



## Dublin Declaration Implementation: Strengthening the Dialogue between Civil Society and Policymakers in Central Europe

### Online event

The Czech Forum for Development Cooperation (FoRS) and People in Need in partnership with GENE held an online event on the **Dublin Declaration Implementation: Strengthening the Dialogue between Civil Society and Policymakers in Central Europe** on **Thursday, June 22, 9:45-12:00 CET**.

The *European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 (The Dublin Declaration)*, convened by GENE, led by Ireland, co-chaired by Luxembourg and adopted on 4th November 2022 at the European Congress on Global Education to 2050, takes a long-term view to forge a shared vision and commitments that go beyond the remaining time frame for achieving the SDGs. The key areas that are reflected in the new declaration include partnerships between key actors at national, European, and global levels; curriculum reform and whole school approaches; the role of educators; the need for adequate funding levels and suitable funding mechanisms; an appreciation for the leadership role played by civil society and young people in driving change; and the continued desire to cooperate for policy coherence and integration of global learning in all education. The *Dublin Declaration* is a result of the close cooperation of representatives of ministries, agencies, policymakers, youth and civil society organisations, local and regional governments, and academia.

This international online event brought together representatives of ministries, civil society organisations and platforms, academia, and international organisations from 17 countries. Together they looked for synergies in working on the implementation and planning to fulfil the commitments on the regional, national, and international levels.

The event was opened by a **keynote speech** delivered by Mr. Liam Wegimont, followed by a **panel discussion** on the role of CSOs, academia, and policymakers in the process of implementing the Dublin Declaration. Three **parallel working groups** offered space to discuss examples of practice and new ideas and the last session provided **perspectives on implementation from international organisations**.



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## Keynote input by Mr. Liam Wegimont (GENE): Global Education in Europe to 2050, The Dublin Declaration Process, Content, Progress to Date

In his [keynote speech](#), Mr. Liam Wegimont, the Executive Director of GENE, emphasised that although the process was led by policymakers, it was tailor-made to include as partners the stakeholders from youth, civil society, local and regional governments, international organisations, academic researchers and also so-called “critical friends”, individuals with expertise and passion for global education from other parts of the world.

The content of the Declaration offers a **conception of global education**, which is very explicit about core values of human rights, sustainability, justice, equality and equity, peace, and international understanding, among others, and a specific type of **analysis that interconnects the local and global dimensions of issues affecting people and planet**. *“It's not global education without the local and it's not global education without the global. This declaration is very clear that pedagogy and pedagogical practices have to align with these values and with this type of analysis and to be participatory and emancipatory.”*

In a nutshell, the Dublin Declaration outlines a **shared vision that all people in Europe - in solidarity with peoples globally - have access to quality global education**. The Declaration is a strategic framework that provides the conceptual basis, political consensus, and strategic commitment to achieve this vision incrementally. It agrees to a renewed definition of global education, but it builds on existing international language and agreements. It recognizes the challenging global context and it commits both national administrations and international organisations to increased and improved Global Education to 2050.





## Panel Discussion: Dublin Declaration process and follow-up

The panel discussion was joined by 5 experts representing ministries, civil society organisations and platforms, and academia who shared their perspectives on the implementation of the Dublin Declaration. The panellists were Ms. Áine Doody from the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Mr. Michal Černý from the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic, Ms. Maria Sakarias from MONDO, Mr. Rares Voicu from OBESU and Dr. La Salette Coelho from the ANGEL Network. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Ditta Trindade Dolejšiová from GENE.

**Ms. Áine Doody** from the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland pointed out that the process of creation of the Dublin Declaration was an important opportunity to **engage with other government departments**, as well as civil society and education partners, to discuss the issue of definition and also to learn from each other about their priorities. As the concept of global education can be seen as a “broad kind of an umbrella term”, she emphasised the opportunity to have a dialogue and **make the links** between global citizenship education and education for sustainable development, which has a lot of political energy behind in Ireland. Furthermore, Ms. Doody appreciated the opportunity to **develop a shared understanding of the global challenges** in the external context, across Europe, and with like-minded partners. Finally, as the biggest opportunity she considered engaging leadership and bringing a political energy and impetus to global education which is core to making progress.

**Dr. La Salette Coelho** from the ANGEL Network offered a perspective from the academic field. She mentioned the increase of publications and journals in the field following the adoption of the Maastricht Declaration in 2004, which gradually led to global education becoming a well established distinct field of educational policy, research, and practice. She appreciated that the Dublin Declaration is explicitly **reinforcing and supporting the importance of research** for policy and practice, as it makes several commitments to support and even where possible expand and resource further development of research of global education. Dr. Coelho pointed out that not only this recognition is inspiring the research further but the Dublin Declaration also brings **new fields of research**, as there is a new, larger definition that tries to embrace the new visions, the emerging topics that are appearing in the discussion. As she stressed, there is a need for evaluation, support for educators, and new pedagogical approaches to help transform education. Finally, she suggested that the Dublin Declaration reinforces the need for more **collaborative work**, not just among the European stakeholders, but also with stakeholders from other regions of the world, acknowledging the power dynamics, the understanding of historical and geopolitical relationships, including legacies of colonialism. As she concluded, *“The perspectives from other parts and regions of the world are very important to have more inclusive and decolonized methodologies to build horizontal relationships.”*



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**Mr. Rares Voicu** from OBESSU appreciated that in the process of drafting the Dublin Declaration, the **constituency made-up of youth organisations** was involved every step of the way and imputed directly into the declaration itself. He emphasised that the validation and **recognition of non-formal education** was very important to the youth organisations, because, from their perspective, the new framework allowed them to integrate their work into the field of non-formal education. *“The component of the Dublin Declaration around youth work is extremely important to us because what we’re trying to do every single time we work with international partners is to foster this kind of international cooperation that goes beyond Europe, that goes beyond our perspectives and beyond the usual means of working.”* He emphasised that for the European Youth Forum, the Dublin Declaration is a tool enabling them to further their advocacy goals and **advocate for better youth rights**.

**Mr. Michal Černý** from the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic explained that the Dublin Declaration comes at a time when the Czech national curriculum is being modernised. This increases the chance for **integration of the principles of the Dublin Declaration in the new national curricula**. This is just being prepared by the working groups coordinated by the National Pedagogical Institute. The process of implementation of the principles of the Dublin Declaration into the new curricula will consist of two phases, as there are two levels of curricula in the Czech Republic. One is the national level and then there is the school level that is created by each school based on the national curricula. In the latter phase, the Ministry of Education plans to support the schools by various means.

Mr. Černý also pointed out that the new definition of global education defines global education as a **“lifelong and life-wide process”** which is reflected in the Czech Strategy 2030+, a document that interconnects the fields of formal and non-formal education. He also admitted that in the field of non-formal education, many principles of global education are **“step ahead of the formal institutions”**, so it is in this respect that **formal educational institutions can learn a lot from non-formal institutions**.

**Ms. Maria Sakari** from MONDO shared that Estonia was the first country to **translate the Declaration** into their language. Similarly as when the Declaration was adopted, it created a particular momentum that put global education into the forefront. The challenge is to keep the political engagement, therefore MUNDO calls for collaboration between ministries and other stakeholders in Estonia. MUNDO suggests that **a global ratification roundtable** could be held on a regular basis so that the Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, Environment, and Climate could meet with the youth organisations, teacher unions, higher education institutes, and civil society and start drafting an action plan as the next critical step. However, establishing such multi stakeholder collaboration may take time.

Ms. Sakarias appreciated that the Declaration works as a **reliable and generally accepted source** to refer to and that it emphasises the critical perspective and interrelatedness of challenges that are very important to global education. She concluded: *“The fact that we are talking about global education from the perspective of quality global education, that is not simply access to it, this has really strengthened our case in Estonia. We need to ensure access to global education, but make sure that it is quality education that we are talking about.”*

- **What is the one challenge that you see in the context of the implementation of the Dublin Declaration? How is your institution addressing it?**

**Ms. Áine Doody:** Moving beyond just meetings as *“policy coherence is about more than just meeting.”* One kind of operational example is a joint research fund on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship that was created across 4 government departments (Departments of Foreign Affairs, Education, and Further and Higher Education).

**Mr. Michal Černý:** The need to keep the importance of global education while facing other important problems that we do have to face now. But these problems are parts of the global problems which can be partially solved by global education.

**Dr. La Salette Coelho:** To mobilise the power of research to bring people together, build bridges between different actors, and different fields of knowledge, facilitate this broader coalition, and put the Declaration into practice.

**Ms. Maria Sakarias:** *“Consistent measurement of progress and then from the perspective of an NGO, keeping the stamina. We're running at a very fast pace, but it's a marathon, so just keep on going.”*

**Mr. Rares Voicu:** *„My biggest fear is that global education will not leave the purely academic or organisation based bubbles and is not going to become mainstream, which we are all striving for.”*

## Dialogue between civil society actors and policy-makers: What are the opportunities and challenges of the implementation of the Dublin Declaration? How to guarantee the continuity of the process?

### Working Group 1: Multi Stakeholder dialogue at the national level

**Ms. Hana Šišková-Grznárová (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic), Ms. Petra Skalická (People in Need, Czech Republic), and Dr. Aravella Zachariou (UNECE, Cyprus) discussed how to ensure the interest and involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the Dublin Declaration.**

**Ms. Hana Šišková-Grznárová** from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic emphasised the renewed political commitment to educate all people in Europe for global justice and solidarity as the most important aim of the process of preparation of the Dublin Declaration. She stressed the importance of visibility of global issues and also more explicit connectedness with the Sustainable Development Goals. She summarised the implementation role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is responsible for the Global Education Strategy in the Czech Republic, and creates action plans together with the Working Group on Global Education, consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Education, the National Government, and the local governments. Furthermore, the MFA supports projects in the field of both formal and non-formal education through the Czech Development Agency. Finally, the MFA is preparing an evaluation of the Action Plan 2020-2023 on Global Education and preparing a new action plan for the next 3-year period.

**Ms. Petra Skalická** from People in Need presented a multistakeholder dialogue in the Czech Republic from the perspective of NGOs. Over the 20 years that Global Education has been developing in the Czech Republic, many stakeholders (government institutions, CSOs, youth organisations, teachers and schools, organisations on regional and local level, and other platforms) have gradually become involved in multi stakeholder dialogue. Ms. Skalická specified that what supports this dialogue is the existence of 'bodies' where the stakeholders have an opportunity to meet regularly and bring issues to the agenda. In this respect, the most important one is the Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, operating under the Government Council for Sustainable Development. The Committee meets approximately 5 times a year, its members inform each other about ongoing processes, and the Committee has the opportunity to comment or provide recommendations for key strategic

documents. Therefore, it can influence the field of global education, environmental education, and education for sustainable development.

Otherwise, the NGOs also support multi stakeholder dialogue through a number of activities. For example, round tables that People in Need continuously organises twice a year focus on opportunities for cooperation among stakeholders, sharing good practices, discussions of newly prepared documents, and other issues related to global education in the Czech Republic.

**Ms. Aravella Zachariou**, Chair of the UNECE ESD Steering Committee at the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, explained that for the ministries that integrate the educational policies on horizontal issues, it is critical to understand that the Dublin Declaration is not a new strategic framework, but a document that has been created and approved to support other parallel policies and the work of the ministries.

For Cyprus, the Dublin Declaration came at the same time as the process for advising the National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development and Green Transition 2030, which enabled to revise and integrate global education as a horizontal issue in this strategic framework for sustainable development and integrate it in the curriculum along with other programs and actions. In the process of the revisions a wider inter-departmental committee was created in the Ministry of Education to integrate global education into the relevant policies and frameworks and to work closely with other stakeholders, the ministries, and NGOs.

Ms. Zachariou asked GENE to keep bringing countries together, supporting the dynamics of networking and multi-stakeholder collaboration and the exchange of good practices not only on the national but also on the regional level.

#### **Ideas from the discussion:**

- It would be interesting to focus on the examples of implementation of the Dublin Declaration on a regional level
- *“How do I enhance my contribution to spreading the influence of global education?”* Whilst a conceptual analysis is exciting, the values mustn't stay at the conceptual level. Each one of us has got our unique constellation of values and responsibility to evaluate our own educational influence as we try to live our constellation of values of our global education in practice.
- How do we evaluate value-based education strategies? The Council of Europe works with the Reference Framework Competencies for Democratic Culture. This tool has a set of 20 competencies and a series of targets that can be used to monitor the impact more closely.

However, research is pointing out that measuring the impact of education focused on values is extremely difficult.

- Research from the Czech National Pedagogical Institute focused on sustainability education indicated that when the respective topics are taught separately, there is a smaller impact on how students understand them. The reason is that they are cross-curricular. It may be similar to global education. So we would need to ensure that the topics are taught in a cross-curricular way.
- Cooperation with the private sector: building on the idea of the multi-stakeholder approach and the policy coherence perhaps what we are not addressing is the cooperation with the private sector. For instance, ways how schools approach the services that are included in the management of the school community should be also part of policy coherence. Food suppliers, management of the processes of this setting up the spaces, the recycling services.

## Working Group 2: Curriculum and teacher training

**Ms. Evi Daga-Krūmiņa from the Ministry of Education of Latvia presented examples of competency-based approach in the Latvian curricula. Mr. Francesco Debono and Dr. Glorianne Borg Axisa from the Ministry of Education of Malta provided insights into how global education has been developing during the last six years in Malta.**

**Ms. Daga-Krūmiņa presented the ways used to implement civic participation in formal education in Latvia in the "Competence Approach in Learning Content" project:**

- Students of Social Sciences are required to initiate a civic participation project, or a social entrepreneurship project, based on their own ideas. It is a mandatory prerequisite for accessing their exams;
- All the high school students have a mandate to complete a community service project based on their individual ideas;
- Extended educational experiences are provided through interactions with non-governmental organizations and their offers;
- A specially designed assessment of students' civic participation skills is conducted in the 8th grade to identify areas for further development / educational process;





Ms. Daga-Krūmiņa clarified that the school year 2022/2023 was a trial year for this approach, so the results are now being evaluated. There are also evaluation forms made for teachers that support them in guiding students and assessing the students' work. The assessment is based on skills such as leadership, communication, collaboration, project management, advocacy, etc. Since the implementation of a civic participation or a social entrepreneurship project is mandatory to access the exams, students need to fulfil their activities according to the criteria in the respective evaluation forms. There is also a system that collects the project initiatives of students from the whole of Latvia, which gives a possibility to further analyse what problems they are choosing to solve, what activities they initiate and what is their impact.

The context of a curriculum reform being currently held in Latvia allows for the inclusion of many key competences related to global education in the curriculum launching. Ms. Daga-Krūmiņa concluded that the priority at the moment is the professional development of teachers as there is a need for systematic guidance to ensure that teachers can be confident in this work. Thus support from GENE in this area would be appreciated.

**Mr. Francesco Debono** from the Ministry of Education of Malta provided insights into how global education in Malta has been developing during the last six years, despite an absence of a national policy for global education, given global education is a new topic in Malta. With the support of GENE, a multi stakeholder cooperation with NGOs, CSOs, and other stakeholders including private companies was launched, resulting in, as Mr. Debono described it: *"shifting the ministries' perspective from a locally oriented ESD to a broader and more holistic globally oriented perspective, more aligned to European and international global learning priorities"*. Among factors contributing to the development of global education in Malta, besides investment in teaching and learning resources, was also a fact that schools were allowed to develop their own global education programs, rooted in their contexts and needs and that the training opportunities focused not only on educators but also on school leadership members.

**Dr. Glorianne Borg Axisa** from the Ministry of Education of Malta detailed that regarding the training opportunities for educators, they try to work with more of a holistic approach. Through the objectives of the SDGs, this aims to *"help the teachers appreciate that they can be agents of change and that their agency is driven by the call for equity and social justice as one of the principles of the SDGs"*. As an example, Dr. Borg Axisa used principles of Geography, "from the local to the global", pointing out that *"the local does not have to be a victim of globalisation, but a contributor to globalisation and vice versa, so that there is a sense of agency that we are part of this broader society, not only the local"*



*community. That we are key players in our society and therefore we are responsible for what is happening further away even in communities that we are not familiar with.”*

#### Questions from the discussion:

- Where to find the energy and time for teachers to be able to implement those really important values?
- How can we engage people in education, which is more than training? Where is our responsibility for engaging in lifelong education and enabling young people to grow with that responsibility?

#### Working Group 3: Non-formal education and youth work

**Mr. Dominik Derenčin (National Youth Council Slovenia) and Mr. Jakub Žaludko (Impact Games, Slovakia) presented their success stories on the implementation of the Dublin Declaration goals into non-formal education.**

**Mr. Dominik Derenčin** from the National Youth Council Slovenia appreciated that in terms of inclusion of the youth, the creation process of the Dublin Declaration was “the prime example of the participation and inclusion” and from the perspective of the youth sector, the implementation process of the Dublin Declaration should keep the similar level of inclusiveness. *“We would like to see us as equal partners at the table, which is not always the case when we talk with the policymakers and different stakeholders.”* Among the priorities of the youth sector in the implementation process, he pointed out *“active citizenship as a part of the formal school curriculum”* and *“a creation of high quality standards of education by mixing formal, informal and non-formal education”*.

In terms of implementation, the National Youth Council (NYC) in Slovenia is aware that there is a lack of systematic approach to reach young people with global and civic education. So their aim would be for each class and each young person to experience at least a short intervention in this field. Mr. Derenčin shared an example of NYC’s workshops on human rights and digitalization that equipped almost 300 young people with the skills and competencies to prevent hate speech and xenophobia, particularly in the digital world. Besides reaching young people, NYC also sees it as necessary to educate the decision makers and other stakeholders.



**Mr. Jakub Žaludko** from Impact Games presented a program of global education through game-based learning called GamiFactory. He explained the reasons for choosing game-based learning: *“9 of 10 students in Slovak schools are not motivated to learn. On the other hand, 9 of 10 students or teenagers play video games on consoles, on their mobile phones, on their computers, with cards.”* Therefore the mission of the GamiFactory is *“to bring education to games, to bring play to schools with these games, and to bring valuable educational content to schools and among young people ”*.

The web platform offers 13 games based on the Slovak curricula and a methodical guide to teachers, parents, and youth workers to facilitate learning. The team is working on the English version and plans to add 200 new games in the future. While so far the Impact Games NGO was funded mostly by Erasmus Plus funding, the vision for the future is to convert it into an international social business model and target the OECD countries, estimating that around 30 % of teachers in the countries might be interested in using the games.





## International organisations perspectives on the Dublin Declaration process and follow-up

A section dedicated to perspectives on the Dublin Declaration process and follow up chaired by Ms. Rocio Cervera from the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and Dr. Aravella Zachariou from UNECE.

Ms. Rocio Cervera from the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (NSC) emphasised that one of the biggest opportunities of the Dublin Declaration is the momentum, the revitalisation of the subject, and the key timing. She shared examples of the added value of the work that the North-South Centre brings to the promotion of global education:

- The multistakeholder approach: The "quadrilogue" is a concept coined to explain a partnership which brings together representatives of governments, national parliaments, local and regional authorities and civil society to ensure good governance of the North-South Centre, representative of all the relevant stakeholders. This system helps build bridges between political actors with different approaches, viewpoints and priorities, generating constructive synergies and offering a platform for structured dialogue and exchange of experience and good practice. This methodology is applied in all the NSC's activities and even though in some interventions, there are not all the layers all the time, the NSC always tries to ensure a multi stakeholder approach and when it comes to global education, the participation of policymakers and civil society organisations. Ms. Rocio Cervera pointed to the latest [UNESCO global education monitoring report](#) indicating that world-wide, 350 million education providers are outside of the state, which makes civil society one of the most prominent non-state actors that contributes to education. Therefore engaging in the multistakeholder approach with civil society and with youth organisations is part of the policy coherence as well as when it comes to inter-ministerial cooperation.
- The NSC works extensively with youth organisations, for example on a series of youth-led activities – summer universities. Creating spaces for young people from different parts of the world to share experience during one week is also a way of working on the implementation of the Dublin Declaration.
- The NSC is "an interface of the Council of Europe outside of Europe" and is now developing a new strategy of cooperation with the League of Arab States and with Africa.



- The Council of Europe focuses on democratic citizenship and human rights education, which is part of global education. In the process of revising the Youth Sector Strategy 2030, the NSC will draw on the Dublin Declaration.

**Dr. Aravella Zachariou**, Chair of the UNECE ESD Steering Committee at the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, explained the collaboration of the UNECE Committee and GENE based on the Dublin Declaration. The UNECE ESD Committee is the mechanism that is providing support to governments to integrate education for sustainable development in their national education systems. It includes 56 countries and many international and regional organisations in the field of education for sustainable development.

Dr. Zachariou used the case of the collaboration between the UNECE and GENE as an example of the collaboration of two regional processes which have their own dynamics, frameworks, and two parallel policies, global education and ESD, and are trying to achieve the common vision. She highlighted the importance of learning from each other, networking, and sharing examples to achieve a common understanding of the complexity and systemic character of the global challenges. The following examples illustrate how such a level of peer learning and common work enriches the work on global education and active citizenship:

- The Dublin Declaration enhances the UNECE's new implementation framework for ESD 2030. The UNECE has the tools and the resources that can help Global Education 2050 move forward. At the moment the UNECE is developing a new framework for the whole school approach and whole institutional approach, which is also a critical issue for global education. The UNECE is developing a toolkit to support countries and institutions with the integration of this whole institutional approach.
- Recently the UNECE ESD Steering Committee finalised and approved the new evaluation format reporting of the ESD that is developed in close collaboration with GENE and UNESCO.
- The close collaboration and the multi stakeholder engagement in these two processes translated in the 9th Ministerial Conference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe that took place in Cyprus 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The North-South Center together with GENE and the UNECE organised two important side events there, participated in the approval of the new strategic framework and the Declaration for the ESD, and continue working together further in this challenging era.



## Final remarks and closing

To conclude the event, **Ms. Ditta Trindade Dolejšiová** from GENE thanked for the informative contributions and inspiring speeches that highlighted the importance of cooperation at the multi stakeholder level, and among international organizations and initiatives.

She summarised that GENE is trying to keep in synergy and align the different respective processes to reinforce each other in the spirit of collaboration and to mainstream global education, the SDGs, ESD, and global citizenship education in their respective fields in Europe and more broadly within other regions. She appreciated the close cooperation with the international organisations that allows activating many joint initiatives, such as the ANGEL Conference held in cooperation with UNESCO in Paris in June 2023 or the revision process of the 1974 Recommendation.

Ms. Trindade Dolejšiová thanked the Czech Forum for Development Cooperation (FoRS) for organising this event and confirmed that GENE will be glad to support a continuation of this dialogue among policymakers, civil society, and other important actors, in the near future.

