

LAPAS



Latvian Platform
for Development
Cooperation

Substantive Report on CSO Engagement

***GENE Peer Review
Global Citizenship Education in Latvia***

Riga, 2023

This report is prepared within the service agreement between Global Education Network Europe (GENE) and Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation (LAPAS) for the purpose of the GENE Peer Review of the Global Citizenship Education in Latvia (Peer Review).

LAPAS holds the responsibility about the content of this report.

LAPAS thanks to our members and partners for participation in the meetings related to the Peer Review.

Special gratitude to Inga Belousa, Green Liberty, for active involvement in the Peer Review process and beyond.

Report is aligned with Global Education Strategic Guidelines 2021 - 2025 “Global Education: development, concept and implementation.” Please see <https://lapas.lv/works/darbibas-virzieni/globala-izglitiba/> for more of LAPAS and its members’ work in global education.

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1. Background of GCE in LAPAS

Although the practical experience of global education is closely related to formal education, the non-governmental sector – CSOs operating in the field of development cooperation, global development, sustainable development and education for sustainable development – play a crucial role in the development of global education in Latvia and informing Latvian society about global issues.

The CSOs, which are also members of LAPAS, operate in the field of global education in various ways:

- organizing training seminars and classes to raise the awareness of children, young people, teachers, journalists, municipal leaders, households and other groups regarding the connection between global issues and everyday decisions as well as to develop global civic competence;
- organizing campaigns and other public events to raise public awareness of global and development cooperation issues;
- developing global education teaching materials;
- cooperating with other global education stakeholders in the implementation of joint activities;
- implementing advocacy for decision-making related to global education policies and practices;
- representing Latvian civil society in international networks related to global education.



*Topics of Global Education Weeks in Latvia
organised by LAPAS*

LAPAS has been coordinating the field of global education in Latvia since the foundation of the association in 2004, still the year 2007 can be considered to be the legal beginning of the field of global education in Latvia, when the document “Guidelines for Development Education 2008–2015” was adopted by LAPAS members (https://lapas.lv/works/darbibas-virzieni/globala-izglitiba/assets/AI_pamatn_2008-2015_FINAL_latv.pdf). Later, with the aim to better share their specific pedagogical experience on how to link current and local contexts, as well as to connect global issues with everyday decisions, in 2014 LAPAS developed glocalization methodology (https://lapas.lv/en/resources/metodikas-un-rokasgramatas/60_glokalizacijas_metodologija/assets/EN/Gloka_06052015_EN.pdf), which has been welcomed by international partners and been foundation to LAPAS GCE work since then. In 2020 and 2021 LAPAS developed Global Education Guidelines 2021-2025 Global education: development, concept and implementation (https://lapas.lv/en/resources/metodikas-un-rokasgramatas/09_gi_vadlinijas_2022/LAPAS-GlobalEducation-Guidelines.pdf)

Please find examples of the GCE best practices by CSOs and beyond in Global Education Guidelines 2021-2025 Global education: development, concept and implementation (see link above).

The future of GCE in LAPAS will be shaped by new EuropeAid DEAR projects that will be implemented in 2024-2026 in close cooperation with member organisations.

2.LAPAS approach to GCE

Global education is an approach that develops awareness, action and citizenship, and promotes participation in addressing local and global challenges and building a bright future. The global education approach is essential in formal education – at all levels and in all forms of education, in non-formal and informal learning.

Global competence is the set of results to be achieved by global education. Global competence is based on understanding, acting and a civic position related to the global or world context.

Understanding

- the interrelationship and sustainability of social, environmental and economic processes and challenges,
- the link between social, environmental and economic processes and problems in everyday life, the local community, the country, Europe and the world as a whole,
- the impact of day-to-day decisions and actions on local community, national, European and global development.

Skills-based action:

- interacting with representatives of different cultures,
- participating in the sustainable development of the local community, national, European and global society.

Civic position characterized by values:

- responsibility to oneself and future generations,
- respect for the diversity of worldviews, values and opinions,
- honesty with oneself and others
- belonging to a global community,
- caring for oneself, others and the environment,
- social, environmental and climate justice,
- solidarity in implementing sustainable change.

These three basic features are interlinked and complementary. Global competences can best be developed by engaging in or contributing to processes based on inclusion, cooperation, solidarity and equality. Global competence is essential for addressing challenges, overcoming causes and building a more promising future.

Global competence characterizes proficiency and permeates both professional activities and daily life. Global competence determines action in situations related to the global or world context and helps to understand it. That is why global competence is essential to live a dignified life in times of uncertainty, challenge and change.

Global competence is practically manifested as the action of a global citizen or global citizenship, which can be described as active participation in the local community and belonging to a wider - global or world community. The diversity of global citizenship is defined by the UN SDGs. Global citizenship is achievable outcome of global education.

3. Process of engagement of CSOs in Peer Review

LAPAS involved CSOs in the process of Peer Review in several ways.

First, within the process of the development of the new organisational strategy LAPAS organised working groups in the main work areas. In these meetings members and partners were also asked about the opinions on the global education issues - LAPAS future work in this area, common interests and vision. In all of these meetings members expressed the support of the further development of the global citizenship education as one of the priority areas of LAPAS. Also in LAPAS members' survey the global education work has been indicated as important area of interests for further work.

Second, LAPAS organised the meeting of LAPAS members and partners with GENE Peer Review experts on October 3, 2023. The meeting was announced in public not to limit the participation of CSOs who are LAPAS members. Specifically LAPAS members who work with GCE were invited to the event. In total seven LAPAS members took part in event, three cancelled participation before the meeting. Members represented LAPASA (Union of University Teachers working with Development Education), IAC (Educational Development Center), EKL (European Movement Latvia), ZB (Green Liberty), LLF (Latvian Rural Forum) and DIA+LOGS (NGO working with HIV/AIDS issues).

LAPAS has also participated in the Reference group of Peer review represented by LAPAS director and council member.

This report also represents LAPAS ongoing work in GCE.

4. Views and proposals of CSOs on GCE

Following summary is based on the meeting with Peer review experts in Riga.

- [School books as an opportunity](#)

Latvia has approach to education that there is a standard but teachers can choose books and materials. Also GCE topics can be used in language learning courses, even poetry lessons. This approach is time consuming but helps teachers to develop curriculum. For example, EKL prepares materials on topics of European Union.

- [Meetings and events with teachers](#)

There are many events where CSOs meet with teachers, organise teachers' trainings, also individual consultations. Teachers have low availability to look for materials themselves so they cooperate with CSOs. For example, IAC implements accredited training programs for teachers.

Also CSOs mentioned that other stakeholders like state institutions lack competence in GCE topics.

- [Development of standards and related materials](#)

CSOs are involved in the development of new curriculum standards, related materials. For example, IAC has created methodology for 10-12 schools, make a probation and send to schools, local communities. Their website also is rich with different materials for teachers on topics of global education, media literacy, active citizenship. The access to these materials also should be promoted through different spaces where materials for teachers are stored by the Ministry of Education and Science.

- [Good examples](#)

As GCE has not have had systemic implementation or any national level support, lots of personal level involvement has to be highlighted. For example, Inga Belousa has had her personal initiative in development of global education approaches in the formal education, especially teachers' education, implementation of GEW activities in faculty.

- [Multistakeholder cooperation](#)

Annual conference on GCE has always been a highlight where GCE topics have been uncovered and all stakeholders have come together to share their practices. Mainly these events have been organised with no support and based on CSO initiative.

Creation of multistakeholder teams - business, teachers, municipality, NGOs is successful tool also for GCE, this approach is actively used by IAC.

- [New approaches](#)

Different new approaches can be used in the GCE. For example, DIA+LOGS use associated/metaphoric cards for their topics that work very well to explain new concepts.

- [Localisation](#)

Localisation of global topics has always been an important approach in LAPAS GCE activities. For example, LLF organises every two years Latvian Rural Parliament where also global topics are discussed and localised. Acting locally but thinking globally. Also LAPAS runs workshops in these forums.

Neighbourhood movements and other new civic initiatives are new target groups also for GCE.

New law on municipalities opens many new possibilities for citizen engagement, also participatory budgeting.

- [Baltic cooperation](#)

Baltic cooperation has played an important role in GCE development - there have been common projects implemented by all three Baltic platforms, also events for SDGs platforms and GCE topics. Also, for example, there have been recent common activities on Baltic-Africa cooperation.

- [EC DEAR financing](#)

EC DEAR projects have been the main source of financing GCE in Latvia (with co-financing from MFA in last 8 years). For example, Green Liberty has had seven DEAR projects on diverse topics like media for development, food security, solidarity economy, fair trade and other. Also IAC has had DEAR projects in past that helped to develop GCE strategies and materials for schools.

At the same time donor agendas do not comply with national realities, also possibilities access to donors' financing. Lack of funding and volunteers at local level reduces the development possibilities.

- [Terminology](#)

Terminology has to be reviewed - what is the actual concept - development education, global education, global citizenship education. Development cooperation is now called international cooperation. In history this field was linked to development cooperation as MFA supported it and also reallocated resources for it. Actual importance of human rights, justice, peace education and sustainable development might shape new approaches also to global education. Still competence approach might be good solution to integrate.

- [Need for strong vision](#)

There is a need for strong vision in GCE and plan of concrete activities as now all actions are fragmented and depending on good will of people interested. Other programs are used to implement GCE ideas but there could be specific financing indicated at least at priority levels of existing financing programs. We also need ambassadors of GCE in all stakeholder groups who can spread the ideas. Generations are changing and global topics become more important.

LAPAS have been enabling small steps at different levels but GCE implementations is more than document. It is about all stakeholders accepting it as compulsory at the national level. Holistic approaches where all parts work together, share the responsibility are important.

- [Structures of implementation](#)

CSOs express the need to have concrete structures and approaches how we implement GCE. There is a need for dialogue between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education and Science about the responsibilities and also about the financing as it affects how CSOs can access the support and also engage in the curriculum development. Annual conference is important multistakeholder event but at the same time more regular and action result oriented meetings must take place. Ministry of Education and Science has consultative board on education issues but it is more general, at the same time many stakeholders are there.

- [Teachers' network](#)

There is lack of language education in many generations of teachers, they do not have access to many materials. Also materials are for pay but educators do not have resources, especially at grassroots level. There could be teachers' network who are interested and want to share. LAPAS has network of friends at local level, this can be capitalized for GCE purposes also.

- CSO role

CSOs can continue to lead but they need government support also. Maybe development of new partnerships can help. For example, LLF had cooperation with the State Chancellery to organise dialogue circles. Overall citizen activism is decreasing and becoming more at individual level, action oriented, therefore the support of CSOs by government will lead to long term sustainability effect for community building and mutual trust.

Overall CSOs are not optimistic about the possibility to continue in GCE with no financial support and systemic strategy, sustainable partnerships with government. This increases the risk that GCE will become purely school curriculum and will not capitalize CSO work in GCE that has been implemented for more than 15 years.

5.LAPAS evaluation of GCE for Peer Review

In this section there are the answers to the questions set by the Peer Review experts to LAPAS.

NGO sector working in the field of Global Education

Main source of financing of CSOs working in GCE have been DEAR projects. Since DEAR projects have become less accessible to Eastern Europe CSOs, also Latvia, the activities in GCE have significantly reduced. The organisations that before worked with GCE have changed their focus to other topics like media literacy, work with migration topics and other. In the last years LAPAS have struggled to organise membership on GCE topic.

If GCE is understood in broader sense by any topic that is related to development, sustainable development, intercultural learning, then there are very many organisations working with these issues. At the same time, based on the previous work, LAPAS has defined the GCE and would not support generalisations of this educational field as then it loses the very essence of the approach - clear and direct link to global level processes. LAPAS insists on the clarity of the terminology in the next steps of GCE development in Latvia.

At the same time LAPAS have been lucky to receive the DEAR project on GCE and we hope to expect the development of GCE also in CSO sector.

Main target groups of GCE CSO work

GCE has historically been more linked to work of schools but since 2014 LAPAS and its members have invested resources to work with many other stakeholders at the local level - communities, entrepreneurs, libraries, museums, youth centres and local CSOs. Lack of support of CSOs for GCE work will bring back GCE to schools mainly.

At the same time young people have prevailed as one of the most important target groups. For example, in 2022 European Year of Youth LAPAS with its members and other partners implemented many activities for young people in the initiative RŪPnīca, but in 2021 organised 20 discussions in rural areas with young people on the future of Europe and SDGs, trying to reach target groups above 18 years.

Till Covid-19 LAPAS for five years also prepared annual newspaper "World becomes better place" that was distributed together with members and local partners, libraries on the streets in the whole Latvia, covering many topics of global education.

Strengths or successes of Latvian NGOs in Global Education

Many good examples can be found in Global Education Strategic Guidelines 2021 - 2025 "Global Education: development, concept and implementation. To mention few:

- Involvement of media in GCE (Green Liberty);
- Link with private sector (CSR Latvia, Green Liberty);
- Development of new approaches (IAC);
- Localisation (LLF, IIC);
- Link with school curriculum (EKL).

Specifically the overall approach of strong glocalisation and multistakeholder development is success story, with involvement of high number of diverse stakeholders in GEW activities for nine years already.

Also cooperation among CSOs is strength - LAPAS has for many years organised tent in national Discussion festival LAMPA where many CSOs joined with their own topics, especially those who would not be able to afford their own participation in this event.

Main advocay points

LAPAS and its members have been stand alone advocates for GCE policy at the national level and has never succeeded in this matter. All policy guidelines eventhough developed in egaging process have stayed as CSO initiative only.

Thereof the above described call by participants of the group on string vision, strategy, action plan, implementation structures and financing is of high importance to sustain this field and CSO involvement.

As there is very low probablity of national funding for CSOs the strong and real support in terms of co-financing fro DEAR projects is expected. LAPAS has been successful in several projects that will be implemented 2024-2026, including subgranting on GCE topics, the ensured co-financing of these projects is requested.

Main challenges within the sector

CSO sector of Latvia has taken leading role in the implementation of GCE but it has been highly dependant on the availability of the EU grants. With lower access to EC programs, CSOs of Latvia have shifted their focus from GCE to other work areas. Lack of the national funding, structures and common vision has led to the decrease of the interest and involvement in GCE. At the same time geopolitical situation defines high urgency for the GCE for all target groups including society as a whole.

Change for positive difference for Global Education in Latvia

CSO leadership for GCE is itself positive change, also going beyond the usual structures and implementing multistakeholder actions reaching out in new ways and to new target groups as described before.

Strong link with the practical actions like development coopration and humanitarian aid ensure the full set of the competences - as knwoledge, as skills and building of the attitudes. In Latvia it has to be evaluated positive that development, education and humanitarian aid CSOs work in one platform cooperating and supplementing each other for the shared vision of just and sustainable development.

LAPAS actively work also in European and global networks what brings to the national level possibilities to join awareness raising actions and other common activities. At the same time they always have been localised to deepen the understanding of local target groups on the complex European and global issues.

Change for positive difference for Latvian NGOs working in Global Education

CSOs working in the global education have been the brave ones - taking full responsibility for the topic that has not been recognised in the national educational policy, attracting resources from the international level, drafting policy guidelines and implementing variety of actions. Developing their own methodologies and approaches, working with the target groups beyond the usual audiences like schools and students. They are benchmark for many other CSOs in Latvia showing that work for common goal is more important than the existing frameworks and resources. But, as they point out themselves in the meeting with Peer Review experts - this cannot last forever. Also CSO sector is chaniging, LAPAS membership is fast growing with new CSOs joining, representing also private sector, tech community, youth, migrants and Latvian diaspora. This opens new opportunities to work with GCE but at the same time also requires targeted support and resources from our own government.