



# **BRIDGE 47**

## **Global citizenship education (GCE) for unknown futures: mapping past and current experiments and debates**

**A report for the Bridge 47 project**

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# Introduction

This report was prepared in response to the Bridge 47 project's call for research on global citizenship education (GCE) in relation to three pre-defined research questions: 1) What is the benefit of GCE to our societies? 2) What is the impact of GCE to our societies? 3) Why do we believe that GCE is the answer to global challenges? This research uses social cartography as the main methodological approach to answer these questions. Social cartographies map different debates and approaches (discourses) within specific fields in order to offer more complex analysis that examine multiple perspectives or understandings of key issues and concepts.

This report begins by presenting the main debates in the field of GCE in the last ten years or so, outlining different understandings of GCE by using examples both from policy frameworks (Maastricht Declaration, UNESCO, OECD) as well as from academic research on GCE. Acknowledging these different understandings, it then proceeds to outline a possible framework for developing (new) partnerships within and beyond the GCE sector that seeks to integrate the various possible contributions of different approaches without a need for resorting to large-scale consensus (or the lowest common denominator) as a basis for cooperation. In the third part, the report introduces a mapping of different GCE and GCE-related projects, partnerships and initiatives that have been examined as case studies for this research and that have been included as entries into the Bridge 47 online library. This section presents key findings from the comparative study. Anyone interested in deeper exploration of these projects is invited to also visit the online library, as this report was limited in space regarding in-depth presentation of all projects. Drawing on the lessons from the first three parts, the fourth and final section offers examples of three different narratives about GCE for three different target groups (policy makers, potential new partners, interested individuals) that seek to deliver arguments for GCE in ways that do not under-estimate the complexity of global challenges ahead of us and that also attempt to create space for more critical (non-mainstream) approaches to GCE.

Although this report can be read linearly from the beginning to the end, each section also presents a more or less self-contained unit that can be used separately by those working on specific subjects (partnerships, advocacy, innovation). Hopefully, this report will help stir further debates on GCE within the Bridge 47 project, especially considering that this report was written precisely in the weeks when the latest IPCC report sent a stark warning to the world that our existing approaches to change and our unwillingness to undergo deep transformation of our societies are robbing us and especially the generations yet-to-come of a viable, inhabitable future.

## 1. Internal reflections - different understandings of GCE

This section offers a synthesis of both recent and enduring debates within the broad field of Global Citizenship Education. It begins with a discussion of terminology related to GCE by recalling some of the more common mainstream conceptual distinctions and key policy frameworks. It then proceeds to explore conceptual differences between soft and critical approaches to GCE (Andreotti 2006). In the final part it adds further nuance by introducing Andreotti *et al.*'s (2015) cartography of soft, radical and beyond-reform approaches.

### 1.1. Mainstream GCE debates in a nutshell

Global citizenship education, global education, and global learning can be considered as largely synonymous concepts with broadly overlapping content and methods of delivery. In general, these three overarching concepts, termed collectively in this report as GCE, are considered to encompass a broad number of other “adjectival” educations, such as human rights education, peace education, intercultural or multicultural education, anti-racism education, environmental education, development education, education for sustainable development (ESD) and others. Somewhat specific in this context is the so-called education for global competencies (EfGC) that, unlike the educations mentioned above, is not primarily or explicitly oriented towards addressing a justice or a values-based issue. Its main focus is on equipping learners with the skills and competencies required for social mobility in the context of a globalized economy, which can also include other educations mentioned above – as long as they can support learners in navigating their way through the global labour market. The first group of GCE and its corresponding “adjectival educations” originated largely from the work of NGOs, educational researchers, international organizations (such as the UNESCO and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe), dedicated youth workers, teachers and activists seeking to address various social, environmental, political and other global issues. The second group of education for global competencies (EfGC) originates in the needs of a globalized economy for highly-skilled, context-mobile workforce that is able to work in culturally diverse teams and environments. Supported largely by private (but also public) funding and promoted through economy-oriented international organizations, such as the OECD (2018) or the Asia Society (Mansila and Jackson 2011), EfGC presents not necessarily a direct negation of the purposes and goals of GCE, but it certainly departs from its agenda in ways that may be considered highly problematic. The problematic aspects are particularly related to the extent to which EfGC engages (or does not engage) with the critique of the negative effects of an infinite growth-based consumerist economy (globalized financial capitalism).

The exact meaning and purpose of GCE has been subject to decades long debates (Hicks 2003; Peters *et al.* 2008) that were for the most part focused on two main strands. The first strand was focused on developing generally acceptable definitions of GCE in national, regional and global contexts. In the debates that were developing within national contexts – mostly in EU member countries – relevant GCE stakeholders within a given country were working together (or sometimes apart) to develop nation-state wide definitions of GCE that were/are considered as guiding definitions within the formal system of education, but in many cases also within the informal sector. Often, such initiatives emerged from the side of NGOs or national NGO platforms or from the side of governmental agencies and bodies tasked with the assignment of developing national curricula, but also from other non-educational bodies, such as ministries of foreign affairs, or international development agencies. These initiatives were part of more complex processes (many of which are still ongoing) that were supposed to lead to development of national strategies on GCE. In some countries these processes were completed, in other places they stalled or are still ongoing (Forghani-Arani *et al.* 2013; Hartmeyer and Wegimont 2016; GENE 2017). On regional and global levels, these debates occurred largely within the framework of international organizations through series of conferences and other events and consultation processes that included various stakeholders from the fields of formal and non-formal education. In the broader European context, arguably the most important (or the most visible and most enduring) policy work was done through a long series of regional and pan-European congresses and conferences sponsored by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. The first Europe-wide GE Congress in 2002 produced the so-called Maastricht Global Education Declaration that may still be considered a key reference, especially for those working on GCE in larger European context. It (Europe-wide Global Education Congress 2002) defines global education as:

**Education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all.**

In the larger, international context, the most visible organization working on the subject of GCE and often cited as a global reference is UNESCO. Unlike the Maastricht declaration that speaks about global education (GE), UNESCO (n. d.) uses the term global citizenship education and defines it as follows:

**Global Citizenship Education (GCED) aims to empower learners of all ages to assume active roles, both locally and globally, in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies.**

These two definitions were created almost 15 years apart and while the UNESCO version is actually the more recent one, there are important, if subtle differences between them that raise a certain level of concern about progress being made during this time – especially from a critically-informed perspective.

The first and the most obvious difference is that the Maastricht declaration uses the term global education, while the UNESCO definition uses the term global citizenship education. The idea of introducing the concept of citizenship (implicitly considered to mean *active* citizenship) to global education has been welcomed by those that considered the activist, or engaged, component of education to be missing from the concept of global education. After all, one of the more widely circulated assumptions in the field of GCE is that the education process is ultimately supposed to lead to some sort of action (Hicks 2003; Peters *et al.* 2008; UNESCO 2014) be that in the change of behavioural patterns (such as patterns of consumption), personal stances (for instance lowering prejudice), engagement in various direct-action activities (such as joining campaigns), or increased participation in established political processes (such as voting). The concept was also welcomed by those that consider all people to be global citizens by the sheer virtue of them being born. From this perspective, there are essentially no non-global citizens.

However, the concept of global citizenship (or citizenship as such, in relation to the concept of cosmopolitanism) has also been subject to many critical considerations by scholars of different lineages (post-colonial, de-colonial, critical race theory and others), who questioned the sensibility of using the term citizenship, as it is generally considered to be tied to the idea of nation-state-based citizenship that affords privileges and rights only to some and no to others (non-citizens). It has been further critiqued on the grounds of introducing an idea of a globally-informed or globally-mobile class/caste of citizens that were seen as distinct from their less globally-informed and immobile counterparts (Andreotti 2011; Mannion *et al.* 2011; Pashby 2011). As such, the concept was (or is) considered by some as potentially elitist, with the status of a “global citizen” being reserved only for those that have the means and resources to afford it.

The second important distinction is that the Maastricht declaration speaks of “opening people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world and awaken them”, while UNESCO speaks of “empowering learners of all ages to assume active roles”. The conceptual differences between educational processes that are supposed to “awaken people” to “the realities of the world” and those aiming to “empower learners to assume active roles” are potentially very significant. The first approach may be considered to assume that there is still something profoundly new (and potentially disturbing) that the learners have to learn first – they have to *awaken* (presumably from their sleep) to the (plural/multiple) realities of the world, of which they have previously been unaware. The second approach does not seem to assume that there is still something profoundly new and/or disturbing to be learned. The learners do not *need to be taught* (about the realities of the world), they need to be *empowered* to act first and foremost. They need the kind of knowledge and skills that will mobilize them for action. In other words, the knowledges implied in these two different conceptualizations *are not* of the same kind.

The first (Maastricht) conceptualization implies a need for knowledge (or some other sort of educational intervention) that changes the way we perceive the world or that changes the way *we imagine/understand the*

*world to be*. In academic literature, this would be referred to as a need for a change of our epistemology<sup>1</sup>, of what we think/imagine the world is (like). The second (UNESCO) conceptualization does not seem to imply a need for a (disruptive kind of) knowledge that will wake us up (to multiple/different realities) first. It presumes that we are *already awake* and that the only knowledge that we need is the kind of knowledge that can be (immediately) translated into action. In scholarly literature, this would be referred to as a need for different (or better) methodologies, a change in *how we do things*. Arguably, the analysis of what needs to happen in order for the change (in the world) to emerge is deeper in the Maastricht document, which argues that before we can act, we need to first transform the way (in which we were socialized) to see the world. We need to learn to *see it differently*. The UNESCO document (at least at a visible level) does not require a change in how we see the world. This implies that we have been brought up to see the world correctly or truthfully. As such, this definition of GCE opens much less space for productive doubt and for deeper transformation than the first document.

There are more subtle differences between these two conceptualizations, but this report will examine only two more. The first is related to the notion of plural/multiple realities in the Maastricht declaration, which is a highly ambitious concept to put in a normative document. It is likely an allusion to the post-structuralist understanding of reality as always socially constructed, and thus necessarily plural. This understanding opens a space for very different kinds of debates, especially for questioning the single story of progress, development and human evolution that is otherwise replicated in many GCE-related documents, conceptualizations and practice (Andreotti *et al.* 2018). Needless to say, no such opening is observable in the UNESCO document.

The second is the explicitly political statement that global education should be about a world of “greater justice, equality and human rights for all.” Being explicit in demanding not just equality, but above all also justice, is what makes the Maastricht declaration much more politically brave and demanding than the UNESCO document. Calling for justice implies an understanding that there is injustice in the world, and injustice in turn implies a need for reparation or restitution. It implies responsibility on the side of those that commit injustice. Equality is politically a much gentler concept that does not necessarily imply restorative measures, nor does it automatically encourage reflection on the possibility of one’s own complicity in harm. Equality can be considered achievable by supportive means alone, while injustice cannot be remedied so easily. Further, the full text of the Maastricht declaration, includes a recognition that “all citizens need knowledge and skills to understand, participate in and interact *critically* with our global society.” Criticality, together with equality and justice, makes up a trio of very important, in fact crucial, words that are absent in the UNESCO definition. Instead UNESCO proposes to build “peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies.” From a critically informed, and particularly from a post-colonial or a de-colonial perspective, the concepts of tolerance, inclusion and security have been subject to much critique from various critical disciplines (Ahmed 2012; Jefferess 2008; Žižek 2008). Tolerance has been critiqued on the grounds that it always implies a hierarchical relation between the tolerant ones and those being tolerated (by the majority population). Similarly problematic is the notion of inclusion, which again assumes that there are those that (benevolently) include and those (that should be grateful for) being included. Inclusion also brings up the notion of a singular understanding of what an ideal society should look like; it opens no space for plurality of worldviews and ways of being to co-exist as equals. Perhaps, the most problematic of all is the idea of secure societies. Different from safety or wellbeing, security is a particularly politically negatively charged notion, associated both with an existence of perceived threats (from presumably violent others) and with a need to build-up a (repressive) state security apparatus (Buonfino 2004; Ibrahim 2005; Shirazi 2017). Examples of how security discourse has been mobilized in recent years, specifically in political speeches and media coverage of the various refugee

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<sup>1</sup> More on this below.

crises, should raise a warning flag about the close connection between securitization of discourse and reinforcement of negative stereotypes and processes of “othering” marginalized groups.

Of course, no document can prescribe what a GCE practice or a GCE-related or a GCE-informed activity will ultimately look like, but such broadly accepted and frequently cited documents as the Maastricht declaration and the UNESCO framework do have an impact – not in an impositional sense (they are not legally binding obligations), but in the sense that they are significant reference points that influence the discourse on and about GCE on a global level. As such, they influence the kind of discussions that can be had, especially in the context of GCE in the formal education system. The documents discussed above emerged in different periods of time and in context of different political configurations of power. What is telling, is that in a way the differences between the documents show a disconcerting trend in which a more recent document, and a more globally impactful one, is less politically ambitious, less critical, less self-reflexive and introduces more problematic terminology than a document that is some 15 years its older. This is not good news for the field of GCE – at least not on the policy level. While we can celebrate the achievement of having GCE included in the SDGs, we should be very careful about what kind of understanding of GCE is meant by it.

### 1.2. From mainstream to critical GCE and beyond

In 2006 Vanessa Andreotti published *Soft vs. Critical Global Citizenship Education*, perhaps the most cited article in the field of GCE of the last two decades. In this article, she proposed a distinction between two main groups of observable approaches to GCE – soft and critical ones. Although it would be an unfair over-simplification to simply equate the Maastricht definition with critical GCE and the UNESCO definition with soft GCE, they can be considered as representatives of the critical-soft spectrum of available positions, if not quite the epitome of each type. The following table, reproduced from Andreotti’s article, highlights the main conceptual differences between these two sets of approaches and examines some of the implications for practice and action that emerge from these two streams.

	Soft GCE	Critical GCE
Problem	Poverty, helplessness	Inequality, injustice
Nature of the problem	Lack of ‘development’, education, resources, skills, culture, technology, etc.	Complex structures, systems, assumptions, power relations and attitudes that create and maintain exploitation and enforced disempowerment and tend to eliminate difference
Justification for positions of privilege (in the North and in the South)	‘Development’, ‘history’, education, harder work, better organisation, better use of resources, technology	Benefit from and control over unjust and violent systems and structures
Basis for caring	Common humanity/being good/sharing and caring, responsibility FOR the other (or to teach the other)	Justice/complicity in harm, responsibility TOWARDS the other (or to learn with the other) – accountability

Grounds for acting	Humanitarian/moral (based on normative principles for thought and action)	Political/ethical (based on normative principles for relationships)
Understanding of interdependence	We are all equally interconnected, we all want the same thing, we can all do the same thing	Asymmetrical globalisation, unequal power relations, Northern and Southern elites imposing own assumptions as universal
What needs to change	Structures, institutions and individuals that are a barrier to development	Structures, (belief) systems, institutions, assumptions, cultures, individuals, relationships
What for	So that everyone achieves development, harmony, tolerance and equality	So that injustices are addressed, more equal grounds for dialogue are created, and people can have more autonomy to define their own development
Role of 'ordinary' Individuals'	Some individuals are part of the problem, but ordinary people are part of the solution as they can create pressure to change	We are all part of problem and part of the solution
What individuals can do	Support campaigns to change structures, donate time, expertise and resources	Analyse own position/context and participate in changing structures, assumptions, identities, attitudes and power relations in their contexts
How does change happen	From the outside to the inside (imposed change)	From the inside to the outside
Basic principle for change	Universalism (non-negotiable vision of how everyone should live, what everyone should want or should be)	Reflexivity, dialogue, contingency and an ethical relation to difference (radical alterity)
Goal of global citizenship education	Empower individuals to act (or become active citizens) according to what has been defined for them as a good life or ideal world	Empower individuals to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures and contexts, to imagine different futures and to take responsibility for their decisions and actions
Strategies for global citizenship	Raising awareness of global issues and promoting campaigns	Promoting engagement with global issues and perspectives and an ethical

education		relationship to difference, addressing complexity and power relations
Potential benefits of global citizenship education	Greater awareness of some of the problems, support for campaigns, greater motivation to help/do something, feel good factor	Independent/critical thinking and more informed, responsible and ethical action
Potential problems	Feeling of self-importance or self-righteousness and/or cultural supremacy, reinforcement of colonial assumptions and relations, reinforcement of privilege, partial alienation, uncritical action	Guilt, internal conflict and paralysis, critical disengagement, feeling of helplessness

Table 1: Soft vs. critical global citizenship education (reproduced from Andreotti 2006)

The *soft vs. critical* mapping can help highlight the significant differences in these two main groups or streams of approaches, however this table does not necessarily capture the full diversity and complexity of available positions and understandings. More recently, Andreotti *et al.* (2015) proposed a more nuanced analysis of the various *loci of enunciation* (spaces from where we speak from) that complexifies the analysis a little further. A simplified version of the originally published social cartography is reproduced below.

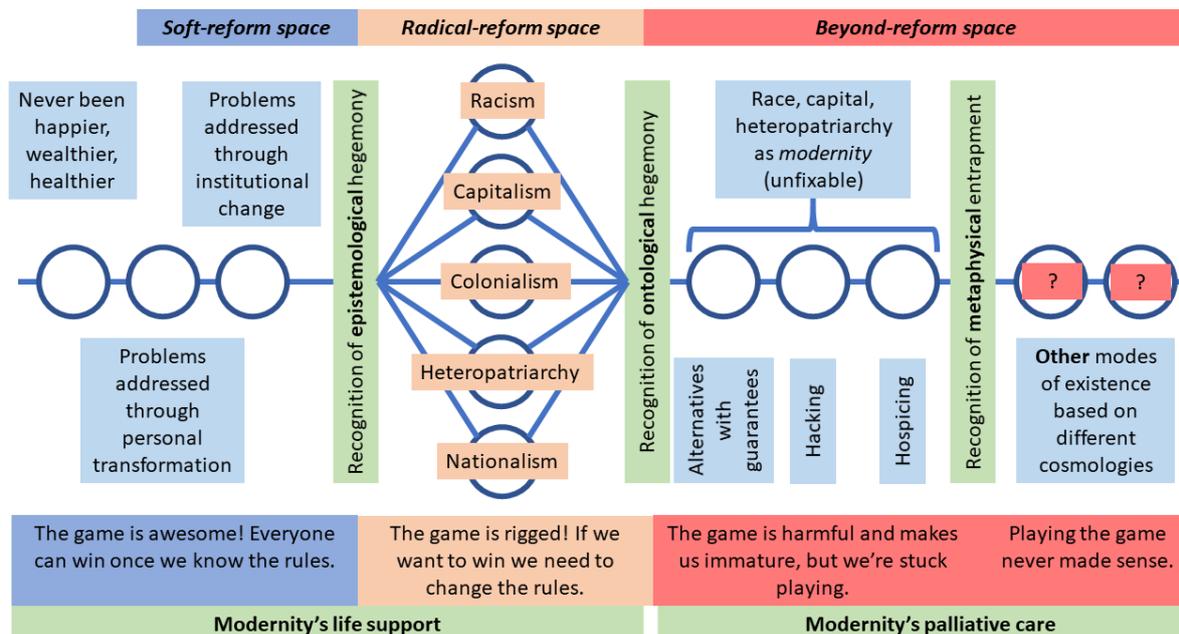


Figure 1: Soft reform, radical reform and beyond reform spaces (adapted from Andreotti *et al.* 2015)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Glossary:

r. of epistemological hegemony – recognition of existence of a dominant way of knowing (deconstructing the idea of (Western) knowledge as universal and universally valid, moving beyond single truths and single stories)

This cartography introduces three broad spaces from where GCE can speak: the *soft reform space*, the *radical reform space* and the *beyond reform space*. The soft reform space may be considered largely synonymous with soft GCE, while the radical reform space contains those critical GCE approaches that focus on critiquing some, but not all, aspects of modernity (e.g. capitalism, racism). The difference between soft and radical reform spaces is that in soft reform spaces there is no perceived need for a (re)examination of understandings of root causes of current global issues. As we already know all the right questions and all the right answers (because our knowledge is universal and universally valid), we just have to bring to life the required individual and institutional change, without changing the kind of thinking that informs them. This approach runs the highest (inevitable) risk of repeating the same mistakes that it is trying to resolve. The radical reform space is marked by a recognition of a need to not only change our behaviours and institutions, but also to change the kind of thinking that informs them. Andreotti *et al.* (2015) suggest that approaches in this space ask the same questions (that are asked in soft reform), but provide different (more complex and better informed) answers to them.

The beyond reform space contains those critical GCE approaches (such as de-colonial or post-colonial) that are grounded in a critique of modernity as such. Modernity, as used here, can broadly be considered as analogous to the concept of “modern society” or, alternatively, to what we simply call “the system.” However, unlike “the system”, which is usually associated with a given configuration of social, political and economic relations, such as for instance global capitalism, modernity is a broader concept/structure of which capitalism is just one part or aspect. Stein *et al.* (2017) and Andreotti *et al.* (2018) use the metaphor of the *house that modernity built* to write of modernity as a way of being, seeing and relating to the world that is grounded on the foundation of *separability* (between humans and nature), the twin carrying walls of the of the *nation-state* and *Enlightenment (humanism)*, and covered by the roof of *global capitalism*. Note that not all parts/aspects of modernity are represented in this cartography.<sup>3</sup>

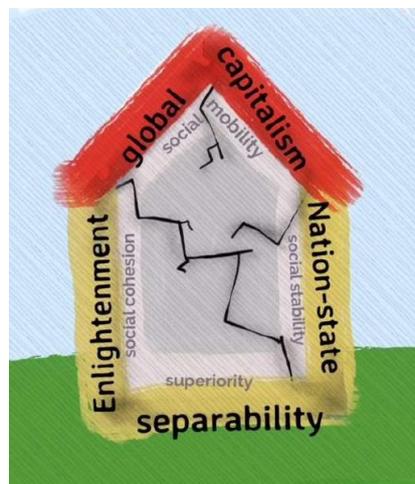


Figure 2: The house that modernity built (reproduced from Andreotti *et al.* 2018, p. 20)

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r. of ontological hegemony – recognition of existence of a dominant way of being (deconstructing the idea that perceiving and sensing oneself as an autonomous, self-transparent, separate individual is the only possible way of experiencing one’s existence in the world)

r. of metaphysical entrapment – recognition of being imaginatively and existentially caught-up in a singular understanding and experience of reality, self, space and time

<sup>3</sup> For a more nuanced analysis, see also *The house modernity built* mini-zine of the Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures Collective (2018), available at: <https://decolonialfutures.net/project-type/pedagogical-experiments/>.

Arguably, of the four identified structural components of modernity, only the negative effects of global capitalism have received a somewhat wider attention from the broader GCE community – mostly in relation to pedagogical practices that expose the structural inequalities inherent to international trade. Very few approaches to GCE practice focus on the critique of the nation-state as the warrant of social stability (and security), as doing so implies also a critique of the existing legal frameworks that define personal, institutional and property-based relationships. It is perhaps not difficult to imagine that such highly-politically charged approaches would not necessarily be met with approval, especially in formal education contexts, where GCE normally resides. Even fewer approaches to GCE question Enlightenment humanism as the cement of social cohesion, as this implies a critique of secular humanism (lay thinking) and challenges the role of the Cartesian *cogito* (rationalistic deliberation) as the sole arbiter of justice and ethics. Challenging these concepts ultimately challenges widely shared beliefs in what we consider right and wrong, good and bad, benevolent and evil. Cracks in these beliefs would compel us to profoundly reconfigure our fundamental social agreements, arguably beyond recognition. Thus, it should ultimately not be too surprising that there are virtually no approaches to GCE (outside various Indigenous contexts) that would challenge the foundational metaphysical divide between humans and (the rest of) nature, as this would require an abandonment of the idea of the individual, autonomous, separate self, which lies at the very core of the only way in which we seem to be able to imagine ourselves to exist.

Depending on the extent to which we consider the promises of modernity (such as the promise of infinite economic growth and rising material prosperity) to be broken and/or fixable, but ultimately still desirable, we will tend to find ourselves in different affective and argumentative spaces from where we speak. For instance, if we believe that modernity's single story of progress, development and human evolution is still a valid story (with minor or major imperfections) we would tend to advocate for minor (soft) or major (radical) corrections that would help us get back on the right track. This would call for a very different kind of action than speaking from a (beyond-reform) space that considers this story as broken (or perhaps, as false from the very start) and irrecoverable, yet still holding sway over us. In this beyond reform space, two different sets of possible strategies emerge. The first set includes attempts at developing alternatives (with guarantees), or attempts at hacking and/or hospicing a system in its decline. This set of strategies emerges from realizing (and mourning) the collapse of existing promises. The second set includes, yet again, completely different strategies that emerge from other modes of existence that never considered modernity's promises to be desirable or sensible to begin with.

In other words, GCE approaches that originate from soft reform spaces do not question our normalized assumptions or knowledge about the world; instead, the solutions to problems are taken as already (largely) known, and we only have to implement them. GCE approaches that originate from radical reform spaces tend to question our knowledge about the world (recognition of epistemic hegemony) and would focus on critical assessments of proposed understandings of problems and solutions. They advocate for multivocality of different perspectives, usually emphasizing those from marginalized communities and/or from the Global South. GCE approaches that originate from beyond-reform spaces would question the assumption that knowledge is the vehicle for change in our ways of being. Rather, they would argue that a change in the way of being precedes the possibility of a fundamental change in our ways of knowing. This may either emerge from a realization that there are inherent limits to what we consider imaginable, desirable and possible that result from the limitations of the ways in how we get to know things, or they may be grounded in other (Indigenous) modes of existence that engender different cosmologies.

If we consider the cartography of soft-reform, radical-reform and beyond-reform spaces in parallel to what has been happening on the (international) level of policy, we can observe a certain disjuncture emerging. While (some of) the theory and practice of GCE is becoming more complex and critical, the policy (considering the UNESCO example, but also the increasing influence of the OECD and neoliberal think-tanks on GCE) seems to

be getting more apolitical and uncritical, and directed towards non-disruptive, but scalable and marketable solutions. The irreconcilable conflict between scalability and pedagogical depth also permeates much of the debate among and between GCE practitioners and advocates alike. The next section takes note of these concerns and explores possibilities for different kinds of conversations and partnerships to emerge that might help us speak across some of the divides that seem almost insurmountable today.

## 2. Building partnerships within and beyond the GCE sector

Using the example from the first section of this report on the differences between the Maastricht and UNESCO definitions of GCE, this section offers an analysis of some of the lessons learned from ongoing debates in the field of GCE that point to a need for a different way of having debates and building partnerships, especially between actors with significant differences in understandings, assumptions and perceptions about GCE.

Bringing up the Maastricht suggestion that we need to “awaken to the realities of the world”, one can easily imagine a jocular description of the UNESCO approach to GCE from a Maastricht-informed perspective. From such a perspective, one could argue that UNESCO-informed “empowered learners” could acceptably perform their tasks well as active citizens while also sleepwalking and being unaware of the multiplicity of contexts and flows in which they are inevitably involved. From here, harsh arguments could quickly arise, and indeed they do in heated conceptual/academic and political debates. In such debates, the adherents of the second approach would potentially consider the first approach as both elitist and demeaning, as it would be seen to be built on the assumption that most people are not aware of the world they live in (and are therefore profoundly ignorant), and that there are those (global educators) that can tell them what the world is really like. An expected response from the adherents of the first approach would in turn be that the second approach puts action before (deep) reflection and that this can lead to uninformed behaviour and practices that may end-up causing more harm than good, despite potentially good intentions.

The troubling lesson to be learned from this hardly fictional scenario is that depending on how we talk to each other or about each other’s understandings of GCE, we could easily be creating more fragmentation and sectoral divisions that lead us nowhere. The difficult task ahead is to develop ways of communicating and being with each other that can take into account the gifts and limitations of different approaches/understandings of GCE – in relation to the kind of tasks they have to perform and the contexts in which they operate. But for this to be even possible, we need to have a clear mapping of different available positions, conceptualizations and understandings so that we can acknowledge not merely that we are all coming from different backgrounds, but that, above all, we are never all going to agree on how we should do things, or what GCE is all about. Given the diversity within the field, of which the Maastricht / UNESCO example is but a taste, consensus-building (between different stakeholders) should not be considered as the only possible strategy of action and partnership building.

### 2.1. Core-to-core and edge-to-edge approaches to building partnerships

Getting people from very different backgrounds to agree on something (core principles) is a very difficult and time-consuming process, which anyone involved in multi-stakeholder negotiations and talks is certainly aware of. Learning to work together without a need for agreement and despite our differences can be much

more (personally and institutionally) challenging, but it can also lead to unexpected results that can make such an approach more time and resource-efficient. The differences in these two approaches, consensus-based and non-consensus-based, are in interdisciplinary studies also referred to as differences between core-to-core approaches and edge-to-edge approaches.

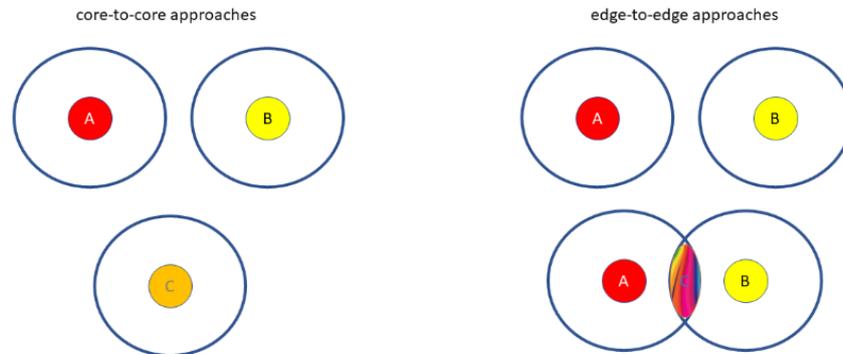


Figure 3: Core-to-core and edge-to-edge approaches

Core-to-core approaches require us to learn about and agree on the core principles that need to be shared between different participating partners. While this process can lead to a creation of strong common ground (when cores are very similar), it usually runs the risk of being limited only to those kinds of cooperation that do not challenge the sameness or similarity of core assumptions, beliefs, norms, and understandings. Core-to-core cooperation across fundamental differences is usually not possible, and core-to-core cooperation in contexts of great similarity very rarely produces something fundamentally new.

Differently, edge-to-edge approaches do not require us to agree on the same core principles, but they do require us to share a commitment to the same task. The risk of this approach is that unacknowledged or unexamined fundamental differences may (at a later stage) end up sabotaging our common projects. To avoid this, it is extremely important to know about these fundamental disagreements – which is why it is very helpful to map initial positions, and to agree that we do not have reconcile them at any time during the duration of the partnership. Depending on the nature of the differences between participating partners, such approaches are very likely to stretch the limits of personal and institutional comfort, but can produce results that are not possible within core-to-core frameworks. Said differently: edge-to-edge partnerships are those spaces where the (previously) impossible can happen.

Depending on the depth and level of differences between participating parties, edge-to-edge approaches do run the risk of creating partnerships/cooperations that can make people feel that by partaking in them, they are challenging their core assumptions, beliefs and attachments that they are not willing to compromise on. In that sense, edge-to-edge partnership require deeper preparation and are sometimes not suitable when people are required to move beyond their “stretch zone”. As such, these approaches require us to focus more not on what we want to do, but on what needs to be done. Unlike core-to-core projects they do not centre on the (desires of) partners, but the task at hand.

## 2.2. What might a GCE-informed, edge-to-edge approach to building partnerships look like?

Arguably one of the biggest lessons to be learned from research on GCE is that the field is marked by a plethora of different understandings and approaches to GCE that diverge significantly in their understandings of the problems that need to be addressed (the critiques), the solutions proposed or imagined (horizons of hope)

and the way to reach them. Further, many of these different approaches could be considered to argue for mutually exclusive propositions or would set different rankings of priorities and understandings of inter-related issues. Using the soft/radical/beyond reform mapping, introduced in the first part of the report, the table below highlights some key differences among these three main groups of approaches.

Analysis of the system	Soft reform (system expansion)	Radical reform (system revamp)	Beyond reform (system change)
Theory of change	Maximise effectiveness and efficiency of existing economic, political, educational institutions through changes in public policy and practice	Diversify representation (of marginalized groups), access to existing economic, political, educational institutions through collective action	Disinvest from existence ordered by existing economic, political, educational institutions, consider the limits of representability
Horizon of hope/possibility	Plan/engineer for the perpetual expansion and improvement of existing institutions, working towards a single/universal story of human development	Deepen our analyses and understanding so as to determine what changes might enable more people to be included into an expanded version of the existing system	Establish and maintain ethical, equitable relations premised on respect, reciprocity, solidarity to uphold the well-being of present and future generations
Terms of the conversation	Same questions, same answers	Same questions, different answers	Different questions, different answers
Approach to education	Ensure system continuity, continual progress, and the transmission of “universal” truth/values	Learn from alternative ways of knowing in search of models and roadmaps that can lead toward a different future	Messy, collective process of learning/unlearning that may lead to viable but as-yet-undefined and unimaginable futures
Approach to development	Mainstream development	Alternative forms of development	Alternatives to development
Approach to social change	“Heropreneurship”	Collective impact through interconnected networks and systems thinking	Deep learning through collective experimentation, improvisation and reflexivity

Table 2: Usual assemblages (adapted from Andreotti *et al.* 2018)

It is important to consider that, whatever our personal and institutional backgrounds may be, we do not inhabit the same spaces (soft/radical/beyond) in all contexts, at all times, and in relation to all questions. For instance, organizations or individuals that have a strong (radical) critique of growth-based economy, many have a soft critique of systemic racism, heteropatriarchy, nationalism and vice versa. Also, depending on what kind of contexts we are working in, we may (tactically, strategically or unknowingly) adopt different stances at different times. Perhaps, we can be more critical in our educational work, but our contexts of work in policy only allow us to push for soft reform approaches. Alternatively, our advocacy practice may be radical (calling for deep systemic change), but our internal institutional practice may not live-up to the radicality of our propositions. Acknowledging this can perhaps help us also recognize the gifts and limitations of these three main groups of approaches. While one possibility of reading the soft/radical/beyond cartography is that it implies a notion that we should move (in a linear, progressive fashion) from soft to radical and from radical to beyond reform spaces, that is not always necessarily the case. In this era of “in-between-stories” or “in-between-spaces” when old systems are dying, but new ones have not emerged yet, we need the efforts of all of us, working together. While there is no question that beyond reform approaches are crucial for experimenting with new, alternatives futures, the soft reform and radical reform approaches are also important, because they can help us reduce the existing and ongoing harm caused by current unsustainable and exploitative systems. They can help the beyond reform approaches buy some important time to work on “alternatives to alternatives”, but they should not be tasked with the hope of being able to extend our current ways of life forever. If nothing else, there are planetary boundaries to consider.

A different mapping, developed by the Smart CSOs Lab (Naberhaus & Sheppard 2015) proposes four different roles of systemic activism – the acupuncturist, the questioner, the broker and the gardener. Each of these actors has a different task to perform, but only by working together can they bring about the required social transformation. They are all indispensable, but they are also each by themselves insufficient.

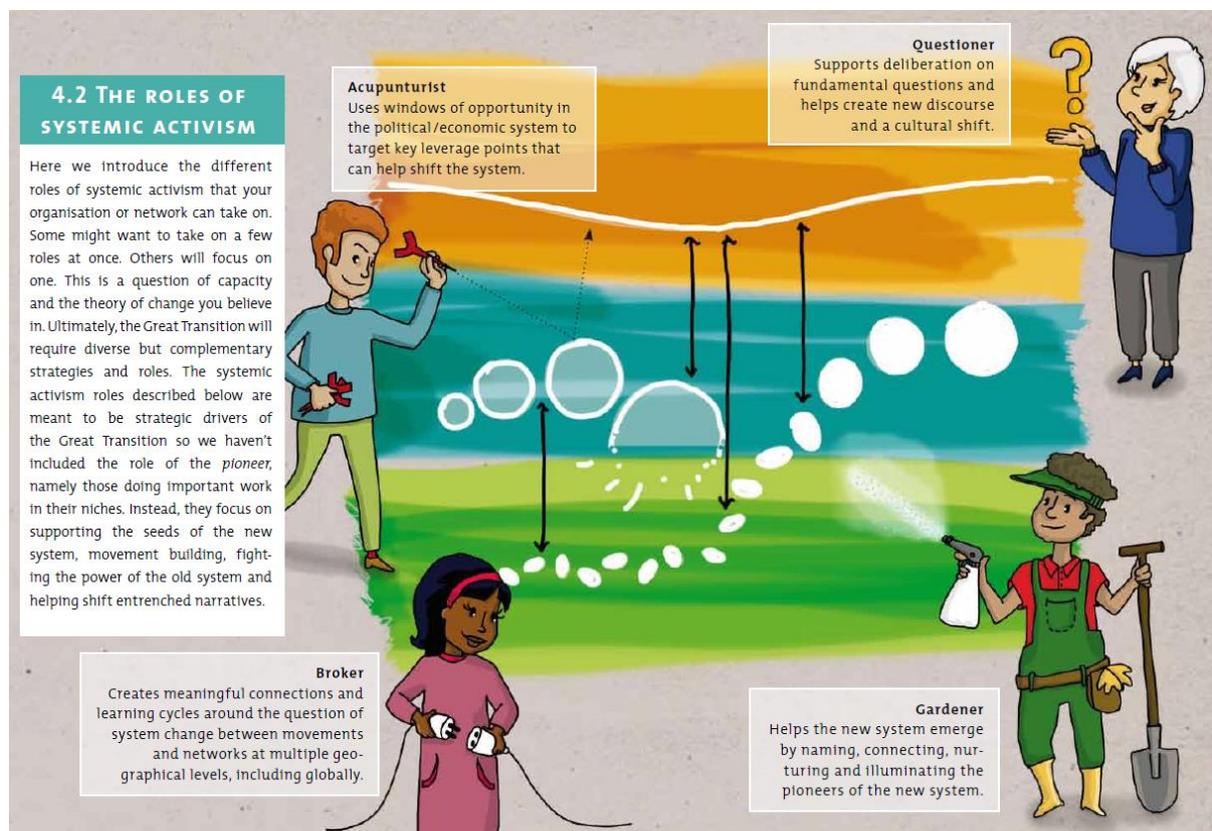


Figure 4: Different roles of systemic activism (reproduced under CC 3.0 licence from Naberhaus and Sheppard 2015, p. 56)

The Smart CSOs model of change suggests that systemic change happens on three different, but parallel levels. First, is the level of culture (yellow), where the dominant societal values and worldviews are and eventually shift. Second, is the level of regimes (blue), where the dominant political, economic and social institutions are and where new or transformed institutions emerge. And third, is the level of niches, where pioneers experiment with ideas and seeds of new system(s). In order to make (a dignified) demise of the old systems possible and the birth of new ones viable, we have to create spaces of engagement where these (and other) different actors can work together, without overpowering each other. Creating such spaces is perhaps the task of GCE-informed approaches to building partnerships. But for such spaces to work, they are more likely to be possible when informed (and hosted) by complex levels of systemic analyses that offer some insight into the size, difficulty and stamina required of the task ahead. Again, using the language of soft/radical/beyond approaches, we will likely not be able to work together using core-to-core approaches, because the core desires of keeping the system intact (soft reform) and developing alternatives (beyond reform) are essentially incompatible. That is why, for instance, we can't policy our way into radical (educational) alternatives, as the primary task of formal education systems is to ensure their own survival, and the survival of the kind of society they emerged from, and not to open pathways for their own de-construction. However, if we focus our attention on the kind of problems that we do not know how to solve with existing means (rising levels of anxiety, depression and self-harm among young people in most [Northern] societies might be examples of such problems), rather than the ones we believe we already have solutions to, then we may be able to work together across our differences, keeping in mind that we do not have to agree, but we have to know also that we disagree. The next section presents findings from the analysis of case studies of several GCE-informed or GCE-related partnerships, movements and initiatives. Several of these (the Ecoversities Alliance, the Leap Manifesto, the EarthCARE network) offer examples of how very different movements and organisations are able to work together on common issues across their many differences.

### **3. A cartography of case studies of GCE informed partnerships, movements and other projects**

The Bridge 47 online library that accompanies this report contains examples (case studies) of several attempts at building partnerships across different segments of society, between organisations and initiatives that pursue very different core goals or ideas, but that have been able to work together on issues and projects that they recognized as transcending their particular interests. The library also contains examples of individual (non-partnership-based) projects that offer original or innovative ways of either conceptualizing GCE or engaging specific audiences. The cartography of case studies on the next page maps these various initiatives, partnerships and projects onto soft, radical and beyond reform spaces. The criteria for mapping correspond to the conceptualizations of soft, radical and beyond reform spaces as presented in Table 2. However, the theoretical clarity of categorical definitions rarely (or never) maps neatly onto real-life practice. This is why the cartography below should be read more as indicative of overlapping spectrums of orientations than as a map of three distinct, separate spaces.

Many of the projects are mapped in these overlapping spaces (between soft and radical or between radical and beyond), some in the middle between two spaces (Unitierra, Global Footprint Network), while others are

rooted in one, but still touching another one (Our Canada Project, Swaraj University). Some projects even cross three different spaces (Ecoversities Alliance, There you go! Campaign). The reason for this is that, as discussed already above, it is often very difficult, and arguably unproductive for organisations, movements and initiatives to try to achieve complete coherence between the desired horizons of hope (aims, goals) and what is feasible in real-life work. For instance, a common observation is that projects can be grounded on quite radical critiques of the existing system, but can only advocate for soft reform propositions/solutions. The Story of Stuff project may be considered exemplary of such a stance. It is grounded on a strong critique of environmental, social, economic and financial unsustainability of global capitalism, but in terms of mitigating against its negative effects the project proposes individual action (stop using bottled water, avoid objects that use microplastics) or mainstream political action in forms of petitions, donations and voting campaigns. These campaigns (that can be quite successful) can address some of the symptoms of the problem, but not its roots (extractive, profit-harvesting, infinite-growth-based economy). Other projects, such as the Ecoversities Alliance, are mapped across all three different spaces, because they are broad assemblages of partners from very different backgrounds and with very different analyses of problems and ways forward.

The mapping does not contain all the resources available in the library as the single-document resources (such as various toolkits and policy papers) have been largely omitted, except in cases where the processes leading to their creation also involved innovative ways of partnership-building (such as the Canadian Youth White Paper on Global Citizenship or the Leap Manifesto). Also, as the library will likely continue to grow over time, new projects will be added to the database. Therefore, the mapping in this text should not be considered definitive, but rather a snapshot of what was available at the time of compiling this report. Further, although the mapping was based on an in-depth analysis of the available documentation about these projects and initiatives, likely other researchers would have positioned some (or many) of them differently. The ambition behind the mapping process was not to achieve an objective representation of available case studies, as all maps are invariably subject to preconceptions, categorical framings and assumptions of the map maker, although considerable efforts were made to ensure a high degree of trustworthiness of representation. Rather than claiming neutrality or objectivity, which are both highly contestable presumptions, the cartography presented here is above all meant as a performative device, whose purpose is to enable deeper and hopefully more nuanced conversations.

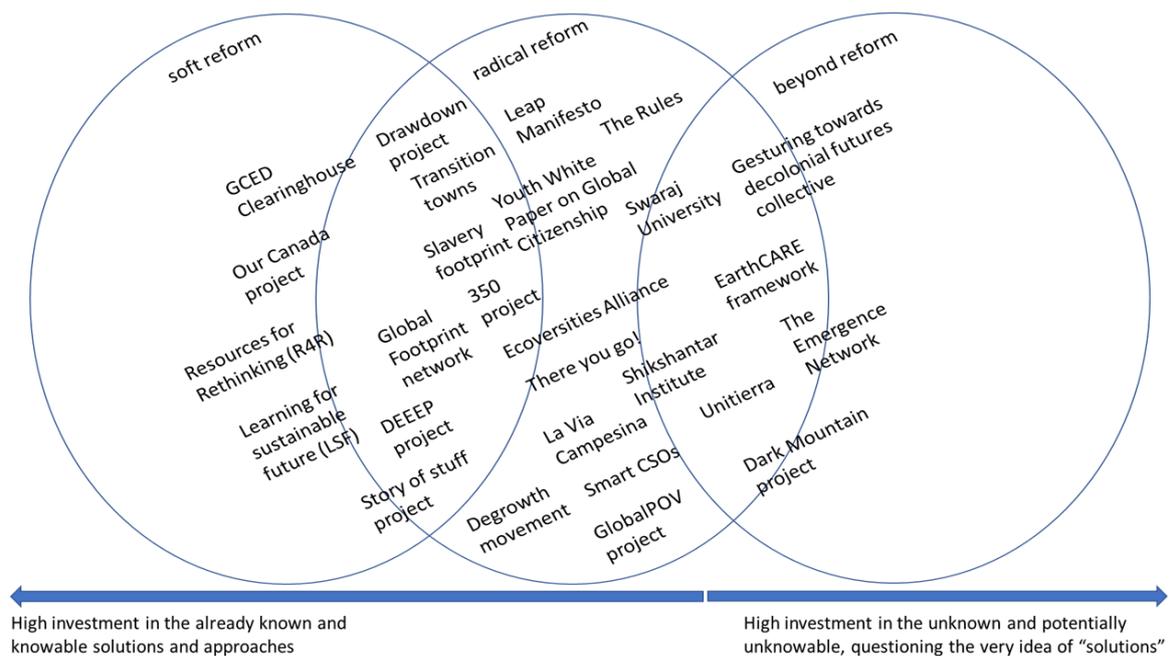


Figure 5: The cartography of GCE-related or GCE-inspired initiatives, projects and partnerships

The cartography maps 28 different GCE-related, or GCE-inspired initiatives, projects and partnerships that can be found in the Bridge 47 online library. Given that there exist globally literally tens of thousands of local, national and international projects that take on various global issues at differing levels of engagement, the cartography produced here can offer only a marginal snapshot into the full spectrum of diversity of these various initiatives and movements. This snapshot is also tinted in other ways, as it does not include any movements, initiatives or projects that do not have a website in English language or lack a website altogether. Although the vast majority of GCE-related initiatives and projects that exist in the world today (especially those that emerge from formal educational contexts) adopt a very local or individual action-based approach to global (social, environmental) change, there is also a significant number that advocate for systemic or structural change, especially within national contexts, with yet a smaller number of those that attempt to reach audiences or build partnerships that extend beyond nation-state borders.

Of those included in the mapping above, only a few could be considered predominantly locally-based (e.g. Transition towns initiative, Unitierra, Our Canada project), but even these projects are part of broader networks that extend significantly beyond their local context and they all emerged in response to broader, global issues. Transition towns may have started in Totnes, but are today a network of over 1400 communities from across the world. Originally Oaxacan, new Unitierras have now emerged in other parts of North America. And while Our Canada project includes hundreds of local projects run by schools, they are also connected through a broader nation-wide network. Still, locality (or origin) remains important (see Critical Addendum below). If we were to transpose the distribution of the charted projects on a world map, a clearly visible pattern would quickly emerge. While all of the soft, or soft/radical projects emerged from the countries of the Global North, a significant majority of radical or radical/beyond reform initiatives emerged from the countries of the Global South, or, are based in the North, but with significant number of members from the South or those who are considered to be part of ‘the South of the North’. Again, this cartography should not be considered as representative, but this observation does provide some weight for the claim that the so-called “voices from the South” have a very important role to play in Northern/Western GCE contexts. For those in search of inspiration from more critical orientations, the global compass clearly points in a Southern direction. Arguably there are many reasons for this, but one of the more obvious ones is related to the uneven distribution of consequences of global structural inequalities, injustices and exploitation that are felt much more directly by the majority of those living in the South, especially by those living in various marginalized or non-normative communities.

A comparative analysis that examines the content, goals, modes of engagement, external contexts and scale of the mapped initiatives, movements and projects produced several observations that can be (or should be) taken into consideration when devising advocacy strategies for GCE, when engaging in new partnerships, or when exploring ways on how to deepen existing practices or seek new, innovative approaches to engage in GCE. These observations are presented below.

#### **Key findings and suggestions:**

1) An immense, and irreducible diversity and divergence in what may be considered goals, ambitions and methods of GCE-related practice (what to do, how to do it, why and what for), is visible on a global scale, but also in regional or national contexts. There is no, and likely should not be, a universal consensus on what GCE is about. Attempts to produce, or impose, such a consensus beyond strictly specific strategic purposes (locally contextualized strategies, partnership agreements), would invariably lead to an erasure of the non-mainstream, yet arguably the most valuable and insightful approaches to GCE. Any attempts at defining what GCE is should be mindful of the much bigger potential of what GCE *could be* that are always at risk to be made illegible or marginalized by any imposed definition.

2) The “global skills and competencies” understandings of GCE, promoted by organizations such as the OECD (2018), the World Bank (2011), the Asia Society (Mansilla and Jackson 2011) and to some extent UNESCO

(2014), that are directed towards preparing learners for future jobs in a globalized, infinite growth-based economy, already contribute to such erasures. With increased pressure from corporate and governmental stakeholders to align GCE practice with the demands of global markets in ways that would standardize GCE performance indicators globally (via a reform of the PISA standards), such erasures are likely to deepen, and GCE may lose most of its critical and transformative potential, especially in formal education contexts.

3) Developing standardized GCE performance indicators and measuring tools arguably makes sense in quantitative terms, but is potentially very problematic in qualitative terms. For instance, it is useful to know how many teachers or other multipliers received training on GCE in different years and what kind of resources were required to organize such trainings in order to develop arguments for sustained or increased funding. However, imposing standardized content indicators (such as expanded PISA tests) can be extremely detrimental to the field, as only the replication of already pre-determined content will be considered valuable and relevant. That is not to say that course-specific or training-specific evaluation should be avoided – quite the contrary, this may contribute significantly to improved quality of practice – but no such context-specific evaluation protocols should be generalized and applied across the board. Similar concerns were raised by participants in an international study on monitoring GCE that was undertaken within the DEEEP project (Fricke *et al.* 2015).

4) The depth of (critical) reflection and engagement about GCE seems to be largely at odds with the scale of individual initiatives and projects. If we bracket out the projects and initiatives that are GCE-informed, but not primarily pedagogical in their goals and objectives (such as various advocacy and awareness raising campaigns), we can observe that largescale GCE projects with very high levels of participations and resrouces, such as the Our Canada Project, the GCED Clearinghouse, or Resources for Rethinking, all belong to soft reform orientations, or are on the border between soft and radical approaches, such as the Story of Stuff project. On the other hand, projects that push the envelope of GCE practice to the border between radical and beyond reform approaches, such as the work of the Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures collective, the Emergence Network and The Dark Mountain project and its associated Home university, are significantly smaller in scale, run by a handful of practitioners and focused on longer, intensive seminars or learning retreats and journeys that focus on adult learners outside of formal educational contexts. The focus on adult learners and non-formal learning spaces also sets them apart from more mainstream approaches to GCE that largely focus on school-attending children and youth.

5) There seems to be an inherent discrepancy, or at least no necessary direct connection between the depth of systemic critique and the level of radicality of proposed solutions/responses or ways to achieve them. This is perhaps most visible in some of the initiatives that work on sustainability or climate change related projects (the Drawdown project, the 350 project, the Global Footprint Network). There is no doubt that their concerns about the future are based on well-documented research (on global warming, species extinction, resources consumption etc.) that invariably points to profound changes in the Earth's biosphere that are both irreversible and unavoidable (the planet will not cool down and we can only speculate how extremely it will heat up). Still, the mitigation efforts that they propose are largely based on technological solutions (increased energy efficiency, shift towards renewable sources of energy, changes in agricultural production and land management) that do not challenge significantly (or at all) the extractive, growth-based economy that led us to the current situation. Given that we have, according to the latest research (IPCC 2018), only 12 years to cut global carbon emissions by 45% to keep the below the 1.5C increase in temperature, this is simply not achievable by mere technological means within current political and economic contexts nor within existing desire structures of our consumerist societies (Bendell 2018, Wackernagel & Rees 1997). This example raises significant challenges for the usual theories of change in GCE that propose that changes in knowledge lead to changes in understandings that translate to changes in behaviour. Given that today we can really no longer say that we do not know enough about the causes and consequences of climate change, and yet, we do not

seem to be really interested or willing to avert our own self-destruction, this paradox would have to be made visible in sustainability-related GCE activities. Not for the purpose of creating “solutions that work” – as likely no such solutions exist – but so that we can also re-orient our focus towards adapting to a very different future, rather than only continuously trying to extend our present as far ahead as we can. In other words, this would mark a difference between operating from soft/radical reform spaces and from a beyond reform space. This re-orientation has a potential to open up very different approaches to GCE and also very different discussions about what GCE is supposed to achieve. The momentum coming from the climate change research community and its accompanying political stalemate, seem to be creating openings where such discussions can begin to take place.

6) Initiatives that emerge from cooperation between very divergent groups (unlike those presented in point 5 above) have a higher potential to achieve more complex understandings and to propose more comprehensive ways forward. The Leap Manifesto gathering that brought together such disparate groups as First Nations leaders and trade unionists representing oil workers; environmental organizations and activists, various NGOs, food justice, anti-poverty, and faith organizations; as well as housing, refugee, and immigrant rights activists ended up producing a set political demands and orientations (the manifesto) that engages with multiple aspects of the problems of divesting from fossil fuels. The manifesto takes account of structural inequalities in Canadian society; seeks to mitigate the negative impacts on those that might be adversely hurt by fossil fuel divestment (petrol industry workers); proposes radical policies that do not rely on externalization of costs elsewhere (their motto: if you wouldn't want it in your backyard, then it doesn't belong in anyone's backyard); is mindful of global political arena (international trade deals); and ultimately proposes a list of feasible, large-scale public projects that would have significant impact on carbon emissions reduction. Although it is likely unrealistic to imagine that any existing government would support the demands made in the Leap Manifesto, the document and the process leading to its creation can offer valuable insights into what is possible in collaborative working spaces, even among groups with seemingly conflicting interests, when individual agendas are decentred and people instead focus on the challenges of a shared future. Arguably significant in this story is the emphasis that was made towards prioritizing the needs of Indigenous communities and other marginalized groups in envisaging the document. Learning directly from those living on the margins of mainstream society is not something that happens frequently in the GCE sector, but it absolutely something that should be taken into account when looking to develop new partnerships and innovative educational practice.

7) No projects were found that could be considered as belonging exclusively to beyond reform spaces, although some may be considered to inhabit the space between radical and beyond reform orientations. In a certain way this is logical as new systems and new ways of being and knowing cannot fully emerge while the old systems are still in place. As long as we inhabit the singular logic of the kind of rationality that we have overwhelmingly been socialized into, we can not operate in spaces of unknowing and unknowability, at least not in ways that would be legible (make sense) within the dominant paradigms. All that can be proposed (for now) are gestures towards experimentation with what we (currently or permanently) cannot know. As soon as “solutions” become firmly articulated, they run a high probability of repeating the same kind of problematic, historically inherited patterns of being and thinking that they seek to deconstruct or replace (see Andreotti *et al.* 2015; 2018). A completely new language would be required to articulate action/practice in beyond reform spaces, and it is questionable whether such a language can already be created now as it would challenge too many aspects of what we consider “common sense”.

The next section draws on lessons from sections 1 to 3 and offers examples of different kinds of narratives about GCE that can be used to engage different target audiences. Bearing in mind the different backgrounds and institutional (or professional) settings, each of the narratives presented aims to speak of GCE in ways that

are generally accessible, but that do not compromise (too much) on making the case for a need for deep structural / systemic transformation.

## 4. External translations – how to speak of GCE to other audiences

This section contains a set of three different narratives for three different target groups (governments/policy makers, partnerships/organizations and citizens' engagement/individuals) that present arguments for GCE, based on the three questions that this report was asked to address:

- 1) What is the benefit of GCE to our societies?
- 2) What is the impact of GCE to our societies?
- 3) Why do we believe that GCE is the answer to global challenges?

The narratives presented below attempt to both offer the arguments for GCE, and at the same time advocate for a need to focus on critically-informed GCE that moves both the debates within the field and the pedagogical practices away from simplistic (soft) understandings of problems and solutions that have been proven problematic by various disciplines of research. None of the narratives presented below uses the mainstream (neoliberal) arguments of GCE focusing on the development of “global skills and competencies” for competition in a globalized labour market. Instead, these narratives strive to introduce as critical or as radical conceptualization of GCE as possible within the contexts of discussions with these various target groups. As specific national and local contexts vary, it is difficult to imagine that these narratives could be used as they are without some adaptation, but hopefully they can offer some useful insights into how to speak about, or advocate for GCE in ways that do not substitute complexity for acceptability / accessibility. The first two narratives (for governments/policy makers and for partnerships/institutions) are presented as single narratives, while the last narrative (for individuals) is presented in two versions: a) as a “soft reform” version for those that are fairly or completely new to GCE, and b) as a “radical/beyond reform” version for those that have already been disenchanted/disillusioned by the upkeep of the “status quo”, as well as for those that have been in the field of GCE longer and have already adopted a (self)critical stance towards it.

### 4.1. Narrative for governments and policy makers:

The world today is facing multiple, unprecedented challenges that will require both present and future generations to learn how to adapt dynamically to the shifting realities brought about by climate change, environmental degradation, increased flows of migration, aging populations (especially in the countries of the North), high volatility of global financial markets, and rapid changes in technology and production of both goods and services brought about by ever-higher levels of automation. All of these and many other unnamed factors combined compel us to explore new, innovative ways to re-shape and re-structure our societies in ways that can help us thrive and live well in face of great adversity and uncertainty.

What is the benefit of GCE to our societies?

Global citizenship education, or GCE, can help learners understand better the complex realities of the world we live in and the historical trends that brought us here. We need a much higher level of general awareness of the causes and effects, as well as of the interrelatedness, of the multiple global challenges we face if we are to maintain any hope in influencing them in coherent, sensible ways, rather than being merely always influenced by them. By encouraging systemic and critical-reflexive thinking, GCE can help learners develop the much needed “bigger picture”. By learning about relevant complexities, bringing to the surface the often invisible connections between seemingly disparate phenomena (such as for instance climate change and increased

migration), and deconstructing many of the normalized, historically inherited, but no longer viable expectations, GCE can help societies deal better with the increasing tensions in the social fabric that emerge from conflicts between irreconcilable, and often unrealistic, demands and expectations of various groups. GCE can steer people away from superficial and over-simplified analyses and help them engage with differences within and between societies in generative ways.

What is the impact of GCE to our societies?

GCE can take on many forms and shapes and in each learning setting GCE is likely to be understood and practiced somewhat differently. In those countries where GCE has a long-standing tradition of being part of the educational system (sometimes under a different name), and where educational research has been strongly linked to educational practice, it is possible to observe large-scale impact through the many activities, projects and collaborations initiated by globally (and locally) engaged/aware learners (and their teachers). As there simply is no way how to isolate GCE from other ways that people learn from and about the world, the direct effects of introducing GCE into school curricula is difficult to demonstrate. It is also difficult to track how GCE affects the emergent changes in society at large, as the latter are shaped by a multitude of different (external and internal) factors. However, research so far has shown the impact of GCE on understandings and dispositions of the learners involved, as well the immensely broad spectrum of projects that engage with different global issues that were started by active, globally informed learners/citizens themselves. Considering merely the astonishing level of recent innovations in environmentally-friendly technologies and other ways to decrease our environmental footprint, it is logical to suggest that none of those would have emerged if those involved in them had not sought to respond to at least some aspect of the environmental crisis we are facing. Where and how they learned about it and what motivated them to become active is often unexplored, but we do know with certainty that something inspired their action.

Why do we believe that GCE is the answer to global challenges?

GCE may not be the answer to all global challenges, a magic cure for all our ills, but it certainly represents one of the viable possibilities for our societies to address these challenges in innovative, sober, respectful, collective, creative, self-reflexive and well-informed ways. For us as a society to even have a chance to engage with these challenges in such ways before they reach a point of escalation that will be uncontainable, it is absolutely imperative to increase both the depth of educational experiences offered by current mainstream GCE practice (especially in formal education contexts), as well as to increase the number of those involved, especially by focusing on adult learners, with priority given to teachers and teacher educators themselves. In terms of depth, this means developing pedagogical practices that engage not merely with the cognitive, but also with the affective, relational and existential dimensions of the learning process, and that can equip learners for dealing with difficult, personally disturbing and uncomfortable knowledge – a skill that is both much required in these uncertain times and also one that remains largely overlooked in the (formal) educational process. GCE is not merely about preparing young people for becoming active citizens of tomorrow, it is about interdependence: about all of us, needing to learn fast about the world we live in, about our relations with it, about harmful patterns and how we developed them, and how can we learn to develop different ways of thriving together in an unpredictable and uncertain future.

#### **4.2. Narrative for partnerships (institutions): CSOs, businesses, government units (police, military)**

We are entering a period in our shared histories where the existing solutions to our collective problems are beginning to fail us. Climate change, fossil fuel dependency, economic instability, austerity, increasing inequalities, the rise of populism and mass/forced migration are compelling us to re-think and re-imagine

profoundly how are we going to continue to live together on our shared planet. The increased tensions that we can already observe in our societies (rising hostility between different social groups, precarity, insecurity and increased levels of anxiety over uncertain future – especially among young people) are emblematic of responses that characterize the periods of “in-between times”, where existing social orders are eroding and new ones are not yet articulable.

#### **What is the benefit of GCE to our societies?**

Global Citizenship Education, or GCE, can help us understand better the complexities of our highly inter-related world, so that we can begin to develop better-informed and more complex responses to the unprecedented challenges our time, such as irreversible environmental degradation and climate change, increased flows of migration and economic integration, rising global inequalities and poverty, new challenges to water and food security, increased levels of anxiety, depression and self-harm, as well as increased hostility towards minority groups. GCE can also help us examine the historic flows and trends that brought us to our current situation, so that we can begin to explore approaches and responses that do not repeat these same historic tendencies in order to help us create more viable and resilient futures. Although GCE has traditionally found its place mostly in the formal education system or in the educational activities of various NGOs and youth organizations, the rising unpredictability of changes both in our societies and in our environment are suggesting a need for the development of partnerships that extend way beyond these traditional contexts. Only by working together across many sectors and disciplines can we hope to respond more robustly and perhaps, in due time, to these rapid changes.

#### **What is the impact of GCE on our societies?**

GCE-informed projects that can be found across the world offer examples of locally contextualized responses to global challenges, whose direct impact is visible especially in the emergence of various sustainability initiatives, developments of “green” technologies and practices, as well as developments of new locally integrated, low-carbon economies and product cycles. GCE-informed practice has also influenced the development of new projects of social and cultural integration that are effective and sensitive towards needs and realities of different social groups. The best of these projects even manage to integrate both social and economic, as well as environmental and cultural concerns. The broader, “global-scale” analysis of GCE contributes to development of initiatives and approaches, policy frameworks and practical (technological and organizational) examples that can address multiple aspects of the global issues we are trying to address.

#### **Why do we believe that GCE is the answer to global challenges?**

No matter how well-informed and complex, there are ultimately no perfect responses and no perfect solutions to any of the global challenges as they are simply too complex to be dealt with either exclusively through policy frameworks, technological means or educational efforts. The complexity of these challenges requires the development of multifaceted approaches that permeate many segments of society, so as to reduce the risks of resolving one issues at the price of exacerbating another – for example by increasing employability at the cost of sustainability, or by increasing social security of some at the price of exclusion of others. Many of these paradoxes and conundrums are not fully resolvable, but we can learn to mitigate against the most unproductive and undesired effects. For this to be possible, we need coherent and well-informed cooperation across many segments of society. GCE can provide conceptual guidance for developing frameworks for such cooperation.

### **4.3. Narrative for citizens’ engagement (individuals): youth, professionals, seniors, immigrants, minorities, activists:**

*a) An introductory narrative for newcomers to GCE (soft reform space)*

As societies have become more individualized/atomized and technology has fundamentally changed communication and relationships, it is increasingly rare for people to find spaces outside of echo-chambers where local and global issues can be addressed in sensible, sensitive, sober and socially accountable ways. Global citizenship education (GCE) can equip and enable people to navigate the complexities of global challenges without despair, to develop critical analyses that connect global systems with their local contexts, to experience a sense of interconnectedness, and to work together in ways that open up different possibilities for co-existence in the future.

*b) A more complex narrative for those already asking difficult questions (radical/beyond reform space)*

We live in a world where fractured relations between people and the planet are beginning to take a serious toll on our chances for long-term survival. The 20th century represented a unique period in human history when our capacities to transform and influence the environment around us increased beyond anything considered possible before. While technological advancements, rapid industrialization and automation brought considerable material and other benefits to some members of the global community, in particular to the countries of the global North, the costs of this “development” were largely externalized to nature and communities in the South. While the North enjoyed a period of relative economic and social stability, other parts of the world were made to provide natural resources, cheap labour and various tax and environmental “safe havens” that made the prosperity and stability of the middle-class in the North possible. Although dominant cultural production, in conjuncture with specific political and economic goals, was successful in transposing the fantasy of the middle-class life globally – leading to rising aspirations and desires for a “western-style” of life across the planet – the false promises of this fantasy are now becoming visible. Met with the limits of the planet’s carrying capacity, we have reached a point where we are compelled to acknowledge the fact that the world cannot sustain the levels of consumption and waste production resulting from the kind of lives we have been living so far, nor have the levels of prosperity enjoyed by the privileged global minority ever been possible without making someone else pay the price. Not only are we (the ones that can afford to) taking from those we consider “far away”, we are also seriously jeopardizing the future of our children, grandchildren and all others that will come after we are gone. At some point, regardless of our hopes and wishes, this will have to stop. Our collective task in this century seems to be slowing down (quickly) the train of “burning the world for the benefits of the few” that brought us here, and stopping it and re-directing it with as few injuries and casualties as possible.

#### **What is the benefit of GCE to our societies?**

*a) For newcomers to GCE (soft reform space)*

GCE can help societies develop better informed and more robust responses to the multiple (environmental, social, economic and other) challenges of an increasingly unpredictable future. By bringing together voices and perspectives from different, especially marginalized social groups, GCE can help reduce misunderstandings and prejudices that often preclude possibilities for generative cooperation. GCE also contributes to improved social resilience and cohesion by offering tools for development of complex (systemic) analysis, by encouraging active engagement with common (social, environmental) issues and by developing pedagogies that explore the long-term needs for our collective well-being.

*b) For those already asking difficult questions (radical/beyond reform space)*

Global citizenship education (GCE) offers one of the possible and interconnected pathways towards learning about the historic trends and trajectories in our societies that brought us to the current situation and that are going to continue to exert their influence well into the future. Critical GCE can help us understand how privilege and power contributed to the creation of a single story of social progress (as metropolitan individualist consumerism) that restricts our capacity for co-existence in a fragile and finite planet. GCE can also help us realize how media, education systems, and even our own day-to-day interactions help re-affirm and uphold

this story to the detriment both to ourselves and to all those around us, human and other-than-human alike. The inherent conflicts and hidden violences and injustices that made possible the emergence of so-called modern societies are becoming more visible as tensions in societies rise when the privileges and entitlements of what is perceived as “normal life” (stable employment, social and health security, protection against “foreign” competition etc.) begin to erode. GCE can help us explore what the externalization of costs of multi-layered privileges has done for the disintegration of the social fabric, and how might we be able to re-weave our societies together in ways that do not depend on the continuous harmful, violent and unjust relations that represent the real threat to our collective existence.

### **What is the impact of GCE to our societies?**

#### *a) For newcomers to GCE (soft reform space)*

GCE has traditionally been associated with activities related to global issues and perspectives in the formal education system. It has also been associated with the work of many NGOs and other youth-oriented organizations. It is considered to be comprised of many inter-related topics and approaches, such as environmental education, intercultural education, peace education, education for (sustainable) development, critical (media) literacy and many others. Research evidence shows that these activities increase participants’ awareness of global issues, help them develop deeper and more complex understandings and inspire them to become engaged with different initiatives to improve conditions locally and/or globally.

#### *b) For those already asking difficult questions (radical/beyond reform space)*

While formal education settings offer an opportunity for mainstreaming GCE, they offer less space for the kind of GCE that asks more difficult, critical, and potentially discomfiting questions. Although mainstream approaches to GCE can contribute to a greater general awareness of the pressing global issues they often lack a more nuanced critical (historic and political) analysis nor do they explore the challenging terrain of internalized (embodied) barriers to change that are very difficult to engage with. In order to be able to explore the deeper layers of our global entanglements and complicities, some GCE practitioners and organisations focus their work primarily on adult learners (in higher education) or on non-formal educational contexts, where there are less systemic restrictions in place that make deep learning possible. It is by focusing on deep and difficult learning that engages not merely the cognitive, but also the affective, relational and existential levels of our being that GCE can help us develop the required stamina, resilience and sobriety required to come to terms both with the many collective mistakes of our past, as well with the increasing unpredictability of an unknown future.

### **Why do we believe that GCE is the answer to global challenges?**

#### *a) For newcomers to GCE (soft reform space)*

Some of the greatest challenges in engaging with any of the large-scale/global issues are related to their inherent complexity and inter-connectedness. Whether we are exploring new approaches on how to engage with the effects of climate change, increased migrations, economic instability, social injustice, unfair trade rules or any other global challenge, GCE can help us develop better informed strategies and actions that take stock of this complexity and relatedness and that can be both more effective and less (unintentionally) harmful. Taken a step further, GCE can also help us realize the inherent and irresolvable paradoxes at the core of our current models of social organisation (such as infinite economic growth on a physically finite planet) that can inspire us to explore and experiment with radically different understandings and innovative approaches that can even go beyond what is considered possible (if ultimately unsustainable) within existing contexts.

#### *b) For those already asking difficult questions (radical/beyond reform space)*

GCE practice that can move beyond descriptive-prescriptive (problem-solution) pedagogical frameworks that represent a majority of educational efforts today can help us not only increase our knowledge about world and its complexities, it can also help us unlearn many of the problematic and unexamined normalized assumptions, dispositions, attitudes and affective investments that are particular to our social construction of the world. Critical and self-reflexive GCE can help us see beyond universalist ideas of knowledge (belief in one single truth), beyond normalized assumptions and beyond the confines of what we currently consider desirable, valuable and possible. It can help us imagine and create different worlds, not (merely) by improving our knowledge and understandings, but above all by re-orienting our desires, by dispelling our projections and by helping us re-sense the connections with the world and each other that have been eroded by metropolitan consumerist individualism. None of this is to say that GCE, or GCE-related practices, will succeed in helping us avert the impending major crises (such as environmental collapse) – as “success” in these aspects depends on too many other factors, but what GCE can do is to help us find collective pathways through this difficult times that hopefully will take us on journeys that will not be bound by repeating the same kind of mistakes we seem to be prone to repeating.

# Critical addendum: GCE emerging from high and low intensity struggles

It is important to understand why some GCE narratives are more legible and relatable than others, especially in the European context. For this purpose it could be important to make a distinction between movements and initiatives that emerge from “low intensity” struggles and those that emerge from “high intensity” struggles. The term low intensity struggles refers to movements and initiatives that are led by people that are in general not directly existentially endangered by existing structural violences and inequalities, while the term high intensity struggles denotes movements and initiatives led by those who experience structural violences and injustices daily and personally. The radicality of proposed agendas is more often than not directly correlated to the perceived urgency for systemic reforms or restructurings that again depends of where one is positioned in the hierarchical structure of global exploitation. In other words, the higher the level of privilege (in global terms) and the higher the level of perceived entitlements to having one’s existence sustained by the current system, the lower the need and the drive for deep, structural change. However, these dispositions may change, if we are able to learn (or sense) how our multiple privileges are at the same time also the sources of our greatest loss. There are however exceedingly few approaches to GCE that actually push the learners towards embodying these kinds of realizations, and likely they are even more difficult to find in formal education contexts. It is, after all, bad for the economy.

There is another important difference to consider between GCE-related activities and projects that emerge from low and high intensity struggles. In cases of low intensity struggles both short-term and long-term goals, aims and even target audiences change frequently, depending on currently popular topics or hot political agendas. This may be particularly visible in the broader EU context, where both schools and NGOs alike often find themselves compelled to focus on the whatever “European year of” happens to be if they wish to have their GCE activities funded through competitive public sources (calls for proposals). Those recently entering the sector may have been given a breather in 2016 and 2017, when no specific annual agendas were set by the EU, but 2018 has been named the EU year of “cultural heritage”, while previous examples include years of “development” (2015), “citizens” (2013-2014), “active aging” (2012), “volunteering” (2011), “combating poverty & social exclusion” (2010), “creativity & innovation” (2009) and “intercultural dialogue” (2008). Having shared policy and educational agendas set by higher institutional authorities may lead to short-term gains, such as the amplification, if not necessarily deepening of development-related public debates in 2015, or a joint focus on efforts to reduce racism and prejudice (in 2008) by different stakeholders in society. However, these precarious alliances are usually short-lived and their questionable benefits are outlived by the continuous superficiality of general interest and levels of engagement that fade away when the next over-arching topic replaces the previous one. That is not to say that there are no organizations or individuals that are not committed to deepening their practice in specific GCE-related areas or subjects in the broader EU context – there are of course plenty of those, but it is important to note that, depending on the level of structural dependence on conditionally available resources, there will likely be less depth and complexity of engagement in contexts where both topics and people rotate frequently than in those contexts where they do not.

The difference between low and high intensity struggles is that in high intensity struggles that are actually often considerably under-resourced – when comparing them to low intensity ones, people do not get to choose their struggles (or topics) nor would they necessarily (or at all) benefit from following governmental agendas. Instead, they live with and through them over long, sustained periods of time, often in ways that would be considered impossible, or at least too personally and institutionally challenging from the perspective of low intensity contexts. The work of initiatives, such as Unitierra (University of Mother Earth), that is closely

linked to the Zapatista movement of rural, indigenous insurgence against state violence in Southern Mexico, or the work of Via Campesina, that is joining struggles of smallholder farmers from 81 countries of the world against corporate power, land grabbing and dispossession, may be considered examples of movements that emerged from high intensity struggles. Both of these initiatives emerged in direct response to state and corporate violence experienced by various communities in rural areas of (mostly) Global South, a violence that persists until today, and both remain undeterred in their mission of resisting the negative impacts of neoliberal capitalism, free-market economy, and violence against women and indigenous people for close to 25 years. The GCE agendas and pedagogies that stem from the lived experiences of these communities may be something that would likely be considered unimaginable from the context of low-intensity struggles of most European CSOs.

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