

Policy Paper “Beyond Barriers: Strengthening Global Citizenship Education for Inclusive Societies”

Essentials

Over the past decade, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) has become a central framework for promoting democratic participation, inclusion, and social justice. While in formal schooling GCE has progressively become part of the curriculum, in non-formal and informal education civil society organisations (CSOs) have played a key role in advancing GCE, particularly by reaching systematically marginalised learners.

Building on previous work conducted by SOLIDAR+, the policy paper *Beyond Barriers: Strengthening Global Citizenship Education for Inclusive Societies* explores the relationship between GCE and socio-economic inequalities, focusing on how GCE can be used as a tool to address systemic inequities. It aims to map GCE provision for learners of different socio-economic backgrounds, identify which groups are most deprived of GCE, and explore innovative practices that link education to social justice and democratic engagement.

Equity in access to GCE must be prioritised for GCE to live up to its promise: although the most vulnerable groups participate to some extent in community life through GCE activities, they often remain excluded from it due to the lack of the material resources, which ultimately could affect their capacity to participate in democratic processes. The Policy Paper identifies enablers for addressing such challenges:

- **Critical GCE frameworks:** more intersectional, feminist and care-based GCE frameworks to go beyond “complacent” models, and more participatory, sustained, and locally grounded GCE practices
- **Intersecting pathways:** inequality to be conceptualised by policymakers and practitioners as a multifactorial and intersectional issue.
- **From individual ethical action to collective political engagement:** a “critical GCE” must integrate reflection and praxis, and challenge global structures of inequality.
- **Strengthen collaboration between academia and civil society:** fill the existing gaps of evidence on the impact of GCE related to accessibility for systematically marginalised groups
- **Beyond the integration of GCE into curricula:** recognise competences gained through non-formal education and support teacher training: for improving the impact of GCE practices.