

Scotland Research Report Summary

Part 1 – About the Research

- *Methodology*

The research was done through an online survey and discussion groups. Providing a total number of 45 responses with total number of 28 different youth bodies responding.

The online survey took place from mid May 2013 to early July 2013. A total of 36 people responded, though there are only an average of just over 20 responses per question, indicating a high percentage of skipping questions, particularly on the written answer sections.

Most responses shown are marked as local authority, but in fact the majority (8) of the respondents who are marked as having “skipped” the question answered an “other” option and 6 of those described themselves as some form of charity, voluntary or not for profit organisation, making this answer the second most frequent. In addition to this, 5 respondents marked “other” as a secondary response, describing their organisations similarly to the above, which would in fact make charities, voluntary or not-for-profit the most frequent response. Thus it can be said that various different forms of organisations are well represented in the survey, giving a useful, broader view on the issues concerned; however it should also be recognised that foundations, community centres and representative bodies – all important parts of youth civic society – have responded in considerably less significant numbers, calling into question the generalizability of those particular results.

The main sphere of work of the organisations was very varied, though “development of local communities” and “education” made a slim majority of responses between them, with “health and healthy lifestyle” in a significant minority. When participants were asked to choose additional spheres of work, the responses became more varied still, with only “social services” and “youth entrepreneurship” being included by less than a third of respondents. Contrary to the above, this makes the results generally a good representation of views from various subject areas with the not unrelated topics of community development, volunteering and education marking the most popular areas.

Most responses came from larger organisations (working with 50 or more young people) and a significant majority works principally with young people. 20% (6) of respondents, however, came from organisations smaller than this, which in general (though not exclusively) worked principally with young people within a limited subject area or areas. The respondents were almost unanimous in that they all run non-formal education programmes which represents over 96% of organisations that answered this question and makes the survey a valuable insight into the potential of global citizenship issues for non-formal education groups.

The discussion groups took place on 24th June 2013 and 4th September 2013 with a total of 9 participants. (There were 4 no shows and 3 participants sent apologies). 5 of the participants were employed by local authorities but in a variety of positions and involved in diverse activities. The other participants came from the voluntary sector and were all from the central belt.

- *Remarks*

The survey research was done almost entirely over the summer period which had a detrimental effect on the number of respondents. The discussion groups were largely a self-selecting group of people who were interested in global youth work so therefore had an

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overwhelmingly positive response to global youth work and a reasonable understanding of what this is. However, it should be noted that many felt exchanges, visits and volunteering were key parts of this.

Part 2 – Summary of Findings

- *Globalisation and Global issues*

Just under 90% of respondents had heard of Global Citizenship or a similar phrase. Underlining these very positive responses, a vast majority of respondents said that they feel that the issues and activities that they work on in their organisation were connected to a bigger, international issues with only 7 responding negatively out of 30. Furthermore, when a similar question was later asked, “Do you think that your organisation/structure has a role to play in working on issues, which are faced all over the world” the unanimous response was positive. Thus we can conclude that whilst all of the organisations surveyed felt that they worked on issues that have an international aspect to them, not all of them believe that their activities address that international aspect.

During the discussion groups, participants were easily able to identify a wide range of global issues.

- *Ability to link local to Global*

Three quarters of respondents believed that the issues they are working on within their organisations are linked to a bigger international issue. Within the discussion groups they were unanimous in their agreement that there work has or has the potential for a global dimension. From the online results while a significant majority answered negatively, the number of responses to the written section afterwards asking them to name this issue was uncharacteristically high with 22 responses. Of these, 8 (over a third) felt the global issue they were involved with was youth empowerment, participation and/or activism (reinforcing its earlier popularity as an additional sphere of work) with just under a further third (7 responses) naming poverty specifically.

- *Ability to link their activities to Global issues*

‘Promoting healthy lifestyles’, ‘Discrimination’ and ‘Children’s Rights’ were the three most popular areas for activities. While these could be viewed wholly as local issues, more detailed responses and points raised in discussion groups indicated a significant understanding of these issues as global issues. Human and Children’s Rights was described as a “unifying concept” – and it’s popularity as a topic is probably linked to other high profile Rights work going on in Scotland by UNICEF and the Children’s Commissioner.

Additional issues which scored highly were ‘Poverty Reduction’, ‘Environmental Protection’ and ‘Intercultural Dialogue’. The issue of poverty was discussed in detail with discussion group 2 and participants believed that often the young people they worked with had experience of this and felt an exploration of poverty / inequality within countries and between countries would be a useful issue to explore.

Within the discussion groups, participants were able to see considerable links between current areas of work and potential synergies for global learning. ‘Fair Trade’ as a topic was raised with the potential to explore consumerism in other forms and its global impacts; Health and Wellbeing was seen as connected to a wider debate on food production, food security and

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GM crops. The Commonwealth Games (Glasgow 2014), Curriculum for Excellence (new curriculum which brings 3 -18 formal and informal learning together) and debates around Scotland's place in the world (increasing with the Referendum for independence in September 2014) were suggested as providing key contexts for developing the global learning agenda. In fact 1 participant suggested that we were well placed to fill this 'gap' which was currently not being provided for.

- *Interest in Global Issues*

Interest in global issues was generally high. Most popular topics were similar to previous responses. 'Promoting Healthy Lifestyle' was most popular, with 'Rights', 'Poverty and 'Access to Education' being the next most popular.

Most organisations seem to show reluctance to cover potentially more complex or controversial issues such as 'conflicts and peace', 'globalisation', 'immigration', 'consumption', 'worker's rights' or 'refugees and asylum'. Despite this, much of this reluctance seems to vanish when asked how *interested* they are in covering these topics, with most issues being recorded as "very interested". It therefore seems that most participants simply feel that they lack the knowledge or detail to address these issues with young people, and would be motivated by more information on the topic or specific training. Some also questioned if young people would be motivated to explore these topics.

- *Learning needs in terms of competences*

Global Citizenship seems to be a fairly universally recognised term amongst organisations of this nature and this is reflected in the responses on developing Global Citizenship knowledge areas with young people which are overwhelmingly positive. Which suggests an underlining perceived value in Global Citizenship education, with 2 of the 3 knowledge areas rated positively by around 90% each. The most popular of these is social justice and equity, possibly for the same reasons as poverty being mentioned above – it has a considerably higher profile than most other issues mentioned. Of the three areas, however, it is interesting to note that the least popular by a significant margin is 'Globalisation and Interdependence' which, although there is still a large majority in favour (75%), there is also a not insignificant negative response at 25%. This underlines the more locally bound mind-sets found earlier and suggests that many non-formal youth organisations are more interested in the 'citizenship' half of Global Citizenship.

When asked to comment on related activities they have already carried out, youth empowerment and inclusion were again strong running themes, with 'inclusion', 'participation' and 'volunteering' as key ideas which repeatedly appeared. The repeated appearance of these themes throughout the survey suggest that this is perhaps what many of these organisations mean by "citizenship" and what they believe is their remit. In the cases where global or international themes are mentioned, some of these are projects aimed at linking young people internationally rather than working on particular global knowledge areas. In terms of developing knowledge, the one area where method of delivery was mostly clear was youth empowerment, where peer education and involvement of young people in the delivery of knowledge and decision making itself was cited as a method several times.

This general trend continues in the next question which focuses on skills with a high percentage of the named skills already being developed. Again, however, there is a reluctance to stray from the local as we see a significantly weaker positive response and a significantly higher negative one for the option 'Intercultural competences in communication'. However, 'changing perspectives' and 'Awareness of stereotypes and prejudice' both score highly, but discussion groups seemed to mainly see this within the local context.

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The most popular skills were ‘Teamwork and cooperation’, ‘Creativity’ and ‘Awareness of stereotypes and prejudice’. Creativity made several appearances, with the people who cited it suggesting that they use the arts (and in one case a choir) to introduce other skills and themes. Involving young people in decision making and peer education came up again several times, reinforcing this theme’s popularity throughout the research.

Finally, in a question asking for interest in developing certain values with young people, generally high support is again received. Almost all values and attitudes named receive wholehearted support from participants, with only two opposed by more than 9% of respondents; of these, it is conspicuous that the value most targeted already within the responding organisations is ‘Self-Esteem, self-confidence, self-respect and respect for others’. This, along with two of the other most popular themes, social responsibility and proactive and participatory community membership, highlights the centrality of youth empowerment and participation within youth organisations.

The most popular value overall, was open-mindedness, and represented the only value amongst the top 4 most popular which was less related to youth empowerment and participation. Overall, the research indicates that youth organisations see values (particularly self-esteem) as a means to achieving youth empowerment rather than vice versa. However it should be noted that the number of responses decrease as the survey continues, with a meagre 12 responses representing the lowest number of the three comments sections and posing a problem again for the generalizability of these results.

- *Potential motivation for Global Learning*

The survey indicates that generally there is an interest in global learning. Respondents indicated that in order to develop global learning within their organisations they needed more information and training on these issues. In discussion groups a significant worry was the time required to thoroughly research a topic before feeling qualified to tackle Global Citizenship issues with a group.

While 30% of those surveyed indicated that ‘Nothing’ would motivate their interest in some areas of global learning in most cases this reflected not a lack of interest in global learning generally but that their interests lay in specific areas like environmental sustainability or humanitarian education. The only great reason for concern in this particular question therefore lies with funding. Over a quarter of respondents indicated funding priorities as their primary concern for a lack of interest in certain issues, reflected again at the end of the survey in reasons for reluctance to host a seminar.

However, the overall responses seem to indicate that greater provision of training and information in the non-formal education sector could potentially stimulate a significant growth in global citizenship related activities.

Part 3 – Conclusions

Overall there is a positive attitude towards global issues and global learning within the youth sector. However, there remains a diverse understanding as to what is meant by Global Citizenship with often a strong emphasis on the local / community aspect, international exchanges and volunteering. However, these all provide a strong context for developing further aspects of global learning. Furthermore, the Curriculum for Excellence brings together both formal and informal sector education for 3-18 year olds, and local authorities in particular see Global Citizenship as a way of supporting this process.



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The Commonwealth Games (Glasgow 2014) and debates around Scotland's place in the world (increasing with the Referendum for independence in September 2014) are also key contexts for developing the global learning agenda. Points that were raised in both discussion groups.

The capacity of youth organisations to organise global education activities varies greatly, dependent on size, resources and motivations. Working with local authorities, all of which have Youth Services, is a key way of cascading training in the project and there are already structures and support in place to take this learning forward within the local authority.

Again the learning and training needs of the youth organisations in relation to global education vary widely. The variety of perspectives on what is meant by Global Citizenship indicates that general training would enable participants to engage in debate on this and broaden their understanding of the term.

For most youth organisations, the young people and their interests and motivations are a starting point. Therefore training which supported youth leaders to recognise and explore a global dimension within a variety of issues would be useful, as would an appreciation of how to link the local to the global. As the research indicated, much current Global Citizenship work is focused on the local / community side.

Discussion groups and the online research also suggest that information on specific global issues was needed as it was time consuming and sometimes difficult to find all this. However, with direction much of this material *is* easy to access online. If training was limited to specific issues it would be difficult to identify what these would be as a wide range of issues has been identified through the research; most popular were healthy lifestyle, rights, poverty and access to education. In discussion groups the ways of motivating interest in young people about these issues was raised and the importance of tackling issues which impacted on them.

There are two main motivations for youth organisations to engage with global learning. Firstly if global learning is on their agenda, forward plans or supports current projects. (Or there is an enthusiastic individual who is self-motivated to take this work forward). Secondly, much of their work is driven by the young people themselves and if they are motivated to engage with global issues then the group or organisation is likely to support this. Key here then is how to motivate young people and support youth workers to stimulate this motivation.

Part 4 – Recommendations

For Scotdec, engaging the target group in the activities will be an on-going process as we seek to make new, and build on recently made, contacts in the youth work sector. However there are a number of key information channels:

- Working through local authorities, who have dedicated Youth Services, to deliver training opportunities and to raise awareness of project.
- Disseminating information on training, seminars etc through the regular bulletins of network organisations for youth services. Eg Youth Link Scotland, Young Scot and Youth Scotland.
- Developing the project's online profile on twitter and other social media platforms

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In addition activities could make explicit connections to Commonwealth Games 2014 and the Scottish Referendum as a way of motivating engagement and support groups to explore the potential provided by these events. Where appropriate, clear references to Curriculum for Excellence would support those planning youth work within this age group (3-18).

In terms of engaging young people in the global learning process and increasing awareness of global issues, there seems to be some conflict between the development plans of local authorities or project funding needs of large NGOs and the 'best practise' approach of youth work which places the young people themselves at the heart of any decision making process. Ideally, any training or resource manual for global learning in youth work would need to account for this process of enabling young people to make informed decisions on the global issues they would like to explore. It would therefore need to support the exploration of potentially diverse topics or issues which might interest young people.

The research and discussion groups also indicate that these inputs need to be framed within local contexts and provide support for young people to connect the local to the global, ensuring the relevance of the global issues to their own lives. In addition, this process would need to take account of the time constraints of those working with the young people and building their confidence in exploring global issues with a group.

Peer education, participation and young people's voice are all areas which are well utilised in youth work and a resource / training could connect with this by providing processes where young people can explore and select the issues which interest them and suggest ways they can take action. Issues such as rights, health and poverty were frequently raised as key topics which youth organisations tackle which have synergy with those of global education.

Overall, there is great potential in Scotland for mainstreaming global awareness in youth work. Global Citizenship will be very much on the agenda in 2014 and the project is well placed to prove the support that local authorities and organisations in the youth sector will be looking for.

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