



Baltic Global Development Education Regional Seminar - Follow up meeting

Riga, Latvia

REPORT

9 April 2018

Organised by:



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Riga follow-up meeting gathered 23 participants from the Baltic countries to discuss the recommendations developed in Zagreb, Tallinn and Vilnius to foster Global Development Education (GDE) in the region. Representatives of ministries, municipalities, civil society organisations (CSOs), teachers and academia worked in various thematic and stakeholder sessions to develop the list of the next steps on the Baltic and national level.

All the three Baltic countries are undergoing the reforms of education curriculum, therefore they all share the challenge of how GDE competences can be integrated and reflected in the new standards. From this perspective effective and accessible training of educators, i.e. new teachers and practitioners, is highly important. In this regard CSOs can play an important role in training, sharing resources and promoting networking on the national level. CSOs also implement diverse awareness raising projects reaching out to the new target groups - private sector, elderly and, of course, youth and students.

In order to promote cooperation at the national level, multi-stakeholder groups should be established. UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can play a crucial role in promotion of GDE - setting indicator systems, regular reporting and monitoring in the field.

Baltic cooperation can play a positive role through the development of common projects, peer learning and strategic meetings, however, due to language issues this cooperation can be still challenging.

The Riga follow-up meeting was organised and implemented by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe with the support of the European Union and in cooperation with Baltic partners Eesti People to People (Estonia), the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation (LAPAS), the Lithuanian Children's and Youth Centre, and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania.

This annual GDE monitoring process covering the period 2016-2019, is in line with the Council of Europe Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019), and is also in line with UNESCO efforts to make progress towards target 4.7 of SDG 4, in the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

By bringing together practitioners and decision makers to exchange and jointly discuss existing perspectives and further developments on the concept and practice of GDE, in terms of policy making, curricula development, pedagogical support and advocacy, the North-South Centre and Baltic partners contribute to the recognition and practice of GDE in the region.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Riga follow-up meeting of the Baltic Regional Seminar on GDE brought together 23 practitioners and decision makers from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to assess the level of implementation of the recommendations agreed in Tallinn (October 2016) and updated in the Vilnius follow-up meeting (May 2017) in the field of GDE policy and curricula development, pedagogical support and advocacy, in accordance with Zagreb Congress strategic recommendations.

During the one-day meeting participants reviewed the state of advancement of these recommendations through three sessions dedicated to policy making and curricula development; professional development of educators and quality support; awareness raising and pedagogical tools. In order to promote stakeholder cooperation, specific working groups of relevant stakeholders were also organised.



Targeted outputs:

- Progress made in relation to Tallinn's GDE regional seminar and Vilnius follow-up meeting recommendations is measured and issues at stake are identified;
- Strategies for the recognition and promotion of GDE developed are shared;
- Complementarities between the current national education policies, Zagreb Congress strategic recommendations and with Council of Europe framework of competences for democratic culture are acknowledged;
- A monitoring calendar, including benchmarks, is agreed until the next monitoring cycle in 2019.

Targeted outcomes:

- Common challenges and practices in GDE in the Baltic countries are identified and regular national follow-up meetings of the multi-stakeholder task forces are agreed;
- GDE as an integral part of education and development policy is promoted through regular assessment of the progress made in the field of Policy Making and Curricula Development;
- Opportunities to develop joint action and collaboration within and beyond the Baltic countries are discussed and planned through regular meetings between the regional NSC GE network coordinators;
- Recommendations and priorities for furthering GDE in the Baltic countries are established and benchmarked.

Considering the thematic priority of ongoing reforms of the education curriculum in all countries of the region, a specific key-note lecture on competences for democratic culture was delivered by the North-South Centre representative.

Overall, the focus of the regional meeting was to bring up also the global context - Sustainable Development Goals, setting the national frameworks for evaluation, measurements and reporting.

III. REGIONAL CONTEXT

All three countries in the region are undergoing the process of educational reforms. Even though many stakeholders are involved in the process, there is still a challenge not to lose the content specific to GDE. In all countries CSOs play an important role in promoting the GDE concept, methods and resources - national development Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) platforms in Estonia and Latvia have established GDE working groups. All countries implement various GDE projects, some on annual basis - like Global Education Week – where funding for these projects is scattered, but still there are no cuts. Funding comes mainly from various EU programs, but also from national sources and in many cases from voluntary actions or cooperation with other organisations and institutions. All countries work to a certain extent with SDGs that provide new opportunities for putting GDE on the political agenda, and foster new projects and multi-stakeholder cooperation, involving youth, local governments, international organisations and other relevant groups. Measuring the progress still remains a major challenge, but SDGs monitoring mechanism is seen as an opportunity.

A. ESTONIA

Sigrid Solnik, Director, Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation

The Estonian Ministry of Education works on the curricula development and on the new study program for human rights education, and global education will be a part of it. Meetings with experts from other ministries and NGOs have been held, but the activity has not been sustainable.

The main stakeholders dealing with GDE in Estonia are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Education, Arengukoostöö Ümarland (AKÜ) - Round Table for development education - and its members. Global Education working group of AKÜ acts as the coordinator between these stakeholders.

The launching of a coalition of Sustainable Development initiatives unites private, public, and non-governmental actors for improved advocacy.

AKÜ and other CSOs are implementing various projects for the awareness raising on global education, training of practitioners, and the involvement of youth.

Biggest challenge: economic growth vs SDGs, explaining SDGs.

B. LATVIA

Inese Vaivare, Director, Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation LAPAS

New education curricula is currently open for public consultations, therefore the integration of GDE issues cannot be foreseen yet. Partly, GDE policy lies within the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a part of its communication policy on the global sustainable development, which guarantees that a small amount of co-financing for DEAR projects is available.

In 2017 LAPAS advocated for the GENE Increase Program in Latvia. After a high number of interactions with various stakeholders - MFA, Members of the Parliament, and others - the Ministry of Education and Science took over the process. LAPAS has submitted the proposal on the involvement of the NGOs, but the Ministry of Education and Science closed the process without involving LAPAS.

LAPAS and its members implement various GDE activities, like the Global Education Week, a movie month, awareness raising campaigns, study visits and trainings. The negative impact of the change on the rules by EuropeAid DEAR call has put many NGOs in a low capacity situation to continue their activities.

The biggest challenge, including the ongoing lack of ownership by state authorities and low recognition of the role of the civil society in boosting global development competencies, is leading to the downshift of the NGOs working in the field of GDE due to constant lack of resources.

C. LITHUANIA

Dalia Navikiene, Deputy Director, Lithuanian Children's and Youth Centre

Lithuanian government is identifying coherence as the core objective of development. Lithuania is planning to develop coherence among both the individual, human level as well as the public, state and economical level, through different areas – sustainable human and society, sustainable education and culture, sustainable public administration.

Committee of Education and Science at the Lithuanian Parliament started discussing the National Agreement on the framework for reforming the general content of education. There are intentions to include sustainable development and global competencies in this framework. The questions of teachers' professional development will be included into the framework as well. Albeit a specific programme on global education is not envisaged, there is a goal to integrate GDE issues into the school curriculum.

There are several awareness raising projects to be implemented - Inconvenient Films Festival, Steps towards Sustainable Development, World under one roof, and others.

The biggest challenge includes the topic of emotional competencies and how to measure them.

IV. KEY NOTE: COMPETENCIES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE

Miguel Silva, Programme Manager - Global Education, North-South Centre of the Council of Europe

The Reference Framework for Competences for Democratic Culture is developed in line with the Council of Europe action plan "Building Inclusive Societies" (2016-2019) aiming at supporting a culture of democracy and of intercultural dialogue in culturally diverse societies. The goal is to create a reference framework of competences for democratic culture, to promote citizenship & intercultural education and its implementation at national, European and global levels, based on the principles of the Council of Europe, for educational decision making and planning.



It consists of the set of competences for learners to gain knowledge and critical understanding, develop skills and attitudes, while promoting values as an active and engaged citizen, at a local and global level.

The Reference Framework for Competences for Democratic Culture has three volumes:

- RF CDC Volume 1 Context, concepts + model
- RF CDC Volume 2 Descriptors
- RF CDC Volume 3 Guidance for implementation

The set results from a list of 101 competences schemes that were audited by the project experts from which 20 competences (out of 55 pre-selected) were identified for the reference framework. It was developed by a team of education experts in the field of citizenship education, intercultural dialogue, civic and history education, language, social psychology, and curricula development from Andorra, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and UK.

It is aimed to be adapted for use in primary and secondary schools, and in higher education, in vocational training institutions as well as in national curricula and teaching programmes, throughout Council of Europe Member States and the 50 States part of the European Cultural Convention.

Competences for democratic culture:

<p>Knowledge</p> <p>Knowledge and critical understanding of the self</p> <p>Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication</p> <p>Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability</p>	<p>Skills</p> <p>Autonomous learning skills</p> <p>Analytical and critical thinking skills</p> <p>Skills of listening and observing</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Flexibility and adaptability</p> <p>Linguistic, communicative and multilingual skills</p> <p>Co-operation skills</p> <p>Conflict-resolution skills</p>
<p>Attitudes</p> <p>Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices</p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Civic-mindedness</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Tolerance of ambiguity</p>	<p>Values</p> <p>Valuing human dignity and human rights</p> <p>Valuing cultural diversity</p> <p>Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law</p>

Further information available: www.coe.int/competences

V. THEMATIC WORKING SESSIONS

A. POLICY MAKING AND CURRICULA DEVELOPMENT

Best practice case: Latvia: Competency-based curricula project Skola2030 (School2030), experts Danute Grīnfelde and Daiga Brakmane

Moderator: Silvija Pupola, project coordinator Humana People to People Latvia

The session started with the presentation of project Skola 2030, which is an example of different stakeholders' collaboration in developing and implementing changes in the national school curriculum.

Competency-based curriculum project Skola 2030 (School 2030), main aspects:

- First time a reform of this scale is happening in Latvia's education system, though one way or another similar changes in education are happening all around Europe;

- This reform aims to switch from the existing system of ready-knowledge to action-based education, which would be accessible to everyone. Education today requires a different set of skills, therefore by 2030 the education process would focus on social responsibility & civil participation



through: 1) a holistic approach where all teachers work together, linked, 2) the promotion of human and personal values and 3) through engagement and participatory method where learners act and solve problems. This means that the role of a teacher would change, as well as the idea of assessment in education (evaluate the process, not the students or teachers).

During this presentation several challenges regarding this reform were identified while some solutions were already proposed in the process:

Challenges:

- Democratic values poorly rooted in daily life (in theory recognised and promoted, their daily practice is low);
- Disbelief in one's own and students' power (teachers lack self-confidence and project this also on students);
- Dismissal of responsibility (teachers not necessarily act as leaders or be a role model to inspire students, and rather prefer guiding the educational process only);
- Lack of interest and understanding ;

- NGOs are \better accepted than state institutions;
- Political and public resistance (e.g. why should kids learn more about other cultures? Won't there be any subjects anymore?);
- Difficult to communicate the reform to the public, professional terminology is too difficult for general public to understand.

Some solutions:

- Persistence and optimism, and hopefulness when working with teachers (they can learn and have already plenty of knowledge and skills, they have to learn to trust themselves, etc.);
- Involving NGOs, partner up with them especially in training teachers;
- Involving other partners, e.g. municipalities, because the goal is the same for all: better education.

Later in the workshop participants shared good practices from respective countries illustrating multi-stakeholders' collaboration. A discussion on challenges and also possible solutions followed:

Ott Kasuri from Association of Municipalities of Estonia presented an example of memorandum between different partners on sustainable development - a network of schools, youth centres, and private environment resource centres - that has been successfully operating for more than ten years. This collaboration started as a solution to alleviate overloaded school curriculum when youth centres took up some of the educational work. Now schools apply for government funding to organize trips to private environment/nature resource centres, mobilising both teachers and learners in this innovative approach. It was also mentioned that in Estonia museums tend to be interactive and almost every museum has a pedagogical centre.

Other examples of cross-sectorial collaboration are the *career days* in schools ("Back to school" in Estonia), where graduates come to their schools and share their career stories, and teaching program "Mission Possible" in Latvia (internationally "Teach First") that inspires young professionals to become teachers.

Suggestions:

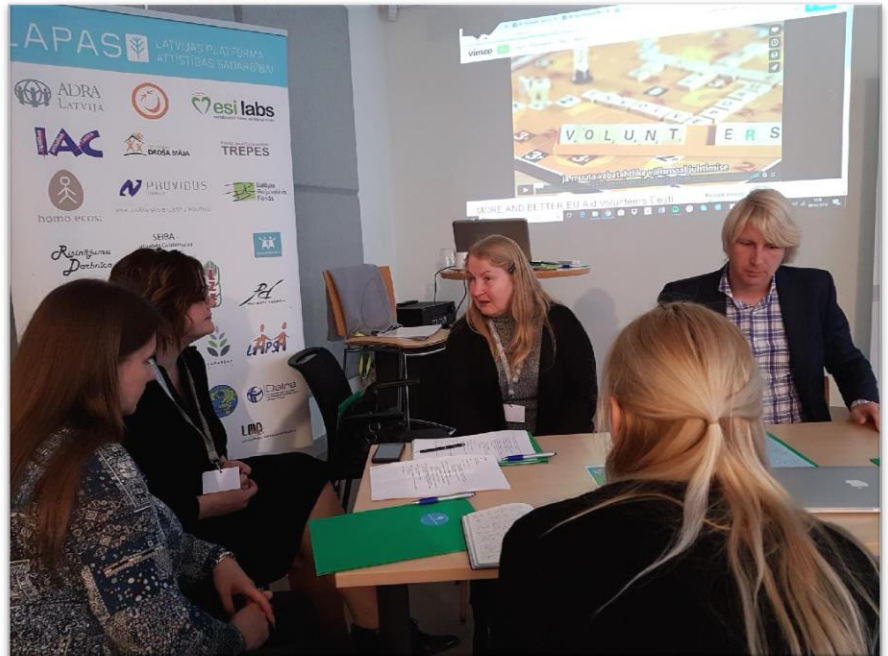
- "Us" vs. "them" should end, we all want the best for students and teachers, our goals are the same; all sectors should collaborate (with media; e.g. TV games and competitions for school students);
- The combination of formal and non-formal education brings good pedagogical results and should be encouraged, especially in the field of GE and SDGs;
- More attention should be given to the allocation of time between lessons and free time (this time can be used constructively in the learning process with a good pedagogical impact);
- More freedom to teachers, especially in choosing methods (in Estonia since 2011 the Ministry of Education advocates for more pedagogical autonomy to teachers);
- Raise the prestige of the teaching profession and recognise the contribution of NGOs (with the support of unions and NGO lobby, and through governmental and municipality decisions);
- Co-working for creating a culture of inclusivity (better access to education, favourable physical and psychological learning environment, change of attitude);
- School should be open to society (e.g. in Finland kindergarten and 1st grade in school collaborate, meet for activities, lessons, trips and similar, which help kids to adapt easier).

B. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATORS AND QUALITY SUPPORT

Best practice case: Estonia: Enhancing technical capacity of European organisations and improving opportunities for EU citizens to participate in humanitarian aid actions, Ruta Pels, President Eesti People to People

Moderator: Pavel Smulski, President Mitra

The session started by the presentation of the project by Eesti People to People. The project on EU Aid Volunteers Technical Assistance unites ten partners from EU countries. The project lasts for 24 months. Within the project diverse activities are implemented such as e-learning trainings, an international residential training of trainers, national trainings implemented in 9 European countries, an online toolkit, public conferences and communication activities. There will be also actions like an International residential training



of trainers with 18 experts; 7 exchanges of staff between certified sending organizations and prospecting certified partners; promotion of the project through a video campaign; a workshop in collaboration with the University of Bologna and other events. The project will reach 87 organizations and 163 people.

Promotional video is available [here](#).

Every year the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) publishes a number of calls for proposal concerning a range of relief and civil protection efforts. The currently published calls can be found [here](#).

Later during the discussion the working group identified challenges and opportunities:

Challenges:

- Language barriers (often English can be a problem to teachers who do not master the language, in particular older generation of teachers)
- No extra financing available for extra time spent whilst adjusting the content
- Opportunities and making them known to all stakeholders
- Values of youth most often not represented in education
- Gap between practitioners and bureaucracy
- Less motivated educators

Opportunities:

- Recognition of non-formal education at national level
- Professionals with international experience
- On-going reform processes in curriculum

C. AWARENESS RAISING AND PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS

Best practice: Lithuania: The practice of our centre is the implementation of “Sustainable school project”, Dalia Navikiene, deputy director, Lithuanian Children’s and Youth Center

Moderator: Krisjanis Liepa, project coordinator Esi labs [Be good!]

The goal of the session was to identify main challenges and opportunities in the field, comparing them over time and thus giving particular ideas/action points for collaborative actions on the national and regional level.

The session started with the presentation of the Lithuanian youth centre. Sustainable School Program started with 30 schools in 2015, focusing on the curriculum development and the infrastructure. Methodological support and evaluation on changes are both important for continuous improvements. Within the project, a “Green team” was established consisting of administration, teaching staff, parents, and students, responsible for situational analysis. Afterwards the experts were available for consultations. Analysis is followed by implementation of these changes during the following school year. Important learning - presenting a certificate improves motivation. By this point 100 schools are already participating (most of the original ones are continuously improving themselves every year). All funding is attracted from the business sector. There is also financial motivation for implementation of new teaching methods. It was hard to start – first implementers were loyal partners. Participating schools are also congratulated during the Green Carpet ceremony.

Later the working group identified the opportunities and challenges related to awareness raising and pedagogical tools.

Opportunities:

- Every change that schools are undergoing (and not only those, also external changes like weather etc.) can be integrated in the learning process;
- Conferences on children’s projects;
- Teachers should be trained on a wider variety of topics, including non-formal education methodologies;
- Attractive ways for dissemination, like more active usage of cultural channels (some examples from Latvia – Pop-music duo Olas);
- Involving media & training journalists.

Challenges:

- Disseminating/communicating the same information to many different audiences
- Everything is about the teachers and the way they treat/disseminate information. An even harder question is how to include global citizenship in the curriculum
- Involving schools from remote regions (in some projects there have been positive experiences in Rēzekne)
- Communicating with general public
 - Making people relate to GDE topics
 - Critical reflection on development topics
- Making topics appealing also for mainstream media
 - Training media/reporters on how to talk about GDE topics
 - Reducing stereotypical and prejudice reporting (especially state financed)
- Challenging to address more sensitive/ controversial topics like migration, sexuality etc.
- Making these programs sustainable in a long-term period.

Cooperation opportunities:

- Resource platform for sharing GDE pedagogical tools, for example related to each SDG;
- Capacity building at local level, for example, peer learning among teachers;
- Common events for sharing good practices;
- Capacity building in local communities (teacher-to-teacher experience and knowledge exchange)



VI. STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

In the following session participants were divided by stakeholder groups to define the state of play, opportunities, challenges and common points of action.

A. Cooperation mechanisms NGOs-government

- sending support letters to bridge the gap between different stakeholders;
- working together - talk together, find solutions, define issues and goals together;
- working groups in ministries and inter-ministerial coordination increases the opportunities to influence and progress in reforms;
- UNESCO can help policy makers to develop strategies and policies for global education through UNESCO SDG monitoring scheme.

B. Cooperation mechanisms teachers

- training and resources are needed for increased motivation of educators;
- active learning, continuing education: teaching methods at universities are obsolete, there is a need for renovation. NGOs can make the learning process more interesting, interactive and fun, and also more impactful for teachers/educators.
- materials and methods need to be shared. UNESCO can help teachers with the pedagogical tools through UNESCO SDG pedagogical support scheme.
- NGOs can facilitate teachers' networking, and support inspirational events.

C. Common points

- Governmental/municipal agencies lately have an attitude towards cooperation, however the cooperation with NGOs is still insufficient, thus working and bring together the state and civil society is a must.
- While it is easy to teach and raise awareness on development topics, integrating GDE in curriculum remains a challenge without the cooperation of the State:
 - Lacking political will, will to find solutions
 - Issues and goals should be defined together by the state and NGOs
- Too many (most) meetings/conferences/networking events are outcome based and through this become often useless.
- Recognition of NGO importance (public and governmental)
 - Critical lack of funding
 - At the moment the work is based almost only on volunteering
- Municipalities implement new laws; however they can promote specific learning environments at local level.
- Important to recognize own responsibility of each actor.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The meeting was designed to indicate recommendations and next steps by the thematic groups and also by the stakeholder groups.

In all sessions participants focused more on the practical level - how different stakeholder groups can cooperate, what are the tools, opportunities and the challenges. Some of the groups identified also challenges related to the perception of the non-formal education, and the work developed by CSOs. At the same time many recommendations and next steps state the strong involvement of CSOs.

For Baltic regional level cooperation it is important to define what can be the benefits of this action. Mainly peer learning, sharing of materials ("sharing is caring") and focused strategic meetings for advocacy can be identified. Also some resources available like Erasmus+ strategic partnerships can be used.

Most of the work is done at the national level and it is strongly encouraged to establish at the national level multi-stakeholder tasks forces. Also training of educators might be more effective at the national level due to language opportunities. Teachers training are crucial for achieving actual implementation of GDE instead of just formal adaptation, in worst cases - promotion of the stereotypes.

At the political level in all countries the motivation to include GDE in the general education can still be observed and therefore the Sustainable Development Goals can serve as a bridge for *glocalisation* - explaining global processes at local level and vice versa. Also they can help to address beyond "usual suspects" - adults, elderly, and private sector, maintain focus on everyday life activities. Especially this is important in rural areas where access to education can be challenging.

Next steps

At the regional level:

- to have strategic, focused and specific GDE advocacy meetings;
- to develop common projects in order to have more resources for GDE activities;
- to promote sharing of GDE resources and peer learning;
- to implement common advocacy actions where needed.

At national level:

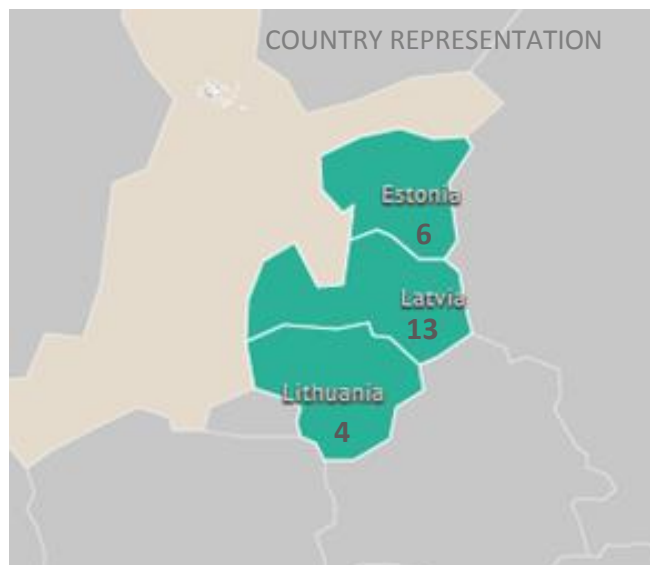
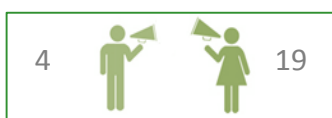
- to establish and maintain multi-stakeholder group on GDE;
- to promote teachers' networking and training;
- to expand GDE activities to new target groups - private sector, adults and elderly, also youth and students;
- to facilitate the recognition of the non-formal education, especially in GDE;
- to establish a "data base" of GDE resources available or to update an existing one;
- to reach out with the activities to rural areas;
- cooperation with media on GDE awareness raising.

VIII. FACTS AND FIGURES

The regional seminar targeted the key stakeholders from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, including representatives of governmental and educational institutions and civil society organizations contributing in the field of global education, 23 of them in total.

This seminar, like most seminars in the field of education, shows a greater participation of women in relation to men. The number of participants by gender on this seminar was 19 female and 4 male participants.

GENDER REPRESENTATION



National delegations represented the multi-stakeholder approach - representatives of government institutions (1), local authorities (5), CSOs (11), UNESCO (2) and educators/academia (4). Participation of decision makers is still a challenge in the region - none of the delegations could ensure representation of members of national parliaments. There were 13 participants from Latvia, 4 from Lithuania and 6 from Estonia.

QUADRILOGUE REPRESENTATION



IX. CONCLUSIONS

Europe is facing challenging times - more and more populist and nationalist governments are elected, democratic values are under threat, the civil society space is shrinking. Global education can promote positive change in this situation as it reflects some of the most important values of Europe - solidarity, justice, equality and human rights. It also requires the skill of responsibility, critical thinking, cooperation and empathy.

The results of the GDE regional seminar follow-up meeting reflect the composition of its participants; therefore the majority of the recommendations are related with the practical work of teachers and CSOs, formal and non-formal educators. Nevertheless there are many actions identified that can support these target groups and promote their cooperation (sharing of resources, events and trainings). Still this can be challenging if the political support and therefore the financial resources available are diminishing.

Sustainable Development Goals can be seen as an opportunity for reaching out to the political level, and for the establishment of the indicator system and regular reporting on the GDE. They also provide an opportunity for multi-stakeholder cooperation and coordination of common actions. Estonia submitted its Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the implementation of SDGs in 2017, now the country is establishing specific coalition. In 2018 Latvia and Lithuania are drafting their VNRs - opportunities for establishment of the multi-stakeholder group are ahead.

Reviewing the Zagreb recommendations, it can be concluded that most of them are implemented within the limits of the resources available.

Disclaimer

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