



CHAPTER 10:

Contributions of the IEA's Civic and Citizenship Studies to Educational Discourse in Lithuania: The Past Three Decades

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Abstract Citizenship education in Lithuania was introduced after the restoration of independence in 1990. Through the implementation of civic education policies, Lithuanian educators emphasized this topic in general education programs (1994, 1997, 2004, and 2008). Lithuania participated in IEA's Civic Education Study (CIVED) in 1999 and International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) conducted in 2009 and 2016. Since 2007, Lithuania has been collecting data to construct a national Civic Empowerment Index. This chapter presents how participation in IEA's civic and citizenship education studies has assisted Lithuania in ensuring that civic education can help students to become citizens who understand their rights and responsibilities, are able to engage constructively in society, and improve society through local activities.

History of Civic and Citizenship Education in Lithuania

Citizenship education in Lithuania was introduced after the restoration of independence in 1990. Through the implementation of specific civic education policies, Lithuanian educators emphasized this topic in general education programs (1994, 1997, 2004, and 2008). Two early civic education programs included objectives like the formation of national consciousness, commitment to the country, and development of the skills needed to live in a democratic society. At that time after the collapse of Communism, the main themes of educational content related to the culture of Lithuania, and history of freedom of the nation remained important. Specifically, civic education in Lithuania after the restoration of independence attempted to help students understand the responsibilities of, and develop skills as, citizens in a free nation. In 2004, Lithuania prepared its application to become a member of the European Union. A new civic education program focused on the knowledge of the universal principles of democracy, tried to examine the subject of patriotism and re-examine the attention to national history and identity. Subsequently the main aim according to the Citizenship Education Program (2008) and the Integration Program of Citizenship (2008) was to encourage students to develop the characteristics necessary for active and responsible participation in the life of democratic Lithuania and its civic society.

International and National Studies on Civics and Citizenship

Lithuania participated in the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) study on civic education, the Civic Education Study (CIVED), in 1999. IEA's International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) was conducted in 2009 and 2016, and Lithuania participated in both of these studies too.

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Since 2007, Lithuania has also been collecting data to construct a national Civic Empowerment Index for adults. This was initiated by the Civic Society Institute and data were collected by TNS Gallup (published in 2007). At the request of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, researchers were asked to survey two additional sub-groups, pupils and teachers, in 2016. The Civic Empowerment Index survey measured four dimensions: interest in current and future civic action, conception of civil society's influence, and perceptions of the risks of civic activity. Preferences for strong leaders were examined as well as the potential of democracy in the country. A study carried out in 2009 concluded that Lithuanian students and teachers had a somewhat higher sense of civic empowerment than other parts of society. In 2014 students' perceptions of their interest in public affairs were even higher than two years earlier.

In 2012, the Institute of Civic Society also conducted an interview study about the condition of civic education in Lithuanian schools (Žiliukaitė et al. 2012). It showed that many students did not understand the relevance of the information that they received from lessons about citizenship, they were more interested in the civic processes going on around them. However, teachers of the subject often reported not feeling competent to discuss political or economic issues. While they believed in schools' opportunities to develop citizenship, both through formal and informal activities, they also believed that the development of citizenship should be guided by a more coherent plan.

The 2016 Civic Empowerment Index focused on students' civic activity and attitudes. Although the average perception of influence index increased in all age groups, perceptions among the younger population increased even more than among older groups. Compared to the whole society, young people were more likely to perceive that they have potential civic influence, and they were also somewhat more willing to work to solve various social problems. It appears that the civic power of young people can be enhanced by their participation in public organizations and in civil activities, and these are not limited to school-related activities. Non-school-related activities can consist of, for example, active participation of young people in various youth organizations, voluntary activities, and non-formal education activities outside school (participation in discussions, debate and civic initiative clubs, local lore, ethno-cultural and other activities). For example, Kaunas Jesuit School planned to develop students' psychosocial skills and create conditions for gaining social experience through internships in various non-governmental and other non-profit institutions in Kaunas city.

Changes in the Country and Educational System that Could have Influenced Civic and Citizenship Education

The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (2015)¹ states that schools should help students to "be active members of the civic society," and "to develop the necessary values to become patriotic persons, to convey the fundamentals of national and ethnic culture, to provide conditions for a mature national self-consciousness, to guarantee the continuity of the nation and culture of the country, to acquire foundations of civic and political culture embodying democratic traditions, to develop abilities and experience necessary for a person as a competent citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, a member of the European and of the world community, and of a multicultural society." The child must realize that there are many cultures and ethnic groups living in the Lithuanian community, with whom they need to communicate. Referring to the historical context, remember that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1236–1795) was explicitly based on multilingual and multicultural principles, which meant that its citizens sought to understand and appreciate the identity and importance of the nation.

¹ Republic of Lithuania Law on Education, I-1489 <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/df672e20b93311e5be9bf78e07ed6470?jfwid=4t02bsoca> § Article 43. School activity. (2015-12-22).

This conceptualization also reflects recent influence from groups within Lithuania, from the Council of Europe and to some considerable extent from the framework and findings of IEA's civic education studies of 1999 and 2009. Citizenship education, as one of the most important goals for education, was also envisaged in the Lithuanian Progress Strategy, Lithuania 2030 (2012), and the 2016–2020 Intercultural Action Plan of Citizenship and National Education (2016).

Achieving General Goals of Civic and Citizenship Education

Since Lithuania regained its independence, civic education has been designed to educate citizens who are able to engage constructively in discussion and improve society through local activities. Schools' aim is to develop students' understanding of the history of the nation, its cultural identity, and commitment to the people of Lithuania and the state. Also important is to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for active and responsible participation by individuals in the life of the democratic state of Lithuania and in civil society. A number of citizenship education projects have been implemented to improve the direction of citizenship.

The General Program of Citizenship Education helps students develop their practical skills of responsible civic participation by actively engaging in the life of civic society. Participation in analyzing and addressing social problems in school and local communities is encouraged.

Students have the opportunity to participate in organizations, projects, and campaigns, as well as in school governance. Direct student self-government is implemented, for example: at the class level, students are given the opportunity to decide where to go during the tour, how to use the funds, etc.; at school level, activities take place such as organization of a referendum on school uniforms; and, finally, individual initiatives are also encouraged, such as students initiating a Christmas goodness campaign. All students of the school (class) have the right to decide/vote and initiate. By exercising the right of self-government, students can directly contribute to the improvement of their environment, school microclimate, problem solving, and the establishment of common rules and procedures.

These experiences also give them opportunities to develop a sense of unity. By actively participating in school self-government, students develop their social skills, learn how to work in a team, develop their ability to constructively solve problems, and develop skills as leaders. The Lithuanian Student Union is a national, democratic, and nongovernmental organization representing the interests of Lithuanian university students. The Union develops and implements projects aimed at improving the academic and social situation of students as well as organizing seminars (or other training activities) and forums. The Union is also an active member of the European Union of Students (ESU) and is a founder of the Baltic Association of Student Unions (BOM).

The general education curriculum for basic and secondary education provides for the following citizenship education opportunities:

The school is expected to combine formal education (history, geography, civic education classes, economy and entrepreneurship) with informal, practical school activities promoting civic engagement, developing the ability to make decisions and motivation to participate in school and local community activities. These activities should help students to use their theoretical knowledge in practice, e.g., when cooperating with children and youth organizations, as well as learning about adults' interest groups and government institutions. Activities of social caring also help students to develop respect and concern. Some of these social-civil activities are compulsory and are included in the curriculum from age 11.

In order to improve students' knowledge of their municipality and of Lithuania, it is recommended to organize part of history and geography in out-of-school environments (museums, historical places, local self-government institutions, protected areas), and also to use virtual learning

environments. Considering the processes of globalization and responsibility of the citizens of Lithuania in solving global problems, it is important to emphasize that the individual's nationality and citizenship exist in a society that recognizes cultural diversity, practices tolerance of national minorities, and preserves national identity in the context of cultural diversity.

Since 1999, the law-related education program, Street Law, developed in the United States to teach practical knowledge of the law by incorporating a range of instructors and modes of instruction in the schools, has been implemented. The project has included: preparation of materials for students and teachers; training of teachers who are able to teach the basics of law in schools; and, encouragement to individuals who are studying law in higher education institutions to teach the basics of law in schools. An engaging active teaching methodology is one of the key features of the Street Law program. It is not based on the dry presentation of theoretical or factual material but on using interactive teaching methods that provide the student opportunities for questioning and discussion. The Street Law program's leaders confirm that the project is based on research including IEA civic education findings about the value of open classroom discussion. That this project has been successful over this considerable period in Lithuania suggests the value of results from civic education studies in educational discourse.

Local Community Outside the School as a Locus for Practicing Citizenship

The Citizenship Education Framework (Janušauskas 2008) emphasizes that students need to develop practical, responsible civic participation capacities by participating in civil society. Socio-civic activities are compulsory for a student studying under a basic education program in Lithuanian schools in grades 5–10 (activities are allocated at least five hours (lessons) per school year) that may take place in cooperation with associations outside the school.

There was no strong evidence of Lithuanian students in ICCS 2009 or ICCS 2016 having especially high levels of involvement in these kinds of activities, although means are slightly higher than in some other countries on reports of belonging to youth organizations and voluntary groups. They do appear to participate in school elections at a higher rate than in some countries, at 89% (Schulz et al. 2018). According to ICCS 2016 results, only four countries were higher. Lithuanian students are relatively low on issue campaign participation, however. Overall intentions to engage in future social movement activities are not especially high in Lithuania either (a finding across the several studies). This will be discussed later.

Place of Civic Education in the Curriculum

Citizenship education is part of pre-primary, primary, and basic education curricula. It is taught in different ways in different contexts. In primary school, it is one integrated subject *Pasaulio pažinimas* (world knowledge). In lower secondary school there are more subjects: in grades 5–8 integrated into the content of the subjects of the moral education of history, geography, *Gamta ir žmogus* (Nature and human being); in grades 9–10 *Pilietiškumo pagrindai* (Basics of civic education); in grades 5–10 *Socialinė-pilietinė veikla* (Socio-civic activities). Citizenship education is one of the main subject not only in the General Programs for Basic Social Education, but also in the General Program for Lithuanian Language and Literature, in the General Program for Geography. Since 2018 pupils in grades 9–10 have had the option of choosing a National Security and Defence module.

General education providers can be state or private. Current types of general education providers are as follows: primary school (*pradinė mokykla*), pre-gymnasium (*progimnazija*), basic (lower secondary) school (*pagrindinė mokykla*), or gymnasium (*gimnazija*). Under the school reform, since September 1, 2017, secondary schools (*vidurinė mokykla*) which provided primary, basic

(lower) secondary, and upper secondary education programs, do not exist as a separate type of general education institution.

At secondary school, the development of citizenship, national identity, and promotion of social action includes all areas of formal and non-formal education. For example, we could see the development of citizenship in these various fields: in teaching of the citizenship subject in grades 9–10, in the integration of civic problems into the content of other subjects and community life, in social-civic activities, and in non-formal education activities. Compulsory social-civic activities are allocated at least 10 hours (lessons) per school year, but individual schools can allocate more time. Schools may devote sufficient time to research, problem solving, or other subjects to ensure full citizenship education. Students develop their research abilities by using their existing knowledge in the community. They learn how to initiate changes to solve problems that arise. In Lithuania, the Civic Empowerment Index has been carried out and it shows that students believe that they have more civic power than other members of society and that it is beneficial to the whole society.

The General Education curriculum in primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary education levels includes the following subjects: democratic state and civic society, democratic values and civic society, Lithuania as a state of laws, and Lithuanian identity in the context of the international community. The program highlights knowledge and understanding, social participation and collaboration, problem solving, and communication skills.

A strong Lithuanian national identity of an independent state willing to stand up to preserve its culture and language has long prevailed in the country. This emphasis is maintained throughout the educational process (and accounts, for example, for subjects such as the history of freedom fighters). This national emphasis has not been a focus in the IEA civic studies, and that may be one reason why the studies have not had more influence on the Lithuanian educational aims and activities. However, participation remains useful because we can locate ourselves in the context of participating countries and see the issues that are discussed elsewhere regarding citizenship education.

Conditions of Citizenship Education in Schools

A Civil education implementation policy: objectives, instruments, results study conducted in 2013 showed that textbooks, printed teaching materials, handouts, and video recordings are often used in teaching civic education (Švietimo aprūpinimo centras 2013).

An external evaluation by the National Agency for School Evaluation was conducted of the quality of school ethos, school self-governance, and the school's role in the local community, along with formal lessons on citizenship (Nacionalinė mokyklų vertinimo agentūra n.d.). According to external evaluation data from 2017 and 2018, citizenship lessons evaluation average is 2.46 in grades 9–10 (on a 4 point scale). The evaluation average of citizenship lessons is lower than the geography lessons (2.51) and higher than history (2.40) and economics (2.29). The average evaluation of the lessons of these subjects (physical culture—2.64, art-technological education—2.61, information technology—2.58, mathematics—2.55, nature sciences—2.55, Lithuanian language—2.53) are higher than citizenship lessons. Two educational paradigms prevail in civic education lessons: traditional teaching often lecturing or textbook based (45% of the lessons taught) and attempting to work in a less traditional way by activating the student's interest and effort in the subject and responsibility for learning (37% of the lessons).

In the national external evaluation of the quality of school activities, which takes place every seven years, each school is assessed in terms of citizenship activity. Membership in organizations and the community (73%), and the school staff culture of cooperation (58%) were rated at the top grade of 3 (good) when assessing the whole school's contribution to citizenship. These results are

based on relevant studies conducted by external school evaluation experts. Schools had lower ratings on school self-government; 51% of schools were evaluated at level 3 and 43 % of school assessed at level 2. Schools have democratically elected student groups that consider how to implement improvements and coordinate activities. The school council, which is compulsory by law, is the most important institution of school self-government, consisting of students, teachers, parents (guardians), and the local community representatives. Self-government in schools starts at the lower secondary level. The Lithuanian Students' Parliament also has functioned for a long time—a democratically elected institution of students' self-government, representing the interests of Lithuanian students.

Starting in grade 8 students move from a focus on school activities to neighbourhood activities and then more broadly. The focus is on responsible participation skills through in school government, and then various local community and youth organizations. In grades 9 to 10, students are intended to deepen their social activities in a variety of social contexts, develop social responsibility, and participate in campaigns for student council elections. There is considerable variation between schools in the extent to which this happens.

Each school makes decisions about methods of assessing student's achievements including student constructed portfolios. It is recommended that students accumulate evidence of their social-civic activities in their e.folders.² In 2013, there were tests to verify achievements in self-selected project work from social education subjects trying to better understand student's civic context in schools.

Recent Debates About Civic and Citizenship Education in Schools

Various issues of citizenship education have been raised for discussion among teachers, student representatives, teacher associations, nongovernmental organizations, and higher education representatives over the past five years. The topics include ineffective integration of citizenship education topics into other subjects and school life; poorly developed civic education guidelines for out of school practical work; students' lack of interest in participation in school and local communities as well as their limited ability to make responsible decisions. Further issues are the fact that theoretical knowledge of citizenship is often not related to practical activities or the issues facing Lithuania and the world. Too little attention is paid to the development of digital literacy; teachers lack competencies to ensure high-quality citizenship education, especially in the field of practical activities and political and media literacy.

Owing to the debate and the desire to improve, opportunities have been created to integrate into a range of activities that will not only expand our worldview but also allow us to understand the significance of global events for each individual. Environmental content is integrated into sciences and social education, ethics and other subjects' programs (natural resources, climate change, ecological problems). In addition, Lithuanian schools participate in national and international environmental projects, for example, the national project CODE-NEMUNAS. The aim of the project was to encourage students to participate in solving current problems of local communities; to develop students' social responsibility and citizenship; to develop cooperation between institutions, municipalities, and local communities at the national level; and publicize examples of good practice. Global issues are also integrated (military conflicts, protection of heritage, world poverty, and cultural diversity).

National teacher training has assisted in this integration. Teachers have been introduced to the importance, goals, and challenges of sustainable development, global education, and development cooperation and then helped to integrate these topics into their subjects. In 2013, Lithuania

² It is recommended that students collect evidence of their socio-civic activity themselves using e-mail folders, for example in the Open Information Counseling Guidance System (AIKOS).

joined the project Solidarity Schools in the Baltics implemented by Humana People to People Baltic. In 2014, the project entitled "The provisions of sustainable development and development cooperation strengthening in the country's general education schools" was implemented. Global Education in School Life was implemented in 2015–2016.

Teachers of Civics and Citizenship

Teachers who completed history, sociology, law, and/or political science degrees and teachers of geography or economics can teach the subject of citizenship without specific further training. However, teachers of citizenship fundamentals and teachers of social education subjects, who integrate citizenship education into their teaching, also have opportunities to participate in additional training. Between 2007 and 2017 specific programs were offered covering media and information literacy, national security, and the basics of citizenship (especially for schools where students speak Polish and Russian). There were opportunities for teachers to improve their qualifications. In Lithuania several hundred teachers have already participated.

Qualitative research using interviews on the status of citizenship education in 2012 revealed that some Lithuanian civic education teachers lack self-confidence in teaching about civics and citizenship. They are especially uncertain about serving as models of citizenship for young people. Teachers feel vulnerable to political circumstances. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports is still trying to ensure that schools are not a political battleground, so in order to avoid this, they provide various consultations and trainings in order to be less affected by negative political decisions. The hope is to ensure political equality, in part by organizing civic events where representatives of all political positions are invited so that students are acquainted with politics and its diversity. Teachers feel that they do not have enough competency to discuss politics with students or help them understand the political life of their country (or other countries). This problem is made worse by the extent of economic and social problems in Lithuania.

Teachers noted that they feel there are discrepancies between ideals and reality. Often what is written in textbooks differs from what teachers know to be the real-life circumstances of the country and of students.

Presence of Civic and Citizenship Education Studies in Education Discourse: Their Influence

After publication of the results of each of the civic and citizenship studies (CIVED 1999, and ICCS 2009 and 2016), the conclusions and recommendations were disseminated to relevant groups and discussed. Efforts are being made to include recommendations in the Medium-Term Strategic Plans for Education. The curriculum was updated in 2008, and the update took into account recommendations and evaluations.

According to the conclusions of the CIVED (1999) study, the level of civic competence of Lithuanian adolescents was low, probably related to the ineffective implementation of new education strategies. This stimulated decisions at the national level to increase the number of hours devoted to civic education. Since 1999, two hours weekly have been devoted to civic education (an increase from one hour). This included the introduction of obligatory social-civic activities for the public. These are activities where students can act individually or in a group for the benefit of society. This may include organizing for the environment, volunteering in various civil organizations, and helping grandparents and engaging in other activities that benefit society.

After the release of the ICCS (2009) study results, which showed a lack of civic participation and political literacy, there was an increase in compulsory hours for social civic activities in grades 5–10. From 2015, social-civic activity was assigned for five hours during the school year and from 2017 no less than 10 hours. Social-civic activity is a pupil-selected activity that promotes

community and practical civic participation skills. Examples of socio-civic activities could be solving community problems, participating in school self-government, volunteer activities, or nongovernmental organizations.

However, the Citizenship Education Curriculum has essentially not changed since 2008 even though new projects have been implemented. At present there is considerable discussion about how civic education could be improved on the basis of the results of international and national research. Objectives remain the same, but themes such as media literacy (including digital), political literacy, and the diversity of students' forms of civic participation are relevant too. Also, there are ongoing discussions indicating that the implementation of efforts to increase knowledge should be supported by practical activities in schools. This is new since the Soviet occupation, because people have not been used to volunteer for the benefit of society. Plans are to focus more attention on approaches that go beyond imparting knowledge and consider how to develop practical skills. It is important to ensure that students, insofar as their opportunities and needs allow, can participate in solving problems of school and local communities, participate in social and civic activities, and consider the issues important in the Lithuanian society and the world that are interesting to them. The next section suggests that participating in the IEA civic studies with their emphasis on participation and attitudes as well as knowledge has reinforced some of these initiatives.

Role of Study Results, of Participating in the Study, and of Country Findings in Pedagogy

To achieve better results in civic education, the ICCS studies made several recommendations. In the national report, we provided insights and recommendations intended to reach school principals, teachers, parents, and other members of the community. These include promoting legal forms of active civic participation in social networks and local communities; paying more attention to the readiness of teachers and parents to take action against bullying; helping students learn how to use the internet responsibly; reducing wide disparities in civic knowledge within the country; forming more positive civic attitudes of pupils in schools in relation to the rights of gender or ethnic groups; developing pupils' citizenship in an inclusive way by enabling pupils to participate actively in civic and social activities; establishing basic democratic governance structures in schools; and encouraging students to engage in school-based civic initiatives.

The implementation conditions for many of the recommendations contained in the ICCS studies' national reports are described in the publication *The Good School Concept* (Geros mokyklos koncepcija 2015), which presents directions and guidelines for schools and anticipates long-term initiatives of improvement of various types of school. It was approved by the ministry and provides guidelines on the principles for developing a school. The concept of a good school emphasizes creating the preconditions for raising the level of educational quality in the country by suggesting guidelines for the conditions necessary to enable programs to operate effectively. The purpose is to provide a benchmark for the development of a modern school by indicating which school features are valuable and desirable in the country, encouraging the creativity of school communities and long-term school development initiatives. It is aimed at pupils, teachers, parents, school leaders, and institutions that implement the rights and obligations of education management and the public.

As the ICCS studies showed that many teachers were unaware of ways to improve civic education and resources that they might employ, several initiatives have been undertaken. These include the following features, some of which are derived from the CIVED and ICCS studies' results. The first is learning with and from others (through working with colleagues, sharing experience and created works, observing lessons of colleagues, studying various resources together, and learning from pupils). Another is combining efforts of teachers and other members of staff by forming groups

where they share responsibilities, and pursue common professional goals. Another is reflection within the school community on how to establish an open and respectful classroom climate, on self-assessment, and on planning. Finally, there is promotion of staff training incentives along with openness of the school organization to partnerships, joint projects, and using alumni networks.

The teachers' associations have been active. Since 2018, Pedagogical Centres have been established to improve staff qualifications. Beginning in 2016 teachers have had the opportunity to take civic education classes at the Centre for Civil Education, which interactive exhibitions seek to answer questions about how a democratic state and its institutions operate, how citizens can participate in governance, and how issues that are relevant to the whole society or local community can be solved. The set of educational material is composed of 16 lesson plans in citizenship, history, geography, Lithuanian language, ethics, religion, and primary education. The permanent exposition at the Centre is complemented by periodically updated thematic exhibitions introducing the most important symbols or events of statehood. The information presented at the Centre for Civil Education is being developed together with visitors: with modern technologies, everyone is invited to develop a personal relationship with the material provided and share views, turning the spaces of expositions into a discussion forum.

Role of the Studies for Recognition of School as a Community

Participation in civic and citizenship studies gave an impetus to thinking about projects to be developed. An important aspect is that civic education seeks to shape national identity so as to develop certain values and form a civic society. The emergence of self-governing organizations and the involvement of the community in Lithuanian schools started with the beginning of independence. In 1991, the Law on Education established the powers, rights, and duties of the education community. Competitions and also projects of ethnographies and cultural heritage contribute in order to get to know the environment around us better and to get to know our history better. These events, financially supported by the Lithuanian state budget and EU funds, remain popular among students and teachers.

Examples of civic education competitions:

"The strength of the past for the present" competition is organized by the Ministry of National Defence, Vilnius University, and the Association of History Teachers. Its aim is to develop the citizenship of young people and promote the knowledge of history; there is also a competition on history of the fights for freedom and loss of Lithuania.

"Clear Language is a Clear Head" competition is conducted by the Lithuanian Language Commission. The aim is to develop students' linguistic competences, responsibility for the Lithuanian language, and the desire to preserve it.

"European Union exam" is designed for citizens who are interested in the history of the EU, its institutions, culture, languages, etc.

Examples of civic campaigns:

"For Lithuania and me" is a campaign dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's Independence organized in 2015. The students, together with all the citizens of Lithuania, wove three-coloured (yellow, green, and red) friendship bracelets, also donating to each other's, and corded bracelets on Gediminas' sculpture (which was created specifically for this purpose).

"Darom (Let's do it)" is an international campaign dedicated to environmental issues, development of volunteering, and community. Lithuania was one of the first countries to join this movement in 2008. Lithuania has accumulated extensive experience in organizing massive environmental work. About 45 thousand volunteers (including students) participate every year.

“The Constitution is alive” is a campaign dedicated to the ratification of the Constitution with a purpose to develop young people's understanding of citizenship.

January 1 is celebrated as Lithuanian Flag Day. On this day, soldiers of the Lithuanian Army honour guard take down the national flag of Gediminas Castle Tower and lift a new one. The flag that was lowered is given to the most active school in the area of civic education. This tradition began in 2005. Schools that actively develop students' citizenship promote a better understanding of Lithuanian history, culture, and Lithuanian Armed Forces are honoured in this way.

Examples of civic projects:

The visions of being a member of society and being member of a nation are inseparable. In one case the public, social aspects are highlighted, and in the other case national and ethnic aspects. An important aspect of some projects is to promote national identity. CODE-NEMUNAS was implemented in 2018 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the restoration of the state of Lithuania and to help better understand the native land and its people. Summer courses have been held in Lithuanian regional and national parks.

“Understand the State” (implemented in 2017) aims to introduce students to various areas of public life in Lithuania, to discuss relevant national and regional problems, and to consider how to solve them. The national minority schools were involved in the “Understand the State” project. School teams visited various government institutions, met with public figures, politicians, and civil servants, discussed specific issues about the state, the city, or the community, and possible solutions to them. There are some examples of problems in local communities where progress toward solutions was made.

The project “Creating the Republic” (2012–2015) is one of the most prominent national civic education projects. Its aim was strengthening of the school community, developing civic competence, and mobilizing the civic potential of schools and local communities. Schools and local communities could be viewed as small republics—independent, democratically cooperative societies. Law, public policy, nongovernmental organizations, and other experts helped them identify important problems including local and national issues. During the project implementation, practical ways to solve them were discussed. During the project, 120 civic projects were implemented, and the three most successful ones were offered as national projects to all Lithuanian schools. The results of the project were evaluated by experts who prepared recommended methodologies for updating citizenship education.

An “Educational European Parliament” was implemented in 2005. The aim of the project is to provide Lithuanian young people knowledge about institutions of the European Union, policy and decision-making procedures, processes of European integration, and to develop young people's self-consciousness not only as citizens of Lithuania but as citizens of EU. Many of these results are synergistic.

“Open Code: CITIZEN” is a project implemented in 2011–2013 the aim of which is to provide educators with competence to develop active and participatory citizenship based on the principles of non-formal education, to develop the skills of young people in practical activities, and to increase their opportunities and motivation to initiate socially meaningful activities. It was designed to draw the attention of senior year students to their ability to improve the environments in which they and their relatives live, study, and work. This included a component for teacher preparation.

Every Lithuanian child who is going to start first grade in Lithuania or abroad receives a “first-class student passport,” which contains symbols of the state of Lithuania, historical events, and the facts of the present that promote the pride of the state. This passport, as a sign that you are a citizen, a resident of the country, indicates that you have rights and duties.

“For clean land and clean water” was a project implemented in 2012–2014. The aim was to implement the Lithuanian sustainable development priorities, to actualize the use of natural resources, and to protect the landscape by examining scientific findings. A project website was created that contained thematic publications and educational tools. Regional seminars were held.

GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) is an international environmental education project that encourages teachers, students, and researchers to explore environmental issues. Activities focus on the development of practical skills by young people and international cooperation by using the latest information technologies, which help to look at the environment from a scientific perspective. Teachers have the opportunity to consult with scientists and collaborate with teachers from around the world. Studies in the fields of the atmosphere, hydrology, and land cover are also carried out; 55 schools in Lithuania actively participate in the GLOBE program.

The Baltic Sea Project is part of UNESCO Associated Schools (and includes about 30 schools). The project is designed to unite the schools in the Baltic countries to find solutions for regional environmental problems. Students conduct observations with their teachers. The aim of the project also is to encourage interest in environmental issues in the region, to perceive the scientific, social, and cultural aspects of interdependence between humanity and the environment.

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