



International Conference Education, Citizenship, World Which school for which society?

Lisboa, 28 & 29 May 2019

Declaration on Education and Citizenship

Meeting in Lisbon in the framework of the International Conference “Education, Citizenship, World: Which school for which society?”, promoted by institutions with intervention in four continents — Africa, America, Asia and Europe — leaders and experts of public services, international organizations and civil society, young students and teachers, reflected on the role of the public school in building democratic societies, in a changing global context and with increasing interdependence.

Drawing attention to the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, whose action has been a key milestone in promoting Democracy and defending it by valuing Human Rights and the Rule of Law, in the European continent, particularly through Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights, an emblematic project of the Organization, as far as the education sector is concerned, for more than two decades.

Recognising, in the context of the 70th anniversary of the Organization of Iberoamerican States for Education, Science and Culture, OEI, that its action, consolidated in the Institute of Education in Human Rights and Democracy, is an example of how education should seek to contribute to individual and collective education, but also generate empowerment over individual duties and rights as an essential pillar for the democratic exercise of citizenship.

Taking into account that the Community of the Portuguese-speaking countries — CPLP, which commemorates the CPLP Youth Year in 2019, has inscribed in the Youth Charter of the Community, signed at the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sport, that “the promotion of a culture of peace and tolerance, the fight against hate speech, the respect for Human Rights and conflict prevention” are central objectives of cooperation, recognising “young people as subjects of rights and political subjects”, and that in the Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Education, approved by the IX Meeting of Ministers of Education of the CPLP in Dili, the importance of strengthening the link between education, training, employment, citizenship and human rights is highlighted as a strategic goal, as well as the assurance of free, quality, socio-referenced and inclusive public education from the perspective of rights humans.



Considering the importance given to Citizenship Education, in the context of the Democratic State, in Portugal, enshrined in the Constitution of 1976 and the Basic Education System Act of 1986. Taking into account the valuable experience that Portugal has to offer in this field and its framework, Students Profile when leaving compulsory schooling in conjunction with other measures and instruments of educational policy, in particular the National Citizenship Education Strategy, Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility, Inclusive Education and Essential Learnings.

Aware that society is in a process of profound change and growing complexity and that apprenticeships, key competences, pedagogical methods and practices should contribute to the challenge ensuring that all students learn with quality and succeed, regardless of their contexts of origin and host.

Certain that Education is a fundamental human right and essential for the exercise of all other rights, a powerful force to guarantee that all children and young people can acquire knowledge, develop skills, attitudes and values which enables them to have a critical and informed understanding of reality in order to act responsibly building a better future and a more sustainable world.

Conscious that the fruitful exchange of work practices, partnerships and policy guidelines contribute to the strengthening of the exercise of Democratic Citizenship through Education.

Participants recognize the following:

1. Transformations of society must go hand in hand with respect for Human Rights and democratic principles, which requires a strong commitment by public authorities in the decision-making process at their different levels, while School continues to play a key role in this process.
2. Living these principles and rights implies the development of a wide range of competences and values by all citizens.
3. Education plays an essential role in promoting fundamental values such as Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law and in preventing violations of those principles and rights, and is a mean of fighting the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance.
4. Education for democratic citizenship is a key element for the virtuous development of Democracy, for the promotion of good governance-transparent, effective and promoter of peace and equality linked to citizens who are involved and who recognize themselves in it.



5. A “whole-of-school” approach is relevant, in order to ensure active and multidimensional responses and processes, based on the needs of each school community, through the adoption of dynamic and multidimensional processes, transversal to the entire school community, providing students forms of participation in defining priorities for action in collaboration with families and partnership with other community actors.
6. Teaching practices should be supported in order to promote information mobilization, knowledge, the development of skills associated with critical thinking and problem solving, putting into practice values and ethical action linked to citizenship and to the respect of social well-being and environmental awareness, recognising young students as subjects of rights and as political subjects.
7. Education systems that contribute to training citizens able to participate in social and civic life at local, national and international level, need to be develop. That supports transformative processes through conscious, competent and responsible intervention. That helps building fair, peaceful, cohesive and multicultural societies, focussed on human dignity and sustainable development, in line with the UNESCO’s action plan and the UN 2030 Agenda.
8. Global and mutual commitments to this areas of action should be maintained and further strengthened.