



Connecting Cultures
SUSTAINING OUR WORLD




CONNECTING CULTURES: SUSTAINING OUR WORLD

Fostering Integration Through
Global Citizenship Education

Meath Partnership, October 2022

 **Irish Aid**
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 **meath
partnership**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACE:	Adult and Community Education
DP:	Direct Provision
DE:	Development Education
ESD:	Education for Sustainable Development
EU:	European Union
GCE:	Global Citizenship Education
NEET:	Not in education, employment or training
PPN:	Public Participation Networks
UN:	United Nations
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SICAP:	Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme

ABOUT MEATH PARTNERSHIP

Meath Partnership is a dynamic partnership company established in 2006 to deliver a range of rural, social and economic programmes at a local level across County Meath.

Through our Social Inclusion Community, Employment, Rural Development, Volunteering and Education and Training programmes we provide support and assistance to private individuals and community groups active at local level through capital grant aid, technical assistance, guidance and mentoring, information and support, training opportunities and development initiatives.

PROGRAMMES INCLUDE:

SICAP (Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme), which includes the Meath Wellness Hub. The Meath Volunteer Centre aims to tackle social exclusion at local levels.

Education and Training Department offers accredited and non-nonaccredited training for individuals and communities, in addition to Erasmus+ funded programmes with a focus integration, inclusion and adult education. The Connecting Cultures project is run through the Education and Training Department

Employment: through the Tús and Rural Social Schemes

The synergies between these programmes has led to a wealth of knowledge and networks has resulted in front-line experience in providing assistance and support to those who need it most.

Specialising in the fields of social inclusion, rural development, training and education, Meath Partnership is also an accredited QQI Training Provider.

Meath Partnership has extensive experience of European funded programmes gained through such initiatives as the EU Lifelong Learning Programme, the EQUAL Community Initiative, DG Asylum and Migrant Integration Programme, Interreg, DG Justice, the Norway Lichtenstein Fund and the Erasmus+ Programme. Meath Partnership are cognisant of current

EU policy across its field of operations, and is at the cutting edge of EU policy-making for the future in respect of training and education, social inclusion, integration policy and strategic employment policies.

In 2022, Meath Partnership signed up to the IDEA Code of Good Practice for Development Education, and are since working towards fully embedding GCE as the cornerstone of our Adult Education programmes.

Meath Partnership continues to support, assist and engage in social progression, the facilitation of rural and urban regeneration, the promotion of wellbeing across local communities and to support actions to address the causes and consequences of social and economic deprivation and poverty.

CONNECTING CULTURES: SUSTAINING OUR WORLD

A GCE APPROACH TO INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY

'Connecting Cultures: Sustaining our World: A GCE approach to inclusion and sustainability', is an innovative, one-year project run by Meath Partnership and funded by Irish Aid, which commenced in July 2022.

The rationale for this project stems from a previous Erasmus+ project (EU Voice). It emerged that participants who were living in direct provision, wanted to continue their volunteering journey. There are over 45 accommodation centres in 22 counties in Ireland . As there are over 600 migrants/ asylum seekers/refugees living in Meath , many in rural areas with limited transport options, we feel it is our responsibility to contribute to positive integration, thus reducing physical and psychological feelings of isolation.

Given the global climate crisis, we are involving sustainability-focused and environmental organisations to facilitate volunteer placements. This multi-stakeholder approach aims to address the root causes of exclusion and environmental degradation to bring about transformative change. This project focuses on climate change as it impacts us all, regardless of where we live. Including people from direct provision, the learning environment will be diverse, and participants will have the opportunity to share experiences, challenges and successes from their country of origin. We hope to identify and introduce practices that can be of benefit the organisation, the environment and people currently living in County Meath.

The overall aim of the project is to support Adult Community Education (ACE) practitioners and migrants/asylum seekers/refugees (primarily living in direct provision centres) to engage in GCE training with a specific focus on the environmental pillar of the SDGs. Liaising with Meath Volunteer Centre, the project will support volunteer placements with community-based environmental organisations in County Meath.





This report is phase-One of the 12-month project. In it, our research outlines the current mechanisms that support integration in Meath and the impact volunteering can have on transformative change. The findings will form the basis for the provision of training to ACE practitioners to increase their awareness and understanding of GCE, which will empower them to identify their unique contribution as global citizens.

Section One of this report provides an outline about GCE internationally and the Irish position and discusses the current situation regarding direct provision in County Meath and supports available throughout the county

Section Two will discuss and present the findings of our survey of the three target groups for this project: Migrants/refugees/asylum seekers; ACE practitioners; Volunteer Centres and set out the next steps of the project.

Section Three will present the findings of the survey and issue recommendations.

Finally, in 2023 we will complete this project with the roll-out of a ‘Lessons Learnt’ toolkit.

SECTION ONE

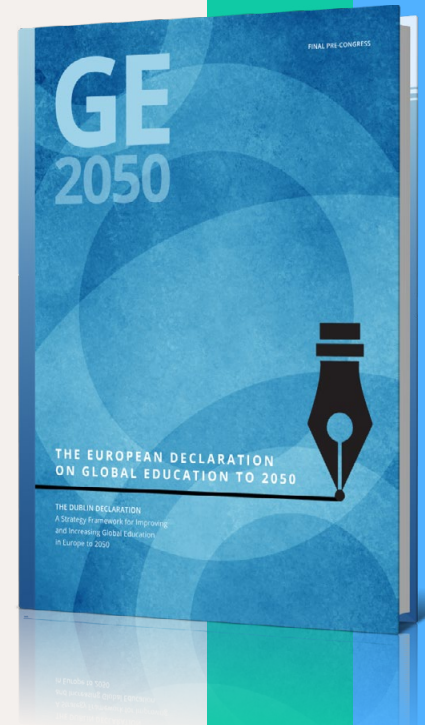
1.1 GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

On the 4th of November 2022 in Dublin Castle, the European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 was adapted by states all over Europe.

The New Definition of Global Education:



Global Education is education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding. It involves respect for human rights and diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future. Global Education encompasses a broad range of educational provision: formal, non-formal and informal; life-long and life-wide. We consider it essential to the transformative power of, and the transformation of, education.² In this spirit, we declare our determination to further advance Global



The full text of “The European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 The Dublin Declaration: A European Strategy Framework for Improving and Increasing Global Education in Europe to the Year 2050 Working towards the day when all people in Europe – in solidarity with peoples globally – will have access to quality Global Education”, is available here: [The European Declaration on Global Education to 2050](#)

Twenty years ago, the Maastricht Global Education Declaration defined Global Education as follows:

...education that supports peoples' search for knowledge about the realities of their world, and engages them in critical global democratic citizenship towards greater justice, sustainability, equity and human rights for all...to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship.

GCE is enshrined in SDG 4 (which is to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”) Target 4.7 further states, “by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote... global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

Transformative Pedagogy creates awareness of ethical issues around the world, from human rights abuses to climate change by inspiring people to adjust their thoughts, behaviours and values.

Critical thinking empowers learners to not just challenge the status quo but also why they should engage in efforts to bring about ethical change to the power dynamics that control and impact communities around the world.

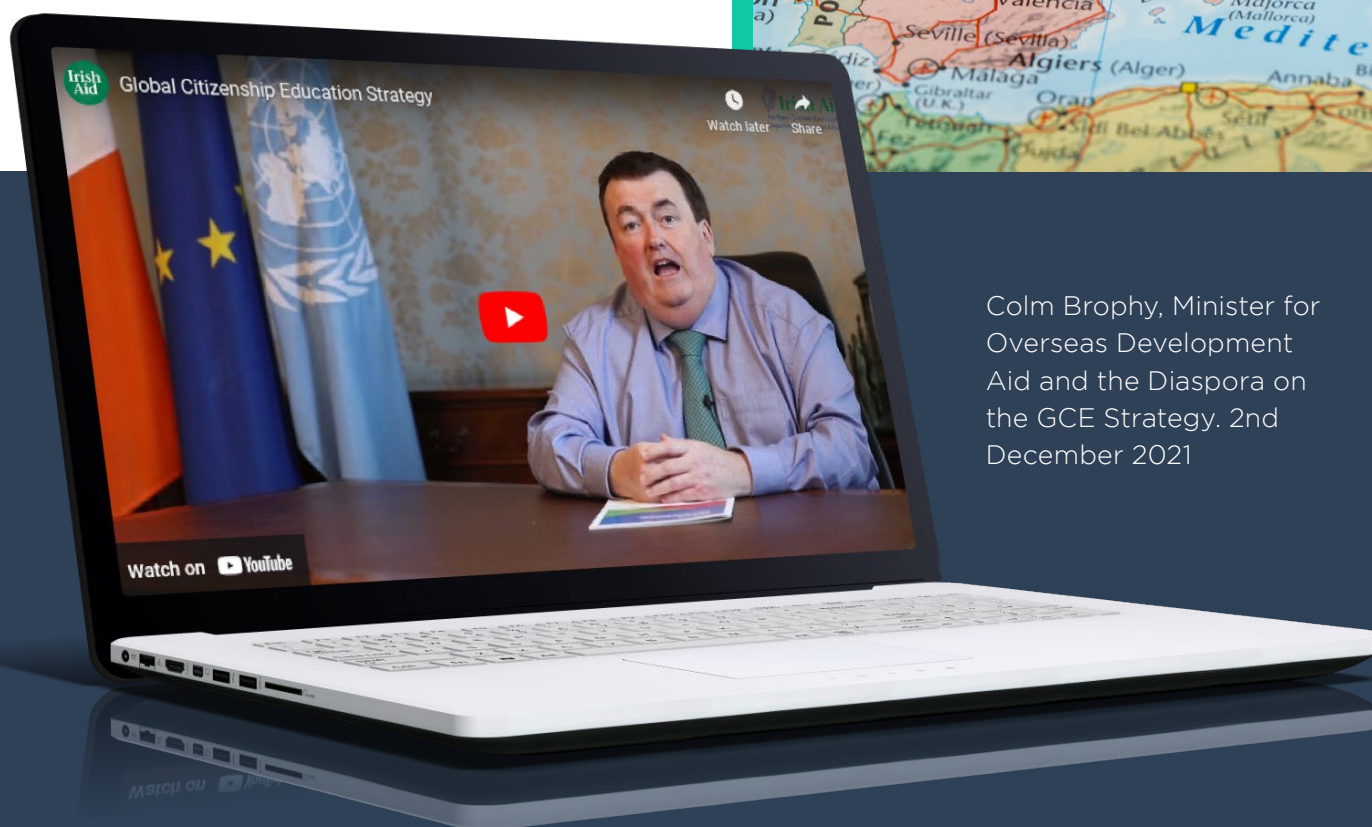


UNESCO GCE encompasses three domains of learning in GCE :

- ▶ **Cognitive**
Awareness of social injustices around the world
- ▶ **Behavioural**
Students are motivated to become agents of change
- ▶ **Socio-emotional**
Develop peaceful and respectful attitudes and values

1.2 GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Irish Aid defines Global Citizenship Education (GCE) “as a lifelong educational process, which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, inter-dependent and unequal world in which we live”. In support of the Global Citizenship Strategy 2020-2025, the Irish government has committed to increasing GCE funding by 60%, up to 10 million euro by 2025.



Colm Brophy, Minister for Overseas Development Aid and the Diaspora on the GCE Strategy. 2nd December 2021

GCE has featured strongly in Irish post primary schools since 2012 with the support of Worldwise Global Schools (WWGS). Furthermore, the Community Education Charter also echoes the ethos of GCE: ie “[community education]...rooted in equality, justice and empowerment”. Irish Aid reported (2020) that 85.4% of learners on DE programmes improved their awareness

of Global Citizenship Literacy, and 77.7% said that participating in a DE learning activity influenced their attitude or behaviour. In relation to adult educators, previous reports (Kearns & O’ Halloran [2020] found that more efforts are needed to raise awareness of the role and place of ACE practitioners in DE/GCE and for ‘educating the educators.’

1.3 INTEGRATION IN MEATH

Overall, 10% of Ireland's population is of a migrant background – 7% from EU member states and 6% from non-member states, compared to just 1% in Romania.

Breaking it down further, according to the preliminary results of the 2021 census, the population of Meath has increased by 25,000 people (or 12.9%) since 2016, the second highest increase in the country (Longford being the highest). The 2016 census recorded that 10.1% of people in Meath were non-Irish, compared to 6% in 2002.

In Co Meath, there are three main direct provision centres, in addition to private or emergency accommodation. These centres house approximately 6-700 migrants/refugees/asylum seekers. Since the start of the war in Ukraine, Meath has received over 1,200 Ukrainian up to September 2022, therefore almost 2,000 refugees and asylum seekers in the county.

Doras, the Irish human rights organisation, have stated that they believe that the direct provision institutional system “creates barriers to integration, contributes to poor mental and physical health and leads to social exclusion.” Although the procedures for determining residency status in Ireland have improved, many are waiting up to two years, and some a lot longer, for a decision. During one of Meath Partnership's social activities for people in direct provision (July 2022), the Integration Team met a lady who has lived in direct provision in Meath for over eight years. Her child was born in Ireland and has not experienced a single day living in a family home.

The fear of residency status being denied and potentially being forced to return to their home country, means people are in a constant state of fear and trepidation of being repatriated, and as such, these types of situations



contribute to being unable to integrate and feeling excluded or isolated.

Furthermore, residents in direct provision centres or emergency accommodation may be relocated to another centre anywhere in the country, sometimes without consultation or notification.

As such, the development of a strategy for meaningful integration, was a necessity. The Joint Migrant Integration Strategy for Louth Meath 2019-2022 defines integration as:

“...a long term multidimensional and dynamic process starting from the moment of arrival in Counties Louth or Meath and involves actions by migrants as well as by host communities and government institutions working collaboratively. Migrants are facilitated to actively participate in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Counties Louth and Meath without having to relinquish their own cultural identity. It implies respect for diversity, equal opportunity and the rights and responsibilities of migrants and the host societies in Louth and Meath with a focus on the development of cohesive communities.”

However, the issue of transport remains. Whilst the Covid pandemic put education on-line and increased access, people in direct provision still feel excluded from the community as they are physically not leaving their place of residence. The rural location of some direct provision centres further contributes to exclusion due to unaffordability and availability of public transport.

Although the Irish Government have committed to ending direct provision by 2024, there is still a need to address exclusion now in addition to preparing for an inclusive society post 2024.

Meath Partnership provides several programmes focusing on social inclusion, including direct coaching and mentoring services to migrants to help navigate education and training options, along with running specifically focused workshops and events such as Business Options, supported by a sector related mentor.

Meath Partnership, being active in the community for almost three decades, have several programmes and initiatives that support inclusion and integration in the community, reaching out to people in rural communities, vulnerable youth and adults, refugees/migrants/asylum seekers.

There are a multitude of organisations, not-for profits and public bodies, offering English language classes all over Meath, such as Cultúr, Fáilte Isteach, libraries, ETBs and the PPNs a crucial support for migrants/refugees/asylum seekers. Many people who are not educators, have volunteered to help with conversational English for Ukrainian refugees.



SECTION TWO: THE STUDY

2.1 METHODS

As part of the study, the MP research team used a mixed methods approach. In addition to bibliographical and online media research, the research team designed a survey adapted for and administered to three different target groups:

- a) educators
- b) volunteer centre managers and coordinators, and
- c) individuals living in Ireland's direct provision system.

The research team held an in-depth interview with a volunteer/coordinator of a local environmental association and a migrant rights advocacy group.

Interviews and focus group discussion, were either recorded and transcribed, or recorded using notes. Surveys were disseminated via online posts, emails to individuals and local stakeholders, and calls and messages via telephone and social media networks. Finally, the survey links were sent to those attending the project's launch in August. With the exception of a few questions on participants' demographic profile, most questions in the survey were open-ended. The focus group was carried out by two facilitators, in order to ensure a comfortable environment and for one facilitator to focus on note-taking and language interpretation (where required and possible). Correspondingly, during the interview and focus groups, the research team made a great allowance in terms of time for participants to engage in discussions about their activities, which allowed them to present their own perspectives on the subject at hand. This also served to minimize any potential bias that could result from one or more researchers' choice of words or questions.



2.2 FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEWS

The focus group was a meeting with seven participants (refugees and asylum seekers), living in a direct provision facility in Co Meath. The focus group session was recorded and transcribed.

The session was a discussion in which participants addressed their volunteering experience, their knowledge of environmental and climate-related issues, and their experiences of such issues both overseas and in Ireland. They were also asked to discuss their needs and expectations from the Connecting Cultures project, and contributions in the form of ideas regarding activities. This was also an opportunity to introduce participants to the aims of the project, so that they may also consider or signal their availability as volunteers over the coming weeks and months.

The discussion during the focus group led to the following conclusions:

- ▶ People want to volunteer in areas that support their profession, especially while they are waiting for recognition of their home-country professional qualifications.
- ▶ All participants were aware of at least one form of climate-related phenomenon or form of local ecosystem destruction (e.g. air pollution, waste management issues, carbon emissions, drought).
- ▶ Most were aware of such phenomena as a result of exposure to news and current events, and in some cases on the basis of personal experience in their country of origin.
- ▶ There are barriers to volunteering, including transportation to and from rural centres, the limited possibility for childcare during volunteering sessions, and language barriers for non-English speakers.



Interviews were held included with members of migrant advocacy and environmental sustainability-oriented grassroots associations in Co Meath (eg Cultúr Migrants Centre at their office in Navan, and an in-depth interview with Sonairte Visitor Eco-Centre, in Laytown).

Assistance in disseminating this survey was provided by key individuals living in or assisting/advocating for those living in direct provision.

An interview was held with four members of the Cultúr Migrants Centre, lasting approximately one hour. Respondents from this interview highlighted the following:

- ▶ People care about environmental sustainability, but volunteering might be difficult for individuals who have pressing personal needs, such as finding housing and work.
- ▶ Discussion about environmental issues involves environmental justice, and this requires a discussion from the bottom up, with individuals who have been displaced by the climate crisis and ecosystem destruction contributing their own perspectives, language, and terminology into the discussion.
- ▶ It was stressed during the meeting that for community outreach projects to be truly community-oriented, they need to have a participatory component, and that this should be present throughout the various stages of the project, including inception, research, execution, and completion.
- ▶ It is crucial for all to acknowledge—especially when discussing SDGs and GCE in the context of migrant and refugee communities—that mass displacement occurs not only because of wars or persecution, but also because of the climate crisis. In other words, there is a pressing need for a legal and social paradigm shift in which the term ‘climate refugees’ is no longer overlooked as a phenomenon.



Points raised in this interview may serve this project as additional perspectives that could provide a good basis for initiating discussion during the “Training of Trainers” step of the project.

The “Training of Trainers” toolkit developed by Saolta, has chapters and key questions that require trainers to think beyond orthodoxies and into critical thinking about our world, both social and material. Key Question 12, for example, which asks “What is Marxist Theory and how can it contribute to our understanding of Development Education?”, may serve as the basis for a conversation that also touches on issues of migration, displacement, and climate crisis, drawing on some of the lived experiences of the diverse communities represented in Co Meath.



We visited Sonairta Visitor Eco-Centre in early September. There the research team held an in-depth interview about the activities of the centre, concerning agricultural, wildlife preservation, and educational activities, obtaining a greater understanding of the environmental challenges in the Meath region.



Activities already underway at Sonairte, involving individuals and families living in direct provision include educational workshops (eg sustainability-oriented or currach-building workshops) and volunteering in agricultural production (eg assisting with planting and harvesting). According to the interviewee from Sonairte, there is significant attendance among such workshops by individuals living in Ireland’s direct provision system. The volunteer coordinator interviewed, cited a number of activities that would involve the farming organic agricultural produce, in which volunteering would be very much welcome. The interviewee stated that there are opportunities for volunteering in the region, that allow both those organising and those participating to be exposed to new ideas, concepts, and skills, while engaging in practices that link local food production practices with global discussions about the environment, the world of insects (Sonairte is also home to the Irish Bee Museum), and global climate crisis.

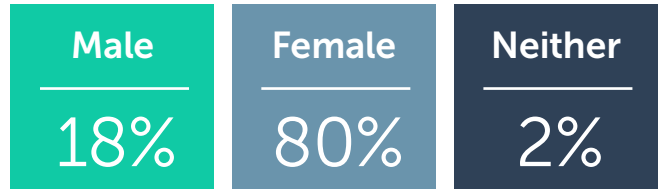
As in our interview with Cultúr Migrants Centre, it appears that Sonairte is an environment in which many of the Key Questions of the “Train the Trainers” toolkit may be discussed, in a physical setting.

2.3 SURVEYS

A survey among ACE educators, volunteer managers and coordinators, and individuals living in direct provision was carried out. The estimated average response time was at half an hour. The survey conducted with educators and volunteer centres, meanwhile, were held with individuals from Meath Partnership's broad network in Co Meath.

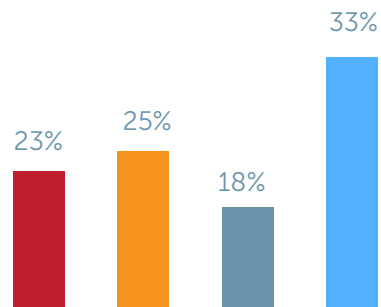
2.4 RESPONDENTS

The survey was also conducted with individuals living in direct provision (n=39). 18%, defined as male 80% as female, and 2% as neither.



When asked about their occupation:

- 23% did not respond
- 25% were unemployed
- 18% work in the agricultural sector.
- The remaining 33% work in healthcare provision, catering, and supermarkets.



2.5 NATIONALITIES

The two most represented nationalities among our respondents were Somalis (28.2% of respondents) and Nigerians (23% of respondents). As figure 1 shows, sub-Saharan Africa is the most represented region.

Country of origin	Number of participants		
Afghanistan	2.6%	Nigeria	23.1%
Angola	2.6%	Sierra Leone	7.7
Cameroon	5.1%	Somalia	28.2%
Chile	2.6%	South Africa	5.1%
N/A	7.7%	Ukraine	2.6%
Malawi	5.1%	Zimbabwe	7.7%

FIGURE 1: RESPONDENTS' NATIONALITIES

The survey results show that most of respondents were either asylum seekers or refugees, living in the direct provision system:

- ▶ Three out of four live in the direct provision system
- ▶ 56.4% are asylum seekers
- ▶ 5.1% are refugees
- ▶ 10.3% have international protection status
- ▶ 5.1% were residents
- ▶ 20.5% did not answer

2.6 KNOWLEDGE OF THE SDGs

As mentioned earlier, some of the questions in our survey were open, in order to allow participants to use their own language and bring forth their own views on the subject, instead of relying on limited options provided by multiple choice.

To understand whether and to what extent people were familiar with climate-related challenges, the research team asked respondents whether they were familiar with SDGs. Just over one in two (53.8%) respondents were familiar with SDGs (see figure 2).

- 53.8% were familiar with SDGs
- 38.5% were not familiar with SDGs
- 5.1% had some familiarity
- 2.6% did not respond

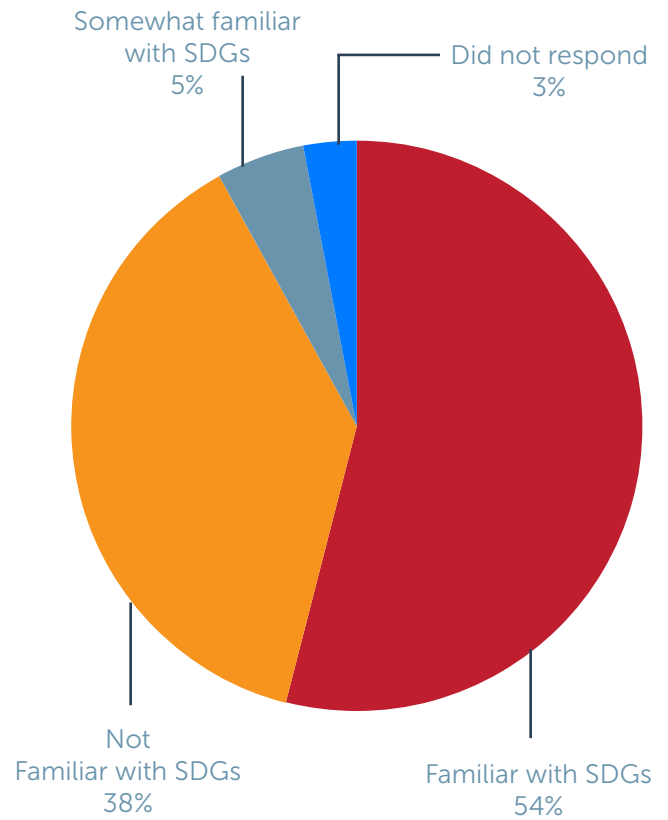


FIGURE 2: FAMILIARITY WITH SDGs

The research team also wanted to identify whether as learners, respondents had ever been in an educational context in which they would have been trained on SDGs. Only 10.23% mentioned that they had received some form of training of the kind.

To the question: “Have you received training on the SDGs?”, one participant wrote:



When completing my degree in Culinary Entrepreneurship, there was a focus on some of the SDGs, such as: 2: Zero Hunger, 3: Good Health and Wellbeing, and 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.



When asked whether SDGs aligned with their personal values, one participant wrote:



Not all of them as there are 17 in total. However, I try to incorporate as many of them into my own life as possible. For example, SDG3 on good health. In the past, I have had health challenges, and lived abroad, so I could compare the different systems and understand where migrants face challenges and how their home system is better / worse



2.7 CLIMATE CHANGE

To the question regarding whether or not they were familiar with global climate change issues (an open question), most respondents showed at least an awareness of the existence of such issues, and in most cases a critical understanding of such phenomena.

In their responses, 74.3% showed a significant awareness of climate change and 97% considered the environment to be important

When asked what experiences they could bring from their own countries, respondents showed an in-depth understanding of the idea and made interesting suggestions (53%).

Some responses include the following:

“

Climate change is a world-wide phenomena that is being caused by organisations and individuals who over consume and demand more; however, they are unaware that their 'more' often exploits individuals.

”

“

Climate change is the shift in weather patterns that can be influenced by many factors like natural and human effect

”

“

Climate change will cause drought, pollution, flooding, lack of rain... etc

”

“

Climate change is affecting our way of life because of changed weather patterns

”

2.8 VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

The research team also sought to understand whether respondents had ever been in a volunteering role. 46% had previously volunteered, 38% had not volunteered before, and 10% would either volunteer if they had the opportunity, while 10% of our respondents said that they would volunteer if given the opportunity.

Had previously volunteered	46%
Had not volunteered before	15/39
Would either volunteer if they had the opportunity, or have volunteered outside of Ireland	10% of total, or 80% of those said they had not volunteered before

FIGURE 3: EXPERIENCE WITH VOLUNTEERING

SECTION THREE

3.1 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The research serves as an urgent reminder that newcomers in a society are not passive recipients of new practices and of a national culture. Rather, they are both contributing and receiving, in the form of new languages, knowledge, skills, ideas, and solutions to pressing local and global problems. Having lived in at least two countries (the one they originate came from, the one they are in now, and frequently several on the way), they tend to have a rich understanding of global challenges and potential solutions.

The information gathered as part of the research shows that there is great interest among civil society and migrant/refugee communities to engage in volunteering activities that would serve to bridge concepts of citizenship, global awareness, and practical engagement.

Nearly all respondents were bringing a great interest about the environment and the global climate crisis. Many had unique perspectives to contribute.



Both at the national and at the county level, there are tremendous challenges with relation to our environmental footprint. More locally, issues like waterways, rivers, and wildlife, but also with agriculture, transport, waste, and food consumption are all urgent. Globally, the country has an enormous footprint, in areas such as data centres, waste management, aviation, and more.

Most had something meaningful to add in the way of experiences and knowledge either acquired here or overseas.

There are several initiatives in Meath already working with direct provision residents. Some initiatives are bringing their new skills and perspectives to talk about the environment. Respondents from direct provision are largely from parts of the world that have suffered devastating environmental disasters. Refugees present us with stark reminders that the quality of life in many of their countries of origin is currently suffering as a result of climate crisis and environmental degradation.



3.2 FOSTERING INTEGRATION THROUGH GCE: RECOMMENDATIONS

As previously mentioned, this report is the basis for Phase Two of the project, GCE training. The learning from the research has provided valuable information to guide Meath Partnership on the most appropriate approach to meet its overall objective, ie how inclusion and GCE can bring about transformative change. As such, Phase Two (training) will ensure that educators, trainers, and local volunteer organizations, are actively learning, together with participants from the direct provision system, about both issues in Ireland and issues in individuals' other countries of origin.

Our recommendations to organizations approaching wishing to adopt a GCE lens, are the following:

01

Ensure a bottom-up learning approach.

Global Citizenship suggests exchange. It is very important that projects on global citizenship adhere to the principles of participatory learning. Many of the people currently living in direct provision have been displaced as a result of the climate crisis, and their presence in Ireland is an opportunity for Irish society to be informed in real time about:

- ▶ The challenges that other communities are facing in their home countries
- ▶ What people are doing back home to confront these issues
- ▶ How people can act together, by bridging different ideas, perspectives, and movements
- ▶ How in a globalized production system, Ireland is tied in with global finance, production, energy, and waste management systems

02

Ensure that no learning process is dominated by a national perspective

Our respondents represent various different countries and continents. Their perspectives can only serve to enrich local narratives on climate crisis action. It is important to remember that people in direct provision are, while facing exclusion, entitled to an equal part in Irish and European society and decision-making as anybody else.



03

Ensure that there are adequate opportunities for those who want to learn professional skills through volunteering.

While volunteering is an important aspect of sustainability, individuals living in direct provision have pressing needs related to employment, housing, healthcare, and education. Environmental volunteering opportunities that enable them to improve their livelihoods in the future should be encouraged.

04

Ensure proximity of volunteering to professional skills.

Ensure that opportunities to volunteer are combined with information about educational programs that could serve to lead people to new skills, careers and, and degrees.

05

Identify useful resources for learning about environmental issues.

Ensure that resources are identified for people to learn about environmental issues, locally, globally, and in their countries and regions of origin, so that all sides may be well acquainted with some of the issues individuals are struggling with.

06

Carry out a strong needs assessment exercise and follow a resource impact model.

This is especially important, considering that 'SDG literacy levels' are important in planning and piloting resources, particularly where a dearth of basic introductory materials to the SDGs have been produced and the 'intermediate' or 'advanced' target users may go un-served.



CONCLUSION

As stated, GCE is transformative in nature, the knowledge, competencies, values, and skills gained through the Connecting Cultures project will inspire and empower people to advocate for equality in the community through critical engagement and meaningful integration.

In order to deepen the understanding of adult educators, awareness of GCE must firstly be created and by imparting this awareness to others, it has the potential create positive, transformative change. Educators may have to challenge their own opinions, values and behaviours also and their personal journey can also be inspirational.

For GCE to be truly effective, it must reflect the diversity of our communities to ensure meaningful inclusion and integration of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, that is based on equality, dignity and respect for individuals and their cultural background. Furthermore, it must be understood that people who have sought refuge in Ireland, may be fleeing as a result of their actions taken against social injustices.

An important step for persons involved in integration and inclusion programmes, is to take into consideration the language and meaning of the SDGs when interacting with people in direct provision. The ideals of the SDGs expressed and campaigned for internationally, nationally and at community level may not be the priority for a person in direct provision, regardless of how much that person may care about an issue. A person from a country where carbon emissions from vehicles and road deaths are prolific may prioritise getting to work by whatever means available to provide for their family, not the environment or climate.

GCE should be approached holistically in order to encourage critical thinking and empower people first to want to take action and second, to act. People who are migrants/refugees or asylum seekers who return to their home-country may have the opportunity to share what they have learnt and experienced in Irish communities



Life-long learning also starts at home. Parents are mentors and they should have access to GCE in order to support, encourage and educate their children to become global citizens of the future, who can speak out and act in addressing the root causes of poverty, inequality and climate change.

ORGANISATIONS WHO WORK WITH MIGRANTS/ REFUGEES/ASYLUM SEEKERS IN MEATH

Organisation	Website	Email
Cultúr Migrants Centre	https://cultur.ie/	info@cultur.ie
DePaul charity	https://ie.depaulcharity.org/projects/cosan-nua/	depaul@depaulcharity.net
East Coast Resource Centre	https://www.crannsupportgroup.ie/eastcoastfamilyresourcecentre/	frc@crannsupportgroup.ie
Fáilte Isteach	https://www.thirdageireland.ie/failte-isteach/locations	failteisteach@thirdageireland.ie
Immigrant Council of Ireland	https://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/campaign/integration/migrant-refugee-leaders-network	stopracism@immigrantcouncil.ie
Irish Refugee Council	https://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/	info@irishrefugeecouncil.ie
Meath Partnership	https://meathpartnership.ie/en/employment/	info@meathpartnership.ie
Meath County Council	https://www.meath.ie/council/council-services/community/meath-and-louth-joint-migrant-integration-strategy-2019-2022	info@meathcoco.ie
Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland	https://www.masi.ie/	info@masi.ie
Translate Ireland	https://translateireland.ie/	info@translateireland.ie

FURTHER READING

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