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CITIZED

**TEACHING CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION?
THE CHALLENGES OF COMPETENCES, ASSESSMENT
RENEWAL AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

29th OCTOBER 2021

Table of contents

Table of contents	1
1.1. Introduction to the Workshop and agenda	2
1.2. Presentation of the project CITIZED	2
1.3. Challenges to Citizenship Education	3
1.4. Groups session 2: Teacher’s competences for citizenship education	4
1.5. Keynote speeches	6
1.6. Thematic session 1: Teachers' training for CE.....	7
1.7. Thematic session 2: Assessing students' learning outcomes	7
Contacts	10

1.1. Introduction to the Workshop and agenda

The NECE Conference Workshop organised by the CITIZED partners took place on 29th October 2021 on the online platform *Zoom*. The workshop was included within the programme of the NECE Conference and was structured in three sessions: the first session focused on some of the key challenges to citizenship education identified during the first months of the CITIZED project implementation, the second session focused on the analysis of teachers' competences frameworks and the final session included an "ideas forum", during which inputs and suggestions on practices, policies and research were collected by the moderators.

AGENDA

9.00 am	Presentation of the project CITIZED
9.15 am	Keynote speeches: Euan Mackie, educational coach and peace education expert Andrea Lapegna, Lifelong Learning Platform
9.45 am	Thematic sessions: Teachers' training for CE Assessing students' learning outcomes Wrap up
10.30 am	Closing remarks

1.2. Presentation of the project CITIZED

CITIZED is a European-funded project whose final objective is to develop an **innovative set of instruments that will help the widespread implementation of citizenship education in European education systems**. It has the ambition to become an effective catalyst of a multiplication process based on teachers' capacity building and empowerment and schools' commitment, by **filling existing implementation gaps** between policy statements and daily practice in the schools. The project is complementing some existing policies and measures that have already an ambition to support generalised good practices. The new and complementary components that CITIZED will develop will be immediately tested and validated by building on the existing collaboration framework established by the Council of Europe and the EU Institutions, as well as through the EIP Lab (spin-off of the UPPER project, funded by Erasmus+) and its online benchmarking system designed to compare and link schools and policy-makers on sets of agreed criteria.

CITIZED objectives

The project started in December 2020 and will last until November 2023. Throughout the project, the following specific objectives will be addressed:

1. Reviewing, analysing, comparing and classifying existing policy approaches to the development of citizenship education, pointing out what works where and at what conditions, thus identifying inhibiting and enhancing factors in the different contexts;
2. Proposing and testing self-assessment and self-reflection instruments and training modules enabling future teachers and in-service teachers to implement effective learning strategies, adequate to develop the set of pupils/students competences related to democratic citizenship;
3. Developing a collaborative open platform and giving access to good practice examples and methodological instruments for schools implementing "whole school" citizenship education projects;

4. Maximising the impact of the project activities in terms of support to large-scale implementation of the validated good practices.

CITIZED expected outcomes

- a) A critical review of recent curricula and national policies in the field of citizenship education including a classification of the most frequent measures;
- b) A stakeholders-validated competence framework for teachers intervening in the field of citizenship education, building on a review of existing models in this field, and an operational model for European qualification for teachers mostly specialising in this domain;
- c) A toolkit for schools engaging to become members of the Democratic Schools Network (DSN);
- d) A set of 5 transnational Policy workshops (MT, IT, BE, AT, FR) to maximise the dissemination of the project outcomes and the creation of an effective policy impact across the EU Member States.

Project structure

Being a policy support project, CITIZED started with a review, analysis, and classification of recent policies in the field of citizenship education: specific aims, cultural characterisation, articulation and funding strategies, definition and implementation processes, impact on curricula, etc. Once the European picture has been explored, the project will develop, through a structured participatory process, taking place in 4 countries and at the European level, a competence framework for educators in the field of Citizenship Education. The framework will constitute the basis for the development of self-assessment tools for teachers, but also of the validation of experiential learning outcomes, of training modules for in-service teachers and curriculum development for future teachers that will be proposed and validated in the following phase.

Based on best practices reviewed as part of the first phase of the project and of the Democratic Schools Network principles, a toolkit for schools which will commit to a “whole school approach” to improve citizenship education with the collaboration of all internal and external relevant stakeholders will be developed and tested. It will include self-assessment tools for schools, examples of effective teaching/learning and organisational strategies, guidelines for the involvement of local stakeholders in school improvement projects, etc.

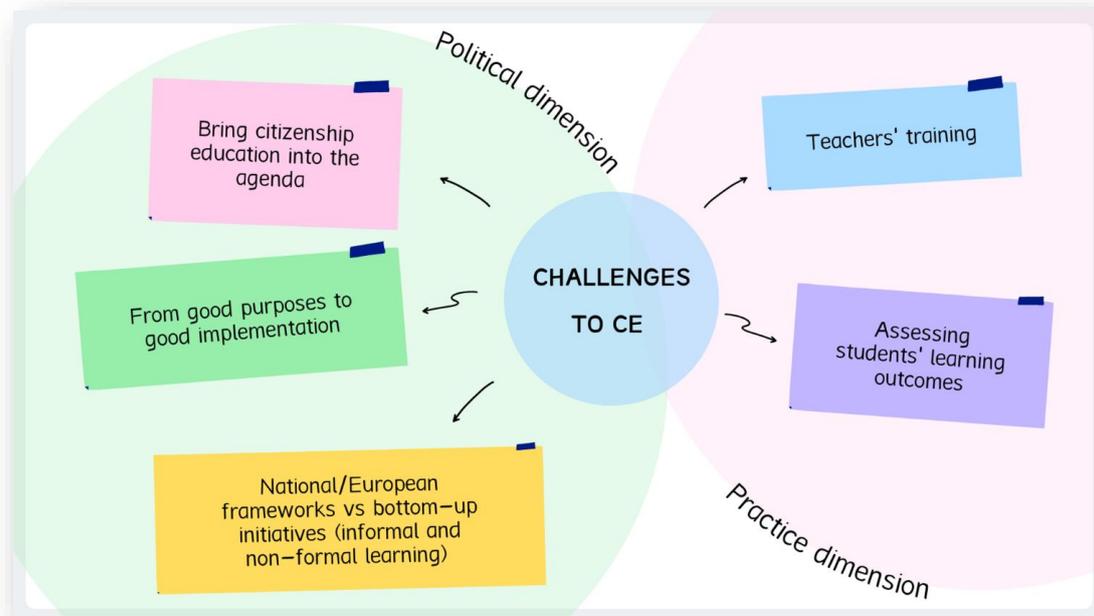
The effort of the project will also be directed towards the achievement of a significant impact on education policies at the different institutional levels: 4 policy workshops in the countries where partners are based will be organised, and a final conference will follow, summarising the main policy recommendations emerging from the analysis, development, and validation work.

1.3. Challenges to Citizenship Education

CITIZED partners identified 5 main challenges to Citizenship Education.

The first three challenges are more related to a political dimension:

1. **Bring citizenship education into the agenda** (agenda of policy makers, general public, teachers, parents and students): Citizenship Education still remains a marginal subject in many European countries. In order to bring some changes, public policies should strengthen the teaching of citizenship education by considering it not only as a subject on its own in order not to become marginal and optional, but also an overarching educational goal.
2. **From good purposes to good implementation**: The analysis conducted throughout the project showed that although Citizenship Education-related policies often come from good ideas and good



intentions, they might lack resources, cooperation, capacity building, monitoring, evaluation. In other words, policy makers do not always take into consideration the long-term development and implementation of the policies.

3. **National/European frameworks vs bottom-up initiatives (informal and non-formal learning);** For example, although the Council of Europe created a reference framework of competence for citizenship education, it is very difficult to bring it into the practice of school education.

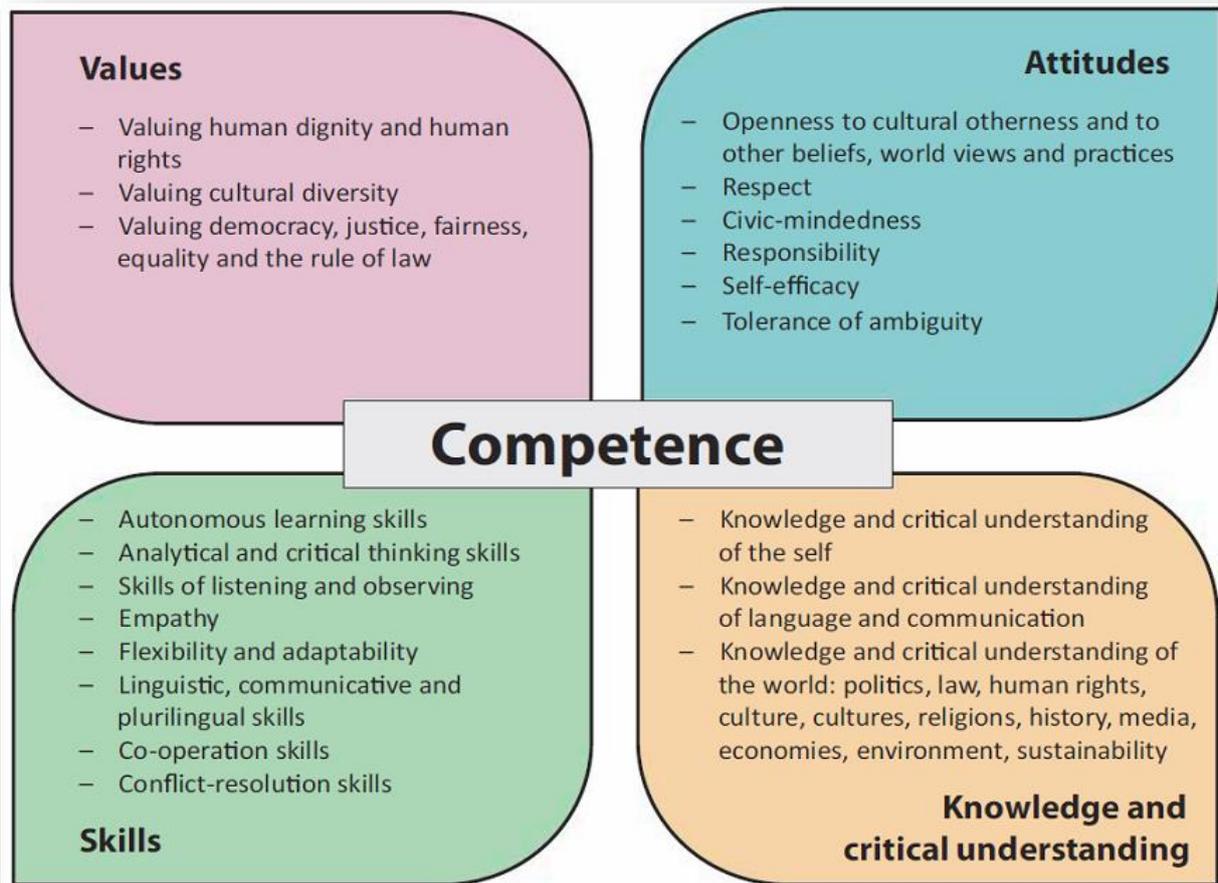
The last two challenges are related to the practice dimension.

4. **Teachers' trainings: from citizenship education contents to citizenship education skills, attitudes and values.** Teachers' training is often conceptualised and structured on the basis of content and knowledge. However, the analysis showed that the most effective citizenship education needs less knowledge and more cooperation and dialogical activities.
5. **Assessing students' learning outcomes.** Citizenship education is often not assessed. In the cases in which there is an evaluation, it is often promoted on a traditional way, without tacking in consideration different forms of assessment which are not based in the acquisition of knowledge

1.4. Groups session 2: Teacher's competences for citizenship education

Work package 2 of the CITIZED project focuses on teacher's competences for citizenship education. Its objective is to identify **competences** required to make teachers able to **help learners** effectively in their learning path for **democratic citizenship**. The basis of this session consists of a conceptual model comprising 20 competences for democratic culture, also referred to as the CDC "butterfly", as proposed by the Council of Europe (Coe)¹:

¹ Council of Europe: A conceptual model. 2021. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/a-conceptual-model>



The CDC “butterfly. Source: Council of Europe 2021.¹

In previous workshops (April and July 2021), relevant elements of the model were identified by the participants, such as: respect, self-reflection, openness towards students’ perspectives, values, dialogue- and project-based methods, empathy, knowledge and critical understanding of the world.

1.5. Keynote speeches

- **Euan Mackie, educational coach and peace education expert**

Mr Euan Mackie, educational coach and peace expert, explored the concept of “Agency” in relation to education and, more specifically citizenship education. As he stated, citizenship can include the concepts of “responsible citizenship, participatory citizenship and justice-orientated citizenship” (Westheimer, What Kind of Citizen, 2004). In this regard, participation, the feeling of being able to actively participate in a society, represents a key aspect of the concept of citizen and citizenship.

The concept of agency is therefore related to this feeling of being active within a society: as Mr Mackie reported, pupils’ or students’ agency is defined by the OECD Learning Compass 2030 as “the will to influence positively their own lives and the world around them”. In other words, agency is also the feeling that we can make decision in life.

In this respect, the key question that Mr Mackie posed was “*how can educators nurture agency in education?*”. During his speech, he argued that agency can be identified through different education perspectives:

- Education as Instructions, top-down and assessment
- Education through informal choices and personal free space
- Education as mature collaboration, coaching, dialogue rich

In particular the last point is crucial for parents, teachers and school leaders if they want to enhance personal students’ agency. In his discourse he argued that there are some key conditions for young people to flourish:

- Feeling safe and secure
- Language interactions and value from
- Opportunity for positive social interaction with peers and others.
- Grace, forgiveness and constructive resolution of problems

Finally, he also outlined the methods of promoting Agency of children, pupils and students, by highlighting 7 key issues to be addressed:

1. Addressing Social and Economic Issues for families
2. Family efficacy and opportunities
3. Skills
4. Expression & Voice
5. Volunteering
6. Inclusion not Integration
7. Participating in Pastoral groups

- **Andrea Lapegna, Lifelong Learning Platform**

Mr Andrea Lapegna talked about the approach to teaching citizenship of the Lifelong Learning Platform. He started his speech by stating that citizenship education is not something that can be taught, but it is something that can be learnt and practiced. As he argued, the LLLP has a holistic approach to education that goes beyond formal schooling. In this framework, citizenship education is not to be considered a subject, as mathematics or science are, and it should not be assessed in the same way. Mr Lapegna also highlighted that Citizenship Education should be mainstreamed across curricula but not by using a top-down approach as it happens in the majority of the countries (such as Italy).

As he affirmed, the challenge is to nurture in children the feeling of being citizens. In some cases, schools are organised through democratic life structures, where students can participate in student bodies or promote active representation. Mr Lapegna focused on the fact that democratic structures in schools can really help to learn how to be proactive citizens.

Finally, he focused on the role of teachers, who should enable learners to feel as citizens. In this regard, it is necessary to promote formative assessment and peer to peer assessment.

After the keynote speeches, the two thematic sessions were launched.

1.6. Thematic session 1: Teachers' training for CE

The debate started with the inputs already collected by the CITIZED project during previous workshops (April and July 2021), which are summarised in the following image:



The first thematic session was developed on the basis of the following preliminary concept:

"Teachers' trainings for citizenship education: from a focus on contents towards the development of skills, attitudes and values."

During the discussion with the participants of the workshop, the issues that emerged were the following:

- Teachers should be ACTORS of citizenship education rather than teach it;
- Teachers as teachers, teachers as allowing free choice and play, teachers as facilitators, teachers as nurturing social interactions of students in pastoral groups;
- *Does this teaching should be more about teaching citizenship rather than citizenship education?*
- The need to define the curriculum of developing citizenship;
- To empower teachers to include skills like critical thinking, media competencies, democratic skills into normal agenda;
- The need to consider also the opportunities that preservice teacher training institutions could provide. This is time consuming and cumbersome for sure but ultimately impactful and sustainable;

- Teacher students need to know how to facilitate cooperation with external partners (non-formal sector, municipality) to foster project-based and service learning;
- Mr Mackie's sentence " Opportunity for positive social interaction with peers" as a very pragmatic idea of citizenship education;
- Like other lifeskills/cross-curricular thematic subjects, it needs to be assessed using Broad Learning Outcomes (BLO's) - checking whether a learning outcome has been reached;
- European citizenship education: teachers and students need practical intercultural/ European experiences through (virtual) exchanges as well as thematic focus on Europe in ITE and CPD seminars;
- Citizenship education needs to be cross-curricular, lifeskills based hence it can't be measured based on traditional score/mark based system;
- CE is something you cannot teach, Maria Montessori's method was highlighted as a good root to develop a new CE implementation method;
- The need to pay attention to the concept of Justice;
- Time of training: facilitate training during school hours;
- Necessary coherence between organisation culture and values, teachers values and goals of citizenship education.



1.7. Thematic session 2: Assessing students' learning outcomes

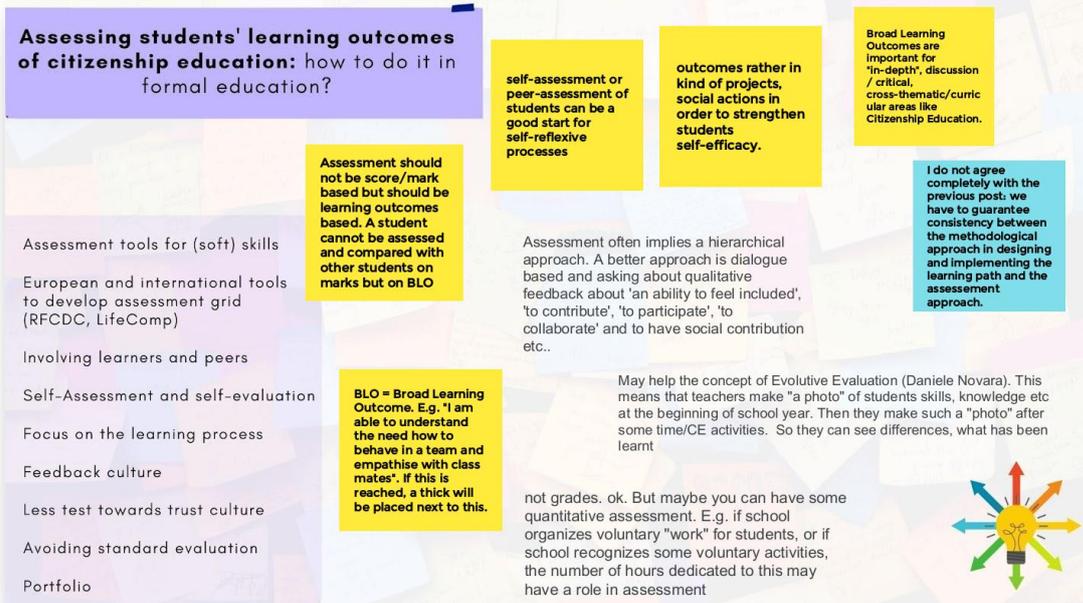
Thematic session 2 started by discussing the following points already emerging from previous workshops:



During the debate, the following points were raised:

- Assessment should not be score/mark based but should be learning outcomes based. A student cannot be assessed and compared with other students on marks but on BLOs (Broad Learning Outcomes);
- Self-assessment or peer-assessment of students can be a good start for self-reflexive processes;
- Outcomes rather in kind of projects, social actions in order to strengthen students self-efficacy.
- Broad Learning Outcomes are important for "in-depth", discussion / critical, cross-thematic/curricular areas like Citizenship Education;
- Assessment often implies a hierarchical approach. A better approach would be the dialogue based one and asking about qualitative feedback about 'an ability to feel included', 'to contribute', 'to participate', 'to collaborate', to get social contribution, etc;
- The need to guarantee consistency between the methodological approach in designing and implementing the learning path and the assessment approach;
- BLO = Broad Learning Outcome is crucial. E.g. "I am able to understand the need how to behave in a team and empathise with class mates". If this is reached, a thick will be placed next to this;
- The concept of Evolutive Evaluation (Daniele Novara) could be helpful. This means that teachers are responsible to "draw a picture" of students' skills related to citizenship education (to be better defined preliminarily), knowledge etc at the beginning of school year, repeating the exercise after regular periods during the year. In this way, potential improvements in the students' active citizenship "attitude" might be better evaluated;
- Provided that grades are not the best evaluation methodology for CE, it may be nonetheless possible to have particular quantitative assessment methods applied. E.g. if a school is able to organise

voluntary and useful "works" for students, or if school institutionally recognises some voluntary activities, the number of hours dedicated to this may have a role in assessment



Assessing students' learning outcomes of citizenship education: how to do it in formal education?

Assessment tools for (soft) skills

European and international tools to develop assessment grid (RFCDC, LifeComp)

Involving learners and peers

Self-Assessment and self-evaluation

Focus on the learning process

Feedback culture

Less test towards trust culture

Avoiding standard evaluation

Portfolio

Assessment should not be score/mark based but should be learning outcomes based. A student cannot be assessed and compared with other students on marks but on BLO

BLO = Broad Learning Outcome. E.g. "I am able to understand the need how to behave in a team and empathise with class mates". If this is reached, a tick will be placed next to this.

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I do not agree completely with the previous post: we have to guarantee consistency between the methodological approach in designing and implementing the learning path and the assessment approach.

Assessment often implies a hierarchical approach. A better approach is dialogue based and asking about qualitative feedback about 'an ability to feel included', 'to contribute', 'to participate', 'to collaborate' and to have social contribution etc..

May help the concept of Evolutive Evaluation (Daniele Novara). This means that teachers make "a photo" of students skills, knowledge etc at the beginning of school year. Then they make such a "photo" after some time/CE activities. So they can see differences, what has been learnt

not grades. ok. But maybe you can have some quantitative assessment. E.g. if school organizes voluntary "work" for students, or if school recognizes some voluntary activities, the number of hours dedicated to this may have a role in assessment

Contacts

The CITIZED partnership would like to thank all the participants in the workshop.

To stay updated with the project implementation and to keep the debate alive, you are welcome to visit the project website: eiplab.eu/citized.

If you are interested in contacting us, please feel free to send an email to:

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