LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION

EDUCATION TO FOSTER INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND SOLIDARITY IN EUROPE

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The diversity in contemporary European societies is increasingly **seen as unparalleled and ever-changing,** linked to the **increasing interaction and interdependence** of citizens, institutions and markets worldwide, and of their respective values, attitudes and ideas. In the course of the last months, a series of worrying phenomena in Europe took place that clearly indicates that Europe is facing **serious challenges** in managing diversity. **Anti-immigrant rhetoric, attacks on refugees, border fences and hesitation to aid people fleeing war-torn zones** as a response to the recent influx of refugees clearly demonstrate the limits to how solidary and inclusive our societies are. The recent barbarous attacks in European cities only gave a further push to the rise of **racism, xenophobia, islamophobia** and other forms of fear and hate across the continent, visible in the **rise of radical right parties** across Europe.

Only an **equitable society of engaged citizens** can be resilient to such threats. Facilitating active citizenship and civic engagement, is not only a regulatory and a legal task

– **it is equally an educational task.** The **transformative power of education** has a major role to play in building inclusive learning societies and in fostering civic participation[1], as it is a preferred vehicle for **creating awareness, knowledge and understanding of (European) fundamental values**. Our education systems **need to be a part of the solution,** not a part of the problem. Making them more **inclusive and democratic** has to be the central goal in this regard, since only

individuals who feel they are accepted by their surroundings can also be accepting towards others.

1. Many studies demonstrate that learning is the main driver in fostering civic participation. The International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS) of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement highlights the interrelationship between civic knowledge and active participation. The more you know about how democratic society functions the more likely you are to participate.

The increasing diversity in our societies is **not well reflected in our education systems**. *De facto,* segregation of migrant children in urban schools – usually in disadvantaged city quarters – exists in many European countries[2]. The segregation is only a part of **large-scale social inequalities** which are pushing an increasing number of (young) people to the margins of society and making them more likely to join radical and violent groups. Therefore, it is worth to note that tackling inequalities in education should be a part of the **comprehensive fight for social justice,** in order to **make universal values alive** particularly among **young people**. This entails both investing in quality integration policies and strengthening participation in the society.

Making **education for citizenship** a genuine priority in the European Commission "Education and Training 2020" work programme for the upcoming cycle is to be welcomed. Citizenship education enables an individual to act as an active and responsible citizen respectful of others and is indeed fundamental to a free, tolerant, fair and inclusive society, to social cohesion, mutual understanding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and solidarity, as well as equality between women and men. However, this is just the first step.

2. European Commission, NESSE, "Education and the Integration of Migrant Children", Brussels, 2008, p.89.
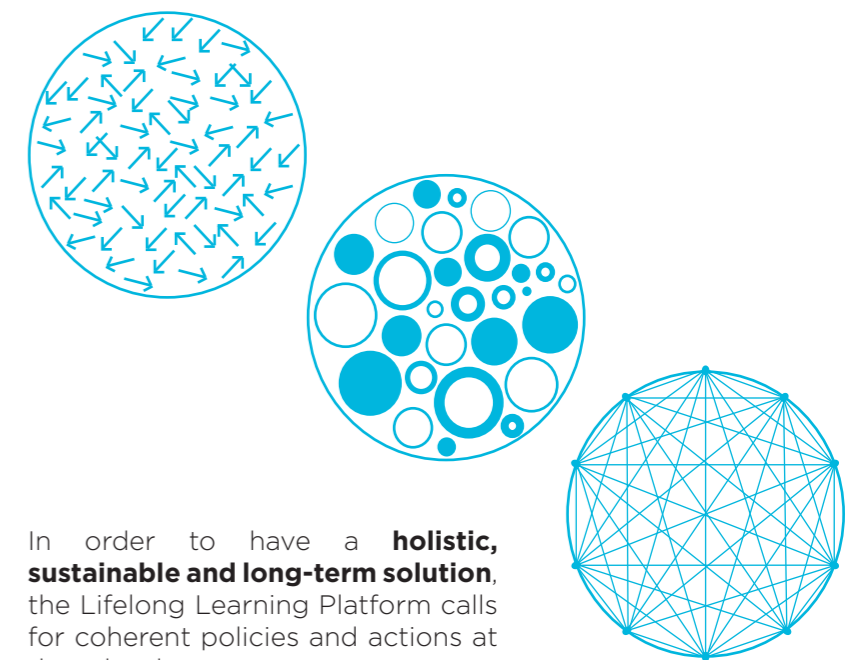
In order to have a **holistic, sustainable and long-term solution**, the Lifelong Learning Platform calls for coherent policies and actions at three levels:

1. Active educational settings
2. Inclusive educational institutions
3. Collaborative wider communities

active educational settings
inclusive educational institutions
collaborative wider communities

Policy Coherence

ACTIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

COLLABORATIVE WIDER COMMUNITIES

Learning to become an active citizen is about knowledge - history, intercultural learning, media... - and attitudes, which requires the use of methodologies that involve learners actively in their own learning.

In order to raise engagement levels in all forms of educational settings, we have to look both at the curriculum and at pedagogy. How is citizenship education covered in the curriculum? Learning to become an active citizen is about knowledge and attitudes, which requires the use of methodologies that involve learners actively in their own learning. For example, **experiential learning, project-based learning and learning by doing** based on everyday life are effective ways of increasing the appetite for learning and the acquisition of transversal skills such as team work. They should be encouraged at all levels and in all sectors of education.

Curriculum should thus be **competence-based**, aiming to equip learners with **democratic attitudes and social, civic and intercultural competences**, as key competences for lifelong learning and representing an essential gear which any citizen should have in today's complex and fast-changing world. We need to build learners' capacity to **think critically and creatively**, to explore **new ways of acting** and **making informed and adequate decisions**. It is important **to apply those active methods and goals as early as possible**, because research shows that children form their political views already at the age of 12-13[1]. It involves reflecting on how people interrelate with each other, understanding cultural differences and creating alternative ways to live together. **Media literacy** is very important in this regard, and should be further developed and integrated in educational settings.

Social cohesion, equality, non-discrimination and civic competences can be boosted through following:
- Citizenship education
- Intercultural learning and dialogue
- History education
- Learning Europe at school

Citizenship education

Citizenship education in Europe **urgently needs a renewal,** in order to contribute to ending the increasing democratic fatigue and the rise of populist and authoritarian tendencies. We need to ensure access to **quality citizenship education for all** in both formal and non-formal educational settings, consisting of both a **core of constitutional values and fundamental rights** and an **open debate about controversial issues**. This entails understanding citizenship education as a social responsibility and a means to show people how to become informed about their rights and responsibilities and help them realise that they can indeed make a difference. **Human rights and democracy** are central in a value-based definition of citizenship education.

1. David Kerr, director of Education Citizenship Foundation, University of Bristol, keynote speech "Active Citizenship Harnessing the Potential – Why, what and how", eTwinning Conference, 23 October 2015
2. According to the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, "Education for democratic citizenship" means education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law.

Intercultural learning and dialogue

Intercultural learning and dialogue help prevent ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural divides. Allowing space in the curricula to **deal with our differences constructively and democratically** on the basis of shared values is essential in more and more diverse societies. Such dialogue can also be fostered through initiatives that celebrate diversity and support **participation of particularly marginalised members of society and minorities**, further strengthening social cohesion (e.g. "Diversity Day" in schools). Intercultural learning and dialogue are a strong tool to move from the culture of peaceful coexistence between separate communities towards an open inclusive society **free from stereotypes and discrimination.** The curricula should allow educators to allocate time to assist learners in developing intercultural competences, for which they should be adequately prepared for via initial and continuing professional development. The **use of culture and arts** can also be a valuable tool to tackle social challenges and tackle controversial issues (e.g. theatre play).

History education

Understanding Europe's past helps to foster **a sense of belonging**, creates awareness on the shared values upon which Europe was built and **strengthens the political identity** of people as citizens of the EU. That is precisely why we need to change the way we teach history. History education should not be simply about knowing the past. It should aim at exploring and understanding different perspectives on the past (**multiperspectivity**), as well as making links between lessons from the past and current trends. By doing that, it has the potential to develop learners' ability to analyse and understand **information critically through dialogue**, in search for historical evidence and in an open and safe debate on controversial issues.

Learning Europe at school

EU citizenship that is only defined and promoted "from above" **cannot be enough to allow the transformation of a legal status into a democratic activity**. According to the study *"Learning Europe at School"[3]*, every student has heard something about the European Union in school. However, this knowledge is mainly limited to facts about geography, history, economics, etc. More than twenty years after the Treaty of Maastricht and the introduction of European citizenship, the 2015 Eurobarometer on European citizenship[4] shows that one third of Europeans still do not feel as European citizens and up to **70 per cent would like to know more about their rights** as European citizens. A decreasing sense of belonging to the EU is therefore not surprising - a genuine democratic society cannot be built if citizens are unaware of **the impact the EU has on their daily life and do not know how to engage in democratic processes. democratic processes**.
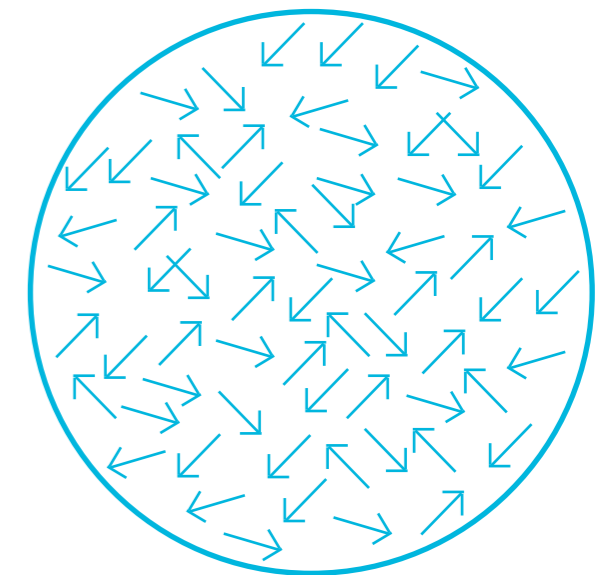
3. Allison Dunne, Daniela Ulicna, Stéphanie Oberheidt, "Learning Europe at School", Final Report – DG EAC, ICF GHK, 2013, p. 86.
4. European Commission, "European Citizenship report", Standard Eurobarometer 83, Brussels, 2015, p. 91.

ACTIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS
GOOD PRACTICES

DEMOCRACY IN PRACTICE

Democracy in practice is a project that aims to raise awareness among young people about the importance of Human Rights as a basis of a healthy democracy by promoting the social and political participation of young people in their local, national and European environment. This will be achieved in two ways, via trainings and advocacy activities. The project promotes the organisation of activities such as lectures, debates, summer universities and training courses during the International Days. As part of the project, guidelines for democracy and human rights activities have been produced. The project will end up having created a big pool of students from all over Europe who are promoting active participation in society, and an active campaign promoting human rights education in secondary and tertiary educational settings.

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YOUNG EUROPEANS' SEMINAR

The YES – Young Europeans' Seminar is a unique yearly event, organised by EEE-YFU for YFU European students who just finished their exchange programme within a European country. It has around 500 participants and consists of five days of seminars, workshops, lectures, panel discussions and other activities. Its aim is to promote discussion about current European issues. The YES provides YFU programme participants with educational activities that enhance their exchange experience. It also encourages participants to understand themselves as young Europeans with responsibilities and opportunities in a changing interdependent world. In addition, the event wants to make participants aware that finishing their exchange year is not an end, but only the starting point of a learning process in the field of intercultural understanding, democratic involvement, and social responsibility.

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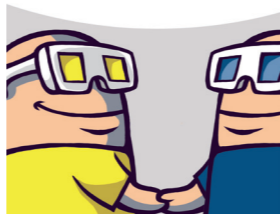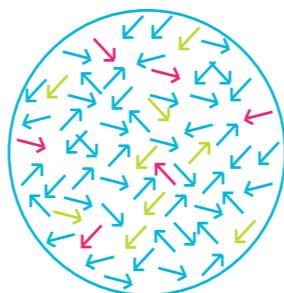www.eee-yfu.org/young-europeans-seminar-yes

THE COLOURED GLASSES

The Coloured Glasses project resulted in the creation of a manual entitled Coloured Glasses: a Resource Manual for Intercultural Education, which contains ready-to-use workshops on intercultural learning for use in secondary schools. This set of interactive Coloured Glasses workshops on tolerance is tailored for both teachers and students and use interactive non-formal education methods. The objectives of these workshops are to introduce young people to the concepts of intercultural learning and to raise awareness on problems in society caused by intolerance. YFU European organisations have sporadically been involved in organising these workshops in schools and have brought volunteers from other countries - in the context of the EVS programme - to facilitate them, giving an added value to the workshops and to the capacity of the YFU organisation.

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E-UROPA

E-UROPa is a EU-funded project on enabling e-Participation, which is, ICT-enabled citizens' participation in policies and policy-making in Europe. Many consider that the EU is something happening in Brussels, far away from them and their daily lives, but there is a number of online tools where everyone can take part in the development of EU policies and learn more about their rights as EU citizens. What is more, telecentres can involve citizens with little online experience, including the elderly, the disabled, household women, etc. Building the capacity of e-facilitators in telecentres as multipliers to provide trainings on digital tools for e-Participation at the EU level is a long-term investment. They will be able to provide such trainings long after the end of the project. Through discussions and practical workshops telecentres will inform and motivate citizens to use e-Participation tools such as Puzzled by Policy website, launching a petition to the European Parliament, participating in European Commission public consultations and the European Citizens Initiative, and will encourage them to reflect on their relevance and usefulness.

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HISTORIANA

Historiana - Your Portal to the Past is an on-line educational multimedia tool that offers learners multi-perspective, cross-border and comparative historical sources to supplement their national history textbooks. Historiana might be considered as a digital alternative to a European textbook, however the website does not attempt to present a comprehensive 'story of Europe' and its relationship with the rest of the world. It offers a framework for comparing and contrasting the impact on and responses by Europe's nations to a range of different events and developments which have shaped the world from the distant past to modern times. Historiana promotes the acquisition of cross-border historical knowledge and the development of critical thinking, digital and other transversal competences important for preparing a young generation for active participation as citizens of the 21st Century. History educators and historians from more than 30 countries have actively contributed to the present online tool. The platform will continue to grow as more and more contributors upload suitable material.

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EDC FOR ALL

The project "EDC for All - Qualifying and Mainstreaming Education for Democratic Citizenship within Europe" gathers five organisations from four European countries with a great variety in status, scope and background. The project aims at improving the quality and attractiveness of Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) in the field of vocational education and training. Innovative practices and tools in the field of EDC for acquiring key competences have been invented, developed and transferred, thereby relying on a large network of European partners with relevant and complementary experiences on EDC. Partners will produce and disseminate an attractive game for the development of competences on European Democratic Citizenship. They will transfer existing learning material such as "Democracy and Human Rights - Charter for All" and the respective "Guidelines for Educators" booklet to the Portuguese and German context.

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CAMBRIDGE SUMMER SCHOOL

The Cambridge Summer School is a two-week seminar series for university students from across Europe for the exploration of topics of interest in the future development of the European Union and its foreign policy, including analysis of the political challenges of the Union, the evolution of the European legal system, the future of the Euro and the European economic governance. Faculty and professionals who have included specialists in political theory, European affairs and history, law, moral philosophy, Islamic affairs, and economics give three seminars per day, one hour and a half each. Students and the faculty are housed at Newnham College in Cambridge, where the seminars are given and meals are taken in common. Other academic, cultural and social activities are organised as well: classical music concerts, debates on transversal topics discussed in the seminars; a 'European night' with presentations on participants' colleges, traditions, customs and dishes of their home Country.

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DEMOCRACY IN PRACTICE

YES 2015
HUMAN RIGHTS IN A DIGITALIZED WORLD

COLOURED GLASSES
a manual for intercultural learning in schools

e-urOpa
Enabling European e-Participation

Historiana
your portal to the past

EDC for ALL!

ACTIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS
INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
COLLABORATIVE WIDER COMMUNITIES

Inclusive educational institutions that address the issues of "learning to live together" and cultural diversity need to function in light of what they promote: they should carry within themselves democratic procedures, continuous learning opportunities… all keys to face the challenges we meet outside school.
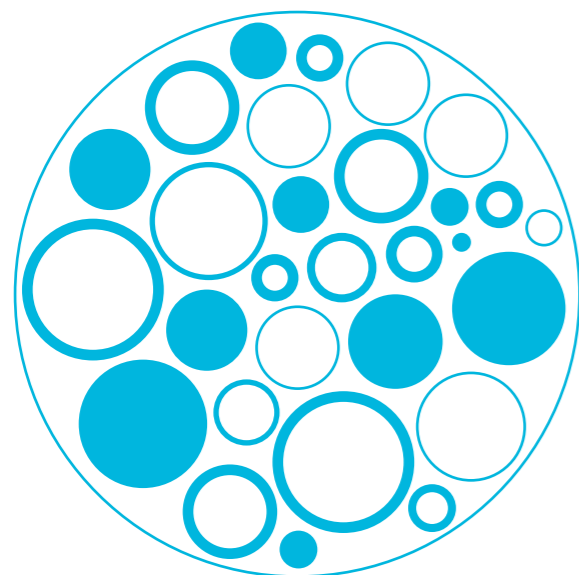
An inclusive educational institution addresses the aspects of "**learning to live together**" and **cultural diversity** in all teaching activities, because pluralism cannot function as an autopilot, it is an intentional commitment imprinted by action. That is why we need to **change the school and its leadership culture**. Adopting a learner-centred approach at organisational level plays a central role in making our educational institutions more inclusive. In that regard, educational institutions should be **committed to non-violence and fighting discrimination and bullying**, as well as **avoiding stereotyping**. This shall be reflected in the policies of the educational institutions and in its overall strategy. Children have to be **equal partners** in the learning process and it is important to address the **emotional aspects** of pedagogy and learner **well-being**. Participatory and inclusive educational settings have to rely more and more on **teamwork, collaborative learning and peer learning**. Teachers and educators should also be counselled and trained to deal with radical ideas and behaviours. Educational institutions should also work with non-formal education providers and social actors; especially when confronted with learners that are at risk of dropping out. Last but not least, it is crucial to implement the UN principles affirming the rights of national minorities[1] to learn and/or have **instruction in their mother tongue** or heritage language by providing proper training and support to learners and their families and to educators.

We need a strong focus on:
- Democratic governance
- Supporting educators
- Prevention of radicalisation

1. UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992, Article 4) and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) Article 30.

Democratic governance
Citizenship has to be both learned and lived. Inclusive democratic governance and participation in educational settings is **key to empower individuals and create a sense of ownership**. We have to make educational institutions democratic settings themselves where learners and educational staff can engage in the democratic life of the institution. The Eurydice report "Citizenship Education in Europe"[2] highlights the fact that "all countries have introduced some form of regulation to promote student participation in school governance". However, it often comes after the transfer of knowledge and skills (ICCS study). Non-formal and informal education sector can aid the process of democratic school development. By giving voice to learners, we can contribute to giving meaning to our shared values.

Supporting educators
Professional and non-professional educators[3] such as parents play an essential role in preparing future generations for dialogue and through their commitment they serve as important role models. One can never stress enough the need to support professional and non-professional educators' lifelong leaning. Concerning professionals, a competence-based initial and continuous training should encompass **working methods to prepare them to manage diversity, discrimination, racism, xenophobia and sexism, and to resolve conflicts peacefully**. They need further support with teaching and assessing soft skills such as problem-solving and critical thinking. We need programmes to increase their capacity to use interactive methodologies to engage learners and at the same time to offer them a safe space to share their thoughts. Furthermore, **peer learning between educators themselves** and with other actors in relevant fields should be supported. That is how we can strengthen their capacity to help learners to develop democratic values, inquisitive mindsets, tolerance and open-minded attitudes needed in 21st century.

Prevention of radicalisation
Educators have to be in **capacity to deal with difficult issues** such as attacks in Paris and Copenhagen that are related to **feelings, principles and beliefs**. Educators should also be supported if they are faced with extremist ideas or behaviours. Some countries have for instance implemented **hotlines** for teachers who can request help when faced with such cases. Educational institutions have to **work hand in hand with specialised actors** to find the adequate responses (psychologists, experts, police offices, social services, NGOs, etc). Putting in place independent **coordinated networks of services** is necessary. The Platform supports in that respect the proposals made in the Manifesto for Education – Empowering Educators and Schools ("*Ran Prevent*"[4]).

2. EACEA, Eurydice, "Citizenship Education in Europe", Brussels, 2012, p.142.
3. Educators hereby include educational staff in formal, non-formal and informal learning including teachers, adult educators, parents, youth workers, etc.
4. Radicalisation Awareness Network, "Manifesto for Education – Empowering Educators and Schools", Ran Prevent, p.5.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
GOOD PRACTICES

CHAPITÔ

The Chapitô project started out thirty years ago as a result of the development of new circus artistic movements in Portugal and the actions of artists and circus companies. This unique project includes an important component of social inclusion by circus arts. The project has a staff of over 100 people, including over 30 teachers, in administrative, pedagogic, production, social and performing areas. Each year it welcomes around 120 students who go on placements in various associations, circus schools, theatres etc., to experience and get extensive knowledge of the world of work. The circus arts training also includes a full programme of vocational training for scenery design, costuming, make up, masks, puppets and stage technicians. The aim is also for students to understand, beyond the development of circus arts, how important they are as a means for the social inclusion of disadvantaged people. Their circus arts training programme is unique in Portugal, and equates to the Level 3 Professional Certificate, in accordance with European regulations.

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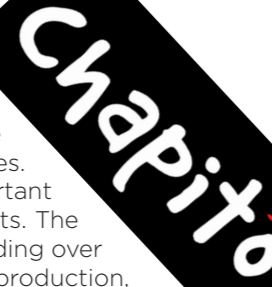+32 2 526 70 09 / info@fedec.eu
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EDUCATION, WE HAVE A PROBLEM!

The campaign Education, we have a problem! was conducted during 2013 and 2014 on social inclusion in education. It aimed at raising awareness of the issues linked to social inclusion in education and giving them visibility on national and European level, making national school student unions take action on national level, involving experts and partner organisations with specific knowledge and interest in the topics and giving concrete tools to tackle social exclusion in education. In 2007, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, OBESSU also published a Manual for School Students to introduce school students to the work of a school student union with all its different aspects: from the birth to further developments, from economic management to organising events, from students' leadership to media-handling, in order to encourage student activism. OBESSU established a Working Group to review and update the Manual for School Students. The new version is due May 2016.

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EQUNET

EQUNET (led by EURASHE, EDEN, ESU and MENON) was a three-year project with the purpose of building an evidence-based advocacy network aiming at raising awareness on the issue of equity in higher education and at increasing access to it for marginalised and non-traditional groups. It acted as a thematic hub where institutions and individuals working on higher education and on equity-assurance could meet, exchange knowledge and shape a more equitable future for European universities. The EQUNET partnership began by analysing the degree and nature of barriers that arise as a result of a particular educational background, of different socio-economic conditions and of structural problems in higher education, and their impact on individuals from five target groups, namely students, migrants, continuing learners, adult learners and post-professionals. Highlighting the best and worst practices, the partners proposed solutions, formulated as implementable recommendations.

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IDEAS

The IDEAS (EURASHE, ESU) project partners, inspired by the EQUNET project, gathered to create a database of initiatives, programmes and projects for enhancing equity in access, participation and completion of Higher Education from across Europe. The database for evidence of a causal link between the initiatives and improvements in equity for their target groups is to be established, to understand enabling factors which allow successful examples of practices to take root and to select successful examples that can be replicated and disseminated widely to promote piloting and scaling up in institutions around Europe. Apart from that, the IDEAS Toolkit serves as a practical guide, replicating the most efficient initiatives in different environments. It will describe the initiatives, target groups, actors involved in the implementation, and enabling factors in detail, and provide practical examples as to how to introduce and manage them in collaboration with or within Higher Education Institutions. It will thus promote the multiplication of these initiatives at local and national level.

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EXCHANGEABILITY

The ExchangeAbility project aims at involving students with disabilities in ESN activities as well as at providing better opportunities for students with disabilities to be mobile in Europe in general. The long-term goal of the project is to foster the mobility of students with disabilities, which is currently particularly low in the EU, to go on an exchange and to provide them with the best possible conditions, preparing the International Relations Offices as well as the local ESN sections for receiving students with special needs. During the project main conference, coordinators and participants from 36 countries had the opportunity to meet experts in the field. Through specific capacity building activities and improvised simulation sessions, awareness was raised among students to improve social inclusion for all students. Furthermore, best practices and experience were shared, European universities were mapped according to their accessibility and a common vision was created regarding social inclusion of disabled youth in student mobility.

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OED

The OED project was about creating a European Network on outreach, empowerment and diversity. It dealt with reaching out to marginalised groups, increasing diversity in adult education (and including the voice of learners), and empowering learners to become active European citizens. The network improves approaches in reaching out to disadvantaged groups, promoting diversity in organisations, improving teaching methodology, fostering active citizenship thanks to participatory strategies and supporting the development of better policies aimed at integration and lifelong learning. Among other things, the network has provided a collection and analysis of good practice examples from across Europe that tackle the overlap of social inclusion and active citizenship, analysed outreach strategies to marginalised groups and developed policy recommendations and empowerment strategies based on good practices and experiences of the network in order to activate disadvantaged learners, as well as improved teaching methodology for diverse target groups.

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ELICIT-PLUS

ELICIT-PLUS is the result of a cooperation between ELOS and ELICIT. It aims at promoting innovative educational practices to develop active European citizenship in intercultural, professional, social, economic and civic areas. In the framework of the project, pedagogical resources and intensive study programmes are offered to teachers, trainers, educational staff, parents and learners. The objective of the project is to establish a sustainable and growing network of training modules for teachers, principals, parents and other actors involved in educational matters in order to educate a growing number of European pupils and students to become responsible European citizens. The modules will address the various competences required to sustain the European socio-economic and cultural model and to boost European competitiveness on the international scene by developing European literacy, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Their approach is established to promote inclusive education: ensuring that all children are safe, visible and learning and to reinforce the connection between formal and informal learning.

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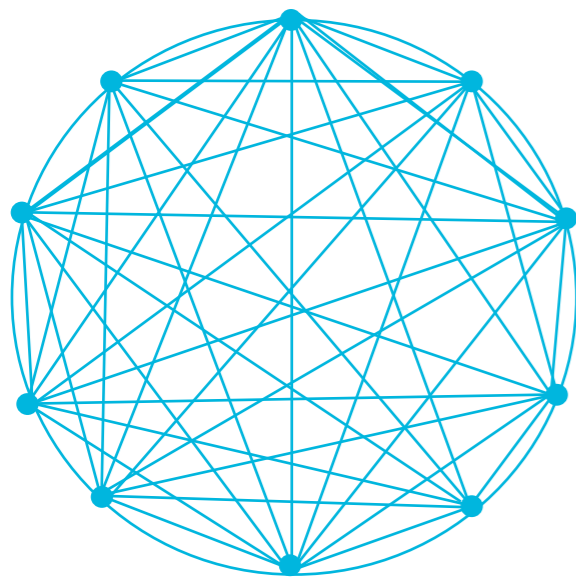www.elicitplus.eu

ACTIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

COLLABORATIVE WIDER COMMUNITIES

Building active and participatory communities cannot be solely based on knowledge. Not only should it take into account the strong added-value of experience, whether it is lived inside or outside schools, such as through volunteering.

Informal and non-formal learning, particularly in youth work and all forms of civic engagement such as voluntary and civic services, play a prominent role in **building active and participatory communities and restoring solidarity.** However, in only one third of EU Member States steering documents, such as national curricula and other regulations, encourage student participation in local communities. Providers of citizenship education in non-formal settings are often not supported and recognised for their work, since only a handful of European countries understand education for citizenship as integral part of youth work. **Youth and sport organisations, popular education, community centres and citizenship learning centres** are more flexible and open to the needs of learners, especially of the marginalised and disadvantaged. Therefore, **synergies between formal and non-formal education** are of paramount importance. Last but not least, we need to ensure that everyone is provided the right, means, space and opportunity to participate and engage in activities in their communities and that their **access to lifelong learning is guaranteed**, as acquiring social and civic competences needs to remain equally relevant in adulthood. To strengthen it further, action must focus on **building up skills and confidence** through community development, training and advocacy schemes.

Other important generators of social cohesion are:
- Volunteering
- Learning mobility
- Family learning

Volunteering

Volunteering is one of the main drivers to developing "citizenship skills" and empowering learners. Furthermore, **opportunities for out-of-school activities**, such as work with the local community, exist in most European countries, but they **remain too limited.** The 2012 Eurydice report[1] rightly called for a renewed effort to develop and support country-wide **programmes and projects encouraging participation in society**. Another challenge is that volunteers are seldom recognised for their engagement in the community, at national and European level. It is necessary to make further progress towards a **better recognition and validation of the learning outcomes** they get from it[2].

Learning mobility

Learning and teaching mobility also plays a crucial role in developing social, civic and intercultural competences and promoting a sense of belonging. Taking part in a mobility period has a wide range of positive aspects. According to the Erasmus Voting Assessment, students that took part in an exchange are **twice as likely to take part in democratic processes** such elections[3]. Additionally, twenty-one percent of EU citizens think that student exchange programmes are **the most positive achievement of the EU[4]**. EU mobility schemes are therefore strongly associated with the benefits of EU citizenship in people's minds. **Proper investment** has to be made by Member States in support to Erasmus+ so that learning mobility **becomes the rule instead of an exception**. We need to ensure inclusive learning mobility schemes and that access to mobility programmes is possible for all **regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds**. Moreover, we need to ensure the increasing quality of mobility programmes, starting from credit recognition to full integration of exchange students in hosting countries.

Family Learning

Parents as important role models should be fully involved in the democratisation of our classrooms, schools and communities. It is well-known that students whose parents actively engage in the school community and participate in school management, develop strong competences with respect to interacting to their peers, teachers and their community. Moreover, studies show that **parent involvement has positive effects on learning outcomes[5]**. Adult and family education programmes addressing the issue of cultural diversity can assist the family in fulfilling this role. Finally, **intergenerational learning** involving grandparents and the younger family members exchanging knowledge, competences and skills also has a strong educational impact on the community.

1. EACEA, Eurydice, "Citizenship Education in Europe", op. cit.
2. Lifelong Learning Platform, "Survey results on the Recognition of volunteers' competences by employers", GR-EAT project, 2015, p. 11.
3. Generation Europe Foundation, "Erasmus Voting Assessment Project, Final Report", Brussels, 2014, p. 52.
4. European Commission, "European Citizenship report", Standard Eurobarometer 77, Brussels, 2012, p. 50.
5. Sam Redding, Janis Langdon, Joseph Meyer, Pamela Sheley, "The Effects of Comprehensive Parent Engagement on Student Learning Outcomes", Academic Development Institute, Harvard Family Research Project, 2004, p. 7.

COLLABORATIVE WIDER COMMUNITIES
GOOD PRACTICES

FAMILY EDUNET

FamilyEduNet - Families for Educational Success is a European project financed by the Erasmus+ Programme, aiming to upscale the successful XarxaClau project of FAPAC (2014-2016). The objectives of the project are to create a network of organisations to accompany, follow and train families in Successful Educational Actions (SEA), to disseminate the scientific evidences that lead to SEAs to students' families and parents' associations in Europe, to train families in SEA with special focus on families from a Roma background or living in rural areas and to provide families and the educational community in general with participation tools to create a network of families to achieve educational success. The main outputs of the project will be an open online family training course (MOOC) and a guideline for training of families in SEA.

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CATS

CATS - Children as Actors for Transforming Society is an annual week-long event in the Caux Palace near Lake Geneva, a conference and space where children, young people and adults live, learn and work together as equal partners in transforming society. It is rapidly becoming the meeting point for a global community of advocates for the rights and well-being of children. It creates a space for children and young people to engage and exchange perspectives with adults in order to enrich, challenge, and expand their respective understanding of children's situations and create the potential for meaningful partnerships and participation. As an example, the L4WB workshop is being designed and delivered by multigenerational collaborators, working in parity and delight, with a span of fifty years between the oldest and youngest of the three facilitators. The programme is co-designed and co-led by children and adults. After the first CATS conference, the young people who had attended set up an online young people's advisory group became very active in the initial planning for each year of CATS.

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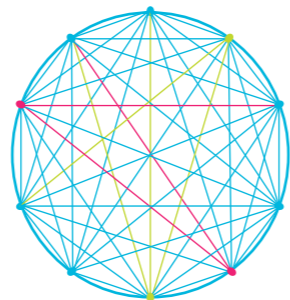
ACTIVE

ACTIVE - Active Tools In Various Environments project aims at giving attention to the topic of active citizenship within the AFS network and create a link between intercultural learning and active citizenship at all levels society. It will provide flexible educational tools to explore life with the glasses of active citizens and potential actors of change. The project has been developed in cooperation with AFS Intercultural Programmes. In the framework of the project a manual of activities is to be produced, consisting of a set of ten activities split into "before, during and after" the exchange. The activities guide exchange participants to bring intercultural competences and change-making in their host and home community. Furthermore, a set of three webinars exploring active citizenship within AFS will be organised, on how AFSers can be visible change-makers in their communities.

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SOCIAL ERASMUS

SocialErasmus is an international project that aims to get young citizens to take social action during their mobility experience, facilitating their integration in the local community and giving them a chance to make a long lasting social change through volunteering activities. The slogan of the project is "Leave your mark!" and the aim is to enrich international experience of young people abroad with volunteering activities that allow them to better understand societal problems and to work on the solutions. SocialErasmus provides an opportunity for young people to get to know "other realities" and learn how they can contribute to improving society as global citizens. Twice a year, volunteers from ESN sections from across Europe organise a full week of SocialErasmus activities together, in order to demonstrate the added value of volunteering, including better intercultural understanding and inspiring international students to continue making change once they return to their home countries.

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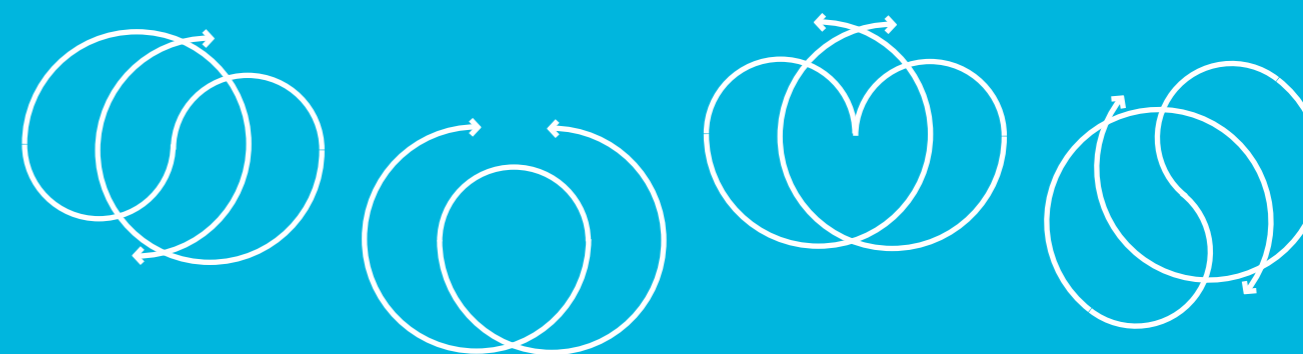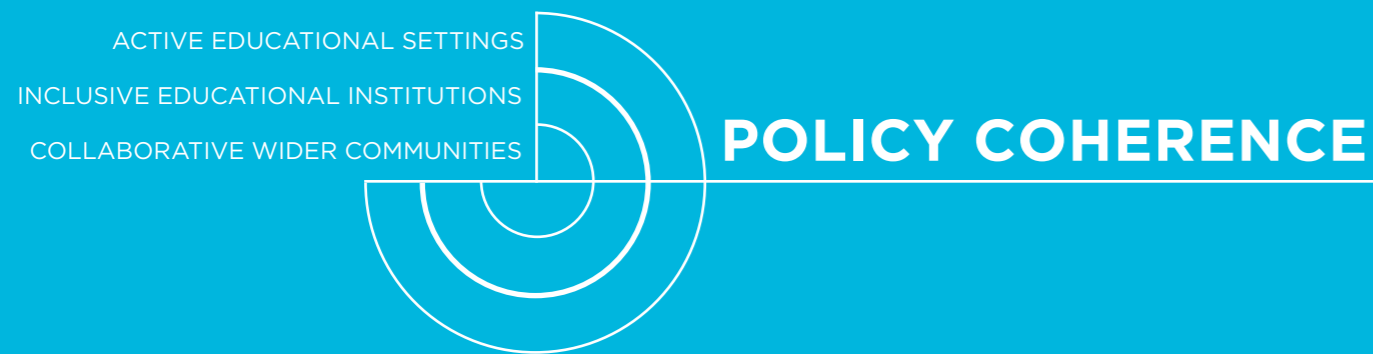www.socialerasmus.esn.org

SIS CATALYST

SiS Catalyst is an initiative to foster ethical, effective and sustainable engagement between children aged 7-14 years and the social, cultural, political, scientific and educational institutions which make decisions that will shape their future. Enhanced interaction benefits both children and institutions through an exchange of views and improved mutual understanding. The initiative had a particular focus on strengthening relationships between post-secondary educational institutions and the children who, despite ability, currently appear unlikely to enter them. SiS Catalyst also aimed at supporting and guiding institutions and people new to working with children through training and mentoring in order to mobilise mutual learning among diverse stakeholders and to encourage institutions to empower children and install early positive attitudes to learning. A number of guidelines, good practices, courses and other resources can be found on the project website.

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ELECTION OBSERVATION PROJECT

The Election Observation project was established to empower young Europeans to contribute themselves directly to democracy in Europe as election observers. In particular, the project aims at organising observation missions to democratic processes around Europe, offering young people an opportunity to be officially accredited election observers and establishing election observation as a standard for the internal democratic procedures of AEGEE-Europe. By publishing reports about their observations, international and domestic observer organisations provide the national and the international public with an independent assessment of a given electoral process and therefore enhance transparency of elections. For these purposes, the project organised observation missions to elections in Ukraine, Bosnia, Moldova, Estonia, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Poland and other countries, as well as to the referendum in Scotland and others. In the framework of the project, annual election observation training is offered to future observers.

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EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP TRIMESTER PROGRAMME

The European Citizenship Trimester Programme - ECTP was born in 2009 as an intra-European trimester secondary-school exchange focusing on European and Active Citizenship. It is a host-family and school-based exchange programme with an additional strong focus on active European citizenship besides intercultural and language learning. The three-month exchange takes place between August and November with a joint ECTP Brussels Camp at the end November/beginning of December, before the students go home to their home countries. Participants are between 15 and 18 years old and have an opportunity to experience a new European country, its language, culture, life, school, habits, and to think about differences and similarities with their home country. The objects of the programme are for participants to gain a wider concept of Europe, to appreciate European diversity, to recognise the importance of active citizenship, to be motivated to be an active citizen, to have an opportunity to implement active citizenship throughout the programme.

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ACTIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

COLLABORATIVE WIDER COMMUNITIES

POLICY COHERENCE

Succeeding in our endeavours to build inclusive communities starting with our educational settings, democratically involving all parties, require coherence in our policies, linking one to another thanks to established partnerships based on civil dialogue.

All EU Member States (and many others) have adopted and committed to the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Now it is **high time to put words into action** and ensure **proper investment** for a sustainable solution. It is about policy coherence and effectiveness.

There is a wide range of educational initiatives and we need to put the tools and instruments we have together, because policy seems to be replicating and going into different directions. It is also about mainstreaming and upscaling initiatives that have shown positive results at local, national and European level while at the same time assessing current policies and instruments in order to address possible gaps.

Engagement across multiple sectors, actors and levels is required to have a long-lasting impact and to find innovative solutions. This double process should take place at all levels. The EU needs to affirm clearly its shared values and commitment to democracy, peace and intercultural understanding and support this process.

The policy coherence to turn ideas into action rests on:
- A new narrative for Europe
- Partnerships
- Civil dialogue

A new narrative for Europe

The Platform stresses the need for the European Commission Directorate for Education and Culture to take legislative action following the Paris Declaration. We call for a broad initiative that would come with an action plan with concrete measures to implement the new priorities of the ET2020 related to its social and civic dimension, in line with the Paris Declaration. It is important not to narrow down such initiative to the prevention of radicalisation. Although Member States ought to exchange their practices on the former, we have to be **careful about the narrative that is used** in order to avoid any further stigmatisation of certain groups. We thus call for an **EU-wide campaign on the "Role of Education in promoting an Inclusive and Democratic society",** supported by the Erasmus+ programme. Sending a positive message to tackle "living together" in diverse and complex societies, it would ensure policy coherence between various initiatives and provide a policy push for Member States to act on the important issues raised in this paper. Erasmus+ Policy **Support actions (Key Activity 3) should be strengthened** to support the process.

Policy coherence and partnerships

Policy coherence between different International and EU institutions and within the Institutions, between Directorate-Generals and Units is essential. Within the European Commission, synergies should be made particularly (but not exclusively) between **DG EAC, DG HOME, DG JUST and DG EMPL**, in a cross-sectoral and lifelong approach. The same applies at national, regional, and local levels. Concrete mechanisms of coordination should be established to follow up the implementation of the Paris Declaration. Cooperation **between the national and the EU level** is important, as well as **between Member States**. In this regard, a working group between Member States for the exchange of good practices is an important step (OMC Thematic Working Group) - best practices and projects should be **mainstreamed and replicated** in other countries. Civil Society organisations should be involved throughout the process.

Civil dialogue

A genuine civil dialogue should be implemented to make sure EU policies are better **aligned with citizens' needs**. Consistent and meaningful involvement of citizens in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies should be promoted. In order to do so, **partnerships with civil society** are needed. Civil society has an important role in this regard, but it needs **sustainable, secured funding** to carry out its tasks. This process will help the EU to get closer to its citizens, a clear ambition of M. Juncker, with concrete and sustainable dialogue mechanisms.

The Lifelong Learning Platform (previously EUCIS-LLL) was born in 2005 as a response from civil society organisations to the definition and implementation of a European policy in the field of education and training in the so-called "Open Method of Coordination".

In 2001 already, several educational networks had come together to share their experience and expertise around a Europe-wide consultation on the EU "Lifelong Learning Memorandum". This cooperation became systematic when the Platform was established as a permanent organisation in 2005. For 10 years now, the Lifelong Learning Platform has played a key role in structuring and increasing the input of civil society on the "Education and Training 2020" and "Europe 2020" strategies and their predecessors.

The Lifelong Learning Platform was acknowledged by the European Commission in 2009 as a "unique representation" of lifelong learning of the various education and training actors organised at EU level, and in 2011 as "in a unique position to support European networks in education and training to work collectively at European, national and local levels and to contribute to a structured policy dialogue within the open method of coordination in education and training".

Gathering 39 organisations, the Lifelong Learning Platform is today the most legitimate interlocutor of the EU institutions in the field of lifelong learning. It continuously defends the need to implement a dialogue across educational sectors and between stakeholders and public institutions at all levels, regional, national and European.

Values

The platform fosters a vision of lifelong learning that promotes equity, social cohesion and active citizenship. It believes that the objectives of education and training should not only be described in terms of employability or economic growth but also as a framework for personal development. It is essential to raise awareness on the fact that lifelong learning should include a large range of learning settings and create more complementarity and continuity between formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Vision

The Lifelong Learning Platform promotes a holistic vision of lifelong learning, from cradle to grave, that is not limited to formal education but integrates non-formal and informal learning. By bringing together actors from all sectors and levels of education and training, The platform contributes to an increased flexibility between systems. By encouraging an exchange of knowledge, it aims to build a citizen's voice on education and training issues but also to propose concrete solutions to make lifelong learning a reality for all.

Objectives

- Pursuing an active dialogue with European institutions
- Enabling exchanges of best practice, experiences and expertise
- Disseminating information on key issues in the lifelong learning sector

Building the future of education!

LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM
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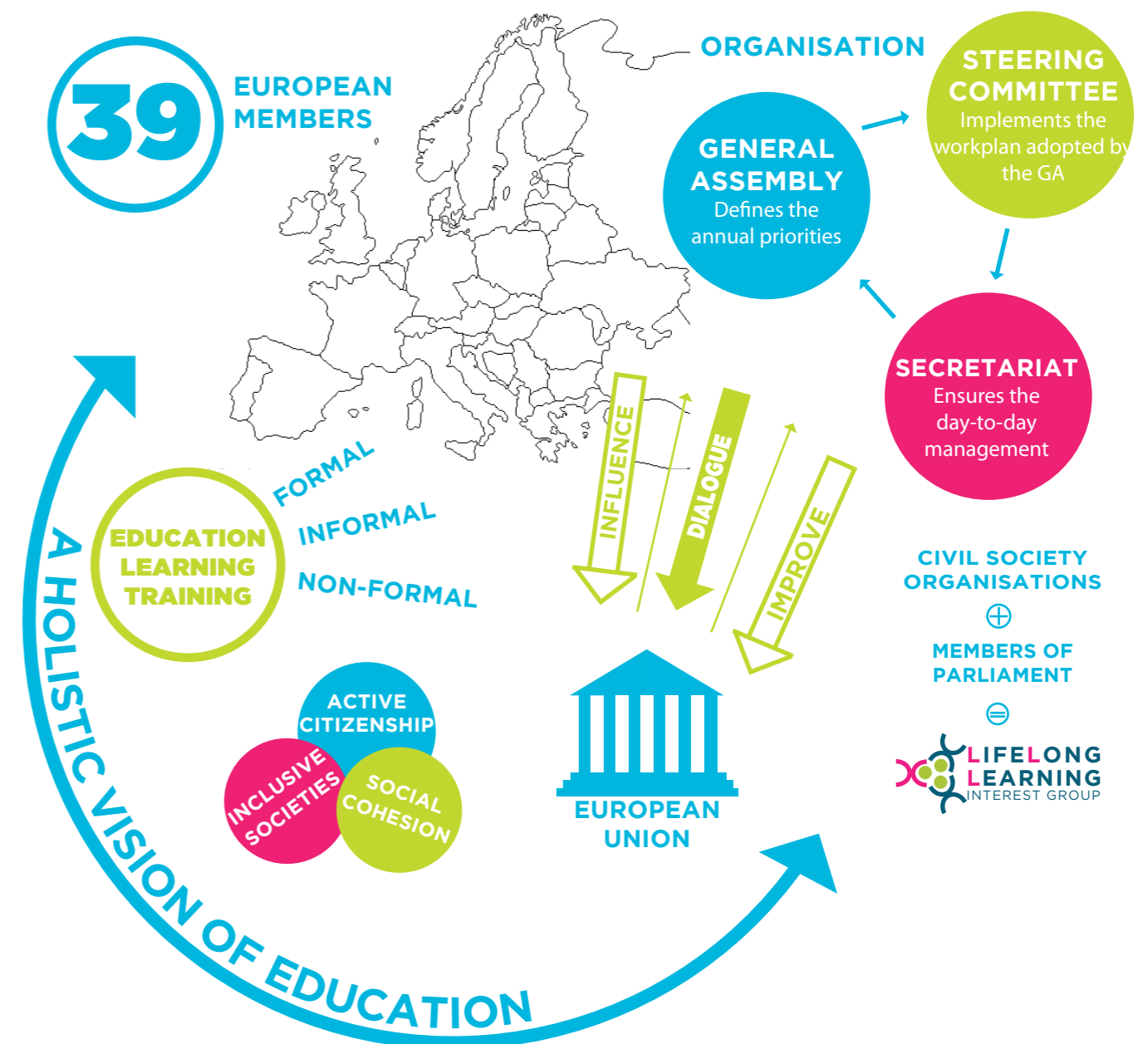
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