

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Vision text

A FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Today, global citizenship education is gaining importance around the world. Driven by rapid changes in society and by globalisation, international, national and regional organisations are putting global citizenship education high on the education agenda. For the United Nations, for example, education is more than literacy and numeracy; **schools must also equip young people with global citizenship competences** to enable them to play a role in forging a more just and a more sustainable global society. Through its federal global citizenship education programme, Enabel is also committed to this overall goal.

Global citizenship education is not an unambiguous concept. There are different views on what it means and how it should be implemented in schools. Qualifiers also vary. Terms such as "global education", "global learning", "cosmopolitan citizenship education", "education for global competence" or "development education and awareness raising" are also circulating. Behind the labels assumptions vary about the meaning of citizenship, globalisation and

the social role of education. Depending on the vision, location and historical context, interpretations may vary considerably. For example, some approaches focus on preparing students for the place they will need to occupy in a globalised market and multicultural societies. Others believe that global citizenship should be about denouncing global dysfunctions that cause inequality. Others still emphasise how each of us can specifically engage to build a more just and more sustainable world.

Annoncer la CouleurC/Kruit uses the term global citizenship education, considering this term to be broad enough to resonate with our many partners and their practices on the ground. However, some clarification is needed. For our work, we break down global citizenship education in schools into two equally important pillars: expanding global consciousness and developing critical literacy. **Together, they form a basis for fostering individual and collective engagement and contribute to a more just, inclusive and sustainable global society.**

Enabel 

Global Citizenship Education Centre of Expertise

Expanding global consciousness

The first pillar, expanding global consciousness, refers to the awareness of the different ways in which people and societies around the world are interdependent. This interdependence manifests itself in two ways: on the one hand, as an undeniable reality of the universal nature of the challenges that we all are confronted with; and on the other hand, in the moral register, as the feeling of all belonging to a common humanity.

From a realistic viewpoint, as the Sustainable Development Goals indicate by highlighting that the great societal challenges of our time are universal, we all live in a really interdependent world. **Climate change, violent extremism, health crises, wars and migration flows are just a few of the current issues that cannot be understood solely from national or local perspectives or from within specific cultural boundaries.** They have an impact on the planet and every one of its inhabitants. Moreover, these issues are linked and show that there is a strong global interdependence between social, economic, cultural, ecological and political aspects. Today's great societal challenges are complex: different, even conflicting, interests are at stake and there are no simple solutions. This interdependence is also becoming more and more tangible in people's everyday lives. Changes in communication and technology are only reinforcing and accelerating this trend. Virtually and in real life, we all come into contact with the rest of the world more than ever.

This interdependence is also a source of shared responsibility, as the challenges are global, it is everyone's responsibility to act at their level, wherever they are on the planet, to jointly meet these challenges and strive towards greater global justice.

From a moral viewpoint global citizenship refers to the idea that everyone on earth is part of the same community – humanity – which transcends national and cultural boundaries. This idea is not new; its roots go back more than 2000 years. Ancient Greek cosmopolitan thinkers were already reflecting about the existence, beside local customs or identities, of a universal bond between people. **For Annoncer la Couleur/Kruit, global interdependence also manifests itself in moral terms, through the sense of universal belonging to a shared humanity, and the sharing of principles of equality and solidarity across national, cultural, religious, ethnic, gender, age-related and other divides.** This moral principle also meaningfully translates in human rights that apply to all.

Developing critical citizenship

The second pillar in which Annoncer la Couleur/Kruit invests is the development of critical literacy. It must be said that there is something paradoxical about the 'citizenship' component of global citizenship. We promote global citizenship, but in reality, no one is a citizen of the world. Although we are all part of the global human community, no one is in possession of an official 'citizen of the world' identity document. Citizenship refers to an individual's legal membership of a country that grants rights and obligations: In the absence of a global state, this dimension is hardly present in global citizenship education. Nevertheless, citizenship also refers to a sense of belonging and solidarity with a particular community, as well as to the capacity and willingness to work for the common good of that community: Global citizenship education is primarily about this dimension. **So it is not about a legal status, but about a way of being in a world that is increasingly connected.**

Citizenship and citizenship education can be designed in different ways. Today, many countries pay more attention to citizenship education in schools. This is also the case in Belgium. Sometimes, pleas have a rather negative departure point. Some policy makers and education actors believe that the norms and values of young people are inadequate, that young people show insufficient interest in politics and should be equipped to face fake news, radicalism and hate messages. In such a context, citizenship education is often limited to teaching social rules and 'good values' (listening, being honest, helping others, etc.). However, for the critical citizenship approach, **global citizenship education is more than that. It also means being able to understand, deconstruct and challenge existing rules and power relations, taking into account and respecting the existence of different beliefs and perspectives on the world.**

ALC/Kruit opts for critical literacy as a second pillar for its global citizenship education activities. We emphasise the importance of democracy, critical literacy, and respect for different perspectives, discussion and active participation in society at the local and global levels.

GCE Centre of Expertise within Enabel

Enabel, the Belgian development agency, is tasked with implementing the Belgian international development policy. Enabel's activities contribute to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and address five major global challenges: Peace and Security, Climate Change and the Environment, Social and Economic Inequality, Urbanisation, and Human Mobility. In addition, Enabel invests in global citizenship education, as a sixth, transversal challenge. It is considered key to maximising the impact of international programmes and efforts towards the SDGs. Through global citizenship, Enabel wants to encourage people worldwide to participate individually and collectively in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and in building a more inclusive, just and sustainable world.

In practice, global citizenship education can take various forms, from a classic training series over coaching of teams to intercultural exchange programs.

The target audience of global citizenship education is also broad and diverse, ranging from students, companies, civil society organizations to governments. As part of Enabel, the Annoncer la Couleur (ALC)/ Kruit programme is specifically tasked with embedding global citizenship education in schools in Belgium. In practical terms, this is done through (i) institutional dialogue, (ii) strengthening teaching practices (training and support of various educational actors), (iii) the realisation of innovative and in-depth projects aimed at strengthening global citizenship education, and (iv) the development of a centre of expertise aiming at generating and sharing global citizenship education knowledge and expertise.

www.annoncerlacouleur.be – www.wikicm.be
(global citizenship education knowledge sharing blog)
www.wijzijkruit.be

