

NATIONAL CURRICULUM MAPPING OF GCE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

STUDIES

GCE in curriculum

Hugo Cruz Marques
Jorge Cardoso
Sandra Fernandes

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AE	Essential Learning Outcomes (Aprendizagens Essenciais)
APA	Portuguese Environment Agency (Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente)
APROFGEO	Geography Teachers' Association (Associação de Professores de Geografia)
APSEs	Action Plan Signatory Entities
ARIPese	Association for Reflection and Educational Intervention in ESE Policy (Associação de Reflexão e Intervenção Educativa na Política das ESE)
CA ENED	ENED Monitoring Commission (Comissão de Acompanhamento da ENED)
CE	Citizenship Education
CEAUP	Centre for African Studies of the University of Porto (Centro de Estudos Africanos da Universidade do Porto)
CeD	Citizenship and Development curricular component
CGpDS	Global Citizenship for Sustainable Development (Cidadania Global para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável)
CICL	Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, I.P.
CIDAC	Centro de Intervenção para o Desenvolvimento Amílcar Cabral
CIG	Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (Comissão para a Cidadania e a Igualdade de Género)
CPADA	Portuguese Confederation of Environmental Defence Associations (Confederação Portuguesa das Associações de Defesa do Ambiente)
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DAC	Development Aid Committee
DC	Development Cooperation
DCF	Development Cooperation Forum
DE	Development Education
DEAR	Development Education and Awareness Raising



DGCE	Development and Global Citizenship Education
DGE	Directorate-General of Education
EECE	School Strategy for Citizenship Education (Estratégia de Educação para a Cidadania de Escola)
ENEC	National Strategy for Citizenship Education (Estratégia Nacional de Educação para a Cidadania)
ENED	National Strategy for Development Education (Estratégia Nacional de Educação para o Desenvolvimento)
ENGOS	Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
ESEs	Higher Schools of Education (Escolas Superiores de Educação)
ESE-IPVC	School of Education of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (Escola Superior de Educação do Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo)
EST	Education for Social Transformation
FGS	Fundação Gonçalo da Silveira
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GE	Global Education
GENE	Global Education Network Europe
GTEC	Working Group on Citizenship Education (Grupo de Trabalho de Educação para a Cidadania)
IPAD	Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento, I.P.
LDAs	Local Development Associations
LO	Learning Outcomes
MAI	Support Mechanism for ENED Initiatives (Mecanismo de Apoio a Iniciativas ENED)
MNE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros)
NGDOs	Development Non-Governmental Organisations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations



OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASEO	Students' Profile at the End of Obligatory Schooling (Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória)
PDCS 2030	Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy 2030
PPONGD	Portuguese Platform of Development NGOs (Plataforma Portuguesa das ONGD)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEGIB	Ibero-American General Secretariat (Secretaria-Geral Ibero-Americana)
SPCIC	Permanent Secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Commission for Co-operation (Secretariado Permanente da Comissão Interministerial para a Cooperação)
WSA	Whole-School Approach



Table of contents

Introduction	5
Methodology.....	6
Overview of the formal education system	7
Analysis of curriculum documentation for DGCE in Portugal for students aged 11-16 years.....	10
Curriculum: General section	10
Vision and purpose	10
Key competencies/skills on DGCE	11
DGCE in the curriculum (11-16 years)	12
History of DGCE in the curriculum	12
DGCE - School Teachers qualifications and DGCE assessment.....	14
Case studies.....	16
DGCE in the Geography, History and Citizenship and Development curriculum	16
Main findings by thematic area.....	19
Conclusions	27
Bibliography	29



Introduction

This study is part of the project “GET – It’s Global Education Time project. From curriculum to action: young people for sustainable development”, co-financed by the European Union through the DEAR – Development Education and Awareness Raising Program. It is promoted by CISP (Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli) and coordinated in Portugal by 4Change. This project seeks to strengthen the education system in eight European countries through Education for Global Citizenship (ECG).

Following a first study focusing on the “Opportunities and Challenges of implementing Development and Global Citizenship Education strategies in Portugal”, this second document aims to complement that work with a more specific overview of the Portuguese education system and its connection to Development and Global Citizenship Education (DGCE).

This document provides a brief analysis of the evolution of educational policies in Portugal, seeking to determine what drives policy change, as well as a reflection on how DGCE is (or is not) being integrated into the curriculum in Portugal. This reflection is followed by a brief contextualization of DGCE training and assessment in Portugal.

Finally, the document integrates a section dedicated to the analysis of three case studies: Geography, Citizenship and Development, and History in the 3rd cycle of education (7th - 9th grades). In this analysis the learning outcomes (LO) proposed by the international GET project were cross-referenced from a DGCE perspective with the learning outcomes available for each subject. This analysis shows how DGCE, from the perspective of the project's LO, is present or absent from the curricula of these three subjects.

The work finishes with a set of conclusions and recommendations based on the main findings of the analysis.



Methodology

For the analysis carried out in this study, three subjects were identified as case studies for the application of DGCE: Geography, History, and Citizenship and Development. The 3rd cycle of education was selected as the age group for this analysis, and each of the essential learning outcomes for the subjects for the three years of the third cycle was analyzed.

In the case of History and Geography, there are Essential Learning Outcomes (AE) that served as the basis for the analysis, and in the case of Citizenship and Development, in the absence of essential learning outcomes, the following documents were used: the Citizenship and Development Framework; PASEO; ENEC; the Environmental Education Guidelines - "Climate Change" section; and the Development Education Guidelines.

With regard to the analysis, and based on an DCGE matrix of Learning Outcomes provided by the GET project, which was common to all 8 countries in the project, each of the essential learning outcomes was analyzed in light of the project proposal. The matrix consisted of 4 themes: **Climate Change, Gender Equality, International Inequalities, and Migration.**

For each of the themes, there was a set of LO proposed by the project from a DGCE perspective, which made it possible to understand the presence or absence of references to DGCE in the essential learning outcomes. It should be noted that this analysis is based on the project's choices and that other perceptions of DGCE may contain other parameters that were not considered here. In this case, the LO drawn by the project can be found in the main findings of each thematic area.

Based on the analysis of the AE in each of the subjects, existing evidence was collected for each LO, allowing us to understand when and how DGCE (and in particular the four themes) is present in the Portuguese curriculum (based on these three subjects). This document does not present the matrix, but only the main findings of the exercise carried out.



Overview of the formal education system

In the last years, Portugal has been deepening a policy which gives schools more freedom and autonomy to introduce citizenship education content in the way they consider most appropriate to their schools. Even so, and despite this autonomy, there are guidelines at national level (based on National Strategy for Citizenship Education - ENEC) for the different stages of education, and with which schools must comply with. But this National Strategy is recent in Portugal. To get to this point, several changes have been made to the curriculum over time.

There are two essential aspects that have marked curricular changes from 1989 to the present day: a) **changes regarding the recognition of the need to promote the autonomy** and curricular flexibility of schools; b) **changes regarding the creation of non-disciplinary curricular areas** (Valente: 2024, p.8).

In addition to these, **curriculum changes were made according to the ideology of each government in power**, which sometimes placed more emphasis on the development of skills and, at other times, on measurable knowledge. These different visions of education and of teaching how to learn have had a substantial impact on the various cycles of education.

According to the main authors, and assuming the chronologic starting point in the Basic Law of Education (1986), curriculum changes have taken place four times, with a frequency of around 10 years between each change, exception made for the last one, in which only six years elapsed:

1. The first time, in 1989-1990, with the curricular reform following the revolution of April 25th of 1974, which sought to bring a different vision to education, introducing the area of **personal and social education, interdisciplinary curriculum**, encouraging **curricular autonomy and comprehensive education**.
2. The second was between 2000 and 2001, when the **competency-based curriculum** and its **flexible management** were introduced, in which an attempt was made to overcome a traditional view of the curriculum. Artistic education and education for citizenship emerged.
3. The third, between 2011 and 2012, in which were introduced **curriculum targets that emphasized a measurable knowledge vision** of the educational processes made in schools.
4. The fourth, with the introduction in 2017/2018 of the **Students' Profile at the End of Obligatory Schooling** (PASEO), that sought to re-emphasize the importance of transversality and the development of skills, as well as to increase autonomy and curricular flexibility. This change was materialized in *Decree-Law no. 55/2018*, which also created the formal framework for the first Portuguese **National Strategy for Citizenship Education** (ENEC).



In Portugal, the tradition is to have a centralized curriculum. This means that decisions are made at the level of the central state power. However, Portugal is characterized by a binomial curriculum, which means that, although the established vision of a single national curriculum is decided by the central state, it coexists with a curriculum operationalization format that is linked to the local context (of the schools or clusters of schools). In recent years, and given the **incremental process of school autonomy which is being promoted in Portugal**, this self-governance process has sometimes come into tension with the curricular guidelines coming from the central level (Valente, 2024).

Therefore, the **changes to the curriculum in Portugal are made by the central state, based on the ideology of each current government and the aspects it considers to be priorities for the Portuguese education system in general** (Valente, 2024). As far as schools and **school clusters/school groups** are concerned, despite their autonomy, **their role is operational and they have no responsibility for curriculum change**.

The participatory nature of curriculum changes has not been uniform over the years. Throughout the history of the Portuguese education system, there were times when changes were centralized and other times when the format was of a more participatory nature. It is important to highlight the fact that there are better implementing results whenever the option is the latter (Valente, 2024). In the specific case of Portugal, it is worth seeking some information in the current legal framework (*Decree-Law no. 55/2018 of July 6* and, in particular, the National Strategy for Citizenship Education) to better understand “who has a voice in curriculum changes”: for example, **for the development of this strategy, a multidisciplinary working group was set up**. This group was **formed by 13 members** representing the Secretary of State for Citizenship and Equality (Secretaria de Estado para a Cidadania e Igualdade); the Secretary of State for Education (Secretaria de Estado da Educação); the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (Comissão para a Cidadania e a Igualdade de Género); the High Commissioner for Migration, P. I. (Alto Comissariado para as Migrações, I.P.); the Directorate-General for Education (Direção-Geral da Educação) from the Ministry of Education; the National Coordination of the School Libraries Network (Coordenação Nacional da Rede de Bibliotecas Escolares); the Directorate-General for Health (Direção-Geral da Saúde); the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (Associação Nacional de Municípios Portugueses) and 3 experts in the field of citizenship and education (Legislative Order 6173/2016).

In addition to the **creation of a multidisciplinary group**, the strategy creation process also included a “**broad consultation of the main players in the promotion of Citizenship Education in schools, with emphasis on students, teachers and representatives of civil society organizations**, as a way of deepening the principles and practices of working with schools” (ENEC: 2017, p. 2). For this purpose, three focus groups were held with these same actors. This concern with **the participatory construction of a National Strategy**, that has brought about changes in the Portuguese curriculum, **is a significant milestone** in the framework of curricular change processes in the Portuguese educational system.

Currently, a review of the contents and learning outcomes of the Citizenship and Development subject is underway. In October 2024, the government (later re-elected in March 2025) announced that measures would be taken to review the area of Citizenship Education in force. Since then, a process has been carried out to review the essential learning outcomes of the Citizenship and Development subject (with the explicit aim of freeing it from “ideological ties”), as well as to review the National Strategy for Citizenship Education, which is still in force (Source: RTP, October 21, 2024).

This work resulted in a new proposal for a National Citizenship Education Strategy, as well as a proposal to create essential learning outcomes for the subject of Citizenship and Development (which do not currently



exist). **These two proposals were made public and put out for public consultation in July 2025. The public consultation will take place between July 21 and August 5, 2025.**

According to official information provided on the website of the Directorate-General for Education, the core learning outcomes for Citizenship and Development **will come into effect from the 2025/2026 school year**, which begins in September 2025, in Portugal. This means that the final document, which will form the basis of the curriculum from the next academic year onwards, will only be made public in September 2025 (Source: DGE, July 18, 2025).



Analysis of curriculum documentation for DGCE in Portugal for students aged 11-16 years

Curriculum: General section

Vision and purpose

According to Decree-Law no. 139 of July 5, the way in which the guidelines for curriculum definition have been defined at central government level, is aimed to **increase the quality and success of students' education**. For this purpose, the revision of the curriculum structure, which made possible the establishment of the curricular matrices currently in force in Portugal, was enacted in 2012 with the aim of “strengthening the decision-making space of school clusters and non-clustered schools” and allowing “greater flexibility in the organization of teaching activities” (Decree-Law n.º 139/2012, July 5, p.3476), thus ensuring the **“optimization of the management of available resources according to the concrete needs of students”** (Decree-Law n.º 139/2012, July 5, p.3476).

This legislative initiative sought to **increase the autonomy of schools in managing the curriculum** by introducing the possibility of:

- creating school subject offers and complementary offers,
- a “more flexible management of teaching loads by establishing a minimum amount of time per subject and a total curricular load” (Decree-Law n.º 139/2012, July 5, p.3476). Schools are thus free to organize lessons and their duration autonomously and according to their needs.
- enhancing the role of teachers by recognizing their “freedom (...) in implementing methodologies based on their experiences, individual and collaborative practices” (Decree-Law n.º 139/2012, July 5, p.3476).

On the other hand, this curriculum revision law also underlined **the role of citizenship education, making it a cross-curricular area, “which can be addressed in all curricular areas**, not imposed as an isolated compulsory subject, but allowing schools to decide whether to offer it under the terms of their autonomous disciplinary materialization” (Decree-Law n.º 139/2012, July 5, p.3476). Following on from this diploma, the PASEO was approved later (2017) and the **National Strategy for Citizenship Education** was enacted, complementing the guidelines set out in the Decree-Law published in 2012. **This policy was also implemented through the creation and explicit use of “Guidelines” for the different domains of citizenship.** These reference frameworks, **although non-binding, in line with the current autonomy policy, constitute important working instruments for schools, which use is explicitly recommended in the ENEC: “Such references are documents supporting the work to be developed by the schools**, which, in the context of their autonomy, use and adapt them according to their options, encompassing the practices to be developed. The areas addressed must focus on their individual input into the development of the principles, values and fields of expertise provided in the document Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling (Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória)” (ENEC, 2017:8).



Key competencies/skills on DGCE

In Portugal, each subject has a curriculum matrix that provides a set of “essential learnings” for students to acquire, depending on their education cycle. This matrix also provides the cross-referencing of this knowledge, skills and attitudes with the descriptors or competences of the PASEO (PASEO: 2017), which complement the guidelines established by Decree-Law no. 139/2012, July 5. When analyzing these PASEO competences, to which each subject is obliged to commit, there are strong links between them and what is considered to be DGCE content in this study. The competences in question are as follows:

- Languages and texts
- Information and communication
- Reasoning and problem-solving
- Critical thinking and creative thinking
- Interpersonal relationships
- Personal development and autonomy
- Well-being, health and the environment
- Aesthetic and artistic sensitivity
- Scientific, technical and technological knowledge
- Body awareness and mastery

The description of these 10 competences and the respective operational descriptors contain elements that are correlated with the DGCE. Below there are some examples of it:

1) the **ability to understand, interpret and express facts, opinions, concepts, thoughts and feelings**; the ability to use and master diversified tools to research, describe, evaluate, validate and mobilize information, **critically and autonomously, checking different documentation sources** and their credibility; the ability to **observe, identify, analyse and make sense of information, experiences and ideas and to argue from different premises and variables**.

2) skills related to **cooperation, sharing and collaboration**.

3) the ability to “**understand the balances and fragilities of the natural world while adopting behaviors that respond to major global environmental challenges**; manifest **environmental and social awareness and responsibility, working collaboratively for the common good**, with a view to building a sustainable future.” The operative descriptors also highlight the ability of students to become aware of “the importance of building a sustainable future” and to get involved in active citizenship projects (PASEO, 2017: 27).



On the other hand, in Citizenship and Development subject (which is one of the gateways to the application of the DGCE in Portugal), the competences are defined by the Class Council (for the 2nd cycle and 3rd cycle) and within the framework of the School Strategy for Citizenship Education (EECE). In the case of secondary education, the Citizenship and Development subject is combined with the other subjects (ENEC: 2017, p. 9).

This means that, with regard to the **competences that may link with DGCE** and their level of depth, these are **ultimately determined by each school cluster**, within the framework of curricular autonomy and flexibility and the EECE School Strategy.

Even so, it should be noted that DGCE is currently integrated in a more explicit manner into the **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) domain (the Development Education Guidelines is the one in force for this domain)**, but also in 5 of the 6 compulsory and non-optional domains (Environmental Education, Interculturality, Gender Equality and Human Rights). On the other hand, Citizenship and Development itself has aspects in its genesis that correlate with DGCE, as it can be analyzed from the final objective of the subject indicated in its framework document: **“Citizenship and Development aims to contribute to the increase of attitudes and behaviors, of dialogue and respect for others, based on ways of being in society that have human rights as a reference**, namely the values of equality, democracy and social justice” (Citizenship and Development subject framework, p. 6).

Although not explicitly, there are indeed links between the key competences to be acquired by students in Portugal and the DGCE.

DGCE in the curriculum (11-16 years)

History of DGCE in the curriculum

First, it is important to emphasize that there is no specific area of Development and Global Citizenship Education (DGCE) in Portugal, but there is a National Strategy for Citizenship Education (ENEC), in which the subject of “Citizenship and Development” (CeD) is framed and, as we have seen before, links between the key competences to be acquired by students in Portugal and DGCE.

This analysis on DGCE history in the curriculum will take as reference the “Citizenship and Development” subject, as well as the ENEC. Specifically, the ESD domain will be considered the main domain of analysis, but the other mandatory domains with which DGCE is linked will also be taken into account, specially Environmental Education, Interculturality and Gender Equality.

Based on this information, it can be considered that, formally and explicitly, DGCE (or in the Portuguese case, DE) only emerged in 2012 with the promulgation of the Guidelines for Citizenship Education, which include a specific DE dimension. It emerged as a response to the need:

1) of framing education for citizenship within a process that “aims to contribute to the training of responsible, autonomous, supportive people who know and exercise their rights and duties in dialogue and with respect for others, with a democratic, pluralistic, critical and respectful spirit” (Guidelines for Citizenship Education: 2013, p.1);

2) of building relevance and space to themes that cut across society. With this purpose, this enactment makes it possible to take the first steps towards the inclusion of cross-cutting themes in the curriculum, based on a transversal approach, both from subject areas and disciplines, as well as from activities and projects. With this objective, citizenship education reference frameworks were created in a variety of areas, including

the Development Education Guidelines, but also the Environmental Education Guidelines for Sustainability or the Guidelines for Human Rights.

Below is a table that summarizes the changes made (from a DGCE perspective) to the curriculum since its integration:

Year	Changes	Description
Before 2012	ad hoc Global Citizenship and Development Education initiatives in schools	Before any formalization of the DGCE framework in Portugal, there was previous work carried out autonomously by schools and teachers in the area of DGCE. This made it possible, on the one hand, to introduce specific subjects (as specific school curriculum offers) in the area of DGCE, usually with the support of NGOs, even before the introduction of the Citizenship and Development subject (in 2017). In addition, there were also occasional initiatives by teachers with specific subjects to create and implement Development Education projects at schools (source: https://oikos.pt/portugal/port1/). Given its relevance, and despite the fact that it does not constitute a curricular change per se, it is an example of what usually was done in Portugal in this area.
2012	Guidelines for Citizenship Education	A public document from the Directorate-General for Education that presents a framework for citizenship education in schools, as well as the guiding documents (Guidelines) that were expected to be developed and which served to support the implementation of citizenship education in schools. Among these guidelines is the <i>Development Education Guidelines</i> , which is assumed in this study to be DGCE equivalent.
2016	Development Education (DE) Guidelines	In 2016, the <i>Development Education Guidelines</i> was published, divided into 6 thematic areas and proposing a set of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviors to be integrated into citizenship education at school, in the specific area of DGCE. This is one of the key documents in this study (more information in the WP1 of this study).
2017	National Strategy for Citizenship Education	The first National Strategy for Citizenship Education underlines Citizenship Education as a mission for the whole school, implementing the curriculum component of Citizenship and Development. Within the framework of this strategy, compulsory areas are established, including Sustainable Development (in which Development Education Guidelines are included).
2018	Decree-Law no. 55/2018	This Decree-Law establishes the curriculum for primary and secondary education and the guiding principles for the assessment of learning, formally framing the Citizenship and Development component.

2025	Process of reviewing essential learning in the curriculum	There is currently a process underway to revise the ENEC and to create specific learning outcomes for the Citizenship and Development subject. These changes will come into effect in September 2025.
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In this process, ENEC also recommends the use of the “Guidelines” co-created by DGE and other organizations from each area (ENEC, 2017 : p. 8). **In the case of DGCE, the “Guidelines” which explicitly refer to this area are the “Development Education Guidelines”**. This document has a set of Themes, Subthemes, Goals and Performance Descriptors, which guide the teachers in the Development Education and DGCE area. The performance descriptors include knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours required for the achievement of the intended learning. There are also available guidelines for other mandatory domains, which intersect with DGCE, namely the environmental education guidelines, and the human rights guidelines which can also be used by teachers.

These three guidelines are primarily roadmaps for implementing DGCE in schools and do not contain content, methodological proposals, or assessments, but they do provide some guidance recommendations on the work that teachers can do with their students.

DGCE - School Teachers qualifications and DGCE assessment

There are no specific DGCE teachers, as there is no initial teacher training in DGCE. According to the ENEC, the teacher responsible for the subject of Citizenship and Development is defined by the school group/cluster and does not require specific training. ENEC does, however, indicate that each school should have a coordinator of the School Strategy for Citizenship Education (who it is suggested should be a teacher member of the school's Pedagogical Council) and who will assume the role of focal point with the Citizenship Education National Team. This coordinator is also responsible for carrying out a survey of teachers' ongoing training needs in this area in their school, which demonstrates a more structural concern with this matter (ENEC, 2017: p.12). In such a way that the strategy contains a sub-chapter on “Teacher training”. Here, recommendations are made, namely that **“the initial training of teachers, which is the responsibility of Higher Education Institutions, should include a Citizenship Education component”** (ENEC, 2017: p.13).

Although there is no specific teacher for the subject of Citizenship and Development (and, consequently, for the subject of DGCE), the ENEC profiles the “teacher of the subject of Citizenship and Development”, with assumptions that should be taken into account when selecting teachers in each school (ENEC, 2017: pp.13 - 14), although it is not mandatory to do so.

In addition, there is a national plan from DGE with national meetings for school coordinators at the national level, with the purpose to share practices, learn from each other and acquire new contents. (source: DGE, 2022, 2023). With regard to DGCE, in particular, there are ongoing training offers in DE under the responsibility of the DGE (based on the Development Education Guidelines), but these are also optional (source: DGE, 2020).

Concerning the assessment options for DGCE (and taking again into consideration the subject of Citizenship and Development), they are the responsibility of the head teacher. ENEC states that the criteria for assessing learning in the subject of Citizenship and Development should be defined by the Class Council and the school and should be included in the certificate of completion of compulsory schooling. There are also



recommendations regarding the methodology to be used for assessment in this area: “it is recommended to use diversified methodologies and assessment tools, valuing diagnostic and formative modalities, not limited to an assessment of theoretical knowledge acquired in relation to each area of Citizenship, but rather to allow learning to be regulated and contextualized in relation to the objectives and goals of the strategy for Citizenship Education defined by the school.” (ENEC, 2017: pp.9-10).

Finally, it is important to highlight the efforts made in higher education, particularly by Higher Education Schools (ESE) in this area. The Higher Education Schools (represented by Association for Reflection and Educational Intervention in ESE Policy (ARPESE) - the association of Higher Education Schools in Portugal) are one of the signatories of the National Strategy for Development Education Action Plan and have been working to deepen DGCE in each of the Higher Education Schools, not only through the support provided by Camões IP under the “Support Mechanism for Higher Education Schools”, but also through joint projects with Civil Society, such as the Transformative Schools project (source: Transformative Schools project, n.d.), in which there is a focus on integrating DGCE curricula into the master's degrees and internships of the institutions, making it possible to train future teachers.



Case studies

DGCE in the Geography, History and Citizenship and Development curriculum

The first cross-referencing exercise carried out was to understand how the official documents and frameworks for essential learning in each subject linked to DGCE in the 3rd cycle.

With this purpose, evidence considered relevant to each subject was compiled.

In Geography:

"Geography is the science and discipline that is distinguished and characterized by spatial thinking, which can be defined as the set of skills that includes knowledge of concepts related to the territory, the use of tools to represent geographical phenomena and the **set of explanatory processes of their interactions, in a multi-scalar vision**. In an increasingly shrinking geographical space, where environmental, population, social and cultural phenomena, among others, have **multifaceted causes and consequences that transcend borders**, it **is essential to develop a geographical education that problematizes, questions and seeks to equate scenarios and find solutions to the complex situations that occur in the world, from natural disasters to contrasts in development, climate change, migration**, demographic ageing, the multipolar composition of the world system (...)" (AE 9th grade Geography, 2018, pp.1 - 2).

"essential learning outcomes (AE) are organized in such a way as to privilege spatial analysis methodologies, from the simplest, such as direct and indirect observation of landscape elements, to the most complex, **problematizing spatial contrasts in an increasingly globalized world**." (AE 9th grade Geography, 2018, p.2).

"Students should be able to answer a set of questions: Where is it located? Why is it located? How is it distributed? What are the characteristics of this distribution? **What impacts are observed? And how should it be managed for the mutual benefit of the community and the environment?**" (AE 9th grade Geography, 2018, pp.2 and 3).

"Globalization, climate change, earthquakes, floods and storms, migration, disparities and conflicts over resources shape many aspects of our lives and societies on planet Earth. Dealing with these complex issues requires rigorous scientific knowledge anchored in key skills, such as outlining strategies for applying and evaluating them, resilience in the face of immediate problem-solving difficulties, **always bearing in mind humanist values of understanding oneself and others and the importance of an active citizenship stance, which are built on daily learning and throughout our lives**, through actions as simple as, for example, making the educational community aware of the need to take proper care of our territory." (AE 9th grade Geography, 2018, pp. 3 - 4).

Moreover, some examples of the strategic actions proposed in Geography seem to be very much in line with what the DGCE brings and proposes. Here are some examples that are relevant to substantiate this perspective, based on the framework linking to PASEO included in the AE in Geography:



- "Investigate environmental and social problems, anchored in geographically relevant questions (what, where, how, why and for what);
- Apply geographical knowledge, spatial thinking and territorial study methodologies creatively, in teamwork, to argue, communicate and intervene in real problems at different scales;
- Identify with their place of belonging, valuing the diversity of relationships that different communities and cultures establish with their territories, at various scales;
- Carry out projects, identifying problems and posing key geographically relevant questions at economic, political, cultural and environmental levels, at different scales;
- Develop a harmonious relationship with the natural and social environment, assuming their behavior in a context of individual and collective well-being" (AE 9th grade Geography, 2018, p.5).
- "starting from a concept or a problematic situation, methodological proposals chosen by the teacher can be applied, taking into account the specific nature of the schools and students, allowing for a link between the three domains of knowledge - knowing-knowing, knowing-doing and knowing-being" (AE 9th grade Geography, 2018, p.2).

In Citizenship and Development:

In the case of Citizenship and Development, evidence of links to the DGCE was also gathered in the Citizenship and Development framework document. These are summarized below:

"The complexity and accelerated transformation that characterize contemporary society lead (...) to **the need to develop various skills for the exercise of democratic citizenship, and therefore the school plays an important role in building citizenship practices.** In fact, the values of citizenship are enshrined in the principles of the Basic Law of the Education System (...), establishing that the education system should be organized in such a way as to contribute to the achievement of students, through the full development of their personality, attitudes and sense of citizenship. In this way, students are prepared for conscious reflection on spiritual, aesthetic, moral and civic values, in order to ensure their balanced civic development. (...)) In order to contribute to the full humanistic formation of students, in Citizenship and Development (CeD), teachers have the mission of **preparing students for life, to be democratic, participatory and humanistic citizens, at a time of growing social and cultural diversity, in order to promote tolerance and non-discrimination, as well as to suppress violent radicalism**" (Citizenship and Development framework, n.d.: pp. 1-2).

"The more pronounced presence of citizenship in education is thus the intention to ensure "a set of rights and duties that should be conveyed in the education of Portuguese children and young people so that in the future they are adults and adults with a civic conduct that favors equality in interpersonal relationships, the integration of difference, respect for human rights and the appreciation of values and concepts of national citizenship" (...). ...] Citizenship and Development **aims to help increase attitudes and behaviors, dialogue and respect for others, based on ways of being in society that have human rights as a reference, namely the values of equality, democracy and social justice.**" (Citizenship and Development framework, n.d.: p. 6).



In History:

As with Geography, in the case of History, the documents from the 3rd cycle AE were used as the basis for analysis. Below is a compilation of some evidence of the points of contact between the History curriculum and the DGCE:

“The aim is for students to acquire a **historical awareness that allows them to assume a critical and participatory position in society, recognizing the usefulness of History to understand in an integrated way the world in which they live and to build their individual and collective identity**. History, through the well-founded and critical analysis of examples from the past, is a fundamental discipline for promoting the culture of autonomy and responsibility, referred to in PASEO.” (History, AE 9th grade, p. 2)

It also specifies, on the one hand, the path taken between the 1st and 2nd cycles and the 3rd cycle and, on the other, the connection between this and the future academic path of the students, some of whom will have their last academic contact with History in the 9th grade: “The AE were prepared with a reference to a compulsory schooling of 12 years, with the concern of giving students the tools to continue their studies, but also considering that, for many, the 9th year represents the end of contact with the subject of History. In the 3rd cycle, History becomes an autonomous subject, since, in the 1st cycle, it is integrated into the Study of the Environment and, in the 2nd cycle, it is the History and Geography Subject. This autonomy allows for a more in-depth use of the specific methodologies of this area of knowledge and, by opting for a chronological approach, gives students an awareness of other spatiotemporal realities, relating the history of Portugal to the history of Europe and the World.” (History, AE, 9th grade, p. 2)

Finally, the specific skills that, in addition to the AE, must be taken into consideration in the 3rd cycle are also specified, as well as the way in which they intersect with PASEO, which constitutes a basic document guiding the essential learning outcomes of all subjects. The following skills should be highlighted:

- Appropriately use historical sources of diverse types, collecting and processing information to **approach social reality from a critical perspective**;
- Relate forms of organization of space with the natural and human elements existing there in different historical periods, highlighting different aspects and aspects that remain;
- Understand the existence of continuities and ruptures in the historical process, establishing relationships of causality and consequence;
- Recognize **the importance of citizenship values for the formation of civic awareness and responsible intervention in democratic society**;
- Promote an approach to History based on ethical and aesthetic criteria;
- **Promote respect for differences, recognizing and valuing diversity**: ethnic, ideological, cultural, sexual;
- **Value human dignity and human rights, promoting diversity, interactions between different cultures, justice, equality and equity** in compliance with the law;
- **Respect biodiversity, valuing the importance of the wealth of plant and animal species** for the development of human communities.



Main findings by thematic area

After the initial exercise to identify the links between the documents covered by the three disciplines and the DGCE, the exercise of cross-referencing the LOs proposed by the projects with the existing evidence in each discipline was developed.

Below are the main findings of this cross-referencing, divided by theme (Climate Change, International Inequalities, Gender Equality, and Migration) and, within each theme, by subject.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Learning Outcomes proposed by the project on which the analysis was based:

- LO 1. discuss root causes of climate change from historical and scientific perspectives and the interconnectedness of local and global consequences;
- LO 2. assess society's impact on the natural world in terms of resource consumption and climate change;
- LO 3. discuss how global governance structures interact with national and local structures in relation to climate change;
- LO 4. express respect for all living entities and cultivate empathy and solidarity towards other individuals, social groups and the entire natural world;
- LO 5. critically reflect on a range of values and beliefs in relation to climate change;
- LO 6. assess the benefits and challenges of individual and collective action in relation to climate change in different times and locations throughout the world;
- LO 7. demonstrate skills for active engagement and take climate action.

Overall analysis

The subjects of Geography and Citizenship and Development present moderate and substantial evidence of AE aligned with all Climate Change LO. History's AE, on the contrary, present almost no evidence for these LO.

In **Geography**, the theme of climate change is represented in a significant way and aligned with the LOs proposed in the project. The section related to "critical reflection and in-depth thinking from different perspectives" (proposed in the LOs) is the one that, from the essential learning outcomes, is most absent. There are no references to the tension between awareness and behavior change, as well as the tension between mitigation and adaptation to climate change. Even so, the essential learning outcomes proposed and related to this section have the potential to explore in-depth critical reflection content, but this will depend on the way teachers work on the essential learning outcomes.



Unlike Geography, the essential learning outcomes of 3rd cycle **History** are relatively weak with regard to the visibility of climate change in the historical course of humanity. They ignore the problems of climate change, as well as the role of History as a fundamental discipline to deepen global awareness and intersect events with consequences at the climate level. The essential learning outcomes also fail to address the issue of mobilizing for action, based on historical awareness, which could be relevant. However, taking into account the mandatory essential learning outcomes in the curriculum, there is room and potential for climate change to be addressed in greater depth. For a better analysis, the possibilities for the different themes of the 3 years of the 3rd cycle in History are presented below in detail:

Knowledge of urban civilizations, industrialization and the transport revolution:

In the 7th grade, the essential learning outcome “Recognizing crucial moments in the development of humanity in the manufacture of instruments and in the control of nature” could configure a way to be associated with a learning outcome related to the problematization of this ‘crucial moment of History’ and what development means from a historical perspective. The same applies to the essential learning outcome “Relating the socioeconomic and political institutional organization of the first urban civilizations with the resources existing in the spaces in which they were established” (7th grade) and the essential learning outcome “Identifying the main industrialized powers in the 19th century, highlighting the importance of the transport revolution for the globalization of the economy” (8th grade). In these two cases, it would be very pertinent to associate the reflection on the depletion and deterioration of existing resources and the growth of urban civilizations, industrialized powers and the transport revolution. Additionally, it would be essential to talk about climate change when talking about the industrial revolution.

Armed conflicts:

The AE associated with major global conflicts also lack an explicit approach to the environmental consequences of these wars, which have been highlighted and analysed in recent years by several environmental organisations, notably the Conflict and Environment Observatory (<https://ceobs.org/publications/>).

Development and globalisation:

It would also be essential to problematise the AE related to social and cultural transformations that have taken place in Western society and the dimensions of development and globalisation (in the 9th grade) with the issues of consumerism and climate change. The same applies to the issue of the economic dependence of developing countries, whose formulation of essential learning outcomes in History does not problematise the developmental impetus and its respective effects in terms of climate change.

In **Citizenship and Development** 3 mandatory documents were considered in this analysis ([Citizenship and Development Framework](#); [PASEO](#) and [ENEC](#)) and the [Environmental Education Guidelines](#), which is a document created by DGE, but which is optional and non-binding. Using the Environmental Education Guidelines as a reference, the results are therefore very much in line with what the GET project LOs are, although the document is not mandatory. Thus, in this analysis, all the LOs received very good scores, with the exception of “LO 3. discuss how global governance structures interact with national and local structures in



relation to climate change". The structural and local and international governance issues in the topic of climate change have space for a deeper development.

GENDER EQUALITY

Learning Outcomes proposed by the project on which the analysis was based:

LO 1. discuss gender equality, gender inequality, gender equity and the power dynamics and assumptions that underpin these concepts;

LO 2. identify the root causes of gender inequality in different local, national and global contexts, including the role of stereotypes and prejudice in processes that lead to discrimination (and violence);

LO 3. express respect for difference and empathy towards individuals and social groups who are subject to stereotypes, prejudice or discrimination in relation to gender inequality;

LO 4. discuss how global governance structures interact with national and local structures in relation to gender equality;

LO 5. critically reflect on a range of values and beliefs in relation to gender equality;

LO 6. assess the benefits and challenges of individual and collective action on gender inequality and gender inequity in different times and locations throughout the world;

LO 7. demonstrate skills for active engagement and promotion of gender equality, gender equity and social justice.

Overall analysis

The theme of gender equality is generally absent from the learning objectives and guidelines of the documents analyzed for the 3 curricular subjects. Nevertheless, of the three curricula, the history curriculum presents some points of connection, however with many limitations.

The subject of **Geography** has great potential for greater emphasis on gender equality issues. The way in which AE are constructed (based on the axes 1) locating and understanding; 2) problematizing and debating; and 3) communicating and participating) is very pertinent and significant, but the link between these essential learning outcomes and gender equality issues is lacking. It would be important to make this link more explicit and intentional, particularly based on the essential learning outcomes already in place. On the other hand, if AE in Geography are approached from the perspective of the LO proposed by GET, it can provide important inputs for its improvement at this level, notably in relation to the causes of gender inequality and structural and governmental phenomena. It would be interesting to consider these in a future review. Here are some examples:



- a. It would be useful to include in the subject the analysis of objective data in terms of gender inequality (detailed in axis 1. locate and understand) and its more in-depth reflection (from axis 2. analyze and debate). Becoming aware of the unequal incidence and consequences of phenomena such as social and economic inequality, as well as natural disasters based on a gender differentiation/analysis would be very relevant as essential learning outcomes, since it allows for a more complete and complex reading of reality.
- b. The existence, in the discipline of Geography, of AE linked to mobilization for Action and Social Transformation (from axis 3. communicate and participate) is well done. However, it would be relevant if, here too, there could be some focus on mobilization for action based on gender issues, namely based on the more theoretical reflection developed in the previous points in the classroom.

Concerning the **History** case, gender equality issues are largely absent from the subject AE. It would be important to make the historical analysis of current situations of inequality, especially between men and women, more explicit in History essential learning outcomes. Furthermore, to frame History as a tool that helps the students to situate and explain the historical origins of current gender inequalities, would be of importance, promoting their critical analysis and allowing the construction of visions of society that are more just and based on the learning that History brings us. This vision is not present in the present AE.

On the other hand, it would be beneficial to reinforce, within the framework of the AE of each year, the “competence areas in the student profile” (resulting from PASEO) and proposed for the 3rd cycle. This means that the fact that they are not included in the main “essential learning outcomes framework” (“AE: knowledge, skills and attitudes”), takes away their strength and may even be ignored in the curricular context. There is potential for these transversal learnings, if integrated into the main essential learning outcomes framework, to make the concern with gender equality issues more intentional and explicit.

Finally, the LO section most associated with structural, political and mobilization for action issues (LO4 to LO7) is absent from the AE in the 3rd cycle. Only an introductory overview of gender equality issues is present. An investment in LO4 to 7 (proposed by GET) would be very important to make learning, in terms of gender equality, more conscious, consequential and transformative.

In **Citizenship and Development**, the conclusion is that there are very few references on gender equality in CE official documents. This lack of intentionality with gender inequality in Citizenship and Development may reinforce the persistence of a narrative which invisibilizes gender inequalities in a general way.

Considering that there is no specific Guidelines document as it happens with other areas (and despite this topic being one of the mandatory domains), it would be an important investment to create a guiding reference framework in gender equality, in the construction of which civil society organizations in the area should participate. The absence of a guidelines document in this area is critical, as it depends totally on teachers’ sensitivity, and the ones who have that will not have guidelines to do it.

It should be remembered that the only existing document (suggested in the DGE website) was created in 2009 and republished in 2015 and since then, it wasn’t updated. Furthermore, it focuses on reflection, discussion and questioning of gender roles, stereotypes, discrimination and representations. In addition, “gender and sport” and “gender and new technologies” are also addressed. On a more political level, there is



a concern to work on the issues of leadership and women in power, but without referring to and discussing in depth the structural issues of patriarchy. In fact, this is an option that is explicitly set out in this guide, clarifying that "this option does not mean, however, that other more critical and reflective approaches - such as those influenced by social constructionism or radical feminisms, whose analysis tends to focus on understanding the multiple determinants of men's and women's behaviors in adult life - are seen as less interesting or with less heuristic value. For practical reasons only, they will not be referenced here." (Pinto : 2015, P. 35).

This option, however, has a structural influence on the way in which learning about gender issues is developed in the 3rd cycle. Furthermore, the fact that this is a document produced in 2009 and revised in 2015 and is therefore very old, carries the risk of it being obsolete at this point.

INTERNATIONAL INEQUALITIES

Learning Outcomes proposed by the project on which the analysis was based:

LO 1. discuss equality and inequality and ways in which these are measured;

LO 2. identify the root causes and consequences of inequality in different local, national and global contexts;

LO 3. discuss how global governance structures interact with national and local structures in relation to global equality;

LO 4. express respect for difference, empathy and solidarity towards other individuals and social groups who are subject to stereotypes, prejudice or discrimination in relation to inequality;

LO 5. critically reflect on a range of values and beliefs in relation to international inequality;

LO 6. assess the benefits and challenges of individual and collective action on international inequality in different times and locations throughout the world;

LO 7. demonstrate skills for active engagement and promotion of international equality.

Overall analysis

The theme of international inequalities is closely aligned with the GET LO, with substantial evidence present mainly in Citizenship and Development and Geography. In the History subject, the AE are limited and moderate aligned with the GET LO.

In **Geography**, the focus on inequalities exists, but when the scale is "international", the focus becomes sparse. It would be important to place more emphasis on the international analysis layer, given that the contexts of interrelationships between different people, territories and societies tend to gain relevance and impact that can have new problems or worsen existing ones. Furthermore, the concept of "development" is



used in the learning objectives as having a simple and linear reading and understanding. Being a polysemic concept, it should be presented in a complex way and/or be the target of a learning objective itself.

Due to the extended references to climate changes in the International Inequalities learning outcomes (namely in LO6 and LO7), which mirrors the major interest in bringing that specific layer to the geography curricula, it would be important to match this interest with learning tools and specific training to support intersectional teaching and learning.

Concerning the **History** subject, within the scope of the critical learning processes linked to the history of Portugal, there is a lack of more references/links between the realities of international inequalities and the historical colonialist processes (LO2). Even though there is a more significant presence of critical and less “glorifying past” discourse in the AE of all grades, balancing the overall content in terms of “colonial” reading of national history, this content is diffuse and scattered, proposing mixed and sometimes conflictual learning objectives with other less critical content.

Concerning **Citizenship and Development**, the DE Guidelines, which were developed collaboratively between civil society and government entities responsible for public education policies in Portugal, are the reference document for DGCE in Portugal. The institutions and individuals involved in the preparation of this document have a history of playing an active role in the implementation and evaluation of projects and public policies related to DGCE.

This fact contributes to a very comprehensive analysis of the seven Learning Outcomes for this theme, mostly because the DE Guidelines have in its structure (themes, objectives and descriptors) a large number of elements that are in line with the tables analysis guidelines.

Of all the LO, the analysis of LO4 shows that there are almost no references to “difference, empathy and solidarity” to face “stereotypes, prejudice or discrimination” in the documents analysed. Given the importance of migration dynamics in schools and community contexts and in national political discourse, it would be important for it to feature more prominently. This analysis can be complemented by the theme of migration and inequality.

MIGRATION

Learning Outcomes proposed by the project on which the analysis was based:

LO 1. discuss types and processes of migration;

LO 2. identify the root causes of migration in different local, national and global contexts;

LO 3. express respect for difference, empathy and solidarity towards other individuals and social groups who are subject to stereotypes, prejudice or discrimination in relation to experiences of migration;

LO 4. discuss how global governance structures interact with national and local structures in relation to migration;

LO 5. critically reflect on a range of values and beliefs in relation to migration;



LO 6. assess the benefits and challenges of individual, collective and national responses to migration in different times and locations throughout the world;

LO 7. demonstrate skills for active engagement and take diversity and/or inclusion related actions on the topic of migration.

Overall analysis

Although insufficient, Geography is the subject that is most closely aligned with the LO proposed for the topic of Migration. History AE shows some alignment with these LO, but explicit references to the topic are scarce. Citizenship and Development shows the greatest misalignment, with almost no evidence.

In general terms, in the **Geography** subject there is a significant set of explicit references in the curriculum to migrations and cultural diversity. However, in addition to a reference to the appreciation of the diversity of relationships that different communities and cultures establish with their territories (in LO3) at the level of the transversal objectives of the subject, in terms of AE these explicit references are mostly concentrated in just 1 theme and 1 year: “Population and Settlement”, in the 8th grade.

As a consequence, the 7th grade Geography curriculum does not contain any specific reference to migrations, and such a reference could fit into the curricular space of problematization and debate of the interrelations and geographic spaces of the theme “Natural Environment”, for example, through the explicitness of some AE related to migrations caused by the interference of human action with impacts on territories and/or climate (LO2 and LO1).

In the 8th grade, despite the natural and several references to the theme of migration in the theme “Population and Settlement”, in the “Economic Activities” theme this reference is absent, missing the opportunity to deepen the connection between migration and economic activities, not only at the level of causes (LO2), but also with regard to consequences (LO6).

In the 9th grade, explicit references are limited to the issue of cooperation between peoples and cultures/SDGs, present in the theme “Development Contrasts”, which fails to explicitly include AE that problematize and debate the causes and consequences of these same contrasts, namely those related to migration (LO2, LO4, LO6). Also in this grade, the theme “Environment and Society” is also missing in the AE specific references to migration, missing the opportunity to understand and/or problematize issues related to climate migration (LO1 and LO2).

In general terms, the explicit references to migration in the **History** curriculum is clearly insufficient, and the topic is very rarely addressed specifically throughout the three years analyzed, which clearly contradicts the central importance of migration in understanding, discussing and reflecting on the history of the world and of different regions and places.

In particular, there is an absence of explicit references to migration in the AE of the entire 7th grade, which, ending in the 14th century, would have space to introduce the topic in the different periods studied, helping



to reinforce the view of migration as a continuous process that is intrinsic to human societies, opening up a perspective that is not only global, but also timeless in relation to migration (LO1). It would also allow for the reinforcement of the process of identifying and recognizing the root causes of migration (LO2) and would contribute to a potential positive predisposition towards migrants and their stories (LO3) and to critical reflection on the different perspectives, beliefs and values associated with migration (LO5).

Similarly, in the 9th grade, explicit references to migration are scarce, especially if it is considered that it covers a time period (20th century and contemporary world) in which there was an exponential increase in the number of people involved in migration processes. The explicit absence of the topic in the approach to the history of the 20th century removes from the curriculum one of the keys to understand and critically reflect on this same history and its impact on the contemporary world. This general failure has a more pronounced impact on the lack of understanding of the different perspectives and results in the approaches of national and local structures in relation to migration (LO6), as well as its interaction with the historical and current structures of global governance (LO4).

Concerning **Citizenship and Development**, although interculturality is a domain of the 1st group (i.e., it is one of the mandatory domains for all levels and cycles of schooling), there is no specific guidelines or any other document that guides specific action in this area in terms of the curricular component of Citizenship and Development (and therefore also in the Citizenship and Development discipline in the 3rd cycle). Considering that all the other domains of the 1st group and many of the 2nd and 3rd groups have a specific guidelines document associated, this fact becomes central in a negative way, weakening the specific curricular work in relation to the theme.

With regard to migration, there is almost an omission of the theme in the ENEC - only the Strategic Migration Plan appears as a reference document, with the ENEC focusing almost exclusively on respect and integration of difference/diversity and intercultural relationships.



Conclusions

Based on the analysis carried out, some reflections emerged on the integration of the 4 themes into the essential learning outcomes of the 3 subjects in the 3rd cycle. Firstly, it should be mentioned that there are discontinuities in the content development of some objectives in the three years of the age group under analysis, in light of the LO of this study. **The discontinuity of the contents presented by the documents, in between school years, can be problematic for learning processes in DGCE.** The continuity between different school years might support more meaningful educational processes for the students.

Secondly, it is important to highlight the difference between both subjects History and Geography *versus* Citizenship and Development. **There is no consensus on the Citizenship and Development curriculum and the existing guidelines are, in fact, unclear.** All the other subjects are structured, with the exception of Citizenship and Development, with explicit essential learning outcomes for each year. Although the autonomy that the Portuguese education system has been offering schools may constitute a pedagogical interesting option, **the lack of a specific curriculum and essential learning outcomes penalizes and weakens the area of Citizenship Education and teachers might feel confused.**

On the other hand, the reference guidelines are referred to as proposals for in-depth study of the themes presented in the ENEC, but they do not have the force of a curriculum; they are considered important elements that can be used as teaching support but they are **not binding**. This fact weakens Citizenship and Development across the spectrum of school subjects and, consequently, detracts relevance of school workspaces that can focus on and deepen the four thematic areas proposed for analysis in this study.

It should be also noticed that within the 6 mandatory domains of this 1st group (Human Rights, Gender equality, Interculturality, Sustainable development, Environmental education and Health), only one domain corresponds *ipsis verbis* to the theme proposed by GET project: **“gender equality”**. Even so, this domain does not have its own reference guidelines, but only refers to an external guide prior to the creation of the reference guidelines developed by the DGE. The remaining themes proposed by GET project are included within domains with a different designation. Namely: **Climate Change** was framed in this study within the scope of Environmental Education; **International Inequalities** were framed within the domain of Education for Sustainable Development; and **Migration** was framed within the domain of interculturality, but without any specific documents or references for interculturality.

In addition to this formal framework, it is important to note that **the way in which essential learning outcomes and the 4 reference areas for DGCE (according to the proposal brought by GET project) are addressed in Portugal, depends greatly on the way in which teachers address these topics** - and in this case, the issue of teacher training from a DGCE perspective remains fundamental. In some cases, there are concepts presented in essential learning outcomes that are polysemic and formulated in a neutral way (although, in fact, they are not neutral), and which can be very sensitive in classroom practice. This neutrality can be overcome by crossing these learnings with PASEO, but for this to happen, it would be important to have in-depth work and training in this regard, namely to prepare teachers to promote critical thinking, debate and exploration of ideas with the students.

Regarding the contents, it is worth mentioning that one theme stands out: **Climate Change, which is the theme with the greater presence in the subjects** (although less present in History). It is clear that **there is a basic and common concern with the work on these contents**, which is particularly visible in Geography.

Gender Equality, on the other side, is in the opposite direction. Despite being a mandatory subject, it has a rather weak presence or even absence in the three subjects. Its presence does not seem to be a priority (or



may not be consensual), which is reinforced by absence of a specific guidelines document authored by DGE for this area. The same happens with **Migration**. The explicit references are scarce in the subjects and there aren't any specific guidelines that could help the teachers to work on this topic.

Regarding the theme of **International Inequalities**, it emerges in the subjects, but generally in an indirect way. **There does not seem to be a pedagogical intention in bringing this theme**, with the exception of the Development Education Guidelines (which are also not mandatory, but it points out possible paths). Still on this topic, it would be important to carry out a cross-referencing work on the intersectionality of the theme between the themes, in particular the theme of international inequalities with the others.



Portugal 4Change & IPVC

Authors:
Hugo Cruz Marques
Jorge Cardoso
Sandra Fernandes



From school curricula
to youth actions
for sustainable development
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Curriculum case studies

Case study #1:

3rd Cycle Geography; from 12 to 15 years; the recommended duration of the subject is 100 minutes per week in the 7th and 8th grades and 125 minutes per week in the 9th grade.

In an increasingly shrinking geographical space, where environmental, population, social and cultural phenomena, among others, have multifaceted causes and consequences that transcend borders, it is essential to develop a geographical education that problematizes, questions and seeks to equate scenarios and find solutions to the complex situations that occur in the world, from natural disasters to contrasts in development, climate change, migration, demographic ageing, the multipolar composition of the world system (AE - Aprendizagens Essenciais / Essential Learnings - 9th grade Geography, 2018, pp. 1-2).

Case study #2:

3rd Cycle Citizenship and Development; from 12 to 15 years; weekly 45-minute classes for a semester or fortnightly 45-minute classes for the whole school year.

In order to contribute to the full humanistic formation of students, in Citizenship and Development, teachers have the mission of preparing students for life, to be democratic, participatory and humanistic citizens, at a time of growing social and cultural diversity, in order to promote tolerance and non-discrimination, as well as to suppress violent radicalism* (Citizenship and Development framework, n.d., pp. 1-2).

Case study #3:

3rd Cycle History; from 12 to 15 years; 325 minutes per week over 3 years and mandatory.

History, through the well-founded and critical analysis of examples from the past, is a fundamental subject for promoting the culture of autonomy and responsibility (History, AE 9th grade, p. 2).

Main findings Climate change

Geography and Citizenship & Development present moderate and substantial evidence of essential LOs aligned with all the topic LOs, while History essential LOs present almost no evidence.

- **Geography:** Climate Change is represented in a significant way and aligned with GET LOs, except for "LO5 - Critically reflect on a range of values and beliefs in relation to climate change". No references made to the tension between awareness and behaviour change, and between mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- **History:** The essential LOs about the visibility of Climate Change in the historical course of humanity are relatively weak (only 2 LOs are present). The problems of climate change are ignored, as well as the role of History as a fundamental subject to deepen global awareness and intersect events with consequences at the climate level. The essential LOs also fail to address a call for action.
- **Citizenship and Development:** The Environmental Education Guidelines were considered, which means that GET LOs received very good scores, except for "LO3 - Discuss how global governance structures interact with national and local structures in relation to climate change".

Main findings Gender inequality

The topic is generally absent from the LOs and guidelines of the documents analyzed for the three curricular subjects. Of the three curricula, History presents some points of connection, however with limitations.

- **Geography:** Only 1 LO (LO7) can be linked to Gender Equality. The way in which essential LOs (AE) are built - based on locating and understanding, problematizing and debating, and communicating and participating - is significant, but the link between these essential LOs and Gender Equality is lacking.
- **History:** Gender Equality is largely absent from the subject AE, although it is the discipline of the three subjects with the most evidence (namely, for LO1, LO2, LO3). To frame History as a tool that helps students to situate and explain the historical origins of current gender inequalities would help promote their critical analysis.
- **Citizenship and Development:** Very few references to Gender Equality in Citizenship Education official documents (except for LO2). This influences how learning about gender issues is done in the 3rd cycle. The lack of intentionality with gender inequality in C&D may reinforce a narrative that makes gender inequalities invisible.

Main findings International inequality

The topic is closely aligned with the GET LO, with substantial evidence present mainly in C&D and Geography. In History, the AE are limited and moderately aligned with GET LOs.

- **Geography:** The focus on inequalities exists (LO1, LO2, LO5, LO6, LO7), but when the scale is "international", the focus becomes sparse. "Development" is used in the LOs as having a simple understanding, being a polysemic concept, it should be presented in a complex way and/or be the target of a LO.
- **History:** With evidence for LO2, LO3, LO4, and LO6, more references between International Inequalities and the historical colonialist processes are lacking. Although there is a more significant presence of a critical and less "glorifying past" discourse in the AE for all grades, these contents are scattered, proposing sometimes conflictual LOs with other less critical content.
- **Citizenship and Development:** Very comprehensive analysis of the 7 LOs, mostly because the DE Guidelines (used in this case) have many elements in line with the table analysis guidelines. This might be explained by the fact that they were developed collaboratively by NGOD and the Directorate-General of Education.

Main findings Migration

While insufficiently, Geography is most closely aligned with the LO for Migration. History AE shows some alignment with these LOs, but with scarce explicit references. C&D has the greatest misalignment, with almost no evidence.

- **Geography:** Significant explicit references to Migrations/cultural diversity (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, LO7). Apart from a reference to valuing the diversity of relationships that different cultures establish with their territories (LO3), the cross-cutting LOs are concentrated in "Population and Settlement" (8th grade).
- **History:** Insufficient references to Migrations (LO1, LO2 and LO3 have moderate presence), which is rarely addressed in the 3 years. The failure of evidence on the AE promotes the lack of understanding of the different perspectives in the approaches of national and local structures on migrations (LO6), and its interaction with the historical and current structures of global governance (LO4).
- **Citizenship and Development:** Although a mandatory domain, there are no guidelines of the curricular component/subject of C&D. Since almost all the other domains of the mandatory group have guidelines, this is worrisome and weakens the specific curricular work (only LO3 has evidence).



Conclusion and recommendations for education stakeholders

1. There is no consensus on the C&D curriculum, and the existing guidelines are unclear. All other subjects have essential LOs. Although the autonomy that the Portuguese education system offers schools is interesting, the lack of a specific curriculum and essential LOs penalizes DGCE and teachers might feel confused. The guidelines are non-binding.
2. There are discontinuities in the content development of some objectives in the 3rd cycle. This can be problematic for meaningful learning processes in DGCE.
3. DGCE depends on how teachers address it. There are concepts in the AE that are formulated in a neutral way, although they are not neutral. The GET essential LOs may promote a critical reflection of reality but teacher training on a critical analysis of reality and the ability to problematize is fundamental.
4. International Inequalities & Climate Change stand out concerning LO evidence, while Gender Equality & Migrations have a fragile representation, even though they are part of the C&D 1st mandatory group.
5. No guidelines for Gender Equality & Migration. Since there are no specific guidelines for both, it would be important to create frameworks.
6. Importance of a cross-referencing work on the intersectionality between themes, particularly for International Inequalities.

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