

“OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION POLICIES FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN NORTH-CENTRAL SPAIN”

ESTUDIOS

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1. Brief Contextualization

"An analysis of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain reveals sustained progress and increasing recognition within the education system since the late 20th century." Its origins lie in values education, development education, and human rights education programs promoted since the 1990s, which introduced a critical and justice-oriented view of global inequalities. The real breakthrough came in 2006 with the incorporation of the subject Education for Citizenship and Human Rights under the Organic Law on Education (LOE), which represented a decisive step towards its integration into the curriculum.

a. Key concepts: terminology and definitions

In recent decades, the evolution of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain has been marked by the influence of international organizations, national policies, and regional decisions. This process has given rise to a diversity of terminology that reflects the different approaches to its implementation.


Regional education authorities, such as the Departments of Education of the Basque Government, Navarre, Aragon, Cantabria, and Galicia, have begun integrating GCE into specific in-service teacher training programs. In the Basque Country and Navarre, dedicated strategies have been developed to promote the mainstreaming of GCE within the curriculum. Galicia, La Rioja, and Cantabria have implemented pilot initiatives and educational projects within the framework of innovation or cooperation programs, aimed at assessing the feasibility of a more structured inclusion of GCE in the curriculum. In Aragon, agreements have been established with NGOs to provide teacher training and to design specific educational materials on GCE.

The main concepts that have defined the Spanish educational environment are:

- Education for Sustainable Development (**ESD**), incorporated into the educational agenda through cross-curricular integration.
- Education for Global Citizenship (GCE), whose conceptual development was consolidated in 2006 with the LOE.
- Education for Development (**EpD**), promoted by the AECID and specialized NGOs.
- Global Education (**GE**) and Global Learning, introduced in some progressive regional curricula.
- Human Rights Education (**HRE**), present in training programs for school coexistence.
- Civic and citizenship education, integrated into the LOMLOE.

b. Key actors

The main actors involved in the implementation of Education for Global Citizenship (GCE) in Spain are:

-  **Educational administrations:** the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the Regional Ministries of Education of the Autonomous Communities of Spain, responsible for educational regulations and curriculum development. They carry out studies and design teacher training programs.

- ✚ **Educational centers and teachers:** key elements in the application of GCE through innovative methodologies, cross-curricular approaches, and teacher training.
- ✚ **Non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs):** promoters of awareness-raising and training projects in GCE, many of them in collaboration with public administrations and educational institutions.
- ✚ **Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID):** a leading public body in the promotion of Education for Development and Global Citizenship within Spanish cooperation policy. Its work is part of the Strategy for Education for Development and Global Citizenship (2017), a document that establishes the guidelines and priorities for integrating this approach into the educational and awareness-raising actions promoted by Spanish cooperation.
- ✚ **Universities and research institutes:** generate knowledge about, carry out studies and design teacher training programs, and collaborate in the development of educational materials.

Through interviews with these actors, we have identified a high awareness of the importance of GCE, but also a perception of a lack of time and resources to implement it effectively in schools.

c. Chronology of policies in the country

Since 2006, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain has undergone a process of transformation marked by advances and setbacks depending on the political context and international guidelines. The approval of the Organic Law on Education (LOE) in 2006 was a key step in the introduction of the subject Education for Citizenship and Human Rights, designed to promote democratic values, human rights, and equality. However, its implementation generated controversy and, with the arrival of the Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE) in 2013, it was replaced by subjects such as Social and Civic Values (primary) and Ethical Values (secondary), which meant a narrowing of the critical and global perspective of GCE in the school curriculum.

Despite this change, the international commitment to the 2030 Agenda prompted new strategies to strengthen Education for Global Citizenship. In 2017, the AECID presented its Strategy for Education for Development and Global Citizenship, with the aim of promoting its integration into education and cooperation. However, until 2020, the implementation of these approaches continued to depend largely on political will and differences in curriculum development between autonomous communities.

With the approval of Organic Law 3/2020 (LOMLOE) and the publication of the 2022 Royal Decrees on the curriculum, Values Education regained a prominent role within the education system through the subject Civic and Ethical Values Education, which incorporates content on social justice, sustainability, cultural diversity, and gender equality.

Since then, strategic documents such as the Spanish Strategy for Sustainable Development 2030 (Government of Spain, 2022) and the Spanish Cooperation Action Plan 2023 have emphasized the need to strengthen teacher training in these areas and to develop teaching resources consistent with the approaches of Education for Global Citizenship.

Despite these advances, the implementation of GCE in Spain continues to pose significant challenges. The lack of time within the curriculum, the uneven implementation across autonomous communities, and the insufficiency of specific resources continue to limit its real impact in schools. To effectively consolidate GCE, greater institutional commitment, a more uniform implementation strategy, and enhanced teacher training to ensure its development across all stages of education will be essential.

d. Existence or absence of specific official documents

This research has found that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain lacks a specific regulatory framework governing it in a structured way within the education system. Its presence is instead dispersed across various laws, national strategies, and international commitments adopted by the country in the fields of education and cooperation.

Beyond education legislation, GCE has also been promoted through Spain's international cooperation policies and strategic frameworks. In 2017, AECID launched the Strategy for Education for Development and Global Citizenship, a key reference for fostering the integration of these approaches in both formal and non-formal education. Likewise, the Spanish Strategy for Sustainable Development (2022) and the Spanish Cooperation Action Plan (2023–2024) have reinforced the relevance of GCE within Spain's commitments to the 2030 Agenda and SDG 4.7. However, none of these documents establishes its binding nature within the school curriculum, leaving its implementation subject to the interpretation of educational administrations.

Consequently, although there are regulatory frameworks and strategies that include elements of GCE, its effective implementation still depends largely on political will, teacher training, and the resources available in each autonomous community. To ensure a more consistent and systemic presence of GCE across the education system, it would be necessary to develop a specific regulatory framework that guarantees its structural integration and sets out clear criteria for its application at all educational stages.

2. Key policy documents

2.1. Main documents and their relevance to GCE in Spain

The development of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain has been influenced by a combination of national regulations and international frameworks that have guided its integration into the education system and cooperation policies. Various institutional actors have promoted key documents that reflect the country's commitment to teaching values linked to global citizenship, sustainable development, and social justice. The main documents are presented below, organized by actor, highlighting their objectives and links to international references.

1. Documents promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union, and Cooperation (MAEC) and AECID



a. Strategy for Education for Development and Global Citizenship (AECID, 2017)

This document, prepared by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), marks a turning point in the integration of GCE into international cooperation. It is structured as a roadmap for strengthening education in global values in Spain, promoting collaboration between NGOs, universities, and public administrations. Its link to the United Nations 2030 Agenda, especially SDG 4.7, makes it a benchmark for the integration of GCE into formal and non-formal education.

b. Spanish Cooperation Action Plan (2023-2024)

This plan defines the priorities for international cooperation, highlighting the need to integrate GCE into educational programs and global awareness strategies. It emphasizes the role of teacher training and the development of teaching materials that reinforce the teaching of global citizenship values. Its alignment with the policies of GCE, UNESCO, and the European Union places it within the framework of international education for development strategies.

c. Spanish Sustainable Development Strategy (2022)

Conceived as a reference for the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda in Spain, this strategy reinforces education as a key tool in the fight against inequality and climate change. Its emphasis on education for sustainable development and global citizenship is linked to the recommendations of UNESCO and the EU, establishing specific commitments for its implementation in the Spanish education system.

II. Documents promoted by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEFP)

d. Organic Law on Education (LOE, 2006) and its amendment with the LOMLOE (2020)

The Organic Law on Education (LOE, 2006) incorporated, for the first time, into the Spanish education system a specific subject aimed at promoting Citizenship Education, under the name Education for Citizenship and Human Rights. Its removal in 2013, following the approval of the Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE), represented a regression in the integration of values linked to Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into the curriculum. Subsequently, the entry into force of Organic Law 3/2020 on Education (LOMLOE) recovered part of this approach through the creation of the subject Education in Civic and Ethical Values, which addresses content related to social justice, equality, cultural diversity, human rights, and sustainability in a cross-curricular manner. This regulation is in line with UNESCO's Recommendations on Education for Global Citizenship (2015) and with Spain's commitment under Sustainable Development Goal 4.7, which aims to ensure education that promotes human rights, gender equality, a culture of peace and non-violence, and respect for diversity. According to UNESCO, education plays a fundamental role in training critical and committed citizens, capable of contributing to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, and sustainable world. The integration of GCE into national education systems is therefore considered essential for achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 4.7.

e. Curriculum for the subject "Civic and Ethical Values Education" (LOMLOE, 2020)

This curriculum establishes the principles of Education for Global Citizenship within the Spanish education



system. Its content includes education in human rights, sustainable development, and cultural diversity, promoting critical thinking and citizen participation. Its structure is influenced by the guidelines of the European Union and the OECD, which have emphasized the importance of teaching active citizenship.

III. Documents promoted by international organizations

f. Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 (UN, 2015)

The 2030 Agenda establishes a global framework for the integration of education for sustainable development and global citizenship into the education systems of member countries. SDG 4.7 requires States to ensure that students acquire knowledge and skills that promote peace, equality, and social justice, key aspects of GCE in Spain.

g. UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Global Citizenship 2015

This document establishes the fundamental principles of GCE as a key educational approach for training critical and engaged citizens. Its guidelines have served as a reference for integrating GCE into Spanish legislation, influencing both the LOMLOE and the Spanish Strategy for Sustainable Development.

h. Global Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development 2020-2030 (UNESCO)

This UNESCO document reinforces the need to integrate education for sustainability and global citizenship into national curricula. In Spain, it has influenced educational planning and the strategies promoted by the MAEC and the MEFP.

2.2. Context of the document's preparation

The development of documents on Education for Global Citizenship (GCE) in Spain has not been an isolated process, but rather the result of a confluence of political factors, international commitments, and educational reforms that have shaped its evolution in the education system and cooperation policies. In recent years, the need to strengthen education in global values has been conditioned by legislative changes, sustainable development strategies, and the adaptation of the Spanish education system to international guidelines.

One of the key factors that has determined the drafting of these documents has been the influence of Spain's international commitments, especially following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this context, SDG 4.7 has been a benchmark for the inclusion of GCE in national education strategies. This alignment with global commitments has led to the development of documents such as the Strategy for Education for Development and Global Citizenship (AECID, 2017) and the Spanish Strategy for Sustainable Development (2022), which reinforce the role of education in the development of a critical citizenship committed to social and environmental justice.

At the regulatory level, the evolution of education legislation in Spain has been another key factor in the drafting of documents on GCE. With the approval of the Organic Law on Education (LOE, 2006), the teaching



of civic values was established for the first time as part of the curriculum through the subject Education for Citizenship and Human Rights. However, its subsequent removal under the LOMCE (2013) created a void in citizenship education, prompting various academic and social sectors to call for its reinstatement. This pressure led to the approval of the LOMLOE (2020), which reintroduced values education through the subject Civic and Ethical Values Education, adopting an approach more aligned with international commitments and the principles of GCE.

In addition to the regulatory framework, the drafting of documents in this area has been closely linked to development cooperation policy, particularly within the framework of AECID and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (MAEC). The Development Education and Global Citizenship Strategy (2017) was drawn up at a time when Spain was strengthening its role in educational cooperation, integrating GCE as a key pillar of its awareness-raising and training strategies. Subsequently, the Spanish Cooperation Action Plan (2023–2024) has consolidated this line of work, establishing concrete measures to strengthen GCE in educational programmes, both formal and non-formal.

The context in which these documents were drafted has also been influenced by political and social factors. Since the introduction of values education under the LOE, the debate on Global Citizenship Education has been contentious in Spain, marked by opposing views between those advocating its consolidation as a central component of the curriculum and those sectors that regard it as an ideological imposition. These tensions have shaped the way regulatory and strategic documents on GCE have been designed and implemented, resulting in uneven application across the autonomous communities.

At the same time, social change and global challenges have acted as catalysts in the drafting of documents on GCE. Growing concern over the climate crisis, digital disinformation and the rise of hate speech have led organisations such as UNESCO and the European Union to reinforce their recommendations on the need to educate new generations in critical thinking and democratic values. In this context, documents such as UNESCO's Recommendation on Education for Global Citizenship (2015) and the Global Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2020–2030) have served as key references for the drafting of documents in Spain, influencing both education legislation and cooperation strategies.

2.3 Levels and forms of implementation of Education for Global Citizenship (GCE) in Spain

The implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain has followed a progressive development influenced by regulatory changes, teacher training strategies, and specific programs promoted by public administrations and third sector organizations. Its application covers different levels, from educational legislation to specific projects in schools and local communities. Over time, key milestones have consolidated its presence in the education system, ensuring its alignment with international commitments, especially the 2030 Agenda and SDG 4.7.

a. Levels of implementation of GCE in Spain

The GCE has been implemented through three main levels, **A large proportion of teachers acknowledge that they do not have sufficient pedagogical preparation to incorporate these contents** each with specific strategies and concrete measures:



- **Regulatory and political level (Ministry of Education and Autonomous Communities)**

This level establishes the legal and regulatory framework governing the integration of GCE into the Spanish education system through successive legislative reforms:

- Organic Law on Education (LOE, 2006): Introduction of the subject Education for Citizenship and Human Rights, with the aim of strengthening education in democratic values and fundamental rights.
- Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (LOMCE, 2013): Elimination of the subject and reduction of the focus on Global Citizenship in the curriculum.
- Organic Law Amending the LOE (LOMLOE, 2020): Partial restoration of values education through the subject Civic and Ethical Values Education, incorporating approaches aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

- **Level of awareness and cooperation (NGOs, universities, and international projects)**

This level focuses on collaboration between educational and social entities to strengthen GCE beyond the classroom.

- Implementation of awareness-raising projects in schools and colleges to foster active citizenship.
- Partnerships with NGOs and educational networks to integrate service-learning experiences.
- Cooperation with international organizations, ensuring the funding and continuity of GCE initiatives.

Examples of implementation

- **Case 1: Integration of GCE into the school curriculum in the Basque Country**

Description: In 2018, the Basque Government implemented a Global Citizenship Education program in secondary schools, in line with SDG 4.7.

Strategy: Creation of teaching materials, teacher training, and evaluation of the impact on students.

Results: Increased awareness of global justice and strengthening of students' critical thinking skills.

- **Case 2: Service learning and GCE in schools in Madrid**

Description: Project in collaboration with an NGDO, enabling students to participate in activities



with social impact.

Strategy: Training in global citizenship and development of community projects on migration and sustainability.

Results: Increased awareness and active participation of students in social initiatives.

- **Case 3: "Solidarity Schools" project in Navarre**

Description: Program developed by the Department of Education of the Government of Navarre in collaboration with the NGO Coordination Committee of Navarre, aimed at strengthening Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in schools. Its methodology combines project-based learning (PBL) and service learning, encouraging student participation in initiatives that connect curriculum content with social, environmental, and community realities.

Strategy: Integration of GCE into areas such as Social Sciences, Philosophy, and Civic and Ethical Values Education, promoting a network between secondary schools and cooperation with social organizations to develop projects with local impact linked to sustainability, equity, and global justice.

Results: Greater critical awareness of global inequalities and the climate crisis, as well as increased civic engagement and active participation of students in their environment.

2.4 Evaluation of implementation

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is recognized within the Spanish regulatory framework through the LOMLOE (2020), which reinforces its integration into the school curriculum, particularly within the subject Civic and Ethical Values Education. However, the absence of specific national evaluation guidelines has led to uneven implementation across autonomous communities and educational institutions.

a. Is GCE assessed in formal education?

Although GCE is covered by Spanish education regulations, its assessment is not uniformly regulated within the Spanish education system. Its assessment is irregular and depends on the initiative of regional administrations and educational institutions themselves. To improve its monitoring and measurement, it would be necessary to:

- Define common indicators to assess its impact on student learning.
- Unify assessment criteria to ensure equitable application across all autonomous communities.
- Provide teachers with specific tools and training in GCE assessment.
- Incorporate the perceptions of students and families into the evaluation process to understand the real impact of this content.



b Who is involved in the evaluation process?

The responsibility for evaluating GCE lies with various stakeholders, but their degree of involvement and capacity for impact is uneven:

- Ministry of Education and Vocational Training: Defines the curriculum guidelines but does not establish specific indicators for GCE assessment.
- Autonomous Communities: They have the autonomy to adapt the curriculum and, in some cases, have developed their own assessment strategies, although without coordination at the national level.
- Educational centers and teachers: They are responsible for implementing and evaluating GCE in the classroom, but in many cases they lack specific training and adequate tools to measure its impact.
- Educational inspection: Supervises the implementation of the curriculum, but without a specific methodology for evaluating GCE.
- Students and families: Their participation in the evaluation is limited, as there are no official mechanisms for gathering their perceptions of global citizenship learning.

2.5 Role of different actors in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy documents

The development of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain is a process involving various actors with different levels of responsibility. From international organizations to educational administrations and civil society, each of them contributes to the definition, application, and monitoring of policies in this area. However, the lack of coordination and a uniform evaluation system has led to significant inequalities in its application.

a. Development of GCE policies

International frameworks, state guidelines, and cooperation strategies influence the formulation of GCE policies in Spain.

Supranational organizations (UN, UNESCO, EU, OECD) establish the global regulatory framework and finance programs for its development (SDG 4.7, Education 2030).

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training adapts these recommendations to Spanish legislation through the LOMLOE (2020).

The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), through its Strategy for Education for Development and Global Citizenship, promotes the integration of GCE into education and awareness-raising.



The autonomous communities and municipalities have the authority to adapt and implement GCE in their territories, which leads to differences in its application.

NGDOs and civil society play a key role in political advocacy, promoting proposals and collaborating in the design of educational plans.

b. Implementation of GCE policy

The implementation of GCE in the education system depends on coordinated action between administrations, educational institutions, and specialized organizations.

The Ministry of Education and the autonomous communities are responsible for including GCE in the curriculum and promoting teacher training in this area.

The AECID promotes educational projects, produces materials, and funds training initiatives in Global Citizenship Education.

Educational centers and teachers apply GCE in the classroom, adapting it to their context and promoting active methodologies.

NGDOs and civil society develop awareness-raising programs, support teacher training, and promote service-learning experiences.

c. Evaluation of GCE in Spain

Therefore, despite its integration into educational regulations, GCE lacks a uniform evaluation system, which makes it difficult to measure its real impact on students.

The Ministry of Education and the Autonomous Communities supervise its implementation through the Education Inspectorate, although without standardized criteria.

The AECID evaluates the impact of its educational projects and publishes studies on the implementation of GCE in the education system.

NGDOs and development education networks produce reports on the integration of GCE into regional curricula.

Supranational organizations (UNESCO, OECD, EU) publish studies on citizenship education, although without focusing specifically on the situation in Spain.

d. Links and challenges in the implementation of GCE

Cooperation between stakeholders is key to the development of GCE, although the lack of a common framework for action has led to significant regional differences.

The AECID acts as a link between educational administrations and NGDOs, facilitating the implementation of GCE programs.

There are significant differences between the autonomous communities, which affects equity in GCE teaching.

There is no unified state assessment system, which makes it difficult to monitor the impact of these policies on students.

In conclusion, the development of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain requires stronger and more sustained coordination between the Ministry of Education, the AECID, the autonomous communities, and NGOs. Although progress has been made in its implementation, territorial disparities and the absence of a uniform evaluation system remain significant obstacles. To consolidate GCE within the education system, it is necessary to:

- Strengthen inter-institutional coordination to ensure its equitable application in all autonomous communities.
- Define a common assessment system to measure its impact on student learning.
- Strengthen teacher training in GCE and promote active teaching methodologies.
- Incorporate the participation of students and civil society in the design and monitoring of these policies.

3 Contributions from stakeholders

3.1. Brief description of the methodology

The research is based on a qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of how Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is being incorporated into the education systems of communities in north-central Spain. The purpose has been to analyze the institutional dynamics and pedagogical practices that favor or limit its effective integration in schools.

To this end, fieldwork was carried out combining different information-gathering techniques: semi-structured interviews based on the GET project's methodological script, focus group meetings, and a detailed review of regulatory documents, regional plans, and educational materials used in the classroom.

The selection of participants focused on key actors within the education system, including secondary and high school teachers, school management teams, technical staff from regional and national education administrations, and representatives of social organizations that regularly collaborate with schools on awareness-raising and educational transformation initiatives.

The study was carried out in Navarre, La Rioja, the Basque Country, Aragon, Castile and Leon, and Cantabria, regions with diverse trajectories in the incorporation of GCE. This diversity has made it possible to identify common patterns and regional particularities, offering a broad and contextualized view of its actual application. The analysis has made it possible to gather experiences, perceptions, and everyday challenges that are rarely reflected in official reports, thus providing a closer look at educational practice.

Profile of the main actors interviewed

The selection of participants responded to the aim of bringing together a diverse and representative sample of the key actors involved in the incorporation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in the educational field. The aim was to reflect the plurality of voices present in the system, including different levels of responsibility,



functions, and types of centers, with the aim of offering a broad and realistic view of the progress and difficulties accompanying its application in schools.

Those interviewed included management teams, teachers from different educational stages, and families linked to both public and charter schools. Technicians from non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) with proven experience in the design and implementation of GCE projects, both in formal contexts and in awareness-raising actions aimed at the educational community, also participated. In addition, the study benefited from the collaboration of university professors specializing in global citizenship, whose contributions allowed the results to be contextualized from an academic and critical perspective.

The combination of these profiles has enriched the analysis, allowing for the comparison of perspectives and placing the research in the real contexts where GCE is developed. This approach has facilitated a more accurate understanding of the conditions, strategies, and resistance that affect its integration into the education systems of north-central Spain.

Data collection techniques and number of participants

The research combined semi-structured personalized interviews (based on a script provided by the research coordination team) within a discussion group. This methodological strategy allowed for the collection of diverse and complementary information on the incorporation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in the educational environment of north-central Spain. The profiles of the participants, the techniques used, and the application of the interviews according to the script established by the study coordination team are presented below.

Profile of the interviewees	Technique used	Number of participants	GET form applied
School principals	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	2	Yes
University professor	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	1	Yes
Director of a UNESCO Chair	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	1	Yes
Representative of the Education Commission of an NGDO Coordinating Committee	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	10	Yes
Parents of students in public and subsidized schools	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	3	Yes
NGO technicians with experience in CDG and awareness-raising	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	5	Yes
Secondary school and university teaching staff	"Semi-structured personalized interviews using a script provided by the research coordination team."	2	Yes
Focus group composed of one representative from each of the profiles plus one representative from the Regional Ministry of Education of an autonomous community.	Focus group	Taken as 100% of the sample	Yes

This methodology has made it possible to capture a wide range of perspectives, combining individual analysis with group interaction, and ensuring a solid basis for interpreting the results from a plural and contextualized perspective.

Data analysis

The information gathered through personalized semi-structured interviews—based on a script developed by the research coordination team—and a focus group was analyzed using a qualitative approach. This analysis focused on understanding the meanings that different educational stakeholders attribute to the presence of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in their schools. The main objective was to identify how this approach is being implemented in the educational context of north-central Spain, as well as the factors that facilitate or hinder its integration.

The analysis was conducted with the eight members of the focus group, representing 100% of the sample used for this instrument. This reference made it possible to organize their contributions and identify both shared perspectives and differing views within a space for collective reflection.

3.2 Global citizenship education in formal education: policies and institutional framework

In the communities of north-central Spain, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) has found support within state regulations, especially since 2020, with the entry into force of the LOMLOE. This law, applicable throughout the national territory, incorporates principles and values aligned with the international commitments of the 2030 Agenda, such as equity, sustainability, human rights, and democratic coexistence. However, although it establishes a favorable legal framework, its application in educational institutions largely depends on the political decisions of each autonomous community and the resources allocated to developing this approach.

The picture is particularly diverse among the north-central regions. In Navarre, for example, significant steps have been taken toward the genuine integration of GCE. The Department of Education is promoting plans and programs that link this approach to a vision of an open and inclusive school committed to social transformation. Collaborative work with social organizations and the provision of specific teacher training have helped create more coherent, sustainable, and context-appropriate educational experiences. A similar situation exists in the Basque Country, where Global Citizenship Education is part of a broader strategy of Education for Social Transformation (ETCG). In this case, collaboration among public administrations, NGOs, and educational institutions has helped consolidate a stable framework that ensures the continuity and impact of initiatives.

In contrast, in communities such as Cantabria, La Rioja, and Madrid, the situation is less favorable. Although national legislation is formally applied, no specific regional strategies have been developed to promote GCE, nor have plans been drawn up to integrate it across the education system. This means that its presence in schools depends, in most cases, on the initiative of teachers or on specific proposals developed by external organizations, as in La Rioja and Cantabria.

In the case of Galicia, although there are general references to global citizenship in curriculum frameworks, its practical application remains uneven and depends largely on the initiative of certain schools or on projects promoted by Galician cooperation. In Aragon, GCE has gained ground through educational innovation plans and agreements between the regional government and local entities. Even so, there is still no consolidated strategy to expand these experiences across the entire system.

A common challenge across all these territories is the weak coordination among the different actors involved. Despite the sustained efforts of many NGOs to develop materials, activities, and methodologies with a transformative approach, these initiatives are not yet fully integrated into official educational structures. The lack of formal mechanisms to ensure their continuity, evaluation, and scalability makes it difficult for them to evolve from isolated experiences into an integral part of schools' educational projects.

Moreover, most communities lack monitoring tools to assess the actual impact of GCE in classrooms. The absence of clear and shared indicators limits both institutional recognition of good practices and the potential for systematic improvement. However, some pilot experiences are beginning to emerge—within the framework of innovation plans or sustainable development strategies—that could help lay a more solid foundation for the future evaluation of this approach.

In short, although GCE enjoys regulatory support at the state level and valuable experiences exist in different parts of the country, its effective implementation in schools continues to depend largely on local factors. For GCE to move from a peripheral position to become a structural component of the education system, regional administrations need to take an active role, allocate specific resources, promote teacher training, and strengthen collaboration networks with civil society.

3.3 Integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into Secondary Schools in North-Central Spain

In schools across north-central Spain, the incorporation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) remains partial, uneven, and, in many cases, marked by discontinuity. As previously mentioned, although the LOMLOE, as a national framework, incorporates education based on equity, sustainability, human rights, and social justice among its guiding principles, its actual implementation largely depends on how these standards are translated into regional policies and on the capacity of schools to bring these principles into classroom practice. The law alone does not guarantee consistent or structured practices. Effective implementation requires concrete support, political will, and favorable pedagogical conditions within the local context.

Based on the interviews conducted and the testimonies gathered through the focus group, it is clear that widespread difficulties persist in incorporating GCE in a structured manner across educational institutions. In most cases, this approach is not explicitly reflected in institutional documents such as school education projects or teaching programs. Where it is present, it tends to be limited to specific activities, often linked to campaigns promoted by third-sector NGOs. While enriching, these actions frequently lack long-term pedagogical planning, which hinders their integration into the curriculum and weakens their transformative potential. The absence of continuity and alignment with learning objectives prevents GCE from becoming an essential component of the educational process.

Within this context, the degree of commitment shown by autonomous communities has led to significant differences in the implementation of GCE. In Navarre, the Department of Education has promoted specific policies that facilitate the incorporation of a global approach into the planning and development of educational projects. Through initiatives such as the Open School Plan, the Coeducation Plan, and calls for proposals linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, the necessary conditions have been created to move toward more coherent and sustained integration.

In the Basque Country, where GCE is embedded within the broader Education for Social Transformation (ETCG) strategy, robust structures for teacher training, pedagogical support, and collaboration with NGOs have been consolidated. This coordinated work has strengthened teachers' capacities and fostered stable educational practices with tangible classroom impact.

Aragon and Galicia show a more intermittent development in the incorporation of GCE. In Aragon, innovative educational experiences have been promoted that address global challenges through Project-Based Learning (PBL), particularly in schools participating in innovation programs recognized by the regional government, as well as in institutions supported by municipalities or engaged in direct collaboration with social organizations.

Galicia, for its part, has promoted initiatives in the field of international cooperation but still lacks a comprehensive educational strategy that articulates a global approach across all stages. In both regions, GCE is advancing thanks to the commitment of teachers and local entities, though still without the systematic backing of a consolidated regional policy that ensures continuity and expansion.

Conversely, communities such as Cantabria, La Rioja, and Madrid have not developed specific frameworks to promote GCE from a structured educational perspective. In these territories, its presence depends almost exclusively on the personal commitment of certain teaching teams or on specific collaborations with NGOs. In Madrid, the absence of clear guidelines and the lack of institutional openness to transformative approaches hinder the continuity of projects with a global dimension.



The most significant progress is observed in schools that have adopted active methodologies, particularly Project-Based Learning (PBL). This approach has proven effective for addressing curriculum content from a critical, interdisciplinary perspective connected to major global challenges. Projects focusing on climate change, migration, equity, and responsible consumption have provided students with opportunities to research, reflect, and act, fostering participatory and inclusive learning environments grounded in real-world issues. However, even these successful experiences require an institutional context that guarantees their continuity: administrative support, teacher coordination, and, above all, sufficient time and resources for sustained development.

Another major obstacle identified by teachers is the lack of adequate teaching materials. Most teachers report that they do not have access to resources that are up to date or adapted to different educational levels, making it difficult to teach GCE in a systematic and sustained way in the classroom.

Compounding this shortcoming is the scarcity of content related to global citizenship in textbooks and the pressure to meet established academic standards—factors that constrain pedagogical autonomy and relegate this approach to a secondary role. This situation makes the incorporation of GCE a complex task and, in many cases, unfeasible without clear institutional support.

Faced with these limitations, many teachers develop their own materials or adapt resources from NGOs and social organizations, though these do not always rest on a strong pedagogical foundation. As a result, practices vary widely between schools and are sometimes fragmented, limiting their educational impact.

To move toward coherent integration, regional administrations must promote repositories of updated and pedagogically validated resources that support instructional planning, ensure the quality of materials, and help consolidate GCE as a structural component of the school curriculum.

School management teams also play a crucial role in incorporating GCE into educational institutions. When there is firm institutional commitment to this approach, interdisciplinary collaboration spaces are created, student participation is encouraged, and teacher initiatives are recognized. Embedding GCE into the school's educational project not only guarantees continuity but also makes it a distinctive feature of the institution's identity and a shared element of pedagogical practice.

Conversely, where pedagogical leadership is weak or school management does not promote transformative approaches, GCE remains dependent on the individual efforts of a few teachers, limiting its reach and sustainability in the medium term.

Partnerships with NGOs and other social actors in the region are also key to strengthening GCE. These collaborations provide resources, methodologies, and support, linking classroom work to real-world challenges and enriching the learning experience. However, the lack of public policies that formally recognize and stabilize these partnerships means that many initiatives remain isolated, with limited opportunities for consolidation or scaling.

Overall, although the national legal framework is favorable, the effective development of GCE continues to be conditioned by several factors: regional momentum, school leadership, resource availability, and teacher training. Achieving solid and sustained integration requires educational administrations to take a more active role, provide schools with adequate resources, and establish stable mechanisms for collaboration among institutions, the educational community, and civil society. Only then will GCE move beyond individual initiatives to become a structural component of the education system.

Obstacles and limitations to the integration of Global Citizenship Education into formal education

Based on the fieldwork conducted, it is evident that the incorporation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in schools across north-central Spain continues to face multiple factors that hinder its consolidation. Although the LOMLOE, as the current organic law, recognizes and promotes GCE by integrating it transversally into key competencies and curriculum principles, its effective implementation remains far from uniform. The decentralization of the education system has resulted in highly uneven application, with GCE largely depending on the political commitment of each autonomous community, the resources allocated, and the institutional support provided to educational teams seeking to develop it.

Curricular Limitations and Lack of Pedagogical Guidance:

One of the most common obstacles is the lack of a clearly defined space for Global Citizenship Education (GCE) within the curriculum. Although educational regulations call for a cross-curricular approach, in practice its integration largely depends on the willingness and experience of teaching teams. The rigidity of curriculum planning, combined with the pressure to cover assessable content, leaves little room for approaches that require interdisciplinary collaboration, critical thinking, and meaningful connections with global realities.

In Navarre and the Basque Country, despite institutional strategies that recognize global citizenship, full integration into the curriculum is still lacking. Although there are programs and initiatives that promote this approach—such as the Coeducation Plan or Eskola Munduan—many schools still lack the specific tools and sufficient time needed to embed it transversally across all subjects.

In communities such as Aragon and Galicia, the curriculum includes references to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the social dimension of education, but without clear pedagogical guidelines for their implementation. This creates a gap between what is stated in the regulations and what can actually be addressed in classrooms with available resources and coherent methodological strategies.

In Madrid, Cantabria, and La Rioja, the absence of explicit references to GCE in regional curricula, together with the lack of supporting materials, has made integration particularly difficult. Teachers lack clear guidelines for addressing these contents and, in many cases, must rely on their own initiative to introduce global issues into the classroom, often without institutional support or dedicated time within teaching plans.

Insufficient teacher training and limited institutional support:

Most teachers have not had access to specific training that would enable them to address Global Citizenship Education (GCE) with confidence and depth. Existing training initiatives—often offered by social organizations or through one-off calls for applications—are highly valued but do not form part of a sustained professional development pathway. Moreover, GCE is rarely recognized as a priority area within regional in-service teacher training plans.

In Navarre and the Basque Country, significant progress has been made, with training opportunities promoted by the administration and coordinated with NGOs. Even so, these opportunities do not reach all teachers and are often concentrated in specific areas, which limits their overall impact. In communities such as Madrid, Cantabria, and La Rioja, teacher training plans continue to focus primarily on technical or subject-specific skills and do not include GCE as a strategic line, reinforcing the perception that it is secondary or optional content.

Dependence on external initiatives and lack of continuity:

In many schools, Global Citizenship Education (GCE)-related activities are implemented by NGOs, which play a key role in promoting them. However, most of these initiatives rely on temporary funding calls, making it impossible to ensure their continuity in the medium and long term. In many cases, projects conclude without being fully integrated into the school's educational program.

This pattern is particularly evident in Cantabria, La Rioja, and Madrid, where the lack of coordination between educational administrations and social organizations prevents the institutionalization of good practices. Although more stable channels of collaboration exist in Navarre and the Basque Country, there remains a certain disconnect between the work of NGOs and the official educational structure, which hinders the expansion and systematization of the initiatives developed.

Lack of systematic evaluation and monitoring:

Another key aspect is the lack of specific mechanisms to evaluate the implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in schools. No clear indicators have been developed to assess its impact, nor have protocols been established to facilitate the collection of information on its implementation in the classroom. Although proposals in this regard are beginning to emerge in some autonomous communities—linked to educational innovation programs or the rollout of the SDGs, their scope remains limited and uneven.

Navarre has begun to link certain GCE projects with educational impact assessment strategies, while in the Basque Country, pilot projects have been launched to explore indicators of change in students. However, these efforts remain ad hoc. In Galicia, Aragon, Madrid, Cantabria, and La Rioja, there are no official tools to evaluate whether global citizenship activities have a significant impact on learning, which limits continuous improvement and institutional recognition.

Inequalities between schools and territories:

The level of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) implementation varies significantly from one school to another. While some schools and colleges have managed to integrate this approach as part of their educational identity—thanks to the commitment of their teams and collaboration with external networks—others have only just begun to embark on this path. Differences in resources, training, and pedagogical leadership have created a gap that educational policies have not yet addressed systematically.

These inequalities are exacerbated in communities lacking a clear regional policy on GCE. In Madrid and La Rioja, progress depends almost entirely on the efforts of individual teachers or access to specific projects. In Navarre and the Basque Country, by contrast, there is stronger alignment among schools, public administrations, and social organizations, although this has yet to be generalized across the entire territory.

In light of the above, it can be concluded that GCE cannot become firmly established as part of the education system as long as it continues to rely on isolated initiatives or short-term projects. Moving toward real



integration requires strengthening teacher training, establishing stable funding mechanisms, creating frameworks for collaboration between public institutions and social organizations, and developing assessment tools to capture lessons learned and drive continuous improvement. Without a coordinated strategy that brings these elements together, GCE risks remaining a valuable yet peripheral proposal within the current educational landscape.

3.4 Contextual Factors Affecting the Implementation of Global Citizenship Education in Spain

In addition to the institutional and pedagogical dynamics examined in the previous section, the implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain is also influenced by broader contextual factors. These include political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental dimensions that shape both the opportunities and constraints for integrating GCE into the education system. Understanding these factors is essential to explain the territorial disparities identified and to design strategies that ensure more coherent and sustained development.

Beyond the dynamics observed within schools, the implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in Spain is also shaped by a set of contextual factors—political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental. These structural dimensions determine both the opportunities and limitations for its development, influencing the degree of institutionalization of GCE and the capacity of educational authorities and schools to consolidate it in a sustained and coherent manner over time.

Political factor

Spain's decentralized education system grants autonomous communities broad powers to define, adapt, and implement their educational policies. This autonomy allows GCE to be contextualized and aligned with regional priorities but also leads to territorial disparities driven by varying levels of political commitment and public investment. The absence of a national strategy specifically focused on Global Citizenship means that its advancement largely depends on regional or local initiatives and the willingness of school leadership and teaching teams.

Economic factor

The availability of financial resources is a decisive factor in ensuring the sustainability of educational projects related to GCE. Budgetary differences among autonomous communities, combined with dependence on temporary funding calls and European funds, often hinder the continuity of initiatives. In resource-limited contexts, actions tend to remain isolated and short-term, preventing them from becoming structural practices. Stable financing and multiannual planning are therefore essential conditions for achieving genuine and lasting integration.

Social factor

Spanish society is increasingly aware of global challenges such as climate change, gender equality, migration, and human rights. This growing social awareness provides a favorable environment for the acceptance of GCE as a meaningful pedagogical approach. However, issues such as political polarization, misinformation, and the spread of exclusionary discourses on social media pose challenges to fostering critical thinking and active citizenship. In this context, GCE plays a key role in promoting democratic values, ethical reflection, and responsible participation.

Technological factor

The digitalization process, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has opened new opportunities for



collaborative learning, classroom networking, and access to global resources. Nevertheless, digital divides persist among territories and schools, particularly in rural areas or those with limited technological infrastructure. Moreover, the effective pedagogical use of technology requires specific teacher training that enables the integration of digital tools from a critical and transformative perspective consistent with the principles of global citizenship.

Legal factor

The Organic Law amending the Education Act (LOMLOE, 2020) explicitly references sustainability, equity, human rights, and civic and democratic values. These principles provide a solid foundation for mainstreaming GCE. However, the absence of common evaluation criteria and clear methodological guidelines limits its uniform application. The diversity of interpretations and adaptations among autonomous communities generates disparities in implementation, hindering the establishment of a coherent national educational policy.

Environmental factor

The impact of climate change and Spain's international sustainability commitments have fostered the inclusion of content related to environmental justice, ecological transition, and responsible consumption. This context strengthens the relevance of GCE as an educational tool to connect global challenges with local realities, fostering a critical understanding of the interdependence between people and the planet.

Overall, these factors demonstrate that, although Spain benefits from a favorable legislative and social framework, the consolidation of Global Citizenship Education requires long-term strategic planning, stronger coherence across governance levels, and sustained commitment to teacher training, stable investment, and results-based evaluation. Only through coordinated action can GCE become a structural component of the education system.

3.5 Opportunities for the introduction and application of Global Citizenship Education in formal education

Although the implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) within the school system is progressing at different rates, the findings of this research indicate that the current educational context offers fertile ground for advancing its incorporation. The LOMLOE, which guides curriculum frameworks nationwide, legitimizes and promotes education grounded in social justice, equity, sustainability, and human rights. This regulatory foundation, aligned with the principles of the 2030 Agenda, represents a clear opportunity to consolidate GCE as a structural component of the curriculum.

However, the actors interviewed agree that the main challenge lies not in the existence of favorable legislation, but in its translation into tangible educational practices. In several communities across north-central Spain, partial steps are being taken which, if reinforced, could become the cornerstones of a transformative educational strategy.

In Navarre, for example, the Escuelas Solidarias (Solidarity Schools) initiative—promoted by the Department of Education in partnership with the NGDO Coordinator—has enabled numerous schools to integrate content addressing inequality, human rights, and a culture of peace into their annual pedagogical planning. The program's continuity and the existence of internal evaluations have strengthened its impact while also



creating opportunities for teachers to reflect on how to connect the SDGs to the curriculum.

In the Basque Country, some schools participating in the Agenda Escolar 2030 network have successfully introduced global citizenship themes through school projects that combine student participation, sustainability, and a critical approach to the environment. Although the program was not designed exclusively for this purpose, it has served as a gateway for linking school learning with global challenges from a local perspective.

In Aragon, projects recognized under the Innovative Schools Program have opened lines of work that connect GCE with educational inclusion and coexistence. Some schools have incorporated activities on migration, climate justice, and the circular economy as part of their innovation initiatives, leveraging school library resources and group tutoring spaces.

In La Rioja, although not originally conceived for this purpose, the regional plan Territorio Lector (Reading Territory) has been used by several schools as a platform for pedagogical innovation to incorporate readings and activities with critical and social content. Within this framework, teaching teams have introduced works related to fair trade, gender equality, and cultural diversity, fostering debate and reflection that promote critical thinking and an understanding of the values underpinning global citizenship.

In rural areas of Cantabria, educational experiences have emerged that, even without a defined institutional strategy, have managed to engage the entire school community in the values of global justice. A notable example is Bajo Pas Primary School, which has developed interdisciplinary projects addressing issues such as access to water, responsible consumption, and climate emergency. These initiatives, driven by the commitment of teachers and the active participation of families, have fostered contextualized, collaborative learning consistent with the principles of GCE.

In Galicia, the Network of Health-Promoting Schools—although primarily focused on physical and emotional well-being incorporated content related to equity, social rights, and solidarity among peoples in some schools. This thematic expansion has strengthened the connection between health, well-being, and social justice, aligning with the core values of Global Citizenship Education (GCE). Likewise, awareness-raising initiatives funded by Galician Cooperation have supported the development of classroom-adapted teaching resources, which are beginning to be implemented across various schools, particularly through projects in primary and secondary education.

In the Community of Madrid, although there is no specific regional strategy for GCE, some schools—particularly in the southern areas—have integrated this approach into their improvement and tutorial action plans. These initiatives, supported by local NGOs, address issues such as peaceful conflict resolution, education for peace, and recognition of cultural diversity. They are typically developed through workshops and targeted projects integrated into annual programs, seeking to promote coexistence and raise awareness of global challenges within the school context.

In addition to these experiences, there is growing interest among teachers in methodologies that foster collaborative learning, real-world connections, and the development of critical thinking skills. Project-Based Learning (PBL), Service Learning (SL), and gamification have proven effective tools for introducing GCE across the curriculum, encouraging more engaged learning processes connected to students' environments.

The rapid digitalization of recent years has also opened new opportunities for addressing global issues in the classroom. Platforms such as eTwinning and online educational communities make it possible to design collaborative projects between schools in different countries, addressing common challenges and fostering shared critical awareness. In less culturally diverse or geographically isolated contexts, these virtual spaces have allowed students to explore the world from new perspectives, enriching classroom dynamics.



The work of NGOs has also been crucial in this process. Initiatives such as Oxfam Intermón's Conectando Mundos (Connecting Worlds)—implemented in regions including Galicia, Aragon, and Navarre—have demonstrated their capacity to facilitate critical reflection and collaboration among schools. However, the impact of these experiences still depends largely on the willingness of schools and the availability of external funding. Ensuring their long-term sustainability requires stronger institutional involvement to guarantee continuity and alignment with curriculum frameworks.

A recurring theme in the interviews is the urgent need for specific teacher training. Across all the communities analyzed, the same diagnosis emerges growing interest, but a lack of methodological clarity and tools to systematically implement GCE. This reality underscores the importance of integrating this perspective into both initial teacher education and continuing professional development, as well as promoting spaces for exchange among teachers already putting this approach into practice.

At the same time, social awareness of global issues has increased. Students' concern about topics such as climate change, gender-based violence, migration, and armed conflict is part of everyday life in many schools. However, this motivation often coexists with intense pressure to respond to immediate local realities affecting the school environment.

As the principal of one charter school noted:

"We are overwhelmed by urgent local realities, such as suicide prevention protocols."

This testimony highlights an ongoing challenge within educational institutions: the need to respond to pressing local issues while simultaneously developing sustained pedagogical processes that address major global challenges from a long-term educational perspective.

The findings suggest that advancing the consolidation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) requires recognizing the real constraints schools face and designing feasible strategies that embed this approach as a practical tool for addressing both immediate and long-term challenges.

Overall, the current conditions—regulatory frameworks, accumulated experience, methodological innovation, digital transformation, and increasing social awareness—provide a solid foundation for qualitative progress. The next step is to translate this foundation into structured educational policies—supported by adequate resources, continuous teacher training, and institutional guidance—that can foster deep and sustainable change in school culture.

The value placed on Education for Global Citizenship and its place in the school curriculum

The results of this research reveal a notable paradox: although many teachers, administrators, and social agents recognize Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as a pedagogical approach with strong educational potential, its presence in the school curriculum of north-central Spain remains marginal and, in many cases, poorly defined. GCE is perceived as a useful tool for promoting critical thinking, social responsibility, and active student participation, yet its effective implementation continues to face structural and cultural barriers that limit its actual reach in schools.

From a regulatory perspective, GCE is supported by a solid legislative framework. The LOMLOE introduces explicit references to the need to educate in universal values, social justice, sustainability, and human rights, in line with the SDGs and the commitments of the 2030 Agenda. However, qualitative analysis of the

testimonies collected reveals a clear disconnect between this regulatory framework and its pedagogical development in the classroom. In the words of several teachers interviewed, GCE “exists on paper” but lacks clear operational guidelines that would allow it to be applied in a cross-curricular, assessable manner linked to stage-specific content.

One of the obstacles most frequently mentioned by the teachers interviewed is the closed structure of the curriculum and the strong pressure to meet learning standards. This makes it difficult to incorporate cross-curricular approaches such as GCE, especially when there is a lack of time, resources, and specific training. In addition, a persistent belief remains that this type of content is “complementary” or belongs exclusively to the realm of tutoring or extracurricular activities, rather than forming part of integrated planning. This perception fuels the fragmentation of the approach and contributes to its limited consolidation in everyday teaching practice.

Despite these challenges, some communities in the region have documented valuable experiences demonstrating that it is possible to address GCE within core subjects such as Social Sciences, Language, Ethics, or even scientific and technological areas—provided there is a shared vision among teaching staff or the school leadership team. In these cases, the use of active methodologies has been key to ensuring that students not only understand global issues but also connect them with their own realities. Project-based learning, service-learning, and interdisciplinary projects have proven to be effective tools for fostering more engaging and contextualized teaching processes.

The role of NGOs in this area has been particularly significant. In Navarre, the Basque Country, and certain areas of Castile and León, several organizations have supported schools in designing and implementing teaching proposals focused on GCE. However, the absence of stable coordination mechanisms with educational administrations has limited their structural impact. Many projects depend on specific funding calls or the personal motivation of certain teachers, creating inequality among schools and a lack of continuity. As one educational project manager pointed out, “We know it works, but if there is no structure or support, the following year everything disappears.”

Another key aspect highlighted in this research is the direct relationship between GCE and the development of students’ critical thinking and civic awareness. Several teachers agree that it is not enough to convey information about the world’s major problems; it is essential to provide tools to analyze, question, and act upon them within the local context. When these issues are addressed in a decontextualized way, without connection to students’ experiences, they are perceived as distant or irrelevant, preventing true engagement.

In this sense, initiatives that successfully connect GCE with students’ experiences, concerns, or interests have shown greater educational impact. However, the absence of a clear strategy to ensure continuity—along with the lack of criteria to assess its contribution to competence development—hinders its consolidation as a structural pedagogical approach within the education system.

In short, although GCE is increasingly recognized by the educational community in north-central Spain, its implementation still depends largely on individual initiatives, occasional partnerships with NGOs, or externally funded projects. To reverse this situation and ensure sustained integration, it is essential to move toward a model in which GCE is no longer seen as a peripheral practice but occupies a stable place within the curriculum. This will only be possible through a decisive institutional commitment that includes adequate resources, specific teacher training, appropriate assessment frameworks, and effective coordination among all educational stakeholders.

3.6 " Recommendations from Educational and Social Stakeholders"

Based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis conducted in this research—which included semi-structured interviews guided by a script designed by the GET research coordination team, along with a review of regulatory and pedagogical documentation—a broad consensus has been identified among teachers and key actors from the main discussion group (including school principals, teachers, NGDO technicians, and staff from the Department of Education of Navarre). This consensus highlights the urgent need to move from isolated initiatives toward a structural, coherent, and sustained strategy for the effective integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCE).

This shared vision, echoed by educational stakeholders in communities such as Navarre, the Basque Country, La Rioja, Castile and León, Galicia, Cantabria, and Aragon, demonstrates that, although significant progress has been achieved in some regions, major challenges persist—particularly those related to the lack of institutionalization, weak inter-institutional coordination, and shortcomings in teacher training.

The following are the main recommendations proposed by the stakeholders consulted:

- **Strengthen the integration of GCE into the curriculum as a cross-cutting dimension of learning.**

One of the most recurrent requests is that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) should move beyond reliance on individual teacher motivation or isolated external projects and instead be fully integrated into schools' educational plans. To this end, regional education authorities are encouraged to develop specific curricular guidelines, include assessment criteria linked to global competencies, and provide methodological resources adapted to each educational stage. This need is particularly emphasized in regions such as Castile and León, Cantabria, and La Rioja, where teachers express a stronger demand for clear guidance to incorporate GCE across the curriculum and in everyday classroom practice.

- **Include GCE in initial teacher training and strengthen continuing professional development.**

The lack of specific training has emerged as a common obstacle across all the communities analyzed. In this regard, both in-service teachers and university educators recommend that GCE content and methodologies be integrated into early childhood, primary, and secondary education degrees, as well as into master's programs in teacher education.

In regions such as Zaragoza (Aragon) and Galicia, the importance of developing GCE-related training pathways within regional continuing education plans—underpinned by institutional commitment and clear methodological guidance—has also been emphasized.

- **Develop stable frameworks for collaboration between educational institutions, NGDOs, and public administrations**

The experience accumulated by NGDOs in regions such as Navarre, the Basque Country, Galicia, and Aragon **has been** instrumental in introducing the Global Citizenship Education (GCE) approach into school contexts.

However, the absence of formal collaboration frameworks with educational administrations has limited their systemic impact. To address this, it is recommended that stable and regular inter-institutional spaces be established, where teachers, educational advisors, and representatives from the third sector can share experiences, evaluate processes, and co-design common strategies. Such cooperation would be key to ensuring that innovative projects are replicated, adapted, and sustained over the medium and long term.

- **Assess and document the impact of GCE in schools**

The teachers and management teams consulted have highlighted the need for tools to monitor the development of GCE in their schools. In this regard, it is recommended that qualitative and quantitative assessment tools be developed, both to measure the impact on learning and to adjust the pedagogical strategies implemented. Likewise, the creation of a regional—or even inter-territorial—repository of good practices is proposed, which would highlight successful experiences and allow for the exchange of methodologies between educational centers in different communities. This proposal has been particularly reinforced by teachers in Galicia and Cantabria, who highlight the importance of highlighting practices in rural areas or contexts with fewer resources.

- **"Integrate GCE as a cross-cutting theme into regional strategic plans."**

Although some communities, such as Navarre and the Basque Country, have already begun to incorporate explicit references to GCE in their sustainability, innovation, or coexistence policies, most of the territories analyzed still lack a clear strategic line that places this approach as a priority. Therefore, it is recommended that GCE be considered a central axis within regional frameworks for educational quality and sustainability, promoting its inclusion in educational projects in schools, teacher training plans, calls for innovation, and programs to support coexistence.

In La Rioja, Aragon, and Castile and Leon, this measure is considered key to strengthening institutional commitment to GCE and advancing toward greater territorial equity.

These recommendations, based on the direct experience of the actors involved, show that there is a solid foundation from which to promote an educational policy consistent with the values of global citizenship. Making GCE a true pillar of the education system in north-central Spain does not require starting from scratch, but rather consolidating what has been learned, institutionalizing what already works, and ensuring the necessary support so that teachers can bring this approach to the classroom with rigor, continuity, and a transformative spirit.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations for the Promotion of Global Citizenship Education

As this research demonstrates, the implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in north-central Spain has made substantial progress while still facing structural challenges that require strategic and sustained planning over time. Although valuable initiatives and consolidated educational experiences have been identified across different communities, GCE continues to be limited by a lack of institutionalization, regional disparities in its development, and weak coordination among the actors involved.

The analysis confirms the need to consolidate GCE as a structural approach within the education system,

moving beyond its peripheral status and its dependence on specific projects or the individual initiative of teachers.

Among the lines of action highlighted by participants, one of the most prominent is the proposal to incorporate Global Citizenship Education into university teacher education degrees and continuing professional development programs, aimed at equipping teachers with a solid foundation of knowledge, resources, and methodologies that facilitate its effective integration into classroom practice.

Below are the main recommendations that emerged from dialogue with teachers, school leaders, social organizations, and institutional representatives, aimed at strengthening the presence, coherence, and sustainability of GCE within the education system.

a) Make GCE a structural component of the educational curriculum

Despite the recognition that the LOMLOE gives to GCE, its integration into school curriculum documents and regular teaching practice remains uneven. The lack of clear guidelines and assessable criteria has led to uneven implementation between regions such as Castile and León, Cantabria, La Rioja, and Aragón.

It is therefore essential that regional administrations develop specific operational guidelines for each stage of education, indicating which global competencies should be addressed, how to do so in different subjects, and with which assessment tools. This would reduce the current dependence on external projects or the individual initiative of teachers, ensuring a common and sustained approach.

b) Provide teaching staff with consistent and continuous training

Teachers have repeatedly pointed to the lack of specific training in Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as one of the main obstacles to its effective integration into teaching practice. This shortcoming is evident in both initial university training and professional development programs, making it difficult to acquire teaching tools, methodological strategies, and resources adapted to the current educational context.

Despite growing interest in addressing global challenges linked to the Sustainable Development Goals in the classroom, a large proportion of teachers acknowledge that they do not have sufficient pedagogical preparation to incorporate this content in a systematic way. This situation, documented in various national and regional reports, highlights a gap between the willingness of teachers and the conditions necessary for GCE to become a structural pillar of the education system.

To move in this direction, it is proposed that Global Citizenship Education be incorporated into the curricula of university degrees in Early Childhood, Primary, and Secondary Education, as well as into master's degrees in teacher training, ensuring its presence as cross-curricular and compulsory content in initial training.

Similarly, regional continuing education plans should offer specialized pathways that integrate practical resources, methodological guides, and collaborative workspaces. These programs would strengthen teaching skills, consolidate a professional community committed to transformative education, and ensure the institutional continuity of GCE beyond specific initiatives.

c) Establish collaborative networks between schools, NGOs, and administrations.

In communities such as Navarre, the Basque Country, Galicia, and Aragón, non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) have played a key role in promoting Education for Global Citizenship (EGC). Their

contribution has taken the form of creating teaching materials, training teachers, and providing direct support in the classroom, helping to incorporate this approach into educational practice.

However, the scope of these initiatives is often limited by the lack of stable mechanisms for collaboration with public administrations, which hinders their continuity and full integration into regional education policies.

To move towards more effective coordination, it is proposed to establish inter-institutional working groups to promote joint strategy planning, resource optimization, and the exchange of experiences between centers and entities. This type of structure would allow for a shift from one-off collaborations to lasting alliances, with a shared long-term vision aimed at consolidating GCE as a structural part of educational policies.

d. Ensuring stable funding for educational projects

The continuity of initiatives linked to Global Citizenship Education (GCE) continues to depend, to a large extent, on the availability of public funds, most of which are linked to annual calls for proposals or projects of limited duration. This financial dependence introduces an element of instability that hinders the consolidation of educational proposals that require time, support, and sustained evaluation processes.

To ensure their permanence, it is necessary for regional administrations to incorporate specific and stable budget allocations that structurally support GCE programs in the formal sphere. Similarly, the role of NGOs as strategic educational agents must be recognized, integrating them into the design, coordination, and implementation of public policies. Their accumulated experience and proximity to schools make them key allies in advancing toward a transformative education consistent with the principles of the 2030 Agenda.

e. Develop contextualized assessment systems.

Currently, there are no systematic tools that allow for a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) on student learning or on the school culture of educational institutions. This lack limits the possibility of adjusting pedagogical strategies, hinders the monitoring of progress, and reduces the visibility of the most effective practices.

To respond to this need, it is proposed to design specific assessment tools capable of collecting quantitative and qualitative results, adapted to different educational levels and stages. These tools should assess not only the acquisition of knowledge, but also the development of attitudes, skills, and values linked to global citizenship.

Similarly, it is suggested that a digital repository of significant experiences be created, open and accessible to the entire educational community, to facilitate the exchange of good practices and enable the identification, adaptation, and replication of initiatives that have proven effective in diverse contexts.

f. Encouraging student leadership.

A truly transformative Education for Global Citizenship (GCE) requires students to be active protagonists in the construction of knowledge, rather than mere recipients of information. In this regard, participatory methodologies, such as service learning, project-based learning (PBL), and gamification, have been shown to promote greater student involvement and a deeper understanding of global challenges and their own



capacity for action.

It is recommended that schools promote spaces for student participation—such as active school councils, assemblies, climate or social action groups—in which young people themselves can propose, design, and develop initiatives from their own perspective. This type of participation not only reinforces a sense of belonging and strengthens autonomy, but also contributes to the development of critical thinking, collective responsibility, and commitment to social transformation.

g) Connecting GCE with the local context

Finally, it has been demonstrated that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) reaches its full potential when it is connected to the realities closest to students. Building bridges between the global and the local fosters a deeper understanding of contemporary challenges and helps learners recognize their capacity to act and transform their environment.

In this regard, it is essential for schools to promote interdisciplinary projects that address global issues—such as the climate crisis, social inequalities, or migration processes—through concrete local experiences. To achieve this, they can draw on digital resources, challenge-based learning, and collaborations with other schools and international communities, thus fostering active education that is connected to reality and open to the world.

In north-central Spain, there is already a solid foundation of experiences, committed professionals, and educational resources that support progress toward the genuine and lasting integration of global citizenship into educational practice. The current challenge is to consolidate these advances through stable public policies, consistent teacher training, and robust institutional structures that guarantee the continuity of initiatives.

Only through this shared commitment will it be possible to ensure that all students—regardless of their region or context—receive an education deeply rooted in social justice, human rights, and the sustainability of the planet.

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