



Country report

GLOBAL EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

The present brief report is based on the research led by Anthropolis Association¹, and the outcome of the two national seminars on global education organized by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and the HAND platform in 2010² and 2013. In addition, we add comments on the perspectives given by the National Curriculum published in 2012.

Socio-political context

We can still agree with the 2010 report stating that the realm of global education remains to be characterized rather by civil initiatives, and depends very much on the personal commitment of teachers and NGO members. Since 2010 (the right-wing government is on power) the focus of the government's strategy seems to shift rather towards national and regional approach, and there is not really an explicit will to integrate GE into the formal education. These circumstances and the lack of a National Global Education Strategy and related action plan increases the importance for an open dialogue between governmental bodies and other key actors on the field, especially as the stakeholders do not seem to have consensus and common strategy.

The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is the responsible body for development cooperation within the government and it is an important actor in GE as well by promoting GE and by providing funding. Unfortunately, their emphasis is still mainly on activities in international development and the MFA rarely funds educational and awareness raising activities.

The NGOs dealing with international development established a platform in 2003 (HAND Association) and a working group dedicated specifically to Global Education (GEWG) started working in 2007. GEWG activity is based on global needs, working with an open, dialogue based and participative method involving young people, NDGOs, teachers, educational institutes, the Hungarian Ministry of Education, other governmental bodies, the business sector and the media. In 2009 the Working Group outlined the recommended foundations for a future

¹ *Globális Nevelés: A globális nevelés helyzete és lehetőségei Magyarországon, 2010 (Global Education: Prospects of Global Education in Hungary, 2010)* (Anthropolis Association, done by Rita Galambos DIA, and Zsófia Láng)

² *Narrative report on the Hungarian National Seminar, 30 September 2010*

strategy of global education in Hungary based on a comprehensive study and that served as a background material for the discussions during the first national GE seminar held in 2010. The recommendations have been delivered to the MFA and the Ministry of Education as well, however, a genuine multi-stakeholder process should still be initiated to convert these civil recommendations into a more comprehensive strategy endorsed by civil and state actors alike.

Fortunately, due to the lobby activities of the HAND GE working group, the importance of global education is included into the National Development Strategy that was accepted in 2013. This may be in impetus for furthering the case of GE in Hungary.

Educational context

Recently, the education system has gone through important changes. The new National Curriculum (NAT) was published in 2012, and it provides the curriculum framework – the areas and themes the public education should cover. There are some possible links to GE: global problems and environmental sustainability are mentioned, and citizenship education and ethics are part of the program, too. Still, the aspects of global education are present rarely and randomly in the curricula at any level of the education, and in teacher training. So this situation has not changes much since 2010. Even if you can find educational institutions at all level of the education system open to GE or already practically incorporating the aspects of global education into their activities (but calling it differently), but these examples in most of the cases stand alone and don't form the part of any system. Basically, it still depends on the individual decision and motivation of the teacher how much they integrate global issues in to the class work. In many cases, it is realized in cooperation with civil associations.

Moreover, global topics do not really appear in the textbooks, and in general the lack of good teaching material (and in Hungarian) is an obstacle, too.

All in all, even if the number of initiatives have increased, the main problem remains that sustainable cooperation between the sectors and the low number of sustainable projects partly due to the unpredictable funding. Moreover, the report concludes that important steps have been made in awareness raising concerning sustainable development and environmental awareness within the primary and the secondary education (referring to the eco-school and the forest school initiatives), but there has been little progress in terms of democracy education and active citizenship competences.

As for the higher education, there is some progressive initiatives (Multicultural Education Teacher MA program of ELTE Centre of Intercultural Pedagogy and Psychology, sustainability education and cultural geography as part of the themes

of the Department of Social Geography and Urban Studies at the university of Pécs), but it is not generally integrated.

GE is present more in the non-formal education settings. Civil society organisations take active part from the very beginning, and they have introduced the GE in the non-formal education system. Some remarkable civil initiatives include the compilation of GE teaching materials (Anthropolis, Artemisszió, Zöld Híd), and since 2008 there is a Global Education Knowledge Centre operating in Budapest by Anthropolis.

School linking

School linking with European schools has been run through the Comenius initiative of the EC. However, linking with Southern schools as an educational method is very rarely used in Hungary. We know about two initiatives: 'Connecting Classrooms' is run by the British Council, and it connects around 60 schools from UK, Hungary and other countries from around the world. The Foundation for Africa realized a project (called HÍD, 'bridge') that connects African and Hungarian schools and students, and focuses on a humanitarian action, and at the same time provides a forum to discuss global themes.