primary schools (ages 4 to 11). The focus on active citizenship and community participation is relatively new and schools are still in the process of finding and testing best teaching methods. Teachers are also challenged by finding ways to engage students and link active citizenship to students' real life, experiences and concerns. The national curriculum has identified the key dimensions of active citizenship to be social and moral responsibility, political literacy and active participation, but apart from that, the concept remains very broad.

Drawing on these challenges, Leeds DEC's wanted to tap into the expertise of NGOs in community issues and multicultural initiatives to support schools in teaching European citizenship in a diverse society.

Box 2 – Objectives

Making young people aware of their rights and responsibilities in a multicultural society and enabling them to understand the issues of trade, justice and equality with respect to Europe and the wider world.

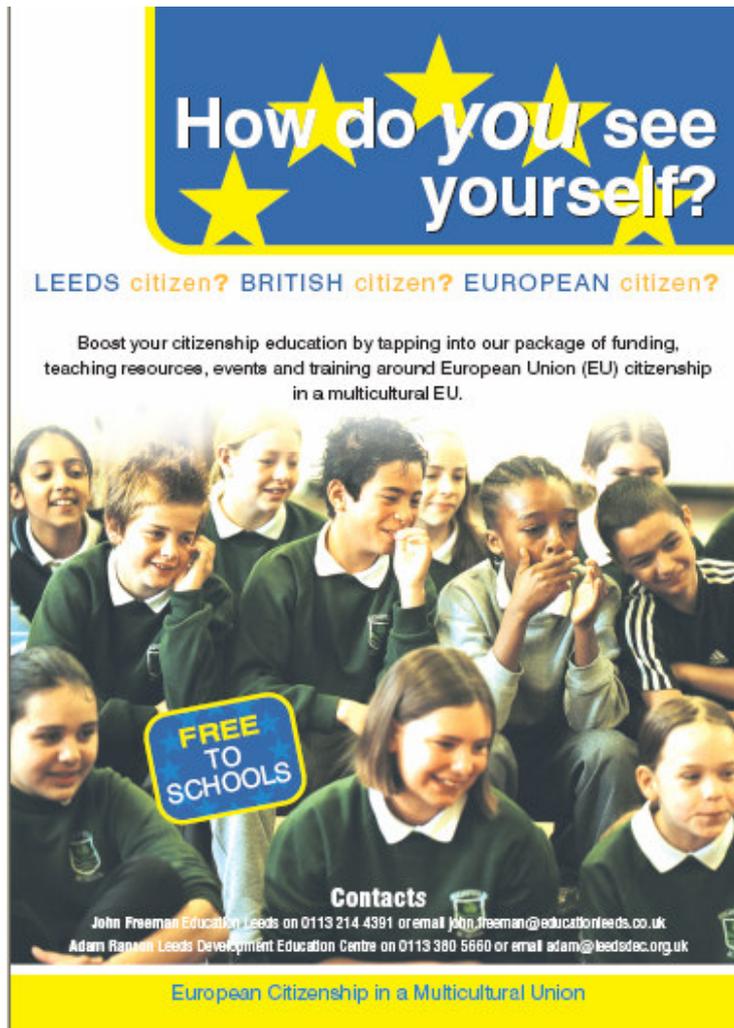
The approach

Leeds DEC worked in partnership with Education Leeds (the education agency of Leeds City Council), and International Leeds, to prepare a programme of educational activities for the teaching of active citizenship in schools.

All the stakeholders were involved in the design of the project since the early stages. Civil associations and schools were invited to give their views and contributions during the Civil Society Forum, a high profile event that attracted participants from NGOs, delegates from education authorities and members from ethnic minority groups and schools. The participation of Hilary Benn, the Secretary of State for International Development contributed to give the Forum high visibility and good media coverage.

The aim of the Forum was to build a common understanding of active citizenship and group cohesion between stakeholders. Participants discussed the different dimensions of active citizenship in multicultural society and defined the objectives of the project on the basis of their experiences. Schools' needs and problems were assessed and creative ways of engaging young people were explored.

Drawing on the Forum’s recommendations, some training sessions on “European citizenship in a multicultural Union” were organised across the city to raise awareness among schools and teachers of the educational activities that were on offer under this project. A showcase event was also prepared to give to as many schools as possible the chance to benefit from the project. In addition, a “Training Manual” and a “Resources Package” were produced and distributed to all the schools that had expressed an interest in the project.



Picture 7: Promotional flyer for the project

After the initial training sessions for teachers, a seminar for students was organised at the Leeds Civic Hall. A total of 180 young people took part in workshops run by different local and international NGOs. The seminar was designed to engage students in the multiple dimensions of active citizenship and stimulate their active participation. For example, they were encouraged to ask questions and were asked to prepare presentations and reports on the work done during the day.

All the stakeholders have indicated the partnership between civil associations and schools to be an important element. On one hand, the schools have benefited from the civil associations’ practical skills and extensive expertise in multicultural and global

issues. On the other hand, the civil associations had the opportunity to listen and understand schools' problems, priorities and educational objectives. As a result educational activities were tailored to schools' needs and could be easily incorporated into the schools' curriculum.

New valuable partnerships were established with local and international civil associations such as Cesema, a Nicaragua based NGO, Le Partenariat St Luis, from Senegal, and Monimbo, from Germany. In most cases, these associations brought in people with first-hand experience and who were able to engage teachers and students with real life stories and case studies. Young people had the chance to listen to refugees who had to escape persecution in their home countries, ask them questions about their difficult journey to Britain and about the difficulties of being granted asylum status. *"Having real life stories worked very well," a teacher said, "because it is hard for schools to access real world experiences. It made a real difference and students were captivated by these stories."*

Members of NGOs were also able to provide schools and young people with practical suggestions on lifestyle changes, such as buying fair trade products, which have a positive impact on the community and on the wider world.

The NGOs established a network of civil society organisations (the Citizenship Trainers Network) that offered schools with a variety of educational activities, resources and training sessions on relevant topical issues such as interfaith, cultural awareness, racial harassment, migration, refugees and human rights. In working with teachers and students, the trainers made a special effort to run interactive workshops based on role play and real life case studies.

Schools had the freedom to decide which aspects of active citizenship they wanted to focus on and had the educational activities delivered for free by the NGOs they had selected. Activities were designed both for teachers and young people. In most cases schools went for both options so as to maximise results.

Through the project a number of innovative resources, such as books, booklets, websites, interactive games and role-play, were made available to support teachers in planning and running active citizenship activities with the students.

The most valuable aspect of the programme was its high flexibility. Schools could pick the topics they were interested in and focus on the elements of active citizenship that were most relevant to them. *"Schools with a high percentage of refugees and students from ethnic minority backgrounds opted for training on diversity, equality and interfaith dialogue,"* observed John Freeman from Education Leeds, *"while white-middle class schools tended to opt for workshops on tackling stereotypes, understanding global trade, migration and asylum seekers."*

Box 3 – Definition/ concept of Active Citizenship

Understanding and valuing cultural diversity; promoting intercultural dialogue; challenging misconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices; tackling racial harassment; understanding economic migration and asylum seekers; becoming aware of global issues such as the violation of human rights, trade and justice; becoming a responsible consumer.

Box 4 - Method and approach

Training sessions and workshops on a variety of themes were organised by a network of NGOs with extensive expertise in working with the community and multicultural issues. Schools had the flexibility to decide which sessions they wanted to be delivered to teachers and students according to their specific needs and educational requirements.

Training activities were designed to be highly interactive (role play, simulation games, real life stories, case studies, etc.) as a way to engage teachers and students on a personal level. The workshops also aimed to be practical in order to help young people put active citizenship into practice in their daily life (i.e. being responsible consumers, fair trade products).

Results, outcomes and impact

The results of this project have been impressive. Over the year, 29 schools benefited from educational activities in active citizenship. About 200 teachers were trained and 5,400 students from secondary and primary schools participated in workshops. In addition, 29 sets of teaching resources were made available for schools.

Teachers have been particularly enthusiastic about the training and teaching resources they have received and have applied similar role-plays, problem solving and simulations to the classroom. Mick Bradley, a trainer from the Centre for Global Education explained: *“The training was about giving teachers suggestions on how to develop citizenship in schools in a variety of ways and to link them to other subjects such as geography and social studies.”* Teachers have reported feeling much more confident about teaching active citizenship and on how to bring the subject alive for students.

Students have been passionate about learning to be active citizens. Their feedback on the activities has been extremely positive and some real changes in their behaviour and attitude has been evident. *“Now we think twice about what food and clothes to buy,”* said some students from Allerton High School. *“We have understood the power that we have to rebalance unjust trade when we act as responsible consumers. We have also been able to influence our parents’ shopping choices,”* pointed out some other students. In some schools, young people have set up groups for raising school awareness on global trade issues and have also been successful in persuading the school to adopt a fair trade policy.

Young people were particularly touched by the life stories of refugees. *“I had my views on asylum seekers completely turned around,”* commented one student. *“Before I thought they had an easy life and lived in free and nice accommodation, but now I understand the horrific conditions they went through in their own countries and I have become aware of the difficulties they have to face to settle in England.”* Other students, who became aware of the differences between illegal immigrants and asylum seekers, decided to join some local groups active in the support of human rights. Some teachers noticed that some students who were from refugee families felt more confident about their status and became more open to share their past and dramatic stories with other students.

The life of the project has carried on after the end of the year as many other activities were generated from the initial training and workshops. Trained teachers are still delivering innovative and creative workshops on active citizenship in their schools. Many schools have allocated internal funds to pay for trainers from the NGOs to deliver extra educational activities or to address new elements of active citizenship. A positive element reported by many teachers is that often the demand to undertake extra work on active citizenship has been generated by the students themselves, demonstrating how enthusiastic and committed the students have been about working on active citizenship.

Box 5 –Management and organisation

The programme was an initiative of Leeds Development Education Centre (DEC) with project partners (Education Leeds and Leeds International). A steering group was set up to manage the delivery of the project.

A Forum, a seminar and showcases were organised to raise awareness and get schools and civil associations involved in defining the elements of active citizenship in a participatory way.

A training manual and a resource package on active citizenship in a multicultural context were prepared for schools to support teachers.

A network of civil society organisations was established to offer schools a variety of educational activities, teaching resources and training sessions.

Success factors and innovation

The project turned out to be a real success thanks to its participatory approach, the flexibility of the programme and interactive teaching methods. The idea of bringing NGOs' expertise into the school to train teachers and to deliver educational activities has proven to be very effective.

“We knew that in order to ensure the success of the project, schools had to be engaged from the start,” said Adam Ransom from Leeds DEC. *“We also had to think creatively to find ways to make schools interested in the project.”* Flyers were sent to all the schools and teachers were invited to a series of awareness raising events such as showcase and short training sessions. Leeds DEC was committed to delivering a project that was sustainable and could make real changes. *“Instead of creating a single training programme in which schools might or might not be interested,”* explained Adam Ransom, *“we got all the stakeholders together to discuss what schools wanted and what NGOs could offer to them. The initial project went through many changes*

and amendments as it was designed and implemented in a highly participatory way. The initial Forum was also crucial for exploring the meaning of active citizenship, creating a common language, a sense of ownership and group cohesion towards the projects and its objective.” In other words, Leeds LED simply acted as a broker between schools and civil associations. The flexibility of the programme and the wide range of topics suited most of the schools’ needs.

Educational activities have been delivered in a very innovative way. *“We wanted to put young people in a context in which they could relate active citizenship to their own experiences and identities,”* said Derek Sankar, a trainer from Leeds Racial Harassment Project. *“We wanted students to be able to connect the concept of active citizenship to their daily life.”* Interactive workshops were run using simulation games and role-play. For example, in the “Trade simulation game” students got into different groups, each representing a real country and were allocated a certain amount of raw material and economic resources. The allocation of raw material and economic resources had to be unequal to reflect the reality of the country represented. Students had to negotiate and bargain between each other while the facilitator had the power to bring in new elements in the simulation, such as civil unrest or waves of strikes. *“This simple game is a good starting point to understand global trade and justice,”* commented Mick Bradley, from the Centre of Global Education. *“Students got easily into the topic and even those who are normally not academically motivated felt involved.”* A similar simulation was used to make young people aware of the production and distribution of chocolate. Students were also encouraged to research the subjects themselves by using the resource materials provided and by preparing presentations. Teachers agreed that real life stories and bringing people from outside the school have been particularly effective teaching methods as young people could connect emotionally with the life of other human beings.

One of the main challenges to the success of the project was to create a common understanding of the concept of active citizenship in a multicultural society. The initial Forum was essential to discuss the different elements of the concept and understand stakeholders’ different priorities and interests. *“There are different strands attached to active citizenship,”* commented John Freeman from Education Leeds. *“But they are all interlinked and it was important to develop a common vision and a sense of shared ownership to ensure that the programme could be delivered in a consistent way.”*

What next?

The network of civil associations that delivered training during the one-year lifespan of the project still exists and continues to offer training and workshops in schools. Most of the NGOs have been contacted after the end of the project to deliver further educational activities on active citizenship.

Schools have included multiculturalism in their teaching of active citizenship and a series of innovative activities have now been embedded in the schools’ curriculum of most of the schools in Leeds.

Contact details and information sources:

Leeds Development Education Center

233-237 Roundhay Road

Leeds LS8 4HS

United Kingdom

Website: www.leedsdec.org.uk

ANNEXES B, C, D, E ATTACHED AS SEPARATE DOCUMENTS:

ANNEX B - COMPENDIUM OF 57 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

ANNEX C - DETAILED TABLES ON ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP PRACTICES

ANNEX D - - LIST OF INFORMATION SOURCES

ANNEX E - - ANALYTICAL TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY

ANNEX F - CASE STUDY TEMPLATE AND GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS