



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**EWC aims to be an innovative, trusted and competent partner responsive to emerging needs.** 2020 was a year we were really called upon to deliver on this strategic priority.

The crisis has been a leapfrog moment both for EWC and the educators we work with. Everyone was forced to get out of their comfort zone and do things in a different way. We have often talked about the response from the health workers, and rightly so. But education professionals have also been first responders to the emergency, delivering answers and solutions to numerous challenges every day.

As the Covid-19 virus spread, and when possible, EWC moved activities online. Like many times before, we experienced the importance of close cooperation with our partners across Europe, who's advice and insights were invaluable to ensure continued progression in our projects.

Topics, content and methodologies central in EWC's work proved to be particularly relevant as a response to issues emerging from Covid-19, for instance the whole school approach, the importance of home-school cooperation, and the learning communities developed through our projects sharing inspiration and ideas across countries. Together with our partners we explored new ways to promote education for democracy and human rights

through online training for trainer courses, webinars, online toolboxes and other digital resources, and even EWC's first Massive Open Online Course. Once the pandemic is over, we will evaluate, document and rethink how we incorporate these experiences to improve our work in the future.

What we do is more relevant than ever. On the one hand, I cannot recall any other moment in time when the importance of schools for the social, economic, and political stability of every single country is so widely recognized. On the other, this is a time full of uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, where we are facing numerous crisis at the same time. We need to support and empower our children to be able to cope and to thrive, focusing even more on their well-being, and probably in a very different way than before.

**Education is key for shaping a better future, move forward and deal with the challenges that lie ahead.**

ANA PERONA-FJELDSTAD  
Executive Director

## EWC PROJECTS IN 23 COUNTRIES IN 2020

**Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia:** Preparing Future Teachers in the Western Balkans: Educating for Democracy and Human Rights

**Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, United Kingdom:** Step Up – Student Teacher’s Practice for Democratic Culture

**Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania:** The Baltic Academy

**Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine:** Regional Cooperation - Training (RFCDC) for Education Experts

**Greece:** Integration of Refugee Children in Greek Schools

**Lithuania:** Education in the Spotlight of NGO’s!

**Norway:** 22 July and Democratic Citizenship

**Norway:** Democracy Workshops at Utøya

**Norway:** Teaching Resources on 22 July and Democratic Citizenship

**Poland:** Fighting Antisemitism, Xenophobia and Racism Now!

**Portugal:** Education for Global Citizenship

**Romania:** Qualifying Educational Professionals and Institutions

**Slovakia:** Promoting Inclusive Schools

**The Czech Republic:** Establishing the Centre for Roma and Sinti

**The Russian Federation:** Practicing Citizenship

**Ukraine:** Schools for Democracy: Supporting Education Reforms

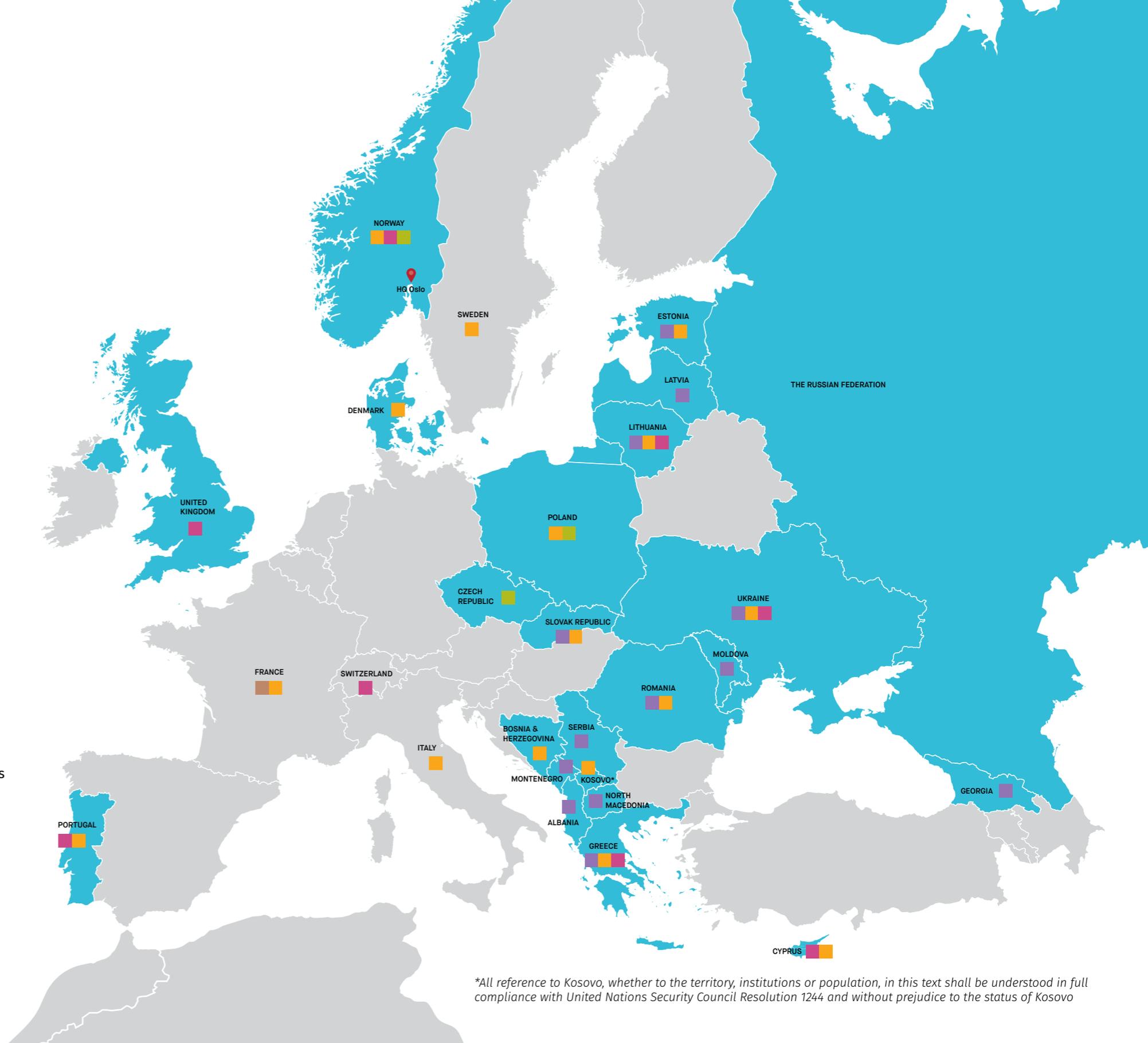
**International:** Learning Democracy at Utøya



**EWC Projects**

### Partners

-  Education Authorities
-  Higher Education Institutions
-  Civil Society Organizations
-  Museums
-  Intergovernmental Organizations

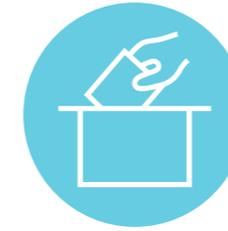


*\*All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo*

## WHO WE ARE

The **European Wergeland Centre (EWC)** was established in 2008 in cooperation between Norway and The Council of Europe. It is a resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship.

**EWC** aims to support educational systems and strengthen the capacity of individuals and educational institutions to build and sustain a culture of democracy and human rights.



## STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC COMPETENCES

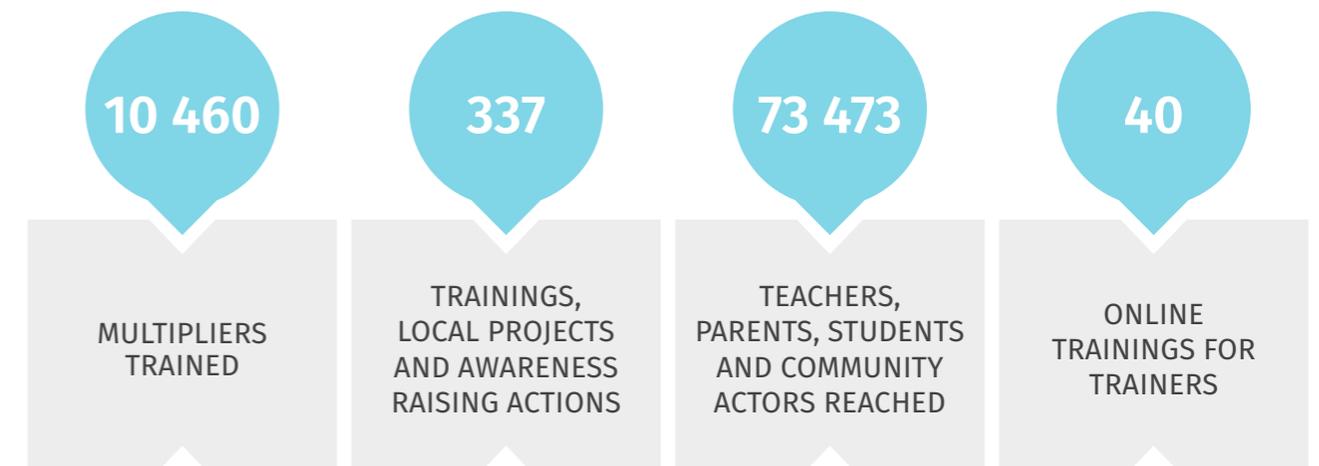
The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the sense of uncertainty and unpredictability in the world. This especially affects young people.

Faced with disrupted education, growing inequalities and the spread of misinformation and fake news, the pandemic reminds us of the need to support young people in developing key competences. Critical thinking, tolerance of ambiguity, problem-solving skills and civic mindedness are all needed in order for them to navigate, adapt and cope even during times of crisis while actively shaping their societies. Yet, many education systems still focus on knowledge-based rather than competence-based education.

### OUR EFFORTS IN 2020

EWC worked to strengthen the skills of teachers, teacher trainers, other educators and students to act as multipliers in their schools, organizations and communities promoting democracy and human rights in education. We worked with and supported educators to widen their skills and to innovate their practices. This included the integration of active and student-centred approaches that gained increasing importance in the context of remote teaching as they positively influenced student participation and motivation.

Our teams also continued to support young people to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to promote and stand up for democracy and human rights. We encouraged them to engage actively in their communities and wider society through for example awareness raising actions and classroom activities.



FEATURED EFFORTS

## Practicing Citizenship in the Russian Federation

The “Practicing Citizenship” project, organised by EWC, aims to build the capacity of education professionals and other stakeholders to apply in practice the approaches and materials of the Council of Europe in citizenship and human rights education.

In 2020, activities were attended by education professionals coming from formal and non-formal education from 17 regions of the Russian Federation.

After a seminar carried out in Armenia, our team worked with energy to provide online training and capacity building including a training for trainers’ course through a series of weekly webinars and practical tasks. The course focused on development of trainers’ competences including the ability to develop, implement and evaluate trainings; delivery of online methods, reflection on own practice and the crucial role of trainers to facilitate group development.

Through the online format, new possibilities of learning and training came up. Participants benefited from sharing their resources, taking part in ongoing exchange and a flexible training schedule that could be more easily combined with work.



Presentation at the training for trainers

## 22 July and Democratic Citizenship

In partnership with the learning centers at Utøya and the 22 of July Centre in Oslo, EWC offers a comprehensive educational programme for Norwegian students and teachers.

Our work focuses on students and teachers from lower secondary schools learning about 22 July 2011, while also discussing how to promote democratic citizenship and act against hate speech, anti-democratic forces and extremism. Through training and support, we empower young people to gain confidence and to stand up for democratic values and issues that matters to them.

EWC was able to welcome students and teachers back to the island in the autumn of 2020. Through 8 trainings, 150 students were trained, in turn reaching 3000 students, parents and teachers through their activities in their schools and local communities.

Funded by: The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research



Students and teachers arriving at Utøya

## Partnering with universities to strengthen civic competences of teacher students

EWC partners with higher education institutions across Europe to promote a competence-based approach in initial teacher education, focusing on enabling teacher trainers and teacher students to integrate citizenship and human rights education into their teaching practice.

In the project «Student Teachers Practice for Democratic Culture – STEP UP », we are working in close collaboration with universities from Greece, Cyprus and the UK to integrate citizenship education and the development of civic competences when preparing future teachers. Our work emphasizes competences such as critical thinking, respect for each other's opinion and valuing diversity – so called competences for a democratic culture promoted by international organizations such as the Council of Europe.

To build capacity of university staff, we trained teacher trainers online introducing them to a new learning framework outlining key competences needed in the future for life in democratic and diverse societies. Four educational videos were produced on how to address controversial issues in the classroom, a topic that emerged to be particularly relevant considering the effects of COVID-19 on teaching and learning communities. The videos can now be used to reach a wider audience in teacher education.

Funded by: Erasmus+



Video addressing controversial issues for teacher students

## Empowering youth for local participation

“We met with our mayor to discuss inclusion and integration of refugees. We also invited other youth groups to meet outdoors and discuss lowering the voting age, and how to strengthen democratic citizenship among youth in our municipality.”

*Kristian Thori-Aamodt, Save the Children Group, participant at Democracy Workshops in 2020*

In partnership with youth organizations in Norway, EWC has started an education and training project to empower local youth initiatives working for human rights and democracy, and to create opportunities for young peoples' engagement in arenas where they spend their daily life outside of school. Such opportunities include spaces to take part in public debates, something many young people are afraid of due to fears of harassment.

In 2020, EWC offered workshops and support for young leaders and representatives coming from youth councils, youth clubs, religious youth groups, sports clubs and other initiatives.

The project has resulted in youth-lead initiatives such as awareness raising events, local governments meetings, social-media actions targeting specific issues and movie nights – all contributing to more youth participation locally. Our work responds to a new Norwegian law requiring all municipalities to have local youth councils or other structures for youth participation. Yet, there is still a huge need for real participation of young people.

Funded by: The Savings Bank Foundation DNB



Youth participating at Democracy Workshops at Utøya



# PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

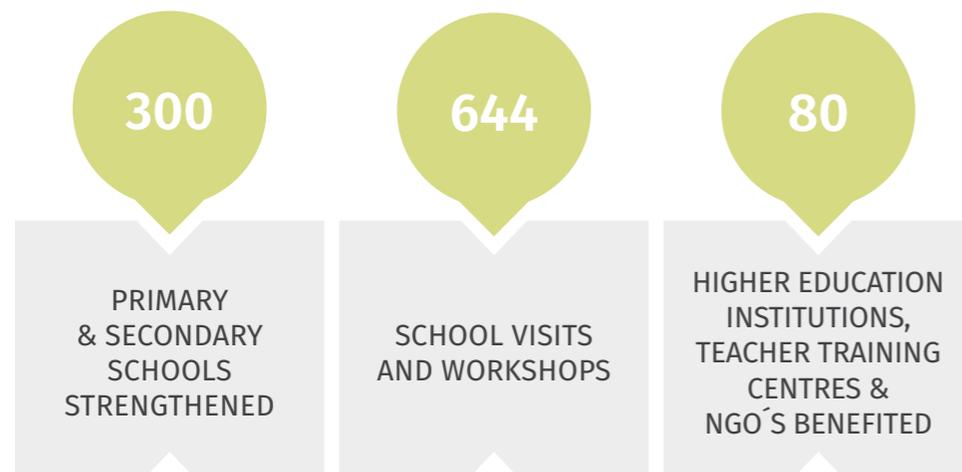
For all children and young people education institutions are important arenas to learn and practice the principles of democracy and human rights such as inclusiveness, equality and respect. The pandemic has worsened existing inequalities, making it more difficult to ensure an inclusive and quality learning environment for all. As schools and universities digitalize more of their teaching, many vulnerable groups risk being excluded due to limited access to devices and internet, as well as lack of skills to use technology for learning.

In order to provide quality education for all students, home school cooperation is key. Particularly during these unprecedented times, alliances between schools, parents and the local community are helping to provide learning for all students. It is encouraging that, on average, 77% of teachers across the OECD indicate that their school provides parents with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions. At the same time, more needs to be done.

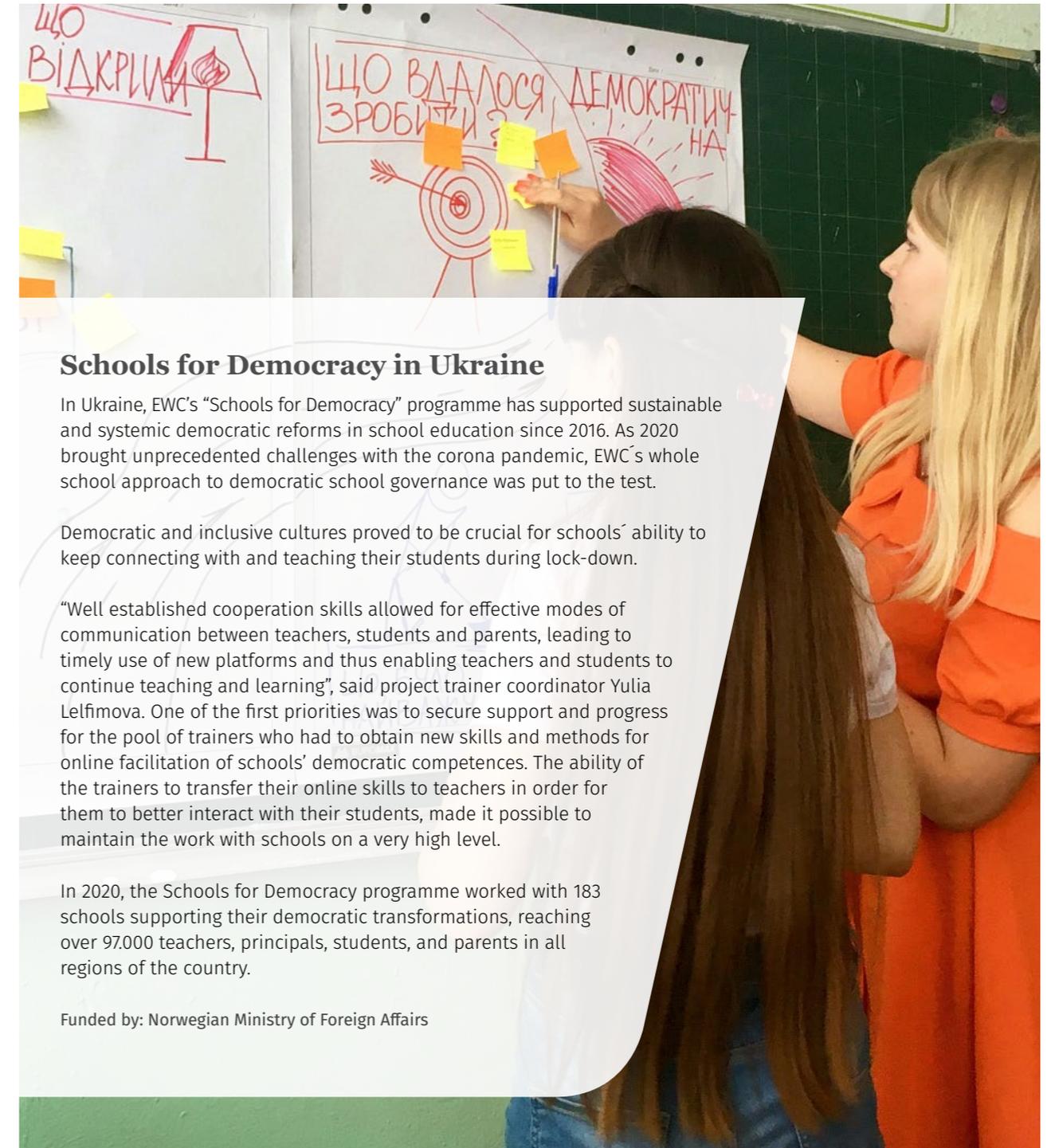
## OUR EFFORTS IN 2020

EWC worked to support the whole school community to create safe, inclusive and democratic learning environments including in teaching and learning, school culture and co-operation with the local community. This means promoting quality education for all children.

We empowered school stakeholders to plan and carry out actions based on their needs, forging positive relations among staff-students and involving parents in the learning process of their children - an approach that gained more importance during COVID-19. Evidence from schools working long-term in EWC school development projects has shown a higher degree of trusting relations among leadership, teachers, students and parents and thus schools were better prepared to manage the crisis. We also worked with teacher training institutions, universities and civil society organizations to make teaching and learning more inclusive and democratic, and to improve the quality of education through new programmes, university courses and methodology.



## FEATURED EFFORTS



### Schools for Democracy in Ukraine

In Ukraine, EWC's "Schools for Democracy" programme has supported sustainable and systemic democratic reforms in school education since 2016. As 2020 brought unprecedented challenges with the corona pandemic, EWC's whole school approach to democratic school governance was put to the test.

Democratic and inclusive cultures proved to be crucial for schools' ability to keep connecting with and teaching their students during lock-down.

"Well established cooperation skills allowed for effective modes of communication between teachers, students and parents, leading to timely use of new platforms and thus enabling teachers and students to continue teaching and learning", said project trainer coordinator Yulia Lelfimova. One of the first priorities was to secure support and progress for the pool of trainers who had to obtain new skills and methods for online facilitation of schools' democratic competences. The ability of the trainers to transfer their online skills to teachers in order for them to better interact with their students, made it possible to maintain the work with schools on a very high level.

In 2020, the Schools for Democracy programme worked with 183 schools supporting their democratic transformations, reaching over 97.000 teachers, principals, students, and parents in all regions of the country.

Funded by: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Students presenting at the Pryluky school

## Improving inclusive practices in and outside Slovak schools

In Slovakia, EWC is working with the National Institute of Pedagogy under the Ministry of Education to promote inclusion in and outside school, addressing educators and schools including those with a high number of Roma students.

To build local capacity on inclusion in the country, a first training for trainers' course for teachers, trainers, NGOs and local authorities was organised in 2020. The course offered a range of tools and activities such as the Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture promoted by the Council of Europe, learner centred methods, reflection on stereotypes and structural discrimination and support for school and community actions.

"I am happy that I found people who support inclusion. It's a good feeling!" said Mirgová Lýdia, regional coordinator of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic for the Roma Community.

Our work has resulted in concrete actions such as work with sport clubs and coaches to tackle discrimination and bullying, webinars for teachers on intercultural dialogue and activities promoting early enrolment of children in Roma settlements.

Funded by: EEA/Norway Grants



From the opening conference of the project

## Faced Covid-19 as a school community

In Greece, EWC partnered with the Hellenic Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs in the project "Schools for All – Integration of Refugee Children in Greek Schools". We trained 230 teachers and school principals equipping them with tools, competences and confidence to deal with intolerance and discrimination and manage controversy. The programme also gave support to schools across the country, through 25 school workshops and 160 school visits, to create safe and inclusive classrooms and schools where refugee children are welcomed.

EWC worked on the whole school approach that was a vital tool during the crisis. The teachers learned from each other and the community to find new and innovative ways to help their students continue learning in an unprecedented situation, demonstrating the importance of the cooperation between the school and wider community.

The biggest challenge was to make it possible for the refugee children isolated in the camps to take part in the online courses and feel included and welcome.

"It was a whole school and community effort. Where students lacked internet access, teachers applied for sponsorships to get them online, and where some did not have laptops, people came together to lend them necessary equipment", said teacher and deputy head, Annie Kiek from the 1st Gymnasium of Avlona.

Funded by: EEA/Norway Grants



1. Student drawing a poster  
2. Staff at the 1st Gymnasium of Avlona

## From inactive to award winning student council in Estonia

Since 2015, EWC and the Ministries of Education in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been working through the Baltic Academy with teachers, principals, community actors and students to make their classrooms and schools more inclusive and democratic. One of them was the Tallin Laagna School, a school that integrates students with special needs.

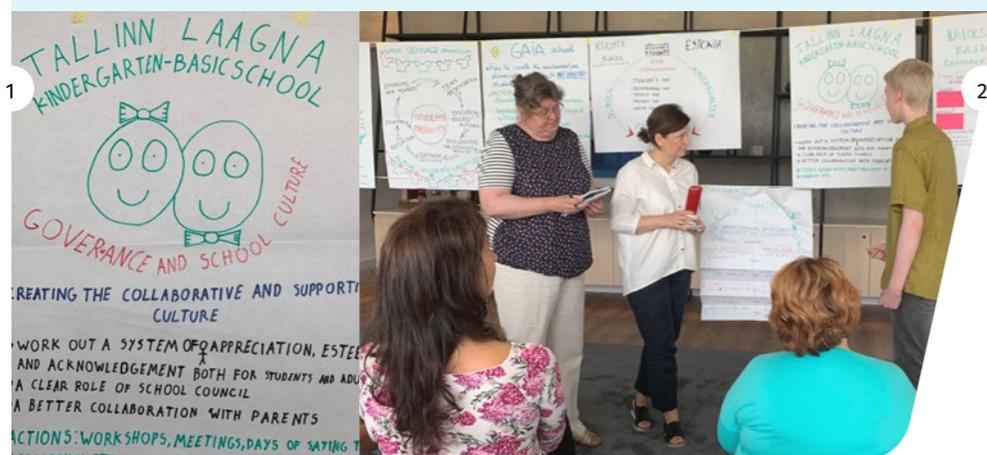
“We joined the Academy because we wanted to create a school community where all members including students, teachers and families feel that they can contribute in making school life better for everyone. We also thought that the school would benefit from a democratic and human rights coherent approach”, said teacher Marika Vinni.

Teachers, students and leadership joined forces to activate the schools’ student council, resulting in a range of new activities such as a health trail for in- and outdoor areas that has proven important for students’ well-being; a survey on healthy food that led to recommendations for a more diversified school menu and new hobby groups run by students.

The student council even took their actions into the local community, raising problems of accessibility of people with reduced mobility at the local government level.

Their engagement was recognized. The city of Tallin granted them with the Active Student Council Award in 2020.

Funded by: All partners



1. Poster from work on school governance  
2. Students and teachers at the Tallin Laagna school



## PROVIDING TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Easy access to good learning and teaching resources improves the quality of education. They support teachers’ and teacher trainers’ capacity to address issues of democracy, human rights and citizenship in schools and universities.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the development and use of digital learning resources for education and training grew exponentially. Yet, there is still a need for practical, quality resources for educators that support them to deal with real life issues working with students online and offline in their classrooms and schools.

### OUR EFFORTS IN 2020

EWC developed a range of practice-oriented resources and made them accessible for education professionals, including new digital resources such as massive open online courses, online resource banks and video tutorials. In order for the materials to be relevant and respond to the context and actual needs, EWC has run working groups developing new resources involving teachers, teacher trainers, students and other experts. In addition, we piloted and evaluated new teaching and learning resources and materials in schools and universities.



## Addressing the theory-practice gap in initial teacher education

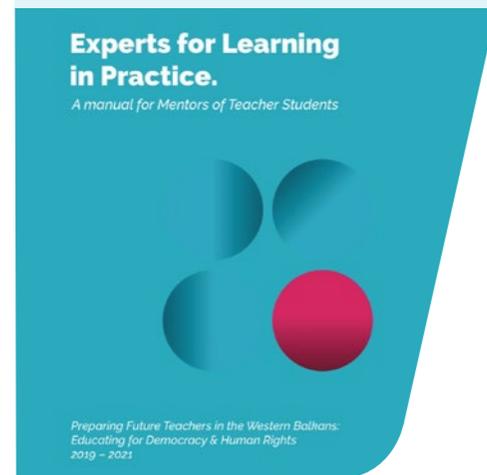
The EWC project “Preparing Future Teachers in the Western Balkans – Educating for Democracy and Human Rights” has resulted in a manual for school mentors focusing on their crucial role to support teacher students by providing them with an opportunity to try out and improve their competences as teachers in the classroom.

Research shows that teacher education in the region still emphasizes theory over the acquisition of practical teaching competences including participatory methods. Learning practices in schools are still too often not steered by an atmosphere of applied democracy, which makes it difficult for students to leave their schools as future democratic citizens. The projects’ regional network of universities raised the need for a resource addressing this gap.

To create strong ownership and to make the manual relevant for education practice in the region, the work was done in close collaboration with a regional focus group uniting university lecturers and practitioners from teacher education when developing the manual. During a series of online meetings, they reviewed, reflected and provided concrete feedback.

To provide wide access, the manual is available in English and four local languages. A series of trainings will be held to disseminate the resource widely in teacher education. As for today, countries such as Georgia and Moldova are planning to use the new resource.

Funded by: The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Manual for mentors of teacher students

## Reaching thousands through first Massive Open Online Course

In Ukraine, EWC partnered with Prometheus, the country’s largest educational platform of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), to develop and launch “Starting towards a successful school” - our first Massive Open Online Course.

The 30-hour course is the first of a series of 4 MOOCs “30 steps towards the New Ukrainian School: Educating a Citizen” supporting teachers, principals, parents and community actors to jointly create a more democratic learning environment.

“Starting towards a successful school” is officially accredited, and participants will be awarded ECTS points upon successful completion. To ensure an interactive and motivating learning experience, the course includes elements such as animated videos, quizzes, gamification, creative tasks and open digital badges.

More than 13.000 have so far registered to take the course. It has been particularly successful during COVID-19. Local lockdowns have restricted traditional training opportunities, but the course allowed for continuous professional development.

“This course provided an opportunity to plan real changes in professional development and my environment. I will review my cooperation with all stakeholders of the teaching and learning process. As an authority representative in my second job, I found many useful tips too. So, definitely a useful experience for me, moreover, I have already recommended the course to some colleagues”, says Zoya Harkusha, course alumni.

The course has been developed by our team in Ukraine together with Prometheus, gathering over 5 years of experience in democratic school development.

Funded by: The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



1. MOOC certificate  
2. MOOC poster

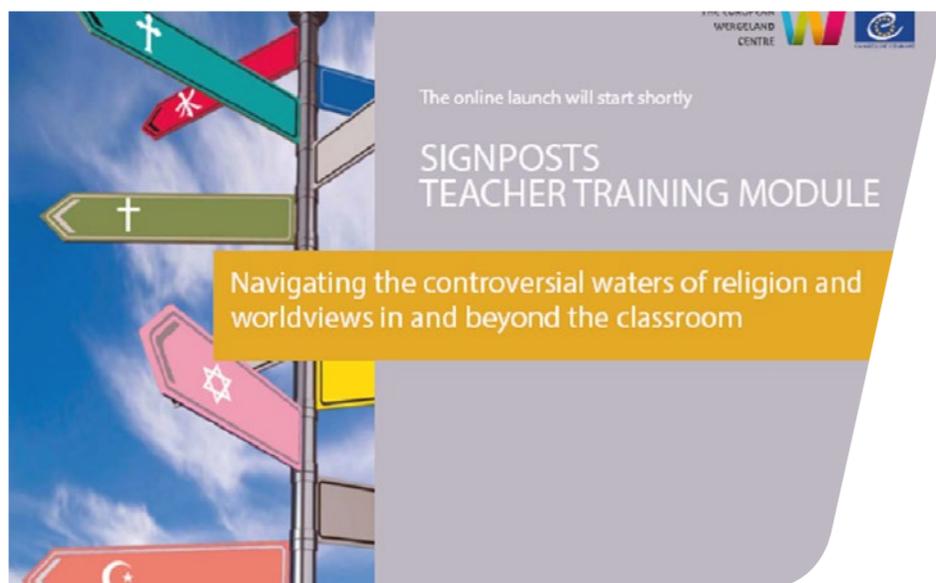
## Addressing the world of religion, world views and beliefs

The importance of classrooms as a safe space to learn about and discuss different religious and non-religious traditions freely and without prejudice is widely acknowledged. Still, there is a need for more adequate materials to support teaching on these issues.

This is why EWC worked alongside the Council of Europe to develop Signposts: a teacher training module for teaching about religions and non-religious world views and beliefs. The tool helps adult professionals to deepen their knowledge about the world of religion, to develop positive attitudes and necessary competences such as reflecting on one's own identity and presenting religions and world views in ways that promote dialogue among students.

We consulted with teachers and teacher trainers to explore where they need most support and identified issues that would need to be addressed, including how to analyse media representation of religions and how to create spaces for student-student dialogue.

In 2020, the module was finalized. With the Council of Europe, EWC co-organised a webinar to widely launch the new resource, reaching over 150 practitioners and policy makers. So far, the module has been accessed more than 400 times. It is already used in teacher education in Greece and Albania and plans for use in other countries are underway.



Signposts teacher training module

## Providing new teaching resources on 22 July

“We need to make sure that the terror attacks that happened in Oslo and at Utøya on 22 July 2011, and similar events are more than just stories [...], and I am confident that these resources will be of great support to teachers as well as students in Norwegian schools.”

*Guri Melby, the Norwegian Minister of Education*

In time for the implementation of the new national curriculum in Norwegian schools last fall, EWC launched the new learning resources on the terror attacks in Norway 22 July 2011. The resources, which were developed in cooperation with the Teacher Education Department at The Norwegian University for Science and Technology, support teachers' capacity to address the terror attacks, as well as to handle the issues of democracy, human rights, and citizenship in classrooms and schools.

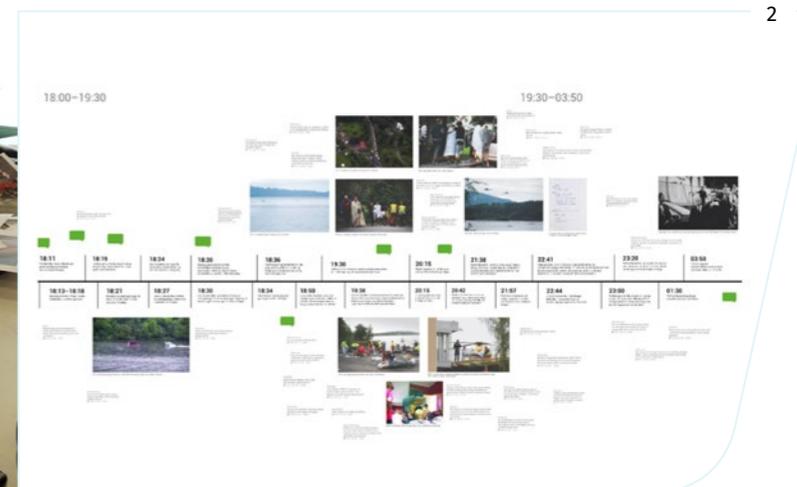
“Many teachers are unsure on how to teach about the different aspects related to 22 July, and therefore it is reassuring to have such relevant and customized materials available to support teachers and schools in this work”, said teacher Guro Havrevold. She participated in the project's reference group of teachers and plans to use the resources in her own classroom.

The resources are closely linked to the interdisciplinary topic of democracy and citizenship and is available for free via EWC's website.

Funded by: The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training



1. From teacher seminar on the development of the learning resources



2. Digital timeline of the terror attacks 22 July 2011



# BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

Building inclusive and democratic societies requires sustainable and broad partnerships at all levels of education. This is particularly important in times of crisis. Research shows that networks and learning communities for teacher collaboration, peer-to-peer learning and exchange help education professionals adapt to the new contexts and rapid changes during COVID-19.

In societies where human rights are under threat and democratic freedoms are restricted, creating platforms and safe spaces for exchanges and critical discussions are more important than ever, being a valuable source of support and motivation.

## OUR EFFORTS IN 2020

EWC has built long-term and trusted partnerships with educational authorities, teacher training institutions, NGO's and higher education institutions throughout the years. We have also forged new and innovative partnerships with museums, educational portals and even computer game developers promoting citizenship and human rights education. These solid partnerships were crucial to adapt projects fast to new realities, and to continue implementation during lockdown, including support for educators, school communities, universities and civil society.

We have also built and supported networks and learning communities that allow educators to share their experiences and resources, to collaborate on innovative approaches and to give and receive peer feedback.



## FEATURED EFFORTS

### Building networks for democratic and inclusive schools in Greece

In the project "Schools For All – Integration of Refugee Children in Greek Schools," EWC has supported school communities with refugee students to build democratic and inclusive school cultures.

An important part of this approach was the establishment of a network of trainers and teachers who share the same mission; a democratic and open school environment for all students free of stereotypes and prejudices, a school for all!

We have trained 43 trainers and 226 teachers and school directors and set up a network of educators which will grow further in the coming years.

During the pandemic, members of the network benefited from sharing a space for discussions and experiences on how to ensure inclusive education for refugee students and other students during lockdown. They shared thoughts, educational materials and good practices and supported each other during a very difficult time for all.

Project partner is the Hellenic Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

Funded by: EEA/Norway Grants



From training for trainers in October 2020

## Creating spaces for the voices of school leaders during COVID-19

In the midst of the pandemic, creating opportunities for the EWC community of practitioners to share knowledge, disseminate what works and create synergies has been a priority.

One example is the webinar “Lessons Learned: Schools Responding to Challenges of 2020”, that was an opportunity to hear the voices of those dealing with everyday challenges at schools, giving them space to share experiences and solutions. Issues raised were leadership in times of COVID-19, how to address socially disadvantaged students and the Black Life Matters movement.

The discussion was led by school principals from Norway, Russia, USA and Greece and was focused on questions from the around hundred participants. A joint conclusion from all was that a democratic school culture with functioning student governing bodies and parents’ participation helped them immensely during the difficult times.



EWC webinar: Schools’ responses to 2020 challenges

## Building resilient learning communities in the Western Balkans

“Despite the challenging circumstances, the initial optimism of this project did not disappear,” said Dragana Jovanović, Professor at the University of Niš in Serbia.

Supported by EWC, the regional network of universities in the project «Preparing Future Teachers in the Western Balkans» managed to strengthen cooperation for democratic developments in education and has helped to work on solutions to overcome challenges created by COVID-19. One example is how to support teacher students’ active learning when it is not possible to carry out practice in schools.

Nine university courses promoting citizenship, democracy and human rights across subjects such as arts, chemistry, mathematics, and history were developed and piloted with teacher students, demonstrating the role of the network as a valuable learning community.

The network has also created closer ties among education professionals and education institutions from six Western Balkan countries, fostering links that are highly relevant in a region with a history of conflicts.

In order to promote a holistic approach to quality teacher education in the region, we also worked with the network to establish cooperation with schools to give teacher students the opportunity to improve their competences as teachers in school classes. We offered capacity building and support for this learning community. In 2020, 16 schools and 25 school mentors participated in a series of online workshops and trainings about practice-oriented teaching.

Funded by: The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



1. From training of teacher mentors
2. Planning implementation of new semester modules with teams from Sarajevo and Mostar Universities
3. Professor Maya Raunik Kirkov teaching the new module «Democracy through Visual Art Education» at the University of Skopje

## Innovative partnerships reaching young people

“I believe this switch of a perspective, letting the visitors take an active role is a noteworthy pro-democracy change. This approach can transform museums into forums of participation, where the skills needed in a democratic society can be trained.”

*Hanna Kłoszewska, project manager at the POLIN Museum*

Recognizing the importance of non-formal settings as crucial arenas for learning, in particular for reaching out to young people, EWC focuses on building innovative partnerships.

It is vital that young people experience a safe, inclusive, and democratic culture in the places where they live their lives. Such experiences can inspire and motivate to enact social responsibility and active participation. In the long run, this is vital to counter increasing inequality, polarization, and lack of trust in established democratic institutions and processes.

EWC partnered for example with the POLIN Museum to address hate speech, intolerance and polarization. We also worked with the new Roma and Sinti Centre in Prague where we supported the conceptualization of their educational and awareness raising services for schools and youth.

Funded by: EEA/Norway Grants



Architectural drawing of the new Roma and Sinti Centre in Prague



## CONTRIBUTING TO POLICY

The important role of education to build and sustain democratic societies is widely recognized and embedded in national education laws and policies of many countries. However, there is often a discrepancy between policies and their implementation in practice.

Yet, many countries are only now undergoing education reforms embracing a more competence-based approach, with a focus on civic competences to prepare children and young people to be active citizens in future.

To successfully implement policies in practice, a number of measures needs to be taken, including professional development of educators, the development and provision of adequate learning materials, and building strong partnerships between different actors in education.

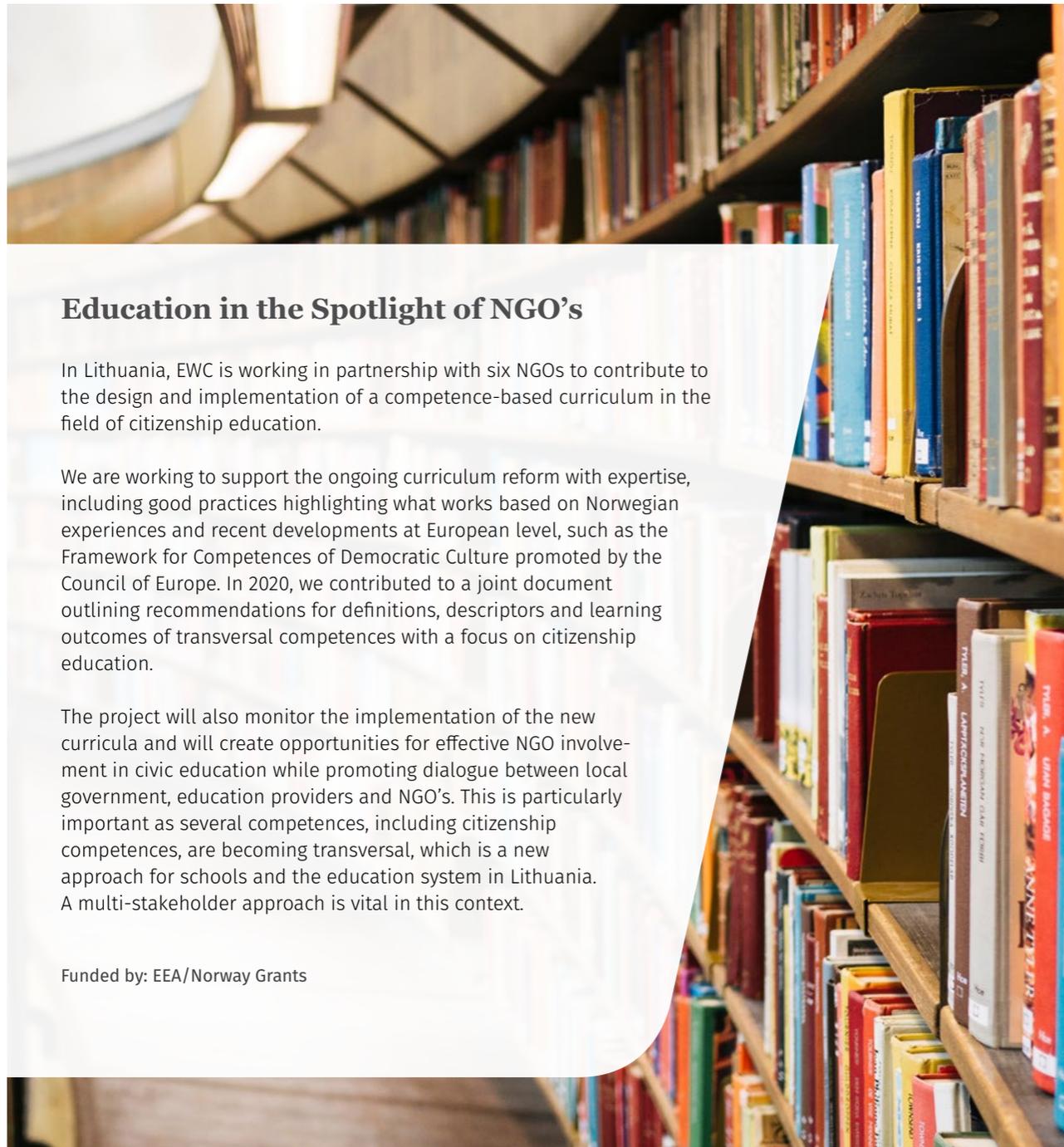
### OUR EFFORTS IN 2020

To ensure that we achieve our mission to bridge the gap between policy and practice, EWC worked closely with national education authorities when designing and implementing projects based on Council of Europe recommendations and national policies.

We provided advice to policy makers and contributed with our expertise to policy development. We participated in working groups developing new curricula, quality guidelines and teacher professional standards. In addition, EWC provided expertise for policymakers working on new national recommendations on assessment and civic education, bringing in the perspectives of education practitioners. We also supported piloting of new policies in schools.

Importantly, during the pandemic we were able to quickly collect and provide information and evidence on the effects of COVID-19 on teachers, students and NGO's to policy makers and other key actors in the field.





## Education in the Spotlight of NGO's

In Lithuania, EWC is working in partnership with six NGOs to contribute to the design and implementation of a competence-based curriculum in the field of citizenship education.

We are working to support the ongoing curriculum reform with expertise, including good practices highlighting what works based on Norwegian experiences and recent developments at European level, such as the Framework for Competences of Democratic Culture promoted by the Council of Europe. In 2020, we contributed to a joint document outlining recommendations for definitions, descriptors and learning outcomes of transversal competences with a focus on citizenship education.

The project will also monitor the implementation of the new curricula and will create opportunities for effective NGO involvement in civic education while promoting dialogue between local government, education providers and NGO's. This is particularly important as several competences, including citizenship competences, are becoming transversal, which is a new approach for schools and the education system in Lithuania. A multi-stakeholder approach is vital in this context.

Funded by: EEA/Norway Grants

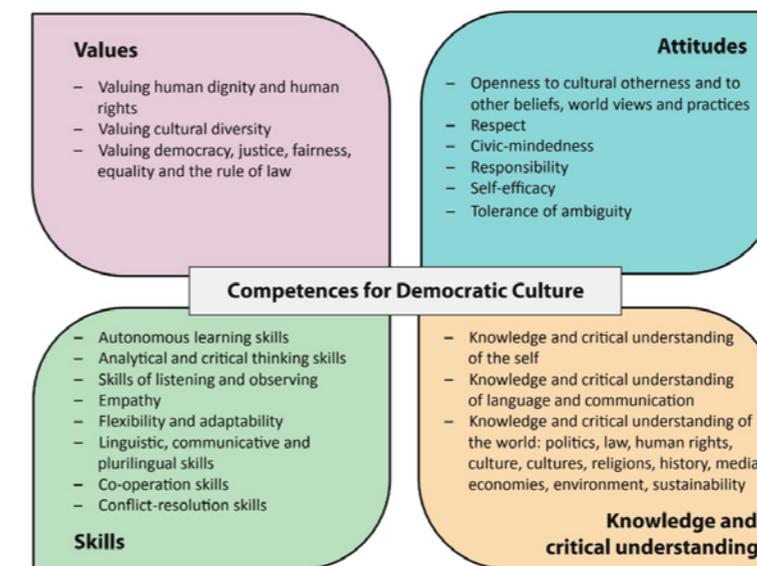
Illustration photo

## Influencing policy implementation across Europe

Educational leaders at the 2020 Informal Conference of Ministers of Education made a declaration on the education response to the COVID-19 crisis. It reaffirmed the need for continuous efforts to develop competences of young people such as valuing diversity, critical thinking, adaptability at all levels of education, and recognized once again the importance of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC).

The Council of Europe strategy on implementing teaching and learning for the development of democratic competences puts a particular focus on training across its member states, including the training of trainers active in teacher education.

As a member of the RFCDC Working Group on Training, which was set up by the Council of Europe, EWC helped to design a pan-European training scheme including materials and tools that will be piloted with trainers, teacher trainers and teachers from across the CoE member states in 2021. We contributed with evidence and experiences on what works well in training and capacity building in this field. The new training scheme aims to support member states to fulfill their commitment to implement the new learning framework.



Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture

The "Butterfly" of competences

## Supporting comprehensive educational reform in Ukraine

EWC continues to work with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, supporting the comprehensive New Ukrainian School reform. While the new national curriculum for basic secondary education was approved in 2020, the country carried on with the implementation of the previously approved curriculum for primary school as well as new quality criteria for school education. First steps were also taken to renew the curriculum for early childhood education and care.

EWC was a member of the working groups developing these policy documents, while also contributing with training and capacity building for curriculum developers alongside piloting the new approaches.

Importantly, the center has worked to ensure that the new educational policies correspond with the Council of Europe's Reference Framework for Competences for Democratic Culture. A major contribution to the working groups was our consultancy on formative assessment as a means to foster active participation, responsibility and autonomous learning skills.

Furthermore, EWC has worked with secondary schools across the country to pilot the promoted approaches: transversal development of civic competences, formative assessment, and development of a democratic



Student activities at the Zaporizhzhya school 101

learning environment. This work has been officially recognized by the Ministry as a national innovation project to pave the way for implementation of the new curriculum in other schools in 2022. Our work has resulted in over 600 lesson activities developed by teachers from piloting schools, showing how one can develop democratic competences in different subjects.

During 2020, the new Quality Standards for schools, developed with an active contribution by EWC, were widely applied to build internal systems of quality assurance and for external audits nationwide. The standards promote democratic and inclusive learning environments as well as participation of all stakeholders in school governance.

«EWC has been a very good partner and supporter in this process», said Roman Shyyan, deputy director of the Reform Support Team and leader of the working groups on the new curricula for primary and for basic secondary education.

In the first steps towards a new curriculum for pre-school education, EWC has during 2020 offered a series of workshops with international experts from Norway, Sweden and Poland sharing good practices and experiences.

Funded by: The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Working group on curriculum

## Contributing to the UN Plan of Action on Hate Speech

EWC took part in the virtual UNESCO expert roundtable discussions on “Education as a Tool for Prevention: Addressing and Countering Hate Speech” in May 2020. The roundtables were meant to provide input as well as written recommendations for the Global Education Ministers Conference on addressing and countering hate speech through education.

The virtual meeting was organized by UNESCO and the United Nations Office on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG), responding to the UN Secretary General’s United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech.

It brought together more than 20 world renowned experts, including youth representatives, human rights experts, and education specialists, to review existing evidence on addressing and countering hate speech, exchange good practices and develop a strategy to boost member states’ capacity to address the phenomenon on and offline through education.

EWC presented key points for further discussions such as the need to strengthen competences of educators to support students dealing with difficult and controversial issues and to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to address hate speech.



Virtual UNESCO expert roundtable

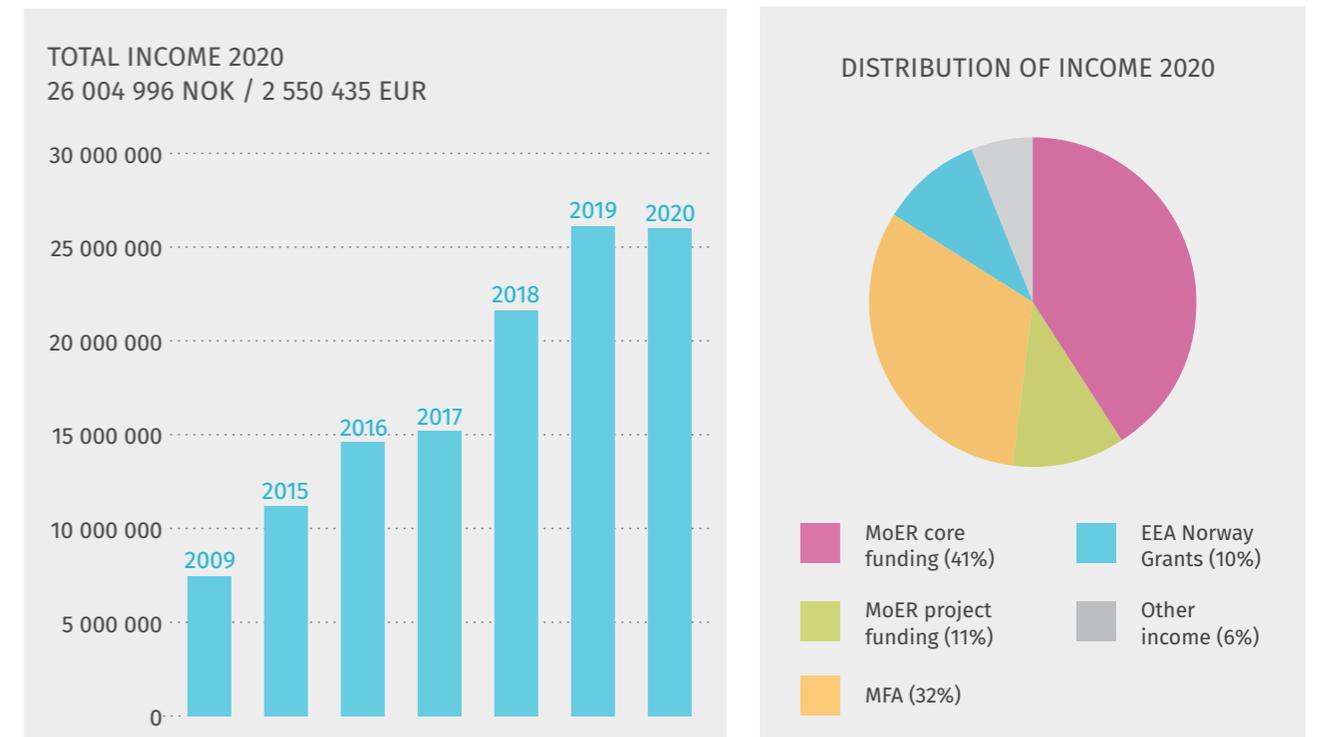
## FINANCES

EWC’s annual income has since the beginning primarily consisted of the core funding provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research – from 99% of the total income in 2009 to 59% in 2017. In 2018 however, this shifted for the first time, with project grants and other income exceeding EWC’s core funding. The main donors were the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and EEA and Norway Grants.

2020 was a particular year for EWC in many ways. While we see a relatively stable number of projects and participants compared to 2019, we see a slight decrease in the total income (0,4 %). The pandemic has required postponements and adaptations, affecting finances across the organization, both in terms of income, expenses, and the division of costs. The core funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) increased with 13 % in 2020.

In addition, since 2019, the MoER has also contributed with annual funding for the project “22 July and Democratic Citizenship”.

In 2020, project funding still made up more than half of the total income (about 58 %). At the same time, the sudden changes and restrictions caused by the pandemic, have once more highlighted the importance of flexibility, innovation, good dialogue with partners and the importance of predictable funding sources.



# ABOUT THE EWC

2020 was a year of adaption, innovation and new ways of working for EWC. During the unprecedented challenges posed by the pandemic, our main aim was to continue our work educating for democracy and human rights. In total, EWC was involved in 17 projects, out of which 13 continues into 2021, 3 were concluded in 2020 and 2 were initiated in 2020. 22 staff members from 9 countries make up the core of the centre, and together we will continue to be an innovative, trusted, and competent partner responsive to emerging issues in the field of education for democracy and human rights.



EWC Staff 2020

# GOVERNING BOARD

EWC is governed by a board appointed by the Minister of Education of Norway. It is comprised of members nominated by the Ministry of Education in Norway and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

## EWC GOVERNING BOARD 2020

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