



EUCIS-LLL

# KEY MESSAGES ON THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENS 2013

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## Key messages

1. Equipping all citizens with **basic skills** is the prerequisite for removing obstacles to active participation in society
2. Value **citizenship education** as a key to engaging citizens in EU democratic life
3. Make **learning abroad** a reality for all through the new funding programmes 2014-2020
4. Acknowledge and **support civil society organisations** for their role in bridging the gap between the EU and its citizens



# 1. BASIC SKILLS

- Focus on **basic skills & literacy**: adults with high levels of education vote 14.8% more than their less educated counterparts (OECD's Education at a Glance, 2012).
- **Access to lifelong learning**
  - Foster **inclusive education systems** by developing tailor-made learning opportunities in a lifewide and lifelong learning perspective;
  - **Target disadvantaged groups**



## 1. BASIC SKILLS

- **Intercultural learning** can contribute to a better integration of migrants, **intergenerational learning** to make ageing populations more active, etc.
- Role of **OER** (Open Educational Resources), e-learning for inclusion
- **EU2020 headline targets: ESL & HE**, especially non-traditional learners in HE (social dimension HE)

## 2. CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

- Developing citizenship through **formal and non-formal education**
- Higher role for **social and civic competences**
- Adopt a **holistic approach to citizenship education** by valuing **transversal key competences** (learning to learn, sense of initiative, cultural awareness and expression) necessary to foster tolerance, solidarity and intercultural understanding
- shift towards **learning outcomes** is crucial to value transversal competences (i.e. civic engagement) – implement national **validation systems**



## 2. CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

- Monitor better “**the citizenship outcomes**” of EU mobility programmes
- Recognise the contribution of **civil society organisations as non-formal education providers** in developing those “citizenship skills” and empowering learners, especially in the framework of **volunteering activities**. Build on the European Year of Volunteering 2011 to feed the discussion for the European Year of Citizens 2013.
- Make educational institutions **democratic settings** themselves
- Reflect upon the consequences of the economic and social crisis.



### 3. LEARNING MOBILITY FOR ALL

- 21% of EU citizens think that student exchange programmes are the most positive result of the EU (Eurobarometer 77, Spring 2012): EU mobility schemes are therefore strongly associated with the benefits of EU citizenship in people's minds and proper **investment** has to be made in the next funding programme, so that up to five million learners can enjoy an experience abroad.
- Ensure a wide **access to mobility opportunities**: target the participation of people with special needs or fewer opportunities;
- Take into consideration **the individual impact of mobility schemes**



## 4. SUPPORT CSO's

- **Celebrate civil society** for bringing Europe to the citizens and vice-versa (i.e. ownership).
- Provide **sustainable operating support** to European civil society organisations.
- Recognise **volunteer time as contributions in kind** in project proposals.
- Develop a **genuine structured civil dialogue** in the field of education and training.
- Adopt a **Statute of the European Association**
- Launch a **Green Paper on art. 11** Lisbon Treaty



## **Flash Eurobarometer 373**

### **EUROPEANS' ENGAGEMENT IN PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY**

#### **Key Findings**

- Most respondents feel that NGOs can influence local (75%) and national (70%) decision-making and to a lesser extent EU-decision-making (53%)**
- More than half of EU respondents (59%) think that NGOs share their interests and values. However, 55% of respondents in RO, 52% in EL and 49% in BG and PT say that European citizens do not need NGOs**
- Most Europeans (56%) are not members of any NGOs or associations. However, the Nordic countries demonstrate a very high level of participation in NGOs and associations, especially Trades Unions**

## Flash Eurobarometer 373

### EUROPEANS' ENGAGEMENT IN PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

- Roughly 7 out of 10 respondents think that voting in local/regional (73%) or national (70%) elections is an effective way to influence political decision-making
- Around 50% of respondents think that voting in EU elections or joining a NGO (both 54%) is an effective means of influencing political decision-making
- A third of respondents (34%) say they have signed a petition in the last 2 years. The of people who have done this ranges considerably, from 53% in the UK to 7% in Cyprus

## **Citizenship Education in Europe - EURYDICE**

- **Survey of 31 Eurydice Network Countries – EU Member States, Iceland, Norway, Croatia, Turkey**
- **Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary sectors mostly public sector but also grant-aided private sector in 3 countries**
- **Information based on official regulations , recommendations or guidelines issued by national education authorities**
- **In 20 education systems, central level curricula treat citizenship education as compulsory separate subject**
- **Many integrated into other subject areas**
- **3 countries (RO NO SL) optional stand-alone subjects**
- **Recommended taught time varies**

## **Citizenship Education in Europe - EURYDICE**

- **Overview of the status of citizenship education in central-level curricula & guidelines – recommended teaching approaches**
- **Focuses on opportunities for students and parents to participate in school governance**
- **Discusses how students experience active and democratic citizenship within and beyond the school context**
- **Evaluation of both provision and outcomes of citizenship education and support for teachers in assessing students**
- **Explores qualifications and support for two key groups in the implementation of citizenship education – teachers and headteachers**

## **Citizenship Education - Objectives**

- **Developing political literacy (knowledge of basic facts and understanding of key concepts)**
- **Acquiring critical thinking and analytical skills**
- **Developing certain values, attitudes and behaviours (sense of respect, tolerance, solidarity, etc.)**
- **Encouraging active participation and engagement at school and community levels**

## **Essential Skills for pupils and students to become active and responsible citizens**

- **Civic-related skills (participating in society through volunteering and influencing public policy through voting and petitioning)**
- **Social skills (living and working with others, resolving conflicts)**
- **Communication skills (listening, understanding and engaging in discussion)**
- **Intercultural skills (establishing intercultural dialogue and appreciating cultural differences)**

# **International Civic and Citizenship Education Study – Determined aims**

- **Social, political and civic institutions**
- **Respect for and safeguarding the environment**
- **Defending one's own point of view**
- **Conflict resolution**
- **Citizens' rights and responsibilities**
- **Participation in the local community**
- **Critical and independent thinking**
- **Participation in school life**
- **Effective strategies to combat racism and xenophobia**
- **Future political engagement**

## The three most important aims according to teachers

- **Social, political and civic institutions** **31.1%**
- **Respect for and safeguarding the environment** **36.7%**
- **Defending one's own point of view** **20.1%**
- **Conflict resolution** **36.0%**
- **Citizens' rights and responsibilities** **62.8%**
- **Participation in the local community** **15.1%**
- **Critical and independent thinking** **57.9%**
- **Participation in school life** **18.7%**
- **Effective strategies to combat racism and xenophobia** **16.2%**
- **Future political engagement** **4.4%**

## Examples of National Differences

- **Promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities**  
**Italy 78.3%      Austria 16.7%**
- **Promoting Students' critical and independent thinking**  
**80% (Denmark, Sweden and Finland)**  
**50%> Czech Republic, Ireland, Poland and Slovakia**
- **Preparing for future political engagement**  
**Denmark 15.9%    Liechtenstein 19.3%**  
**12 countries - less than 5%**

## Teachers' confidence in teaching these topics

Human Rights and Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities	93%
Different Cultures and Ethnic Groups	84%
Voting and Elections	84%
Legal Institutions and the courts	57%
Global Community and International Organisations)	
The European Union	) 77-80%
Constitution and Political systems	)
Emigration and Immigration	)

# European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning



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## THANK YOU!

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Citizen Education in Europe – Eurydice document can be downloaded from the website:  
[eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/thematic\\_reports\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/thematic_reports_en.php)

*Building a citizen's voice on education and training issues*