



SCHOOLS FOR DEMOCRACY: SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN UKRAINE

PROJECT REPORT 2017-2019



**THE EUROPEAN
WERGELAND CENTER**
Educating for Democracy
and Human Rights

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2016, Ukraine embarked on the most comprehensive educational reform in its history as an independent state, proclaiming the building of the New Ukrainian School (NUS)¹. NUS as a policy concept defined the place that the school is to take in the education of Ukrainian citizens – critically thinking, innovative, valuing and respecting dignity and the rights of people. The schools that are to educate these new citizens need to become inclusive and democratic in every aspect of their activities - teaching and learning, governance and cooperation with the community.

Having a vast expertise in democratization of education, the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) has been a partner of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine since the very beginning of the reform. EWC contributes to the development and implementation of key policy documents, facilitating the reform in the country in line with key principles of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Right Education (EDC/HRE)².



EWC Executive Director Ana Perona – Fjeldstad along with Roman Greba, Deputy Minister of Education, sign a Memorandum of Cooperation, June 2018.

The following report summarizes the EWC’s work in Ukraine in 2017 – 2019 within the programme “**Schools for Democracy: Supporting Education Reforms in Ukraine**”. The first

¹ <https://mon.gov.ua/storage/app/media/zagalna%20serednya/Book-ENG.pdf>

² EDC/HRE is a complex of tools and educational approaches, aimed at empowering learners to exercise and defend their rights and the rights of others, to understand and realize their civic responsibilities, to build and sustain the culture of democracy and human rights.

almost 3 years of programme activities resulted in a range of achievements, as well as lessons learnt that have pointed to developments of the programme in the future. The report was prepared for the programme's donors and partners, but it contains the information relevant for all stakeholders.

The report has two main aims. Firstly, along with numerical data, the report offers description and attempts at analysis of the key results in terms of the core programme elements – capacity building of education professionals, democratization of schools, as well as internal programme management. Secondly, the report gives an overview of key developments in the programme during its first three years of implementation pointing to possible focal areas in the future.

1.1 Programme Structure

“Schools for Democracy: Supporting Education Reforms in Ukraine” programme is carried out in 2017-2021 with an aim to support democratic reforms in school education in Ukraine by promoting democratic culture and democratic citizenship in the curriculum and in practice. The Programme is implemented by the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) in close cooperation with the MoES of Ukraine and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ref. UKR-17/0010).

The Programme encompasses four **components**:

- Support for Development of New Policies, incl New National Curriculum
- Democratization of Schools
- Learning Democracy Online
- Experience Exchange and Regional Cooperation

Programme components aim to assist educational authorities in Ukraine in developing (I, IV), piloting and implementation (I, II, III) of the reforms in education, including the new National Curriculum.

To ensure systemic and sustainable work in the country, EWC has established **partnerships** in Ukraine and on the international level:

Ukraine

- Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- State Service of Education Quality (SSEQ)
- Ukrainian Institute of Education Development
- Institute for Modernization of Content of Education
- Lviv In-Service Teacher Training Institute (Lviv ITTI)
- Prometheus (online learning courses provider)

Internationally

- Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research
- Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Lillehammer, Norway (INN)
- Fleksibel utdanning Norge FuN, Norway
- National Centre for Teacher Professional Development, Georgia
- Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of Moldova

The Programme is operated by two implementing organizations in Ukraine: Center of Education Initiatives (Lviv) and ISAR Ednannia (Kyiv) coordinated by the National Programme Coordinator contracted by the EWC.

1.2 Programme Objectives and Action Areas

To reach the goal of supporting democratic reforms in school education in Ukraine by promoting democratic culture and democratic citizenship in policy and practice, four **main objectives** were set:

DEMOCRATIZATION OF SCHOOLS

Sustainable and systemic democratic changes in schools are introduced and functioning in school governance, teaching and learning, and cooperation with the community

EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Educational policy in Ukraine draws on lessons learned from policymakers in Norway, Georgia and Moldova, and experience gained from programme activities



NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM

New National Curriculum for 5-9 grades and other supporting policy documents foster democratic competences and are ready for introduction in all schools in Ukraine

LEARNING DEMOCRACY ONLINE

Teachers and students in Ukraine, including in occupied areas, have access to new digital resources for learning democracy

After close discussions with partners and building on the EWC's M&E framework, the following implementation strategies or **key action areas** have been chosen by the team in order to reach the objectives set:

- Provide support for policymakers and facilitate regional exchange of experience
- Build capacity of the school community to implement reforms
- Build capacity of education professionals to implement reforms
- Cooperate and establish partnerships to strengthen local sustainability of democratic changes
- Develop digital teaching and learning resources

The core activity plan of the programme is drafted and updated according to these action areas.

2. PROGRAMME IN NUMBERS: BRIEF OVERVIEW

The numerical results of the programme's 3 years of activities are grouped below by the programme's action areas. The numbers reflect not only the development of the programme in-width, i.e. continuous growth in large-scale numbers, but also in-depth – by means of contribution to national policies, development of online courses and materials, as well as supporting sustainable networks and agents of change.

Programme Results by Action Areas (2017-2019)

Support for policy makers and regional exchange

- **3** National Reform Working Groups joined
- **4** policy documents developed with Programme support, incl the new National Curriculum and new Quality Standards for Schools
- **2** policy documents piloted
- **50** Curriculum developers trained in education for democratic citizenship and human rights
- **21** policy makers participated in study visits
- **102** education experts from Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia involved in experience exchange

Cooperation and partnerships

- **14** institutional partners nationally and internationally
- **7** Teacher Training Institutes involved in capacity - building trainings
- **4** round table discussions and **10+** carried out to coordinate actions with other donors and public institutions

Capacity - building of school community

- **305** schools in all regions trained directly
- **1303** schools reached in total
- **150** whole school democratization projects completed
- **19000+** teachers, students, parents, school heads, local community representatives directly trained
- **55000+** beneficiaries reached through Programme activities
- **3000+** followers on Facebook

Online - teaching and learning resources

- Program website and e-learning platform launched at www.schools-for-democracy.org
- **3** e-learning courses and **3** online solutions for schools and teachers developed
- **2** MOOCs for teachers in the pipeline
- **6** webinars produced
- **381** users enrolled in the online courses testing
- **1234** registered users on the website
- **107** digital teaching and learning tools developed
- **2** Council of Europe's manual packs translated

Capacity - building of education experts

- **72** trainers in the Programme pool facilitating school changes and providing teacher training, incl online
- **50** Curriculum developers trained in education for democratic citizenship and human rights
- **66** experts from all regional In-Service Teacher Training Institutes trained to implement new approaches in education
- **20** experts trained to develop online learning resources

3. CONTRIBUTION TO POLICY

Following the path of general democratic changes in the country, new educational policies form the new philosophy of education that embraces the right of each to obtain quality education. It is quality education that supports competent and inclusive citizenship, essential for the democratic path that Ukraine chose to pursue. Giving voice to every stakeholder in the educational process, student-centered teaching and learning, formative assessment³, inclusive and decentralized school governance, and, most importantly the transition from “pumping” the students with excessive factual information to the development of their transversal competences define the policy principles of new quality Ukrainian education.

Since 2017, the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) has cooperated closely with the Working Groups preparing the New National Curriculum, Concept and Strategy of Civic Education, and new Education Quality Standards for Schools by providing expert and operational support to integrate values of democracy and human rights in the Ukrainian policy framework. Through experience exchange between policymakers in Norway and Ukraine, as well as sharing of ideas between practitioners in other countries in the region – Georgia and Moldova, trainings for curriculum developers, expert recommendations and piloting of the new approaches EWC did not only assist the development of new policy papers, but also supported their implementation in practice.



EWC's policy contribution was officially marked by the gratitude received from the Ministry of Science and Education in 2019

³ Formative assessment is also called an “assessment for learning”. This type of assessment serves to check on a student’s learning process and improve it through individual feedback on how to achieve a learning objective.

3.1 Curriculum for Primary School

In 2018, the National Education Standards for Primary School were adopted, outlining key approaches to teaching and learning as well as embedding key competences defined by the new Law on Education (2017)⁴ into learning goals for the primary school. According to the curriculum, the purpose of primary education assures the continuity of educational principles throughout the school:

“to fully develop the child, his or her talents, abilities, competencies and cross-cutting skills in accordance with age and individual psychophysiological features and needs, the formation of values and development of independence, creativity, the curiosity that provide its willingness to live in a democratic and information society, continuing education in primary school”.

The document offers a new approach to learning by shifting the focus to the child’s learning, encouraging critical thinking, exploration and self-motivation. Teachers have received more freedom in choosing teaching methods, and competence-based learning goals have opened for a better cohesion between and integration of separate subjects. The new Curriculum also encourages more focus on formative assessment as a means for competence development.

3.2 Curriculum for Basic Secondary School

Another important policy document the EWC contributes to is the new National Curriculum for 5-9 grades⁵ which has the aim to continue the transformations launched earlier in primary school. The Draft Document has been presented for public hearing on March 4, 2020.

Competence-based learning goals in the Curriculum Draft foster development of 11 key competencies, including civic and social competences. Among them - communication skills, responsible citizenship, competences related to the ideas of democracy, justice, equality, human rights, cultural competence, openness to other cultures. The document encourages development of these competences cross-curricularly, that is through all subjects. For example, civic competences are now at the focus not only of History teachers but also Math and Sports and other subject areas. This provides for a closer interrelationship in between the subjects and a more holistic learning.

EWC has contributed to determining the civic competence in the document, invoking the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC)⁶. At the core of the framework are competences that are required for citizens to uphold and

⁴ The law laid down the principles of the state policy in the field of education. Among these principles were inclusiveness, the formation of civic culture and culture of democracy, respect for human rights and freedoms, intolerance to humiliation, to physical or psychological violence, as well as to discrimination on any grounds.

⁵ In Ukrainian, the lower secondary education is called “basic secondary”

⁶ Council of Europe (2017). *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture. Volume 1: Context, concept and model*. Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg. Retrieved from <https://rm.coe.int/prems-008318-gbr-2508-reference-framework-of-competences-vol-1-8573-co/16807bc66c>

participate efficiently in the culture of democracy and co-exist peacefully in diverse democratic societies, which largely coincides with the goals of the Ukrainian educational reforms. Consequently, some RFCDC wordings and concepts were adopted in the new curriculum. For example, age-specific learning goals, related to the development of civic competences, were elaborated on the basis of RFCDC descriptors, which offer a way to trace and develop students' competences through their observable behavior.

Another essential EWC contribution is putting in light the concept of formative assessment in the curriculum. Unlike summative assessment, formative assessment (also called assessment for learning) is focused on learning processes and development. It is focused on supporting an individual student, revealing individual learning gaps and setting individual learning goals instead of making the student adapt artificially to the content. This type of assessment is conducted in cooperation with the student and is recognized as an optimal for democratic competences development.

3.3 Piloting of the Curriculum

The analysis of the existing practice at schools demonstrated that there is a wide gap between the newly introduced policies and actual culture of school education. Many contradictions obstruct the implementation of the new principles at schools: dependency of many teachers on the instructions from the "top" on how and what to teach instead of practicing academic freedom, assessment of students' achievement through final grade rather than cooperation with the student on his or her own learning path, teaching aimed at the delivery of facts instead of work towards learning goals. To overcome these challenges, support for teachers in their professional development and re-training are needed.

To better equip teachers for implementation of school reform, a piloting project (2018 – 2021) was launched, registered by a Ministerial Decree as a national innovation project. It is being carried out in 62 schools to implement approaches for the development and assessment of civic competences outlined in the new Curriculum. The data acquired through piloting project has allowed Programme experts to make meaningful contributions to the policy documents.

In the innovative project, new tools and approaches are being tested in two directions: 1) tools and materials for the development and assessment of students' civic competences⁷; 2) new teacher training programme to facilitate the process (covering e.g. interactive and cooperative methods, teamwork, project-based learning, formative assessment and development of learning exercises). A newly developed blended learning course facilitates the teacher training programme.

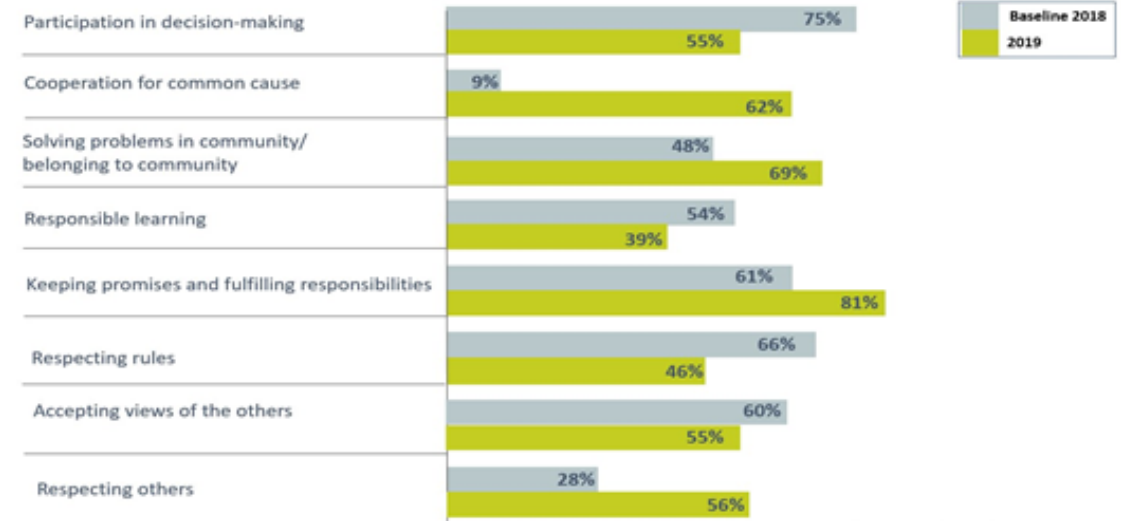
In the first year of the project, a toolkit for civic competency assessment (student test)⁸ was developed and tested in 10 schools. The chart below shows the data received with testing in 10 schools. Civic competences of 444 students were measured before and after the programme intervention. As the numbers demonstrate, the percentage of students with high level of certain competences considerably increased after almost a year of the programme's

⁷ Main materials developed within the programme, including piloting tools and online sources, will be discussed in the chapter 4 of the report.

⁸ Elaborated in terms of the programme M&E tools. See also chapter 7.2 of this report.

support of the schools, while at the same time cooperation, respect and some other competences still need to be worked upon.

Civic Competences of the 7th Grade Students



The comparison between two test results. The green scale shows the percentage of students with a certain level of civic competences in autumn, before the intervention, and the blue scale – in summer, after the programme’s involvement.

In their turn, these 10 piloting schools became centers for experience exchange and training for 52 more schools. Through this exchange, the most effective pedagogical practices are being identified and tested. It is planned that on the basis of piloting results, methodological recommendations for teachers will be developed, as well as the recommendations for the State Standard for Basic Education and Civic Competence Education.

3.4 New Quality Standards for Schools

EWC’s support of the State Service of Education Quality (SSEQ) and its Working Group on the development of the new national quality standards for schools have resulted in the development of the new Quality Standards for School Education adopted in 2019. Prior to the document’s adoption, EWC piloted the new quality standards at 12 schools in cooperation with the SSEQ helping to accommodate practitioners’ feedback in the document. Both study visits to Norway for the SSEQ experts and participation of programme team in the WG contributed to introduce the shift in approach in quality control – to support school development rather than check and inspect.

New quality criteria have introduced more focus on inclusive and democratic learning environment at school, such as the work on prevention of bullying, shared decision-making, democratic leadership and higher student participation. These standards are an important step for strengthening democratic educational culture. They will be used for building an internal quality control system at schools and carrying out external institutional audits.

4. NEW TEACHING & LEARNING RESOURCES

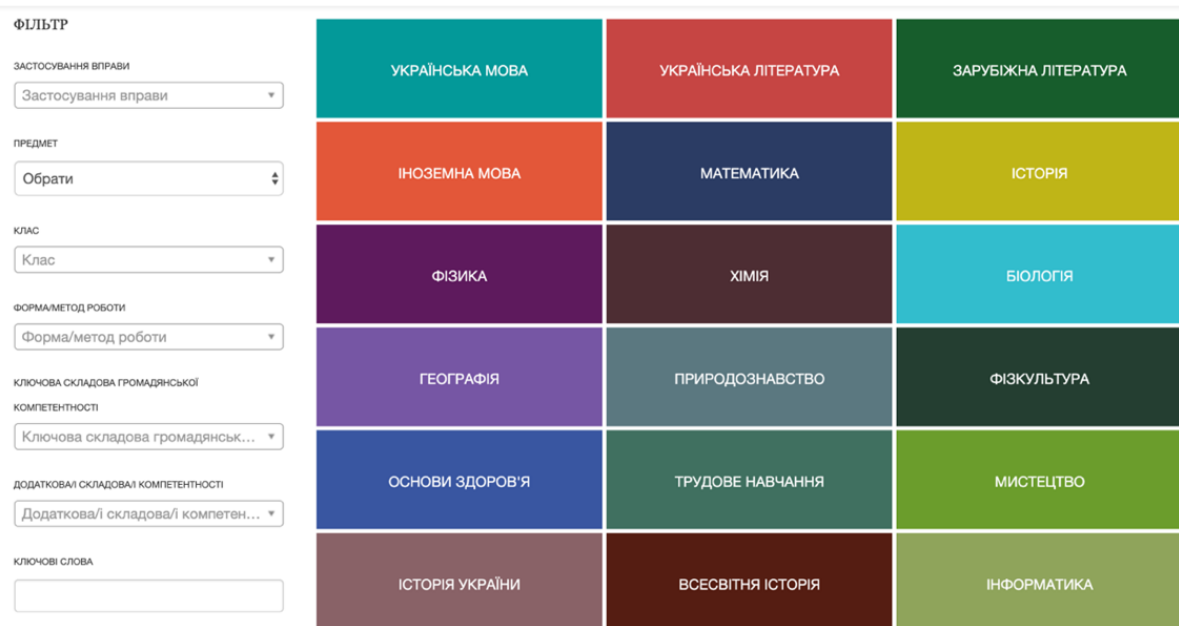
Development of materials is another element of the programme aimed at eliminating the gap between policy and practice. There is a lack of resources for education professionals in line with the new curriculum. It is clear that at this stage of reform profound support is needed for teachers, providing more tools and practical recommendations to assure their professional autonomy along with the quality of their teaching.

The “Schools for Democracy” programme offers new teaching and learning resources at the online learning platform. First, it encourages education professionals to develop “ready-to-use” resources and provides these materials through open access. Second, online courses are developed and offered to build the capacity of education professionals and support the institutional development of schools.

4.1 “Ready-to-use” Materials for Teaching

EWC has contributed to the creation of several teaching resources. One of them is a manual entitled “Civic Responsibility: 80 exercises for the development of civic competences at 12 school subjects”, recommended by the MoES for use in schools. The manual contains examples of exercises for students and describes how civic competences can be developed at all school subjects.

To offer more materials that could be directly applied in the classroom, the [Toolbox](#) was developed - an online repository of exercises. For now, it contains 107 exercises for development and of civic competences in various subjects at school and can be used for extracurricular activities. All the Toolbox activities are designed or modified by practitioners, whose contact information is contained in each material added. Teachers, participating in the programme, are encouraged to share their developments and add materials to the Toolbox, which helps to strengthen their academic freedom.



Toolbox on the programme’s site. Colored icons lead to the activities on one school subject. On the left, the users are able to filter the activities according to the age of students, methods of work, key words etc.

4.2 Online Courses

As the reform requires a prompt re-training of a large number of educators⁹ in all regions of Ukraine. online resources appear to be one of the best means to achieve this aim due to their universal availability and flexibility of use.

The Programme has responded to these needs by introducing an online learning component and starting work on two Massive Open Online Courses. At the same time, to keep the efficiency and quality high, the team has focused on the blended learning model, where online support is combined with face-to-face workshops and school-based competence development. Unlike MOOCs, blended courses comprise a face-to-face element – an opportunity to discuss and reflect along with peers and trainers as facilitators. Although this format does not allow to train large numbers of participants, it gives a better opportunity for more efficient learning.

In this situation, programme experts developed 2 Massive Open Online Courses¹⁰ (MOOCs) and 3 blended courses¹¹.

THE EUROPEAN WERGELAND CENTRE

МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ви не пройшли ідентифікацію (Вхід)

Доступні курси

Курс для шкіл-учасниць Програми "Демократична школа"

Курс для тренерів програми Демократична школа

Розвиток і оцінювання громадянських компетентностей

Вступний курс для тренерів програми Демократична школа

Курс для шкіл-учасниць Програми "Демократична школа"

Курс використовується для підтримки планування і здійснення демократичних змін та розвитку громадянських компетентностей у школах-учасницях програми "Демократична школа".

Курс для тренерів програми Демократична школа

Цей курс створений для підвищення знань дійсних та потенційних тренерів та тренерок програми "Демократична школа" з ключових тем освіти для демократичного громадянства та освіти з прав людини

Розвиток і оцінювання громадянських компетентностей

Курс створений для підтримки вчителів шкіл, які беруть участь у Всеукраїнському інноваційному освітньому проекті «Формування й оцінювання громадянських компетентностей в освітньому процесі на рівні базової середньої школи» (2019-2020).

Вступний курс для тренерів програми Демократична школа

Цей курс створений для підвищення знань дійсних та потенційних тренерів та тренерок програми "Демократична школа" з ключових тем освіти для демократичного громадянства та освіти з прав людини

Доступ

Доступ

Доступ

Доступ

Online courses available on the programme's website

One blended course was developed to ensure professional development of programme trainers. It is entitled **"Online course for Schools for Democracy Trainers"** and provides an introduction to key notions and recent developments in education for democratic citizenship and human rights. It is obligatory for all programme trainers to take the course. It was run twice in 2018 and 2019 with a total number of participants over 90.

Another blended course, created in cooperation with Inland University of Applied Sciences

⁹ There are over 450000 in-service teachers in Ukraine.

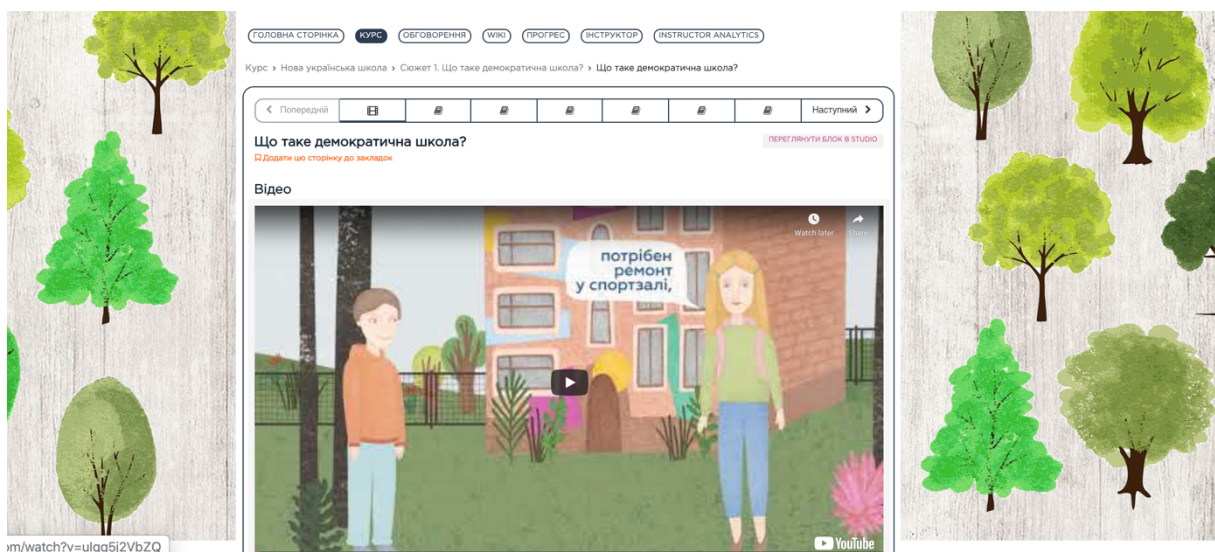
¹⁰ Online courses, available for a large number of participants. Within the programme, MOOCs were developed for the independent work of teachers or school teams online.

¹¹ Online courses are available to all registered participants on the programme website: <https://e-learning.schools-for-democracy.org/>

(INN, Lillehammer, Norway) and the Arctic University (Tromsø), is entitled **“Development of Civic Competences at Schools”** and run in 2019 – 2020 (12 - months duration). The course is designed for school-based competence development of teachers according to the model applied by the INN in Norway. It focuses on pedagogic practices and cooperation between teachers to develop democratic competences of students transversally at different subjects and extra-curricular activities. The course is facilitated by 15 trainers and unites 115 users from 62 schools.

One more blended course is being piloted with the schools of the 5th Programme cycle that started in February 2020. The course has a purpose to support face-to-face Programme implementation between visits of the trainers to schools and has a title **“Democratic School”** (18 – months duration, corresponding to one programme cycle). It is facilitated by 68 trainers and unites 162 users from 61 schools.

In 2020, this blended course allowed schools to learn about the principles of school democratization and implement some changes even during the schools’ lockdown. Programme experts and participants, who previously had an experience of having worked with online resources in terms of the programme emphasized that this experience was an asset for the transition from face-to-face to online teaching, when schools closed during corona lockdown.



Screenshot of the “How to Build a Democratic School” MOOC. The MOOC contains video materials that guide course participants through different course chapters.

One of the MOOCs drafted in the Programme is an e-guide on **“How to Build a Democratic School”**, a compendium of recommendations developed to support all school stakeholders in the implementation of the whole school approach (WSA)¹². The course offers materials for parents and community representatives to shape the learning environment which allows students to learn and practice democracy. “How to Build a Democratic School” is a collection

¹² In accordance with the EWC and Council of Europe definitions, WSA implies an integration of EDC/HRE principles in all areas of school life with the involvement of all school stakeholders. This is the core approach used within the programme in working with schools.

of experiences from the whole duration of the programme, systematized within one course. The course is under construction and is planned to be launched in June 2020 on the site of the leading Ukrainian [online course provider](#).

The second MOOC is focused on **formative assessment**, a democratic pedagogic practice itself that is implemented in the atmosphere of trust and involves both teachers and learners. It is a new topic in the curriculum implementation recommendations and teachers need support in learning how to apply it. The course is aimed at filling the gap and will be accessible for all teachers. It also helps other stakeholders, like students, school administration and parents, to understand what formative assessment is and its advantages. This e-guide builds on the experience of the Schools for Democracy programme and includes best practices, offering learners real-life examples of changes and solutions that were successful in the programme schools. The course is being developed and will be launched by the end of 2020.

To assure quality of the online courses, an evaluation of online courses will be carried out by an external expert team.

5. NETWORK OF TRAINERS AND SCHOOLS

Assuring the sustainability of the results achieved by the programme is one of its main purposes. It can be achieved through the creation and support of networks of education professionals and organizations. These networks are change agents, motivated schools and trainers, who cooperate with each other on a continuous basis and set an example to others in the implementation of democratic reforms within and outside of the programme.

Various activities of the programme are aimed at networking support through assuring dialogue in between the regions and peer learning. All programme trainers are part of 8 regional hubs, covering all 24 Ukrainian regions¹³. The hubs are in charge of regular trainings of trainers for experience exchange and participatory planning of the regional schools support. Schools communicate directly with the trainers on the regional level - usually, there are 2 trainers working with one school. Furthermore, EWC organizes conferences, national and international, for the networking of all programme stakeholders.

Facebook group with around 3000 subscribers¹⁴ serves as a platform for schools and trainers to share their stories and tools.



National conference participants, June 2019. 58 schools had an opportunity to share the results of their work with colleagues and get feedback.

¹³ The programme covers all Ukrainian regions, except Crimea.

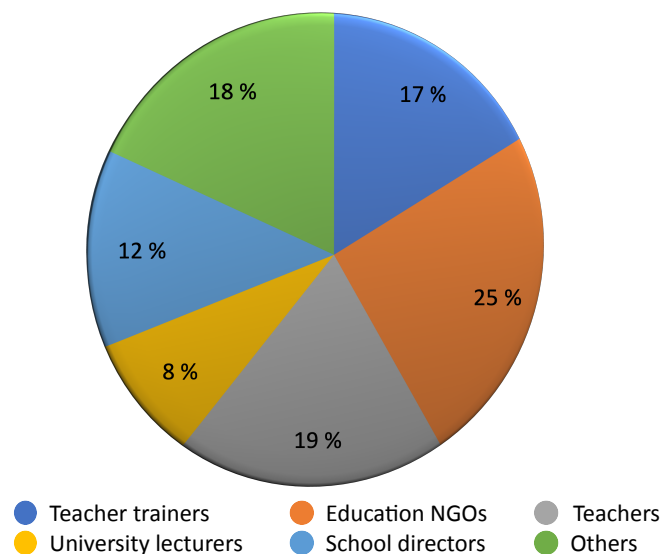
¹⁴ As of March 2020.

5.1 Network of Trainers

Currently, there are 72 trainers in the Schools for Democracy network. They are organized into smaller teams, coordinated by the regional hubs. The activities of 8 training hubs have various purposes - introducing new trainers to the network, exchange of experiences and feedback on the topics the trainers consider the most relevant¹⁵, updating trainers on the most actual concepts and practices implemented within the programme. In addition, several times per year, the programme organizes face-to-face trainings of trainers, annual online learning course and webinars for peer learning and experience exchange with involvement of international experts.

By this, the programme supports continuous professional development of the network members. The training activities contribute to the improvement of training skills, such as the understanding of the educational process, ability to develop training programmes, ability to facilitate learning, to deal with the group dynamics, to use a variety of interactive approaches. The training activities also offer information on new topics, such as conflict mediation or digital citizenship and build up such specific programme-related competences as the creation of online courses and the implementation of formative assessment.

Trainers profile 2019



Professional specialization of trainers involved in the programme in 2019

Both trainers' feedback and their professional progress show that the trainers bring their knowledge beyond the programme in their teaching practice and to their organizations.

The vast majority of trainers report that the programme allowed them to establish cooperation and professional exchange with trainers from different regions of Ukraine significantly contributed to the development of their training skills and that they use the

¹⁵ In 2019, trainers conducted webinars within the network on the topics of conflict resolution, project learning approach, work with challenging participants, school mediation, student self-governance.

acquired knowledge in their work outside of the programme¹⁶. At least 5 of the trainers including the Programme coordinator have co-authored several policy documents facilitating the current reforms.



Training of trainers in 2019

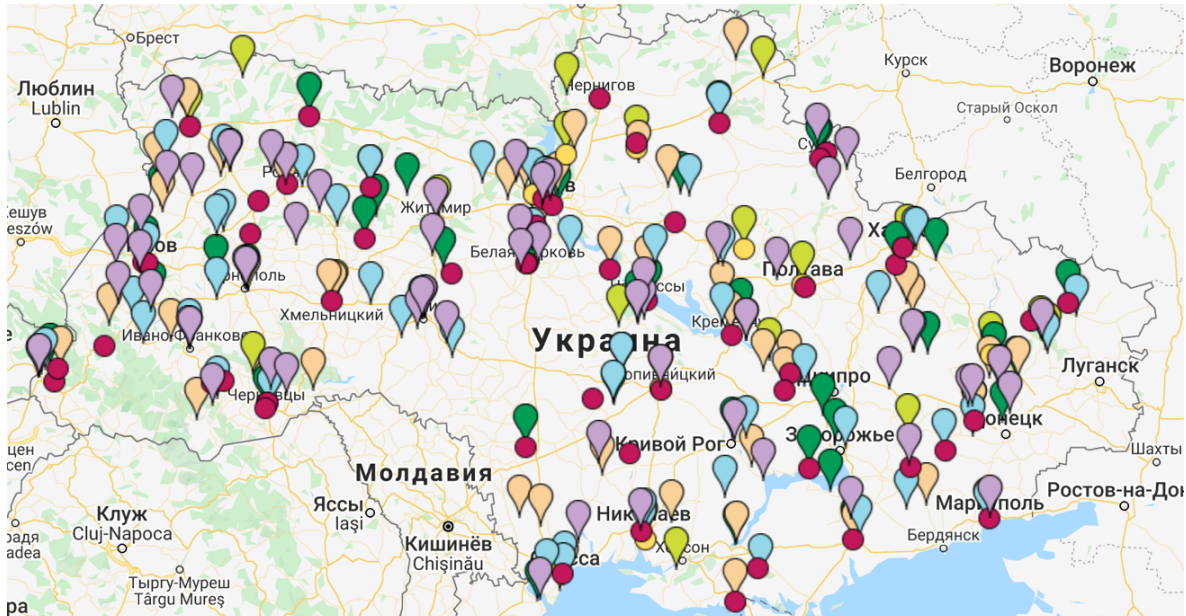
One of the examples of such professional progress both within and outside of the programme could be a laureate of the Global Teacher Prize Ukraine 2019, Natalia Kidalova. She has been a teacher for 23 years and a trainer of the programme¹⁷.

¹⁶ Data obtained within a survey in August 2019.

¹⁷ Interview with Natalia Kidalova, available on the EWC website: <https://theewc.org/ewc-trainer-wins-prestigious-award-in-ukraine/>

5.2 Network of Schools

The cooperation of schools is another important element for assuring the programme's sustainability. 305 schools are currently active in the network¹⁸, representing more than 96 000 teachers, students, parents and community members.



All alumni and currently participating schools are marked on the map. Different colors signify different years of participation.

Many of the schools are appreciated by the Ministry of Education as agents of change and invited to present their results at various occasions, organized by the authorities.

The EWC encourages networking among the alumni schools through the communication platform, alumni network Facebook page¹⁹, national and international conferences, as well as through mini-grant projects. The mini-grants are provided for the schools to cover small-scale project implementation costs in relation to 3 topics - school governance and the environment, collaboration with the community and the development of civic competences. The priority is given to the projects that include regional or interregional cooperation between schools.

The cooperation of schools within the piloting element, also supports networking. 52 schools come to the seminars organized on the basis of 10 schools that joined the programme earlier. In between the seminars, schools communicate on the MOODLE platform. As many participants emphasize, peer- learning allows schools to support each other in democratic changes:

“Interesting and hard work with the best trainers and colleagues from different parts of Ukraine made us feel that we know a lot and can share with each other. Each time our school team learns through the program, we bring a lot of good and interesting things to the school for our students, teachers and parents. Our school has become quite different in recent years! In fact, we have changed all together!”

¹⁸ Information on all participating schools can be found on the programme's website: <https://www.schools-for-democracy.org/merezha/shkoly>

¹⁹ Link to the alumni network Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/563736167341697/>

6. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

As it was proclaimed in the New Ukrainian School concept²⁰, schools must be at the forefront of the social change in the country. With the educational reform, schools become autonomous units of change. This change concerns not only the content of education but, most importantly, the change of the school environment, the transition to more democratic and more inclusive education.

The EWC's whole school approach (WSA) to school development offers conceptual and practical tools for carrying out this transition. It embraces changes in all core areas of school life – teaching & learning, governance and culture, and cooperation with the community.

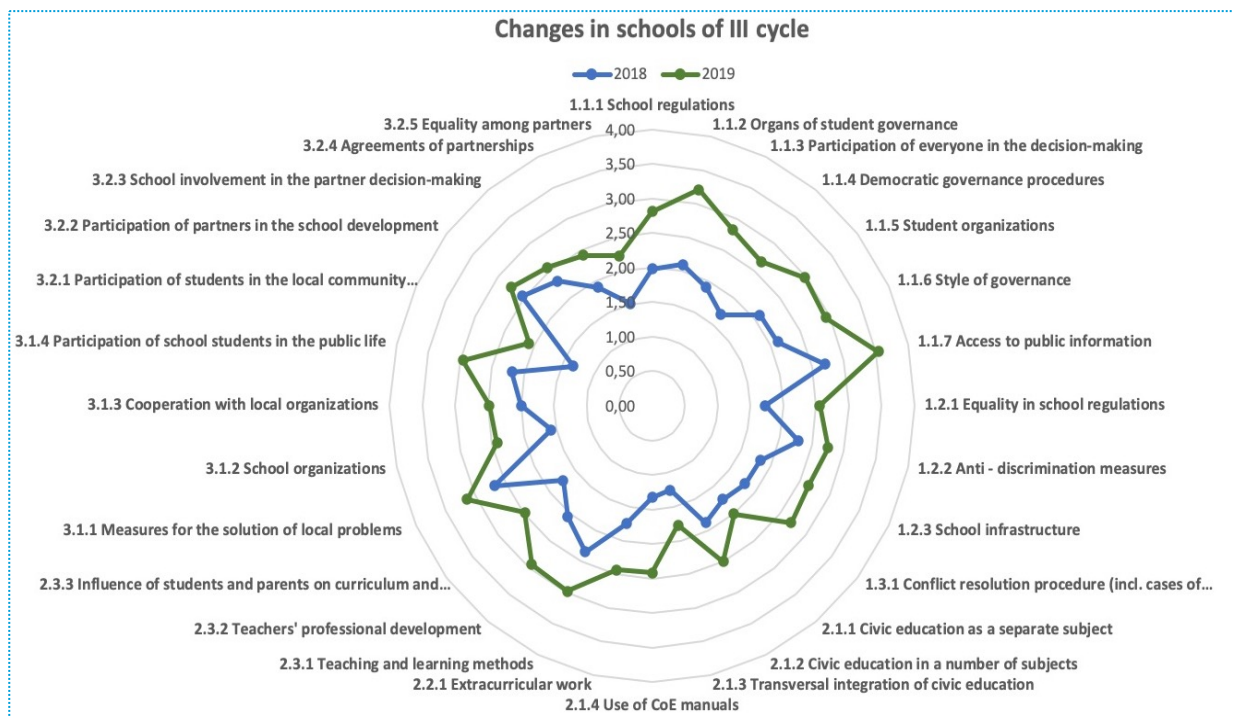


Visualization of the EWC's whole school approach

The Programme works with schools in 1,5 - year cycles supporting their democratic transformations. Schools meet with other participants and trainers at a launching conference. Further, basic trainings for school teams and 5 visits to each school are conducted. This number of meetings with schools allows involving the maximum number of school stakeholders, essential for WSA. Further on, 7 face-to-face workshops are carried out at schools with the support of additional tasks online (the blended learning course described in the online learning part). In 2019, 27% of schools' students and staff were involved in programme activities. Schools communicate with trainers directly and define themselves what kind of support they require to implement democratic changes.

²⁰ See also chapter 1 of this report.

School teams implement the changes through projects, focused on one or more areas, in cooperation with their peers. Below are some of the examples of schools' change stories ²¹ that they provided after the completion of their projects. As final self-assessment with the Tool for Democratic School Development shows, over 70% of schools advance from a lower to a higher levels in several democratic standards after 18 months of intensive participation in the programme activities. Many continue transformations also after the "graduation" from the Programme.



Democratic changes at the Programme covered schools (cycle III). The blue line shows the baseline situation in 2018, and the green line - changes achieved by 2019. The self-assessment is done with the Tool for Democratic School Development.

6.1 Governance & Culture

Many schools participating in the programme choose to focus on changing the school governance. The participation of students, parents, teachers along with the school administration and community representatives in the decision-making assures that changes will be relevant for all. The involvement of students can happen in various forms – from their participation in particular projects to the organization of student governing bodies and the creation of school documents that establish **democratic procedures** in the school.

²¹ Change stories are available on the programme website: <https://www.schools-for-democracy.org/istorii-zmin>

Moshanetska school (Chernivtsi reg.) made a step towards giving more voice to students, letting them choose and implement the projects they were interested in. The students did not stop there – having taken the initiative in their hands, they successfully organized structures for student governance and participated in the development of the school codex.



A functioning student body is one of the ways to assure democratic governance at school.

Another way of involving everyone in the democratization of school culture is **mediation**. One of the major obstacles to the implementation of democratic changes in *Ladan gymnasium (Chernihiv reg.)* was the high level of bullying at school and the inefficiency of solutions to this problem applied at school. Once school stakeholders were trained in mediation and mediation services were in place, school climate improved. Teachers obtained tools for solving conflicts with parents and students, who, in their turn, demonstrate more interest in school life. Several schools from the same region as Ladan gymnasium were keen to learn more about school mediation and organized a training, supported by the programme micro-grants scheme and supervised by the programme trainer. As a result, a booklet on mediation was prepared and is available in Ukrainian on the programme's website.

Overcoming discriminatory attitudes to the special needs students was the main aim of *Ternopil school No 28 (Ternopil reg.)* during their participation in the programme. The school focused not only on educating teachers working with special needs students, but on improving the school environment through values education and involving everyone in the discussions on the importance of **inclusion**.

6.2 Teaching & Learning

Democratization of the schools does not need to go top down. Most often, the improvement of learning environment is launched at the classroom level.



More active use of interactive methods and peer – learning is one of the steps for democratizing the process of teaching and learning.

Velykohayivska school (Ternopil reg.), the changes began with creating “comfort zones”, that could be used both for relaxation and learning. Along with the changes in physical space, **new methods** were applied in the classrooms. After trainings for teachers, the vast majority of them started applying more interactive methods and using a wider variety of technological solutions.

The introduction of **civic and human rights education both for students and school staff** strengthens democratic communication and activates project activity, say students and teachers of the Chervonohrad school (Lviv reg.). It is not only conducted in the classrooms, but also through the school newspaper and radio that students manage.

“Children have become much more aware of their rights,”- says social educator Irina Brukh. “The teachers left their “comfort zone” and began to introduce something new in their lessons”.

Merefa medical lyceum (Kharkiv reg.) was another school with an acute problem of unresolved conflicts, mostly in between teachers and students. The use of activities, provided in **CoE manuals**, supported teachers in the transition to a partnership in learning with students.

“The activities in the CoE manuals helped to understand: if one does not violate the rights of the child - there will be no conflict. We have not previously agreed. And now we are not just expressing our opinion, we are learning to negotiate”, - said Olena Kolodyazhna, deputy director of the Lyceum on educational work.

The positive experience of these changes pushed the school to join ‘Piloting of the New Curriculum’ component of the programme that focuses primarily on the development of civic competences through teaching practices.

6.3 Cooperation with and Participation in the Local Community

Participating in finding solutions for the challenges of **local community development** can be the core driver of democratic changes at schools too.



Here the school has focused on environmental projects to contribute to students’ better participation in their community.

Dubove school (Zakarpattya reg.) became the centre of the rural community. The school has conducted projects aimed at the support of retired people with no families, the improvement of local areas of leisure and the environment. Once the school opened to the community, the community representatives also took a more active part in the school life, participating in school events.

In *Solonyanska school (Dniprotetrovsk reg.)* projects for school development, initiated by school parliament, involved local community actors in its activities. A new football field, a playground, an inclusive resource center is not a complete list of what appeared in one year and contributed to a more active participation of students in local community. Now, local

organizations, individual volunteers and initiatives are involved in organizing school events too. And leaders of student self-government are filing proposals for the **local youth policies**.

The lack of parents' interest in school affairs negatively affected the environment in *Vatlavpilska gymnasium (Zhytomyr reg.)*. Parents saw their role as merely being present at parents meeting, so teachers started changing the format of these meetings to more informal ones. Before participation in the "Schools for Democracy" programme, parent meetings were about teachers talking about students' grades and behavior. The meetings were transformed into round-table discussions. This one step led to a more **active parental community**, which initiated the creation of various learning groups, trainings, discussions and the democratization of school governance.

7. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

To assure efficient programme administration, programme team invests significant efforts in internal coordination, evaluation of activities and programme development. Among key achievements in the programme management is a good communication flow within the programme team, sound financial management, improved external communication and monitoring and evaluation routines.

7.1 Programme team and internal communication

The Programme is administered from the Oslo office in a close cooperation with the Head coordinator in Ukraine, as well as coordinators for the three major Programme components (Schools, Online Learning and Curriculum). The Oslo team consists of Programme Manager and officers responsible for finance, M&E and communication. Proper and due communication between key personnel across the Programme is assured by regular meetings, updates. Introduction of an online project management tool (Asana) has contributed to a more thorough understanding of the programme goals by all key team members and improved monitoring and follow-up.

7.2 Financial Management

Financial management in the programme is based on internationally accepted practices and public procurement routines. The agreements with key implementing partners in Ukraine (Centre of Education Initiatives and ISAR Ednannia) are quality assured by Deloitte. Disbursements to partners are exclusively made based on their implementation plans and relevant financial requests.

Payments are mainly made in Euros which mitigates the loss of cash due to rate fluctuations. Partners in question also have audit and procurement procedures that comply with the EWC's requirements.

EWC has a zero tolerance to corruption and follows the principles of accountability and transparency. It ensures that its partners and collaborators also follow the same policy.

7.3 Communication

Outreach and relevance of information for every particular target group is of key importance for successful and lasting changes. Programme communication priorities, the role of the communication team and key channels for communicating with various stakeholders are defined by the programme team in the communication strategy and communication plans.

In 2019, the Programme has changed the Facebook strategy switching the focus from activity reporting to presenting good practices, inspiring examples and useful teaching and learning resources. In the result, also thanks to the new Communication officer in the team,

the activity on the programme Facebook page significantly intensified. Number of Facebook page followers and the programme’s newsletter increased more than 4 times since 2017²².

Furthermore, the communication team is responsible for the development of the programme’s [website](#). It was launched in April 2018 and contains major information on the programme. It also serves as a learning platform gathering relevant resources for education professionals – best school practices, tools for teaching and assessment, manuals, webinars and links to online courses etc.

7.4 Monitoring & Evaluation

The current monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework of the programme was updated in 2019 to better grasp the outcomes set initially, as well as to reflect some adjustments in line with the ongoing educational reform. Consequently, some of the programme indicators were changed, reformulated or new indicators were introduced.

Tools that were missing for data collection, were created by programme experts. Tool for School Development²³ serves to assess the state of democracy at a particular school regarding 28 standards of the democratic school in three WSA areas of school life - teaching and learning, school governance and relations with the local community. This information allows to track the school’s progress and for trainers to offer the most relevant guidance.

Tool for Democratic School Development



The tool is used when the school joins the programme and at the end of participation in the programme in 18 months to track the progress. The tool is based on the principles of inclusion of all school stakeholders in the assessment and in the implementation of changes.

Civic Competence Assessment Tool is an M&E instrument that was developed to measure students’ performance linked to activities in the piloting of the new Curriculum. Civic Competence Assessment Tool was designed to reveal the possible impact of the teachers’

²² As of April 2020, more than 3000 subscribers on Facebook and more than 1200 newsletter subscribers.

²³ English version of the tool available on: <https://theewc.org/resources/tool-for-democratic-school-development/>

pedagogic activity and use of the programme materials on the development of students’ civic competences. The tool is based on a cluster of nine civic competences, such as participation in the decision-making, contributing to problem-solving or accepting views of others, and contained 15 situational tests of different difficulty levels united by a story plot. For example, the test leads students through the process of elections for student government bodies.

Currently, the programme team is working on digitalizing the tool to make it available to all interested Ukrainian schools.

<i>Choose your answer:</i>	<i>Contributes to finding the solution</i>	<i>Disrupts finding of the solution</i>
<i>A. Wait for the opponent to present his/her arguments and ask a question to check if you understood him/her correctly</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>B. Look at the opponent and listen attentively</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>C. Stop the opponent when you feel you have understood what he/she means</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>D. Interrupt the opponent to present your point of view</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>E. Look attentively and support the opponent with nodding</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>F. During the discussions, speak about irrelevant topics, since it helps others to relax</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>G. Be negative and critical to every argument you don’t like</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>

An example of the test question in the tool. Test situation: school parliament elections. Students gathered for a meeting to pick the elections day. The student who takes the test needs to mark which action would contribute to finding a common solution and which one not.

To assure the quality of the programme’s M&E framework, as well as to analyze if the programme generally reaches established aims, external evaluation of the programme was launched. Relevance, impact and effectiveness of the programme are the main focus of this evaluation. Through the study of existing data and interviews with various stakeholder groups, programme results will be analyzed and priorities for the future will be defined.

7.5 Partnerships

Various types of partnerships were built in the programme to have a clear perspective of the existing gaps in the reform implementation, coordinate with others and to efficiently respond to stakeholders’ needs.

The first group of partners - state bodies that are directly responsible for the policy area in relation to which EWC conducts its activities. Programme staff has been working on establishing operational relations with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.



One of the elements of institutional cooperation between the EWC and Ukraine's MoES are study visits. Here: Ministers Lilya Hrynevych (2018) and Ganna Novosad (2019) at their meetings with the Norwegian Minister of Education and Integration Jan Tore Sanner.

Another state agency that has been a long-term programme partner is the Institute of Education Content Modernization. Since the institute's main purpose is the applied research and implementation of its results, it has been involved in the piloting component of the programme. Other key partners among state institutions are the newly established Ukrainian Institute of Education Development put in charge of the New Ukrainian School policies implementation, and the State Service of Educational Quality, who developed the new quality criteria for schools.

Furthermore, EWC established partnerships with expert organizations to facilitate a more efficient implementation of the programme. Cooperation with the Lillehammer Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences was essential for the elaboration of the content and structure of the online blended course, a new field of expertise for the EWC. A Ukrainian online course provider "Prometheus", experienced in the technological solutions for online materials supports the team in the development of massive open online courses.

Close cooperation was also upheld in between EWC and the main actors contributing to reform implementation in Ukraine. In the initial phase of the programme, the team went through the process of initiating, organizing and participating in meetings with other important international and local stakeholders to coordinate and look for synergies. EWC organized 4 coordination meetings on civic education before the MoES initiated own coordination meetings. As a result of this dialogue, cooperation was established with the Finnish-EU project "Learning Together", "Engage" project funded by USAID, the Swiss DOCCU project and other international programs in Ukraine to coordinate actions.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

8.1 General Conclusions in the Report

“**Schools for Democracy: Supporting Educational Reforms in Ukraine**” programme has been developed in cooperation with policy-makers and stakeholders in education in Ukraine to respond to current needs. Along the way, some programme activities have been adjusted to achieve efficient, relevant and sustainable results according to the goals set. To sum up, in conclusion we enlist the major factors that influenced the development of the programme.

Since programme experts participated both in the policy work and its practical implementation, strengthening the **link between policy and practice** became one of the key programme’s directions. The current educational reform offers many new opportunities for the professional development of teachers and changes in schools, but also brings forward many new principles and concepts, often vaguely familiar to educators. Piloting of the curriculum and other policy documents (see chapter 3), development of various teaching and learning resources, available online to a large target group (see chapter 4) are aimed at filling the gap between policy and its implementation.

Another programme priority that emerged as a programme-shaping factor was the **sustainability of changes**. The establishment and support of expert and institutional networks in all Ukrainian regions (see chapter 5) set up a strong independent platform of agents of change who implement democratic education in the country. This platform serves to uphold changes in schools all over the country (see chapter 6).

Ensuring **relevance** of the programme for all stakeholders is another programme priority. To this end, several changes in the administration and coordination of the programme were introduced (see chapter 7). A stronger focus on communication allowed to reach particular target groups and offer them the most relevant information to facilitate a broader implementation of reforms. Programme M&E framework update, as well as development of M&E tools, serve to collect regular feedback from programme stakeholders and implement relevant changes according to their needs. Finally, cooperation with a variety of partners facilitates a more informed programme planning.

8.2 Perspectives for the Future

Programme activities continue in 2020 – 2021. Certain areas of programme development will be prioritized in the coming months based on the lessons learned. The main priority remains with **support for policy** development, piloting and implementation. The most pressing task is finalization of the New National Curriculum and advocating for the new democratic standards it sets, including new approaches to student assessment. Dialogue with the Ministry and other key state agencies will be continued to identify the needs for support and set priorities within the existing programme framework, establishing new **partnerships** where necessary.

Another important priority is finalizing and launch of several **online courses** which will serve as a sustainability factor for programme results. In this regard, focus should be laid upon

tailoring the courses' content to the needs of teachers and school heads in order to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary for implementation of the reforms. To this end, a study on distant education for teachers in Ukraine will be carried out throughout 2020 to inform the team's online learning work. In addition, one of the main tasks for the upcoming year will be establishing partnerships to implement the online courses via local course providers, incl strengthening the capacity of Programme trainers and their organizations to facilitate online learning.

Presenting and communicating programme results is another upcoming task for the programme team. Dissemination of digital teaching and learning resources, good practices as well as M&E tools, developed within the programme, will be conducted both through programme events and online communication platforms.

In the upcoming months the programme team will also look into the focus areas, needs and opportunities to continue supporting education reforms in Ukraine in the **future**, beyond 2021. Joint conclusions are to be made in cooperation with the main programme stakeholders. Facilitating the process for a quality external evaluation is the first stage for drawing these conclusions through systematizing the gathered data, analyzing the emerging trends and changes. **Interim evaluation** will be carried out with the aim to improve programme efficiency and assure a stable and far-reaching impact.
