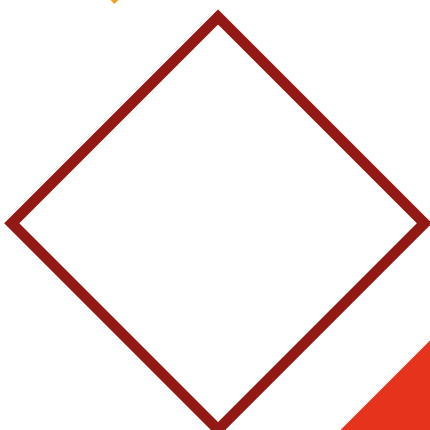
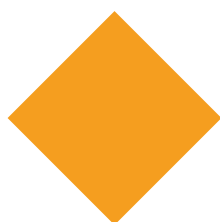




# CITIZENSHIP AND LIFELONG LEARNING MONITOR 2021

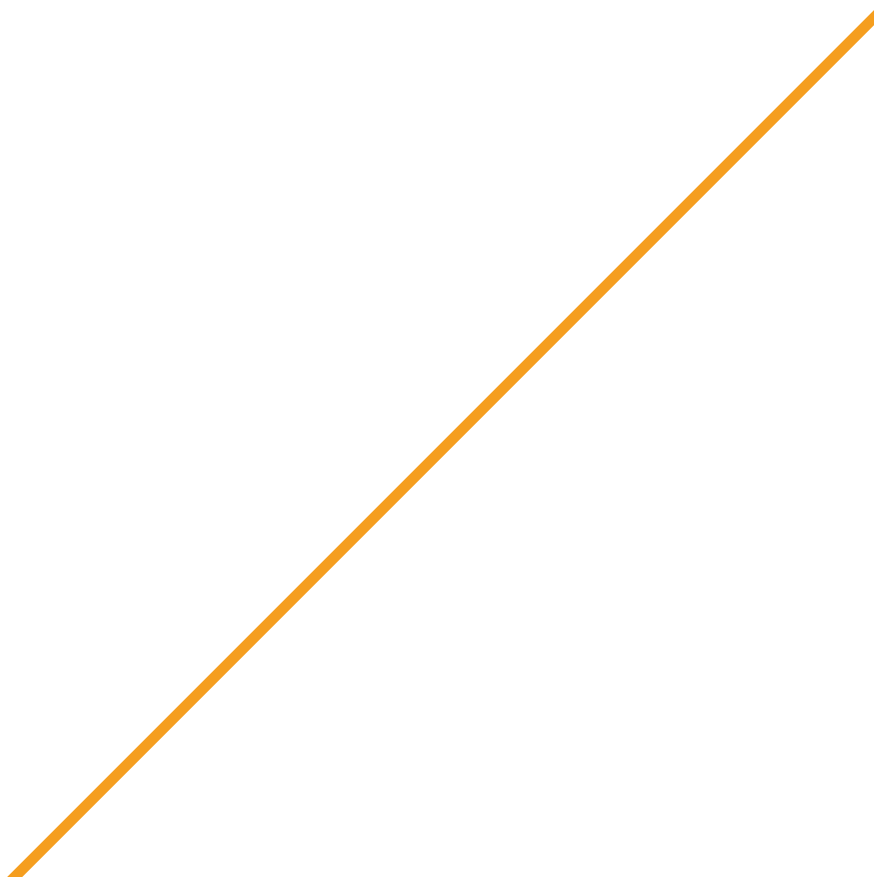
**PORTUGAL**





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>EDUCATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN A POST PANDEMIC WORLD</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>EES in formal education</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>EES in informal and non-formal education</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Shrinking civic space in the context of the pandemic</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Spotlight: the far-right and racist attacks</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Civil society strikes back</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>20</b>



## ABSTRACT

The following report represents one of eleven national case studies feeding into the sixth edition of the SOLIDAR Foundation's annual Citizenship and Lifelong Learning Monitor. The purpose of this publication is to report on the policy developments at European and national level in terms of global citizenship education and lifelong learning policies and their linkages with the state of the civic space in the country. In the post-pandemic context, many European countries are aiming to "build back better" and rethinking and reconceiving the paradigms at the very basis of our societies. The 2021 Monitor aims to analyse and investigate how these paradigmatic shifts have taken place in the fields of education and lifelong learning. The Portuguese report is focused on two main topics: Education for environmental Sustainability (EES) in the frame of Global Citizenship Education (GCE), and the shrinking civic space, together with the interconnectedness and solidarity shown among Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to counter such shrinking. The report will look at the policy actions taken by the public authorities with regards to the inclusion of EES and GCE in formal education. The encouraging policy architecture is very attuned to the needs of the learners for the 21st century, but the situation in Portugal in terms of investment in education and the basic skills achievement is problematic, revealing some structural issues that need to be addressed before any paradigmatic change to education that involves GCE can be made a reality. At the

same time, the presence of adults in education is insufficiently developed even if Portugal has made progress in terms of the support provided to adults to participate in education in the recent years. The situation in formal education comes on the backdrop of numerous initiatives developed in informal and non-formal education, therefore, the report will encourage a better connection of these different types of education to ensure that a proper lifelong and lifewide learning experience can be secured for all learners when it comes to EES and GCE. The report will also proceed to study the civic space situation, since this needs to be enabling enough to allow learners to become active citizens that take ownership over the direction that their country takes in the fight against the climate crisis. The civic space in Portugal remains in a healthy condition even if recently the CSOs have had less opportunities to participate in formal procedures for policymaking, an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions as well. However, the more worrisome aspect in the Portuguese society is the rise of hate crimes and racism which has reached to far-right groups even targeting CSOs with overtly racist actions. Currently, the Portuguese government has not taken a significantly strong response to protect its citizens against this, and such polarisation risks to threaten the possibility of a healthy civic space. Given these challenges, the Monitor concludes with a set of recommendations to address them.



## INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the environmental dimension of education, starting with an investigation of the current approaches to providing Education for Environmental Sustainability (EES), with a particular emphasis on policies and measures supporting the integration of EES and learning opportunities in formal, non-formal and informal education. It look into good practices from the informal and non-formal education providers, underlining the importance of boosting collaborations across all education providers and making use of their work when finding ways to mainstream EES and Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in education. The report then provides an overview of civic space in Portugal, analysing and assessing the challenges encountered by Portuguese civil society and the actions taken to counter such challenges. This is done because

the learners require a civic space where they can actualise the green competences which need to be acquired in a participatory and co-creationary process. The civic space is the only place where EES and GCE competences can be adequately used as over there learners can take control over the decisions taken in relation to the political, social and economic life of their society and push the public authorities to act on their behalf in promoting all against the climate crisis. The report will look at the way civil society organisations (CSOs) have countered any restrictions of the civic space, taking stock of their good practices and promoting them. The report will conclude with a set of recommendations on how to address any challenges identified when analysing the mainstreaming of EES and GCE, and the situation of the civic space.

# EDUCATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN A POST PANDEMIC WORLD

## EES IN FORMAL EDUCATION

Considering how social and ecological challenges in our societies have been exposed or have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, but also by the intensification of the climate crisis, it has become crucial that education fosters reflections that can help solve such challenges at the local and global level. Therefore, education and training need to adapt and modernise to address the rapidly changing contexts of our world and accelerate the mainstreaming of Sustainable Development in all facets of society. Education for Environmental Sustainability, particularly, represents an essential component of any country's efforts towards Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup>. This being said, the Portuguese educational system has been reflecting on education for the environment, as is the way they conceptualise EES, ever since the passing of the Environmental Associations Law of 1987. This made it mandatory for the Ministries of Education and Environment to collaborate and include EES into study plans and programmes for the pupils. EES was always connected with citizenship education, as the goal was to model a citizenry that is participatory while also environmentally aware<sup>2</sup>. This approach has expanded through most programmatic or policy documents that were released in relation to citizenship education. Before exploring this, it must be

mentioned that references to GCE are still relatively sparse across the strategies of the public authorities in Portugal, with GCE being mentioned explicitly only in the [Essential Core Curriculum for Primary Education](#). This was adopted in 2017 and identifies the competences that students should master per subject and school year. It also addresses areas of knowledge and dimensions easily associated with GCE, such as Society, Nature and Technology<sup>3</sup>. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is explicitly present, all along the compulsory education continuum, in the natural and physical sciences' domain<sup>4</sup>. References to EES are further encompassed in the [National Strategy for Environmental Education](#), adopted in 2017, which aims to establish a collaborative, strategic and cohesive commitment to environmental literacy in Portugal. The actions envisaged by the Strategy purport to contribute to boosting active citizenship in the field of Sustainable Development promoting the "building of a just, inclusive, low-carbon and resource—efficient society through education"<sup>5</sup>. The document had objectives set until 2020, therefore, there is a need for a new such strategy to be put in place as soon as possible if the Portuguese public authorities are committed to continuing the mainstreaming of the topic and meeting the Agenda 2030 objectives through education as well.

1 Millora, Chris (2021). *Unlocking the transformative potential of education: the alliance between lifelong learning and SDG Target 4.7*. Bridge 47. P.14. Available at: [https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/2\\_lifelong\\_learning.pdf](https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/2_lifelong_learning.pdf). Last accessed: 2 March 2022.

2 European Commission (2020). *Environmental Education*. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Environmental\\_Education\\_F01.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Environmental_Education_F01.pdf). Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

3 Folque Assuncao, Maria and Oliveira, Vitor (2016). Education for Sustainable Development in Portugal. In *International Research on Education for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood, Perspectives on Early Childhood Education and Development*. J. Siraj-Blatchford et al. (eds.). Pp.104-105. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309173268\\_Education\\_for\\_Sustainable\\_Development\\_in\\_Portugal](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309173268_Education_for_Sustainable_Development_in_Portugal). Last accessed: 1 March 2022.

4 Ibid.

5 European Commission (2019). *The EU Environmental Implementation Review 2019 Country Report – Portugal*. Environmental Implementation Review 2019:

A Europe that protects its citizens and enhances their quality of life. P.5. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report\\_pt\\_en.pdf#:~:text=The%20National%20Environmental%20Education%20Strategy%20for%202017-%202020,and%20cohesive%20commitment%20to%20environmental%20literacy%20in%20Portugal](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_pt_en.pdf#:~:text=The%20National%20Environmental%20Education%20Strategy%20for%202017-%202020,and%20cohesive%20commitment%20to%20environmental%20literacy%20in%20Portugal). Last accessed: 28 February 2022.

Though the references to GCE do not seem overwhelming, it is important to check the exact wording. The 2017 Strategy is already making references to just and inclusive societies which many strategies across Europe are not. Similarly, looking at the 2017 [National Strategy for Citizenship Education](#), it acknowledges global challenges when discussing the role of the citizens, and considered how they can act in ways that build up solidarity and an understanding of the interconnected nature of the challenges. Citizenship education is already conceived as a topic entitled 'Citizenship and Development', which already has scope that captures the relationship with other countries and peoples. The topic is implemented transdisciplinary in lower primary education, it is a stand-alone topic in

upper primary and lower secondary education, becoming a cross-curricular topic in upper secondary education. Social and intercultural relations represent a prong in the strategy for citizenship education foreseen by the Portuguese public authorities, underlining the importance of democracy, sustainable human development, globalisation and interdependence, peace and the management of conflicts. At the same time, the strategy for promoting the topic is aligned with whole-school principles, recognises the important work done by NGOs and CSOs through informal and non-formal education, and aims to include such actors in the delivery of education. In the Strategy, it is insisted upon the fact that the topic cannot be delivered in one-off interventions, and needs to become a paradigmatic approach that trickles through all topics<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, the identified themes to be included in the curriculum are aligned with the vision of the SOLIDAR Foundation members on what GCE should tackle<sup>7</sup>. **The way the Strategy is developed is a perfect model for what SOLIDAR Foundation argues with regards to GCE and with the inclusion of EES and ESD via GCE<sup>8</sup>.**



This being said, the references to EES and ESD are abundant, even if the EES strategy is in need of a renewal, and this is made clear also by the [National Education Strategy for Development Education](#), adopted in 2010, which calls for universal principles such as dialogue, solidarity, justice and social equity, in addressing the different Sustainable Development dimensions and recognises the transformative element of Development Education. Though Portugal is very advanced on the strategic and declarative level, it does confront with structural challenges and investment-related hurdles which can prevent the adequate implementation of the strategies mentioned above. **The Portuguese education system has experienced progress in the last decade,**

6 Government of the Republic of Portugal (2017). *National Strategy for Citizenship Education*. Available at : <https://cidadania.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/pdfs/national-strategy-citizenship-education.pdf>. Last accessed: 24 February 2022.

7 Ibid. P.7.; SOLIDAR Foundation (2020). *Global Citizenship Education Policy Paper*. P.11. Available at: [https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/001/148/original/GCE\\_Policy\\_Paper.pdf?1594110914](https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/001/148/original/GCE_Policy_Paper.pdf?1594110914). Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

8 Ibid.





**but there are still important challenges to address**, namely, the persisting high level of grade repetition and high drop-out rates, as well as a high percentage of adults who have not completed their upper secondary studies<sup>9</sup>. Further, the country still presents one of the lowest rates for upper-secondary education among 25–34-year-olds (72% compared with the OECD average of 82%)<sup>10</sup>. It must be mentioned that Portugal closed many gaps in education since 2010, with the rate of early leavers from education and training decreasing from 28.3% in 2010 to 8.9% in 2020 and with the rate of tertiary educational attainment increasing from 25.5% in 2010 to 41.9% in 2020<sup>11</sup>. However, these numbers do not account for the fact that educational achievement in Reading, Maths and Science has worsened<sup>12</sup>, revealing a structural challenge in terms of the basic competences achieved by the learners which are essential to be able to adequately develop as an active citizen. Between 2012 and 2018, Portugal has experienced some of

the largest decreases in the share of expenditure across all educational levels (over 12%), mainly explained by an increase in GDP superior to the one in total expenditure on education<sup>13</sup>, while the cost of education was pushed down by measures such as the larger average class sizes, which increased by 15% in this period<sup>14</sup>. Such measures of cost effectiveness in education are completely at odds with addressing equity in education and ensuring that each learner benefits from quality education<sup>15</sup>. As of 2018 the level of spending was still below the EU average (4.7%). In pre-primary and primary education, spending in 2019 was 1.5% of GDP (1.2% by central government), 1.6% at secondary education (1.4% by central and 0.2% by local governments), and 0.6% in tertiary education (by central government)<sup>16</sup>. Under such circumstances, the Portuguese government must provide more commitment to its strategies, ensuring for long-term quality investment in education<sup>17</sup>.

To offset some of the challenges, there have been programmes organised at the level of municipalities. SOLIDAR Foundation does not encourage scattered approaches for the reason that it creates inequity in access to education based on the region in which a learner studies, which, in the case of GCE and EES, is devastating considering how some learners would be denied the capacity to actively engage and thrive in society as citizens that are fully aware about their rights and responsibilities. However, the innovative

9 OECD (2020). *Education Policy Outlook: Portugal*. Pp.3, 5-6, 9 Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/education/policy-outlook/country-profile-Portugal-2020.pdf>. Last accessed: 2 March 2022.

10 Ibid. P.5.

11 European Commission (2021). *Education and Training Monitor 2021: Portugal*. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor-2021/en/portugal.html>. Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

12 Ibid.

13 OECD (2021). *Education at a Glance 2021*. P.249. Available at: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/b35a14e5-en.pdf?expires=1637784461&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=4BDD2434266CF10D77FC566D976D8456>. Last accessed: 2 March 2022.

14 Ibid. P.320.

15 SOLIDAR Foundation (2021). *The Commodification of Education and the Prevalence of For-Profit Education Stakeholders: Policy Paper*. Available at: [https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/001/374/original/SOLIDAR\\_Foundation\\_Policy\\_Paper\\_on\\_the\\_Commodification\\_of\\_Education\\_October\\_2021.pdf?1633423601](https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/001/374/original/SOLIDAR_Foundation_Policy_Paper_on_the_Commodification_of_Education_October_2021.pdf?1633423601). Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

16 European Commission (2021). *Education and Training Monitor 2021: Portugal*. P.5.

17 SOLIDAR Foundation (2021). *The Commodification of Education and the Prevalence of For-Profit Education Stakeholders: Policy Paper*

pedagogies used in such local initiatives and means of developing projects should be promoted as good practices and considered for upscaling. Furthermore, the involvement of the local authorities in the delivery of such

actions is commendable and in line with the whole-community approach for the delivery of quality education to all learners. Below you can find examples from the cities of Lisbon and Guimarães<sup>18</sup>.

## CASE STUDY

### Lisbon

The Municipality of Lisbon reviews on an annual basis its pedagogies for teaching EES, taking stock of new methods and promoting across the education professionals. In 2017, 466 different pedagogies took place in 99 education institutions, ranging from projects on sustainable commuting to the education institutions to campaigns and nature days.

### Guimarães

The Municipality here promotes inter-generational learning with regards

to sustainability issues. This is all set up under the Landscape Laboratory. This programme connects various initiatives to promote sustainability and delivers them in such a way that it provides access to information and research on environmental aspects and then uses these to set up projects where younger audiences and senior citizens can work together to address local challenges.

More information on how the municipalities are supporting learners in collaboration with formal education but also outside formal education can be found [here](#).



18 European Commission (2020). *Environmental Education*.



## EES IN INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Informal and non-formal education is important for two reasons in the context of the EES. Firstly, there is a need for a lifelong and lifewide learning approach, considering how the classroom model is no longer sufficient to be able to prepare learners for the complex and interconnected challenges of the 21st century society<sup>19</sup>. Secondly, these types of education can expand to reach learners of all ages. If formal education is mostly associated with younger learners, through informal and non-formal education the authorities can have more avenues to reach the adult population, as it is essential to ensure that they will also be educated under the tenets of EES. Without the adult population participating into this type of education, it will be impossible to ensure that an adequate number of people is socialised to act responsibly and contribute to protecting the planet against the environmental crisis.

This being said, the educational attainment across the wider Portuguese adult population (25–64 year-olds) remained below the OECD average, with almost half of the population having either an upper-secondary qualification or more, compared to the OECD average of four out of five people<sup>20</sup>. In Portugal, only a very small share of adults is enrolled in education: 4% of 25-64 year-olds compared to 7% on average across countries participating in the Adult Education Survey (AES). Nevertheless, a relatively high share of adults (44%) participates in non-formal education and training, in line with the average across AES-participating countries<sup>21</sup>. The COVID-19 pandemic hindered the slow progression in adult learning

in Portugal. The share of adults (aged 25-64) participating in learning decreased by 0.5 pps. from 2019 to 2020 (it currently stands at 10%, still above the EU average of 9.2%). The share of low qualified adults decreased even further (from 4.2% in 2019 to 3.3% in 2020, close to EU average of 3.4%). However, the share of high-qualified adults remained unchanged (47.8% in 2020, well above the EU average of 20.8%)<sup>22</sup>. **The numbers are encouraging compared to the rest of the EU, the amount of adult learners who join educational programmes that could be tailored to include EES elements is insufficient considering the urgency of the climate crisis.**

In recent years Portugal has made a significant effort to improve the qualifications of its population, and while some progress has been made, qualifications remain far below the levels of in Europe<sup>23</sup>. In the case of adults, the Portuguese authorities aim to extend educational and qualification levels via the '[Qualifica' Centres network](#).<sup>24</sup> In addition to recognising skills previously acquired by adults in formal, informal and non-formal learning, the centres also provide guidance and referral to other qualification solutions, such as adult education and training courses, certified modular training<sup>25</sup>. Such attention provided to qualifications is important, because it looks into guidance as well, and into supporting learners to discover how they can access training related to sustainability. However, the results from this approach are yet to be seen considering the dismal rate of adults participating in learning which was mentioned above. **In informal and non-formal learning, the provision of EES, as a dimension of ESD is led by CSOs, namely development NGOs that have also been playing key**

19 SOLIDAR Foundation (2020). *Global Citizenship Education Policy Paper*.

20 OECD (2020). *Education Policy Outlook: Portugal*. P.3.

21 OECD (2019). *Education at a Glance 2019: Portugal*. P.2. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2019\\_CN\\_PRT.pdf#:~:text=Students%20in%20primary%20through%20lower%20secondary%20education%20in,to%20management%20and%20keeping%20order%20in%20the%20classroom%29](https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/EAG2019_CN_PRT.pdf#:~:text=Students%20in%20primary%20through%20lower%20secondary%20education%20in,to%20management%20and%20keeping%20order%20in%20the%20classroom%29). Last accessed: 23 February 2022.

22 European Commission (2021). *Education and Training Monitor 2021: Portugal*. P. 11.

23 Eurydice (2022). *Portugal Overview*. Available at: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/portugal\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/portugal_en). Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

**roles in the introduction, growth, and support of ESD<sup>26</sup>.** CSOs have also been involved in the development of the [National Strategy for Development Education](#), as referents and experts for informal and non-formal education<sup>27</sup>.



The problem with much of the work done on EES and GCE in Portugal is that it still is occurring in the form of many stand-alone initiatives that are not always connected. The informal and non-formal education sector carries a great weight of the load of providing EES and GCE. An example is the [ECOs-Locations](#) national project which started in 2009 and is still being implemented by the [League for Nature Protection](#) in partnership with the Scouts Movement in Portugal and the Portuguese National Guard. Targeting youths in their local community and providing actions for them to develop their environmental citizenship, while being funded by the EEA Grants, the project is providing the much needed practical outlet for learners to gain ownership over an action that promotes the sustainable management and conservation of nature and biodiversity specifically in their surrounding environment. Similarly, the [Young Reports for Environment](#) initiative has been operating since 1994 and,

relying on a participatory methodology, it encourages citizens to study and document themselves on sustainability related matters. Through the programme, people would identify an environmental challenge in their community, propose solutions, document this via a journalistic production and then promote their findings to the local community to raise awareness and obtain the support of their peers for their solutions. The international Eco-Schools and Eco-Municipalities initiatives are also present in Portugal, representing accreditations for education institutions or for municipalities that are promoting sustainable development and have methods of governing education on such topics that is ensuring a more participatory approach from the side of the learners. Examples of eco-schools can be seen in previous editions of our Monitor for better understanding of how they operate. These are just some examples of the work done outside of formal education to tackle these topics, and a slew of other examples covering aspects such as sustainable mobility and energy efficiency as well<sup>28</sup>. However, the problem with such initiatives is that they are fully voluntary and depend on who wishes to implement them and where. At the same time, they can replicate other existing initiatives or overlap with others while having a slightly different methodology. Therefore, the Portuguese public authorities should take stock of these practices and find ways to upscale them and to support better coordination amongst them so that all learners can have access to such initiatives and so that all initiatives can contribute to meeting the goals of the governmental strategies with regards to the mainstreaming of EES and GCE.

The examples above show how informal education not only prepares learners to be active in society but can actually provide learning opportunities through which people can directly secure the protection of the environment.

26 migratED: Media Education for Human Rights (2019). *Global Citizenship Education in Portugal*. Available at: [https://www.migrated.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/4Change-Factsheet\\_-GCE\\_EN.pdf](https://www.migrated.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/4Change-Factsheet_-GCE_EN.pdf). Last accessed: 22 February 2022.

27 Ibid.

28 YouthWiki (2022). *Green volunteering, production and consumption*. Youth and the World: Portugal. Available at: <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/portugal/95-green-volunteering-production-and-consumption>. Last accessed: 2 March 2022.



Similarly, campaigning, protesting and other forms of civic engagement can raise awareness on the complex issues related to our environment, while making a difference in protecting it. For example, considering the EU's plans for achieving carbon neutrality by 2050<sup>29</sup> which include a [Strategy](#) to replace combustion vehicles with electric vehicles, exploiting new resources such as lithium, used for manufacturing electric batteries, becomes more critical and encourages leading mining companies to explore new reserves. In Portugal, where lithium reserves are present, the government is [granting a significant number of concessions](#) for lithium mines, thus leaving local communities to come to terms with the prospect of an open-air mine interrupting their life<sup>30</sup>. A recent

example of this instance is the proposal for the building of a mine in the village of Covas do Barroso in Northern Portugal, where one of the largest estimated deposits of lithium in Western Europe was found<sup>31</sup>. Residents, with the support of environmental organisations,<sup>32</sup> have launched a campaign entitled “[Minas não, sim à Vida](#)” (No to the mine, yes to life) to stop the development of the mine while it is still in its initial phase. Instances such as these are becoming more and more common [across Northern Portugal](#) and have led civil society to reflect on the potential impact that decarbonisation plans could have on local communities across the EU<sup>33</sup>. While [green mining](#) purports to be responsible and sustainable extraction of resources that minimises environmental impact, it also can encompass large amounts of waste material and air and water contamination<sup>34</sup>. Civil Society has been at the forefront of organised action to protest the prevalence of green mining and economic interests over the wellbeing of citizens<sup>35</sup> while contributing to raising awareness regarding the environmental implications, and, effectively educating citizens in informal ways about EES. In a similar way to resource exploitation, the environment can have an impact and is impacted by migration, and CSOs are providing support in raising awareness on the connections between migration and the climate crisis as well. Below is an example of such actions.

29 European Commission (2022). *Climate Action: 2050 long-term strategy*. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/climate-strategies-targets/2050-long-term-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/climate-strategies-targets/2050-long-term-strategy_en). Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

30 Pinto, Luísa (2021). *Governo despacha 14 concessões mineiras, incluindo lítio em Argemela e volfrâmio em Montalegre*. Publico. Available at: <https://www.publico.pt/2021/11/04/economia/noticia/governo-despacha-14-concessoes-mineiras-incluindo-litio-argemela-volframio-montalegre-1983395>. Last accessed: 21 February 2022.

31 Soares, Pedro Filipe (2021). *Não à mina, sim à vida*. Publico. Available at: <https://www.publico.pt/2021/11/19/opiniao/opiniao/nao-mina-sim-vida-1985538>. Last accessed: 21 February 2022.

32 Associação Montalegre Com Vida; Associação Unidos em Defesa de Covas do Barroso; Corema – Associação de Defesa do Património | Movimento de Defesa do Ambiente e Património do Alto Minho; Em Defesa da Serra da Peneda e do Soajo; Movimento Minas Não; Movimento ContraMineração Beira Serra; Movimento Contramineração Sátão e Penalva; Movimento Estrela Viva; Movimento Não às Minas – Montalegre; Movimento SOS Serra d’Arga; PNB – Povo e Natureza do Barroso; SOS – Serra da Cabreira – BASTÕES ao ALTO!!; SOS Terras do Cávado; Fundação Montescola.

33 CIVICUS (2021). *Opposition against Proposals for Lithium Mines Continues; Journalist Racially Attached on Live TV*. Available at: <https://monitor.civicus.org/updates/2021/06/07/opposition-against-proposals-lithium-mines-continues-journalist-racially-attached-live-tv/>. Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

34 University of Massachusetts (2016). *Environmental Risks of Mining*. Available at: <https://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2016/final-website/problems/mining.html>. Last accessed: 22 February 2022.

35 Fagundes, Teófilo (2021). *Manifestação contra a narrativa do Green Mining a 5 de Maio em Lisboa*. MAPA. Available at: <https://www.jornalmapa.pt/2021/04/27/manifestacao-contra-a-narrativa-do-green-mining-a-5-de-maio-em-lisboa/>. Last accessed: 3 March 2022.





## CASE STUDY

SOLIDAR Foundation member, [Rede Sem Fronteiras](#) (hereafter RSF), has been campaigning for environmental action, specifically in relation to migrants' rights. To this end, they implement activities to promote solidarity in migration, tackling the relation of climate crisis and its impact on migration. The [European Social Forum on Migration \(ESFM\)](#) has been a pivotal avenue to discuss how different social and environmental systems of oppression are interrelated and reproduced, determining migration trajectories as well as experiences in countries of transit and destination. In 2021, the Forum took place in Lisbon and was organised by [RSF](#) in cooperation with the [Organisation for a Universal Citizenship \(OCU\)](#) and several CSOs working on migration, and saw the participation and intervention of fellow SOLIDAR members [CGIL](#) and [ARCI](#). The Social Forum on Migration, born in Porto Alegre in 2004, serves as an avenue for diasporas and CSOs to discuss the implementation of alternative and participatory governance policies for migration. The overarching aim of the Forum was to create a process that reflects on migratory fluxes and that works towards a new vision of migration, towards the generation of cultural changes that

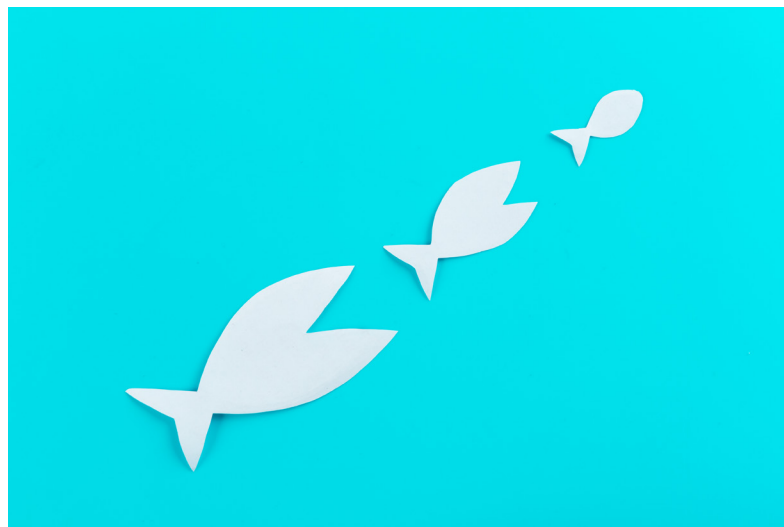
ensure that respect of human rights to which people on the move are entitled. More specifically, the Forum, since their conception, has worked towards ensuring spaces of sharing and construction between civil society and social movements involved in the migration area, with a special attention to the voice of migrant people. Therefore, the methodology guarantees first and foremost the participation and leading role of migrants, with the leading role of migrants and refugees. The Forum culminates in recommendations and proposals of concrete actions. In its latest iteration, it was highlighted that an alternative form of socio-environmental development centered on a society-nature system is needed, instead of the form of anthropocentric development that is leading the planet to a great environmental and civil disaster. Participants called for socio-environmental resistance to be territorial and inter-territorial in each space in defense of water, territory and cultures, to reduce migration and improve the quality of life. Finally, what was pointed out was also the urge to build, implement and communicate a common narrative at the intersection of migratory justice, environmental justice and social justice.

# SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE

## SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PANDEMIC

As evidenced by the cooperation between Civil Society and citizens in the protests on green mining, civic space is pivotal to empower learners with the tools to understand global phenomena and act in ways that boost solidarity and address the global challenges. Based on this, an enabling environment for civil society which provides quality learning opportunities for all to achieve just, inclusive societies as lifelong learning approaches can contribute towards active citizenship, political and community participation<sup>36</sup>, and towards environmental protection. To this end, a healthy and thriving civic space is paramount, especially in times of crisis, as it enables citizens to organise, participate and express their views to influence and shape the political, economic and social life of their societies.

SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSF](#) has reported on the challenges in countering the shrinking of the civic space due to the restrictions in movement, the lockdowns, and several other challenges imposed by the COVID-19 related measures. As of 18 March 2020, the country entered a state of emergency which prohibited public gatherings and significantly limited movement. Further such decrees were issued in November 2020, continuing to limit assembly and movement. In line with most measures taken across Europe, the fact that the state of emergency was reviewed every 15 days was a positive underlie of how the decrees were implemented in Portugal<sup>37</sup>. However, this has had a significant impact on the possibility of CSOs performing their regular work, as reported by RSF.



According to the [CIVICUS Monitor](#), authorities in Portugal tend to be very receptive to Civil Society's views, hence the Open status of the civic space based on CIVICUS' ratings, however, civic participation in decision-making at the governmental level is primarily conducted through formal channels (public consultations, participatory budgeting, etc.) and as a result, grassroots and informal movements are often excluded, experiencing a lack of influence on policy-making compared to other interest groups. Such an issue is reflected also in funding where smaller organisations lose the competition for institutional funding against more established ones and ones that are more economically sustainable, as SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSF](#) highlights. Furthermore, while there is respect for fundamental freedoms, Civil Society is becoming increasingly aware of potential vulnerabilities and challenges to their positioning with the government, which, thus far, have not been addressed<sup>38</sup>. SOLIDAR Foundation member, RSF reports that Civil Society is often seen as a service provider, and this impacts the effectiveness of

36 Čajková, Tereza (2021). *Why is transformative education a vital response to the multiple challenges of the future?*. Bridge 47. Available at: [https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/foresight\\_and\\_sdgs.pdf](https://www.bridge47.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/foresight_and_sdgs.pdf). Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

37 International Center for Not-For-Profit Law (2022). *COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker: Portugal*. Available at: <https://www.icnl.org/covid19tracker/?location=147&issue=&date=&type=>. Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

38 Civic Space Watch (2018). *Portugal: Civil society complaint on harmful speech receives state support*. Available at: <https://civic-spacewatch.eu/portugal-civil-society-complaint-on-harmful-speech-receives-state-support/>. Last accessed: 28 February 2022.



advocacy in specific policy areas. For example, in the development sector, the consultation process has been limited to an intermediary body, the [National Development Agency](#), over which CSOs report having significant limitations in influencing its decisions, practices and policies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>39</sup>. The intermediary body resembles more an instance of cooptation rather than meaningful engagement of the civil society.

While the Portuguese government has undertaken considerable efforts to provide spaces for Civil Society participation, there appears to be increasing difficulty for grassroots associations, which, often, end up being excluded. Such an exclusion also manifests itself in the difficulty to access funding, which, due to the nature of social services provision of CSOs, should be an essential resource to ensure their economic sustainability. While collaboration among authorities and Civil Society to meet the social and economic needs of the population, can be beneficial<sup>40</sup>, it should never come to the expense of the work of Civil Society. SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSE](#) has been advocating for the creation of a public funding scheme for CSOs, modeled after the existing one established for [Private Institutions of Social Solidarity \(IPSSs\)](#). Such a scheme is periodically negotiated with the authorities, and it is implemented through efficient monitoring by the parties. This scheme would ensure better economic sustainability for small CSOs, as it would ensure reliable public funding, without undermining the efforts of IPSSs to mobilise private donations.

## SPOTLIGHT: THE FAR-RIGHT AND RACIST ATTACKS



**SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSE](#) reported that CSOs in Portugal have had to adjust their work to respond to the challenges posed by the pandemic in terms of the provision of social services, but also to the social tensions developed during the pandemic, when the significant increase in violent discourse and hate against minorities and migrants<sup>41</sup> have led to an escalating climate of tension and increased polarisation of Portuguese society.** Xenophobic attitudes, racist [incidents](#) and attacks against Civil Society have been increasing in recent years, and the pandemic further exacerbated them, leading the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) [to call for “an urgent institutional response”](#). For instance, in August 2020, members the far-right group named Resistência Nacional (National Resistance) marched in front of the headquarters of anti-racist organisation [SOS Racismo](#) wearing white masks and carrying torches, to intimidate them<sup>42</sup>. Aiming to tackle the rising xenophobic and anti-immigrant sentiments, the Portuguese government appointed several members of Civil Society to a Working Group whose main objective was to develop solutions to address racism and discrimination against people of colour in the country. However, members of the working group have publicly criticised the Portuguese government, claiming that it minimised and underestimated the danger posed by the rise of fascist and racist attitudes, especially against

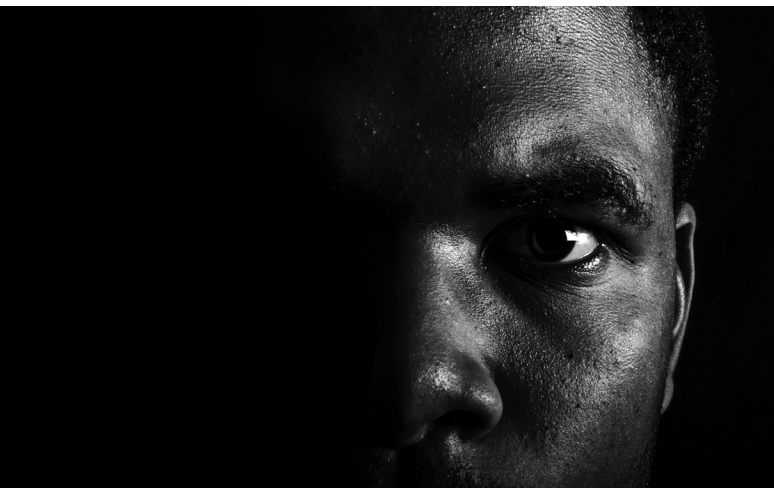
39 Ibid.

40 Irish, Leon; Salamon, Lester and Simon, Karla (2009). *Outsourcing Social Services to CSOs: Lessons from Abroad*. World Bank. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/517011468019451377/pdf/503850ESW0WHIT10Lessons0from0Abroad.pdf>. Last accessed: 23 February 2022.

41 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and Council of Europe (2018). *Relatório da ECRI Sobre Portugal (quinto ciclo de controlo)*.

Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-report-on-portugal-portuguese-translation-/16808de7db>. Last accessed: 1 March 2022.

42 Ferin, Lara and Magalhães Claudino, Henrique (2020). *SOS Racismo Vai Fazer Queixa ao Ministério Público por ‘Parada Ku Klux Klan’*. TVI. Available at : <https://tvi24.iol.pt/internacional/resistencia-nacional/sos-racismo-vai-fazer-queixa-ao-ministerio-publico-por-parada-ku-klux-klan>. Last accessed: 3 March 2022.



people of colour and migrants, as highlighted by the murder of Ihor Homenyuk<sup>43</sup>. SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSF](#), reports that the Portuguese government was ommissive when faced with the murder of the 40-year-old Ihor Homenyuk inside the Lisbon airport in the SEF (Foreigners and Borders Service) room. Furthermore, [Mamadou Ba](#) an anti-racist activist of [SOS Racismo](#) and Working Group Member appointed by the Secretary of State for Citizenship and Equality, claimed that the Portuguese leadership lacked the necessary ambition to confront and address racism in Portuguese society. Particularly, the activist accused Prime Minister António Costa of equating, in one of his public statements, his anti-racism activism with the ideas of far-right party [Chega](#)<sup>44</sup>. Amidst such concerning developments, especially in the context of increased attacks against CSOs in the country, it is even more pivotal that

Civil Society is enabled to empower citizens to contribute towards active citizenship, political and community participation and for the Portuguese authorities to reflect the commitments to anti-racism in practice too<sup>45</sup>.

## CIVIL SOCIETY STRIKES BACK

In the quest to counter such xenophobic and anti-immigrant sentiments, SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSF](#), implements and engages in projects that put intercultural education at its core. Since 2019, [RSF](#) started to develop a project to organise supportive networks for the Latin American diaspora in Europe, especially in the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and France. Their projects aim to enhance the capacity of Latin American immigrant associations operating in European countries and, at the same time, promote dialogue between the origin, transit and destination of immigrants. While reflecting on how to build global networks of solidarity spaces, alliances between civil society, local governments and sanctuary cities<sup>46</sup>, they further promote dialogue between cities that have developed good practices and implemented programs based on the effective inclusion of the migrant population, considering intersectoral development policies and equal opportunities, these dialogues take place in society's own spaces for debate such as the World Social Forums on Migration and their regional versions.

43 de Sousa, Ana Naomi (2021). Portuguese border guards found guilty over death of Ukrainian man. Al Jazeera. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/10/portugal-border-death>. Last accessed: 2 March 2022.

44 CIVICUS (2021). *Opposition against Proposals for Lithium Mines Continues; Journalist Racially Attacked on Live TV*.

45 Čajková, Tereza (2021). *Why is transformative education a vital response to the multiple challenges of the future?*.

46 European Committee of the Regions (2020). *Integration of migrants in middle and small cities and in rural areas in Europe*.

P.25. Available at: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/engage/studies/Documents/Integration%20of%20Migrants.pdf>. Last accessed: 3 March 2022.

## CASE STUDY

The project [Aliança Migrações - Projeto Cidades](#) is an alliance between local authorities and civil society calling for different governance of migration. The project, started in 2015, is implemented by SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSF](#), together with the National Association of Welcoming Cities and Territories-ANVITA and the Organisation for Universal Citizenship-OCU (formed by Emmaus International, CCFD-Terre Solidaire, the Utopia Movement and the Latin American network Espacio Sin Fronteras). The Alliance of Migrations (Aliança Migrações) aims to encourage and highlight concrete alternatives led by local authorities together with Civil Society in terms of dignified reception of migrants, citizenship and respect for fundamental rights. The Alliance further aims to highlight alternative migration policies supported

by the regions and foster the sharing of replicable good practices and co-operation between local realities. The project was initiated in 5 pilot cities: Lisbon, Barcelona, Palermo, Grenoble and Montreuil, where volunteers participated in actions led by local actors and carried out qualitative and quantitative research that allowed to build an overview of the challenges of each city and the inspiring practices implemented, providing project partners with an overview of the issues surrounding migration in each of these territories. The practices gathered allowed project partners to highlight recommendations and prospects for joint projects to strengthen local practices in favour of reception and to build on these concrete alternatives to bring about a change of direction in migration policies.

The strengthening of civil society and the capacity building activities have been at the core of the COVID-19 recovery for many organisations. Therefore, such cross-border mechanisms have proved to be vital to ensure solidarity across civil society on civic space and foster the enabling environment for civil society. The civic space can be a huge catalyst for innovation and changes to organisational practice, especially since, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability to innovate and adapt quickly has become crucial. Cross-border solidarity at European and global level fed onto the work done in formal and non-formal learning on solidarity, thus strengthening the concept of a common European identity. In its work to promote cross-border solidarity, SOLIDAR Foundation member, [RSF](#) fosters exchanges between civil society, academia and local governments, with a focus on defending and promoting the rights of migrants and refugees. To this end, the organisation coordinates and participates in spaces of cooperation, reflection and decision that contribute to the construction of alternative migration governance policies in a spirit of cooperation between peoples and sustainable development. **These initiatives were reflected in the collaboration of [RSF](#) in the design and implementation of the [Coordination Office for Migrant Policy of the Municipality of São Paulo](#), one of the pioneering examples at regional level in the promotion of specific policies for the migrant population and with the participation of civil society in project design.** With the aim to reflect on how to build global networks of solidarity spaces, alliances between civil society, local governments and sanctuary

cities, [RSF](#) also promotes dialogue between cities that have developed good practices and implemented programmes based on the effective inclusion of the migrant population. In the face of global challenges, the work performed by RSF promotes exactly the type of solidarity and collaboration that can foster collective action which goes beyond national borders and views the challenges for how fluid they are in their impact.

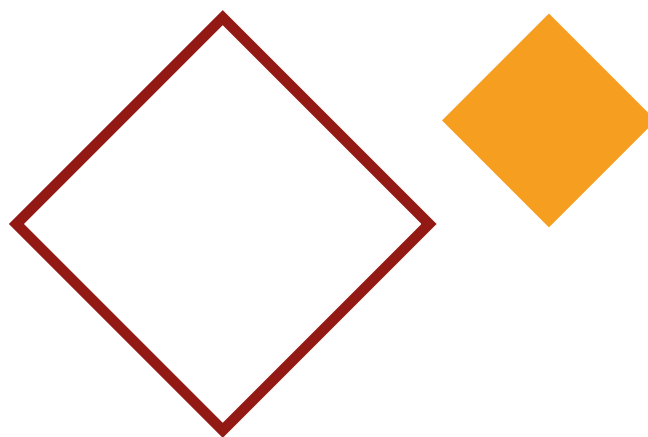
Ultimately, solidarity mechanisms and initiatives in the civic space fed into non-formal and informal work on GCE and EES, providing a lens which views the role of education in the promotion of citizenship education and of the knowledge, values and attitudes that foster an environment for the strengthening of democracy. Collaboration that produces long-term positive outcomes goes beyond the simple engagement of stakeholders, but rather, is based on the awareness that producing better results comes from the acknowledgement of the existence of a shared goal.



## CONCLUSION

The Portuguese case study is dominated by paradoxes and contradictory approaches. The implementation of EES in formal education has a long history in Portugal, and in 2010 and 2017 multiple strategies for ESD, EES and GCE have been passed, each with wordings that promote the exact type of education that is needed to adapt the learners to the 21st century society and to the green transition. Moreover, the country continued to close many gaps in terms of the structural issues in education that were preventing learners to have equal access to education. Therefore, early school leaving, tertiary education attainment, adults' participation in education, all have improved over the period 2010-2020. However, at the same time, investment in education has not grown at the same pace as increases to the GDP and has remained fairly low due to the austerity measures taken in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis. With this in mind, it becomes observable also that though more learners join education and they are supposed to receive an education tailored for the current societal needs, they are performing worse than in 2010 in terms of basic skills acquisition. There is also a concern that many of EES and GCE initiatives by the informal and non-formal education providers are not upscaled sufficiently, and that this access to a lifelong and lifewide learning experience is provided unequally to learners depending on the region in which

they live, with the learners living in bigger cities experiencing better conditions for such education. Under these conditions, there can be seen that more needs to be done in Portugal to connect all the education providers and offer a true whole-community approach to education. Similarly, the civic space, which is required so that learners can actualise their green competences and can use it to pressure Portuguese authority to make meaningful changes to protect all against the climate crisis, appears to be robust, with a good relationship between CSOs and the public authorities. However, recent developments have excluded CSOs from decision-making avenues, straining slightly the relationship with the government, while the rise in extremism, xenophobic and racial attacks has increased polarisation in Portugal and impacted the work of CSOs. Under these conditions, it has been inspiring to see the fight of activists and CSOs to combat such increasingly discriminatory practices and hate crimes, while they have also stepped up their work on intercultural education and on building up cross-border solidarity. The essential next step in this tug-of-war is for the Portuguese public authorities to actually commit to their speech of condemning racism and take steps in supporting the CSOs and activists that fight against it. Below are SOLIDAR Foundation's recommendations for the challenges revealed in this monitoring report.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Increase public investment in education to develop adequately green competences within active national and regional educational and skills frameworks
- ◆ Ensure funding and implementation support for educational activities aimed at training teachers on Agenda 2030-related topics, providing them with teaching tools and materials
- ◆ Renew the expiring strategies on Education for Environmental Sustainability and on Education for Development in cooperation with formal, informal and non-formal education providers
- ◆ Increase support measures and dedicate more resources to the adult education strategies, to boost up the numbers of adults participating in learning, while also ensuring that the education and training offer is reflecting on green competences as well
- ◆ Make use of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan's funding to reform education to speed up the implementation of the strategies focused on global citizenship education, especially focusing on boosting the academic performance of all learners on the basic skills needed to be able to engage in global citizenship education
- ◆ Improve the avenues for collaboration between formal, informal and non-formal education providers, while upscaling the good examples of innovative pedagogies from outside formal education
- ◆ Improve upon the dialogue with Civil Society, fostering the participation of all Civil Society Organisations, in their diversity, in the planning, implementation and monitoring of policy-making in education and in relation to the civic space
- ◆ Develop funding mechanisms that would ensure better economic sustainability for small CSOs while also ensuring that the representation of CSOs in policymaking is not solely linked to the size of the organisation
- ◆ Improve mechanisms for the consultation and political participation of underrepresented groups in policy-making and ensure political commitment to addressing racism with concrete and resourced measures

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