



# SCALE OF REFERENCE FOR PARTICIPATORY CITIZENSHIP SCHOOLS

A TOOL FOR SCHOOL PARTICIPATION!

*"Participation is an important antidote to traditional educational practice which runs the risk of leaving youth alienated and open to manipulation. Through genuine Participation in projects, which involve solutions to real problems, young people develop the skills of critical reflection and comparison of perspectives which are essential to the self-determination of political beliefs. The benefit is two-fold: to the self-realization of the child and to the democratization of society."*

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Hart, Roger A. (1992).  
Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship.  
Florence: United Nations Children's Fund

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays we live in a complex and demanding society that on the one hand calls for our active Participation as citizens, but on the other encourages individualism and competitiveness. The apparent increasing **youth disengagement from conventional political Participation** in recent years has been contradicted by research that indicates that young people has not disengaged from democratic and civic behaviour, but has been struggling to **find other ways** to make their voices heard.

With their extraordinary energy, creativity, talents, gifts and potential for change, **young people can contribute decisively to the development of our communities**. It is therefore essential to create new and transform existing spaces so that young people can truly Participate, namely in the processes and the issues that affect them, thus seeking to broaden their horizons to the relevant issues of their local, regional, national, European and even global communities. A society that does not encourage nor support young people to participate in finding solutions for their problems and for the problems of their community, cannot expect that these will later become active and supportive citizens. This encouragement and support is particularly determinant in the case of marginalized young people and youth at risk.

According to the **Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education**<sup>1</sup>, *“Education for democratic citizenship” means education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law”*.

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1. The Charter can be consulted at [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int).

The Charter further affirms that *“Teaching and learning practices and activities should follow and promote democratic and human rights values and principles; in particular, the governance of educational institutions, including schools, should reflect and promote human rights values and foster the empowerment and active Participation of learners, educational staff and stakeholders, including parents/tutors”*.

Participation is a **Human Right** with an inherent value and, at the same time, it is a **pedagogical process**, meaning that the best way to learn how to participate is by participating, developing skills and competences, values and attitudes to a more active and responsible citizenship (learning by doing).

At school young people can experience Participation, not only by taking responsibility and making decisions about their own learning processes, but also by taking part in discussions and actions that relate to local, regional, national, and global matters. In this context, **schools can and should play a major role in providing knowledge and experiences of citizenship**, allowing and encouraging Participation of the various actors (students, teachers, parents/tutors and school non-teaching staff) in building solutions covering, not only the school environment and the surrounding community (local citizenship), but also enabling the development of a sense of belonging in the European and global communities (European and global citizenship).

In order to support schools in this process there is a need for **(1) comprehensive and adequate tools** that may act as practical guidelines for fostering Participation, as well as **(2) the development of strategies to engage** students and the other relevant school actors.

## 2. THE SCALE OF REFERENCE FOR PARTICIPATORY CITIZENSHIP SCHOOLS

The Scale of Reference for Participatory Citizenship Schools is a **practical self-assessment tool** in terms of school actors' Participation in learning, governance and community relations. It can be used as a standard framework for schools across the European Union that wish to understand in what level they are in terms of Participation, as well as to be inspired to take steps in order to become more participatory.

It was designed **to be applied by secondary schools or equivalent**. Although it can be adapted to early school years, in such cases, it will be important to take into account the different roles of parents/tutors, teachers, other school staff and students in each school level. The scale is built in steps so that each step corresponds to a higher level of Participation of the school actors and correspondingly, to a greater degree of active citizenship promotion by the schools.

This Scale is not only a tool, but also a **process that invites schools to become more participatory**. This process is composed by a **participatory self-assessment activity** involving all relevant actors (students, teachers, other school staff, parents/tutors and other community actors, such as local authorities, civil society organizations, other schools, etc.), as well as the development, together and with the support of school relevant stakeholders, of a **Strategic Plan** to become a more participatory school<sup>2</sup>.

The main objective is that **each school follows its own pace and finds its own path** to become a participatory space. Therefore, the Scale was designed to work as a self-assessment tool, does not include any external control mechanism and it is flexible enough to allow each school to find its own way of using and adapting it to its reality. This is the reason why, in order to understand progresses made, schools shall register the criteria used during each self-assessment activity, allowing future comparisons between different years' results.

On the other hand, the Scale **was not created to generate comparative or competitive conclusions among different schools**. However, if schools from a similar context want to use this tool to learn from each other, they can do it and generate comparative conclusions between them, by previously agreeing on common criteria.

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2. Some examples of School Strategic of Action Plans for Participation can be found in [www.democraticschool.ecos.pt](http://www.democraticschool.ecos.pt)



The Scale of Reference for Participatory Citizenship Schools is the result of a collaborative work between three Schools and three Civil Society Organizations (CSO), from Portugal, Poland and Slovenia, under the project **Network of Democratic Citizenship Schools**.

During around 4 months (between January and April 2016) each country team **mapped school Participation at local and country levels**, by gathering and organizing information such as legislation and regulations, current practices, relevant stakeholders and objectives, as well as identifying and studying different models of existent participatory schools. Common methodology and guidelines were used to perform this research in the three schools and countries, which included activities such as **desk research, interviews** with school key actors and **focus group discussions** targeting students, teachers, managers, school non-teaching staff and parents/tutors.

In May 2016, project's partners gathered in an **international training course**, held in the Portuguese Partner School, Agrupamento de Escolas de Pinheiro e Rosa (AEPROSA), in Faro (Portugal). Partners used school and country mappings results, their previous experience and the knowledge acquired in that training course to develop this tool. In this course, several tools and instruments on citizen and youth Participation were presented and studied and partners decided to use the International Association for Public Participation "**IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation**" (can be consulted in <http://iap2canada.ca/page-1020549>) as a base for building the Scale of Reference. Additionally, they started to build the scale dimensions and sub-dimensions, using their real examples and also some visioning activities of what would be the best Participatory Citizenship School.

A **group of Portuguese experts** was consulted and contributed generously with relevant inputs, suggestions and recommendations such as the importance of keeping in classroom learning as a separate item of self-assessment and the utilization of real examples from practitioners as a way of feeding and keeping the Scale updated to future reality.

The final document proposal was prepared by CSO technical teams with the support of the School teams, especially the Portuguese School Team, and **tested by all partners** during a transnational project meeting and in several school local activities.

# 3. USING THE SCALE OF REFERENCE

## 3.1. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

For the purpose of this self-assessment, the school universe is divided in four dimensions:

A) Learning;

B) Governing;

C) Being part of a larger community;

D) Inclusion - consisting on a transversal dimension that emphasizes the Participation of certain individuals or groups in all other dimensions.







For each dimension, there are several sub-dimensions that shall be assessed by schools taking into consideration the existence of four relevant groups, corresponding to the existing schools actors, considered for the purpose of this assessment such as follows:

- **Students** - People attending an educational institution aiming at developing new knowledge, competences or values, thus achieving a certain level of qualification and/or certification;
- **Teachers** - People working in an educational institution whose main role is to support students in acquiring knowledge, competences or values and to achieve a certain level of qualification and/or certification;
- **Parents/Tutors** - Those responsible for following in the educational path of a student such as parents, other family members, tutors, legal tutors or others;
- **Non-teaching staff** - The ones working in an educational institution that are not teachers, whose roles can be administrative, organizational, logistical or pedagogical support (such as a psychologist, a counsellor, or others).

The evaluation is to be done in four evaluation tables, one per dimension, and it shall be done actor by actor. So, starting with the first table on “Learning” and with the first actor “Students”, schools shall chose the Participation Levels corresponding to the Students engagement in each of the sub-dimensions presented.

The Levels of Participation are identified near each table with specific symbols and a small statement and are graded from 0 to 4. A full description of the Levels of Participation can be found in section 3.3. By using this description and the Guidelines provided in section 3.2., schools shall choose and signal the Levels that best apply to their current situation.

For each Participation level chosen, schools shall answer the question “Why did you choose these levels?” by adding a short description and examples of the procedures or processes in place that justify their choice. In the future, these descriptions may serve as examples/guidelines for other schools. Once the “Students” lines are all completed, schools shall sum up the total score reached and record it in “Total”. After finishing “Students” evaluation, schools shall move on and evaluate the Participation of the following school actor, and so on, up until all the 4 evaluation tables are completed.

		 0	 1	 2	 3	 4	WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THESE LEVELS?
STUDENTS	A1		X				<i>A.1. In the beginning of each school year, students receive a document with the program and the objectives of each subject.</i> <i>A.2. ...</i>
	A2			X			
	A3		X				
	A4				X		
TOTAL 							

When those filling in the assessment have no information regarding a certain actor’s Participation in a specific sub-dimension, they can choose the option “No Info”. In that case, the results achieved will be similar to a non-participation result, meaning that the school will score zero in that sub-dimension. We expect that this “rule” will encourage schools to further their self-awareness regarding that specific actor’s Participation.

In certain situations it may be widely accepted, at regional or national levels, that parents/ tutor or non-teaching staff’s Participation is not relevant for the assessment of a specific dimension or sub-dimension. In those cases the schools can consider a dimension or a sub-dimension as “Non-Applicable” for that actor, by cutting out the corresponding part of the table and by subtracting from the final scores the total score that would correspond to that part of the evaluation. For more information on how to calculate final scores in this situations can be found on chapter 5.

Note that this exception can only be applied to parents/tutor or non-teaching staff’s; Students and/or teachers’ Participation can never be considered as “Non-Applicable”!

Once the self-evaluation in dimensions A), B), C) and D) is finalized, schools shall copy all the scores obtained on “Total” for each actor to the final assessment table and sum them up into total scores. The total score will correspond to a School’s Participation Level. It is also possible to check the levels of Participation of the school per actor and per dimension. You can read the chapter 5 of this document to get to know how to read the results.

To help schools filling in the assessment some examples of actions, activities, projects and initiatives are given along the document. Schools can look at these, relate them to their specific reality and decide upon that, the Participation levels to choose.

## 3.2. GUIDELINES FOR USING THE SCALE

When using the Scale of Reference, please keep in mind the following guidelines:

**Only generalized practices count; isolated practices do not count** - When conducting the assessment, take into account school's generalized practices (regulated or not). Isolated good examples can be taken into account as best practices to be shared and spread, however they shall not be considered for the self-assessment results. The same applies to school's regulations that are not being implemented in practice. While it might be difficult to identify generalized practices due to the diversity existing in schools (vocational and regular training/education, special needs education, different roles that teachers, non-teaching staff and students can play in schools, etc.), it is important that each school finds compromise solutions that portray its own reality.

**Only direct Participation or real representation counts** - We consider that an actor is part of the decision-making if he can make or contribute to decisions by himself (direct Participation) or if, at individual and/or group levels, he is represented in a proportional way by someone chosen in elections that are free and fair (representation). In this sense, for instance, if students are the majority, a school body where they have fewer representatives than teachers cannot be considered as a body that represents them.

**All school actors are relevant** - The Scale takes into account the existence of four groups, envisaged as four different school actors - students, teachers, parents/tutors and school non-teaching staff- their respective roles and the desirable balance of powers between them. Only exceptionally, taking into account different school and country realities, the Participation of school non-teaching staff or parents/tutors can be considered as not relevant for the assessment of a specific dimension or sub-dimension. This exception does not apply to students and/or teachers! Please refer to section 3.1. to know how to proceed in those situations.

**All persons count equally** - When analysing a school actors' Participation, all people who are part of that role shall be taken into account. This means that even if some students, teachers, parents/tutors or school non-teaching staff have privileged access to decision-making, if the same opportunity is not equally available to all other people with the same role, then it shall not be taken into account.

**Only effective Participation counts** - When analysing a school actor Participation, it is important to assess not only if people can participate, but also if people do participate. Thus, even if everyone is granted with the right to participate, if most people are not participating, the self-assessment shall conclude for a low level of Participation.

**There is no Participation if relevant information is not available** - Information is essential to any other level of Participation and it is the first step to build up Participation. If school actors are not provided with the relevant information regarding one dimension and/or sub-dimension, it means they are on Participation level 0, even if apparently they are consulted, involved or collaborating/empowered (levels 2, 3 and 4).

**Both internal and external factors count** - When assessing school actors' Participation, both internal and external factors that contribute to and affect the school reality shall be considered, even if they do not depend on the school will or mandate. This means that, for instance, if the national legislation denies schools' decision-making power on a certain topic, when assessing the corresponding sub-dimension, schools must consider a low level of Participation, even if the school does not agree with or would like that situation to be different. Schools should take notes of these factors during their self-assessment exercise and use them as a base for defining actions to take within their Action Plans for Participation.

## 3.3. LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

For the purpose of this self-assessment the following 5 levels of Participation shall be considered<sup>3</sup>:

0		<b>NO PARTICIPATION</b> <i>"Sometimes we invite you to attend or be part of our actions and initiatives".</i>
1		<b>INFORMATION</b> <i>"We will keep you informed".</i>
2		<b>CONSULTATION</b> <i>"We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced our decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals".</i>
3		<b>INVOLVEMENT</b> <i>"We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision".</i>
4		<b>COLLABORATION AND EMPOWERMENT</b> <i>"We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible" or simply "We will implement what you decide".</i>

3. Except for Level 0 – No Participation, the Participation levels and respective explanations were adapted from the "IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation" created by the International Association for Public Participation.

## GET TO KNOW A BIT MORE!<sup>4</sup>



### 0 NO PARTICIPATION

School actor(s) do not participate when not provided either with information or means to take part in everyday life of school, and are therefore prevented from understanding the schools' context (problems, opportunities, roles, etc.). In this level we can also include situations of manipulative Participation, decoration and tokenism. (Hart, 1999)

Different examples of NO Participation can be found. A very common example of **manipulation** takes place when students, families, teachers are invited to think and design a project to improve the school, their ideas are collected but they never get to receive any feedback or get to know how their ideas were transformed into a "community design" or a "participatory action plan".

On **decoration** we can recall, for instance, school actors are invited to dance or sing, to take photos and attend actions to celebrate international dates, but have little idea of what it is all about and no say in organizing the occasion. The actors are used to bolster a cause nothing more.

**Tokenism** is a practice or policy of making no more than a token effort or gesture, as in offering opportunities to minorities or to groups that are somehow disadvantaged, equal to those of the majority. We can see it for example if students have one representative in a school council composed by 20 or 30 adult persons.

4. Except for Level 0 – No Participation, the information in "Get to know a bit more!" is a summary of the contents of the Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) "Engaging Citizens: A game changer for development?", 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, organized by the World Bank in 2015.



## 1 INFORMATION

School actors are provided with continuous, balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

Information is a **basic level of Participation**, but essential to any other level and the first step to build up Participation.

Information is a **two-way process**. Even when information is made available to others it does not mean they will actually get that information, become sufficiently informed and do something with that information, taking a step to be more participative.

To inform or to be informed doesn't necessarily lead to acquired knowledge or increased Participation. Nevertheless, a participatory process always starts and depends on the information available to all potential participants. For instance, in a school environment: how can students participate in school if they don't fully know all the school structure, regulations and policies? The same applies to teachers, school non-teaching staff and parents/tutors.

Information is the key to Participation!





## 2 CONSULTATION

School actor(s) receive information from the school and are asked for feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Consultation is **probably the most common way of Participation**. In a democratic society we are regularly consulted about several political decisions (elections), social and economic issues (satisfaction enquiries, participatory budgets). Consultation is a very helpful and easy way of engaging people, but it can lead to a decrease of Participation if information is not sufficient. For example, in a school: Do I, as a student or a parent, increase my Participation in school by responding to an enquiry? Did I get enough information about the aspects enquired? Did I get enough information about the results of the enquiry?

Besides the need to provide proper information, consultation processes **only increase Participation if those enquired get some response, some feedback from those who consulted them**. Do I get to see any consequence of my Participation in a consultation process in school? Chances are, if I don't, I won't participate in a consultation process again. Therefore, a simple engaging act of consultation can prove to be disastrous if there is no information and no responsiveness. Consultation is, nevertheless, an easy way to engage small or large groups of participants and should always play an important part of a participatory process. When the appropriate methodology is applied, and follow up is carefully looked into, consultation can motivate people and increase future Participation.



### 3 INVOLVEMENT

Decision-makers work directly with the various school actor(s) throughout the decision-making process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

When people are involved, they take part, they act with others or express themselves on a certain activity, decision or process, feeling a part of it. Therefore, involvement means Participation, which can be more or less active, depending on the situation. In school, students can be involved or involve themselves in the preparation of learning activities or celebrations; parents/tutors can be involved or involve themselves in school activities (reading or telling stories, describing their jobs to students, etc.); teachers and school non-teaching staff can be involved or involve themselves in school projects.

To analyse the level of Participation in result of the involvement, there are a few points to take into consideration: the first one is the **level of initiative** of the involved participants (for instance: did parents/tutors get involved in a certain activity by their own initiative or were they asked or invited by the teachers?); the second is the **parity of their involvement** (for instance, students were involved in the preparation of a school play, but were they involved in all the phases of the process or just in what the teacher's reserved for their Participation?); finally, and most importantly – **decision making**. Is the involvement in decision-making in reach of all participants in a certain event? Like, for instance, are students involved in the decision making of the annual activities plan? Are parents/tutors involved in the solving of disciplinary problems? Are teachers and school non-teaching staff involved in the definition of school regulations?

Involvement is always a form of Participation that increases the sense of belonging, builds up group liaisons and organization/community identity. Depending on the level of initiative, parity and decision-making of the participants, it can be more or less self-rewarding, hence promoting and increasing individual Participation.



## 4 COLLABORATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Decision-makers partner with the school actor(s) in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution or the final decision-making is placed directly in the hands of the school actor(s).

To collaborate is to co-elaborate, that is to say, collaboration means different people participate in the elaboration/construction/organization/implementation/evaluation of something. Participation should always be understood as a result of collaborative actions of participants. Actually, **Participation is essentially a collaborative process**. In these processes every participant puts a bit of effort, creativity, responsibility or any other personal resource in a common doing. Therefore, collaboration is a quite elaborated form of Participation, as it implies, not only initiative, parity and decision-making, but also discussing, resolving, and sharing responsibilities and benefits. In a school environment, do teachers collaborate, for instance, to raise student's well-being? In the classroom, do students collaborate, for example, to include a newcomer or to solve a problem? Can we identify an example of collaboration of teachers and students, teachers and school non-teaching staff or teachers and parents/tutors?

**Participation is always a form of empowerment.** In all the forms of Participation: information, consultation, involvement or collaboration, people and organization get more power. That is to say, power over themselves, their social environment and their lives and development. But, it is only when you acknowledge your own Participation as a form of personal and social empowerment that it becomes a natural way of being. People aware of the empowerment within participatory actions tend to seek new forms of Participation. And that is why engaged citizens become more active and sustainable organization or community development depends on the increase of people's Participation.

# 4. THE SCALE

## A. LEARNING

This dimension comprises all decisions regarding the individual and group learning processes happening in the school, inside and outside the classroom, including formal curricula<sup>5</sup>, co-curricular and extracurricular activities<sup>6</sup>, at school and class levels.

## B. GOVERNING

This dimension comprises decision making-processes not related to learning, that happen at class, departments or school level, as well as the process by which these decisions are implemented and evaluated.

## C. BEING PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY

This dimension comprises the network of relations that connect the school to other social actors namely other schools, community groups, families, enterprises, public authorities and civil society organisations at local, national and international levels.

## D. INCLUSION

This dimension comprises the right that all actors have to participate without discrimination - no matter their origin, colour, gender, religion or belief, language, political opinions, social origin, property, status, etc. It implies valuing all individuals, ensuring equal access and opportunities to all, and removing barriers to all Participation levels (information, consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment).

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5. "Formal Curriculum (or curriculum) typically refers to the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives they are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course or subject; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning." In The Glossary of Education Reform available at <http://edglossary.org/curriculum/>

6. "Generally speaking, co-curricular activities are an extension of the formal learning experiences in a course or academic program, while extracurricular activities may be offered or coordinated by a school, but may not be explicitly connected to academic learning, not being assessed. This distinction is extremely fuzzy in practice, however, and the terms are often used interchangeably. Athletics, for example, are typically considered to be extracurricular activities, while a science fair would more likely be considered a co-curricular activity, given that students are learning science. Participation may be required by the school, students may be graded on their entries, or a science teacher may coordinate the fair. Still, in some schools certain athletics activities might be considered "co-curricular," while in other schools a science fair may be labelled "extracurricular." In The Glossary of Education Reform available at <http://edglossary.org/co-curricular/>

## A. LEARNING

This dimension comprises all decisions regarding the individual and group learning processes happening in the school, inside and outside the classroom, including formal curricula, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, at school and class levels.

**A.1. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT/DESIGN** Development/design of the formal curriculum elements such as contents and objectives, at school or class levels.

**A.2. CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION** Implementation of the formal curriculum elements, including the methodologies and activities used for group or individual learning.

**A.3. CURRICULUM EVALUATION** Activities carried out to provide and elements used to evaluate achievements within the scope of the formal curriculum, such as feedback and suggestions for improvement, grades, scores, etc.

**A.4. CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR LEARNING** Definition and implementation of co-curricular and extra-curricular contents, activities and learning objectives (see definition on page 21). Co-curricular and extracurricular activities may include: trips and travels, additional courses or lessons, school projects, integration of students, social learning, festivities and celebrations.

**Note:** In some contexts curriculum development and curriculum implementation are so connected and interdependent that it doesn't make sense to speak about those two sub-dimensions separately. Thus, if this is the case that applies to your reality, do schools' assessment only to dimension "A.1 - Curriculum development". In those cases the grades given to each actor in the sub-dimension A.1. should be multiplied by two.

### PARTICIPATION LEVELS



0 Do not take part



1 Are informed



2 Are consulted



3 Are involved



4 Collaborate or Co-decide  
(alone or together with other school actors)

		0	1	2	3	4	WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THESE LEVELS?
STUDENTS	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>						
TEACHERS	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>						
PARENTS/TUTORS	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>						
NON-TEACHING STAFF	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>						

#### PARTICIPATION LEVELS

- 0 ⚡ Do not take part
- 1 ⓘ Are informed
- 2 👤 Are consulted
- 3 🗣️ Are involved
- 4 🤝 Collaborate or Co-decide

## FEW EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES FOR EACH PARTICIPATION LEVEL

### A.1. | CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT







- 1 ⓘ Teachers create a moment or moments within the class to introduce students and/or their families to the main contents and objectives of the curriculum;
- 2 👤 Teachers can send to the respective Ministry their comments and suggestions on the curriculum and propose substantial parts of each subject;
- 2 👤 Teachers assess students/families/ school non-teaching staff motivations, interests, fears and/or possible contributions for the curriculum development;
- 3 🗣️ Students prepare and deliver theoretical part of the lectures;
- 4 🗣️ Teachers can propose pilot projects to the regional Department of Ministry of Education to experiment innovative contents within their curricula units;
- 4 🤝 Learning Plans developed together by students and teachers in a collaborative way;
- 4 🤝 Tutoring processes involving teachers and students to support personal development and guidance on achieving learning objectives.

### A.2. | CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION









- 1 ⓘ Teachers create moments to introduce the contents of their classes to students and/or their families and inform them about the implementation of the formal curriculum elements, including the definition of methodologies and activities;
- 2 👤 Students and or parents/tutors can discuss and propose methodologies to teachers;
- 3 🗣️ Teachers consider students (individual or group) learning preferences in curriculum implementation;
- 4 🗣️ Students define, organize and run classes, choosing methodologies;
- 4 🗣️ Students decide how to research and study defined topics;
- 4 🤝 Teachers are responsible for preparing detailed curricula implementation plan, including methods used, learning objectives, etc.



### A.3. | CURRICULUM EVALUATION

- 1  School creates moments to clarify the criteria and standards for evaluation in the beginning of the year and/or along the year;
- 1  Parents/tutors are informed about the existing assessment system in the school and it is also available on the school's website;
- 2  Teachers create moments to receive and give feedback regarding the results and learning process of students, trying to establish closer relationships and understand personal and familiar aspects that can influence the results and the learning process of each one of the students;
- 2  Teachers create moments where students can reflect about their learning preferences, styles and needs, and based on these, collect feedback to improve their own teaching performance;
- 2,3,4  Peer evaluation circles (can be considered as participation levels 2, 3 or 4 depending on the objective and powers of these circles – for instance, it will be a level 2 if it serves only as a space for peer-to-peer exchange of information and impressions, or a level 4 if the circles decide the evaluation);
- 4  Continuous self and peer-to-peer evaluation process, through the use of various tools (learning plans, meetings with teachers and peers, self-assessment questionnaires, etc.), that is determinant for students' final evaluation grades.

### A.4. | CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR LEARNING

- 1  Students, parents/tutors and school non-teaching staff are informed regularly through different channels (internal information bulletins, facebook, newsletters, etc.) about existing extra-curricular activities in the school, as well as their schedules, contents and objectives;
- 1  Students are informed about the kind of co-curriculum activities will be provided in next school year;
- 2  A needs assessment is done every year to assess students' and parents/tutors interests, motivations and intentions regarding co-curricular and extra-curricular contents;
- 2  Parents/tutors are consulted about which co and extra-curricular activities they find relevant to their children's school through an annual meeting promoted by the school board;
- 3  Parents/tutors are invited to play an active role in festivities and celebrations organized in the school;
- 4  Parents/tutors council promote school extra-curricular activities;
- 4  Teachers and non-teaching staff run extra-curricular activities such as workshops, storytelling, theatre, cooking activities, gardening, etc.) to share their knowledge and experiences with students;
- 4  Parents/tutors organize training for students in different topics.

## B. GOVERNING

This dimension comprises decision making-processes not related to learning, that happen at class, departments or school level, as well as the process by which these decisions are implemented and evaluated.

**B.1. CLASS MANAGEMENT** Affairs relevant to the class (aside from the curriculum development, implementation and evaluation) such as class procedures and practices, conflict resolution, organization of the class space, among others.

**B.2. SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLANNING** School main framework including regulations and procedures, high-level goals and policies, priorities, activity plans, budget plans and similar.

**B.3. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT** Implementation of the strategic plans and policies, including taking decisions on issues such as budget expenditure, human resources, other resources, class schedules, opening/closing of course offers, disciplinary measures, conflict resolution, among others.

**B.4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION** Oversee management and organizational performance to ensure that the school is working in the best interests of the public and of the school community, that it is achieving the desired and planned outcomes and that the organization is acting prudently, ethically and legally.

### PARTICIPATION LEVELS



0 Do not take part



1 Are informed



2 Are consulted



3 Are involved



4 Collaborate or Co-decide  
(alone or together with other school actors)







		0	1	2	3	4	WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THESE LEVELS?
STUDENTS	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="radio"/>						
TEACHERS	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="radio"/>						
PARENTS/TUTORS	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="radio"/>						
NON-TEACHING STAFF	A1						
	A2						
	A3						
	A4						
	TOTAL <input type="radio"/>						

#### PARTICIPATION LEVELS





- 0  Do not take part
- 1  Are informed
- 2  Are consulted
- 3  Are involved
- 4  Collaborate or Co-decide

## FEW EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES FOR EACH PARTICIPATION LEVEL

### B.1. | CLASS MANAGEMENT

- 1  Info sessions promoted by teachers and schools' representatives about the existing class rules;
- 2  Teachers dedicate class time to ask and debate with students the rules and other subjects that they consider important to be set for the class management;
- 2  Class meetings were students can propose solutions for the resolution of existing conflicts;
- 3  For each class, there is a teacher (for example a class director or guardian) who is responsible to promote students' participation in all decision-making processes regarding the class, and when necessary presents those decisions or proposals to other relevant school's bodies;
- 3,4  Teachers create the opportunity for students to reflect about the most important rules for the class and ask them to set the rules together, revising them together when necessary along the year;
- 4  Students and teachers create together..

### B.2. | SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 1  School actors are provided with information concerning school policy and planning documents via web, email, networks or hand-outs;
- 2  Students can take part in consultation processes about the most relevant strategic documents such as regulations, objectives and goals of the schools' assessment system;
- 2  Consultation processes concerning school policy and planning documents are done using several channels such as web, email, networks, meetings and questionnaires;
- 4  The members of a body where all school community members have a seat and a vote or where actors are represented in a proportional way, create strategic and planning documents of the school in a collaborative way.






### B.3. | SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

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- 1  School actors are informed regularly about the school budget and activity plan execution situation;
- 2  Students and their parents/tutors/families are annually consulted about schedules, opening/closing of course offers, disciplinary measures, conflict resolution preferences and needs;
- 3  Students and teachers are invited by the competent organ to collaborate in conflict resolution.

### B.4. | MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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- 1  Schools self-evaluation reports are published on its webpage and/or hard copies are made available at school;
- 2  Different actors are consulted directly or through their representatives (students' school council, teachers' coordinators, parents/tutors school councils) when external or internal evaluation processes take place through surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc;
- 2  The actors are consulted about the areas which are going to be taken into consideration when implementing the schools self evaluation;
- 3  Students also take part in regular evaluation of school functioning, for instance, being part of the team that does data collection and analyses or supporting the drafting of the evaluation report;
- 4  All actors take part in design and implement schools self-evaluation and monitoring.

## C. BEING PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY

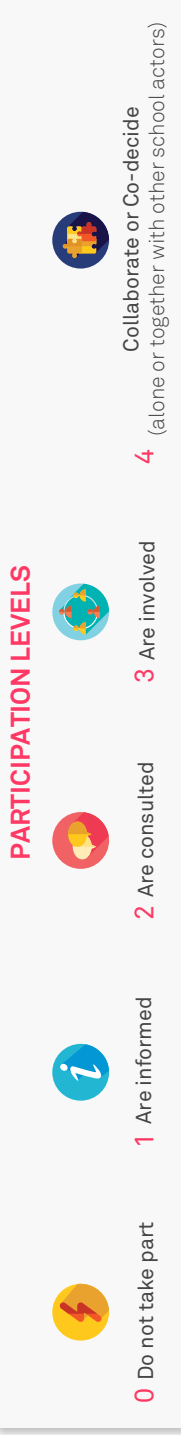
This dimension comprises the network of relations that connect the school to other social actors namely other schools, community groups, families, enterprises, public authorities and civil society organisations at local, national and international levels.

### C.1. RELATIONS WITH THE SCHOOL SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Activities, initiatives, projects and programmes that band together various schools, community groups, families, civil society organisations, enterprises and public authorities from the surrounding community of the school to support learning, personal development, integration and participation. These activities can be promoted by the school in their surrounding community or by other community members in or for the school and may include: local volunteering or working experiences, community/business school partnerships, curriculum activities aimed to connect students to different experiences and community needs, cross generation learning and local design of solutions to problems of the community.

### C.2. RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Cross-border school exchanges, projects and programmes supporting learning, personal development participation and integration in a globalised world, that are promoted by schools or by any public or private entities that are partners or have a role in the school. It can include international exchanges of students, study visits to foreign countries, language courses abroad, youth exchanges organised by civil society organizations, mobility opportunities run by CSOs/NGOs, international volunteering or working experiences.



		0		1		2		3		4		WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THESE LEVELS?
STUDENTS	C1											
	C2											
TEACHERS	C1											
	C2											
PARENTS/TUTORS	C1											
	C2											
NON-TEACHING STAFF	C1											
	C2											

STUDENTS

TOTAL

TEACHERS

TOTAL

PARENTS/TUTORS

TOTAL

NON-TEACHING STAFF







TOTAL

#### PARTICIPATION LEVELS

- 0  Do not take part
- 1  Are informed
- 2  Are consulted
- 3  Are involved
- 4  Collaborate or Co-decide

## FEW EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES FOR EACH PARTICIPATION LEVEL


### C.1. | RELATIONS WITH THE SCHOOL SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

- 1  Actors get information through various channels (digital newsletters, e-mail, Facebook posts, ...) about the activities carried out by the school together with local civil society organisations;
- 2  School carries out an annual survey to collect ideas from different school actors on activities that can be developed with local civil society organizations, enterprises or public institutions;
- 3  Teachers involve students in the organization of events for the community, providing space for their personal views
- 3  Civil society organisations invite students to give contributions to the general organisation of events and to participate in local activities developed together with the school, targeting the community;
- 4  Teachers decide together with students projects to be developed in their communities;
- 4  Civil society organisations and students organize together a national youth exchange, a school training, or other activities at school.



## C.2. | RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY

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- 1  Actors get information through various channels (digital newsletter, Facebook posts...) about international activities promoted by schools or by partner public or private entities;
- 2  Actors participate in a working group to provide ideas about which activities that would like to take part at international level;
- 3  In partnership with school, youth organisations open calls for students to take part in international projects (summer camps, youth exchanges, and others);
- 4  Civil society organisations and students organize together at school international activities such as a youth exchange or an international training course.

## D. INCLUSION

This dimension comprises the right that all actors have to participate without discrimination – no matter their origin, colour, gender, religion or belief, language, political opinions, social origin, property, status, etc. It implies valuing all individuals, ensuring equal access and opportunities to all, and removing barriers to all Participation levels (information, consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment).

It is a transversal dimension that aims to assess the existence of appropriate mechanisms to promote the inclusion of persons and groups (among students, teachers, parents/tutors and non-teaching staff) that face situations of exclusion, ensuring their Participation in the other 3 dimensions:

- A - Learning;
- B - Governance;
- C - Being part of a larger community.

**NOTE:** Prior to the assessment of this dimension, it is important to promote a reflection and identify, for each school actor, what persons or groups can be facing exclusion.

### NÍVEIS DE PARTICIPAÇÃO

For this dimension, instead of using the Participation levels from 0 to 4, schools will self-assess their situation, scoring as follows:

- 1 point if there are no mechanisms to promote inclusion;
- 2 points if there are few mechanisms to promote inclusion and we do need to work on it;
- 3 points if there are some mechanisms to promote inclusion and but we need to deepen and/or diversify them;
- 4 points if there are many mechanisms being implemented to promote inclusion and they are working quite well.

		1	2	3	4	WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THESE LEVELS?
STUDENTS	A					
	B					
	C					
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>					
TEACHERS	A					
	B					
	C					
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>					
PARENTS/TUTORS	A					
	B					
	C					
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>					
NON-TEACHING STAFF	A					
	B					
	C					
	TOTAL <input type="text"/>					

## FEW EXAMPLES OF MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION

### DIMENSION A | LEARNING

- School curriculum is developed having into consideration different social, economic and cultural background of students and other school actors;
- School curriculum includes human rights, citizenship and democratic participation subjects and activities;
- School books are accessible are braille and vocal synthesis when necessary;
- All school areas are accessible by wheelchair;
- There is support for students living in situations of economic disadvantage to acquire all necessary materials and books;
- All students have access to pedagogical support appropriate to their needs;
- Extra and co-curricular activities are planned and implemented having in mind specific needs (cognitive, physical but also students living in rural areas far from their schools and others);
- Classes are planned and implemented using inclusive language (gender friendly terminology is an example) and inclusive methodologies as well as facilitation processes adequate to specific needs;
- School promotes experiential learning and learning by doing activities, allowing actors to have contact with each other and fostering the understanding of different needs, life conditions, cultures, etc., thus promoting intercultural relations;
- School actors, including religious and cultural minority members, have space, in the classroom or in co and extra-curricular activities, to express and share their culture, beliefs and religion;
- Schools ensure that foreigner students have access to classes of national language for non-native speakers;
- Foreign parents/tutors and students who cannot express themselves in the national language of the hosting school are free to use their mother tongue to communicate about their learning and integration process and schools are prepared to address this need;
- Schools are equipped with a multidisciplinary team that supports families in dealing with specific learning, emotional and social needs or is able to refer them to other competent bodies when needed.

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## DIMENSION B | GOVERNING

- School ensures that all representative bodies are prepared to accommodate all people's specific needs promoting equal access to decision-making bodies and processes;
- Minority groups are free to organize themselves in a formal or informal way, and make their voices heard in school structures;
- Schools create conditions for teachers and other staff temporarily working at school to take part in governing activities;
- Governing activities are planned and implemented using inclusive language (gender friendly terminology is an example) as well as inclusive methodologies and facilitation processes adequate to specific needs;
- School strategic documents and regulations are developed having into consideration different social, economic and cultural background of students and other school actors.

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## DIMENSION C | BEING PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY

- There is support for students living in situations of economic disadvantage to participate in the different activities under this dimension (Being part of a larger community);
- The opportunities to participate in the activities promoted in partnership between schools, civil society organisation, local authorities and other community actors respect the principal of equal opportunities for all;
- The activities developed in partnership between schools, civil society organisation, local authorities and other community actors, tackle inclusion topics and issues, promoting awareness raising about existing discrimination, violence, bullying and other social issues, through Human Rights Education;
- School ensures that activities with or within the community accommodate all participants' specific needs;
- School supports minority groups to participate and /or organize activities with and for the community.

## 5. HOW TO READ THE RESULTS

After filling in the 4 self-evaluation tables presented in the previous chapter, it is time to **discover your school's general Participation level**.

In order to do that, you just need to copy the total scores obtained by each actor in each one of the 4 self-evaluation tables, to the table presented above, and sum them up in order to obtain total results per actor, per dimension and finally, the total result of the school. The presented results will allow you therefore to **understand the weight of each actor and of each dimension in the school's Participation level**.

As explained in section 3.1., in case the option "No Info" was selected during the evaluation process, the corresponding scoring per sub-dimension/actor will be similar to a "Do not take part" result, meaning that it will score 0.

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	PARENTS	NON-TEACHING STAFF	TOTAL
DIMENSION A LEARNING					
DIMENSION B GOVERNING					
DIMENSION C BEING PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY					
DIMENSION D INCLUSION					
TOTAL					

Remember that this scale is not only a tool, but also a **process that invites schools to become more participatory**. The results should be used in order to inspire improvement, action and transformation and to self-assess schools, not actors' actions or behaviours.

You can know discover the general level of Participation in the School by finding the in the following number intervals series, the one where your school total score fits:



0-54  
PARTICIPATION  
ASPIRANT



55-108  
PARTICIPATION  
APPRENTICE



109-162  
PARTICIPATION  
MASTER



163-216  
PARTICIPATION  
WIZARD



0-54  
PARTICIPATION  
ASPIRANT

Your school needs to work hard in fostering the Participation and inclusion of all actors in different dimensions of decision-making. Reflect and research on social and political impact of not involving the various actors in the decisions taken in your school and start to take some steps to start your path towards a more democratic learning environment and school. You can start by mapping which structures and mechanisms allow the Participation of each one of the actors and how they work. Don't forget to involve all actors in this mapping. Step by step and by different information and consultation processes you can see how you can foster the 1st levels of Participation (information and consultation). Why not setting a few actions each year in your Educational Plan that can contribute to it?



55-108  
PARTICIPATION  
APPRENTICE

Your school has already started to take a few steps to involve some actors in decision-making processes in some of the school's affairs although a lot of work still needs to be done. Along this way surely you have already notice the complexity and difficulties in involving students, teachers, school non-teaching staff and parents/tutors in those processes. Nevertheless, you are starting to feel how this process can be important in changing the dynamics and involvement of families and community in school's life and decisions. In this path, don't forget to involve all actors, to, step by step, enhance the quality of your information and consultation processes enlarging the scope of actors and/or actions, for example, and to foster the 3rd and 4th levels of Participation (involvement and collaboration and empowerment). Why not create a working group to start to reinforce and systematize these practices?



109-162  
PARTICIPATION  
MASTER

Your school has been defining some actions and making some changes in the decision-making processes to involve most of various school actors and in an inclusive way in almost all decisions related with learning, governing and relationships with the surrounding community. It is time to start sharing your practices, learning and reflections about the impact of this work with different schools and to start looking up for practices, instruments and mechanisms that can contribute to enhance the quality and perhaps frequency of the work you do in making your school even more participative. Have you ever thought about developing a Strategic Action Plan specifically for fostering Participation and democratic practices to consolidate a democratic culture in your school for the future?



163-216  
PARTICIPATION  
WIZARD

Your school has been taking solid and continuous steps towards a democratic and inclusive learning environment by involving all actors of the school community in most of the decisions regarding learning, governing and relationship with the surrounding community. Participation became the "*modus operandi*" of the school and it works now in an organic way. Make sure that your practices are disseminated and visible to others. You have the know-how to contribute to inspire other schools, leading them to search for similar challenges, not only by sharing your practices and learning but also by contributing with programmes for skills development of students, teachers, parents/tutors, school boards, school non-teaching staff, etc. Have you ever thought to carry out an evaluation process focusing specifically on these practices related to Participation and Democracy to have a deeper perspective on its impact in families, learning, social and political involvement of students? If you decide on that, make sure the results of this evaluation lead you to improve and innovate your work.



**NOTE ON HOW TO CALCULATE THE RESULTS IN THOSE SITUATIONS WHERE “NON-APPLICABLE” OPTION WAS USED DURING EVALUATION:**

As explained in page 11, when it is considered that the Participation of parents/tutors or non-teaching staff is **non-applicable to evaluate a determined dimension or sub-dimension**, and the corresponding part of the table is cut out, schools need to **subtract the possible highest score that would correspond to that part of the evaluation from the final results number series above**. This means that, if, for instance, the school has decided that the Participation of the non-teaching staff is not relevant for the evaluation of sub-dimension A4, then it shall subtract 4 points from the result number series presented above, which will become 0-50 (Aspirant), 51-104 (Apprentice), 105-158 (Master), 159-212 (Wizard). On the other hand, if a school considers that Participation of parents/tutors is not relevant to evaluate all B Dimension, then it shall subtract 16 points (corresponding to the highest score that it is possible to be achieved by parents/tutors in B Dimension) from the number series presented above, that would, in that case, become 0-38, 39-92, 93-146 e 147-200.

## 6. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

**In order to deepen the reflexion on School Participation, schools can use the following questions:**

- How does your school understand Participation?
- How is Participation mirrored in your strategic documents? And in the internal regulations? How does this influence the way you address and live Participation at school?
- What is the connection between the way your school understands Participation and the projects it develops?
- When you think about Participation in your school, do you foreseen it in an inclusive manner? How could your school deepen this dimension?
- In your opinion, how does the outside community perceive the way your school understands and lives Participation? How does this influence the dynamic of the community and the Participation of the community in your school?
- What can be the origin for a minor Participation level from one of your school's actors? What actions can be taken by the school in order to promote their Participation?

## 7. THE NETWORK OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP SCHOOLS PROJECT

The Scale of Reference for Participatory Citizenship Schools is an intellectual output of the two years long **Network of Democratic Citizenship Schools** project, which aims to promote youth full Participation, through research, best practices sharing and experimentation of different approaches to school Participation, and by giving the first steps towards the creation of a European Network of Democratic Citizenship Schools.

The project **Network of Democratic Citizenship Schools** is funded by the European Union under ERASMUS + Programme and it is the result of a partnership between 3 schools and 3 civil society organizations from Poland, Portugal and Slovenia. Its target group is the school community, especially the students, but also teachers, school non-teaching staff and parents/tutors. The surrounding community, such as civil society organizations, youth organisations, municipalities, universities, citizens and others, is also involved by supporting, providing feedback, and getting engaged in the planning and delivery of project local activities.

Seeking to **encourage young people's active citizenship**, by developing their sense of belonging to the school, local, national, European and global communities and by promoting their Participation in the decisions affecting their lives, the partner teams involved in this project have been developing, between September 2015 and August 2017, a number of common actions with the following goals:

- Understand, compare, collect and organise information regarding School Participation in each partner country;
- Research and study various models of participatory and democratic citizenship in schools;
- Create this Scale of Reference for Participatory Citizenship Schools;
- Approve Strategic Plans containing the actions that each School community involved in this project will undertake in order to "climb stairs" in the Scale of Reference for Participatory Citizenship Schools, during and after the period of project implementation;
- Launch a "Network of Democratic Citizenship Schools", which will initially include the 3 School Communities involved in this project, that shall act as multipliers, promoting the integration of other EU Schools in the network.

## 8. PROJECT PARTNERS

### **ECOS – Cooperativa de Educação, Cooperação e Desenvolvimento, CRL (Portugal) Project Promoter**



composed by a multidisciplinary team forged by Youth Organizations' Movement, at local, national and international levels and in Development Cooperation, ECOS aims to contribute through its activity for a new development paradigm, based on dialogue, cooperation and construction of links of trust between different social actors. In such a context, ECOS works as a catalyser of learning processes, spaces of dialogue and cooperation aiming for a common participation in a more inclusive, democratic, fair and sustainable development for our communities, through alternative learning and non-formal education methodologies.

Get to know more in [www.ecos.pt/](http://www.ecos.pt/)

### **Kulturno izobraževalno društvo PiNA (Slovenia) CSO Partner**



PiNA works on strengthening the NGO sector, the development of a critical and responsible society and on international (co)operation by developing activities, connecting with other key players and promoting active Participation of the civil society. It became recognised in the local community as one of the referential NGOs in the region. PiNA participates in networks and initiatives on the national level and has the status of working in the public interest.

Get to know more in [www.pina.si](http://www.pina.si)

### **Centrum Rozwoju Inicjatyw Społecznych CRIS (Poland) CSO Partner**



CRIS' mission is to build social capital, to inspire and support civic activism. CRIS is a leading Non-Governmental Organizations' Incubator and supporting centre for local leaders and other active groups. Moreover, the organization is promoting a partnership between Civil Society Organizations, businesses and local government, especially by implementing models of effective cooperation.

Get to know more in [www.cris.org.pl/](http://www.cris.org.pl/)

## Agrupamento de Escolas Pinheiro e Rosa AEPRosa (Portugal) School Partner



AEPRosa is a group of public schools located in the municipality of Faro. It consists of 9 schools scattered from the city centre to rural perimeter boundary. It provides an educational service from pre-school to secondary education (regular strand and vocational/professional education). The school has special units structured to support the inclusion of students with autism and other learning disorders and has been developing inclusion projects to promote the inclusion of Roma students.

Get to know more in [www.aeprosa.pt/](http://www.aeprosa.pt/)

## Gimnazija Gian Rinaldo Carli Koper - Ginnasio Gian Rinaldo Carli Capodistria (Slovenia) School Partner



Gimnazija is a secondary school located in Koper, Slovenia. It is a small sized school and has a course focused on general studies. Curriculum includes foreign languages, sciences and liberal arts. It's focused on developing competences, multicultural aspects and informatics. One of the aims is to develop skills like teamwork between students and teachers, to teach students to study properly, how to use all the achieved competences and how to be more open-minded and tolerant to differences. The school is located in a multi-ethnic and meta-linguistic region and has two national boards.

Get to know more in [www.ginnasio-carli.si/](http://www.ginnasio-carli.si/)

## IV Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Mikołaja Kopernika (Poland) School Partner



IV Liceum is an upper secondary school in Rybnik, Poland. It has around 400 students. Its belief is that the school should take care of complex growth of a young person – providing opportunities and inspirations for intellectual and personal development. All this is provided to students through various possibilities – participating in international projects, taking additional courses run by university professors, implementing projects and initiatives connected with expressed interests and many others.

Get to know more in [ivlorybnik.pl/](http://ivlorybnik.pl/)

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*"Some schools are cages, other schools are wings and are not in love with caged birds. What they love are birds in flying. They exist to encourage birds to fly. They cannot teach how to fly, because flying is something that birds are already born with. Flying is something that cannot be taught; it can only be encouraged."*

Rubem Alves  
Philosopher, Educator, Writer, Psychoanalyst, Theologian

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