



# CITIZENSHIP AND LIFELONG LEARNING MONITOR 2019

Continuous digital and intercultural  
education for EU citizens' societal  
inclusion and active participation



# ABSTRACT

The Citizenship and Lifelong Learning Monitor 2019 is the SOLIDAR Foundation annual report on developments from national and European level regarding citizenship education and lifelong learning. The publication came amid heightened intercultural tensions, following a wave of terrorist attacks in the early 2010s. These tensions prompted the release of the 2015 Paris Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education and to renew member states' commitment to promoting the EU identity and values.

The Monitor is based on **three thematic** areas from the 2015 Paris Declaration: 1) **Ensuring that people acquire civic and intercultural competences;** 2) **Enhancing critical thinking and media literacy, particularly regarding internet and social media use;** 3) **Promoting intercultural dialogue.** Structuring the data from **case studies on eight countries – Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain, Serbia and the UK** – across the three themes, the report identifies **trends in the way public authorities and civil society organisations offer and support citizenship education.**

This year's edition finds that almost half of EU citizens lack basic digital skills. It is hardest for the most disadvantaged people to develop digital skills because of regional inequalities in digital infrastructure. Moreover, teachers lack

support for including information and communications technology (ICT) in classrooms, resulting in formal education that are therefore filled by CSOs-led informal and non-formal education. However, CSOs are hamstrung because they cannot cooperate with public authorities on influencing the digitalisation agenda or developing the curricula for citizenship education. As a result, citizenship education is outdated and insufficiently integrated into the national system, adding a burden on overwhelmed teachers who must incorporate the issue in school.

The migration crisis increased the number of people with migrant backgrounds in Europe, requiring a renewed interest in intercultural dialogue. Yet, populist waves poison any integration debate. The academic achievement of pupils from migrant backgrounds lags behind that of native pupils, showing that good quality reforms are poorly implemented. More action must be taken, requiring help from all education stakeholders. CSOs must be included in policy development, given their vast expertise in these activities. Their operational capacity must be improved, and they must be made vital partners to public authorities in developing skills that European citizens need to participate in the present-day society.

This report produces the evidence base for SOLIDAR Foundation and its members' advocacy strategy.

# FOREWORD

The concept of Lifelong Learning has developed together with the European Social Model. The dynamism that European integration has brought to the participating nations required additional investment in education and training, but also new forms. Human capital has been recognised as the main source of economic growth, and Lifelong Learning became the centre piece of the Lisbon Strategy, and remained firmly in the focus under its successor, the Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth.

However, the importance of learning cannot be meaningfully emphasised without also explaining how and what exactly. In the digital age, the content of Lifelong Learning has to focus increasingly on digital skills. Catching up with new developments in theory and practice cannot just depend on schools. Public media, civil society organisations can play a major role in Lifelong Learning, and these capacities and activities have to receive financial and moral support.

With the diminishing importance of concepts like « schooling age », and the rise of new types of education and training provision, the tendency of Taylorisation in the school system has been reversed. In a way, this is a post-modern era, when education should not be conceived as a machinery, but rather as an organism. Every new development in life brings with itself new learning requirements, while many new opportunities are also created.

Globalisation has brought with itself better knowledge of and more experience with distant countries and nations. Travel has not just been a matter of trade and leisure, but also learning. In fact, the most important EU program in the field of education, ERASMUS, is based on the learning opportunities of students in other countries. However, both globalisation and EU integration also created major imbalances and inequalities. This study



demonstrates for example the lack of basic digital skills among almost half of EU citizens, as well as regional inequalities regarding digital infrastructure. Neither the EU nor its member states have been successful in providing equal opportunities, which is a deficit calling for urgent action.

The COVID-19 crisis has proved the Lifelong Learning concept right more than any shock or structural change before. Schools have to learn to function in a completely new way, almost overnight. But practically everybody on Earth whose work is affected by the coronavirus pandemic has to learn very quickly how to adapt and remain productive. This is a challenge not only to economic performance but also social cohesion and democratic politics.

In the past decade, European nations have faced a succession of major crisis from finance to terrorism. Most of them challenged our common values one way or another, while EU citizens remained committed to human dignity, pluralistic democracy and intercultural dialogue. The Citizenship and Lifelong Learning Monitor 2019, produced in collaboration between FEPS and SOLIDAR Foundation, provides very important insight for all those who want to protect these values and ensure they remain the guiding principles of our civilisation.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OBJECTIVES

The Monitor is a SOLIDAR Foundation study on European countries, taking stock of citizenship education and lifelong learning developments, to support its member organisations' work. Building on previous editions, the study has a fourfold objective:

- ♦ Collect data on European developments in citizenship education and work by CSOs;
- ♦ Raise awareness on requirements for implementing citizenship education and on CSOs' needs, including funding;
- ♦ Collate and disseminate best practices to facilitate the cooperation and exchange of ideas that promote civic competences across Europe;
- ♦ Support the SOLIDAR Foundation and its members' evidence-based advocacy strategy for persuading EU decision-makers to act consistently with social investment through citizenship education and lifelong learning.

**The countries analysed in this report are: Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain, Serbia and the UK. The analysis is based on the following overarching topics: digital citizenship, citizenship education and intercultural dialogue. The thematic choice shall be explained in the following sections.**

## 1.2 CONTEXT

Researching citizenship is crucial as support for populist movements and parties increases, as citizens face increased pressures and responsibilities from digitalisation, and as changing demographics imply a need for intercultural, peaceful coexistence. The spread of populism, especially from the far-right, fuels racism, xenophobia, discrimination and a negative attitude towards cooperation and solidarity. In 2018, populist movements made gains in parliamentary elections in Italy, Hungary, Slovenia, Sweden, Latvia and Luxembourg<sup>1</sup>. The xenophobic discourse perpetuated by such parties contradicts the EU common values and risks alienating EU citizens, creating *us-vs-them* divisions that fuel social inequality and exclude people from rightfully participating in society. The dangers are worsening since, as of the end of 2018, **over 30% of European citizens** were likely to vote for a populist party; in 2019, this support **exceeded 40% in Hungary, Poland, Italy, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and France**<sup>2</sup>. As the number of pu-



OVER  
**30 %**  
SUPPORT FOR  
POPULIST  
PARTIES

<sup>1</sup> Boros, Tamas; Freitas, Maria; Laki, Gergely; Stetter, Ernst (2018). State of Populism in Europe. Brussels: Foundation for European Progressive Studies and Policy Solutions. Available at: [https://www.feps-europe.eu/attachments/publications/web\\_state%20of%20populism%20in%20europe%202018.pdf](https://www.feps-europe.eu/attachments/publications/web_state%20of%20populism%20in%20europe%202018.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Foundation for European Progressive Studies (2020). The Populism Graph. The Progressive Post [online]. Available at: <https://progressivepost.eu/spotlights/populism-tracker/the-populism-graph>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

pils from migrant backgrounds increases<sup>3</sup>, these parties create divisions between them and the native population. The terrorist attacks that shook Europe in the early 2010s fuelled tension among citizens and weakened the understanding of civic values. Fear and ignorance allow populist movements to grow, dividing people. Media and digital literacy become necessary in this context, as the blurred lines between real and virtual impact on citizens' daily lives. The societal changes brought by digital changes require citizens to be aware of their new responsibilities and to develop new skills to integrate in society. However, fear and ignorance are experienced in this context as well, as 65% of European citizens thought in 2018 that the internet was not safe for users<sup>4</sup> and as European countries confront with many citizens lacking basic digital skills<sup>5</sup>.

With the challenges ahead, the Monitor maintains its thematic structure, built on the backbone of the [2015 Paris Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education](#). The declaration was signed by the European education ministers in response to terrorist attacks in France and Denmark and to ensure that the European values – respect for human dignity, freedom (including freedom of expression), democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights – are respected. Three of the Declaration's thematic areas represent the **overarching topics approached in this study: 1) Ensuring that people acquire civic and intercultural competences; 2) Enhancing critical thinking and media literacy, particularly regarding internet and social media use; 3) Promoting intercultural dialogue**<sup>6</sup>.

**65 %**  
THINK INTERNET  
IS NOT SAFE



For the first area, 78% of surveyed respondents in last year's edition reported dissatisfaction with citizenship education curricula<sup>7</sup>. This year's report delves into how citizenship education is approached in Europe, how teachers are prepared and supported in their approach to the topic and into a normative study of how SOLIDAR Foundation members envisioned citizenship education. In relation to the second area, the focus is on digital citizenship which is to be explained later. It was selected because of the need for citizens to adapt to digital transformations in order to participate in society<sup>8</sup>. The virtual space mediated by social and political contexts creates a sense of belonging to a wider community, providing knowledge, attitudes, values and opportunities for civic participation. People

3 European Commission (2019). Education and Training Monitor 2019. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/volume-1-2019-education-and-training-monitor.pdf>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

4 European Commission (2018). Flash Eurobarometer on illegal content [online]. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/flash-eurobarometer-illegal-content>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

5 Eurostat (2020). Individuals' level of digital skills. Available at: [https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=isoc\\_sk\\_dskl\\_i&lang=en](https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=isoc_sk_dskl_i&lang=en). Last accessed: 7 February 2020.

6 EU Education Ministers (2015). Paris Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

7 Gharsalli, Sara and Susova, Lucie (2019). Citizenship and Lifelong Learning Monitor 2018. P.5. Available at: [https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/000/944/original/Citizenship\\_and\\_Lifelong\\_Learning\\_Monitor\\_2018.pdf?1564562802](https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/000/944/original/Citizenship_and_Lifelong_Learning_Monitor_2018.pdf?1564562802). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

8 European Commission (2018). Communication on the Digital Education Action Plan. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0022&from=EN>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

must be empowered to avoid online dangers and to develop and maintain meaningful relationships, interact respectfully with others and appreciate their self-worth<sup>9</sup>. The Monitor accounts for national definitions of digital citizenship, national digital strategies and policies, their implementation, and CSOs' efforts to combat cyberbullying, online illegal content, radicalisation, hate speech, fake news, and to help people develop digital competencies linked to media literacy, privacy and security, and ethics and empathy online<sup>10</sup>. Concerning the last area, promoting intercultural dialogue requires an early start in a climate that nurtures the wellbeing of learners, protecting them from cultural and identity-based discrimination. This can be achieved through a whole-school approach focused on learners' needs and involving all actors to create an inclusive environment. The Monitor looks at CSOs' collaboration with educational staff, parents, public authorities and others to promote the whole-school approach.

### 1.3 METHODOLOGY

The research was compiled using mixed methods, including a survey of SOLIDAR Foundation member organisations, semi-structured interviews with members following the survey, and desk research. The survey asked SOLIDAR Foundation members about public and private initiatives related to digital citizenship, citizenship education and intercultural dialogue, while accounting for their work in these areas and their financial capacity to perform their role. The interviews provided a chance to clarify their work and collect examples of best practices. The desk research used primary sources such as national strategies for digitalisation and citizenship education, national education curricula and national and Europe-wide policy initiatives, as well as secondary sources such as the European Commission's Education and Training Monitor, its

European Semester Country Reports and its Eurydice studies. The purpose was to create national case studies — chosen with a balanced geographic spread — and ensure that those case studies are comparable. It is also to analyse legal and policy infrastructures around the thematic areas, and to ensure that SOLIDAR Foundation selects member organisations that have not previously engaged with the Monitor, so that we expand the Monitor's database on best practices for citizenship and lifelong learning.

9 Frau-Meigs, Divina; O'Neill, Brian; Soriani, Alessandro and Tome, Vitor (2017). *Digital Citizenship Education: Overview and new perspectives*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-187117-gbr-2511-digital-citizenship-literature-review-8432-web-1/168077bc6a>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

10 Frau-Meigs, Divina et al. Digital Citizenship Education.

## 2. DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

### MAIN FINDINGS ACROSS EUROPE

Fewer than 40% of European teachers receive 'ICT in the classroom' training in initial teacher education (ITE) or continuing professional development services (CPD).

CSOs are excluded from the development of digital education.

Only 57% of EU citizens have basic digital skills.

Stark regional discrepancies in digital skills attainment and digital infrastructure persist.

The development of digital strategies is widespread, but implementation is uneven.

There is a focus on eGovernance rather than a reflection on the responsible use of digital tools for active participation in society.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide sufficient and adequate teacher training on the use of ICT in the classroom.

Set more partnerships between CSOs, the private sector and public authorities in the provision of digital competence training.

CSOs should engage more with the issue of digital citizenship, and focus more on providing soft digitalisation skills.

Target investment for digital infrastructure and digital skills acquisition in socio-economically disadvantaged regions to close inequality gaps.

Improve monitoring of the way digital competence frameworks are implemented in schools and ensure that quality assessment is performed and digital education is updated.

Expand the definition of digital citizenship in national digital strategies to include skills needed for active participation in society.

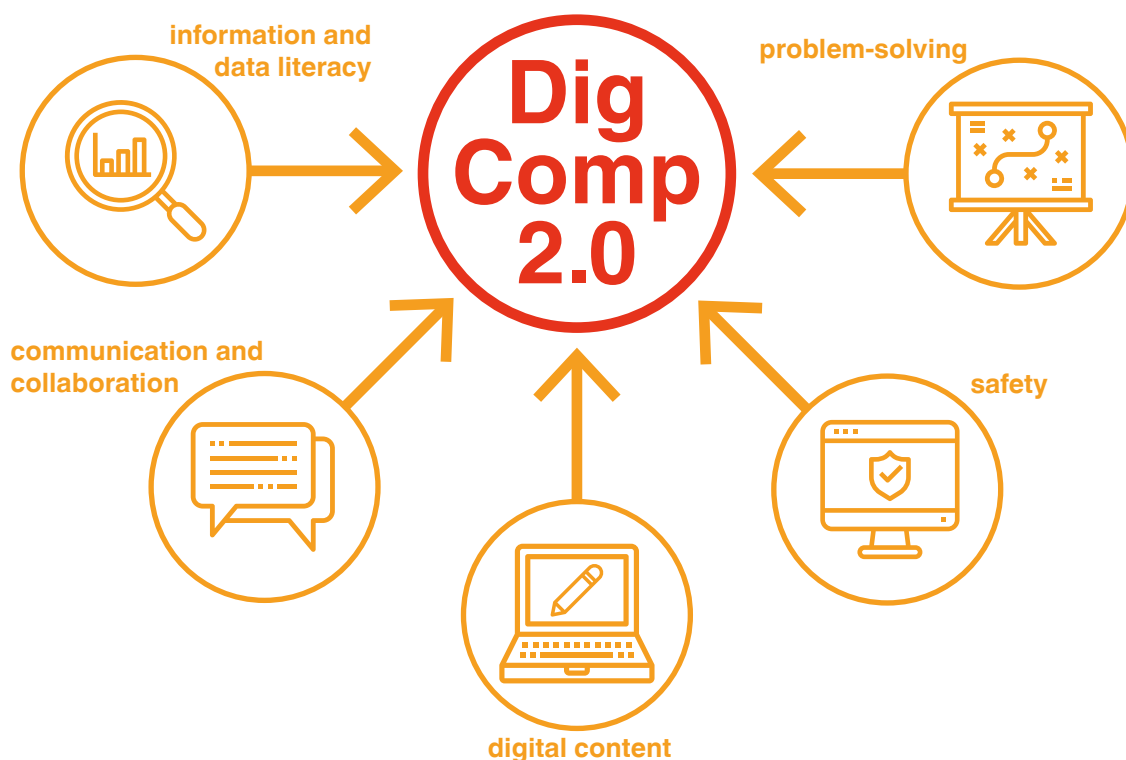
## 2.1 CONCEPTS

This study has been relying on the definition for ‘digital citizenship’ developed by the Council of Europe, focusing on the ability of citizens to:

- ♦ Engage with digital technologies (creating, working, sharing, socialising, investigating, playing, communicating and learning).
- ♦ Participate actively and responsibly (values, attitudes, skills, knowledge) in communities (local, national, global) at all levels (political, economic, social, cultural and intercultural).
- ♦ Be involved in lifelong learning (in formal, informal and non-formal settings).<sup>11</sup>

An essential element of this definition is the development of critical thinking and competences that boost people’s confidence in using digital technologies responsibly, while strengthening their participation in society.

The definition expands the responsibilities associated with active citizens to the digital realm. The Council of Europe developed a [Digital Competence Framework for Citizens \(DigComp 2.0\)](#), updated in 2016, with five competency areas: **information and data literacy; communication and collaboration; digital content creation; safety; and problem-solving**. These cover the competencies that citizens need in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to actively participate in society through digital technologies. SOLIDAR Foundation used this Council of Europe framework to assess our members’ work and curricula in the countries we studied. The purpose was to assess whether citizens receive sufficient support to develop skills to participate online.



<sup>11</sup> Frau-Meigs, Divina et al. Digital Citizenship Education.

## 2.2 THE SITUATION IN EUROPE

The issue of digitalisation has moved up the European Commission's agenda in recent years. The [Digital Single Market Strategy](#) set out a vision for European citizens to engage with digital technologies and acquire the right skills. In the [2018 Digital Education Action Plan](#), the Commission established three priorities for member states:

- ♦ Make better use of digital technology for teaching and learning.
- ♦ Develop digital competences and skills.
- ♦ Improve education through better data analysis and foresight.

The European Commission announced in January 2020 that it aims to update the Digital Education Action Plan, since 10% of young Europeans lack basic digital skills and there is a wide discrepancy between regions in digitalisation and digital skills acquisition<sup>12</sup>. Education and lifelong learning strategies failed to meet public demands. People are under-prepared as the labour market experiences shortages of people qualified on ICT usage. In 2017, the average attainment of basic digital skills for people in the EU aged 15-74 was just 57%<sup>13</sup>. The situation is dire in Croatia and Italy, where less than half the people hold basic digital skills<sup>14</sup>. This points to inadequacies in the support for people in Europe, a systemic problem of archaic digital resources and infrastructure in formal education, of regional inequalities in terms of skills attainment and the inability of teachers to keep up with technological developments.

**57%**  
ATTAINMENT OF  
BASIC DIGITAL  
SKILLS



Most European countries face teacher shortages and an ageing teacher workforce. The fact that 18% of lower secondary school teachers in Europe feel that their profession is valued<sup>15</sup> shows that the expectations placed on teachers are unfair. Part of the problem is that teachers do not receive sufficient training to meet students' needs. Among those secondary school teachers,

**16% said they needed to be trained in ICT use for the classroom.** Yet in many European countries, **fewer than 40% of teachers received 'ICT in the classroom' training in initial teacher education (ITE)** or report feeling confident in using ICT in the classroom<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> European Commission (2020). Communication on a Strong Social Europe for Just Transitions. Pp. 3-4. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs\\_20\\_49](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_20_49). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Eurostat. Individuals' level of digital skills.

<sup>14</sup> European Commission (2019). Country Report Croatia 2019 and Country Report Italy 2019. 2019 European Semester: Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2019-european-semester-country-reports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2019-european-semester-country-reports_en). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

<sup>15</sup> European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2019. P.9.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Pp. 32; Data from National case studies of Education and Training Monitor 2019.

The barrier to digital infrastructure and regional inequalities in access to digital resources adds to these feelings of inadequacy. This damages social cohesion while alienating citizens from disadvantaged backgrounds, widening the gaps in inequality. This gap exists between the north and south of Italy. By 2020, the south of Italy will have a 36% coverage of fast broadband connection, which is 20 percentage points lower than the rest of Italy<sup>17</sup>. Germany reports similar regional gaps, but between rural and urban areas<sup>18</sup>. The Spanish decentralised education system led to similar problems, with only 37% of rural households covered by fast broadband connection, and 30% of low-income households reporting never accessing the internet, compared to 2% of high-income households<sup>19</sup>.

## FAST BROADBAND COVERAGE



**Without resources to understand how to engage with digital technologies, and without a lifelong learning approach, people cannot be active members of the society.**

## ACCESSING THE INTERNET

**Digital resources must be recognised as public goods, as is done in Denmark and the UK<sup>20</sup>.**



<sup>17</sup> European Commission (2019). Country Report Italy 2019. P.57.

<sup>18</sup> European Commission (2019). Country Report Germany 2019. Accompanying the document: 2019 European Semester: Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011. P.55. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file\\_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-germany\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-germany_en.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

<sup>19</sup> European Commission. Country Report Spain 2019. Accompanying the document: 2019 European Semester: Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011. P.53. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file\\_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-spain\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-spain_en.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Ofcom (2018). Statement: Delivering the Broadband Universal Service. Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-1/delivering-broadband-universal-service>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020; The Agency for Digitisation of the Government of Denmark (2016). A Stronger and More Secure Digital Denmark: Digital Strategy 2016-2020. Available at: [https://digst.dk/media/16165/ds\\_singlepage\\_uk\\_web.pdf](https://digst.dk/media/16165/ds_singlepage_uk_web.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

Though all European countries address digital education, either with a specific or broader strategy, the way it is done is essential. Out of the countries studied, the term digital citizenship is only addressed in Italy, but remains limited to eGovernment<sup>21</sup>. Though not mentioned, the term seems to be embodied in Danish digital education strategies, as its [Digital Strategy 2016-2020](#) discusses digital culture<sup>22</sup> in a way that captures elements from the Council of Europe's definition of digital citizenship. However, Denmark's strategy is limited to children understanding how to cope socially and ethically in a digital world, neglecting a large part of the Danish population<sup>23</sup>. The fact that the impact of digitalisation on a person's active participation in society is not considered in the national digital strategies studied appears to be problematic. It narrows recommendations to hard skills, disregarding a wider range of competences. Considering DigComp 2.0, and its inclusion in national curricula, the European countries successfully included digital competences in national documents. Eleven countries use national definitions of digital competences, including Germany and Croatia from the countries studied in this report, while eight others, including Serbia and Austria from the countries studied in this report, use DigComp 2.0 together with their national definition<sup>24</sup>. On a policy level, the studied countries excel at digital competences included in the curriculum, with Austria exhibiting a robust approach that refers to the usage of digital tools and the internet, the knowledge of device components, digital communication and content creation, problem-solving and identifying digital gaps, and, most importantly, active citizenship through digitalisation<sup>25</sup>. The issues of computational thinking, the management of digital identities and the protection of data

are emerging in curricula in Denmark, Germany, Italy and the UK<sup>26</sup>, while Germany focuses on identifying digital gaps<sup>27</sup>. Attention paid to health and safety online is given in the Croatian, German, Danish and English curricula<sup>28</sup>. The concerns raised, however, are linked to the actual implementation of DigComp 2.0 competences in schools. In Spain, Germany and the UK, the implementation of the national framework of competences is subject to changes brought at the local administrative level, given the devolved responsibilities, creating regional inequalities. In Croatia and Serbia, the implementation of curricular reforms introducing digital competences in schools is not monitored, with SOLIDAR Foundation members reporting that changes have been imported from European frameworks without refining for the local context. **Targeted investment, proper monitoring of reform implementation and a structural reform that prevents inconsistent implementation based on regions can make the comprehensive policy initiatives a reality and facilitate citizens' participation online.**

21 Digital Transformation Team (2018). Project IO – Digital citizenship. The Italian Government. Available at: <https://teamdigitale.governo.it/en/projects/digital-citizenship.htm>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

22 The Agency for Digitisation of the Government of Denmark (2016). A Stronger and More Secure Digital Denmark: Digital Strategy 2016-2020. Available at: [https://digst.dk/media/16165/ds\\_singlepage\\_uk\\_web.pdf](https://digst.dk/media/16165/ds_singlepage_uk_web.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

23 The Agency for Digitisation of the Government of Denmark. A Stronger and More Secure Digital Denmark: Digital Strategy 2016-2020.

24 European Commission (2019). Digital Education at School in Europe. Eurydice report. Pp. 9-10. Available at: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/en\\_digital\\_education\\_n.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/en_digital_education_n.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

25 European Commission (2019). Digital Education at School in Europe. Eurydice Report. Pp.65-68.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

## 2.3 DIGITALISATION FOR SOLIDAR FOUNDATION MEMBERS

Recognising the above challenges and national level shortcomings, CSOs, including SOLIDAR Foundation members, compensate by providing formal, informal and non-formal training. However, for digital skills acquisition there is still much more that can be done on the civil society side. We analysed how SOLIDAR Foundation members engage with the DigComp 2.0's five competence areas. In terms of competences related to information and data literacy, few SOLIDAR Foundation members engage with evaluating and managing digital data and content, focusing on hard skills such as knowledge on accessing data online.

### MEMBERS PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

**37,5%**  
Browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content

**37,5%**  
None

**25%**  
Managing data, information and digital content

**25%**  
Evaluating data, information and digital content



Considering competences connected to collaboration and communication, and digital content, they focus on developing competences linked to immediate benefits of technological advancements, such as interacting through digital technologies, developing digital content, and collaborating through digital technologies. However, there is a neglect of the management of digital identities for copyright and licenses, programming, and engaging in citizenship through digital technologies.

### MEMBERS PROMOTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ON DIGITAL CONTENT

**50%**  
Developing digital content

**37,5%**  
Integrating and re-elaborating digital content

**12,5%**  
Copyright and licenses

**12,5%**  
Programming



Citizens are aided by CSOs to integrate digital technologies into their lives, but without receiving support on the implications of this work, on strategies for consuming online information, on the development of digital identities or on the responsibilities of citizens. Regarding problem solving competences, members are more diverse in terms of approached topics, though many of them focus on creatively using digital technologies.

### MEMBERS PROMOTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ON COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

**75%**  
Interacting through digital technologies

**50%**  
Collaborating through digital technologies

**37,5%**  
Sharing through digital technologies

**37,5%**  
Netiquette

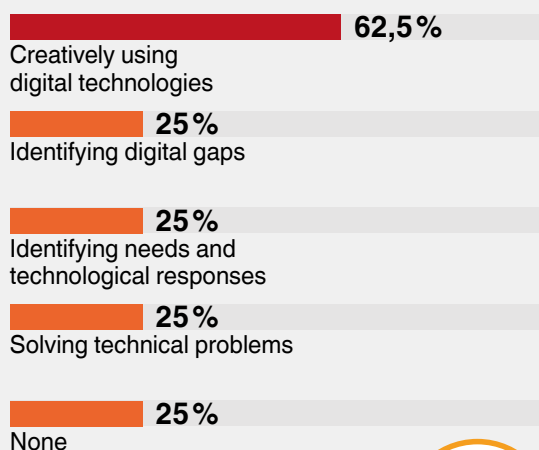
**25%**  
Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies

**12,5%**  
None

**0%**  
Managing digital identity

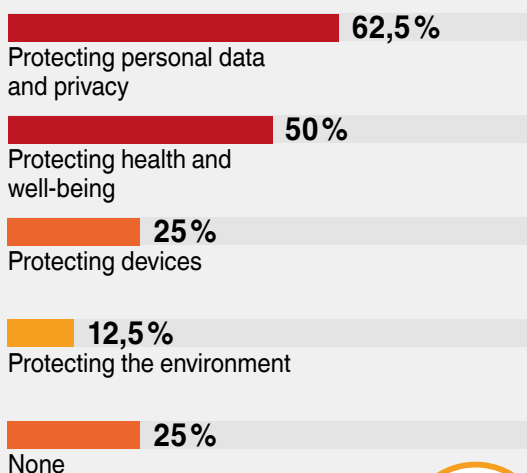


### MEMBERS PROMOTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ON PROBLEM-SOLVING



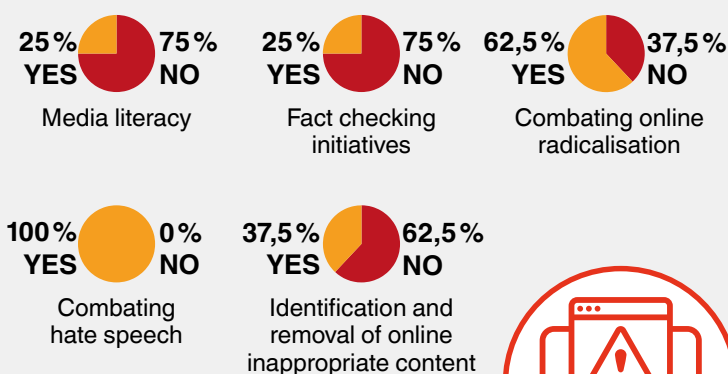
Lastly, for safety, SOLIDAR Foundation members are involved in protecting personal data and privacy as well as the environment and health. This latter batch of competences reveals that **SOLIDAR Foundation members are aware of technological developments' impacts, and offer citizens tools to alleviate risks.**

### MEMBERS PROMOTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ON SAFETY



SOLIDAR Foundation members provide due attention to empathy and ethics in the digital space, as most work on combatting hate speech online, and a large number fight online radicalisation. However, few members support media literacy or fact-checking initiatives, missing an opportunity to develop the critical thinking competences that would facilitate how citizens use and consume online data and information.

### MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES ON ONLINE DANGERS



## BEST PRACTICES COMBATTING CYBERBULLYING

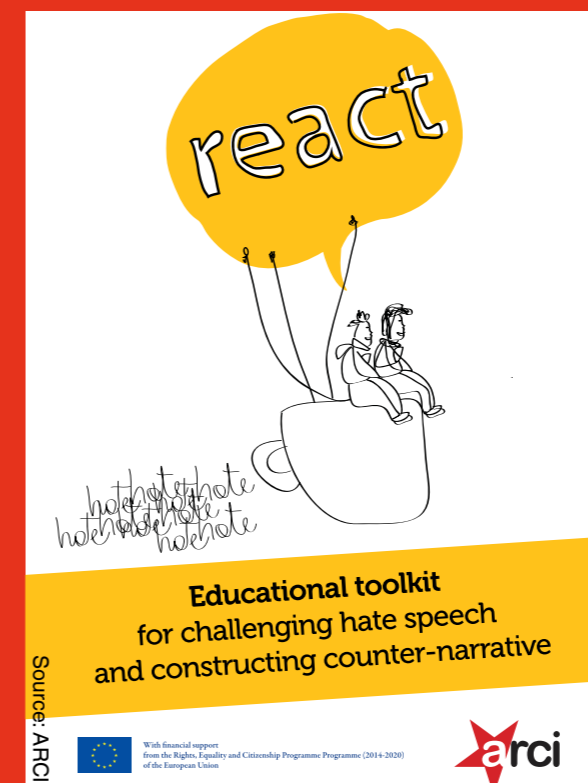
SOLIDAR Foundation members take a strong stance against cyberbullying, recognising its insidious nature and facile manner of proliferation. Members from Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Serbia, Italy, France, Hungary and Spain organised various EU-funded projects related to combatting cyberbullying.

A SOLIDAR Foundation member from Denmark, [Forum for International Cooperation \(FIC\)](#) launched the project [#Youthagainstcyberbullying](#) in partnership with SOLIDAR Foundation and its members from Serbia, [Initiative for Development and Cooperation \(IDC\)](#), Italy, [ARCI](#), Hungary, PGA Foundation, and France, [CEMEA](#). The two-year project aims to create an online platform, an app and an e-brochure to raise awareness of the dangers of cyberbullying and the help available. Young people will be trained to combat cyberbullying, and they will multiply their training in project partner countries, ensuring that new generations take responsibility against cyberbullying.

SOLIDAR Foundation member, ARCI has designed a similar programme to spread information about the consequences of cyberbullying and train children to protect themselves, within two EU-funded projects, [REACT](#) and PRISM. The focus is on cyberbullying and hate speech aimed at people with migrant backgrounds, and the aim is to transfer the training methods devised to formal education. SOLIDAR Foundation member [La Liga Española de la Educación y la Cultura Popular](#), in Spain, instead designed a campaign to raise awareness on the topic, reaching 630,000 people. Finally, Croatian SOLIDAR Foundation member, [Centre for Peace Studies \(CPS\)](#), established a website for people to report hate crimes online.

These initiatives show civil society's efforts to make people more responsible online and promote the democratic values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. The CSOs become a valuable actor that can help the public authorities educate people about the online environment. More information on this can be found in the national case studies.

REACT



**One potential reason for the limitations in SOLIDAR Foundation members' work is the lack of cooperation from public authorities. Members report being excluded by public authorities even in consultations on the development of digital strategies.** In Croatia and Serbia, the reported hostility from public authorities towards CSOs limits civil society's ability to influence the agenda or access resources and support for running activities in digital competences. It is encouraging to see, however, that in some countries there is cooperation, albeit on hard-skills acquisition, such as coding. The Austrian and British governments have openly collaborated with CSOs on this. Still, there is no organised debate on the vision of digital citizenship, and, therefore, no space for CSOs to underline their expectations for digital citizenship.

As seen in the Monitor's latest edition, SOLIDAR Foundation members have few partnerships with private businesses on media literacy projects. Moreover, they lack partnerships on digital competence promotion in general. The private sector invests heavily in developing digital competences to satisfy labour market demands. **The case studies contain examples of tech giants engaging and having a disproportionate influence on European digital agendas. More partnerships are needed between all education stakeholders to ensure people receive a well-rounded support to become part of the digital society.**



Source: BFI OOE

## BEST PRACTICES PROMOTING DIGITAL SKILLS

SOLIDAR Foundation members and civil society are a reservoir of expertise on digital skills acquisition. They provide training that is not offered by public authorities, or that people cannot realistically access. The alternative of CSOs-provided training is appealing, as there is more flexibility to adapt to societal needs than a reform of the formal education system would allow. Austrian SOLIDAR Foundation member [BFI OOE](#) runs the [coders.bay](#) project, through which it offers an intense coding course with the aim of providing more workers who are qualified for the IT sector.

Beyond labour market-oriented projects, SOLIDAR Foundation members ensure that people have the tools to be safe online and act as responsible digital citizens. SOLIDAR Foundation member [La Liga](#) developed the [Sonar que Somos Mundo](#) online courses, which help teachers raise awareness about global citizenship and train them to promote global citizenship online. SOLIDAR Foundation member [IDC](#) is helping internally displaced people develop skills

for societal reintegration. This includes the development of digital skills, so they can start their own businesses in a digital landscape. NGO [Age UK](#) provides digital skills development classes to elderly people, ensuring that age does not impact opportunities of societal participation, while Italian NGO [Zanshin tech](#) includes people of all ages in digital martial arts classes, teaching skills to manage their own digital identities and data, as well as others' data. German SOLIDAR Foundation member [Internationaler Bund](#) engaged in the EU-funded project [SMART: Social Media Responsibility Training](#). The guidelines that emerged from the project are aimed at helping young people understand what data they share through social media, how to protect themselves, and how to responsibly connect with peers online.

CSOs have taken up the responsibility of helping people becoming more digital. More information on this can be found in the national case studies.



# 3. CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

## MAIN FINDINGS ACROSS EUROPE

The majority of educational systems prefer to use knowledge-transmission rather than competence-building systems for citizenship education.

Citizenship education is yet to be a mandatory, stand-alone topic in many European countries.

Religion is still offered as an alternative to citizenship education across Europe.

Only two of the studied countries provide citizenship education as a specialisation for teachers in ITE.

CSOs are excluded from curricular reforms related to citizenship education.

The discussion over citizenship education is outdated in many European countries.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Opt for a citizenship- rather than civics-focused system.

Provide citizenship education as a stand-alone topic, with a clear competence framework and due time spent on it in class.

Provide secular, non-nationalistic and global citizenship education classes.

Train teachers on the topic.

Give CSOs space to engage in the development of the citizenship curriculum and the decision-making related to citizenship education.

Renew the citizenship education curricula according to current societal requirements.

### 3.1 CONCEPTS

The concept of citizenship used in this study relies on the definition set out in the [2018 Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning](#): The ability of people to act as responsible citizens by fully participating in civic and social life based on informed views about social, economic and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability. Critical thinking, critical use of media, support for cultural and social diversity, promotion of peace and non-violence and knowledge of contemporary events and world history are essential for citizenship competences<sup>29</sup>.

As revealed in the Monitor's previous edition, most European countries have a component connected to citizenship education in the curriculum<sup>30</sup>. This year's edition checks how citizenship education is provided in formal education and consolidates SOLIDAR Foundation members' normative view for citizenship education. For this, the report operates with the concepts of civics and citizenship education. Civics education involves transmitting knowledge related to a country's history and geography its system of government and constitution. Citizenship education involves teaching skills to investigate and interpret, helping students participate in society<sup>31</sup>. With this distinction, we can separate an education model for passive knowledge transmission from one that develops competences for societal participation. The civics education model is more widespread, with SOLIDAR Foundation members from seven of the eight studied countries reporting this type of education.

### 3.2 THE SITUATION IN EUROPE

Citizenship and EU common values have been scaled up to ensure social cohesion, with no European citizen left behind. Europe is plagued by xenophobia, violent radicalisation and discrimination, causing many people to lose their rights to participate in society. To highlight the common European identity and bring ownership to European citizens over societal developments, the [2018 Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching](#) and the [2017 European Commission Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture](#) were developed. The European Commission reiterated its focus on citizenship in its Education and Training Monitor 2018, highlighting research revealing that open-minded social attitudes, trust in democratic institutions and the acceptance of equal rights for all can be instilled in people through citizenship education. **Citizenship education must be a lifelong process, since it helps people take responsibility for themselves and their peers in an active, responsible, and informed way at international, European and national levels**<sup>32</sup>.

Pursuing the same line of inquiry as last year's edition, the following graph reveals how civics or citizenship education are included in curricula. With more education reforms coming in 2020 – see case studies of Croatia, Italy and Denmark – the subject is becoming more and more mainstream. Yet it is insufficient, given the narrow scope of the civics education model, and given that it still is not a stand-alone subject in all countries. In two of the eight studied countries – Spain and Serbia – it is provided

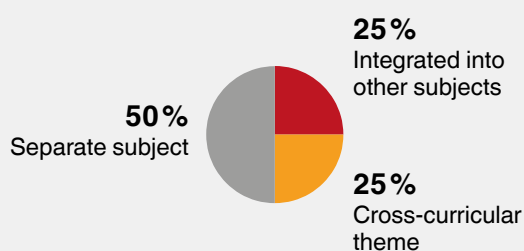
29 European Council (2018). Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604(01)&from=EN). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

30 Gharsalli and Susova. Citizenship and Lifelong Learning Monitor 2018.

31 Kerr, David (1999). Citizenship education in the curriculum: An international review. School Field, Vol.10, Issue 3/4, Pp.5-32. Available at: [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Curriculum/SEEPDFs/kerr.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Curriculum/SEEPDFs/kerr.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

32 European Commission (2018). Education and Training Monitor 2018. Pp. 9-11. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/volume-1-2018-education-and-training-monitor-country-analysis.pdf>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

#### CURRICULUM APPROACHES TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN STUDIED COUNTRIES



as an alternative to religion classes<sup>33</sup>, while in Croatia, SOLIDAR Foundation members report that the religious community strongly influences curricular changes. Only two of the eight countries – Austria and the UK – of-

fer citizenship education as a specialisation for teachers, though in Austria teachers must specialise in other topics as well<sup>34</sup>. Five of the eight countries – Germany, Italy, Denmark, the UK (England) and Spain – **struggle with teacher shortages and an ageing teacher workforce, and exhibit a low percentage of teachers who believe their profession is valued**<sup>35</sup>. In this circumstance, **the flexibility associated with citizenship education provision weighs on an overwhelmed teaching profession that lacks the conditions to implement it. Regional inequalities in the provision of citizenship education, the result of leaving the topic to the discretion of schools or to the decentralised, federal systems, are pointed out by SOLIDAR Foundation members in four of the eight studied countries.** The impact this has on social cohesion is crucial. **There must be more systematisation in the way citizen-**



Source: ALAMY

33 Eurydice (2020). Primary education – Spain [online]. Available at: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/primary-education-42\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/primary-education-42_en). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.; Eurydice (2020). Secondary and Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education – Spain [online]. Available at: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/secondary-and-post-secondary-non-tertiary-education-43\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/secondary-and-post-secondary-non-tertiary-education-43_en). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.; Eurydice (2019). Teaching and Learning in General Upper Secondary Education – Serbia [online]. Available at: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/teaching-and-learning-general-upper-secondary-education-51\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/teaching-and-learning-general-upper-secondary-education-51_en). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

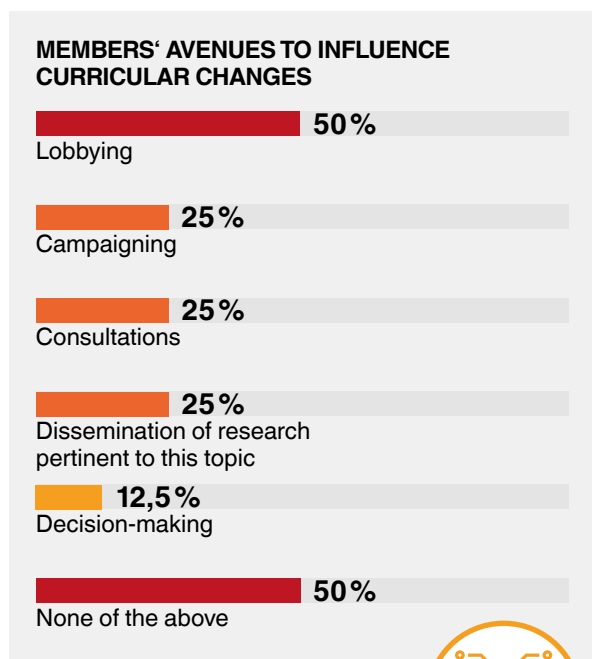
34 European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2018. P.21.

35 European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2019.

**ship education is provided.** However, it is encouraging to see that curricular reforms are being implemented in three of the eight studied countries – Croatia, Denmark and Italy. These are bound to increase the number of study hours for citizenship education, to make it a stand-alone topic and to reform teacher training.

### 3.3 SOLIDAR FOUNDATION MEMBERS' VISION OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The above issues are bound to be long-lasting, as the process of developing the citizenship education curriculum does not include all education stakeholders. SOLIDAR Foundation members report that CSOs are relegated to consultative roles, and often not even that. The graph below shows that CSOs have few tools at their disposal to intervene in shaping curricula.



**CSOs' exclusion from shaping the citizenship education agenda is detrimental in the development of a comprehensive approach to training people to be active members of society.** The civil society perspective is essential for ensuring a holistic look at people's needs and associated competences when developing citizenship education curricula and teacher training.

SOLIDAR Foundation members advocate for developing the topic as a separate subject in the curriculum, providing it with due attention and ensuring that it is not offered as an alternative to religion classes. Equating citizenship with a religious moral code risks narrowing the understanding of citizenship or excluding citizens affiliated with other religions. **SOLIDAR Foundation members expect a structured legal response to better regulate the way citizenship education is provided, without placing this burden on the shoulders of teachers.** However, it must be ensured that the scope of citizenship education is not narrowed when a structure is provided. Therefore, SOLIDAR Foundation members stress that **the topic must be approached in a secular, non-nationalistic and global manner, preventing the exclusion of people based on religious, ethnic or nationality biases and ensuring that it allows people to adapt to globalisation.** SOLIDAR Foundation members raise concerns about the outdated curriculum content in many European countries. A clear definition of the concept of 'citizen' must be offered when establishing curricular contents. However, critical thinking, interculturality, protection of human rights and a focus on issues such as sexual violence, cyberbullying, the LGBT+ community's rights and media and digital literacy are the SOLIDAR Foundation priorities for inclusion in curricula.

## BEST PRACTICES EXTRACURRICULAR PROVISION OF CIVIC COMPETENCES

CSOs and SOLIDAR Foundation members can be fantastic partners for schools in devising extracurricular activities and ensuring a lifelong and lifewide approach to learning is implemented to enrich citizens' development and strengthen communities. The limited reach of formal education can be complemented via informal and non-formal education.

SOLIDAR Foundation members, [CPS](#), collaborates with 12 municipalities to provide extracurricular activities in primary schools on civic education. The CSOs are developing manuals for citizenship education together with teachers, implementing activities on the topic with pupils, and disseminating the work of these teachers across Croatia. The lack of citizenship education in schools is, in this way, compensated, while more actors are involved ensuring that children receive a well-rounded education and that the entire community takes ownership over educating future citizens.

Further collaboration between schools and SOLIDAR Foundation members is realized also in Serbia, where [IDC](#) collaborated with Čačak municipality to set up a [School of Journalism for Children and Youth](#). The 7-month media literacy project allowed secondary school pupils to attend workshops on journalism, ICT, ecology, human rights, cooperation, and to develop an online and printed magazine accompanied by media content collected through interviews, opinion polls, reportage. The project aims to encourage youth activism, develop digital, collaborative, social, civic and communication skills. The fight against fake news and media literacy remain central for the development of socially participative and responsible citizens. More information can be found in the national case studies.



Source: IDC Serbia

## 4. INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

### MAIN FINDINGS ACROSS EUROPE

23.5% of EU school heads report shortages of teachers who can work in multicultural environments.

Only 31.7% of lower secondary teachers in Europe report having elements of teaching in multicultural and multilingual settings included in their initial teacher education.

Stark discrepancies in academic achievement between pupils with migrant backgrounds and native pupils (on average, migrant background pupils are two times likelier to underperform).

CSOs provide a significant amount of support services for newcomers, effectively ensuring any intercultural education gaps from formal education are covered.

High average rates of early leaving from education and training (10.6%) and people not in employment, education or training (16.5%) in the EU.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide better teacher training on work in multicultural and multilingual settings.

Target investment in additional support for schools to manage pupils from a migrant background and help close the academic performance gap.

Ensure mandatory cooperation between formal education providers and CSOs in providing activities and using a lifelong and life-wide learning approach to education.

## 4.1 CONCEPTS

In studying intercultural dialogue, this report treats the **whole-school approach as a proxy**. We use the European Commission's definition for the whole-school approach: **a learner-centred vision of education that implies that the entire school community (school leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and families) engages in a cohesive, collective and collaborative action, with strong cooperation with external stakeholders and the community at large**<sup>36</sup>. Due to the diverse student body in formal education, a holistic approach to students' needs allows them to develop in harmonious environments that encourage intercultural collaboration. If such an environment is not built, it risks alienating the most disadvantaged, widening inequality gaps, damaging social cohesion, and creating cultural and identity-based discrimination. Therefore, a whole-school approach represents a

structural condition for developing intercultural dialogue. As the whole-school approach caters to wider socio-emotional needs, it creates an environment in which each learner is prioritised and encouraged to participate in education and reap its benefits. Consequently, such a system helps create an inclusive educational system. Data related to early school leaving, adult education participation rates and young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) would indicate whether a successful whole-school approach is in place.

## 4.2 THE SITUATION IN EUROPE

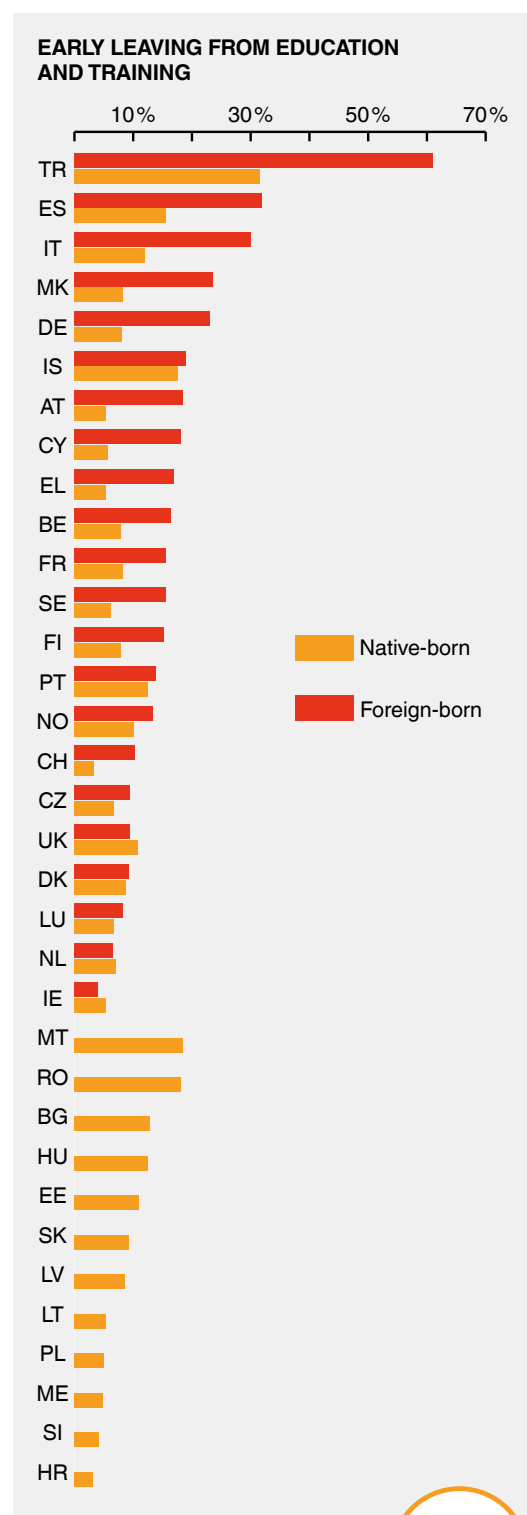
Citizenship education is interconnected with intercultural dialogue and the development of an educational environment that combats discrimination and racism and encourages all learners to be open-minded in collaboration with peers. The increased focus placed on intercultural dialogue, as can be seen through



<sup>36</sup> European Commission (2015). A whole school approach to tackling early school leaving: Policy messages. Education and Training 2020. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/early-leaving-policy\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/early-leaving-policy_en.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

the work of the ET2020 Working Group on Promoting Common Values and Inclusive Education, is a direct result of changes in school demographics as well as observed gaps in the educational attainment for pupils with a migrant background. The proportion of teachers working in schools where at least 10% of students are non-native speakers has increased in six countries since 2013. Over half of teachers in Austria and Sweden work in such schools. In 2018, 32% of teachers worked in schools where at least 1% of the student population was formed of refugees<sup>37</sup>. This reveals an **increased need to mediate interactions between native pupils and their peers from migrant background, fostering inter-cultural dialogue.**

This is difficult to achieve because not even native pupils are fully included. In 2018, the rate of early leaving from education and training (ELET) in the EU was 10.6%, missing the ET2020 target of below 10%<sup>38</sup>. It included only 11.1% of adults in education, well below the ET2020 target of 15%<sup>39</sup>, while it maintains a 16.5% NEETs rate<sup>40</sup>. The situation has been steadily improving, but with new challenges from the diversification of the student body, to teacher shortages, to digitalisation, all coinciding with reduced funding for education, a stronger effort will be required. The ageing teacher workforce will make this harder, as 32.8% of primary teachers and 39% of secondary education ones were above the age of 50 as of 2018<sup>41</sup>. **Without a robust teacher workforce, it becomes difficult to ensure a system that provides due attention to each pupil. It is not enough to have a teacher workforce, the workforce must be prepared to operate in the multicultural and multilingual settings of schools today.** 23.5% of school heads in the EU report shortages of teachers prepared to work in such environments<sup>42</sup>. This could be a symptom of the



<sup>37</sup> European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2019. Pp. 24-25.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Eurostat (2019). Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training).

Last accessed: 7 February 2020.

<sup>41</sup> European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2019. P.19.

<sup>42</sup> European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2019. P.23.

fact that only 31.7% of lower secondary teachers in Europe report having elements of teaching in multicultural and multilingual settings included in their ITE<sup>43</sup>. This topic is underrepresented in Continuous Professional Development (CPD), as only 19.7% of teachers report it being in CPD in their country while 13% of all teachers say they need more training on this<sup>44</sup>.

**30.2%**

**FOREIGN-BORN  
PUPILS LEFT  
SCHOOL  
EARLY**



**This impacts the academic attainment of pupils with migrant backgrounds, as inequalities between them and native pupils grow.** 20.2% of foreign-born pupils had left school early as of 2018, compared with 9.5% of native pupils<sup>45</sup>. Regarding the case studies, the graph captures the fact that Croatia is not tracking these numbers because its population remains relatively homogenous. However, the gap is significant in Spain, where the number of pupils with migrant backgrounds who leave is double the number of native pupils; in Austria and Italy the early leaving from education and training is three times more common among pupils with migrant backgrounds than native counterparts. The gap in Germany is more than double. However, the UK and Denmark have successfully closed the gap. In the 2015 Programme for International Student As-

essment (PISA) tests, migrant background pupils averaged a score of 447 in science, while the mean average of native pupils was 500. Even when accounting for the socio-economic status of native pupils, the pupils with migrant backgrounds were two times more likely to underperform<sup>46</sup>. Though Denmark has low levels of early leaving from education and training, pupils with migrant backgrounds are 3.5 times more likely to underperform<sup>47</sup>. There is a need to improve the support provided to migrant background pupils. The policy initiatives are encouraging, but clearly the results point towards a poor implementation of the tools at hand.

#### **4.3 SOLIDAR FOUNDATION MEMBERS' ENGAGEMENT IN INTERCULTURALITY**

To develop a holistic approach to learners' socio-emotional needs, the whole-school approach must increase synergies between all education stakeholders, beyond formal education. **Collaboration with CSOs, such as SOLIDAR Foundation members brings tremendous added value, as the non-formal and informal education they provide complements formal education and also ensures lifelong and life-wide learning approach to education, which benefits the communities where people live and operate.** The graph below shows the wide range of extracurricular activities in which SOLIDAR Foundation members are engaged, offering many ways to complement formal education and cater to learners' needs. SOLIDAR Foundation members report interacting with learners' parents/guardians, public authorities, teachers and school heads in a way that offers their support to learners. Such collaboration is encouraged, as seen in the Catalan case study where the legislation requires education institutions to collaborate with CSOs

43 European Commission. Education and Training Monitor 2019. P.28.

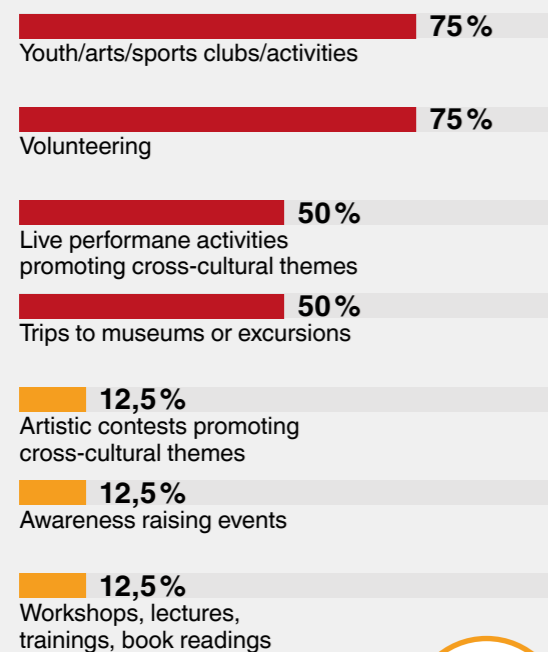
44 Ibid. P.32.

45 Ibid. P.53.

46 Ibid. P.61.

47 European Commission (2019). Country report Denmark 2019. Accompanying the document 2019 European Semester: Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011. P.30. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file\\_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-denmark\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/2019-european-semester-country-report-denmark_en.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

#### MEMBERS' EXTRA-CURRICULAR, CIVICALLY-ORIENTED ACTIONS



for provision of extracurricular activities<sup>48</sup>. In Austria, CSOs are part of the broad Dialogue of Cultures Task Force, which is responsible for the National Plan for Integration and the promotion of intercultural dialogue<sup>49</sup>. SOLIDAR Foundation members have run refugee and welcome centres, provided legal, administrative and technical assistance to newcomers, and raised awareness through campaigns on the difficulties for newcomers. These examples, described in the case studies, show that CSOs are needed to support public authorities, who lack civil society's flexibility to adapt to newcomers' needs.

48 European Commission (2019). Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into School in Europe. Eurydice Report. Pp.142-159. Available at: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/integrating\\_students\\_from\\_migrant\\_backgrounds\\_into\\_schools\\_in\\_europe\\_national\\_policies\\_and\\_measures.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/integrating_students_from_migrant_backgrounds_into_schools_in_europe_national_policies_and_measures.pdf). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.

49 Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria (2019). Task Force 'Dialogue of Cultures' [online]. Available at: <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/european-foreign-policy/international-cultural-policy/dialogue-of-cultures-and-religions/task-force-dialogue-of-cultures/>. Last accessed: 6 February 2020..



Source: IDC Serbia



Source: La Liga

## BEST PRACTICES FIGHTING AGAINST STEREOTYPES

SOLIDAR Foundation members and other CSOs across Europe have fought stereotypes to promote a diverse, tolerant and peaceful society. Members [CPS](#), [La Liga](#) and [La Ligue](#) have been engaged in the Erasmus+ funded project [Let's play the fraternity card](#), through which they encourage children to produce postcards and materials that would promote interculturalism and peaceful co-existence. These actions were complemented by critical thinking exercises run by teachers to debunk myths about other cultures.

SOLIDAR Foundation member [IDC](#) aimed to promote the same values and debunk the same myths among journalists instead of pupils, through the Balkan Media Caravan project. Young journalists from Serbia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina listened to stories from migrants and refugees over a six-day trip. They were trained on appropriate ways to report on issues involving migrants and refugees and developed their own media pieces, giving voice to migrants and refugees by allowing them to describe their lives, without interference from any bias.

SOLIDAR Foundation members [ARCI](#) and [La Liga](#) have fought similar stereotypes about people with migrant backgrounds. They targeted the European Parliament elections of 2019 with the [IntoEurope](#) campaign, which trained 200 diverse people to develop campaign material to counteract the populist rhetoric and emphasise the shared European history and identity, as well as the values of intercultural dialogue and peaceful co-existence.

The CSOs have been a strong voice in protecting the most disadvantaged, but their projects extended to protecting the native population by informing people, educating them, highlighting any fears caused by ignorance and teaching peaceful coexistence in dynamic and multicultural societies. Civil society's support for societal inclusion and the development of responsible citizens is crucial at a time when the populist rhetoric is becoming stronger and stronger. More information can be found in the national case studies.



## 5. FUNDING

The average public spending on education in 2017 was 4.6% of the GDP. Spending in the UK, Denmark and Croatia was roughly in line with the EU average, while in Germany, Spain and Italy it was below and in Austria slightly above<sup>50</sup>. These numbers are not encouraging, since education spending was considerably higher before the economic crisis. The fact that the numbers have not returned to pre-crisis levels is concerning, particularly when funding is insufficient to deal with all challenges, and at a time when the teaching profession needs to be renewed, when digitalisation needs more educational support, and when student population demographics are changing with migration.

Apart from Germany, where funding for CSOs on issues linked to citizenship and democracy has increased, all other studied countries experienced cuts in funding provided to CSOs, or changed the funding application procedures or criteria of selection in a way that limits the beneficiaries. The funding model remains unstable and short-term, based on donations or on tenders for service delivery. **The CSOs' serious reduction in operational capacity is problematic, considering the important role that they bear in providing informal and non-formal education on the societal challenges with much more flexibility than public authorities allow themselves.** Given their important role as partners to policymaking and implementation in citizenship education and digital citizenship, CSOs require more funding and flexibility in funds allocation.

<sup>50</sup> Eurostat (2019). Government expenditure on education. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Government\\_expenditure\\_on\\_education](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Government_expenditure_on_education). Last accessed: 6 February 2020.



## 6. OVERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

### DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

- ♦ Expand the definition of digital citizenship in national digital strategies to include skills needed for active participation in society.
- ♦ Better monitor the implementation of digital competence frameworks in schools, with quality assessments to ensure that digital education is kept up to date.
- ♦ Target investment in digital infrastructure and digital skills acquisition in socio-economically disadvantaged regions to close inequality gaps.
- ♦ Provide sufficient and adequate teacher training on the use of ICT in the classroom.
- ♦ Create more partnerships among CSOs, the private sector and public authorities in training for digital competences.
- ♦ CSOs should engage more with the issue of digital citizenship and focus more on providing soft skills associated with digitalisation.



### INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

- ♦ Ensure mandatory cooperation between formal education stakeholders and CSOs in providing activities and in using life-long and life-wide learning approach in education.
- ♦ Improve teacher training for multicultural and multilingual settings.
- ♦ Target investment in support for schools to manage pupils from migrant backgrounds and help close the academic performance gap.



### CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

- ♦ Ensure citizenship education is provided as a stand-alone topic, with a clear competence framework and with due time in the classroom.
- ♦ Train teachers to provide citizenship education.
- ♦ Update citizenship education curricula according to current societal requirements.
- ♦ Provide secular, non-nationalistic and global citizenship education classes.
- ♦ Opt for a citizenship education model as opposed to a civics education one.
- ♦ Provide ample space for CSOs to engage in the development of the citizenship curriculum and in the decision-making related to citizenship education.



### FUNDING

- ♦ Increase public spending on education.
- ♦ Increase funding for CSOs engaged in informal and non-formal education.
- ♦ Simplify the procedure for obtaining funding for CSOs and make the funding more sustainable and long-term.



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