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UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
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DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE, LAW
AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE
"ANTONIO PAPISCA"

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The Future of Education
in a (drastically) changing Europe

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



The Future of Education in a (drastically) changing Europe

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Abstract

The paper departs from the fundamental role of education and its responsibility to educate EU youngsters to live peacefully and fairly in a complex, globalising, multicultural, sometimes violent world. Education and educational governance are crucial in this perspective within the EU context.

For the sake of better understanding the fluid and confusing context in which education, educational systems and approaches develop at different levels and in different forms, some preliminary premises are introduced concerning the international and European context of education, the value premises of Europe’s future as well as the main tasks and responsibilities of Europe in the current globalising world.

The core of the paper is structured into two main parts. The first part deals with the role of education to the rethinking of Europe in its global perspective. It diagnoses the legal and international environment of education; it explains the crucial role of education as a permanent learning to life together in society-building; and finally it assesses the education challenges in a plural, interconnected and globalised world (from education for responsible citizenship to intercultural citizenship education). The second part of the paper concerns a more focused overview and critical assessment of the relation between the EU and education. It clarifies the legal framework of education within the EU context, assesses the major strategy and programmes of education and explores the importance of a European Education and Lifelong Learning Area for the future of Europe. The paper concludes with some policy suggestions for future developments in the field of education.

Introduction

1. The international and European context of education

We are living in a world characterised by change, complexity and paradox. This confusing world is subjected to contradicting processes of integration and disintegration, mainly due to the globalisation trends throughout the world. The subsequent economic, political, social and cultural challenges have a drastic and diversified impact on societies, states, peoples, communities and persons across Europe. These undermine the values and principles of European societies and impact the future of the EU.

In such complex international and European setting, it is argued that education at all levels (formal, informal and non-formal) should take the lead in providing individuals with the necessary attitudes and capabilities to deal with today's global challenges. This argument is made on the basis that, beyond being a right per se, education is also an empowering right, which enables people to develop fundamental skills, competences and confidence to secure other rights. This implies that it is mainly education which gives people the ability to access information, to grow in knowledge and to provide opportunities for self-development and responsible participation in society.

From a close look at the current European situation we can easily conclude that the EU is at the crossroads of its destiny, a turning point of its integration process. Its historical development shows a dynamic and evolving entity with many faces, multiple identities and diversified cooperation forms. A number of (internal and external) challenges are now undermining the European model of socio-economic cohesion and cultural and regional diversity. Europe is in crisis and the EU project risks disintegration. The populist and nationalist drive in many European countries, the refugee and Brexit issues only demonstrate its seriousness.

In a February 2016 EurActiv interview, Edgar Morin, the French sociologist and philosopher, speaks of a 'planetary crisis' and the need 'to change civilisation' in order to respond to the complexity of today's world.¹ This pending reality should generate a collective awakening of consciousness. It certainly implies a rethinking and actualising of the multiple European narrative and the recognition of the new and radically changing context. We agree with Václav Havel when he wrote that "*without commonly shared and widely entrenched moral values and obligations, neither the law, nor democratic government, nor even the market economy will function properly.*"²

Our democracy is in crisis. EU citizens are losing faith in democracy because political leaders are unable to deliver the promises at national level.³ Moreover, our democratic institutions seem not be able to adequately manage the problems. In sum, the place and the role of the State is drastically changing in international relations, mainly due to the positive and negative consequences of the globalisation process and the increasing multi-cultural dimension of our societies. The State is not

¹ Monica Simeoni: *Europe or Not! Multiple Conversations and Voices: with Alberto Martinelli, Vittorio Cotesta, Nadia Urbinati and Alain Touraine*. Brussels, Bern. P.I.E-Peter Lang S.A., 2017.

² Václav Havel: *Meditations on Politics, Morality and Civility in a Time of Transition*. London. Faber and Faber, 1993. p. 146.

³ The findings of the Eurobarometer surveys clearly indicate this trend. See https://ec.europa.eu/echo/eurobarometer_en

any longer the exclusive actor in the globalising system and power has been globalised, despite attempts to return to national solutions as the current migration crisis illustrates. The ongoing and radical process of transformation of European societies needs a proper contextualisation within its globalising, Europeanising, regionalising and localising context. This seriously impacts education.

In order to avoid a pure economic dimension of education which seems to persist in the current debate, a revision of its purposes and role is drastically needed within the international and European context. Specifically, an applied reflection has to be made on the way in which knowledge should be transmitted and also on the type of capabilities and competences that individuals should acquire to cope with today's challenges. Such needs have been captured by Sustainable Development Goal number 4 which, differently from the previous Millennium development goals, seeks to “*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*”.⁴

2. Value Premises of Europe's future in perspective

In his final State of the Union address on September 12, 2018, Jean-Claude Juncker called for a Europe that has to embrace its destiny.⁵ Only “*by pooling sovereignty where necessary, we strengthen all our component nations and regions*”, he added. Also, the White Paper on the Future of Europe (March 2017) clearly expressed the need for a reformulated narrative and convincing discourse as well as for concrete citizens-driven policies in order to remain an attractive and inspiring project and not an empty box for its citizens.⁶ Therefore, it is important to clearly affirm the value premises of Europe as a community in dealing with the welfare and wellbeing of its current and future citizens. Europe is a multiple purpose community which requires multiple tasks to be continuously updated in a transforming international system.

In a rapidly changing world, continuous political courage, inspiration and human-centred practices are needed to shape and strengthen the values that are associated with Europe. These values do not only refer to Europe as a socio-economic community but also as a community of destiny, life, purpose, responsibility, but certainly as a space of multicultural learning and a meeting place of multiple identities.⁷

It is obvious that the European Union cannot be captured in a one-liner. It presents a rather unique process of integration, but it is still a project in the making which today is in urgent need for a new inspiring and mobilising story. This requires a continuous search for a dynamic vision for the future that captures a sense of belonging and offers true added value to EU citizens, even in times of transformation and confusion. This might be called a paradigm shift in European society building with an impact on the relation between the EU institutional fabric and its citizens and on the role for education.

⁴United Nations: *Sustainable Development Goals*. Online, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>, 2015.

⁵ Jean-Claude Juncker: *State of the Union*. Online, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/soteu2018-speech_en_0.pdf, Sept. 2018.

⁶ European Commission: *White Paper on the Future of Europe*. Online, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/white_paper_on_the_future_of_europe_en.pdf/, 2017.

⁷ Léonce Bekemans: “Europe in a Changing world: European concerns, reflections and perspectives”. In: *Claritas, Journal of Dialogue and Culture*. Vol. 7, No 1/2, p. 39-45.

A clear vision for the future based on a value-driven community is needed. Europe is a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional space exhibiting multiple characteristics. We should be aware that these aspects have to be understood, contextualised and translated to a diversified citizenry within a context that often produces radically changing and paradoxical realities. These realities have an impact on current European identity, citizenship and solidarity building and, consequently, shape the education/learning objectives, tasks and responsibilities.

A true message of a positive and forward-looking vision needs to be conveyed. This implies a view that is embedded in a community of shared values, supports the strength of the European integration process, and recognises the positive heritage as well as the complexity of a multifaceted Europe as an added value to the European project. The care and promotion of these values should be conceived as a task and responsibility for education. This implies the recognition of internal and external aspects in the pursuit of a European model of society, but reaches out beyond the European territory.

3. Tasks and responsibilities of Europe in the world

Today Europe has an appointment with its destiny. Its model of society, based on the fundamental human rights, on culture as vehicle of emancipation, on sustainable development and socio-economic cohesion, and on a multilateral vision of the world order, is put under pressure. In other words, we experience a confrontation between the actual European confusing (political, economic, cultural and institutional) reality and the global responsibility of Europe in a context of an ever increasing globalisation.

Europe has a mission and responsibility in the globalising world. In the fast-changing global landscape, Europe is confronted with the preoccupation, but also with the moral responsibility to maintain its model of integration and diversity within a radically transforming world system. The question has to be put if Europe within a further unifying European economic space can guarantee internal solidarity, based on a common institutional basis in which states, regions and communities can live their diversity, as well as external solidarity, based on an open societal model of living together. This task requires an inspiring narrative which responds to institutional governance structures, internal and external European solidarity and a vision that motivates the participation of its citizens.

The challenge for further European integration (and Europe's survival) is the search for a new equilibrium between diversity and unity in a globalising world. The European model should consider the economic, historic, social and political changes which are taken place at the international level, but it should remain faithful to its principles of internal and external solidarity. 'Rethinking 'Europe' implies recognition of a radical increase of the level of complexity within societies, a further development of European citizenship within multiple identities and the elaboration of multi-level governance practices. Despite all current and dramatic changes, Europe still remains a civilisation project, characterised by a rich intellectual (material and immaterial) cultural heritage and common values.

However, in today's multi-faceted and multi-layered globalisation era, the EU needs a revisited political project and a common long-term (inspiring) vision, to counterbalance the

increasing influence of national interests in European policy-making, at the expense of the ‘European commons’. There is a real danger today that the Union, faced with the growing frustration, criticism and indifference of its citizens, will disintegrate or become a mere union of economic interests, detached from its very nature and identity. The undermining of these fundamentals could negatively influence Europe’s economic, social and ecological welfare and finally lead to its marginalisation in the global system. To overcome the crisis in European solidarity, very much illustrated by the national(ist) policies in dealing with the refugee crisis, trust-building initiatives and measures need to be taken within a ‘shared sovereignty’ framework.

There is again need for an enlarging and mobilising vision which can raise a new élan and a regained connection with the citizen. Furthermore, we must dare to recall the enthusiasm and faith in the European project, as it was embodied by the Founding Fathers of Europe. They wanted to guarantee a sustainable peace within the European borders and combined a long-term vision with a pragmatic policy approach. Economic arguments supported the political goodwill. Therefore, Europe needs bridge builders who can concretely complete the rhetoric of the European story, underscore the European ideals of peace, unity in diversity, freedom and solidarity and mobilise the young people for the European model of society. Still the rhetoric needs to be translated into a workable and forward-looking reality amidst the radically changing world. The role of education is herein fundamental. Only through integral human development in education and learning processes true citizens’ dialogue can develop and link EU citizenship to democracy. Also new forms and places of dialogue, active citizenship and cooperation emerge outside the existing institutionalised structures of representation with an increasing role of the formal and non-formal civil society.

In short, in spite of failures and imperfections in the integration process, the project Europe remains a valid working place to define Europe as a common and to develop a unique institutional and operational framework. Four fundamental tasks can be distinguished:

- Firstly, Europe has the moral responsibility to build a best practice of cooperation internally and externally. The individual and collective well-being depends more and more on a comprehension of man’s capacity to read the signs of time and act accordingly in the pursuit of economic and social welfare within a world of global competition. A radical change in vision and method to survive as a European civilisation is an urgent matter.
- Secondly the Europeans have the moral responsibility to show that people can live together in the world, despite differences in language, culture, religion, origin, etc. In practice EU citizens still need to show that they can form an international public space where a cultural diaspora can exist in mutual respect, tolerance and dialogue. Clear and coherent messages, examples and testimonies are important and meaningful instruments to inspire citizens.⁸
- Thirdly the European countries and regions have to search continuously to make their social and economic systems more efficient so that the weaknesses of the one can be compensated with the strength of others. This implies the importance to encourage individual initiative, to aim for a broad and just distribution of the benefits of economic welfare and to revalorise the sense of responsibility in a value driven education with European dimension.

⁸ The Series ‘*Europe of Living Stories*’ International Academic Publishers Peter Lang publishes books that tell inspiring European testimonies.

- Finally, the Europeans should play a more courageous and dynamic role on the international political scene by defending its model of peace and transnational cooperation and strengthening its method of collaboration with other macro regions. Europe should work for a transition of the traditional management of geopolitical and global economic conflicts to a new transversal policy of the global political and economic landscape.

I. The role of education to the rethinking of Europe in its global perspective

In this first part some reflections are presented on the role of education in a drastically changing Europe. They refer to the legal and international framework of education, to the role of education in society-building and finally to the various challenges Europe is confronted with in the plural, interconnected and globalised world.⁹

As said earlier, economic, political, social and cultural challenges in the age of globalisation have a drastic but diversified impact on societies, states, regions, peoples, communities and persons across the globe. The danger exists for a commodification and marketisation of education in its contents and outputs, neglecting the added human enhancement of the learning process. It may lead to a mere (global) market of education and an extended privatisation of education with a loss of quality.¹⁰

We strongly believe that new, innovative and peoples-oriented (human-centric) approaches are needed to respond to the challenges of fragmented and disturbed societies. Therefore, a substantial and urgent need exists for a revisited role and increased responsibility of education in culturally diverse and complex societies. Such a new culture for education embodies a respect of an integral human development, including various (formal, informal and non-formal) learning places and environments. This implies a learning to cope with changes, uncertainties and risks. A focus on learning competences, life skills, practices, pedagogies, case stories, testimonies and exercises to stimulate creativity and fantasy is therefore required to bridge the educational gaps and change the mind-sets.¹¹

1. The legal and international environment of education

The main point of departure for understanding the role of education in society-building is the legal framework. The right to education was first enshrined in 1945 in UNESCO's Constitution as a commitment to "*advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social*" (Article 1.2.b). Equal human dignity is conceived as one of the basic pillars of the democratic principles of justice, equality and (intellectual and moral) solidarity.

⁹ Léonce Bekemans: *Role and Responsibilities of educational institutions and strategies for intercultural citizenship education in a globalising world*. Berlin: Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, 2016. 30 p.

¹⁰ Léonce Bekemans: "Education for Intercultural Realities in a Globalising World (Market) Society". In: *Die Zwischengesellschaft" (The In-Between Society): Interdisciplinary Studies on Culture and Society Series*, Vol. 10. (Ed. Caroline Y. Robertson-von Trotha). Baden Baden: Nomos, 2016. pp. 213-230.

¹¹ Léonce Bekemans: *A Value-driven Education Framework for Globalised Multicultural Societies*. Paris. UNESCO, 2015. p. 15.

The right to education was universally proclaimed in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) as a means directed to the full development of the human personality.¹² It clearly emphasises the (enabling) right to education.¹³ The right to education has subsequently been further specified in several international binding treaties. The first was the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 1950 (Art 2).¹⁴ It was followed by the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in 1965 (Art 5)¹⁵, the International Covenant Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1966 (Art 13)¹⁶ and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU in 2000 (Art 14)¹⁷. Hence, the right to education seems to be a widely recognised and protected fundamental right, crucial to shaping the dignity of the human person. States have therefore the obligation to provide education to all, in a non-discriminatory and, if required, progressive manner.¹⁸

An important aspect of the international legal environment of education has been the 2000-2015 Millennium Development process, in particular with development goal 2, aimed at achieving universal primary education. The so-called Millennium Development Goals served as a learning platform for the development and launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UNGA, 2015) with 17 clearly specified sustainable development goals. The topic of education is directly addressed in SDG 4 “*to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*” with an innovative associated target aimed at “*education for sustainable development and global citizenship*”. Furthermore, at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly in September 2018, a new global partnership was launched with the aim to get every young person into quality education, training or employment by 2030. ‘Generation Unlimited’, a part of the UN Secretary-General’s Youth 2030 Strategy, is to tackle the global education and training crisis. The partnership platform focuses on three key areas: secondary-age education; skills for learning, employability and decent work; and empowerment.

It is worthwhile to briefly introduce the recent activities of the international and European intergovernmental organisation, most active in the field of education.

1) UNESCO

¹² Art 26 of the UDHR reads as follows: “(1) *Everyone has the right to education: Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.* (2) *Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace;* (3) *Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*”

¹³ United Nations: *Universal Declaration* <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights>, 1948.

¹⁴ Council of Europe: *European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*. Online, https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf, 1950.

¹⁵ United Nations: *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*. Online, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cerd.aspx>, Nov 1963.

¹⁶ United Nations: *International Covenant Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. Online, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>, 1966.

¹⁷ European Union: *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU*, Online, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT&from=EN>, 2000.

¹⁸ Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, 2011, A/66/269 (\$13).

Since its creation this United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation has played a major role in promoting education in human integral development. Its continued effort in keeping education relevant for changing societies is marked by two key documents. The Faure Report “*Learning to be*” (1972) established the two interrelated notions of learning society and lifelong education. The Report dealt with “*the lifelong learning process of every individual that would enable the formation of the complete man who is an agent of development and change, promoter of democracy, citizen of the world and author of his own fulfilment*”. The Delors Report “*Education for the 21st century: The Treasure within*”¹⁹ (1996) focused on the relationship between education and subject areas of development: science, citizenship, culture, social cohesion and work. It identifies the major objectives of education: to learn to know, learn to do, learn to be and learn to live together. This Report still remains a basic resource in the contextualisation of education in society.

More recently, the 2015 UNESCO publication “*Rethinking Education: Towards a global common good?*”²⁰ builds on the previous reports to reformulate education in the current context of change, complexity and uncertainty and to open a policy dialogue. It proposes to overcome the public/private dichotomy and to embrace forms of global cooperation rooted in a humanistic approach of intercultural knowledge and understanding, being directed at “*sustaining and enhancing the dignity, capacity and welfare of the human person, in relation to the others*”. This has implications on education governance issues, because it involves a multi-stakeholders debate and a bottom-up policy exercise. We very much favour such human-centric approach to education.

UNESCO has also been playing a significant role in leading cooperation efforts in the education field. A milestone is the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All and the launch of EFA, a global movement involving intergovernmental agencies, national governments, and civil society groups to provide basic education for all. Its education objectives were finally summarised at the 2000 World Education Forum in Senegal. Governments formally committed to the Dakar Framework for Action with the goal of achieving basic education for all by 2015 and to incorporate the concepts of gender equality and quality education.

2) Council of Europe

In its Maastricht Global Education Declaration (November 2002) the Council of Europe defines education as “*the process by which society transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another.*” It targets the development of a coherent vision of the role of education as a means to foster human rights, democracy and rule of law, and intercultural dialogue²¹. The CoE’s vision of education encompasses values and competencies and attributes a fundamental importance to both formal and non-formal education. The idea is to integrate the concepts of lifelong learning and learning society into European educational policies with the aim of offering continuous opportunities for the development of skills and competencies. It recognises

¹⁹ Delors Report: *Education for the 21 century: The Treasure within*, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, Paris. UNESCO Publishing, 1996.

²⁰ UNESCO: *Rethinking Education: Towards a global common good*. Online, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232555e.pdf>, 2015.

²¹ Council of Europe: *COMPASS Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People*. Online, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/education>. 2017.

the key role of open, inclusive and flexible education systems, as well as the high potential of non-formal education. In terms of policy development, the CoE has partnered with the European Commission to foster the recognition, valorisation and validation of non-formal education and to encourage contamination of the formal and informal sectors to the benefit of learners.

Within the Council of Europe, global education is a priority focus area for the North-South Centre (NSC). In its view, global education encompasses “*development education, human rights education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention and intercultural education; being the global dimension of education for citizenship*” (Maastricht Global Education Declaration, November 2002). It has adopted a unique concept called ‘quadrilogue’ to describe its working method, being a partnership governance scheme that brings together representatives of governments, national parliaments, local and regional authorities, as well as civil society. Common challenges are identified, solutions are proposed, and examples of good practice are shared. With this method and within the framework of IEGEND, the 2016-2019 joint programme between the EU and the CoE promotes global development education in the Balkan, Baltic, South-East Europe, Mediterranean, and Visegrad countries.

2. *The Role of Education in society-building: objectives and competences*

Objectives and competences of education need to be clearly identified for understanding its role in society-building as a permanent learning to tool to live together.

Objectives

Education is a dynamic learning process that creates added value, forms a person’s integral development and/or arouses curiosity. It plays a significant role in the development of both human beings and modern societies as it enhances social, cultural and economic development, favour active citizenship and may underscore ethical values. According to Katarina Tomaszewski, a former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, the right to education is structured along an approach which should make education: available, accessible, usable and adaptable.²²

Education is to build peace, foster dialogue and enhance understanding in order “to build peace in the minds of men” as enshrined in UNESCO’s Constitution (1945). This implies the need to transmit in an open and critical way ideals and principles that valorise the person at the centre of education systems. Its priority task today should be to transmit information, knowledge, competences and skills which give scope and responsibility to the development of each person in times of change, in line with fundamental values such as peace, tolerance of diversity.

However, the current crisis of socialisation and value transmission has made the task of education difficult but vital for society building. In the current market-oriented developments within societies, the need to re-contextualise the foundational principles for the governance of education, particularly the right to education and the principle of education as a public good, is crucial. The role of education should therefore be reset within the dramatic acceleration in the speed of social change brought about by the process of globalisation. We therefore plea for a humanistic vision of

²² Katarina Tomaszewski: *Manual Rights-based Education, Global Human Rights Requirements made simple*. Bangkok: UNESCO, 60 p.

education and development, based on respect for life and human dignity, equal rights, social justice, cultural diversity, international solidarity and shared responsibility for a sustainable future.

In short, it is firstly necessary that young people are given chances to be valued in their own dignity and rights. Secondly, education should provide opportunities for valuing diversity in a perspective oriented at intercultural dialogue so as to support the strengthening of cultural literacy as an indispensable competence for the youth. Thirdly, a humanistic vision of education is grounded on the conception of common responsibility shared by the global community. Lastly, humanistic education is holistic inasmuch it permeates all disciplines with the aim of disseminating human rights not as part of a subject in itself, but rather as a systematic approach. Within this perspective Educommunication²³ can be conceived as a concrete trajectory of citizenship-building and social transformation that promotes everyone's opportunity and capacity to participate in society and to transform it by improving the quality of human relations

Competences

Key education competences refer to knowledge, skills and attitudes that serve personal fulfilment, social inclusion and active citizenship. These include the traditional competences but also the more transversal ones such as learning to learn, social and civic competences, cultural awareness and expressions. In this context, Edgar Morin²⁴, proposes four objectives in the transmission of knowledge and the activities of teaching: - to form a well-developed mind; - to teach the human condition; to educate to live; and – to learn the dignity of the citizen.

Various educational skills can be identified as essential to becoming responsible and active citizens: civic-related skills for participating in society and influencing public policy; social skills for living, cooperating with others, and peacefully resolving contrasts and conflicts; communication skills; and finally intercultural skills for appreciating the worth of cultural differences, promoting solidarity, establishing intercultural dialogue, and effectively countering xenophobia (Eurydice, 2012).²⁵

3. Educational challenges in a plural, interconnected and globalised world

Besides the right of education and its general role in society-building, some educational steps need to be distinguished in a plural, interconnected and globalised world, moving from responsible intercultural citizenship education, and putting human dignity at the core of all learning activities.

3.1. Education for Responsible Citizenship

A first step relates education to citizenship-building in society. Citizenship education implies to form (young) people within the specific socio-cultural context responding to the challenges of globality and complexity, cultural disintegration, the dispersion and fragmentation of knowledge.

²³ Giulia De Paoli: *Educommunication for Global Citizenship. Promoting the Transformative Potential for Youngsters in the Era of Information*. MA thesis, University of Padua. 2018.

²⁴ Edgar Morin: "Réforme de la pensée et l'éducation aux XXI siècle". In: *Les Clés du XXI siècle* (ed. Jérôme Bindé). Paris: Unesco/Seuil, 2000, pp. 271-275.

²⁵ European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice: *Developing Key Competences at School in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities for Policy*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2012.

This implies an integration of various learning sources and levels of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

A dynamic approach

If education has the priority task of transmitting knowledge and competences that give scope and responsibility to the development of each person, some fundamental issues should be raised. These deal with (1) education of and for all; (2) education for humanity, which involves cross-cutting the dichotomy between a ‘humanistic’ education and a ‘professional’ education; (3) education for change, which deals with the meaning of creativity and the use of a critical mind; (4) education to master a variety of languages; and finally (5) permanent education in the search for values, which implies surpassing the so-called contradiction between tradition and innovation. However, it is not sufficient to affirm the principle of the centrality of the person in education processes, the educator and the teacher have to act within a changing socio-cultural context.

Such a dynamic approach requires different sources and levels of learning. Growing social inequality and poverty, true understanding of internal and external solidarity, and respect for differences, as well as the inaccessibility of the benefits of globalisation to some, have to be tackled by various and differentiated forms of learning. We believe this can only be done in a dialogue’s framework, through (formal, informal, and non-formal) education for active citizenship.

Furthermore, citizenship education should be based on a community of shared values. This includes an awareness, knowledge and exercise of rights and responsibilities and goes beyond the legal status and judicial relationship between citizen and state. The reality learns that the concept is steadily broadening and changing, as lifestyles and patterns in our relations with others become more diversified. Far from being limited to the national context, the notion of coexistence among citizens relates to the concept of a community embracing all contexts – local, regional, national and international – in which individuals live.

From this perspective, the link between citizenship and education is very close. Today’s educational challenge is to strengthen citizenship-building in societies and develop learning modes that respond to the citizens’ need for information, knowledge and capacity, and consequently, prepare people for living adequately with the societal changes of today’s world. This is the core of the pedagogical approach to citizenship. However, the teaching of citizenship is not sufficient; it is the learning of citizenship that is essential. As a consequence, the concept of citizenship could (and should) be integrated into the educational process recognizing different perspectives and inputs.

Moreover, active and responsible citizenship is a lifelong process. Learning citizenship is interactive and deeply embedded in formal, informal, and non-formal contexts. Support should therefore also be given to citizenship learning within civil society as well as within the informal setting of the family. Teaching people to learn to become active citizens implies giving them access to the capacities and skills they need to participate efficiently in economic, political, and social life. This also means the knowledge of languages. Responsible citizenship is therefore to be seen as a universal concept, giving children and young people the knowledge, values, and skills, they require to participate in society and contribute to their own and society’s well-being. In summary,

citizenship education relates to educating (young) people to become responsible citizens who are capable of contributing to the development and well-being of the society in which they live.²⁶

Objectives of Responsible Citizenship Education

While its aims and content may be highly diversified, the key objectives of responsible citizenship education in today's complex world relate to: (1) political and (multi)cultural literacy; (2) critical thinking and developing certain attitudes and values; and (3) active participation.²⁷

1) Political and (Multi)cultural Literacy

The development of political and cultural literacy may involve: learning about social, political, and civic institutions, as well as human rights; the study of the conditions under which people may live harmoniously together; teaching young people about national constitutions so that they are better prepared to exercise their rights and responsibilities; promoting the recognition of cultural and historical heritage; and promoting the recognition of the cultural and linguistic diversity of society. From this perspective, increased literacy should favour active communication and participation in democratic societies, finally leading to responsible citizenship-building. Moreover, the impact of globalisation on societies necessitates a growing awareness of the existence of different cultures, religions, and political systems in order to develop respect for the otherness. In other words, the increased diversity of peoples within and between societies requires a re-conceptualisation of literacy towards a political and multicultural literacy, which might be a vehicle to mutual understanding and learning in multicultural societies. Illustrative is the UNESCO World Report (2009) *'Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue'* that defined cultural literacy as a fundamental resource for benefitting from multiple learning places (ranging from family and tradition to the media and informal groups and activities) and an indispensable tool for transcending clashes of ignorance.

2) Critical Thinking and Developing Certain Attitudes and Values

The development of critical thinking and the adoption of certain attitudes and values may entail:

- acquiring the skills needed to participate actively in public life; developing recognition of and respect for oneself and others, with a view to achieving greater mutual understanding;
- acquiring social and moral responsibility, including self-confidence, and learning to behave responsibly towards others;
- strengthening a spirit of solidarity; supporting values with due regard for differing social perspectives and points of view; learning to listen and resolve conflicts peacefully;
- learning to contribute to a safe environment;
- and developing more effective strategies for fighting racism and xenophobia.

3) Active Participation

²⁶ Karen O'Shea: *Education for Democratic Citizenship 2001-2004. Developing a Shared Understanding. A Glossary of terms for Education for Democratic Citizenship*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003.

²⁷ Léonce Bekemans: "Educational Challenges and Perspectives in Multiculturalism vs. Interculturalism: Citizenship Education for Intercultural Realities". In: *Interculturalism and Multiculturalism: Similarities and Differences* (ed. Martyn Barrett), Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing Department, 2013. pp. 169–87.

Finally, the active participation of youngsters may be promoted by: - enabling them to become more involved in the community at large (at international, national, local, and school levels); - offering them practical experience of democracy at school; developing their capacity to engage with each other; - and encouraging pupils to develop project initiatives in conjunction with other organisations (such as community associations, public bodies, and international organisations), as well as projects involving other communities.

In short, it should be clear that citizenship education is not just concerned with imparting theoretical knowledge to enhance political and (multi)cultural literacy in issues such as democracy, human rights, the functioning of political institutions, cultural and historical heritage, etc. It is also crucial for integral human development that positive civic attitudes and values are developed and active participation is promoted – be it at the school level or in society at large. Citizenship education should therefore be conceived as embracing all members of a given society, regardless of their nationality, gender or their racial, social, and educational background.

Conditions for Citizenship Education

The conditions for such an integral human development in education and learning can be summarised as follows: The first condition is the development, not only of an analytical mind and understanding, but also of a synthetic and creative capacity for applied learning in concrete training projects. This favours tolerance and avoids stereotypical behaviour and prejudices. The second is the formation of both general and specific knowledge, implying thinking and acting with respect for diversity and differences. This requires knowledge acquisition with an open and critical spirit, rooted in an historical perspective, but conscious of basic values. The third condition is education for listening, comprehension, respect for other cultures and peoples and education for responsibility. Therefore, knowledge of one's own culture and language as well as of other cultures and languages is an important key for actual communication. The fourth is a pedagogy embedded in regional and educational specificity; this implies territorial inclusiveness in order to create formal and informal spaces of learning. Fifth and finally, there is the condition of the development of programmes for learning to live together and developing life skills at the grassroots level, which stimulate participation, respect and dialogue.

3.2. Intercultural citizenship education: a tool to live and do together

Objectives

Another important educational aspect of the rethinking of Europe in a global perspective refers to intercultural citizenship education. The general and priority objective of intercultural citizenship education is: “*Empowering and stimulating people to contribute to social cohesion and cultural enrichment with respect for diversity and on the basis of equality.*”²⁸ Its specificity concerns learning processes that lead to knowledge of other cultures and instill behaviour patterns of availability, openness, respect and dialogue in and between societies. It implies concretely the promotion of learning skills for constructive conviviality in a multi-form cultural and social context, valorising the cultural dimension of active citizenship. This consists not only of acceptance of and

²⁸ Anna Lindh Foundation: *Handbook Intercultural Citizenship in the Euro Mediterranean Region*. Alexandria: Anna Lindh Foundation, 2014. p. 18.

respect for diversity, but also recognition of the proper place of cultural identity in the perspective of mutual learning. The challenge of such an education is expressed at two levels: the cognitive level of knowledge and information on the world and on others, and the affective level of attention to narrative, relation and interaction.

To live peacefully together in a diversified world therefore requires intercultural citizenship education. In its Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education: *'Education for democratic citizenship'*²⁹ the Council of Europe provides a clear definition: [it] means education, training, awareness-raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law." The Intercultural Citizenship Handbook published by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures³⁰ in 2014 is an excellent example of such a broad educational approach. It is a resource tool that covers both theoretical and practical aspects of intercultural citizenship learning, including practical case studies and exercises from across the Mediterranean region.

Intercultural citizenship education recognises the human rights paradigm as its point of departure, implying the importance of human rights education and consequently of education for democratic citizenship. Therefore a multi-dimensional approach to intercultural education in the current globalising reality should respond to a multiplicity of objectives: (1) education for reciprocity, which implies the promotion of an attitude towards life together, to collaborate with others and to affirm the value of each individual and all persons who make up society; (2) education for complexity, which signifies learning beyond particularities to be able to live in various educational spaces (schools, universities, families, etc.) between universality and cultural plurality amidst ongoing change; (3) education for correct and respectful interpersonal communication, both verbal and non-verbal; (4) education for conflict prevention, which means teaching conflict management in a civilised way; (5) education for the conviviality of differences, which implies the promotion of initiatives with respect for both differences and common denominators, which in turn means that respect for diversity and intercultural dialogue are conceived as vehicles for conviviality in multicultural societies, on the condition that intercultural learning is practice-oriented and rooted in a territorial context; (6) education for active participation, which implies the development of skills allowing the individual to play an active role in the solution of problems and to participate in the decision-making processes within society; (7) education for intercultural competences, which implies the development of the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's own intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes; and finally (8) education to and for peace, which consists of a global education in values constitutive for peace-building and living together peacefully.

²⁹ Council of Europe: *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*. Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 7 and Explanatory Memorandum. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. 2010.

³⁰ Anna Lindh Foundation: *Handbook Intercultural Citizenship in the Euro Mediterranean Region*. Alexandria: Anna Lindh Foundation. 2014. 158 p.

Intercultural Competences

Participation in multicultural societies presupposes the acquisition of intercultural competences by the individuals involved. These competences are an integral part of ‘learning to live together’. They include abilities to effectively and appropriately interact in complex and diversified environments.³¹ This implies that the scope of intercultural competences goes beyond formal education and school learning.

The Council of Europe’s White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue ‘*Living Together as Equals in Dignity*’³² (2008) defined learning and teaching intercultural competences as follows: “*Complementary tools should be developed to encourage students to exercise independent critical faculties including to reflect critically on their own responses and attitudes to experiences of other cultures*’. UNESCO’s Intersectoral Platform for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence³³ published in 2013 a very useful conceptual and operational framework for addressing these intercultural competences.³⁴ It was argued that intercultural competences empower participating groups and individuals and enable them to interact with cultural others with a view to bridging differences, defusing conflicts, and setting the foundations of peaceful conviviality. In March 2016 the Council of Europe published a new conceptual model of the competences which citizens require to participate in democratic culture and live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse societies.³⁵

4. Assessment

A knowledge society requires an in-depth development of lifelong learning, benefitting from a variety of interconnecting learning resources for citizenship-building. However, today’s societal challenges to a learning society imply the need for a more innovative capacity to (re)design (new) institutions of political, economic, social, and educational governance, which can respond properly to the realities of the multi-faceted process of globalisation. This implies raising investment in different people and differentiated knowledge and broadening opportunities for innovative, more flexible forms of learning within various meeting places. The policy consequence is that educational institutions should accept lifelong learning as their collective responsibility, but that governments should invest in training teachers and trainers for all stages of learning, in informal and non-formal as well as in formal education, and that the lifelong learning agenda for active citizenship should be deepened and widened.

A strengthening of international cooperation between learning resources, educational institutions and dialogue frameworks is therefore recommendable in this context. This could be based on work done by the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the EU,

³¹ Alvino Fantini & Aqeel Tirmizi: *Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence*. Centre for Social Development, Global Service Institute, Research Report 07-01, Washington University: World Learning Publications, 2006. 133 p.

³² Council of Europe: *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity*. Online, <http://www.coe.int/dialogue>, 2008.

³³ UNESCO: *Programme of Action Culture of Peace and Non-Violence. A vision in action*. Paris: UNESCO. 2013.

³⁴ UNESCO: *Intercultural Competences. Conceptual and Operational Framework*. Paris: UNESCO, 2013. 46 p.

³⁵ Council of Europe: *Competences for Democratic Culture: Living Together as Equals in Culturally Diverse Democratic Societies*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. 2016.

especially in relation to two key international instruments: the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011) and the Council of Europe's European Charter on Education to Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (2010).

The educational community should be a dynamic community of learning to human conviviality and values. Therefore, it should recognise different types of knowledge, skills and training activities, using different pedagogies and methodologies in various educational environments. Still the rapidly changing world challenges the need for an integral education that focuses on the formation of young people to become responsible citizens, being critically-minded, committed and creative. The teaching and learning of knowledge, attitudes and activities should be faithful to this basic mission. Moreover, the transmission of inclusive education knowledge and skills should be done with motivation, enthusiasm and passion.

II. EU and Education: how does education contribute concretely to the rethinking and reforming of Europe

In the second part, we focus on how education and education programmes have contributed and may further contribute concretely to the rethinking and reforming of Europe.³⁶ At the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Maastricht Treaty (9/12/2016) European Commission President Juncker said: "*We cannot explain the European Union, the European project, simply by going back to the history... we want to convince younger people that the EU is a must today ... we have to explain the European history in a perspective: What is Europe today and what will it be tomorrow and the day after tomorrow?*". In the following we briefly present the legal framework in which EU education and education programmes should be understood; we further describe and analyse the major programmes and finally, stress the importance of a strong European Education Area for Europe's future.

1. Legal framework

It should be clearly acknowledged that education and training are not subjects of a common European policy. With the principle of subsidiarity each Member State maintains full responsibility for the content and the organisation of its education system. The European Commission's work in the field of education and training rests on two pillars: (1) policy cooperation with the Member States; and (2) funding programmes. The basic principle is that Member States are in charge of their education and training, and the European Commission works together with the Member States to help achieve common goals.

Education was formally recognised for the first time in the Treaty establishing the European Community signed in Maastricht 1992. The Maastricht Treaty provides the legal context for education and vocational training in the EU. Its legal framework is based on Art 165 (education) and Art 166 (vocational training) of the Treaty of the EU (now the Lisbon Treaty, 2008).

³⁶ Léonce Bekemans: "Education for European Citizenship-building". In: *Globalisation vs Europeanisation. A Human-centric Interaction (Léonce Bekemans)*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2012. pp. 263-287.

Art 165, paragraph 1 says that: *“The Union shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.”* The objectives are stated in paragraph 2: *“Union action shall be aimed at: - developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States; - encouraging mobility of students and teachers, by encouraging inter alia, the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study. - promoting cooperation between educational establishments; - developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States;- encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors, and encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe; - encouraging the development of distance education; - developing the European dimension in sport, by promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports, and by protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest sportsmen and sportswomen”.*

Art 166, paragraph 1 of the TEU says that: *“The Union shall implement a vocational training policy which shall support and supplement the action of the Member States, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content and organisation of vocational training.”* Paragraph 2 defines the objectives: *“Union action shall aim to: - facilitate adaptation to industrial changes, in particular through vocational training and retraining; - improve initial and continuing vocational training in order to facilitate vocational integration and reintegration into the labour market; - facilitate access to vocational training and encourage mobility of instructors and trainees and particularly young people; - stimulate cooperation on training between educational or training establishments and firms; - develop exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the training systems of the Member States”.*

These two TEU articles clearly affirm that education is the responsibility of the Member States and the EU institutions only play a supporting role to provide an environment for education programmes. In other words, the European Community may contribute to the development of quality education and training by encouraging cooperation between Member States, through a wide range of actions, such as promoting the mobility of citizens, designing joint study programmes, establishing networks, exchanging information or teaching the languages of the European Union.

Therefore, the European Community has a complementary role to play: to add a European dimension to education and training, to help develop quality education and training and to encourage life-long learning. It also funds educational, vocational and citizenship-building programmes which encourage EU citizens to take advantage of opportunities which the EU offers its citizens to live, study and work in other countries.

2. EU Education Strategy and Education Programmes

In the following we are focusing our attention on some current contextualised developments in the European education and training area for building and strengthening the future for education in a global perspective: the EU 2020 Strategy and the Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020). We favour

a broadly-defined European studies curriculum for all stages of informal, non-formal as well as formal education to strengthen the European dimension of national education systems and programs. Europe should strengthen its lifelong learning agenda to foster active and responsible EU citizenship. However, support for inclusive European-oriented education about responsible citizenship, multiple identities and citizens' dialogue would need to deal with differentiated discourses, general and specific curriculum content and social and cultural relevance of education projects.

1) *The EU 2020 Strategy*

In March 2010 the European Commission proposed the EU 2020 Strategy³⁷ as a broad 10-year growth strategy, being the successor of the Lisbon Strategy (2000-2010). It aims at "*smart, sustainable, inclusive growth*" with greater coordination of national and European policy. Concrete actions at EU and national levels underpin the strategy through a growth-based building of a genuine European Knowledge Area, the empowerment of people in inclusive societies and the creation of a competitive, connected and greener economy. It identifies the key measurable priorities for the period 2010-2020 on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy.

This EU 2020 Strategy presents the general framework for the specific European Cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)³⁸, setting common objectives and benchmarks. Real progress has already been attained for two education targets under the Europe 2020 Strategy: early school leaving has been reduced from 13.9% in 2010 to 10.7% in 2016, with the target to reach 10% by 2020; and tertiary educational attainment is up to 39.1% in 2016 from 34% in 2010, with the target of 40% by 2020

As each EU country is responsible for its own education and training systems, the EU policy is designed to support national action and help address common challenges, such as ageing societies, skills deficits in the workforce, technological developments and global competition. It focusses on six priority areas: - improve people's skills and employment prospects; - create open, innovative and digital learning environments; - provide support for teachers and trainers; - cultivate the fundamental values of equality, non-discrimination and active citizenship, - favour transparency and recognition of skills; and – invest in a sustainable way quality and efficiency of education and training systems. Flagship initiatives to support these priority objectives are: 'Innovation Union', 'Youth on the Move', 'A digital agenda for Europe', 'Resource efficient Union', 'An industrial policy for the globalisation era', 'An agenda for new skills and jobs', and 'A European platform against poverty'.

2) *EU Education programmes*

Erasmus+ programme

³⁷ European Union: *EU 2020 Strategy*. Online, <http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf>, Sept. 2015.

³⁸ European Union: *ET2020*. Online, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework_en, Feb. 2016.

The ERASMUS Programme, being the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport reaching out beyond the EU, is the most successful education programme. It clearly illustrates the concrete link between Europe and education. It enables European students to spend part of their studies at another higher education institution or with an organisation in Europe. It increases learning opportunities abroad for students and teachers. It was launched in 1987 and celebrated in 2017 its 30th anniversary.³⁹ It is based on the premise that investing in education, training and youth is the key to unlocking citizens' potential regardless of age or background. With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2009, the European Union acquired a new competence in the field of sport. Since 2014, activities aimed at promoting the European dimension in sport have been implemented.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Europe in 2015 and of the massive migration flows entering the EU, the role of education, training, youth and sport for promoting shared values, intercultural understanding and social inclusion has been vested with a renewed importance. In particular, the Erasmus+ programme aims to support actions in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. It replaces seven former programmes, bringing together the Lifelong Learning Programme [(Erasmus (higher education), Leonardo da Vinci (vocational), Comenius (school education), Grundtvig (adult) and Jean Monnet)], the Youth in Action programme, five international cooperation programmes (Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink, the programme for cooperation with industrialised countries) and finally the new sport action. Its total budget amounts to € 14.7 billion, representing a 40% budget increase, providing EU grants and training for about 4 million people and 125,000 institutions. In 2015 678.000 Europeans went abroad to study, train or volunteer with Erasmus+; 2.1 billion € were invested in the Erasmus Programme and 19.600 projects were funded with over 69.000 participating organisations.

The programme consists of three main key actions which illustrate the broad scope of activities;

- Key Action 1 concerns learning mobility of individuals: it aims to enhance the skills, employability and intercultural awareness of the participants (i.e. mobility of learners and staff, Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees and Erasmus+ Master Loans).
- Key Action 2 deals with cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices in the fields of education, training and youth, aiming at a long-lasting impact on organisations, individuals and policy systems. It supports transnational strategic partnerships, capacity-building transnational cooperation projects, knowledge alliances and sector skills alliances.
- Key Action 3 finances support for policy reform in line with the overall European policy agenda, the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and the European Youth Strategy.

In 2015, 57 % of the funds went to support the learning opportunities abroad for individuals within the EU and beyond (Key Action 1); 19% for partnerships between educational institutions, youth organisations, businesses, local and regional authorities and NGOs (Key Action 2); 4% for reforms to modernise education and training and to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and

³⁹ Facts, figures and trends can be found in:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/educationculture/repository/education/library/statistics/erasmus-plus-facts-figures_en.pdf

employability (Key Action 3). From the remaining 20%: support to international cooperation accounted for 11%, Jean Monnet for 2%, Sport activities for 1%; while management fees for National Agencies and administrative expenses accounted for 5%.

Since its launch in 1987 Erasmus has enabled 9 million people to study, train, volunteer and gain professional experience abroad. For the future Erasmus programme, which will run from 2021 to 2027, the European Commission is proposing to double its budget to €30 billion. This would enable 12 million people to participate in the programme, three times the number currently able to participate. It seems that the next programme will be substantially strengthened, extended and be more inclusive. It will further promote activities which foster knowledge and awareness of the EU, extend opportunities to forward-looking knowledge fields (e.g. climate change, robotics etc.) and provide a better outreach and inclusion of people with fewer opportunities. Also, the international dimension of the programme will be boosted. We are convinced that further investing in people, skills and knowledge will help respond to global challenges, maintain social fairness and consolidate Europe's future.

Apart from the five international cooperation programmes (i.e. Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink, the programme for cooperation with industrialised countries) the relevance of the international dimension of European education is also demonstrated by the cooperation with other international organisations such as the Council of Europe (i.e. Human rights/citizenship education: "*Democracy in Action*"; the ROMED Programme and Cooperation in the field of youth) and the OECD (i.e. the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) and Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS).

In short, the December 2016 Eurobarometer findings⁴⁰ very well illustrate the increasing positive attitude of Europeans towards the Erasmus programme. Awareness of the Erasmus programme has risen considerably since 2009 from 30% to 53%. However, there are substantial differences between EU Member States: while more than three-quarters of the population have heard of the Erasmus programme in Luxembourg (80%), Spain (77%), Belgium (76%) and Portugal (76%), figures drop to mere 30 % in Romania and the United Kingdom. But a very large majority of Europeans have a positive image of this programme: 86 % express a positive opinion, just 5% have a negative opinion, and 9% are unable to answer.

Jean Monnet Programme

Within the Erasmus+ programme, the European dimension of higher education throughout Europe is favoured by the Jean Monnet Programme, formerly part of the lifelong learning programme of the EU (2007-2013). Jean Monnet Activities are designed to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. The activities also foster the dialogue between the academic world and policy-makers. Focus is on the study and research of European integration, on the strengthening of governance of EU policies and on the understanding of Europe's position in a globalised world. They consist of actions (i.e. teaching Modules, Chairs,

⁴⁰ Standard Eurobarometer 86. (2016), *Public opinion in the European Union*. European Commission. DG Communication.

Centres of Excellence, Projects, Networks and Support to associations and institutions) and operating grants to specified institutions such as the European University Institute and the College of Europe.

Launched in 1989, the programme is now present in 78 countries throughout the world. Between 1990 and 2014, the Jean Monnet Programme has helped to set up approximately 4,000 projects in the field of European integration studies, including 200 Jean Monnet European Centres of Excellence, 1000 Chairs and 2,250 European modules. In 2015, overall, 260 projects were granted for a total amount of EUR 14,4 mio. The projects involved 335 organisations and more than 267,000 participants in 43 countries worldwide. One of its main objectives is to increase interest in understanding and participating in the European Union, leading to a more active citizenship-building.

In short, the Jean Monnet programme represents a success story in the development of European integration studies. It developed from a strict, limited and disciplinary focus to a much more open and interdisciplinary focus. It represents a wider geographical reach with target groups beyond the university. In the last years, we have also seen a greater attention to the diversity and innovation in teaching, research and reflections on Europe's future.

3. The Future of Europe: Towards a European Education and Lifelong Learning Area

We believe it is now time to further build on these foundations and step up our ambition to re-found Europe's future for a more united, stronger and more democratic Union⁴¹ towards a European Education Area. We welcome the prominence given to education and training at the EU level in recent months.

The European Commission has been developing initiatives to help work towards such a European Education Area. The goals should be that: - spending time abroad to study and learn should be the standard; - school and higher education diplomas should be recognised across the EU; - knowing two languages in addition to one's mother tongue should become the norm; - everyone should be able to access high quality education, irrespective of the socio-economic background; and people should have a strong sense of their identity as Europeans, of Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity. Also, the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) has been active in promoting studies on the future of education and training in view of the "Future of Learning" agenda.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of January 2015 an informal meeting of the EU Education Ministers in Paris on 17 March 2015 adopted a joint Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.⁴² A strong signal was given to the pivotal role of education in instilling and promoting human and civic values. It called for a strengthening of the role of education in promoting citizenship and common EU values: "*The primary purpose of education is not only to develop*

⁴¹ Jean-Claude Juncker: *State of the Union Address* of 13 September 2017.

⁴² European Union: *Joint Declaration on Education*. Online, https://eu2015.lv/images/notikumi/2015-3-10_Declaration_EN.pdf, March 2015.

knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes and to embed fundamental values, but also to help young people to become active, responsible, open-minded members of society."

The Paris Declaration also proposed EU-level cooperation on four overarching priorities: - Ensuring young people to acquire social, civic and intercultural competences, by promoting democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and non-discrimination, as well as active citizenship; - Enhancing critical thinking and media literacy, particularly in the use of the Internet and social media, so as to develop resistance to discrimination and indoctrination; -Fostering the education of disadvantaged children and young people, by ensuring that our education and training systems address their needs; and - Promoting intercultural dialogue through all forms of learning in cooperation with other relevant policies and stakeholders.

As an immediate follow-up, the Commission and the Council jointly decided in November 2015 to adapt their policy cooperation in the fields of education, training and youth to give priority attention to the implementation of the Paris Declaration. In 2016, two expert groups were launched – one focusing on education and training and the other on youth work – to accelerate the exchange of good practices, inspire policymakers on issues listed in the Declaration and prepare concrete policy guidance tools.

Most importantly, the Paris Declaration already had its effects in schools and other learning institutions throughout Europe. In the 2016 Erasmus+ cooperation projects, priority was given to those projects tackling the objectives of the Paris declaration. Policy learning was further stimulated by the research of the NESET II, being an advisory network of experts working on the social dimension of education and training, set up at the initiative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture. It examines how European education systems can better prepare future citizens for tolerance, respect for diversity and civic responsibility.⁴³

At the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaty, the leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission declared in Rome on March 25, 2017 their commitment to creating a "*Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent.*"⁴⁴ With the debate on the future of Europe in full swing, the European Commission formulated its vision for a European Education Area by 2025 in its Communication "*Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture*".⁴⁵ The ideas formulated were intended as a contribution to the EU Leaders' meeting on 17 November 2017 in Gothenburg, where the future of education and culture was discussed. It is very clear that the Commission believes that it is in the shared interest of all Member States to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for job creation, economic growth and social fairness as well as a means to experience European identity in all its diversity.

The Communication was quickly followed up with the launch of a new "*Future of Learning*" package in January 2018, addressing key competences for lifelong learning, digital skills,

⁴³ Irene Golubeva: *The links between education and active citizenship/civic engagement*. Ad hoc Report, NESET II. 2018.

⁴⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25/rome-declaration>

⁴⁵ European Commission: *Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture*, COM(2017) 673 final. 14.11.2017. 14 p.

common values and inclusive education. The same month the first ever European Education Summit took place in Brussels, gathering over 20 national Ministers for Education to discuss equity and diversity in education.

In May 2018 the Commission presented a second package of new initiatives to further boost the role of education in view of building a European Education Area by 2025. In its May 2018 Communication on “*Building a stronger Europe: the role of youth, education and culture policies*”⁴⁶ the important role played by education, youth and culture in building the future of Europe is highlighted. The proposed measures aim to enhance learning mobility and educational opportunities in the EU, empower young people, in particular by encouraging them to participate in civic and democratic life, and harness the potential of culture for social progress and economic growth in Europe.

The Commission’s vision of building a European Education Area is based on a combination of a strengthened Erasmus+ programme, an ambitious framework for European policy cooperation in education and training, support for Member State reforms through the European Semester, and a better targeting of European funds. It also describes ongoing initiatives towards European Universities and a European student card. This package of initiatives also includes proposals for Council Recommendations on early childhood education and care, on the automatic mutual recognition of diplomas and learning periods abroad, and on improving the teaching and learning of languages.

In order to respond properly to the challenges of Europe’s future, we assume that such a European Area of education and lifelong learning, reaching out to citizens⁴⁷ should include:

- Making mobility a reality for all: by building on the positive experiences of the Erasmus+ programme and the European Solidarity Corps as well as by creating an EU Student Card to offer a new user-friendly way to store information on a person's academic records;
- The mutual recognition of higher education and school leaving diplomas: by initiating a new 'Sorbonne process' and building on the "Bologna process";
- Greater cooperation on curricula development: by making recommendations to ensure education systems impart knowledge, skills and competences that are deemed essential in today's world;
- Improving language learning: by setting a new benchmark for all young Europeans finishing upper secondary education to have a good knowledge of two languages in addition to their mother tongue(s) by 2025;
- Promoting lifelong learning: by seeking convergence and increasing the share of people engaging in learning throughout their lives with the aim of reaching 25% by 2025;
- Mainstreaming innovation and digital skills in education: by promoting innovative and digital training and preparing a new Digital Education Action Plan;

⁴⁶ European Commission: *Building a stronger Europe: the role of youth, education and culture policies*. COM(2018) 268 final, Brussels. 22.5.2018. 11 p.

⁴⁷ Luc Van den Brande: *Reaching out to EU Citizens: a New Opportunity. 'About us, with us, for us'*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the EU. 2017. 36 p.

- Supporting teachers: by multiplying the number of teachers participating in the Erasmus+ programme and eTwinning network and offering policy guidance on the professional development of teachers and school leaders;
- Strengthening networks of European universities so that interuniversity cooperation raises quality output in teaching and research;
- Investing in education: by using the European Semester to support structural reforms to improve education policy, using EU funding and EU investment instruments to fund education and setting a benchmark for Member States to invest 5% of GDP in education;
- Preserving cultural heritage and fostering a sense of a European identity and culture: by developing – using the momentum of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage – a European Agenda for Culture and preparing a Council Recommendation on common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching;
- Strengthening the European dimension of Euronews, which was created in 1993 by a number of European public broadcasters, with the ambition of having a European channel offering access to independent, high quality information with a pan-European perspective.

The current momentum should benefit from a clear commitment by Member States to give a concrete follow-up of initiatives. We wish to stress, however, that the follow-up steps by the European Commission and Member States should be rooted in a holistic vision of education, which means looking at education in its universal scope and not exclusively at one specific education/learning level or at the sole purpose of labour market demands. This is why we call for a European Education and Lifelong Learning Area which encompasses all levels, sectors and forms of learning - formal, non-formal and informal - in order to truly be of benefit to all EU citizens. After all, not all young people are students and not all students are young people - we need education policies that match this 21st century reality to live as Europeans in a globalising world.

Conclusion

This paper adopted a human-centric approach to education, analysed the right to and role of education in society, and assessed the major characteristics of the European/EU dimension of education and learning in today's fragmented world. In our conclusion, some guidelines and policy suggestions are proposed which are in line with a prospective European Education and Lifelong Learning Area.

Within a context of mounting economic, political social and cultural challenges in European societies, following conceptual education guidelines should be considered: - the valorisation of the educational and cultural dimension of citizenship-building is crucial to the morally robust engagement of the citizen in society at all governance levels; - the promotion of education for responsible citizenship and multiple identities should be understood and carried out in the wider societal context of the knowledge triangle; - a more comprehensive, international, and multi-perspective analysis of the interconnections between education and society should make societies more cohesive and sustainable; - education at various formal, informal, and non-formal levels of learning should foster a culture of peace, understanding, and dialogue, leading to active and responsible citizenship; - promotion of the internal and external dimensions of a social market economy should be a priority in educational governance and learning practice; - and finally, the

remaking of educational institutions as formal and informal learning places/spaces par excellence. These guidelines may also provide answers to the growing social problems in globalising societies.

In order to respond to these contextual and societal developments, following policy-oriented education activities are suggested within the EU context and beyond:

- promote places of intercultural learning through international exchange programmes;
- introduce innovative learning methods and tools at various educational levels;
- develop a multi-layered curriculum on integral human development to enhance understanding of the new realities of citizenship and the ongoing socio-cultural and political transformations of multicultural societies;
- launch creative incentives to learn active and responsible citizenship, since formal, non-formal, and informal learning in an interdisciplinary perspective are all necessary to preserve and enrich the political, cultural, and economic heritage of communities;
- launch an integrated strategy to foster education in human rights and responsibilities.

The search for appropriate answers, however, needs to be rooted in an enlarging and mobilising vision of global intercultural citizenship-building towards a workable and forward-looking European reality amidst a radically changing and confusing world. The role of education is fundamental to this vision. Only through integral human development in education and learning processes can a true European citizens' dialogue and participation develop. In short, a European Education and Lifelong Learning Area may contribute to building up trust in the future of the European project by transmitting understandable information, critical formation and dialogical learning and making citizens the reference for Europe as a common.