

# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

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20 years of global citizenship education  
in Europe : and now, 30 years to come!

Enabel 

Global Citizenship Education Centre of Expertise

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# INTRODUCTION

2022 was a busy year for Enabel's Centre of Expertise for Global Citizenship Education (GCE), but two events stood out in particular:

First, the programs previously known as 'Kruit' and 'Annoncer la Couleur' merged to become BeGlobal. This name change reflects two realities: first, the federal nature of Enabel's GCE program. While the realities of education in Belgium vary by community, Belgium's recognized expertise in GCE transcends community variations. Second, this name change signals the transformation of our program into a centre of expertise in GCE.

Through its centre of expertise in GCE, Enabel positions itself in complementarity with the other actors of the Belgian GCE sector as a craftsman working to strengthen a quality GCE in Belgium: advocating for its generalization and anchoring in educational systems; proposing meetings and exchanges between different actors, as well as providing quality material for practitioners; identifying and disseminating innovative and evidence-based practices; popularizing and propagating scientific, conceptual and practical advances in the field; promoting exchanges between Belgium and partner countries on ideas and actions that strengthen international solidarity and concrete commitments to build a more just and sustainable world.

Secondly, the year 2022 was also marked by the adoption of a new European framework for GCE. This Dublin Declaration, which follows up on the Maastricht Declaration 20 years later, is the result of a long process led by GENE (Global Education Network Europe), and which involved many actors: regional and national representatives, youth, practitioners and NGOs, the research and education sector, critical friends, etc. This new European framework for the establishment and strengthening of quality Global Education in Europe opens up many opportunities for the Global Education sector, which are discussed in this 2023 edition of the yearly magazine published by BeGlobal.

We are very pleased and proud to welcome between these pages the contributions of Liam Wegimont (Executive Director of GENE - Ireland), Sabine Seiffert (formerly Global Engagement and recently Berlin Development Policy Council - Germany), Annamaria Vicsek (Ministry of Education - Serbia), La Salette Cohelo (Angel Advisory Board - Portugal) and Ana Larcher Carvalho (GENE - Portugal). These different authors each address different facets and implications of the Dublin Declaration, with the aim of making it known to the GCE practitioner sector in Belgium and abroad, and to make it a tool for framing, promoting and improving GCE in Europe.

Liam's contribution addresses the differences and continuity between the Maastricht Declaration and the Dublin Declaration; Sabine's contribution presents how the Dublin Declaration was developed, the decision-making processes and the contents; Annamaria's contribution considers the political and practical implications of the Declaration; and La Salette and Ana's contribution discusses how the Dublin Declaration opens up new doors for GCE research and innovation.

We wish you a very good reading!

*Cécile Giraud & Caroline Decombel*  
*Global citizenship education experts - Enabel*

# Global Education from the Maastricht Declaration to the Dublin Declaration

*Liam Wegimont - Executive Director GENE -Ireland*

Global Education in Europe has grown apace in the last 20 years, in this article we will look at that growth and compare the Maastricht Declaration of 2002 to the more recent Dublin Declaration of 2022.

## The Maastricht Declaration (2002)

The policy framework on Global Education at European level emerged in 2002. The Maastricht Declaration on Global Education, agreed at the Maastricht Congress in November 2002 involved governments and engagement civil society, and to a lesser extent, local and regional governments and parliamentarians.

The Maastricht Declaration included an agreed definition of Global Education: "Global Education is education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all". It was also clear from the Maastricht Declaration that Global Education was understood as a synthetic, umbrella concept – bringing together varying traditions: "Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Environmental Education, Peace Education, Intercultural Education, and the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship"

The Maastricht Congress was something of a milestone in the growth of Global Education in Europe in that it:

- Emphasised the political necessity of support for Global Education as a prerequisite for critical public engagement with global development and sustainability
- Focused on the need for stakeholder involvement and inter-ministerial cooperation
- Called for the establishment of a system of national reporting, and for European policy learning, through the proposal to establish a European Peer Review process for Global Education. (For the reports see [www.gene.eu](http://www.gene.eu))
- Called explicitly for increased funding to Global Education.

The Maastricht Declaration was significant in relation to a policy framework for Global Education in that it firmly embedded the notion of the right to quality Global Education for all citizens as a benchmark for progress in the achievement of Global Education. What was later described as a "rights-based, universalist approach" to Global Education, began to increasingly appear also as a common policy language in national strategy documents.

Looking back, what was the effect of the Maastricht declaration at policy and other levels, as a strategic framework? According to Professor Douglas Bourn "The Maastricht Declaration...has become the basis for many national strategies in Europe on GE... [and the effect] can be seen particularly in the series of peer reviews of different countries policies and practices..." It has proven useful not only for government policies, and policy research, but also at the level of stakeholder policy and practice.

One of the leaders of the CSO stream within the preparation for the recent Dublin Declaration, Patricija Virtic, of SLOGA – the Slovenian National platform of NGOs, reflecting on the effect of Maastricht 20 years ago, put it succinctly: "[The Maastricht Declaration was a huge milestone, looking back at it now](#)"

## Global Education in Europe: growth and improvement trends over 20 years.

There have been many positive trends in Global Education over 20 years, many of which are outlined in the new European Declaration. These include strengthened policy frameworks at European level; and a growing number of European countries with strong (and often revised) national strategies that provide frameworks of support for enhanced quality and greater reach.

There is far greater inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination than heretofore in a growing number of European countries. A greater focus on equity and equality of reach prevails in GE policy, as policymakers attempt to reach all people in every country in Europe: also reaching out to those neglected by current education systems. There is a greater focus on whole of institution approaches and a greater acknowledgement of the necessity to include stakeholders, including CSOs and representative youth organisations.

While 20 years ago there was a paucity of data on Global Education, this is now greatly enhanced, with greater data and research available. 20 years ago, there was the aspiration to include Southern/global voices in the work of Global Education, but only a few countries (for example Norway, UK) were implementing such approaches. Now there is a clear focus, in many countries, on such approaches – and on related post-colonial analysis, decolonising of curricula, and the inclusion of migrant and minority communities. Finally, aggregate funding from national budgets across Europe has doubled in 20 years – good news, but of course this from a very low base, and funding is still paltry when compared to the advertising budgets of, for example, major perfume companies!

Nevertheless, 20 years after Maastricht, and with many changes and challenges being faced by the world and by learners now, that did not exist 20 years ago: it was time for a new Declaration.

## **The new European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 – the Dublin Declaration**

In June 2021 the process of preparation towards a new European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 began; mindful that November 2022 would mark the 20th anniversary of the Maastricht Congress and Declaration. Much has changed in 20 years. The new process, convened by GENE, and led by Ireland and Luxembourg, included national policymakers from European countries, and also involved youth organisations, CSOs, local and regional governments, academics in the field, critical global friends from other regions, and international organisations active in this field (the European Commission, the OECD, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and UNECE).

The intergovernmental drafting process was chaired by Ireland (who hosted the Congress in Dublin in November 2022), co-chaired by Luxembourg, while GENE provided the Secretariat ([www.gene.eu](http://www.gene.eu)). The drafting Committee comprised representatives of Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, and included also a representative from Engagement Global, Germany, representing the Board of GENE. The Declaration went through numerous draft iterations and took account of feedback from the various stakeholder streams outlined above.

The final text of the new European Declaration on Global Education to 2050, which was agreed at the Dublin Congress on November 4th 2022, includes:

- A preamble that outlines the broad consensus on which the Declaration is based
- A context section which outlines the range and complexity of challenges and crises, and the importance of education to this context
- A vision of a more just world and of the necessity of and the right to global education
- A summary definition of Global Education (with more detail in Appendix 1)
- A synopsis of existing international agreements and commitments (with more detail in Appendix 3)
- An outline of progress made in GE over 20 years, on which to build
- An overview analysis of context, and
- Recognition of the importance of Global Education
- The text concludes with commitments at national and European level and delivers an Appendix 2 outlining manageable and clear steps towards achievement, with annual and 5-year benchmarks.

The Declaration also develops a more detailed and renewed definition of Global Education – building on the Maastricht definition but going beyond it (Appendix 1); proposes a system for monitoring progress (Appendix 2) and builds on existing policy commitments at European and international levels (Appendix 3).

Turning to the definition, the new Dublin Declaration states that “Global Education is education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding. It involves respect for human rights and diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future.”

There is, evidently, clear continuity between the Maastricht and the Dublin definition – but also a number of substantial changes, which I’d suggest might be summarised as

- a broadening, to include issues that are now upon us and were less evident 20 years ago;
- a deepening: the anthropology underlying the definition includes a more complex and nuanced understanding of what it is to be human, and pedagogical perspective of the Declaration suggests a deeper understanding of the nature of human knowing, human becoming, learning and human action;
- a quickening, which emphasises a greater sense of urgency (and liveliness) than heretofore, and also emphasises more explicitly the importance of hope and imagination in Global Education.

There are many signs of both continuity and progress. At the heart of the vision of the Maastricht Congress back in 2002, was the need to go beyond silos; now in the new Declaration the unnecessary division between ESD, GCE, and other forms of global learning, is recognised as just that - unnecessary. One of the strengths of the Dublin Declaration, which is also in keeping with the Maastricht Declaration, is the insistence that, while recognising varied traditions and differing national usages, there is also a need to bring a variety of concepts together under a common, comprehensive understanding.



## In Conclusion

There are, of course, many profound challenges that remain and that may threaten the very core of Global Education outlined above— challenges regarding how to teach important truths in a “post-truth” world; how to enhance democracy in the face of resurgent fascism; how to teach for justice and for peace when war-mongering is accompanied by a war against reality; how to continue on the road of de-colonising curricula in the face of backlash against critical thinking; along with the challenges of social media, of artificial intelligence, etc.

Nevertheless, while there are many challenges that abound, the slow and steady progress over 20 years in Global Education - as outlined in some detail in the recent Dublin Declaration (p 2-3) – the clear signs, even since November, of a resurgence in political and strategic support for Global Education in many countries, along with the clear agreement that Global Education is crucial to the future of the planet, our people, and our most human longings for justice, peace, equity global solidarity and human flourishing - suggest that there are indeed reasons to be hopeful, reasons to imagine a better world, and to learn how to achieve it, together.

# On the writing process of the Dublin Declaration

*Sabine Seiffert - GENE Board member*

*Engagement Global (Germany, until March 1st 2023) & Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag - Berlin Development Policy Council (Germany, since March 1st 2023)*

The Dublin Declaration on Global Education in Europe to 2050 is a strategy framework to reach a vision and commitments for greater justice, solidarity, sustainability, equity, and equality for quality Global Education in Europe to 2050. To create this strategy GENE chose a very iterative and participatory process that took 18 months and involved hundreds of stakeholders and interest parties from Europe and world-wide.

## Who were the stakeholders?

GENE – together with the host country Ireland and the co-host Luxembourg - brought together key actors, policymakers and stakeholder expert's groups on Global Education to create a long-term vision for Global Education up to 2050, linking it to national and European initiatives to strengthen education systems in Europe. The process was multi-stakeholder-focused, recognizing that different stakeholders have different roles, responsibilities, and possibilities to implement, increase or improve Global Education at European, national, and regional level.

The engagement aimed to generate consolidation and coherence, secure stronger political commitment, and ignite a deeper and longer vision of quality GE for all in Europe and the world, involving youth and critical friends in the process. Policymakers from GENE member states – representing ministries for education, development, and foreign affairs – led the drafting with the GENE Secretariat and actively participated in the process of creating the Dublin Declaration, taking account of the views of all other stakeholders.

In addition to policymakers, GENE also consulted with civil society organizations, local and regional governments, and youth organizations throughout the process. The European Youth Forum, National Youth Councils and international youth organisations led youth engagement, CONCORD coordinated consultation meetings with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), while PLATFORMA engaged with Local and Regional Governments (LRGs). A total of around 60 CSOs, 70 youth

organizations, and more than one dozen LRGs were actively engaged in the process of consultation and of engagement. To bring a non-European perspective to the Dublin Declaration, more than 40 Global Critical Friends were invited as experts from other regions of the world. Additionally, in collaboration with the Academic Network on Global Education and Learning (ANGEL), GENE commissioned researchers to identify specific issues that are relevant to the conceptualisation and definition of Global Education.

GENE also built up a strong dialogue with international partner organizations such as the European Commission, UNESCO, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (NSC-COE), OECD, and UNECE to identify potential synergies between existing or emerging processes at the national and international level. Beyond the declaration process, GENE also established a partnership with UNESCO to work together within the framework of the revision procedure of the 'UNESCO Recommendation 1974'. The collaboration during the process initiated a further collaboration between GENE and UNECE, as well as the North-South Centre for the future.

## How and why did we involve youth and critical friends in the process?

By collaborating with youth organizations and global critical friends, GENE recognizes the importance of ensuring that the perspectives and voices of young people are integrated into the architecture of education policies and programs. This approach not only empowers youth to take ownership of their education and their future, but also ensures that the solutions created are tailored to meet their unique needs and aspirations. Additionally, involving critical friends provided a diverse range of perspectives and ideas, which helped to create a more comprehensive and global vision for global education.

The input of experts from around the world helped to avoid a Eurocentric perspective, and instead provided a more global vision that takes into account the historical realities of the world, the effects of globalisation and the legacies of colonialism. The collaboration helped to create a vision that goes beyond traditional Eurocentric understanding of education, but rather a vision that is inclusive of all global cultures, languages, and realities in the world.

“There was an effort by GENE to reach out to people with diverse views and not necessarily Europeans because this is a European document. (.) I thought that was a very good thing. Because then you’re able to take on ideas from different perspectives. The other thing is the consultative nature of the process. So many meetings were held... GENE tried to take on ideas and whatever issue that came up, and they tried to incorporate it in the process, (...). Because if you’re talking about global education, then we need to be globally receptive to different cultures. So this is a plus that we can also learn from, to do things in a consultative way, in a tolerant way, so that you can bring in all kinds of diverse ideas. We live in a cosmopolitan world, with different ideas, different people. And if we are to reach out to all of them, we need to have this kind of approach.”

(Andrew Tabura, Ministry of Education, Uganda and member of the Global Critical Friends group)

All stakeholder groups worked throughout the process in closed workshop sessions while presenting their visions and expected commitments to each other several times during the 18 months.

## How did we reach consensus?

A continuous dialogue was maintained throughout the 18-month process, using methods of consensus-building derived from GE practice, as the GENE Secretariat facilitated a staged series of contributions on different stages of the draft versions from all stakeholder groups. Consensus was achieved in a collaborative manner involving political actors, policymakers, the members of GENE, and further stakeholder groups mentioned above. The chair (Ireland) and co-chair (Luxembourg) worked continuously, with the GENE Secretariat, to develop consensus among the drafting committee and member states; and also to ensure that stakeholder perspectives were constantly reflected in emerging drafts of the Declaration.

The first workshops on the vision of the declaration have been conducted already during GENE policymaker roundtables in 2020 and 2021. The process began with initial consultations, working group meetings within the different stakeholder groups, followed by the presentation and discussion of provisional results, as well as different versions of the draft to GENE member states and stakeholders.

Written expectations were required by the member states in winter 2021/2022. Input was gathered from stakeholders, international experts, and policymakers on three different occasions in March 2022. Policymakers and stakeholders were consulted with a draft for written feedback in May 2022. Several official meetings were held in June and September with government delegations and representatives to present the stakeholders’ contributions to the draft declaration and to work towards a final draft. A drafting committee took into account discussions and also considered and integrated results of the different working groups, as well as observations from global critical friends and feedback from the GENE board to ensure that the most important points from stakeholder feedback were fully integrated.

Representatives from GENE member states Ministries and Agencies, and a Board member composed the Drafting Committee. This policymaker committee was selected by the GENE Secretariat, in consultation with the chair and co-chair, following an open call to all GENE member states. Drafting Committee members were chosen to ensure expertise, broad geographical spread, balance of Foreign Affairs/Development and Education, balance of large and small member states, and gender balance. It advised on and negotiated the drafting process.

The participants came from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA); the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Cooperation; the Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Czech Republic; the Finnish National Agency for Education; the French Ministry of External and European Relations; the Irish Ministry of External Relations/ Irish Aid and a representative of the GENE Board (Germany). For full disclosure, the current author was the GENE Board representative to the Drafting Committee.



### Meetings of the drafting Committee

The Drafting Committee met to discuss and agree emerging drafts in 6 sessions.

- First meeting of the Drafting committee: 24 of March (Dublin/hybrid)
- Second meeting of the Drafting committee: 27 April (virtual)
- Third meeting of the Drafting committee: 11 May (virtual)
- Forth meeting of the Drafting committee: 1 June (Paris)
- Fifth meeting of the Drafting committee: 28 June (virtual)
- Sixth meeting of the Drafting committee: 20th of September (virtual).

### Declaration drafts and final versions

The Drafting process led to a number of drafts

- 18th of May 1st Draft of the declaration for circulation
- 14th of July 2nd Draft version of the declaration for circulation
- 21st of September 3rd Draft of the declaration for circulation
- 20th of October Final Agreed Draft following silence procedure.
- 4 November Final Congress Version Adopted 4th November 2022

## What were the most discussed issues?

With the Dublin Declaration, a framework has been created with a long-term perspective. Therefore, it was beneficial during the process to imagine challenges and changes peoples are going to deal with in the future - an unknown and unpredictable future.

Most discussed has been surely the definition of Global Education:

*Global Education is education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding. It involves respect for human rights and diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future.*

To what and for what should people be empowered? Is "hope" something Global Education can strengthen? What kind of justices are we talking about when we think of GE? Can there be equity without equality? What involves 'planetary' when we speak about a planetary sustainability?

There were important discussions regarding the aspect of the future, which should be embodied in all our thinking and acting – forever. Consensus was found fairly rapidly on underlying values, principles of GE, the importance of the global dimension and any kind of global solidarity within Europe and worldwide.

## Was there a great variety of points of view on GCE?

The Dublin Declaration uses «Global Education» as an intersectional umbrella term, as a unifying concept to promote coherence, foster policy learning, and prevent silo-isation to achieve a greater overall impact in Europe to 2050. Global Education is an umbrella term that captures complexity to strengthen a common European vision. Therefore, the Declaration acknowledges the variation of terms used in different European countries due to national circumstances, and at international level. Most important: it also recognises how the use of specific terms and definitions changes over time.

While in the Maastricht Declaration (2002) Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention, Intercultural Education, the intersectional understanding of the term being used in the Dublin Declaration has broadened: Global Citizenship Education, or the Education for Global Citizenship and International Solidarity, Global Learning, Anti-Racist Education, Education for Gender Equality, Global Youth Work.

The changes reflect a new understanding for the importance of international solidarity and respect for diversity to respect human rights for all peoples - especially for the most vulnerable and excluded - locally and globally. The broadened understanding also mirrors in times of multiple crisis's the need for a world of social and climate justice.

The adapted term and new understanding of Global Education also reflects a new set of underlying values and principles of Global Education. GE emphasizes the importance of the interconnectedness between local and global dimensions in a physical way - on issues affecting people, their cultures, other living beings and the planet; but it takes also the global dimension of time into account, looking at the interconnection between generations; and between past, present and (an unknown) future.

### **What was considered the most important?**

The Dublin Declaration has the potential to give education in Europe a new, cosmopolitan, and solidarity-based as well as a rights-based orientation to make an impact on global justice. Global Education itself is therefore key to strengthen the transformative power of education, as well as the transformation of education. The most important issue for the Dublin Declaration was to ensure a clear conceptual framework embracing the diversity of concepts, with clarity regarding relationships between them.

Just as 20 years ago it was somewhat new to ask for implementing Global Education into formal education; now it is obvious that Global Education shall be part of all education sectors today, including formal, non-formal and informal settings, and for life-long and life-wide learning. Global Education shall address all people, and therefore, a Quality Global Education should encompass neglected voices and voices from outside Europe, including the Global South.

Developing and strengthening Global Education assessment, monitoring, and evaluation at all levels was also considered crucial to guarantee high standards of monitoring and evaluation of GE, but of course also to improve the quality of Global Education further. Furthermore, stronger inter-ministerial and whole of government approaches at national level and stronger coherence between international initiatives was identified as important. Lastly, a strong funding and monitoring mechanism was considered as an important aspect of the Dublin Declaration.



This collaborative process helped to create a more holistic and nuanced understanding of the role of education in addressing the complex global issues and provided a framework for creating a more just and equitable world. Furthermore, it helped to create a vision that goes beyond traditional Eurocentric understanding of education, but rather a vision that is inclusive of all global cultures, the complexity of the world and people's different realities.

# The Political Implications of the Dublin Declaration on Global Education

*Annamária Vicsek - Ministry of Education – Serbia*

We live in a rapidly changing world shaped and challenged by cultural and ethnic diversity, environmental and economic crises, digital acceleration, and extreme demographic tendencies, endangered by pandemics and wars. In this instable and insecure world new, global competences are needed, where being open minded, diverse, and interconnected is the only way forward. Having a global perspective on the world around us can be quite challenging, but it undoubtedly offers a great basis to address global challenges on a global level.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought enormous changes into our lives that we had to adapt to in a very short period of time. We have proven that education systems can adapt in remarkable ways at remarkable rates. But we have also learned that significant and deep changes cannot be implemented overnight.

Albeit the pandemic is ceasing, the consequential economic crisis and war in the heart of Europe force us to continuously operate in survival mode. In survival mode it is hard to focus on detail, on depth and quality. Yet, education policy makers feel the need for transforming education, by fundamentally rethinking the purpose, content, and delivery of education (United Nations, 2022).

Both education policies and practices must transform, so future generations become globally competent individuals: people who have more robust, complex scientific knowledge and skills, with strong pro-environmental attitudes and capacities to act, who are able to observe and understand local and global issues, and appreciate different perspectives and opinions, communicate, and cooperate successfully and respectfully with others, and feel responsible toward sustainability and collective well-being.

In 2022, after convening national consultations, the UN brought together 163 Member States including government leaders, teachers, students, civil society, academia, and other stakeholders and partners.

Following the summit 133 Member States submitted national statements of commitment and 65 Heads of State and Government delivered their statements during the Summit aligned with the summit's five action tracks: Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools; Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development; Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession; Digital learning and transformation; Financing of education. As identified by education policy leaders throughout the world, future changes in the education system must base on these five action tracks..

Moreover, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD, which is a world-wide forum where governments and market-based economies collaborate on promoting sustainable economic growth, has recognised the importance of Education for Sustainable Development and Education for Global Citizenship, and within PISA 2018, Global Competence assessment was measured alongside with reading, maths and science literacy.

The assessment provided valuable data on global competences of 15-year-old students, and the effectiveness of schools in addressing the development of global competence. One of the reports of the PISA 2018 assessment (OECD, 2018) gave an overview on students' competences, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, in examining local, global and intercultural issues. Another report (OECD 2022) shows that countries and economies vary in how prepared their students are for the urgent environmental challenges that humanity is facing. Whereas the last thematic report relying on PISA 2018 assessment results published just recently (OECD 2023) targets global citizenship competences.

The recommendations given to policy makers are intended to lead education systems to reforms resulting in young people who are able to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development.

20 years after the Maastricht Global Education Declaration a new strategic document, the Dublin Declaration on Global Education to 2050 was adopted at the Dublin Congress in November 2022, providing a unique common European framework of reference that aims to focus and catalyse for action in Global Education. The Declaration is a European Strategy Framework that offers policy makers and practitioners guidance for increasing and improving Global Education. It builds on existing international and European agreements, while also seeking to be coherent with relevant emerging international contexts, while bearing in mind that respective states and their governments are responsible for the realisation and content of their educational systems.



The Dublin Declaration on Global Education is a non-binding legal instrument. However, it reflects the development of trends in European education systems and represents the commitment of the policy makers to move in certain directions, while adhering to particular norms and principles. The Declaration can be considered as a significant step forward in policy making aiming to increase and improve Global Citizenship Education in Europe because its core elements emphasize social justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, human rights, just to mention a few.

Moreover, it is committed to inclusive and participatory pedagogical practices and builds competences for international understanding, planetary sustainability, and embracing of diversity and international understanding – all of these are very much needed nowadays.

The Declaration is a useful tool for governments and non-governmental organisations both as a guideline for elaborating internal policies, action plans and programmes and as a tool for advocacy towards and between national and local authorities, hence it must be given further political and pedagogical priority in a long-term perspective.

Governments and education policy makers now must find ways to reach full ownership of and develop a systemic approach to implementation of the Declaration. This can be challenging for governments and practitioners alike, since the internal structures and practices, legal backgrounds and economic circumstances may vary from state to state, region to region. In cases, when various strategies target several overlapping or similar topics, it is of significant importance to identify, rely on and enhance the ones that are closely inter-related. They might appear as if differing in focus and scope, but if they have mutual goals and practices, they can and will be mutually supportive.

The Dublin Declaration embraces, inter alia, Education for Sustainable Development, Education for Global Citizenship, Human Rights Education, which are also targeted and elements of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe 2010, 2013), the Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development (UNESCO 2021), and the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 (United Nations, 2015).

As an umbrella document, the Dublin Declaration can be a catalyst and provide focus for action for education policy makers, through grassroots and policy level interventions while aiming for dissemination of good practices and raising standards throughout Europe and beyond, which is a realistic goal if implemented wisely, efficiently and sustainably.

## How can the Dublin Declaration be implemented successfully?

Without aiming for completeness, I would like to offer a few topics to consider for policy makers when planning the implementation of the Dublin Declaration.

Education must step out of its usual borders. It is not only schools and other formal education settings where teaching and learning is happening. Schools need to recognise that and aim for interaction and cooperation with students' families and the local communities.

In order to make deeper impact and reach sustainability in implementation, new strategies have to be reflected in the curricula as well. This does not necessarily mean introducing a new compulsory school subject. Curricular reforms throughout Europe aim more for developing competences – views, attitudes, skills and knowledge, instead of requiring repetitive knowledge of determined contents of certain topics. Aiming for cross-curricular competences is perfectly reasonable when considering Global Education.

The governments must aim for providing inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy learning environments in schools where pupils thrive and reach their full potential, where they learn for life, prepare for the world of work and sustainable futures, where young people are encouraged to act in the general interest of personal and collective wellbeing.

The online environment can be a vast repository of contents, materials and sources for students to use when exploring and searching for global issues and topics. However the rising of fake news, hate speech and digital violence pose a new challenge for the education systems. Therefore, teaching media literacy and cyber security is becoming more important than ever before.

There is an accelerating rise of usage of social media platforms among youngsters. It would be a shame not to capitalise those platforms for educational purposes, knowing how active and motivated students are using them. Yet it is our responsibility to teach them how to use digital spaces, to question biased media representations, and to express their voice responsibly online.

One of the most important elements of strategic development is capacity building, the support and professional development of teachers, since they are the ones carrying out curricula and changes and reforms within the education system as well.

We need to encourage teachers for life-long learning and provide opportunities for them for peer learning and mentoring, and to exchange teaching and learning materials and examples of best practices in an online environment, or creating a network of schools. To reach best results and sustainability it is recommended that the concepts and methodologies become an integral part of the initial teacher training as well, hence collaborating with academia and higher education institutions is highly recommended.

A communication campaign about the Declaration would be important to raise awareness on concepts of Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development and Human Rights Education. Large public events organized by schools for their communities, e.g., important International or National Days related to Global Education would certainly be to the benefit of all citizens and entire society.

Participants of the Dublin Congress have already declared their determination to further advance Global Education in Europe. Now it is up to the policy makers to take the first steps towards implementation, involving not only teachers and other school staff, and students, but local communities, parents, as well as governmental and nongovernmental organizations. If we, all together, show great dedication and commitment to implementing the Declaration, Global Education can and will become integral part of the education systems.

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# The Dublin Declaration on Global Education to 2050: What challenges and opportunities does it bring for research?

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In this article\*, we reflect on the implications for research of the Dublin Declaration on Global Education to 2050 (GENE, 2022). The Maastricht Declaration (GENE/North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, 2002) had an essential impact on research, as we will contend below, and the GE to 2050 Declaration has the potential to do even more. We identified four major areas of impact.

Firstly the new Declaration explicitly recognises the fundamental importance of research for Global Education (GE) as an essential enabler of better, research-informed policymaking and makes several commitments to strengthen research work. Secondly, it outlines a new shared vision and definition of GE that is broader, deeper and framed by several new concepts and emerging themes that capture the perspectives of European policymakers and other key stakeholders on GE. These will impact the conceptual discussions around GE, and will equally open the way towards new topics/areas of study that researchers may want to explore in the future.

Thirdly, the new Declaration recognises the importance of establishing connections between researchers, policymakers, and other key actors in the field of GE, namely with researchers and other professionals from other parts of the world, opening the way to more collaborative research work across multiple groups and regions.

Finally, the New Declaration gives us, as researchers and as a community of GE, a more significant responsibility to respond to the needs of the people faced with changing planetary realities, increasingly complex and inter-related challenges, threats to democracy, peace, and human rights. We will discuss these four impact areas leaving at the end several questions on how to strengthen GE research, stimulate conversations and deepen connections between stakeholders in the field of GE.

## The New Declaration reinforces the importance of research for Global Education

In a workshop with policymakers, Prof. Doug Bourn reflected on the evolution of research in GE and its importance to policymakers. He highlighted that GE has been around for 30 years and has its roots in the work of Civil Society Organisations. These organisations have had a decisive role in its expansion and also in the development of innovative approaches.

However, there was not a history of evidence-based research nor a strong body of literature about GE. Therefore, policies were implemented without solid evidence to support them. Policymakers need, more and more, evidence as a basis for policy development in which to base their choices and justify funding decisions. Analysing and demonstrating the impacts of GE on learning and student development, for instance, is essential to sustain support for GE in the future.

In the last decade, research has grown, providing some of the evidence that policymakers require. Since the Maastricht declaration in 2002, there have been significant developments in GE: it is now a clear, distinct field of educational policy, research, and practice with at its core the promotion of an approach to learning based on global social justice, the promotion of human rights and desire for a more just and sustainable world (Bourn, 2022). Research in GE in several universities has gained strength with various journals emerging in the field with the concomitant increase in publications.

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Prof. Massimiliano Tarozzi, the coordinator of the “Multilingual Global Education Digest”, a project of the ANGEL (Academic Network on Global Education and Learning) network edited by GENE (Global Education Network Europe), which reviews GE literature since 2015, highlighted the consistent tendency of increase in the number of publications.

There has been a clear increase in English Language publications in the last six years: from 159 publications in 2015 to 469 in 2021. Taking into account other languages, in the last six years, the “Digest” identified 296 books and 1600 journal articles (ANGEL, 2022). This testifies to the increased interest in the issues around GE from researchers, namely from early career researchers that have produced a significant number of Ph.D. theses.

The new Declaration is significant for research in that it reinforces the importance of research in GE. It directly recognises the fundamental importance of research for GE by stating that it is an essential enabler of better, research-informed policymaking. It also makes several commitments to strengthen research work: commitments to support and where possible resource the further development of research in Global Education to enable research-informed policy and to support efforts to strengthen the work in this field of, inter alia, (...) researchers, recognising their expertise in the field of Global Education.

These commitments, plus a reviewed vision and definition that are much more clear and detailed, as we will see in the next section, are poised to have a significant impact on research by reinforcing its importance in GE.

## The New Declaration opens new fields of research for Global Education

As stated before, the New Declaration builds upon the Maastricht Declaration. However, it presents a renewed vision and definition, resulting from inputs from diverse stakeholders, translating essential perspectives emerging among different actors, including policymakers, civil society organisations, youth, local and regional governments, academics, with stakeholders from other regions of the world. This is one of its strengths and the reason why this vision and definition will need to be considered in conceptualisations of GE in future research.

The definition integrates new terms that enlarge GE scope and line of action according to new visions and emerging topics, adding, for instance, a more spiritual dimension reflected in expressions like hearts; or to imagine and hope. Or a deeper reflection about planetary sustainability, on the role of people in the world, and their place in it, now and into the future.

The importance of conceptualisation is expressed in “Appendix 1”, devoted to this renewed definition. Due to its broader ambition for a shared perspective regarding GE’s transversal and intersectional nature, it will undoubtedly impact theoretical frameworks.



Gathering a variety of related national and international definitions and concepts, the document looks for a shared common core - values, principles, and dimensions - opening an opportunity to critically analyse the relationship between various concepts and their use in practice.

Another important topic that the GE to 2050 Declaration opens up is evaluation. Recognising that current models of planning and evaluation do not work, one commitment was assumed regarding evaluation: to support the development of appropriate standard-setting, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, based on models of good practice that are both relevant and appropriate to Global Education in particular sectors. These new models require the input of research to be developed.

The new Declaration also highlights the need to support educators and research has an important role here as well. Several questions are set - mainly regarding the reinforcement of teachers' education in order to incrementally bridge the gap between the willingness to integrate Global Education, and the confidence, skills, competencies, and support to do so; whole-school approaches; and curricular reforms, including the decolonisation of curricula. In order to promote GE in formal education, new pedagogical approaches and practices are needed, and research has a key role to play in it.

These new concepts and topics require deeper critical reflection in which research has a critical role to play.

## **The New Declaration opens the way to more collaborative work in Global Education**

The new Declaration emphasizes dialogue, coordination among stakeholders, and networking and policy learning around GE. As put forward in the Declaration, Our vision is of (...) Involving and including all relevant stakeholders in dialogue, networking and cooperation around Global Education. Commitments are also made to support coordination between local, regional, national, pan-European, and international levels and through networks. Research has a vital role as a facilitator of such dialogues and a forum for connecting people.

One example is what was achieved in a couple of years with ANGEL. The network was established in 2017 through close cooperation between GENE and leading universities in the field to establish and reinforce relationships among scholars and academic institutions and strengthen the links between researchers and policymakers to enable research-informed policymaking.

The network has grown over the years and has more than 900 members, including academics, policymakers, NGOs, and others interested in GE. It has developed a membership database that facilitates connections among different stakeholders and has held several events encouraging closer dialogue and interaction between policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. This testifies to the power of research to bring people together and start conversations on critical topics of interest in the field of GE, which the new GE declaration can strengthen.

Research also has a major role to play in facilitating the work with peers and colleagues from other regions of the world to engage in mutual learning and support. The engagement with Global Critical Friends, representatives from different GE sectors of other regions of the world during the process of elaboration of the New Declaration, highlighted the need to include many perspectives and different sources of knowledge in research.

New exciting topics, such as power dynamics, understanding of historical and geo-political relationships, including the legacies of colonialism, and more inclusive and decolonised methodologies, were brought into the conversation. It was never so urgent to commit to strengthening the dialogue in a horizontal relationship that can promote mutual learning. Research has much to gain with these interregional processes, mainly if it can integrate methodological and content innovations, experimental and disruptive. It also has the potential to be the facilitator of such exchanges.

## **The new Global Education Declaration gives researchers a bigger responsibility**

The new GE Declaration gives us a more significant responsibility, as researchers and as a GE community, to respond to the needs of the people. This is expressed at the beginning of the declaration: people are faced with a range of complex crises and challenges, and have a right to learn, to be presented with the tools to critically reflect on their place in the world, to respond and to act in solidarity. And GE contributes to responding to these challenges.

GE is essential to empowering people, individually and collectively, to learn and contribute to changing the world. Our responsibility is even more urgent towards young people. Young people are confronted and concerned with the complexity of global challenges. They want to know more about global inequalities, climate change and loss of biodiversity, all forms of discrimination, and human rights violations and understand the deeper reasons for social injustices and inequalities.

Many young people are highly engaged in building a different world, as is visible in the movement for climate action and many other youth movements. They are also calling for a different education, one that equips them with more tools to understand the complexity and interlinkages of global issues, one that recognises the human place within nature, that is learner-centered. One that empowers learners to take action to change the world (UNESCO, 2022).

Researchers, as well as policymakers, have a responsibility towards these young people to answer those demands, giving them the instruments to participate in these conversations and intervene. That is what GE is poised to do. As stated in the reviewed definition in the New Declaration: We consider Global Education essential to the transformative power of, and the transformation of, education.

## The way forward

The new GE Declaration opens up new challenges and opportunities for research regarding topics, actors, and methodologies. To make it significant and meaningful, starting a conversation on what the declaration means to researchers in their own contexts is fundamental.

What role can researchers play in developing policies at a national level? How can we make the most of structures already existing? The ultimate challenge is mobilising the power of research and researchers to bring people together, building bridges between different actors, fields of knowledge, and regions, and facilitating a broader coalition among stakeholders in Global Education to find the best ways to put the declaration into practice.

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