STRATEGIC NOTE

Global Citizenship Education in Belgium



Belgium
partner in development

COLOPHON

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Theodora Gentzis, Chairwoman of the Executive Committee of the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Rue des Petits Carmes 15, 1000 Brussels, Belgium, Tel +32 501 81 11, diplomatie.belgium.be

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CONTENT

Introduction 04

Definition 05

Vision 06

Strategic objectives 07

1. Fostering a critical and mobilising approach
2. Strengthening an integrated, coherent approach to GCE
3. Leave no one behind: towards a more inclusive GCE
4. Encouraging complementarities and fostering collaboration
5. Mutual, cross-fertilising and continuous reinforcement of the actors
6. Decompartmentalising and diversifying stakeholders
7. Help people to know and recognise GCE in international cooperation

Areas of work 13

1. Concertation and coordination
2. Regulatory frameworks and tools
3. Decompartmentalising GCE within international cooperation

Scope of action 16

List of acronyms 17

INTRODUCTION

Belgium has been involved in global citizenship education (GCE), formerly known as development education, since the 1980s. In 2012, the Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) adopted a strategic note on development education. A definition of development education is given in the Law on development cooperation of 19 March 2013, and constitutes one of its objectives.

This note is now being updated, not least because Belgium aligning with the new paradigm of global citizenship education (GCE) at both Belgian and international level. Indeed, the European Declaration on Global Education[1] to 2050 was adopted in November 2022. The declaration lays out the contours and prospects for GCE in Europe up to 2050. GCE is part of a systemic and critical approach that allows people to understand global issues in their complexity and interdependence. In this sense, **GCE makes it possible to analyse global issues; it encourages, supports and accompanies initiatives by civil society, education and other stakeholders to build a just and sustainable world for all living beings and their environment.** This is essential in the face of the multiple crises that have marked the 21st century (global warming, collapse of biodiversity, growing inequality, migration management, polarisation, rising extremism, misinformation,...) in which high-income countries share responsibility. The result can be a loss of bearings and a sense of insecurity. For GCE, these crises are all the more reason to raise questions about the complexity and interdependence of global issues.

This approach is also in line with the framework of the universal agenda of Sustainable Development since the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be achieved in all countries. All stakeholders in society need to be made aware, mobilised and provided with the tools to help achieve the SDGs and ensure policy coherence for development. This is why GCE is explicitly mentioned in the SDGs (target 4.7[2]) and contributes to most of the SDGs.

Belgium is recognised in Europe[3] for the proportion of its budget it devotes to GCE, the diversity of its partners, its methods and tools, the emphasis it places on GCE research and innovation, and the fact that GCE is embedded in societal debates. This note identifies Belgium's GCE vision, the objectives of the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) in this domain and the various areas of work necessary to achieve them. Following on from the 2012 strategic paper, it builds on, and aims to preserve, the strengths and achievements of GCE in Belgium, while it also incorporates more recent or still emerging ideas to reinforce them. It will serve as a guide for the DGD to pursue its GCE activities in the coming years, beyond 2030.

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1 The Declaration is the Strategy framework for improving and increasing global education in Europe to the year 2050. It was drafted and adopted by a significant number of European countries in Dublin, in November 2022.

2 SDG 4.7: «By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.» This was developed in the Incheon Declaration, focused on formal education: Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.

3 The European Global Education Peer Review Process - GENE (2016), Evaluation du service de l'évaluation spéciale (2018), Peer Reviews of the DAC (2022), among others.

DEFINITION

The definition of GCE in the European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 is the following:

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

Global Education encompasses a broad range of educational provision: formal, non-formal and informal; life-long and life-wide. We consider it essential to the transformative power of, and the transformation of, education».

In Belgium, GCE has three components: education (formal, non-formal and informal)[4], individual and collective mobilisation, and political advocacy.

4 **Formal education** refers to the structured education system that lasts from primary school (and in some countries from pre-school) to university, and includes specialised technical and vocational training programmes.

Non-formal education refers to planned and structured programmes and processes for individual and social education outside the formal educational curriculum.

Informal education is a lifelong learning process based on the educational influences and resources of the direct environment and daily life.

VISION

GCE is an integral part of international cooperation: it aims to achieve sustainable human development, eradicate poverty and exclusion, and reduce inequalities[5]. It is a pillar of international cooperation because of its strategic position, which is complementary to most international cooperation initiatives, by focusing on other target groups (the Belgian population) and using other methods. It is also cross-cutting, as it covers all themes, sectors and geographical areas.

GCE, critical and transformative education, is essential for international cooperation, as it allows citizens to understand issues such as inequality, extreme poverty, injustice, migration, various societal crises, global geopolitics and international relations, in their current and historical dimensions. It encourages people individually, but above all collectively, to develop, relay and take part in sustainable, innovative, solidarity-based and socially just solutions. Such solutions are put in place for the well-being of all, not to the detriment of certain sections of the population or other living beings. GCE fosters a global civil society which is mobilised for the major challenges of our time in international cooperation and beyond (Policy Coherence for Development). As a result, besides the components of education (formal, non-formal and informal), the components of mobilisation and political advocacy are crucial.

GCE and its actors play a vital role in imagining and proposing alternative frames of reference, for the transition towards models of society that are sustainable, responsible and based in solidarity but also more generally for active citizenship, democracy and critical engagement in the public sphere.

GCE also plays a key role in helping actors in international cooperation adapt their visions, strategies and practices to new international realities and paradigms. It plays a watchdog role, at the vanguard of international cooperation, questioning unequal power relations and dominant models, and comparing them with other models and initiatives from here and elsewhere that are more in tune with the current global challenges. GCE takes a resolutely decolonial approach and valorises diversity as a source of reflection and inspiration.

GCE should not be exported as such to different cultural contexts. Endogenous initiatives that share some of its objectives can be used as a mirror for GCE practices, and can lead to joint actions based on balanced partnerships and intercultural dialogue.

5 Chapter 2 of the Law of 19 March 2013 on development cooperation.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Fostering a critical and mobilising approach

GCE is a transformative form of education: its ambition is to steer societies towards a world of justice, solidarity and sustainability in which human rights and the rights of living beings are a fundamental value. In this sense, GCE is essentially political in the broadest sense of the term. It cultivates both a sense of joint responsibility and a spirit of resistance, of commitment to democratic institutions and opposition to all forms of inequality and discrimination. By focusing on both learning and social transformation, GCE transcends the dichotomy between a purely emancipatory and a purely instrumental approach to education. This political dimension of GCE is crucial to meeting the complexity of the challenges in society. There are two elements that need to be avoided in international cooperation and GCE. The first is having a charitable vision, in which the assumption is that global challenges will be solved by 'rich' countries or individuals, whereby the 'saviour/victim' paradigm is perpetuated. The second vision is that these problems can be solved by transferring mainstream Western capital, techniques, knowledge and/or values to other countries, and that the reverse would be irrelevant or of limited use, thereby reinforcing the domination of certain practices over preferable, little known or under-valued alternatives. **The DGD promotes critical and mobilising GCE in official texts, in its GCE programmes and in the programmes it supports.**

In order to identify individual and collective means of action, and to support people's ability to mobilise for change, GCE needs to highlight the interdependencies and multiple power relationships at work at the global and local level, the very relationships that underpin injustices and power relationships between human beings (such as gender relations), but also between human beings and other living beings. It is essential to incorporate these emancipatory and critical pedagogical approaches into all GCE activities. It is also a question of developing the political competencies and attitudes needed to bring about social change at local, regional, national and transnational levels.

GCE also makes it possible to call decision-makers to account at different levels of power on global issues and their translation into local realities. It promotes open spaces for social movements to call decision-makers to account, and strengthens participation in the existing spaces. In addition, it is essential to reflect on the role of education and on how to ensure that GCE approaches lead to more global social justice and sustainability, taking into account specific Belgian approaches (education - mobilisation - advocacy).

In the school environment, the aim is to encourage critical thinking and dialogue between different visions of the world, the universal and the models to be developed as a society.

Finally, GCE represents a space for all actors involved in international cooperation to reflect on their work. It is a space where they can debate and ask questions critically and constructively, confronting them with their own contradictions.

2. Strengthening and integrated, coherent approach to GCE

GCE is based on three components: education (formal, non-formal and informal), mobilisation and advocacy. One of the strengths of GCE in Belgium is that it works intensively in all three. These components can be combined. For example, co-constructing mobilisation or political advocacy with target groups can entail an educational component. However, these components are still too compartmentalised in terms of reflection and practice. Each level of action requires specific competences and mobilises different target groups. It is therefore legitimate for the actors to specialise. Nevertheless, for a coherent approach and for all these components to be mutually reinforcing, there needs to be a link between them. As such, for a target group approached in an educational process, it is important to offer possibilities for mobilisation. Mobilisation and advocacy must be fuelled by education. In its GCE programmes and those it supports, **the DGD promotes better coordination of the various components and an integrated approach.** This can be ensured by one actor or in complementarity with others, including actors other than those involved in GCE. The aim is to ensure that the target groups can easily access all three components, regardless of which one they started with.

3. Leave no one behind: towards a more inclusive GCE

Leave No One Behind (LNOB) is a key focus of international cooperation in general. The European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 also reaffirms the right of all Europeans to have access to high-quality GCE. Various efforts have been made in this area in Belgium: an expansion of GCE channels and tools, diverse partnerships, work with the audio-visual sector, pilot projects involving civil society organisations (CSOs) and institutional actors[6], etc. These efforts have delivered results, and have been highlighted and shared at European level as models of good practice from which other countries can learn. Even though it is still difficult to consolidate the monitoring of the target groups reached, based on the programmes monitored by the DGD, it has been observed that GCE provision is primarily concentrated on certain target groups: median socio-professional categories, urban environments, people from less diverse cultural backgrounds, 12- to 30-year-olds, people without children, secondary and general education, etc.

In the spirit of inclusiveness of LNOB, the DGD fosters the diversification of target groups in GCE in its GCE programmes, in those it supports and in the consultation frameworks in which it participates. It facilitates consultation between actors, encourages pilot projects and supports collective learning. The resources and expertise also need to be better distributed to reach more people or organisations from backgrounds or structures that stakeholders identify as under-reached, including: high and low socio-professional categories, rural areas, people from diverse cultural backgrounds, people aged 30 to 50 with children, the private sector, vocational and technical schools, pre-school children, etc. Programmes with multi-year funding are the ideal framework for investing in pilot projects. Sectoral consultation frameworks can also facilitate a collective approach to accomplishing this.

6 Institutional actors: public services or non-profit legal entities with a public-interest mission, the majority of whose members or administrators are also public services, or represent them. They are active in international cooperation and, like CSOs, work on the basis of the right of initiative. These range from the umbrella organisations of local authorities to those of higher education institutions and actors specialising in research, training or culture.

Although the social groups most reached by GCE remain relevant, their social profile broadly reflects the social backgrounds from which CSOs come from. However, other social milieus that are less reached are also organised and mobilised for causes in line with the objectives of international cooperation. A key challenge in enhancing the impact of GCE is therefore to forge alliances with organisations in these milieus, identify common objectives and set up win-win partnerships.

Above all, this means getting to know the associations and key actors in these milieus who can share objectives with GCE actors. This proactive approach could lead to collaborations that benefit all parties: reaching other target groups, sharing GCE content and methodologies, providing a sounding board for the work accomplished in these milieus, enhancing GCE with other realities and experiences that enrich both content and methods, and adopting a more inclusive social approach. This openness makes it possible to go beyond the themes inherent to international cooperation, to engage in more systemic cross-cutting questioning and make GCE more holistic. It also makes it possible to establish the vital link between the local and the global.

4. Encouraging complementarities and fostering collaboration

To achieve the goal of diversifying target groups, the DGD relies on a range of GCE partners working on themes with a variety of target groups, approaches and societal roots. It also relies on many different types of actors: civil society organisations (CSOs), institutional actors, higher education institutions, museums, film production companies, associations of cities and towns, etc. Making the most of this diversity to open up to other target groups, without fragmenting the resources, is crucial. The DGD plays a key role in ensuring that its various GCE partners work together, making the most of their complementarities and collaborating in a variety of ways, whether through complementary programmes, formal partnerships, synergies, networking or more ad hoc collaborations. There are already various forms of collaboration, such as common strategic frameworks (CSFs), joint programmes, working groups, networks, etc. These need to be strengthened, or new ones need to be created, to enhance the effectiveness of the actions.

In Belgium, GCE takes place in a particularly complex institutional context. Formal education is organised independently by the three linguistic communities, with strong intermediary actors such as networks and umbrella bodies. Mobilisation also fits in with the community's responsibilities for youth, lifelong learning and culture. Advocacy is organised in a complex system of competences, from local to international. However, GCE is primarily structured and monitored at federal level in the framework of, and drawing on the expertise of, international cooperation. Belgium's commitments to sustainable development involve all levels of government. **The DGD therefore plays a role in concertation with other public authorities on their respective competences that overlap with GCE:** education, youth, culture, local authorities, environment, etc. This involves informal contacts, collaboration between administrations, partners with organic links to other public authorities, the BeGlobal programme for education, participation in consultative bodies, etc. Respect for the mandates and autonomy of each level of authority are key principles in these initiatives.

In addition to diversifying target groups, this reinforced and regular consultation is also necessary for the following aspects:

- The strategic aspects of GCE;
- The streamlining of provision, especially where the fields of action and target

groups of different actors overlap;
• The exchange of expertise and information;
• The setting up of joint actions;
• General monitoring of actions and evaluation of the results;
• Coordination of advocacy and mutual reinforcement of messages with other public authorities;
• Exchanges across linguistic communities.

5. Mutual, cross-fertilising and continuous reinforcement of the actors

Capitalising on the knowledge and practices of GCE is difficult, because GCE subjects and methods are complex, the objectives are ambitious, the context is difficult, the change processes are long and there is a large number of actors. The challenge is to transform the experience into learning that can be shared, for the benefit of those on the ground. **The objective here for the DGD is therefore to promote the strengthening of the actors in GCE for the continuous improvement of the quality of GCE.** Due to its overview of a large number of actors and actions, the DGD can encourage and facilitate this process.

Through partnership and complementarity between actors, it is important to foster the sharing of experiences, joint improvement projects inside and outside the JSF (Joint Strategic Framework), working groups, etc. This work across linguistic communities also needs to be stimulated. The BeGlobal knowledge centre can also play an important role in bringing the GCE actors together, both among themselves and with those involved in education and research. It also monitors what is happening abroad, and popularises and disseminates pilot projects and action-research projects.

Strengthening collaborations with the humanities and social sciences research community, with a view to prompting reflection on critical GCE, is also an avenue that needs to be pursued. The emphasis needs to be placed on practices similar to GCE from countries in the 'Global South[7]', or from social groups which are not reached in Belgium, and on how these practices make it possible to understand current practices differently.

Moreover, staff turnover is higher in GCE than in other areas of international cooperation. Outside the civil service, this status is often less advantageous than for the managing of international partnerships. Given the important role of GCE in our societies, it is fundamental that the function of 'GCE officer' is recognised and valorised. Whether a cause or consequence, we also see that outside of advocacy, GCE is a field with significant female representation. This phenomenon is comparable to other undervalorised sectors such as nursing or teaching. High staff turnover and the young average age of workers hamper the possibility of capitalising on and advancing practices. This is all the more the case given the considerable reliance on volunteers, for whom it is difficult to guarantee a level of training which is sufficient for high-quality GCE. In this area, it is therefore important to launch a joint reflection on valorising and stabilising GCE staff. Similarly, there are a number of avenues to be explored for continuing professional development by and for GCE actors.

7 In this paper, for the expression 'Global South', reference is made to the conception of Abdeljalil Akkari and Magdalena Fuentes in the UNESCO publication Repenser l'éducation: alternatives pédagogiques du Sud, 2021 (freely translated): «the common denominator among the countries forming part of the very diverse Global South is probably their former status as colonies or protectorates of certain 'Global North' countries». The Global South therefore includes countries in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as most of Asia, located in both the northern and southern hemispheres.

6. Decompartmentalising and diversifying stakeholders

GCE needs to be built around a common global reflection. It is therefore essential that GCE actors further develop the links between their GCE work and that of the rest of civil society in Belgium and their partners abroad. The shared search for solutions to global challenges must be both contextual (localism) and global. It must be the result of experience sharing and dialogue with Belgian civil society as a whole, and with actors in the Global South. This would make it possible to better understand the balance of power in the Global North, and make the link with the Global South. In this way, we could gain a new understanding of Belgian practices in the area of GCE, foster a decolonised approach of actions and prevent global citizenship from being a projection of certain milieus in our society.

The complexity, scale and interdependence of the current global challenges demand a concerted effort from a wide variety of stakeholders. This calls for different kinds of multi-stakeholder partnerships that transcend the boundaries of civil society, government and higher education institutions. To achieve the objectives of GCE, we need to continually demonstrate creativity, exploring the world beyond existing partnerships and involving new participants by working with actors who have never taken part in or even heard of GCE.

The challenge is to enable multi-stakeholder partnerships to move to the next level and bring about real change. As such, **the DGD supports collaborations between CSOs, institutional actors and BeGlobal with lifelong education structures, youth organisations, social movements, farmers organisations, social actors, public bodies such as cities and municipalities, the private sector, civil society outside Belgium, etc.**

In particular, the DGD supports the most relevant collaborations to integrate cross-cutting themes. These include for example: researchers and associations with expertise in gender to deal with gender issues; researchers and environmental organisations to deal with climate and biodiversity issues; researchers and diaspora associations to deal with migration and decolonisation issues; and experts in intersectionality to deal with cross-cutting issues.

7. Help people to know and recognise GCE in international cooperation

GCE is not well known in international cooperation. GCE uses tools to communicate and raise awareness, and is aimed at a wide audience in Belgium outside the international cooperation sector. It is therefore often associated with international cooperation communication, the first steps in fund-raising and/or the broadening of the societal base for international cooperation. However, while this may be one of the consequences, it is not the objective of GCE. GCE cultivates critical thinking that can prompt a reconsideration of (certain forms of) international cooperation, while supporting the principle of responsibility and global justice.

GCE is also usually associated with young people and with teaching. However, it is aimed at the Belgian population as a whole, regardless of age. It is also taught in non-formal and informal education. In the context of political advocacy, for example, it is aimed specifically at decision-makers.

A better understanding of GCE would make it possible to deploy its strategic potential as a pillar of modern international cooperation. This would facilitate possible and relevant links with other areas and countries of expertise in international cooperation and international relations.

The DGD will continue its efforts to raise awareness of GCE, its objectives and its specific features within internatio-

nal cooperation, and will encourage GCE actors to do the same. GCE needs to be explained and understood in all its complexity by all actors involved in international cooperation, including mobilisation and political advocacy. It also highlights the need for policy coherence for development, and lays bare the contradictions inherent in international cooperation to make the sector more coherent, efficient and innovative.

International recognition of the quality of GCE in Belgium would also benefit from being known and valorised by the actors involved in international cooperation.



AREAS OF WORK

The areas of work relate to all objectives

1.Concertation and coordination

To achieve its objectives in the area of GCE, the DGD relies on third-party organisations, competent actors on the ground and partners.

Various organisations carry out activities that contribute to GCE in Belgium, each to a certain extent and depending on the resources available. Most of these initiatives have developed within civil society, thanks to the privileged contacts that CSOs enjoy with certain target groups. Thanks to their links with partners in other countries, they have gained specific knowledge of the global challenges. They have been active for decades, and the quality of their work is recognised. Most have pedagogical expertise in empowering target groups to think critically and mobilise. Many of them can therefore be regarded as strategic partners of public authorities.

Some of these actors **specialise** in GCE: GCE is part of their mission. These are mainly recognised CSOs in international cooperation, but also other non-profit organisations and a number of institutional actors. Recognised CSOs and institutional actors are autonomous actors with a right of initiative guaranteed by the law on international cooperation. They define their intervention strategies and select their target groups collectively in the context of sector-wide consultation, and also according to their own nature, vision and mission.

Other actors take initiatives and organise activities in the GCE sphere **even though this is not part of their core remit.** It is nevertheless important to take them into account, valorise them and disseminate their initiatives and best practices. They can also help leverage global citizenship initiatives through collaboration with GCE actors. These include IPSIs (Popular Initiatives of International Solidarity), educators, influencers, interest groups, companies, the media, cultural broadcasters, etc., as well as non-profit organisations such as socio-cultural associations, social actors, environmental organisations, lifelong education organisations, youth organisations, diaspora organisations, farmers' organisations, feminist organisations.

Educational institutions set out to teach children and young people to act and think critically in the context of a globalised world. As such, objectives have been laid down within formal education in the field of citizenship education, and GCE can also make a contribution in this regard. **Higher education** institutions have expertise in teaching, GCE and social change.

Higher education institutions are crucial in training decision-makers and professionals both here and abroad (via scholarships). Incorporating global issues into all curricula, as well as mobilising teachers, workers and students or cross-cutting issues such as decolonising knowledge and practices, is their primary concern.

Finally, there are also a number of **decentralised public actors** with expertise in the area of GCE, who are important for bringing the issues and mobilisation to the local level. For example, municipalities and provinces have key competences in the area of education, especially pre-school and primary education, and in many social domains. They are also in close contact with local associative networks, act as relays for initiatives on the ground, can be testing grounds for pilot projects, and are partners of various CSOs, etc. The communities themselves are competent

in the areas of education, youth, lifelong learning, culture, etc.

The DGD also develops its own GCE programmes and activities. This is primarily via the BeGlobal programme run by **Enabel**, the Belgian federal development agency. BeGlobal encourages young people to take their place as citizens of the world. In addition to supporting GCE in education, BeGlobal invests in research, focuses on actions to foster engagement among young people internationally, and promotes global citizenship within Enabel.

The DGD also co-finance the production and distribution of audiovisual projects which are part of an GCE vision for the broadest possible Belgian audience. Those projects (movies, documentaries, series, games, etc.) offer a number of advantages:

• They can describe a complex situation quickly, portray it with nuance and make it emotionally tangible;
• They can potentially be seen by an unlimited number of people;

• They can be reproduced and used by other GCE actors.

The DGD's direct partners in GCE are:
• Recognised CSOs active in GCE. They fall under two federations (ACODEV and ngo federatie) and two umbrella organisations (CNCD-11.11.11 and 11.11.11).
• Institutional actors involved in GCE. They are organised around their federation, FIABEL.
• Enabel, primarily through its BeGlobal programme.
• The private and public audio-visual sector.
• The Africa Museum in its services to the public.

These partners, which receive funding from the DGD, are key to achieving its GCE objectives. Firstly, because a strong civil society, structured and networked with global civil society, is essential to a healthy democracy, as a response to current challenges, while offering concrete opportunities for collective mobilisation. The integration of GCE issues by other public and private actors is also essential for the efficiency and relevance of the services they provide to the Belgian public. Secondly, because the DGD relies on their knowledge on the ground and their social and institutional anchoring. These various partnerships mean that the DGD has a broad view of what is being accomplished, and provide input for collective reflection in the area of GCE.

In order to build on the diversity of its partnerships and the fact that it is a hub for information sharing, the DGD plays a key role in supporting consultations on the subject of GCE, bringing together actors who do not normally come into contact with each other, sharing experiences and assessments, identifying cross-cutting challenges, etc. It organises sectoral concertation via the Belgium Joint Strategic Framework, individual concertation via Institutional Dialogues, steering committees, assessments and monitoring of programmes, and informal consultations via networking.

The DGD also plays a coordinating role with other public authorities with mandates connected to GCE, in particular education actors and other public actors involved in international cooperation. It also acts as Belgium's international interface for processes relating to GCE.

2. Regulatory frameworks and tools

The DGD's work is governed by regulatory frameworks and tools: the law on cooperation, the Royal Decrees governing governmental and non-governmental cooperation, tools for assessing and monitoring programmes, specifications for public procurement contracts, protocols, etc. These frameworks and tools influence the way GCE is implemented. They are regu-

larly enhanced through experience and evaluations. This takes place in cycles that do not necessarily coincide. **In an iterative approach, as these frameworks and regulations are successively adapted, the DGD will ensure that they are aligned and used in such a way as to achieve the pursued objectives in the area of GCE.** It will also work to ensure that they are mutually coherent.

3. Decompartementalising GCE within international cooperation

The DGD will work to promote links between GCE and other professional domains within international cooperation. It will ensure that GCE has more visibility. It will explain the objectives and scope. It will highlight how GCE can contribute to international programmes, and the benefits of having a global vision of the dynamics at work. This will be achieved in a variety of ways. These include (non-exhaustive list): including a global citizenship component in the initial and continuous training of international cooperation professionals (in particular those working abroad), formal and informal networking, more focus on linking GCE with current affairs, including GCE in various strategic documents, incorporating an GCE perspective into debates on international cooperation.

At the same time, it is also important for GCE actors to identify how international cooperation partners can contribute their vision, knowledge, practices and experiences to GCE.

GCE can prompt reflection on policy coherence for development. **The DGD will encourage mutually reinforcing actions within the various departments of public authorities and public institutions** with a view to creating synergies. It will be able to mobilise the thematic and geographical expertise of its partners in its contacts with other directorates-general of the FPS Foreign Affairs and other departments and public institutions.

SCOPE OF ACTION

Belgium: the importance of covering the whole territory

It is expected that, as part of a collective approach, GCE actors will have more of a presence in certain more overlooked areas, such as rural areas, certain cities or working-class neighbourhoods, by setting up partnerships with actors from these areas, in line with the principle of LNOB.

Europe - world, international networks

The activities related to GCE are financed outside Belgium, primarily for advocacy with multilateral institutions at the European or global level.

Involvement of international partners encouraged

Actors are strongly encouraged to open up on multiple fronts. Indeed, GCE is about interdependencies and analysing global power relations. In order to be coherent, GCE actors need to valorise the perspectives of other countries (in particular in the Global South), so that they can take a fresh look at their own practices in the light of what is being done in other places. Despite their limitations (digital divide, environmental impact, etc.) digital channels have facilitated interaction with actors from all over the world to a significant degree. It is therefore essential to give them a key role.

Reflect on the conditions for promoting GCE in the Global South from Belgium

Theoretically, the objectives in the area of GCE are relevant in every country in the world. Indeed, a strong civil society, citizens who understand the dynamics underlying contemporary challenges and who are committed to global justice are necessary everywhere. Nevertheless, GCE, as defined and understood in Belgium, conveys our own vision of the world, our own values and our own experiences. GCE as such does not exist in many countries. Moreover, the challenges are not the same everywhere as they are in Belgium and clearly not in the global South.

The idea is not to export and impose our (dominant) cultural approach on other cultural contexts. It is better to be on the lookout for initiatives in partner countries which, while not necessarily explicitly GCE, share some of its objectives. Drawing inspiration from these, or using them as a mirror for our own practices, is more useful than molding them to our own vision. It may be a question of identifying common objectives for one-off or long-term joint actions, based on balanced partnerships and intercultural dialogue.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSO: Civil Society Organisation
DAC: Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DGD: Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid
GCE: Education in Global Citizenship
GENE: Global Education Network Europe
IA: Institutional Actor
IPSI: Popular Initiatives of International Solidarity
LNOB: Leave no one behind
SDG: Sustainable Development Goal



@tdv.knut