CSS-EU

CHANGE SHAPING SCHOOLS

O2.1: NEEDS AND CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS REPORT

STIMMULI for social change

SEi SOCIAL ENTERPRISE INTERNATIONAL

Center for Social Innovation

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PAR Visoka poslovna škola BUSINESS SCHOOL

ALL GROW

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Project summary

ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) aspires to scale up a thoroughly researched, evidenced based educational model that resulted through an empirical study involving teachers, students, and researchers in 8 schools in Europe. Specifically, ChangeShaping Schools wishes to become the gateway project for diffusing "Social Innovation Education" (SIE) in Europe as a comprehensive inclusive educational model for empowering and preparing students for tomorrow's world.

The innovative and inclusive aspect of SIE was the reason that this model won the funding contract from the EC's H2020 programme three years ago and enabled researchers and experts to collaborate and enforce the scientific base of the specific educational model. Now, having a solid scientific and empirical foundation, we aim with this project to diffuse SIE in Europe, transfer it to different EU countries such as Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia and Romania and empower more schools to shape the much-needed changes in both education and society.

Regarding the suggested educational model and its powerful effect in "enhancing the acquisition of social and civic competences, fostering knowledge, understanding and ownership of values and fundamental rights", it should be highlighted that:

> *"SIE introduces a collective and collaborative learning process for the empowerment and socio/political activation of students to drive positive social change. Through this process, students develop a set of social and civic related competences that enable them to: i) identify opportunities for social value creation, ii) to form collaborations and build social relationships and iii) take innovative action for more democratic and sustainable societies".*

This definition and most importantly the evidence gathered during the previous academic year from more than 1000 students who participated in an empirical study (i.e. involving an online survey, interviews, classroom observations, student's written narratives) indicating the positive effects of SIE in the development of social and civic competences, highlights that the project is in perfect alignment with the specific objective of this call.

Also, an additional purpose behind this project is that through the upscaling of the SIE model we seek to contribute further to an educational policy reform highlighting the empowering and transformative power of SIE that improves the individual and collective capabilities of people, builds new inclusive relations, and produces collective outcomes and social value.

1.2 Overview of this report

The aim of this report is to produce a consolidated and updated context report, highlighting school and students' needs to promote equal opportunities. On top of that, an introduction to the

education systems and the policy framework for inclusive education in the four participating countries will be developed and further presented dedicated chapters for each country (3,4,5,6). In this Chapter the general context is presented followed by Chapter 2 where a closer look at the overall process, priors, data analysis, data collection and target groups. The following four chapters will be dedicated to each country participating in the project followed by a cross-country analysis – Chapter 7 and Conclusions and Recommendations in Chapter 8. All the tools used in data collection and other relevant information will be included in the Appendix.

The needs and contextual analysis process started in February 2021 and included four parts. First part was the design of the methodological guide, followed by Data collection and translation, next Data analysis, and lastly, the creation of this report. It is important to emphasize that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the work across all countries leading to unexpected school closure and widespread uncertainty. The results and observations presented in this report are impacted by the Pandemic and took place 100% remotely.

It is important to mention that this is a continuation of the needs analysis started in the proposal phase of this project when an analysis of the educational systems around the EU has already been conducted. However, a more solid consideration of each educational context in terms of how Social Innovation is or is not considered as part of the educational field will further be examined as part of this report.

Given the different contexts whereby the SIE model will be scaled up and implemented, this report will investigate their specificities in terms of gaps and needs and further contextual considerations of the 4 new countries Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, and Romania where the model will be introduced. On top of that, the needs of teachers in terms of training needs and gaps relevant to SIE's context shall also be conducted. From previous experience, the data gathered from the needs analysis is vital in understanding specific country level issues with regards to the possibility of teachers having autonomy to develop the curriculum, capacity to access community connections and flexibility of school and education leadership. Therefore, individual Chapters will be devoted to each country Croatia – Chapter 3, Cyprus – Chapter 4, Serbia – Chapter 5 and Romania – Chapter 6.

Chapter 2 – Needs and context analysis report process

2.1 Process overview

The needs and context analysis report included three main phases as depicted in following figure: **Preparation, Data Collection and Analysis**

In the **Preparation** phase, the following elements were taken onboard:

- Review prior understanding of the needs
- Stakeholder's map and identification of key participants
- Determining what information, we need to collect to correctly determine the existing gaps
- Create the outreach strategy to collect the information from teachers, civil society, and policy makers
- Translate to local language and test the data gathering documents
- Review and prepare GDPR agreements and data protection process

The **Data Collection** phase included:

- Conduct the survey and focus group with teachers
- Conduct interviews with Policy Makers and Civil Society
- Transcribe and translate all the data collected

The **Analysis** and **decision** phase included:

- Analyze the prioritized needs using quantitative and qualitative tools
- Conduct SWOT analysis
- Analyze and synthesize the information for each country and cross countries
- Determine favorable factors and design constraints
- Determine recommendations, conclusions and lessons learned

2.2 Prior understanding of the needs

Based on the need's analysis conducted as part of the predecessor H2020 project, educators highlighted four key elements that needed to be clarified for implementing and adopting the SIE model in their settings. Those four elements involve around the following:

- **Teachers' understanding of SIE**: what it entails and how it is defined, what is the philosophy and what are the differences to EE. What are the underpinning values and skills that they need to focus on?
- **Resources and support offered**: in terms of steps and activities that would enable them to get to grips with the SIE model and implement it,
- **Stakeholder engagement**: from parents to local community actors and other external actors. The most important aspect of this engagement was to understand their pivotal role in the model so that they would be able to better articulate it when inviting them to collaborate with their school,

- Finally, **raising the profile of SIE** in their school and having a long-term focus on embedding it into their schools' lessons/ curriculum.

Taking all those into account, with this task we aim at further validating those key elements in the four new contexts that will be applied but most importantly add new aspects that we shall consider coming from these new contexts. Considering the needs and gaps identified by the predecessor schools, we will be able to extract a more global/ universal view on what is needed and how training around SIE could be formed and applied. Given that the project involves pilot schools from quite different backgrounds, a "one size fits all" approach cannot be followed. Hence, by combining the views of the need's analysis, we will seek to address them in the following activities.

2.3 Methodology and target group

A mixed methodology approach was followed by combining qualitative with quantitative data collection mainly through an extensive desk research, surveys, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with a variety of stakeholders (of formal and non-formal nature), such as school teachers, educators in general, policy makers, civic organizations and other actors working with primary and secondary schools in the four countries.

The proposed target groups included 120 teachers (30 teachers per country) to be invited to participate in the online survey. On top of that, the opinion of twenty (20) policy makers in total was considered through a semi-structured interview and 20 civic organizations and other associations surveyed or interviewed.

2.3.1 Preparation

The CSS-EU team has decided during the first transnational meeting that we aim to collect rich qualitative data and the quantitative data collected with surveys will be complemented by **focus groups** with teachers to be able to validate and clarify any concerns we would identify in the surveys. All participants in the needs and contextual analysis have been informed and agreed to participate in the study. The data were collected and processed in accordance with the GDPR and 'CSS-EU' quality and risk protocols.

The first step in the data collection process was to **determine key stakeholders** to be included in the semi-structured interviews. Next our team investigated **what information we need to collect** to correctly determine the gaps in accordance with the project goals and prior findings of H2020 project. This process happened in multiple iterations and collaborative conversations took place between all partners. **Data collection guidelines and protocols have been created first in English and next translated** to Croatian, Greek, Serbian, and Romanian by each country partner. Each partner was also responsible to **create the outreach strategy** and coordinate communication with teachers, policy makers and civil society. Lastly, each partner was responsible for adjusting the translations and collecting and translating the data.

The data collection process included the following instruments:

1. **Country context desk research**
2. **Survey with teachers**
3. **Focus group with teachers**
4. **Semi-structured interviews with Policy Makers and Civil Society**

Country context desk research was done prior to the primary research activities with the goal to understand what stakeholders (researchers, policy makers, educators) have done in the past that relates to Social Innovation Education in each country. The country context includes previous research findings, studies, articles, etc. to gain a broader understanding of the field of Social Innovation in Education. These findings were later on combined with the primary research date to offer a detailed overview of the state of play of SIE in Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia and Romania.

The **surveys** were created with the goal to identify teachers and students training needs for embedding Social Innovation Education into schools curriculum. Each survey included multiple parts and went from looking into the general understanding when it comes to SIE towards practical experience with the method, national and school context as well as the impact of the pandemic and teachers training preferences.

The **focus group** was organized with the goal to tap into the depth of knowledge our teachers have and co-design this project together. This activity was designed with the purpose to dive deeper into the topic of Social Innovation Education and capture teachers' perspectives and preferences regarding teachers training curriculum. Since, teachers in different countries have different levels of familiarity with Social Innovation Education, we had design them in an inclusive manner to ensure that all participants can make valuable contributions.

The **semi structured interviews** were used for capturing in-depth context, stories, and discussions in relation to **Civil Society** knowledge regarding Social Innovation Education. The same data collection instrument, semi structured interviews, was applied to learn more about **Policy Makers** preference, motivations, and capacity to influence the implementation and adoption of CSS-EU.

All the findings are compiled in a cross-country analysis Chapter 7 showcasing the most important findings, to be able to categorize the needs as identified by the different stakeholders informing in this way the rest of tasks in this Work Package as well as the other Work Packages.

2.3.2 Data Collection

The target numbers for data collection were 120 teachers' surveys and 20 interviews with policy makers and 20 with the civil society. We next divided this target by each participating country resulting in 30 surveys, 10 interviews (5 Policy makers and 5 Civil Society). In addition to what was planned we decided to conduct a focus group with approximately 10 teachers per country. The participants to the focus group were selected from the participants in the survey and the criteria used was prior knowledge and experience of Social Innovation Education. Once the data was collected, each partner translated it to English and entered it into our databases.

The table below will present the planned versus actual results in terms of target group participants.

	Survey		Interview Policy Makers		Interview Civil Society		Focus Group	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Croatia	30	30	5	5	5	5	0	10
Cyprus	30	34	5	5	5	5	0	6
Serbia	30	38	5	6	5	5	0	7
Romania	30	67	5	5	5	5	0	6
TOTAL	120	169	20	21	20	20	0	29

2.3.3 Data Analysis

Next, our team started the analysis phase when we prioritized the needs and potential adaptations to each country's context using qualitative tools as well as SWOT analysis. Lastly, we conducted analysis and synthesized the information for each country as it can be seen in Chapters 3,4,5 and 6 of this report.

During monthly meetings, each partner had the chance to share their findings as well as what went well and what did not as part of the data collection process. For each country, was created a chapter where we investigated the needs as well and country context regarding Social Innovation Education.

Further we analyzed teachers' answers in the survey and focus group as well civil society and policy makers perspective. Lastly, each partner conducted a SWOT analysis for integrating Social Innovation Education, which helped us identify key areas which are at the core of this process in each country. Once we conducted the analysis for each country, we investigated cross country analysis and determined multiple actions necessary to design the next outputs of the project. In this part we consider the favorable factors and design constraints for teachers training and the curriculum. The needs and country context analysis report is ending with conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

2.4 Assumptions

- Teachers, policy makers and civil society representatives in all four countries will be available to participate in the data collection activities
- Partners across all countries will be dedicated and collaborative in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data
- The data collected will offer key insights for understanding the field of Social Innovation Education as well as opportunities and challenges for the field now and in the future
- The data presented in this report is limited by our current/prior understanding of the topic
- The results of this report will serve as input for other outputs of the project and will contribute to the general outcome of the project

Chapter 3 – Croatia

Each country's analysis will start with an overview of the educational context followed by the results of the survey and focus group as well as interviews with civil society and policy makers and key findings. We will present each country in alphabetical order and start here with Croatia.

3.1 Social Innovation Education Context

The Social Innovation Education Context is the result of the desk research conducted by our partner PAR University College and includes an overview of the National Education System, the evolution of Social Innovation, Innovation in formal and non-formal education and Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities for Social Innovation Education.

3.1.1 Overview of the National Education System

The Croatian educational system provides educational services at the level of pre-school, primary, secondary, and higher education, and adult education, to enable each user to optimally develop his potentials with the aim of his personal development and inclusion in the labor market and readiness for lifelong learning.

In the Republic of Croatia, education is available to everyone, under equal conditions, in accordance with their abilities. Compulsory education is free of charge in accordance with the law, and under the conditions prescribed by law, private schools and colleges may be established.

The competent state body that takes care of the education system in the Republic of Croatia is the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, which is also the competent and implementing body that with its role, structure, activities, and capacities provides basic preconditions for sustainable development of human resources in the education system.

Preschool education

Preschool education in the Republic of Croatia includes the upbringing, education, and care of preschool children, and is realized through programs of education, training, health care, nutrition, and social care for children from six months to school. Preschool education is the first level of the educational system and is not mandatory for all preschool children. It is divided into three educational cycles: (1) from six months to the first year of the child's life, (2) from the first to the third year of the child's life, (3) from the third year of the child's life to primary school.

Primary education

Elementary school is compulsory and lasts eight years. Educational work in primary school, which includes children aged six to fifteen, is usually organized as a classroom for students from I. to IV. grade and as subject teaching for students from V. to VIII. grade. Primary education begins with enrollment in the first grade of primary school and is compulsory for all children, as a rule, from the age of six to fifteen, and for students with multiple developmental disabilities up to the age of 21. Through primary education, the student acquires knowledge and skills to continue education. The founders of primary schools are counties (20 counties) and the City of Zagreb, municipalities, cities, and legal and natural persons. Primary schools can be regular with a general education program,

special with a program for children with disabilities, art (dance and ballet) and schools in the language and script of national minorities.

Secondary education

Secondary education enables everyone to acquire knowledge and abilities to work and continue their education under equal conditions and according to their abilities, after completing primary schooling. Secondary education begins with enrollment in high school. High schools, depending on the type of educational program, are grammar schools, vocational and art schools. Through secondary education, the student acquires knowledge and abilities to work and continue education. A student in high school education programs ends with passing the state matura, and a high school student in vocational and artistic education programs, which last at least four years, ends by writing and defending a final thesis in the organization and implementation of the school. If a student in vocational and artistic education programs, which last at least four years, wants to continue his education at a higher education institution, he is obliged to take the state matura exams.

Higher Education

The higher education system is twofold and consists of university and vocational education programs of varying duration. University study programs train students to perform jobs in science and higher education, the economy, the state, public and private sectors, and train them to develop and apply scientific and professional achievements. Professional study programs provide students with an appropriate level of knowledge and skills that enables them to perform professional occupations and enables them to be directly involved in the work process.

Reforms and innovative concepts

Reform from 2019 emphasized the most important goal - **for students to learn to solve problems and gain functional knowledge.** That is why new curricula were adopted and replaced the 25-year-old ones, which were not the result of reform but of adjustment to the new system.

Learning will be aimed at providing students with knowledge and skills, and consequently it should become more interesting for them. At a time when computers can remember huge amounts of data, the student does not need to remember this pile of data but must know how to find a connection between them, find information and then use it to solve a specific problem, think critically and cope with a situation, be creative and innovative.

The reform also brings new curricula, new textbooks, and a new way of working. Specifically, the new curricula start in the fall for the 1st and 5th grade of primary school, in the 7th grade for science subjects (biology, chemistry, physics), for the 1st grade of grammar schools, and in vocational four-year schools the new curricula are for three subjects - Croatian, mathematics and foreign languages.

It is believed that teachers who have been educated will apply new methods of work. The emphasis is also on acquiring other competencies important for the 21st century, such as digital skills, but certainly not only is digital technology used for entertainment, but also to learn to use it for learning, which is sometimes difficult, so the student should be guided to adopt it because that is how they will learn later in life.

As for entrepreneurial thinking, entrepreneurial schools can apply a wide range of approaches to promoting entrepreneurship. This promotion can involve students in a variety of ways, encouraging them, for example, to participate in competitions and receive awards and recognitions.

Greater flexibility in school helps to incorporate innovative activities and elements into the curriculum, which can be supported financially and / or staffed to achieve sustainability.

The example of Croatia and the Government's Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014 stands out as a good example of entrepreneurial practice in schools. Special emphasis was placed on courses for teachers and Children's Entrepreneurship Week, a project implemented since 2008 in primary schools and kindergartens throughout the Republic of Croatia.

Special effort was made by First Zagreb Gymnasium, which competed for a project funded by European Union funds with the aim of developing a comprehensive curriculum, guidelines for teachers and appropriate methodologies for entrepreneurship education in Croatian secondary schools.

Civic education is one of the seven cross-curricular topics for which there is no textbook nor is it a separate subject and will be taught as part of history, Croatian language, biology, geography, ethics, psychology, politics and economics, religious education, and other cross-curricular topics.

Other cross-curricular topics are health, entrepreneurship, personal and social development, learning how to learn, use of information and communication technology and sustainable development.

Expectations of interdisciplinary topics are realized together with the educational outcomes of the subjects on the subject contents that teachers choose as suitable for the realization of both outcomes and expectations, the Ministry of Science and Education explains.

3.1.2. The evolution of Social Innovation in Croatia

Social entrepreneurship in Croatia is still in its infancy, while in the EU it employs 7 percent of the working population and generates up to 10 percent of gross domestic product.

In the European Union, more than 10 percent of all economic organizations operate as social economy organizations and about seven percent of the workforce works in such companies, while in Croatia this percentage is only 0.2 percent, which means that we are still in the early stages of social entrepreneurship, and that we still have many steps to take to reach the level of EU countries.

There are about a hundred social enterprises in Croatia that have quality production and services, but due to difficult access to funds for promotion, they are still invisible. The European Union finances social entrepreneurship in Croatia through the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, but also within the Operational Program Effective Human Resources.

Social innovation in Croatia is not sufficiently developed: although civil society organizations have developed some solutions and examples of good practice that can be considered socially innovative, these examples are not documented and there are no analyzes of existing social innovations, which makes it difficult to talk about their impact on citizens of the Republic of Croatia. The importance of the concept of social innovation at the system level is still not sufficiently recognized and therefore it is necessary to work on respecting its value as a means that can lead to positive social change and opportunities in many particularly important areas such as employment, poverty, aging, family, and housing policy.

There are many non-profit organizations in Croatia that operate in various areas of life. In addition to associations that care for children, the elderly and other vulnerable social categories, there are also associations that aim to promote various values and goals, associations that bring together people of the same interests and hobbies, that care for animals and the environment, and many others.

Each association has some specifics, but there is a basic legal framework in which associations must operate. This framework primarily includes the registration of associations and the need to submit a financial report that will show how the associations were financed, but also used the money.

A large number of non-profit organizations in Croatia are financed from state funds, i.e. funds from local communities. The European Union also gives large sums to non-profit organizations, and other sources of income are from membership fees, donations, and earnings from its own work.

In terms of spatial distribution, most organizations are based in the capital, which is logical. The number of organizations is also relatively large in larger centers and in more developed areas and is declining as we move towards less developed and rural areas. However, we can say that there are literally non-profit organizations throughout Croatia.

3.1.3: Innovation in Formal and Non-Formal Education

Within Croatian formal education there is a novelty (2019/2020) called cross-curricular topics. Cross-curricular topics are topics of universal human values and competencies for life in the 21st century and as such are present in a special way daily in the educational work of the entire educational vertical.

Interdisciplinary topics are realized by interconnecting educational areas and teaching topics of all subjects. The European Framework of Reference states that the competences acquired during compulsory education are not subject-specific but relate to broader interdisciplinary objectives and are a link from teaching to lifelong learning.

Seven interdisciplinary topics were singled out and defined and two of them are entrepreneurship and civic education.

Civic education encompasses knowledge of individual rights, the characteristics of a democratic community, and political systems. The student develops critical thinking and communication skills necessary for social and political action in everyday life.

The fundamental values promoted by learning and teaching Civic Education are responsibility, human dignity, freedom, equality, and solidarity. Importance is attached to the development of a responsible attitude towards public goods as well as the readiness of the individual to contribute to the spread, development and maintenance of common public goods.

Cross-curricular topic Civic education enables the student to: develop their own civic competence that enables the effective performance of the civic role:

- acquire knowledge of human rights, political concepts, processes and political systems and the characteristics of a democratic community and ways of participating in its political and social life
- promotes human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity, democratic principles in the community inside and outside school life

- develops critical thinking, argumentation skills and communication skills necessary for the social and political participation of active citizenship
- develops the fundamental values prescribed by the Constitution: freedom, equality, ethics, morality, family values and the value of marriage, national and gender equality, peace, social justice, respect for human rights, inviolability of property and home, preservation of nature and human environment, rule of law and democratic multi-party system. (Decision on the adoption of the curriculum for the cross-curricular subject Civic Education for primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Croatia, NN 10/2019)

Entrepreneurship is the value of creative, responsible, and innovative activation of personal potentials in different areas of life and different social roles. Entrepreneurship is the ability of an individual to turn ideas into action.

Entrepreneurship competence is one of the key competences of the European Framework of Reference for Lifelong Learning, which is needed by every individual in (self) employment and personal growth and development in the knowledge society.

Entrepreneurship as a value and Entrepreneurship as an interdisciplinary topic are included in all cycles and all subjects and extracurricular activities from an early age. The connection between the school, the economy, the labor market, and the local community is important, with a special emphasis on experiential learning with mentoring support, assistance, and monitoring.

Within the topic Entrepreneurship the student will:

- develop organizational and managerial skills (planning, implementation of plans, monitoring of execution, time management) and the ability to make decisions
- set goals and priorities in solving problems
- develop the ability to work in a team and lead a team
- develop communication skills (mutual and group, presentation, and negotiation skills)
- get to know the rules of learning and working in an intercultural environment
- support openness to new ideas and opportunities
- create innovative, competitive, and creative solutions
- get acquainted with project development and project management
- develop economic and financial literacy
- get acquainted with basic economic concepts (creating new value) and behave socially responsible
- develop perseverance, a positive attitude towards work and work habits, the ability to self-assess and think critically, and to define and solve problems
- distinguish and explore individual occupations
- to acquire basic knowledge in the field of work and business for the purpose of career development,
- recognize the need and opportunities for lifelong learning.

Through the realization of educational expectations of the interdisciplinary topic Entrepreneurship, the student acquires work habits, develops responsibility, independence, diligence, initiative, creativity, innovation, decision-making ability, self-confidence, determination to act, willingness to take reasonable risk and risk management, mobility and flexibility in their living environment and action with special emphasis on the importance of ethical behavior and respect for ethical values.

As far as non-formal education is concerned, modern research on learning has shown that learning is much better and more lasting in a non-formal atmosphere, i.e., through the interaction of

participants and collaborative learning and through non-formal methods that provide students with interesting, creative, experiential, and exploratory learning.

The largest space for the promotion of lifelong learning and non-formal education is provided by the Agency for Mobility and EU Programs (AMPEU) and the programs: Erasmus + and Horizon 2020 (research and innovation program).

It is shown that individuals who participate in non-formal education improve their skills, especially those related to taking action, entrepreneurship, inclusion, teamwork, etc.

Such and similar forms and methods of non-formal learning should become an integral part of the improvement and advancement of the formal educational system and lifelong learning. Non-formal learning is a framework for developing students' potentials, knowledge, skills, and values that will help them in personal development and success and adequately prepare them for global competition and new demands on the labor market.

3.1.4. Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities

Socialist Republic of Croatia was established in 1943 and lasted until 1990. Throughout that time, books and school textbooks were treated as an instrument of revolution, a basic means of education and influence on people's consciousness. Post-war teaching was based on a combination of Marxism, Leninism, Stalinism and, after all, Titoism. School that was supposed to educate students properly, in accordance with ideology, form a view of the world, had in its teaching work the basic components of Yugoslav ideology. All of this had an ideological function to children, though they may not have lived at the time of the creation of the state, they never forget the value of power that enabled the victory in the war, and which seeks to enable a better life for children through activities that help in creating a versatile, socialist man. (Tepeš, 2018)

After 1990, a war broke out in Croatia due to its declaration of independence and decision to leave Yugoslavia. The war lasted four years and left a fatal impact on all aspects of Croatian society. In terms of education, it meant delaying its progress and not being able to catch up with modern education policies which were current in Europe of that time.

Croatia entered the European Union in 2013 and thus gained a lot of benefits where some of them are related to education. Croatia now, being the official member of the EU, follows some of its main education policies:

- emphasizes the great benefits for all children, especially disadvantaged children, when it comes to participation in early and pre-school education, and in this context emphasizes the importance of ensuring that every child has access to early and pre-school education; ; notes with concern, in this regard, that in several Member States the demand for places for early and pre-school education is higher than the supply, especially for younger children;
- stresses the importance of monitoring the quality of early and pre-school education in order to enable children to develop their cognitive skills and to determine whether the best interests of children are being met.
- emphasizes the positive effect of cultural diversity and multilingualism in schools on the linguistic and cognitive development of students, as well as on the promotion of intercultural awareness, respect and pluralism.
- notes that the modern curriculum should focus on fostering competences, improving personal skills and improving the ability to lead healthy and future-oriented lifestyles,

focusing on formative assessments and the psychological and emotional well-being of students; considers that every student should be able to fulfill his or her intellectual potential; Stresses that skills development and strengthening is an ongoing process that extends across all levels of education and the labor market, and that skills and competences should be taken into account in the educational process and in the recognition of educational qualifications;

- stresses the need for more open schools in order to enable the recognition of non-formal and informal learning as well as the smooth transition between different educational fields (eg technical and academic);
- notes that a significant number of new jobs are being created in renewable energy industries and that green sectors and occupations should be adequately addressed in school curricula.
- emphasizes that information management skills, critical thinking and the ability to apply acquired knowledge are key objectives of academic education.
- advocates that higher education must accompany society as a whole in order to promote innovative growth and social well-being; considers that cooperation between higher education institutions and external stakeholders is desirable, given that the latter can contribute to the design and implementation of higher education programs through knowledge and expertise; points out, however, that decision-making must always be the responsibility of students and pedagogical professionals. (European Parliament, 2018)

Finally, there are certainly a lot of SIE opportunities in this country. What we need to work on is the motivation and continuous education of both teachers and students as they will be the carriers of changes in the future.

3.2 Teachers needs and preferences

To understand teachers' understanding and experience regarding Social Innovation Education as well as training needs and preferences, we designed and conducted a survey to collect teachers' input. This quantitative inductive research was followed by a deductive qualitative research using a focus group with a subgroup of the survey respondents. The aim of combining the two tools was to clarify some of the answers in the survey and to explore any hypothesis we did not consider during the survey in a deductive manner. The main takeaways and findings will be presented below.

3.2.1 Survey

The survey was deployed by PAR University using google forms between March 30 and April 30. In total 30 teachers answered the survey in conformity with the GDPR regulations.

Teacher profile

Students Age groups	Teachers	Proportions
Adult (+25)	1	3%
Highschool (14-18)	14	47%
Middle School (11-14)	10	33%
Elementary and Middle School (7-14)	3	10%
Elementary (6-11)	2	7%
TOTAL	30	100%

Teachers who answered the survey teach a variety of subjects from Biology, Geography, Mathematics to Religion, Physics, Foreign and Croatian language. In terms of students' level, they teach, the teachers are teaching mainly students about **11 years old with 47% teaching at high school level (14-18) and 33% Middle school (11-14)** and a smaller number of teachers who are teaching at elementary level (6-11) 7% and a 10% who teach both elementary and middle school students (7-14)

On average a class has around 19 students with the lowest at 15 students and the highest at 25.
When it comes to collaboration with other initiatives **almost half of the teachers (14 out of 30) are not part of any educational association, professional association or engage with any other organization in extracurricular activities.** The other half of teachers (16 out of 30) mentioned the Croatian society of historians, Croatian association of chemistry teachers, Association Ekonom, Religion teachers association in Croatia, Association of Italian language teachers ISTRA among others.

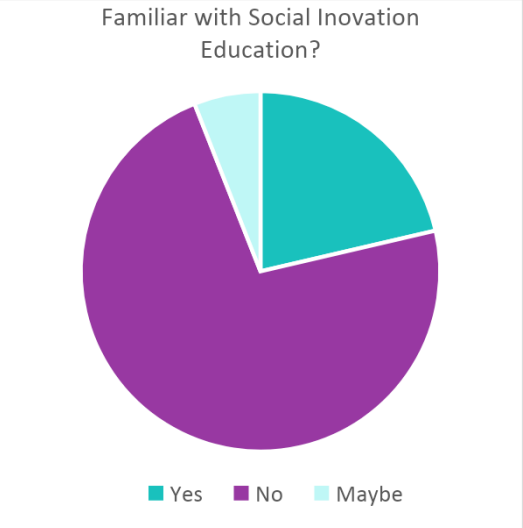
Socio Economic Context

Teachers who answered the survey come from four main areas: **Karlovac, Zagreb, Reika and Delince**. In terms of schools' socio-economic context, we have 33% of schools who do not have a vulnerable group, the next more significant category is Roma community with 33% followed by Newly Arrived Migrants with 13% and other groups mentioned by the teachers were Students whose parents have poorer financial situation and Disabled students both representing 10% of the responding schools.

Socio-economic characteristic which applies most to the school	Responses	Proportions
None	10	33%
Roma Community	10	33%
Newly Arrived Migrants	4	13%
Students whose parents have poorer financial situation	3	10%
Disabled students	3	10%

Social Innovation Education (SIE)

As part of the survey, we investigated teachers' experience with SIE or other similar concepts. At the start of this section, we also included a definition of the concept so that teachers who are not familiar with the terms could relate to it and share from their experiences. The definition provided was "*Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, businesspeople, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process*



they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future."

When asked if they are **familiar with the term Social Innovation Education most of the teachers said "no", 57%, only 17% said "yes" and 27% answered "maybe".**

When asked what they think it means, teachers associated the name of the method with **innovation, collaboration, and inclusiveness** in the educational system. *"Innovation is something new, just invented and in this case, it refers to social areas."* The terms are also **associated with the reform of the educational system** as this teacher shared *"Model which wants to modify existing education system"* and "*I think it's about new teaching methods".*

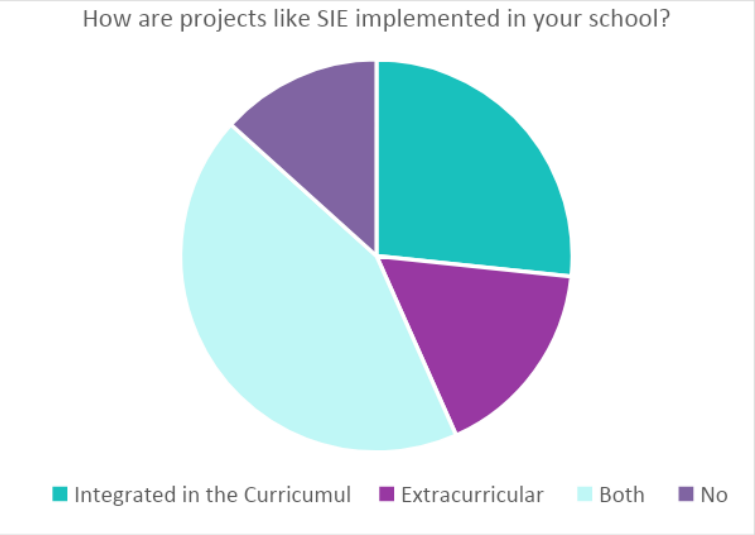
In terms of **experience with applying the SIE model only one teacher (1/30) responded that they had used the method** when **50% said no and 47% said not sure**. Out of those who said yes and are not sure only three gave examples as follows "*We were working on an Erasmus project related to a new international and intercultural methodology, I don't know if this goes into education for social innovation", "I participated in Erasmus sport, I don't know if that is part of SIE", "About soft skills".* These responses also highlight that Erasmus projects are associated with new and innovative teaching and learning methods.

School Context

In this section of the survey, we looked at the overall school context, how extracurricular projects are being implemented, who are the key stakeholders as well and enable and potential barriers.

In terms of extracurricular activities**, each school has a rich and wide range of activities** from Science to arts, drama, journalism, sports, languages, choir, dancing and so on. The teachers recognize the numerous extracurricular activities using terms such as "*too many"* or *"Many types, from sport to art*".

When asked how projects like SIE are implemented in their school most of the teachers said that "Both regular classes and extracurricular activities" 43%, Integrated in the curriculum 27%, as Extracurricular activities 17% and 13% do not have any experience with similar projects. These results indicate that **SIE is more likely to be implemented if aligned with the curriculum**.



In terms of **obstacles** some of the most common were **lack of finance, teachers lack of motivation** *"Staff is passive and unwilling to join"*, **lack of capacity and time** *"Due to other obligations from regular, additional or additional classes, professors simply do not have time to dedicate to quality work on the project"* **, Students lack of interest and motivation "***Students laziness"* and **Bureaucracy** "*A lot of paperwork which has to be justified", to "Resistance of people in leadership positions", "Probably finding and preparing the project before its integration*".

Some of the strategy's teachers applied to overcome these barriers related to the school environment were "*With a good plan and organization."* as well as *"strong will of teachers to introduce and implement a project that they consider to be of high quality and that will help the development of schools, students, teachers*" and *"By preparing systematically".* In **terms of overcoming students lack interest, teachers' share the following strategies** were "*By delivering detailed presentation of the project"* and *"By motivating them speaking about what benefits does Erasmus project bring*"

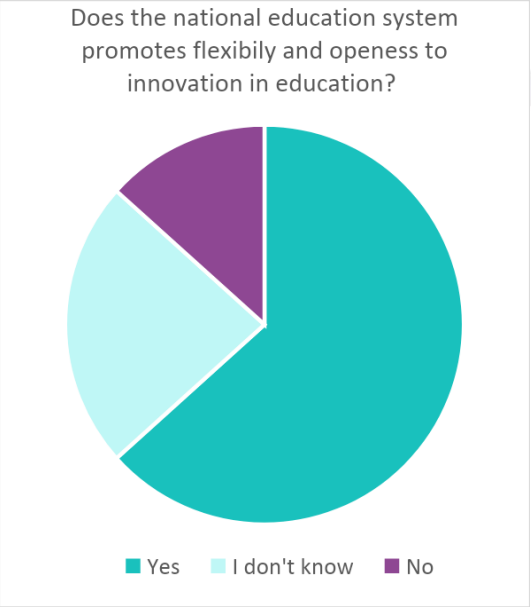
When we asked teachers "What enablers are there to integrate new projects into your school?" teachers mentioned *"Many, by curriculum, regular class, and other activities"* however they are highlighting the challenges to find motivated colleagues, leadership, students "*There are many possibilities, but not many interested people "*

It is encouraging to see that **most teachers 63% had collaborated with local stakeholders/association during projects** however there are 23% who did not collaborate and 10% who responded maybe. The collaboration with them included *"Help in finance and promotion", "partners, guest lecturers ", "With local city hall as partners" and "Cooperation partnership"*

The collaboration with parents has also potential for improvement. **Only 33% of parents are involved in projects** and this collaboration could be improved through *"Regular meetings to inform about the project", "By giving them more tasks"* and *"by including them in the content of the project"*

National context

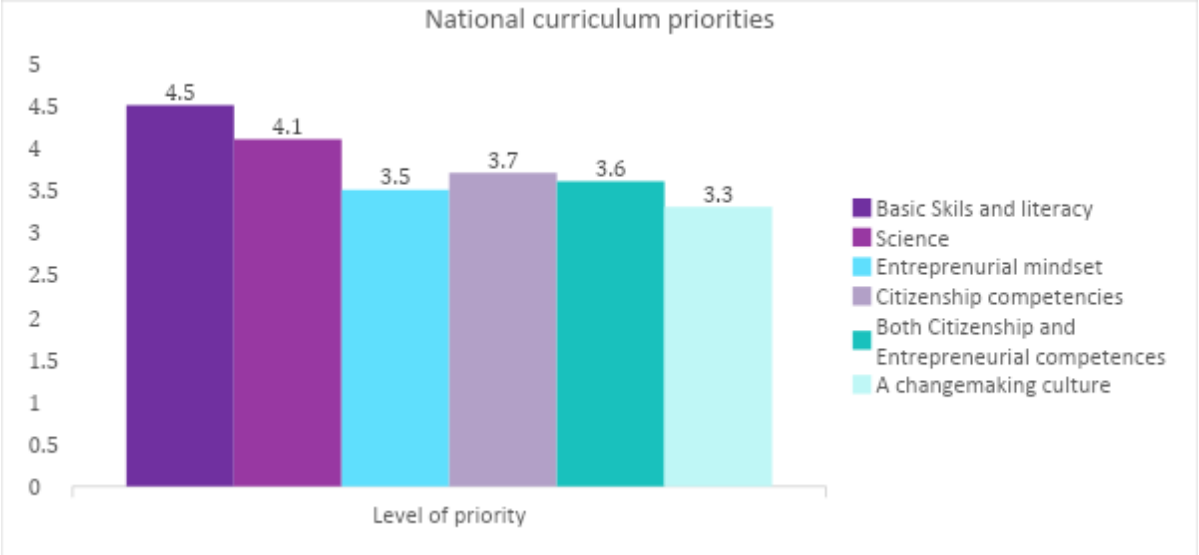
In this section we looked at national context in terms of openness to innovation, teacher professional development, available resources, and national curriculum priorities.



63% of teachers believe that the Croatian national education system promotes flexibility and openness to innovation in education while 23% do not know. Only 13% of teachers disagree. In terms of opportunities for teacher training and continuous professional development in innovation to education

the percentages are almost the same 67% of teachers agreeing, 23% do not know and 10% disagree. Since the answers are remarkably similar, it can indicate a **correlation in teachers' perception of national system priorities and practices reflected in professional development opportunities offered to teachers.**

Teachers were asked to rate on a scale of not a priority (1) to high priority (5) the priorities of national curriculum towards developing the following competences for students: Basic skills and literacies, Science, Entrepreneurial mindsets, Citizenship competences, Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences and A changemaking culture. **The top priority perceived by teachers is Basic skills and literacy followed by Science, Citizenship competences,** Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences, Entrepreneurial mindsets and lastly A Change making culture.



An important concern for the project is that a large majority of teachers 70% shared that they lack the time and support to work on innovative educational practices such as SIE, 20% said that they do not know and only 10% shared that it will be possible.

Pandemic impact

Since all educational systems have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, we investigated how teachers and students have access to technology well as how the teaching process was impacted by the pandemic.

In Croatia **only 33% of all students** who were targeted in this survey **are equipped with the necessary equipment to participate in online classes** while in 66% of cases only some students have the necessary equipment. In terms of teachers the situation is reversed 36% of teachers have partial access to equipment and **64% of teachers share they have access to necessary equipment and tools to conduct online classes**.

The teaching process has greatly been impacted by the technology and its impact is reflected in the adaptation of the lesson in the digital space as these teachers share "*More work online and use of digital technology"* and "*I learned new ways to transfer knowledge."* Teachers seam to associate it with **negative impact** of the teaching process as these teachers share *"additional load and stress", "Given the nature of my subject, it totally made it worse", "I miss live communication because some things just can't be conveyed through online teaching, and students 'motivation is declining", I don't like online teaching".* There are also teachers who see it **more in the gray** "*It has definitely changed it, it has its good and bad sides (good - fast, reduced paperwork, bad - lack of student motivation, lack of live communication"* or **more positively** *"The pandemic has modernized my work and encouraged me to look for new methods and strategies for teaching and motivating students", "It showed me that one should always adapt to a new condition"*

Teacher training preferences

Since an important output of CSS-EU is teacher training we investigated past teachers training experiences and tried to understand teachers' preferences and the ongoing support they would like to receive.

When asked to describe a **training experience they enjoyed** and why did they enjoyed it, teachers gave a wide variety of answers highlighting the **interactivity aspects** "The seminar of the Society of Biologists in Zagreb was interactive and fun" **peer to peer learning and feedback** "A workshop for chemistry professors where we all presented our lesson structures and learned from each other" the **practicality aspects** "On the islands with other teachers and children where we applied the learned things", the **relevance of the content** "Training on the digitalization of teaching in which we participated when the pandemic began. I liked it because it was well run, interesting and primarily informative." As well as the **possibility to observe other contexts** "Our association organizes workshops for professors where we exchange experiences and travel around Croatia"

In terms of priorities for training needs and ongoing support teachers shared that it needs to be **practical and applicable** *"Well organized, professional and applicable in real conditions"* **benefit the students** "*One that I can apply in class and that will benefit students"* how to **engage the students** "*About how to motivate and encourage shy and more passive students"* as well as **related to online learning** "*Training on how to maintain quality teaching through online learning"*

3.2.1 Focus Group

In Croatia 10 teachers participated in the focus group and they were further divided into 2 groups of 5 participants each. The focus group gathered participants' opinions and understanding in relation to Social Innovation Education, it is integration in the curriculum, community involvement, resources, decision making and training preferences.

Understanding of Social Innovation Education

When it comes to **teachers understanding of Social Innovation Education** teachers perceive it as a **new teaching method** "*A model whose goal is to introduce new teaching methods''* or *"Trying to*

modernize school system by working with students " and emphasize the **collaboration aspects** "*It is innovative approach to education which implies cooperation with students" and "Cooperation with students for the purpose of changing schools and current education"* as well as the **inclusive approach** *" Trying to establish equal opportunities for everyone in the community by improving the way of life in local community/ I am not familiar with the term."* There are **also teachers who are not familiar with Social Innovation Education** *"I am not sure because I never had the opportunity to work within SIE, but I think it is an initiative where schools function as a promoter of social actions in their local surroundings"* and *"I have no idea - never heard about the term"*

In terms of **activities Social Innovation Education can include teachers mentioned Research, Group work, Presentations, Field work as follows** "*It can include regular teaching during the classes as well as some extra activities we think of while working individually with the students'' and "studying and teaching, making a research and promoting it on various levels (local/national/international)"* as well as "*student working alone or in groups and presenting their work".* Teachers also emphasized their role as facilitators in this process *"students doing fieldwork with the teacher guiding them".*

Social innovation education is associated with something *"new and useful", "innovative and fresh ideas*" as well as something "*students are not familiar with"* which will bring benefits to the students *"something students will benefit from".*

Integrating Social Innovation Education in the curriculum

Teachers recognize there are multiple paths to integrate SIE into the curriculum. As part of **existing subjects** *"It could be embedded into existing subjects, but not all of them, for instance it might be difficult to include it into subjects of scientific nature, such as Maths and Physics. I think it would work better within subjects which are more humanist and social oriented, such as languages, history, psychology, etc.".* An alternative path is to become **a standalone new subject** "*Maybe a whole new subject teaching SIE could be thought of with its methodology, there is a lot of work there to establish it, but it would definitely be of great value for the students - it would of course, have to be decided whether or not to introduce this subject as a mandatory or optional, but this is work of school council and principal."* Or as a **multidisciplinary collaborative project** as this teacher shares ``I *think all teaching staff should meet and see which objectives of SIE could be adapted to their subjects and then take bits and pieces of it - in that way every subject would have at least some components of SIE".*

Some teachers are recognizing that they are already including **the student-centered** aspect of Social Innovation Education as this teacher shares "*we tend to put students to the center always and as a part of each subject*" as well as **agency and addressing social issues** *"within the course of civic education, we try to encourage students to take action in their local community and thus establish a change for the benefit of others*". There are also teachers who are not sure *"Not that I am aware of".*

Teachers are recognizing the versatility and flexibility of the method and are identifying **history and Croatian language as subjects which could integrate SIE** *"In History for example, we could emphasize more those historical events (e.g. revolutions or something similar) which were driven from socio/political activation from individuals so as to show the students that when put together with the*

same idea, people can achieve great things and change the course of the history ." and "*The same can be applicable in part of language classes, when dealing with history of language, especially in Croatian language"*

Teachers who participated in the focus **group shared some of their experiences with transnational national projects** "*We participated as a school in an international project with Goethe institute within the subject of German language. Our students had the opportunity to take the German language and obtain official certificates. Teachers, on the other hand, traveled to Germany and there met other German teachers coming from various non-speaking German countries. Both the teaching staff and students reacted well to it."* Which **contributed to the development of intercultural skills** *"A project where we participated had to do with IT skills and digitalization. We had partners from Cyprus, Germany, Italy and Portugal. Besides acquiring IT skills, both students and staff traveled to partner countries and in that way improved their intercultural skills."* Teachers also shared examples of **collaborative projects where they were able to mobilize the local community around the projects including local stakeholders and leadership.** *"In our school every year we have an initiative where we cooperate with other schools from the local area and together prepare an event dedicated to foreign languages. We work with students during the classes and extra hours to prepare the program where they read and recite in foreign languages. Event takes place in the city hall. Local stakeholders, city council and library also collaborate with us in arranging this program."*

Enables

Teachers identified **student collaboration and involvement in community issues** as one of the **advantages** of SIE method *"Students would get aware of the importance of collaboration with the local people*" and "*It would raise students' awareness about socio-political issues in their area".* The methods will also bring **fresh new ideas which will be beneficial for the students and the teachers** "*They would open their horizons and become more open-minded"* and *"It would break the monotony of always teaching the same subjects".*

SIE could contribute to enable more teachers to collaborate within a school as this teacher shares *"One of the targets could be introducing SIE in more than one subject - spread its spirit and make the school SIE Ambassador".* The **school environment is favorable and enthusiastic for the projects from teachers' staff** *"Some of the teaching staff is really enthusiastic towards new projects and already possesses a lot of knowledge and skills on how to implement them in subjects***" to school directors** "*Our principal is more than eager to participate in this type of the project and connect with local stakeholders so as to create benefit for the whole area".* Also the **teachers emphasized the past experience** they possess which could be leveraged in this project "*Other projects that we had in the past can help us with this one, i.e. we more or less know the procedure and how to guide it*" **as well as the need for adaptation to students needs as this teacher shared** "*We wouldn't make difference in targeting the students - we would adapt the project needs to every level of education."*

Challenges

When asked about challenges teachers mentioned the **bureaucracy** "*Teachers, both in primary and secondary schools, are faced with a lot of paperwork which has to be done regularly and in time. A*

*lot of time it so happens that teachers have managed all that paperwork at home. Therefore, they are burdened with students in the school and with the paperwork at home which means that they simply have neither time nor willingness to take up a new project which means finding more time and doing more paperwork. "*Another challenge is related to **student's motivation** , especially at high school level as this teacher shares "*A big problem in this area is lack of motivation with students, especially in high schools. Due to the sensitive area of puberty, students are shy and barely manage the obligations they must take care of for regular classes, let alone extra activities. Furthermore, they do not want to actively participate and have a fear of being judged and criticized for their mistakes."* Teachers are also concerned with the **duration of the project** as these teachers share "*I would say that the length of the project is a big issue here. The projects themselves last a lot, especially in their beginning phase. This might exhaust all the staff working on it. "*as well as **engaging the school leadership** *"Sometimes the problematic aspect of this story are the principals and managing staff who simply do not approve new ideas and projects for the fear that teachers will then neglect their main area of work (i.e., their subjects) for the sake of projects' work.* Lastly, teachers are concerned that **collaborating with local authorities and institutions** might be challenging. "*It is difficult to establish cooperation with local city hall/organizations/institutions because each and every one of them has their own aspect of work."*

Communication and dialog have been mentioned by teachers as some of the strategies they had applied to mitigate potential challenges as these teachers share "*It is crucial to establish a dialogue firstly with the staff who will be working on the projects and then with the students. Everyone needs to have a clear vision of the project and know what benefits it brings for the entire institution"* and "*Strategies of persuasion and good communication skills".* Another **effective strategy mentioned by teachers is good organization and preparation** *"When it comes to projects, it is vital to conduct a good preparation and continuously follow the work and tasks that are being submitted. Once you fall behind with the work, it is difficult to catch up."* Teachers mentioned including **rewards for students** can motivate them "*Students will be interested if there is a reward included, perhaps teachers can motivate them by giving some credit for their work (additional points, no homework, etc.".* Lastly teachers mentioned peer support and encouragement as a strategy to keep motivating teachers *"Teachers working on the project should encourage and motivate others to join so as to create better results".*

Community Engagement

During the focus group teachers created an extensive list of **community organizations which could be supportive of SIE as follow** "*Maybe other local schools / Libraries / City Hall and city council / Other non-profit organizations which deal with education / Museums which have educational purpose / Local companies which might find the project interesting"*

Parents are seen as potential supporters at elementary level "In elementary schools in general we have a good cooperation with the parents, they support our projects and sometimes even take part in it" but **their influence will be reduced at high school level** as this teacher shares "In high schools, parents do not have as important role and most of the time they are not even aware of the projects

that are being undertaken in the schools."

On the other hand, perception of collaboration with local government can be seen as **beneficial** as this teacher shares *"If we try a lot, we can get their support in project implementation - they could promote our work and help us, either in organizational or financial sense*. "However, teachers recognize that **it is difficult to engage and rely on them** as their two teachers share "*It is difficult to reach them, and if so, more difficult to get their response"* and *"I wouldn't rely too much on them."*

Resources and infrastructure

Teachers recognize the **importance of technical staff and IT resources** as this teacher shares "*The most important role is technical staff working on the project because everything will depend on them - reaction of the students, communication with the partners, progress on the project"* and" IT *Resources which will enable us to work fast and efficiently.* "Other than that they **are not too worried about resources** as this teacher shares *"I think that more or less we have all relevant resources."*

In terms of **IT equipment teachers feel good about the existing resources however there are still places where the internet connection and equipment are lacking** *"Yes, we have good equipment" and "Some of the classrooms are lacking computers and internet connection"* and *"connection is sometimes slow, and it is impossible to work."* Teachers emphasized the importance of having good infrastructure at home as this teacher shares "*These days it is more important for teachers and students to have a good IT structure and access to Internet in their homes (due to Covid and distance learning)* "as well as in **remote villages where this is lacking** *"3 years ago we had all our equipment changed thanks to the Ministry of Education, so we have a really good IT infrastructure. We do realize, however, that this is not the case in other Croatian cities and villages. "*

Decision making

Teachers shared that the curriculum is **normally decided at the start of the school year taking into consideration the ministry recommendations** *"This is decided at the beginning of every school year"* and *"The decision of the national ministry and previous years are taken into consideration."* Teachers also shared that each one of them has the **right to state their opinions** *"All teachers have the right to state their opinion".*

Regarding project implementation, the school environment **can be difficult to navigate** as there is never a single opinion "*There are always both sides - those who wish to participate and those who are skeptical about it"* there are also situation when the project could be sabotaged *"Unfortunately there are people sabotaging the projects for unknown reasons."* This teacher also gives good insights into what the project presentation needs to include to be successful from students desired outcomes to activities, partners, and roles "*The project first has to be approved and then described in terms of who will take over which part, how it's going to influence the students, which activities should take place, who will have a leading role, which partners to contact, etc."*

Teachers **can take the students outside the classroom to conduct activities however permission from parents and principal need to be given** "*With the permission of a principal and students'*

parents" and it depends on the location "It depends how far from the school they would go" and "In general yes, we don't have a problem with that."

Teacher training preferences

In terms of training preferences teachers prefer **both theory and practice** *"A training which has both theory and practice (and the emphasis is put on practice because theory is easily forgotten)"* with clear guidelines *"A perfect training would be well guided and conducted ".* The training needs to bring in something new and be **inspirational** *"I love the training which inspires me with new ideas for class".* Teachers would **also prefer to travel for the training** *"My personal preference is a training which takes place in another city or even country because it enables me to travel and expand my horizons".*

Teachers prefer in person training *"I personally prefer live training*" but **recognize the benefits and comfort of online training** "*Online sessions though they are transmitted via Internet also have their charm because you can enjoy them and learn something from the comfort of your own home.*

3.3 Policy makers priorities

The Croatian context and needs analysis also included interviews with policy makers to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Croatia 5 individuals were interviewed and even if they were all categorized under the umbrella of policy makers bring in a variety of roles within the broader educational system from University Dean to Assistant in the Ministry of Education Council to Head of office in the regional department for education, Associate professor at School of Law or Headmaster at local High School. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

Policy makers expertise areas

The **expertise pallet of policy makers is extraordinarily rich and broad,** and it includes the "*development of the new Ministry of Education Curriculum*" to the practical implementation of the policies at school levels as this headmaster shares "*implementation of the decisions of the school board, teachers' council and other bodies and implement the decisions of the teachers' council on the imposition of pedagogical measures, on the requests and complaints of students and their parents".* The policy makers interviews also have extensive experience with courses design, implementation, and *"preparation of proposals for determining education programs above the state pedagogical standard to be financed from the city budget: programs for gifted primary school students, extended stay programs and full-time classes, early IT education, programs for students and children of preschool age with special needs, programs for additional education of teachers and professional associates, city level competitions, meetings and festivals, international and intercity cooperation of schools; scholarships for gifted high school and university students and scholarships for students who*

are educated for deficit occupations, and for whom the city of Rijeka expresses the need for employment of the city's educational, social, health and cultural institutions; "

Priorities for the educational sector

- **Combine practical and theoretical knowledge** as this policy maker shares "We *strive to have an equal ratio of theory and practice. We* ***equip students with tools for the real needs of the labor market****, we teach them the tangible skills they will need. Finally, a few years ago, people started talking about the importance* ***of introducing practical knowledge into studying****. PAR is a pioneer in the dual model, and as other colleges and universities have only recently begun to introduce such a model, it is proof that we have been on the right track."*
- **Prepare students for the future** *"I would say prepare the students for the future, in terms of providing them with* ***relevant theoretical and practical background which will enable them to tackle challenges from our domain****. Other than that, establish international cooperation and in that way encourage students to study abroad and develop their* ***intercultural skills.***
- **Inclusive Education** *"Globally competitive, high quality, accessible, inclusive and sustainable education system based on excellence and economic and social needs in which children, pupils and students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, responsibility, entrepreneurship and innovation in work, in which educational workers have appropriate status, strong professional and stimulating role and significant independence and responsibility in work, and parents greater involvement in the educational process; a scientific system that drives economic and social growth and development. "*and ***"Leave no one behind****, fight illiteracy, promote a culture of inclusion in and throughout education systems, to reach all learners prioritizing the most disadvantaged and vulnerable. Design and implement affirmative policy actions and innovative learning programs that act on the multiple factors preventing children and youth from pursuing a full education cycle. Ensure that* ***education policies prioritize gender equality and encourage their participation in STEM****. Increase investment in early childhood care and education to counter disadvantages and set the foundations for successful learning in school. Strengthen policies* ***to include refugees, migrants, and the forcibly displaced, in national education systems,*** *and ensure continuity of education in conflict and crisis-affected situations.* ***Work beyond policy silos*** *to connect education, health, nutrition, gender, technology and labor, bringing on board the expertise from governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society, teachers, youth and the private sector."*

Priorities for teachers

- Engage with teachers who are capable to inspire and motivate students "To gather staff which is professional and willing to work. It is important for the educational organization to have **teachers who know how to inspire and motivate as this is what drives motivated students.** While employing teachers, we look not only at their professional career, but also their readiness to approach students and understand their needs."
- **Continuous professional development** "*Encourage them to train and improve their skills and knowledge continuously by preparing workshops and seminars which they could attend regularly*."

- **Create a supportive environment for teachers' professional development "***Track their work, listen to their needs, provide them with support, inform them continuously about the way they can improve their skills and way of teaching (seminars, workshops, courses)"*
- **Nurture teachers to lead by example** *"Scale up investment in teachers through better training, professional development and decent working conditions. Teachers must teach students to harness the power of collaboration and show to be authentic leaders."*

Priorities for students

- **Ensure students have the knowledge and practical skills for the job market** *"Students learn real knowledge and practical skills and represent a link between academia and the real sector. They aim to connect the knowledge they provide to students with the job market and make it easier for them to enter the business world. Students are thus enabled to connect directly with the business community or create their own networking."*
- **Develop a curious and resilient mindset** *"We want to have students who are well educated in terms of theoretical knowledge, but also equipped with skills which they will master throughout their studies. We want* ***our students to be curious and never stop exploring*** *and asking questions.* ***We teach them to always dig deeper in the issue and never give up if a problem arise****s. We are, of course, aware that these students are not born, but rather created and this is the approach we cultivate with them from the first day they enter our institution."*
- **Create an inclusive space for students to reach their full potential** "*Keep track of their needs, make sure that schools provide them not only a place to learn, but also a place for creating friends, feeling safe, a place enjoyable to be. We work on students' inclusion as well and we try to get rid of the stereotypes there are due to national or religious background."*
- **Contribute to student's competency development** *"Increase their motivation and self-confidence, guide them in the process of maturation, help them with their problems, listen to them, try to understand them*
- **Develop 21st century skills and competencies such as problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking, courage, confidence and passions** *"Our students need to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Students should never be afraid of trying something because they are afraid of failure. They need to know they do not have to go at it alone, and sometimes you need others to accomplish tasks. Educators must teach their students that by their combined talents, they can maximize their energy, passion, and creativity. Students must be able to assess and analyze information."*

Social Innovation Education

The **Policy Makers interviewed did not know about Social Innovation Education however after learning more about it rated it positively** as a "*It seems like a brilliant idea!"* they appreciated *"The fact that it* ***created the link between schools and their local communities*** *is simply extraordinary"* however they are also raising **concerns in regards to conducting the project in the online setting** "*is a good idea, but I am not sure how the implementation is going to look like. Both teachers and students are tired of regular classes, especially these days with the online classes and they don't show much of an enthusiasm towards new projects and ideas*."

In terms of organizational priorities, **Social Innovation Education is on the agenda of the Ministry of Education who is recognizing the common goals to develop students' skills and social engagement** as they share this interview *"We have the same goals, more or less - develop students' skills and social engagement. SIE puts students in the center and takes into account the skills and competences of teachers*." We also noticed **an alignment with school leadership policies** who shared *"It goes well with our idea to encourage students to take more action and collaborate with the local community. I believe that this initiative would yield good results for the benefit of both students and community."*

Initiatives similar to Social Innovation Education are considered by **the ministry of education who are working towards developing social competencies through civic education** "*We are in the process of creating it - social competences for students of both primary and secondary school through civic education*" however **it still needs to be developed, tested and validated** "*We are currently working on something similar, but still needs time to develop and test it so as to see its effectiveness."*

Even if the policy makers did not give any specific examples when it comes to teacher training programs to **support them in embracing innovative educational approaches**, the policy makers shared that teachers are encouraged and regularly informed when such opportunities arise "*Yes and teachers are informed about them on a regular basis. Moreover, they are encouraged to participate in them as it is thought it will generally have a positive impact on their teaching in general.*"

In terms of similar programs with SIE, the policy makers recognize that **the area still needs to be developed** "*There are not many in Croatia, I would say that this is still a relatively new concept in our area*" and mentioned **Prima initiative and Newfelpro project.**

CSS-EU recommendations

- Make the project very **practical** "*As much as practice as possible. I think everyone is fed up with projects which have a lot of theoretical output."*
- Build **a good team of partners and coordinate project responsibilities well** "I *would say that the most important thing is to gather good partners and include professional staff. This is the key to good project management. Also, the coordinator should bear in mind all the tasks, responsibilities and deadlines."*
- **Professional work with motivated students embedded in research findings** *"A lot of research, professional work conducted by devoted staff, motivated students willing to learn, etc."*
- **Good project management and ensuring stakeholders satisfaction** *"Quality, sufficient budget, team satisfaction, scope, schedule and deadline, satisfaction of the target audience*."
- **Set realistic expectations, communicate constantly, and work collaboratively** *"There are many factors which influence this: first and foremost, set expectations and be organized, then make sure to get support and organize the team, prepare for the risks as they are inevitable, stick to the plan and respect it, communicate efficiently…"*
- **Build with sustainability in mind** "*To create something meaningful and innovative, something that will remain even once the project ends."*

- **Put students' needs first** *"the students will be the carriers of this project. They should be listened to and given the right to speak and state their opinion whenever they ask for it."*

In terms of **organizations which could be interested in SIE the policy makers recommended Step by step, good initiative, local schools, and associations.**

In the end the policy makers had a last piece of advice for the team and this advice was *"Stay true to your principles".*

3.4 Civil society priorities

The Croatian context and needs analysis also included interviews with civil society representatives to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Croatia 5 individuals were interviewed coming from the Department of Schools and Education, Student Association, and local schools. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

Civil society area of work

The diversity of civil society representatives is linked together by their **mission to advance students education** from *"ensure equal access to education for everyone"* to *"create a community of high school students who will be all connected and cooperate in terms of national and international projects, networking, job opportunities, etc. "* and *"One of the objectives of the institution I work for is to prepare students to understand, contribute to, and succeed in a rapidly changing society, thus making the world a better and more just place."*

Educational Priorities

- **Inclusiveness** "*Establish an inclusive and caring school environment, foster positive school climate, encourage staff to embrace their roles, cooperate on local level with our community, encourage students to make a change in the society, establish good cooperation with other local schools (primary and secondary), etc."*

- Create a culture of change at local level by bringing the students together *"Bring the students together, inspire students in entrepreneurial sense, encourage the sense of intercultural identity, decrease the stereotypes students might have towards each other, create a culture of change on a local level"*

- Foster an environment favorable to students taking action *"Modernize the university, become a leader in higher education on a national level, ensure that higher education is available to everyone, establish international cooperation, encourage students to take action"*

- **Collaboration and communication with National Ministry to increase international collaboration and digitalization** *"A good cooperation and communication with national Ministry and all schools which belong to our region, continuous digitalization of school system, taking part in international projects related to education, create partnerships with other similar reputable institutions on national/international level"*

Social Innovation Education

Civil society representatives have a positive opinion in relation to Social Innovation education. In particular, they like the aspects of **taking action towards the benefit of the local community** "*Young people should be encouraged to take action and make a change for the benefit of their local community. These kinds of projects definitely lead to creating a sustainable society and they should be given more attention."* Other civil society representatives have also noted the positive aspects social innovation education creates in young people's lives "*Projects like these develop not only the change in the local surrounding, but also create changes within young people who take part in it and that is its most important benefit. Young people, students who participate in these projects feel more powerful, confident and autonomous and it is of crucial importance to foster these feelings."* Civil society representatives are also concerned regarding student's involvement in such activities *"I think of it as a good initiative, but I'm skeptical towards the willingness of the students to take part in it. Normally they are very passive and not eager to do more than just attend regular classes."*

Three out of five civil society representatives shared that they have initiatives like social innovation education. They motivated their decision to engage in such activities because such activities foster collaboration and involvement in addressing community issues "*Yes because one of our main goals is to make students collaborate with their local communities and create a positive change for themselves and others."* Another reason for adopting such initiatives within the organization are the skills students developed throughout the project which are relevant in their future *"Because we want to encourage students to take action and participate in extracurricular activities. It is important for them to develop the notion of a community so that they could continue with it later in the future."* The organizations who shared that they do not have social innovation education initiatives motivated it by having a different target group or a different role within the ecosystem "*Because we are not oriented towards that target group"* And "*Because we are more of a supervising institution."*

Civil society representatives shared that there are few initiatives like social innovation education such as Creative Youth and University of the 3rd century however they share the common thought that Croatia is still lagging behind other European countries *"Unfortunately no, I think Croatia still has a long way to go in this sense and still lagging a lot behind other European countries (mostly western ones)."*

CSS-EU Recommendations

- **Team expertise** "Staff who knows how to deliver this project, motivated students, good cooperation and communication with the local community, etc."
- **Students' motivation** "*The most vital thing is students' motivation, if that is lacking, the whole project will simply not function."*

- **Research and leverage existing know-how** *"A lot of research on the same topic so as to implement the strengths of other well conducted projects and avoid their mistakes."*
- **Good project management** *"Good preparation and organization - this is crucial for the project management, and especially of this kind which involves a lot of parties and lasts a long time."*
- **Collaboration and communication** "*Many factors are to be accounted for in these projects - staff, students, community cooperation, respecting the deadlines, collaboration with partners, being organized, ..."*
- **Find schools who undertook similar initiatives and learn from them** *"Find as many schools as possible who have undertaken the similar initiatives and learn from their experience."*
- **Authenticity and consistency** *"Being authentic and consistent the whole time during the project duration."*
- **Clear communication with students** *"The most important of everything is to explain the project to the students in such a way that they understand and realize the value of it. This is done by an inspiring presentation, and it could come handy to show some real and authentic materials from previous SIE workshops."*
- **Stick to core values and be original** *"You should strive to be original and not lose your core values"*

At the end civil society representatives had two more devices for us "*Our advice is **to put focus on students rather than teachers** so as to get the real experience of the project."* and *"Bear in mind that **objectives in a specific school context should be clearly defined** to avoid confusion in the middle of the project.*

3.5 SWOT Analysis

CSS-EU - Croatia	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Aligned with Ministry priorities and develops 21st century skills - Have an experienced team and proof of concept - Multidisciplinary and flexibility - Centered on students - Aims to create a practical approach towards SIE - Links the community and school - International exchange of know how - Teachers recognize the benefits of the method - this project is well structured and organized and it is easy to implement it - we have a lot of Erasmus+ projects, some of them very similar to CSS-EU which makes it easier to handle it - PAR University College is well known in our local and regional community and many institutions are willing to cooperate with us - staff motivation to undertake this project	- Develop a common understanding of what SIE is, 57% of teachers do not know what it is - Required time (70%) lack of time - Needs to be adapted to local context and find the communication mechanism - we are burdened with many projects and can't devote fully only to this one which could influence its quality - our main field of interest is Business and, in some areas, we miss the knowledge and skills necessary for work on school-related topics

Opportunities	Threats
- New curriculum adopted in 2019 I focused on 21st century skills - 63% of schools had already collaborated with local stakeholders - a good cooperation with many institutions on local and regional level - not many schools are familiar with SIE initiative which gives us room to introduce something new	- 33% of students have equipment to participate in online classes - There are many extracurricular activities inside the schools - Bureaucracy is a challenge identified by teachers - Keeping teachers and students motivated - the course of Covid-19 pandemic is unpredictable, and it is still unknown how the situation will develop in the beginning of the school year 2021/2022

Chapter 4 - Cyprus

Each country analysis starts with an overview of the educational context followed by the results of the survey and focus group as well as interviews with civil society and policy makers and key findings. Below we will present our qualitative and quantitative research findings from Cyprus.

4.1 Social Innovation Education Context

The Social Innovation Education Context is the result of the desk research conducted by our partner Center for Social Innovation CSI and includes an overview of the National Education System, the evolution of Social Innovation, Innovation in formal and non-formal education and Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities for Social Innovation Education.

4.1.1. Overview of the National Education System

Pre-school education in Cyprus is compulsory for all children having reached the age of 4 and 8 months by September 1st of a given school year. As the initial stage of education, pre-school aims to create, establish, and offer opportunities to children regardless of age, gender, or country of origin to achieve a balanced cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor development.

Primary education begins for all children aged 5 and 10 months before September 1st of a given school year and lasts for 6 years. Primary education focuses on respect and love of Greek civilization, identity, language, and religion, at the same time as it recognizes the multicultural trends of Cypriot society. It thus seeks to support the development of intercultural awareness, tolerance, and respect. Another important focus of primary education is knowledge regarding the European Union and the students' identities, rights, and responsibilities as European citizens.

Primary education is followed by Secondary education, which is divided into Lower and Upper. The Lower secondary school (Gymnasium) is meant for all students after they finish their Primary Education, usually at the age of 12, and involves a three-year cycle. When students successfully complete this cycle, they can then move to either the General upper secondary education (Lyceum) or attend the Secondary technical and vocational education, both of which are voluntary. Secondary education seeks to prepare students in their academic or professional orientation. It aims at the promotion and development of a healthy, spiritual and moral personality; the creation of competent, democratic and law-abiding citizens; the consolidation of national identity, cultural values, global ideals for freedom, justice, peace and the cultivation of love and respect for people, with the aim of promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between people.

Prior to commenting on some reforms introduced by the Ministry in relation to Secondary Education, it must be stated that Primary and Secondary Education can be also attained in Private institutions. The main difference between public and private education is that secondary education takes place through 7 years rather than 6 as is the case for the public educational system. The 7th year is usually

dedicated to preparing students for exams for entry to English-speaking Universities (A' Levels or similar type of exams).

In 2015, the Ministry of Education introduced a series of reforms in the public secondary education sector. The most significant of these reforms were: **a) success and competence indicators for learning, b) restructuring of diagnostic tests through nationwide diagnostic assessment at first year of Gymnasium in the subjects of Modern Greek and Mathematics and at first year of Lyceum in Modern Greek, Mathematics and Physics, c) the introduction of school Action Plans for the improvement of school units and d) the design of a new Teacher Evaluation System.** For Technical and vocational education, the 20th century saw a modernization of instructional methodologies as well as the creation of a modernized educational infrastructure including libraries and equipment technologies. The new instructional approach aims to prepare graduates to enter the job market and compete with other European graduates on an equal-opportunity basis. For further information see the website of the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture (moec.gov.cy).

4.1.2. The evolution of Social Innovation in Cyprus

In terms of the institutional framework in Cyprus, social entrepreneurship and the social economy was until recently under the jurisdiction of the 'Administrative Reform and Development Unit', a specialized unit created in 2015 and made up of staff from three different ministries: a) the Ministry of Economics and the Directorate-General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development; b) the Ministry of Internal Affairs; and c) the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism. The Unit was however dismantled in 2018, with its duties and responsibilities being divided between the three Ministries (Stylianou, 2018 - for an in-depth analysis of the redistributed duties and responsibilities, see article below in Greek https://inbusinessnews.reporter.com.cy/financials/cyprus/article/191286/dialyetai-i-monada-dioikitikis-metarrythmisis).

Social innovation in Cyprus is a relatively new concept and idea and largely connected with social enterprise. According to the ex-minister of Work and Social Services Sotiroulla Charalambous (2008-2013), in 2018, 6.7% of the workforce in the EU is employed in the social enterprise sector). Of course, different member states are at different levels regarding the integration and involvement of this sector in their economies and societies. As the minister states, in Cyprus, the social innovation and enterprise sector largely involves 'practices of cooperation'. While she does not offer further clarification over what that involves (but most likely it involves informal and unmonitored practices of cooperation between social agents), she does recognize that as a country Cyprus should further explore the possibilities of the application of practices of social innovation and social enterprise (Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe : comparative synthesis report. 2020. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/567551).

Despite the relatively new involvement of the social innovation and social enterprise sector in Cyprus, the last decade has seen the country taking steps towards greater integration of social enterprise in its economy and society, largely through EU projects. The 'Social Entrepreneurship Support Europe' scheme for example, has promoted the upgrading and development of capacities in the field of social entrepreneurship (SigmaLive News, 2017 - Eurosuccess: Social entrepreneurship

project | SigmaLive). In her interview, the minister has also stressed the importance of the Commission's 'Initiative for Social Enterprise', that provides the opportunity to take advantage of the numerous possibilities offered by Social Innovation and Social Enterprise ((Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe : comparative synthesis report. 2020. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/567551). Another example of the promotion of social innovation is the introduction of a new award for organizations dealing with Social Innovation by the Federation of Employers and Entrepreneurs in 2020 (InBusinessNews 2020. The Social Innovation Award is part of the Cyprus Innovation Awards 2020. InBusinessNews https://inbusinessnews.reporter.com.cy/business/services/article/254880/to-brabeio-koinonikis-kainotomias-entassetai-sta-kypriaka-brabeia-kainotomias-2020175
)

Recent years have seen the establishment of various organizations promoting social innovation in Cyprus. The Centre for Social Innovation, our organization, is one these with the aim of developing and introducing new solutions to systemic social problems (CSICY). Other organizations include Citizens in Power (Citizens In Power), EuroCY Innovations (Home | EUROCY Innovations Ltd), Cardet (CARDET - Home), Caritas-Cyprus (Caritas Cyprus – Ending poverty. promoting justice. restoring dignity.), Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies) and the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR)).

4.1.3. Innovation in Formal and Non-Formal Education

Secondary formal education in Cyprus already includes two courses that touch upon Entrepreneurship and Citizenship education. The first of these is Economics (Οικονομική Παιδεία) which aims at developing knowledge of finance and expanding attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary in the field of entrepreneurship and business organization and administration (Educational Portal http://www.schools.ac.cy/). This is however a theoretical course. The second course is called Family Economics (Οικιακή Οικονομία), which despite its title, covers a wide range of topics. More specifically, this multifaceted course aims at improving and promoting the social well-being of students through developing their social skills and critical thinking and upgrading their social and physical environment. Through this course, students recognize the importance of identity formation during adolescence, learn to manage the changes that occur on a personal, family and social level, and improve their self-image by forming an integrated and balanced personality (Educational Portal http://www.schools.ac.cy/)). This module touches, on some level, on citizenship education.

In terms of the latter, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) specifically recognizes its importance. CPI forms part of the Ministry of Education and it is the body responsible for all public educational practices in the Cypriot educational sector. As it is clearly stated on the Institute's website: 'the institution seeks to become a center, where teachers themselves undertake critique and reflection of their activities, and where collaborative work is done by instructors at all levels of the hierarchy' (Weddell, 1971, 14). In terms of active citizenship skills, CPI recognizes that improving the individual and social skills of students, as well as cultivating feelings of understanding and tolerance towards other cultures is now the dominant goal of all modern and civilized societies. To this end, the Cyprus

Pedagogical Institute recognizes the concept of active citizenship skills as being at the core of the education system in Cyprus (Ενεργός Πολιτότητα). The engagement of CPI is therefore crucial in developing a framework for SIE integration in Cypriot schools.

In terms of non-formal education, the Ministry offers the possibility to individuals to study at adult education centers. One of the courses offered concerns also Business Administration (Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων) and deals with aspects of business and entrepreneurship such as setting up a small business, effectively managing finances, producing business plans, sales and staff training, organization and administration, and personal finance management. Other interesting and related to SIE courses offered at adult education centers are Philosophy and Sociology (Επιμορφωτικά Κέντρα).

Some other interesting initiatives in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship in Cyprus do exist, in particular the Junior Achievement Cyprus Organization (Homepage - Junior Achievement Cyprus (JA Cyprus)). The organization has reached over 5000 students and over 450 students and mentors, a considerate number for a country such as Cyprus. The organization has 7 training programmes (Company Programme, More than Money, Innovation Camp, Entrepreneurship Day in Second Chance Schools, Economics for Success, StartUp, Sci-Tech) while it regularly organizes workshops. The 7th workshop was organized in December 2020 and was titled 'Adjust' and aimed to awaken the entrepreneurial spirit of students and help them develop entrepreneurship and innovation skills (Students propose solutions for digital education. Press Release 2020. InBusinessNews. https://inbusinessnews.reporter.com.cy/business/services/article/264398/mathites-kai-mathitries-proteinoyn-lyseis-ga-psifiaki-ekpaidefsi).

Similar initiatives to SIE exist both in the public education sector and in the private one. In the public sector, some initiatives are: 1) EUROSCOLA (DIRECTORATE OF SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION), which intends to familiarize and sensitize students with EU institutions and policies, as well as to nurture an urge to defend fundamental rights; 2) Health Education programmes (Department of Secondary General Education), which are meant to protect, improve and promote the physical, mental and social well-being of pupils by strengthening their personality and by upgrading their social and natural environment. Health Education is the appropriate precautionary approach in education when dealing with problems in interpersonal relations, anti-social behavior, delinquency, smoking, alcohol, drugs, sexually transmitted diseases, obesity, road safety and racism. In the private sector, some institutions have advanced the practice of Service Learning, as for example the American International School in Cyprus (Service Learning Activities | American International School Cyprus). All of these initiatives are relevant to SIE as they involve citizenship skills (in the case of EUROSCOLA, European citizenship) and collaboration with the community.

4.1.4. Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities

EU membership has greatly influenced Cypriot educational policy. First and foremost, through its EU membership, Cyprus has become a terrain where ERASMUS+ projects dealing with education take place, such as the CSS-EU program itself or other projects such as SCHOOLS ENGAGE. To this end, ERASMUS+ projects target Cypriot teachers' greater professional development and Cypriot students'

greater participation in various social activities and improvement regarding civic attributes (Elaboration of programs for education and training | European Union).

Furthermore, the EU has assisted in the development of various innovative teaching techniques (Service Learning, SIE, etc.) and funds relevant teacher training workshops. At the same time, educational material is available in different platforms that are supported by the European Commission such as EPALE (Teaching methods and materials | European Union).
Additionally, the EU and its policies are designed to support educational systems and address common challenges such as integrating migrants and refugee children, development of skills, etc. (Shared challenges in education and training | European Union). This is commonly achieved through setting objectives and measuring progress (Setting objectives and measuring progress | European Union), as well as through international cooperation (International cooperation | European Union).

Lastly, the EU pays attention in the recognition of professional qualifications and in different ways of developing skills sought by employers and employment opportunities (Skills and qualifications | European Union (europa.eu)).

4.2 Teachers needs and preferences

To understand teachers' understanding and experience regarding Social Innovation Education as well as training needs and preferences, we designed and conducted a survey to collect teachers' input. This quantitative inductive research was followed by a deductive qualitative research using a focus group with a subgroup of the survey respondents. The aim of combining the two tools was to clarify some of the answers in the survey and to explore any hypothesis we did not consider during the survey in a deductive manner. The main takeaways and findings will be presented below.

4.2.1 Survey

The survey was deployed by CSI using google forms between March 10 and April 20. In total 34 teachers answered the survey in conformity with the GDPR regulations.

Teacher profile

Students Age groups	Teachers	Proportions
All Cycles (4-23)	2	6%
Highschool (14-18)	17	50%
Middle School (11-14)	4	12%
Elementary and Middle School (7-14)	7	21%
Elementary (6-11)	4	12%
TOTAL	34	100%

Teachers who answered the survey teach a variety of subjects however most **respondents, 47% are teaching Greek Philology** which includes Modern Greek, Ancient Greek and History. Other subjects taught by respondents were Mathematics, Health education, Music, Religion Studies, Arts, Natural sciences (Physics, Chemistry), and French and English across all levels.

In terms of students' level, the teachers are teaching mainly students about **12 years old with 50% teaching at high school level and 12% Middle school (11-14) and 21% Middle and Elementary School** and a smaller number of teachers who are teaching at elementary level (6-11) 12% and a 6% who teach across all cycles.

On average a class has around 21 students with the lowest at 8 students and the highest at 25.
When it comes to collaboration with other initiatives **most of the teachers 94% are not part of any educational association, professional association or engage with any other organization in extracurricular activities.** Only 2 out of 34 mentioned that they had worked with Open School of the Municipality of Larnaca and Education Committee for Party, Roma Association, Educational Council of Private Primary School, Cypriot Philologic Company.

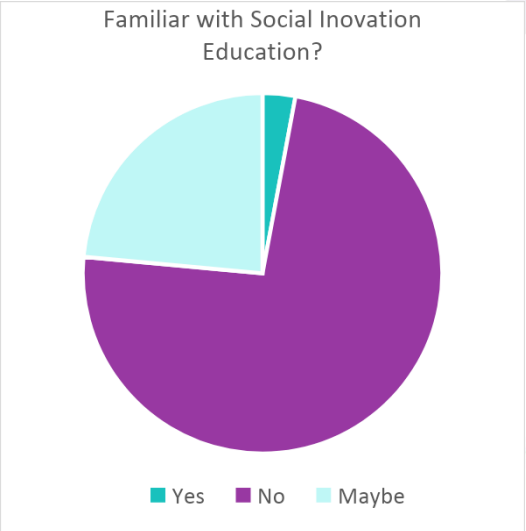
Socio Economic Context

Socio-economic characteristic which applies most to the school	Responses	Proportions
None	26	76%
Roma Community	0	0%
Newly Arrived Migrants	1	3%
Newly Arrived Migrants and Vulnerable students	4	12%
Students from vulnerable groups from low socio-economic level	3	9%

Teachers who answered the survey come from four main areas: Nicosia**, Larnaca, Paphos, Limassol however 67% are from Nicosia region.** In terms of the school's socio-economic context, the large majority of schools 76% shared that they do not have any vulnerable group. The most representative group is Newly Arrived Migrants and Vulnerable students with a mix of 24% divided across the two categories impacting the socio-economic level of the family. This is a significant difference in comparison to Serbia where we have the Roma Community as a vulnerable group while here this group does not appear.

Social Innovation Education (SIE)

As part of the survey, we investigated teachers' experience with SIE or other similar concepts. At the start of this section, we also included a definition of the concept so that teachers who are not familiar with the terms could relate to it and share from their experiences. The definition provided was "*Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, businesspeople, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this*



process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future."

When asked if they are **familiar with the term Social Innovation Education most of the teachers said "no", 74%, only 3% said "yes" and 24% answered "maybe".**

When asked what they think it means, teachers associated the name of the method with **innovation, collaboration, and addressing social issues** in the educational system *"How can the school provide skills that students can use to be social innovators ".* The term was also **associated with the reform of the educational system** as a teacher shared *"Innovative teaching and pedagogical approaches that can enhance students' cognitive and socio-emotional abilities".* Interestingly teachers also spoke about civic aspects, relating the term with Active Citizenship *"Possibly something relating to actions promoting the adoption of positive democratic attitudes on behalf of citizens, so as to decrease phenomena that damage democracy, which in itself as a term is often misunderstood."* Teachers believe **SIE is creating a bridge between the school and the community to address social issues** *"Education that is suitably adapted for schools with intense social differentiations***",** *"Innovation in education that has to do with needed reforms in solving social issues"* **and** *"The educational process is combined with changes in society".*

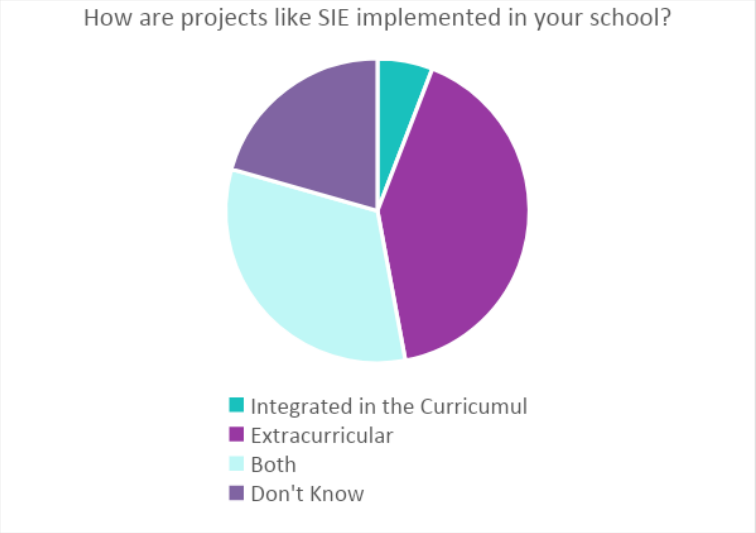
In terms of **experience with applying the SIE model only three teachers (3/34) 9% responded that they had used the method** when **85% said no and 6% said not sure**. Out of those who said yes, we have a few examples as follows: "*I work with students in writing and publishing articles in the school's newspaper", "The project "Our City, One Hug" of the Limassol municipality"*.

School Context

In this section of the survey, we looked at the overall school context, how extracurricular projects are being implemented, who are the key stakeholders as well as enable and potential barriers.

In terms of extracurricular activities**, most schools have a wide range of activities** from Music, theater, dancing, art, tennis, basketball, smart games, chess, robotics, foreign languages, and many relate them to participation in various programs such as ERASMUS+ and volunteering. 20% of teachers shared however that there are no activities in their schools.

When asked how projects like SIE are implemented in their school most of the teachers 41% said as Extracurricular activities, followed by 32% as "Both regular classes and extracurricular activities", 6%, Integrated in the curriculum and 21% do not know. These results



indicate that **SIE is more likely to be implemented as an extracurricular activity which is different from the results in Croatia where integration in the curriculum was the best option.**

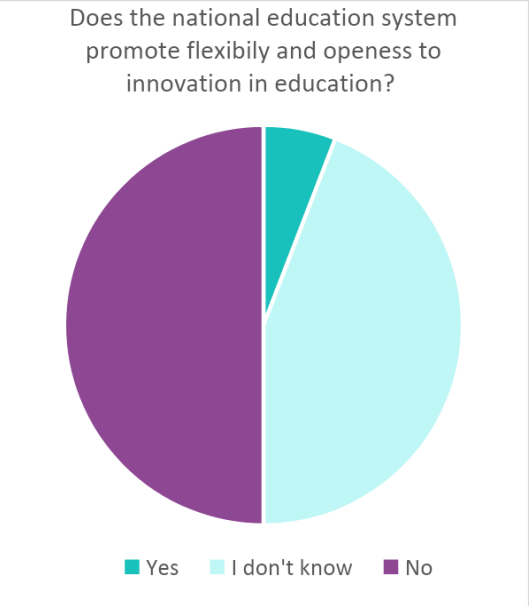
In terms of **obstacles** some of the most common were **lack of time, the pressure to cover the mandatory curriculum and teachers lack of motivation** *"The mandatory coverage of the analytical curriculum, which is overloaded by the ministry; Lack of motivation and incentives to teachers; Most teachers are not socially sensitive*", **lack of resources "***Financial issues"* **and challenging environment** *"Insufficient cooperation by the community and the type of school which does not allow for much action"* **, Students lack of interest and motivation "***not interesting the students"*. **Compared to Croatia, teachers in Cyprus are mentioning more the pressure of the national curriculum and the restrictive school environment** *"It requires a lot of time from educators' free time. As I work in a private school, it is difficult for a teacher to integrate such programmes. Additionally, usually such programmes are taken up by one person who will have most of the work in relation to the programme, without necessarily meaning that he/she does not get help from other interested colleagues."*

Some of the strategies teachers applied to overcome these barriers related to the school environment were mostly related to collaboration and communication "*cooperation between educators, support by management and community*" and "*Better cooperation and information between teachers and the student body"*. In **terms of overcoming students' lack of interest, teachers shared the following strategies** and **incentives:** "*Students are motivated by a prize in a competition, recognition of their efforts, with gaining credits for the course "Creativity, Action and Social service", possible trips and contacts with other people".* The involvement of parents is also a strategy applied by teachers in Cyprus "*The good relationship and support by parents and their association for any initiatives taken by teachers".*

When we asked teachers "What enablers are there to integrate new projects into your school?" teachers mentioned " *The school defends and promotes diversity and multiculturalism, our facilities are suitable for various kinds of activities and our teachers are trying to participate in actions"* however they are highlighting the challenges related to lack of time and heavy curriculum *"Not many due to the overloaded curriculum material and lack of interest".*

It is encouraging to see that **most teachers 53% had collaborated with local stakeholders/associations during projects** however there were 38% who did not collaborate and 8% who responded maybe. The collaboration for them included *"Sponsorship", "As trainers for the diffusion of an initiative", "They were chosen due to their relationship with the school, either those were professional (educational organizations that we have worked together in the past) or personal (alumni, parents of children that study in our school). Usually, they are involved in ERASMUS+ programmes and they provide presentations, visits in their workplaces, or even material items/products' ', "The social worker of the Limassol municipality sees families as advised by the school. Also, we secure donations and voluntary services from parents and entrepreneurs."*

The collaboration with parents is quite successful in Cyprus where 50% **of teachers mentioned that parents are involved in projects** and 43% were not sure. Some of the strategies mentioned to engage more parents were "*Through **exciting programs that can convince parents of their beneficial impact on children**", "We should invite **and involve parents more in extracurricular activities** (e.g. on Saturday mornings)",* and *"Parents actively participate in the actions and initiatives of the school. It would be good however **to have some external financial support** so that their participation does not include all the time financial support also."*



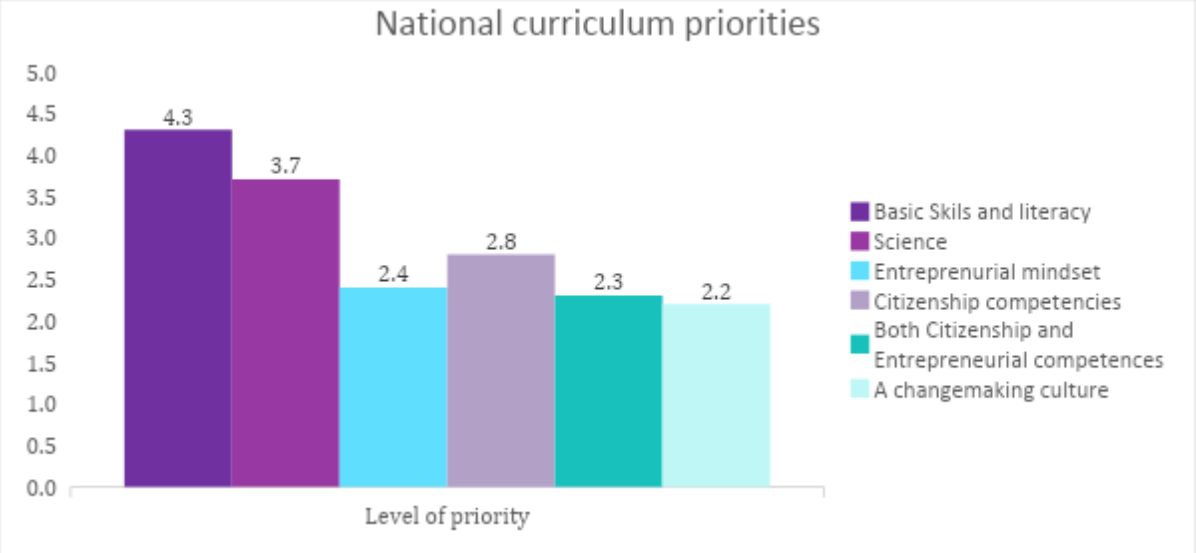
National contexts

In this section we looked at national context in terms of openness to innovation, teacher professional development, available resources, and national curriculum priorities.

Only 6% of teachers believe that **the Cyprus national education system promotes flexibility and openness to innovation in education** while **50% of teachers believe there is no flexibility and 44% shared that they do not know.** This answer is justified as teachers feel a lot of pressure in implementing the analytical curriculum. In terms of opportunities for teacher training and continuous professional development in innovation to education the percentages are almost the same 41% of teachers disagree, 41% do not know and only 17% agree.

Teachers were asked to rate on a scale of not a priority (1) to high priority (5) the priorities of national curriculum towards developing the following competences for students: Basic skills and literacies, Science, Entrepreneurial mindsets, Citizenship competences, Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences and A changemaking culture. **The teachers perceive the following hierarchy of priorities: Basic skills and literacy, followed by Science, Citizenship competences, Entrepreneurial mindset, both citizenship and entrepreneurial competences and lastly, a changemaking culture.**

The order is the same as in Croatia however the scores were tighter there. Here we can see Basic Skills and literacy and Science with over 1 value point above the others.



An important concern for the project is that a large majority of teachers 76% shared a concern regarding lack of the time and support to work on innovative educational practices such as SIE, 18% said that they do not know and only 6% shared that it will be possible.

Pandemic impact

Since all educational systems have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, we investigated how teachers and students have access to technology well as how the teaching process was impacted by the pandemic.

76% of teachers targeted through the survey reported that their students were **equipped with the necessary equipment to participate in online classes** while in 24% of cases only some students have the necessary equipment. In terms of teachers the situation is slightly better with only 15% of teachers who have partial access to equipment and **85% of teachers sharing they have access to necessary equipment and tools to conduct online classes**.

The teaching process has greatly been impacted by the technology and its impact is reflected in the adaptation of the lesson in the digital space as these teachers share *"Initially, I faced technical difficulties, until the children got used to the use of computers. Many parents helped in this. My lesson is taught through distance learning but, primarily with the younger students of the primary school, I found it extremely hard to adjust the activities. In secondary education, the adaptation of the analytical curriculum was easier, at the same time as the psychological burden to students was bigger. Pleasant surprises were the use of various quiz softwares.* Teachers seem to associate the pandemic with the negative **impact** of the teaching process as these teachers share *"The discontinuity in the way of study, affected the quality of teaching. Even with the use of modern forms of distance learning, students cannot be conveniently supported individually, as compared with face-to-face teaching.* There are also teachers who see it **more in the gray** "*It has had both positive (use of technology, focus on important items of curriculum) and negative effects."* or **more positively** *"The pandemic has its positive side also, as it forced many teachers and students to familiarize*

themselves with technology. Education in Cyprus had to modernize for a lot of time and the Pandemic was just a means to an end. At the same time, educators did not have adequate support. Teaching itself has been affected negatively due to absence of personal contact. I could not be certain whether students followed the class or understood what I was saying. I believe that with visual contact, things would have been quite different."

The **most important changes are related to mental health** "Dramatically, especially in terms of evaluation and in terms mental health for teachers and students" some activities **could not be completed especially those which involved experiential learning** "*In practical lessons (e.g. mathematics), where students have to proceed to the solution of various exercises, that was accomplished either at a minimal degree or completely inadequately. Additionally, it has taught us that the physical presence of a teacher is not only necessary but a prerequisite."* and pressured teachers to transform their teaching *"It made me rethink my teaching methods and make my students more independent learning"*

Teacher training preferences

Since an important output of CSS-EU is teacher training we investigated past teachers training experiences and tried to understand teachers' preferences and the ongoing support they would like to receive.

When asked to describe a **training experience they enjoyed** and why they enjoyed it, teachers gave a wide variety of answers highlighting the **interactivity and teamwork aspects** "*Mostly workshops in small groups organized by the school. So we had the opportunity to ""play"" with new learning tools while resolving queries*" the **practicality aspects** "*A webinar on discipline methods that cultivate responsibility and resilience in children. I enjoyed it because it was feasible to implement as a teacher and as a parent" and "Professional training session that had a direct impact on school reality. I tried it and it was effective",* the **relevance of the content** "*The recent workshop on bullying because it provided practical and feasible suggestions ".*

In terms of priorities for training needs and ongoing support, teachers shared that it needs to be **practical and applicable** *"Feasible - practical ways of dealing with different problematic situations eg indiscipline management***" engaging the extended community** "*Training in communication with parents with students in community"* how to **engage the students** "*Around sustainable development, equality, environmental awareness, emotional intelligence, and what the important, how can tangle consecutive my students to them***.", student behavior** "*Training for the proper treatment of children who do not read and do not care about school to the extent that would have"* as well as **related to online learning** "*Using technology, cultivating empathy and Activation of students incentives" "Digital literacy workshops"* **and opening the school to the community** *"Innovation, opening the school to society".* Teachers also highlighted the **importance of trainers seminars** *but by real experts who have direct relationship with matters and problems of the school. Usually, unfortunately seminar theories are copied from books and presenters simply read them. Also be given time to follow the teaching courses"*

4.2.2 Focus group

In Cyprus 6 teachers participated in the focus group. The focus group gathered participants' opinions and understanding in relation to Social Innovation Education, it is integration in the curriculum, community involvement, resources, decision making and training preferences.

Understanding of Social Innovation Education

When it comes to **teachers' understanding of Social Innovation Education, teachers** perceive it as a **student-centered collaborative approach** to solve social problems "*A methodology where the student becomes the center of the learning process. The student takes the initiative and with appropriate guidance, conducts research and acts. Another important aspect is the creation of small teams, where students set specific goals and they seek to accomplish them. And the last important aspect of this is the evaluation, to be able to compare and evaluate your results, get feedback, and understand your effects. "And Students coming together and finding ways they can help their neighborhoods and communities; but we as educators have to probe them first."* The **project-based aspect is also highlighted by teachers** "*I have also heard of the term "project-led education" that they do in Scandinavia, where the teaching and learning of the curriculum is no longer done via independent lectures/lessons but through inter-thematic projects and lessons."* Teachers emphasized the **importance of reflection and feedback at the end of the process** as a differentiator "*I personally have experience of a SIE activity that dealt with bullying. The students developed questionnaires and then each team circulated it in the school. This was a social issue dealt by students, with teachers just facilitators. At the end, each team evaluated the questionnaires of the other teams and the work they did. This kind of teaching methodology can be applied in any thematic lesson; the most important thing is to have a process and at the end to evaluate it appropriately.*

In terms of **activities Social Innovation Education can include teachers mentioned research, comparison, and reflection on findings as well as voluntary action and social service** (theater at retirement homes or nurseries, cleaning up environment).

Social innovation education is associated with **student-led teaching and learning, creation of small teams to do research and carry out projects, includes an element of evaluation, deals with social issues and it must have a process. It can be applied in any thematic lesson towards coming together to find ways to help society.** The sustainability aspect is also important to "**conduct projects that must be sustainable and not one-off"** and "*additionally, we have to guarantee that these deal with social issues at the same time they are sustainable"*

Integrating Social Innovation Education in the curriculum

Teachers recognize **that it is difficult to integrate SIE into the curriculum "** *It is difficult to integrate it in the curriculum itself. Despite the ministry saying that they want to integrate aspects such as entrepreneurship, skills, etc., the analytical curriculum does not allow us to move away from the content itself."* The difficulties come from teachers' limited time to dedicate to activities outside the analytical curriculum. "*You have to consider that for students to actually go and do actions, they have*

to actually be taught something about them (e.g. how a company works, how we do desk research, how to analyze findings). So, time from the lessons/curriculum will have to be dedicated to provide necessary knowledge but 90% of teachers in Cyprus will not do that because: a) they do not want to take time out of their personal time and b) they are afraid they will not manage to cover the analytical curriculum". **The suggested path for SIE is to enter the analytical curriculum.** "*I want to say that while there are difficulties, with the correct processes you could even manage to enter the analytical curriculum. But you need the correct processes: training of teachers, actions, obvious results and evaluation and proposal for the ministry."* And in this process, there is a need to clear evidence *"And to add here that if we want to integrate it in the curriculum formally, we need to have results for 2-3 years, clear results, that we can bring to the ministry and say, "here you can see the clear effects". So, you can also follow the students in the long-term and have evidence of the influence of this model in the long-term. Because we know that there should be skills' training, but it is difficult to find something and promote it***." Changes in the evaluation system might be an opportunity for SIE** "*I also want to mention that from next year, the way we evaluate students will change; we move away from the 100% of the final mark being taken by the exam and move towards a 40% of final mark from the exam and 60% will come from oral grade, which can be various things (projects, skills). Possibly, we can bring in something from SIE here***." There are also teachers who suggested going outside the analytical curriculum** "*For me, the project should not try to align itself with the analytical curriculum and the system but try to overturn. The education system is exam- and knowledge-centered and there is not much in relation to skills."*

Teachers who participated in the focus group **had experience with entrepreneurial and social projects as part of larger initiatives** such as Junior Achievement as these teachers shared "*There is this competition in schools now called Junior Achievement, which is an Entrepreneurship competition. Groups of students are asked to create their own start-up, non-for-profit companies. In the case of social innovation, it can be that students create a social enterprise."* They are also involved **with social projects** "*We do mainly either socially-focused or pedagogy-focused activities. Socially focused activities we have done were simple: baking cakes, etc., selling them and then the money goes to poor students or special schools. We also go and clean beaches, or we sing Christmas carols and raise funds for poor families.* **As well as experience with organizing charitable social events** *"I have experience from a Catholic school in Greece, which due to its religious character, did a lot of social services. At least once per month there was a visit to either retirement centers, orphanages or special schools or others, where we would offer what we had collected through fundraising and provide them with things they needed (e.g. a radio, a tv, etc.). We would also organize events open for the public where we would either sing, portray/sell art, etc and raise funds."* Teachers have experience with engaging parents and the larger community in social projects "*In the last school I was in, we also organized a bake sale. The children and parents baked cakes and there was an event in the school where we sold the cakes"* and " *I was member of a bi-communal event organized at the Home for Cooperation where children from both sides played smart games together like chess with the goal of learning each other and being able to communicate with simple words in each other's language; this was beautiful as this activity took place in the context of language lessons and the goal was promoting inter-communal dialogue."* Teachers highlighted international EU projects they heard

about that could be relevant to SIE *"A project I heard about but I was not a member of concerned an open call to schools in the EU to deal with immigration. The first prize was won by a Cypriot school which decided to do a visual intervention where they designed a boat with various people of different ages inside"* and *I have heard of a very interesting program that dealt with STEM education, where students created projects with robotics, etc. and their teachers acted as facilitators. And one girl created a robotic arm and said that she had done that because some of her friends in school had kinetic issues."*

Teachers are recognizing the need to have a **process and training to integrate SIE "***I believe that these kinds of teaching methodologies can be integrated in all subjects but there has to be a process, with training that shows us previous practices, etc."*

Teachers who participated in the focus **group shared some of their experiences with projects where they engaged the students and the community at large "***In our school we have established theatrical competitions which have been highly successful. The students organize themselves in groups and under the coordination of their teachers, they set up different plays. You have actors' groups, you have students responsible for setting, sound, etc. And the best ones are organizing a Theater night and there we have guest Judges who determine the winner. This has been extremely successful as an initiative and perhaps we can extend it also to offer something back to the community. "*

Enables

Teachers identified **increasing students' self-esteem** *"Increase in student self-esteem (first time congratulated and recognized), acknowledgment of own role in the whole process, greater student involvement and better familiarity and communication with co-students, empathy, culture of competition."* **Another important aspect is active citizenship.** *"These sorts of projects have a great influence on students as they make them realize that they are part of a bigger society, members of a larger whole."* An important aspect is **building empathy and collaboration with teachers and the entire community** "*Students will feel closer to their teachers as that is something that is often lost by just covering the curriculum. And also, they come together and engage with other stakeholders such as the councils, etc."*

Challenges

When asked about challenges teachers mentioned the **lack of long term sustainable results "***The problem with similar initiatives that we have done is that you have a small group of students that take up specific roles but it is not sustainable nor is it of great interest from students or leave a long-standing effect on the community. "* The practical integration of these methods and engaging students is another challenge "*Usually there are a few students engaging and then 1-2 teachers to supervise. So, the issue is taking these programs and expanding them to include all students and more teachers and carried out on the basis of some central courses of the curriculum so students develop key skills. As a theoretical context it is good but the issue is how we apply it. "The* last aspect mentioned is the need **for incentives and teachers support** "*The main point is for the educator to see incentives in taking up these projects and then to make sure that he/she will be supported in this role."*

Engaging with other stakeholders to ensure sustainability of the project has been mentioned by teachers as a strategy to mitigate potential challenges "I *believe that you can overcome difficulties pertaining to the sustainability of projects based on the kind of stakeholders you will engage. For example, if you engage Parents' associations, they will maintain this element of the projects as they are always there. Also, the councils, if you make these projects with the councils, you can have them annually."*

Community Engagement

During the focus group teachers mentioned **Parents' Associations** as an important stakeholder" Parents' *Associations should be first and they are always next to the school."* Who can be included in the project from start "*Another opportunity could be to include in the project the shops around the school with which we already have a relationship (we shop from them, the students shop from them, one of the shops uses our parking space, we go to specific companies and sing Christmas Carols and they always give)"* and their importance is recognized by all teachers *"the parents are the most important stakeholder for engaging.* "Another idea is to include **alumni** "*Also alumni of the school or parents of alumni; but you need a tactic at engaging stakeholders. You must build a relationship; you do something for them and then they do something for you.* **Adapting to each context and looking at organization the school collaborated in the past could be leveraged into new projects** "Me*, I taught at the French school here, and the Franco Institute and the Embassy are always involved and assist in all projects carried out, from funding to participating. But I agree that you have to build connections and relationships."*

Local NGO can be a support for schools however many schools are not aware as this teacher shared "*Something that schools do not know about is that they can seek the support of many NGOs for their projects, especially if they deal with entrepreneurship, environment, etc. Because if a school want to do something about Innovation and comes to for example CSI, they can write together a proposal and get a lot of money in doing this"*

On the other hand, perception of **collaboration with local government and councils can be seen as beneficial and an opportunity to be explored** as this teacher shares *"I yes, we have said about engaging councils and they can be extremely helpful. Often involving the councils allows a project to be more sustainable as the council would want to keep something for a longer time."* **And they had already shown interest as this teacher shared** *"A council here in Nicosia came once and asked me "how can we involve more the schools". They have heard about a program that many schools were involved in which concerned finding alternative ways of going to school - because of traffic jams when parents come to drop or pick up their children - and they were extremely interested."*

Resources and infrastructure

Teachers recognize that there are plenty of resources available. "*There are a lot of resources and last year there was even a training about how teachers can seek resources from various organizations if they want to do something."*

Decision making

Teachers shared that the curriculum is **decided at ministry level** "This is given from the ministry and very rarely if at all are teachers allowed a say."

Teachers **can take the students outside the classroom to conduct activities as they have done in the past "***We have taken students to various places, from different regions to sing Christmas Carols, to the beach for cleaning, to other places. This has not been an issue."*

Teacher training preferences

In terms of training preferences teachers emphasized the need to apply the SIE principles in the teacher training *"I think the most important thing is to follow the three principles of SIE but rather apply it to teachers. So the training should be* ***'student'-centered****, there should be teams and* ***working together and there should be an evaluation and reflection. And it should be interactive****; do not come and tell me "this is what you should do and go do it", like a lecture!* **Teachers prefer interactive and practical trainings** ***"****The theory I can learned it by myself if I sit down and read. But I want more interaction, more practices, I want to see this put in practice. "* Teachers would like **to apply what they have learned** in practice *"A very good training that I did was a workshop where at the end we had to develop lesson plans and they checked not only whether you understood but whether you can actually implement them."*

It would **be particularly important to clearly communicate the goals of the training from the start** as these teachers mentioned "*Of course each person learns differently. Personally, I would like to see an example first. I would like someone to define and explain to me what 'Social Innovation' Education really is; I would like to know its aims and how it proposes to achieve those. Step-by-step so the listener gets from the beginning what is the* ***goal/aim of what we are doing****. The clearer you explain from the beginning what are the aims of the course and the direction of the training."* And *"I agree, it must be clearly set and explained* ***what the aims are of what we are doing and additionally what will we get, the benefits from it.*** **Teachers also gave suggestions on strategies to scale the SIE training model** ***"****Something else that might be interesting is that if you manage to promote this model to the Pedagogical Institute and they agree to hold a training session, then schools would be required to send at least 1 teacher each in these training. And then it will be compulsory for them to participate."*

4.3 Policy makers priorities

Cyprus context and needs analysis also included interviews with policy makers to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Cyprus, 5 individuals were interviewed and while all were categorized under the umbrella of policy makers the individuals identified occupied a variety of roles within the broader educational system

from Cyprus Pedagogical Institute to Paphos Regional Education Office of the Ministry of Education, local high school, and Parents Association. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

Policy makers expertise areas

Policy makers interviews have a wide area of expertise which brings great value to CSS-EU project from individuals who *"Coordinate application of anti-racist policy of the Ministry and run support network for schools, including workshops to students and parents.* *Support schools in applying the framework for 'work education'. Report writing in relation to human rights issues, inequality, etc. Participate in or coordinate European programs. Represent the Ministry and the Pedagogical Institute in parliament proceeding dealing with sex education, human rights, family violence, etc."* **Policy makers specialize in primary education and teacher training and are responsible for *"Coordination of private and public primary schools, pre-primary schools and special schools of the region.*** *Assigning staff to schools, supervision and evaluation of appropriate functioning of the schools.* ***More specialized responsibilities such as teachers' training, setting relations with parents and community, etc.*** *Give recommendations to the ministry in relation to policy making and generally report about aspects of education in the region."* **High school representatives are giving insights into the operational structure and practical implementation of the policy** such as *"The most important responsibility is of course making sure about the proper functioning of the school. These responsibilities might include the organization of the school but also making sure about the quality of the teaching. The* ***public school is of course guided by the decisions of the Ministry*** *and we must abide by the laws and circular communication coming from the Ministry. At the same time, there are opportunities for actions outside the curriculum by teachers and my role is to support them. Additionally, as the public school receives students from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, etc.) we must make sure that all these children/students are properly integrated. This is of course guided by the ministry, but we also have some corporations with private Universities on topics dealing with teacher training or even student training."* and *"The main responsibility of the role is to* ***follow the policies of the Ministry of Education****. As everything is given by the Ministry (analytical curriculum, personnel, budget, etc.) our role is to just make sure that everything goes accordingly, that there is a safe environment that teaching, and learning takes place in. From thereon, there are other possibilities for action as well, but these are quite limited."* The interviews were also able to **capture parents' voice** *"While parents themselves do not have a say in the analytical curriculum, as that is offered by the ministry and schools cannot deviate from it, we do have controls over the correct application of the ministry's policies in the school. I would say that our priority is maintaining a systematic and regular contact with the teaching personnel, as well as making sure that there is a connection between the school and the family as an institution. Furthermore, the Association has various Committees (health and safety, events, education, etc.) which often propose various actions to the Council, and which are then put to the vote."*

Priorities for the educational sector

- **Inclusion of migrant children and distance learning** *"The Ministry's key strategic priorities are the inclusion of migrant children, the uniform education reform, and issues of distance learning at the moment (due to the pandemic)."*

- **Training teachers to be capable of integrating migrant students, active citizenship and inclusion "***The general curriculum priorities as set by the ministry are the cognitive, psychological, emotional and motor-skills development of students, as well as other aspects such as active citizenship, etc. Region has its own issues/priorities, i.e., the large number of migrant children (the percentage surpasses 40% of students), so a priority is the inclusion of these students and inter-cultural communication and education, including the reduction of friction within classes. Training of educators accordingly with specialized training programmes to deal with these issues is a priority. Thus, the priority of the regional office is to integrate programs focusing on active citizenship that can connect the school with the community and focus on how we can educate children who are socially and culturally sensitive."*
- **Proper functioning of educational institutions** *"A priority for me is the proper organization, to make sure that everything runs smoothly without losing teaching time. Behind this there should be preparation, organization and a correct division of labor for everyone."*
- **Application of the analytical curriculum in a safe environment "***The first one is obviously the correct application of the analytical curriculum, which is something we are obliged to do according to the Ministry's directives, and also the correct evaluation of the students' progress. And to offer to students and teachers alike a safe and interesting environment (including technology) where teaching and learning can take place. "*
- **Training teachers to correctly evaluate students** *"For me personally, my priority is situated mostly in the correct evaluation of students. Because teachers are not trained properly in relation to this, how to write an assessment or how to evaluate work. So this is where I have focused, a fair student evaluation system. This obviously is related to teacher training and development. Here also the budget and possibilities are limited and usually it depends on individual teachers and on whether they will go to training. We have twice per year the educators' days for training and some pedagogical workshops. Apart from all these however, I personally also feel the obligation to offer skills to students beyond the analytical curriculum. And that is why I was interested in this program.*
- **Diligent application of Ministry's requirement** "*As parents, our priority concerns the correct application of the ministry's directives by the teaching personnel without any issues or problems."*

Priorities for teachers

- **Change of the evaluation system for educators** *"Recognition of the need to change the evaluation system for educators in various reports from different committees.*
- **Teachers' mental health** *"At the same time, the Pandemic has made the situation more difficult, as everything has been put on hold, with educators themselves just trying to handle the current situation as much as they can. We also believe issues of mental health will be of utmost importance in the coming years."*
- **Training for new teachers who need emotional support** *"Distance of the region a particularity. Region gets many newly appointed teachers (with no prior experience) who come from other regions. Regional office responsible for both training and providing emotional support. So, there is a multi-layered issue in terms of the training and support for all these educators which*

spreads over even to Principal training as schools with experienced/inexperienced teachers are run differently. "

- **Digitalization/Pandemic has increased training capacity** *"The Pandemic has also influenced teacher training and support as, to a certain extent, technology has facilitated our reach. From training that would reach 40-50 teachers and that would often take place during school hours, now we can have training with 300-400 teachers and at diverse times. Additionally, the office has to provide support and training to teachers about how to support children with vulnerable backgrounds."*
- **Quality of teaching** *"Another priority for me is the quality of the teaching, which relates to teachers' training. I try to promote teachers moving away from teacher-centered* educational models *and thus, I want to offer training that facilitates this aspect of their teaching, not just be a burden to educators."*
- **Teacher training in relation to student's evaluation** *"As I said above, a priority for me is the provision of training for educators that deals with the proper evaluation of students, how to achieve a fair evaluation system for students. At the same time, I am also interested in how to achieve a safe and adequate environment for teaching to take place in. And the last 10 years we have had our own Teaching Commission within the school where decisions concerning these aspects are taken."*

Priorities for students

- **Mental health and reducing the issues of racism and inequality** *"Mental health issues. On a personal level, issues of racism and inequality, supporting schools in creating a safe environment for children. For the Ministry, the goal is to have a humane and democratic school, to accept children irrespective of background and to provide equal opportunities"*
- **Ensure a safe and stable environment for students** *"The Pandemic has however exacerbated these inequalities as, while they existed already, they are now increasing due to both the economic crisis that preceded and the current health crisis. Children have to deal with multiple losses (economic, at a personal level, etc.) while many children (migrant children or poor children) will be behind their classmates and not able to take part in the educational environment. Basic concern is: if children lack the safe and stable environment and context that allows them to be educated, how can we move on and set goals concerning the analytical curriculum itself?"*
- **Support students who are part of vulnerable groups and lack access to basic needs** *"An important priority is the serious support for children who do not have basic needs, for example those with a migrant background or children from broken families or those with unemployed parents. These students need constant emotional support, and many children need support in terms of basic needs such as food and water or safety (violence in the family)."*
- **Creating an environment favorable to learning "***I believe that this point is inter-connected with the one above. If the teacher manages to teach in a way that appreciates the skills, personality, and ideas of the students, then students themselves will gain. There will be an environment that facilitates the teaching and learning and the inclusion of students in the learning process.*

- **Equal and fair evaluation of students** *"As I said above, a priority for me is the equal and fair evaluation of students, as well as the provision of a safe and adequate environment where learning can take place in."*
- **Supporting student's welfare** *"In relation to students, the Association's goal is towards their general welfare. We focus thus in the economic support of poor students, support for students with learning difficulties, organization of various events (theater, dances, games, etc.), there is control of the products sold in the canteen of the school along with the school management, we hand out presents during Christmas and Easter as well as organize celebrations for final year students, Additionally, the Association supports the implementation of various programs that the Ministry is unable to do, such as buying water filters for the school, placing roofing in the school's sports arena, buying air condition in classes or even buying books."*

Social Innovation Education

In Cyprus policy makers recognize that Social Innovation Education is similar to an existing course called Health Education where students work together to address local issues through project-based learning *"A similar philosophy underpins the course 'Health Education' (course included in the curriculum since 2011). This course basically aims to introduce a critical perspective, where students of different ages, locate issues in various contexts (in the school, community, etc.) and try to take action along with other agents in order to improve the general quality of life. Additionally, the 'Health Education' course focuses on healthy lifestyle, through small projects such as influencing restaurants to have a variety of preparations for food (not only fried), bicycle routes, issues about inequality, etc. "* **The same observation was made by a similar policy maker who also added the importance this course has in connecting the school with the community which is an existing strategic goal for schools** *"Without having the name SIE itself, this is something that is already done on various levels in our schools. This is what I referred to before about informing and sensitizing students concerning social problems and about collaborating with adults (entrepreneurs, parents, municipality officials, etc.) in order to find solutions and also to allow students to raise problems experienced only by them (e.g. not having a playground). This is done in various ways: for example, writing an essay in a 'Greek language' course or through the course 'Life/Health Education' which is a course which in itself seeks to do this sensitizing. So what you are describing exists in schools but it might not exist in a systematic way or educators might not realize themselves that they are doing it. This connection between school and community is a strategic goal for many schools. We have programs where children collaborate with adults on social issues, primarily with their parents and less often with entrepreneurs and local municipality officers. So it is of primary importance to pay attention to this sensitization of children, to allow them to have a balanced personality and be conscious of social problems. The point is to produce correct and conscious citizens also."*

Policy makers associated Social Innovation Education with student centered approaches as opposed to teacher centered ones where students are active members of the society *"I consider it very important. It reminds me of some principles of what authentic teaching and learning should be. By "authentic", I mean a teaching and learning that considers the social context, with the problems that society faces becoming an object of investigation within the classroom. This type of education recognizes that children are part of a society and not outside of it. These types of educational models*

stand in contrast to more traditional teacher-centered models that have been proven inadequate in the proper education of students. As a result, we lose the interest of students, and we have discipline problems. So what you are suggesting can motivate students to be part of something bigger, that what they are learning is not just "empty knowledge" that they cannot apply anywhere." **They also brought up some concerns when it comes to implementation since some teachers consider it as extra work and to change this issue their recommendation is to include it in the analytical curriculum** *"I have to admit of course that similar kinds of programs exist in schools, but educators consider them as extra-work. So, the big issue in order to succeed is to see how these programs can be connected to the analytical curriculum. I mean not have them as something extra from the curriculum but connected them in a way with what students are being taught in class. So teachers will not see these as something extra but as something which is part of their material."*

The overall perception of Social Innovation Education is a positive one and many schools are trying to integrate it in their activities however it is important that they are well organized and easy/clear to implement for teachers and students *"I liked this model, and this kind of teaching technique is something that we are trying to apply here in Latsia, within the contexts that we are allowed. Because you should know, the Lyceum as a school has a very heavy schedule. So, these actions should be very targeted and very well-thought of if they are to succeed and not be a burden to students and teachers. But I would like to see how we could develop it further in the school that I am in."* **The other aspect brought by the policy makers is that the model needs to integrate into the school systemically as the member of parents association shared** *"I believe that these kinds of educational models must be practiced and implemented in our schools. The issue however is how. Because if you want it to enter the educational culture of Cyprus you have to bring it into schools in a systematic way, in a manner that allows both teachers and students to benefit from it systematically."*

Since Policy makers in Cyprus have been exposed to similar methods, they recognize Social Innovation Education as a critical method to develop students' competencies *"As a methodology and philosophy, this is what education should be - a critical, change/reform-oriented education. Creating individuals that are self-reflective and critical, who recognize inequalities and their own position in relation to these. From thereon, what enters the curriculum, and the analytical program is determined by various factors and is a complex process."* **They also gave suggestions in terms of how Social Innovation Education could be integrated in the students' curriculum from presentations to teachers to policy recommendations or as part of the existing curriculum** *"These things usually start from the bottom, through teacher training in workshops or conferences, where you inform educators regarding the model and methodology. These can be done via various ways and take various forms, but the most important thing is to reach and inform the schools and the teachers. From the moment that teachers understand that this model exists, and they might be doing aspects of it already, what follows is the exchange of good practices, these can be the beginning of the SIE application. Then, the next step would be to make a policy recommendation to the Ministry - this is in the mid-term (3-4 years). The Ministry can then include SIE in the curriculum; for example, it can make it part of the 'Health/Life Education' course, to be a distinct chapter of the whole Course. Additionally, SIE can be part of the so-called 'Hidden Curriculum' (outside the official didactic material). I believe that SIE would enter the 'Hidden Curriculum' first and then should try to enter the analytical curriculum. "*

School principals also recognize the benefits of the program to bring real world experiences in the classroom and as an interdisciplinary method "*I think it can be a bridge that can connect what students are taught in class and the real world. And we are promoting other ideas like interdisciplinary education, so that there is a unified knowledge - not just theory but also experience. "Practitioners* **also highlight the difficulty to enter the high school curriculum and the opportunity to integrate it in middle and elementary school curriculum** "*In Lyceum, it is exceedingly difficult to apply this because of the rigid analytical curriculum. We have for example tried to find some time to teach students how to prepare a CV and it has been difficult to impossible. Only as part of action programs, extra-curricular activities that schools do, these projects can come to schools. Perhaps in Gymnasiums will be easier, to enter in the curriculum I mean. But through action programs is the most likely. The issue is that such actions are usually done not in a systematic way, meaning they are one-off. '' Parents* association also see SIE as a avenue to develop student skills and become better members of the society "*I believe that SIE might prove highly important in terms of the association's priorities, as students will be allowed to develop their set of skill, particularly this feeling of responsibility that all humans should have towards their society, understanding that they are members of a greater whole that they affect and are affected by."*

Policies which facilitate the introduction of Social Innovation Education

Policy makers had identified multiple avenues which SIE could take as well as give multiple examples of programs who have been successfully adopted by some schools.

- **As part of the analytical curriculum** "*It is important to clarify how you want this program (SIE) to enter schools (within the analytical curriculum or extra-curriculum). The analytical curriculum is very tight."*
- **As part of an existing subject such as Health Education** "*Perhaps you could integrate it through the 'Action, creativity and Social Service' program or also in the 'Health Education' program. But, they already have more than enough to teach and manage in the school and it will be very difficult. But, if you want to run this program similar to other different actions that schools run (e.g. Junior Achievement, Innovative Schools) that can be done and especially in relation to 'Health Education' actions. "*
- **As part of other initiatives such as Young Volunteers "** *The Young Volunteers initiative is extraordinarily successful. For example, a school in Limassol did the "Washing-machine of Love" (children did washing with messages regarding equality, etc. which was well-received by the media) and then, because of its coverage, it became good practice. 10 more schools will be doing the "washing machine" now. "*
- **Research Day, Erasmus+, etwinning, Ecological Schools, Junior achievement are some of the programs policy makers mentioned which share common aspects with SIE and are already implemented "***As a teacher I participated in the programme "Research Day", which was a collaboration between the Ministry of Education, the Pedagogical Institute and the University of Cyprus. I coordinated a group of students on how to do a research study (in collaboration with academics from the University). Some topics we studied were why people do not go to libraries, stress in students or bullying. So we would locate a social issue and conduct research along with students and academics on this topic (a literature review, questionnaires, interviews*

and preparation of report). So there were these aspects that you mentioned: location of a social problem and cooperation amongst various social actors. And another aspect of this was that teachers that participated, philologists or even mathematicians, would teach students about research-relevant things during school hours; things like how to write a report or how to analyze statistics in excel. There are still programs like this, for example a programme, which is part of Euroscola, called "European ambassadors' '; this programme promotes the ideas of the European Union in schools. When there were European elections, this group of teachers with students tried to inform the community about EU values and why we should vote through various games, simulations and a play. We had invited EMP's, mayors and many others. These programmes escaped traditional teaching techniques at the same time as it provided knowledge about the EU. There are other programmes such as the "Ecological School" or "Young Journalists'' that are similar. These are programmes that cooperate for example with the municipality towards the gentrification of the community. We also have a programme called "etwinning" which is an ERASMUS+ program and a collaboration of various schools in various countries focusing on cultural heritage .Our school (students with their art teacher) focused on Lefkara lace and its promotion. Another program is the Entrepreneurship program where Junior Achievement is part of. Students, in collaboration with Economics and Business teachers, create a company, issue shares and even sell a product. These were all very innovative programmes. "

- **Competition like programs like Junior Achievement** "*There is a competition called Junior Achievement, which is something similar. It's not really the same, but students, through this competition, are involved in social issues and affairs. As a school, we work a lot on this competition; the last 3 years we have had over 10 teams participating. It is not easy as teachers should participate as well and sometimes is not easy to find. They deal with projects such as recycling old clothes, or they make energy drinks, or creating a website for re-use of old items. So there is the social factor involved in these projects. This obviously takes place outside the school's analytical curriculum. Additionally, our school makes its own carob honey because we have many carob trees. So a team of students help in producing and selling carob honey. And also, this year we have planted pomegranate trees and roses and we will produce juice and honey from these. This is of course difficult as we have to find teachers to support this as all this is done outside the analytical curriculum hours. In the school we also have the Supporting Committee where students participate along with Parents' Associations and other social actors. But again, they are very narrow in their application.*

Teacher Training to embrace initiatives like SIE

Policy makers shared numerous programs run by the Pedagogical institute "*The Pedagogical Institute runs various. There are the optional afternoon seminars, which take place outside school hours. There are seminars organized within school hours. There are seminars for parents organized in schools. We also run other programs such as the Program for newly promoted staff (new Principals, etc.). There are two-day workshops for educators. SIE could enter as part of these training programmes; the Pedagogical Institute integrates such programmes in the training for teachers usually through specialized seminars. Usually, organizations come to us and they bring us their*

manual, which is then checked by the Ministry and then we enter the programme as a specialized seminar for teachers."

There is a course targeting teachers and principals in regards to the introduction of innovative practices in school *"A specialized training programme for Social Innovation itself does not exist. There exists the general one for introduction of innovative practices in schools which are targeted for either Principals or teachers who wish to introduce an innovation. When a particular innovative practice comes, it is usually taken by those interested and they are informed and trained on it. For example, when we brought the interactive boards, there were announcements about training and some educators showed interest etc. Before that it was the use of computers in class."*

Other teacher training programs mentioned by teachers are part of EU programs or initiatives run by the civil society such as Junior Achievement as these principles share "*What I told you about "Research Day" there is the equivalent for "Research technology". The way these programmes function; they also function like teacher training. For example, I learned about research and doing research (questionnaires, interviews, etc.) and interpreting data during this programme. The programme on Entrepreneurship ("Junior Achievement") also has teacher training, the same as "EU Ambassadors", they follow some workshops. So, all these programmes are prepared in such a way that they include teacher training but I believe that the training and the learning for teachers come from the process also."* and *"I do not have something in mind. The only thing I can think of is the teacher training that takes place as part of Junior Achievement, which trains teachers in this thing. I have seen some other things lately about Innovation but something specific that will push educators to participate I do not know. "*

In terms of similar educational initiatives to SIE, policy makers mentioned "Health Education" and programs run by civil society mentioned above such as Junior Achievement "*Have referred to 'Health Education'. In secondary education specifically there is additionally the program 'Action, Creativity and Social Service'. These are programs that are in the analytical curriculum, and which could be utilized to integrate SIE. But again, you will need to think of the 'how' very carefully."*

CSS-EU recommendations

- **Conduct relevant teacher training** "*First of all, it has to take in consideration what happens within the schools. For example, it will be first offered as specialized training to teachers which will be relevant to them. And afterwards, you can target further educators. So it is about who you will target first (in terms of educators) so you get the ball rolling. "*
- **Clear communication and engagement with teachers who are interested in the methodology** *"First, communicate to educators what this is. You can enter for example in a big school and you can pilot. And once the program starts and it is running, and others see it being implemented (children being in the streets, communicating with people and doing things) this will then spillover. So first, find educators willing to adopt this methodology. Second, find schools, if not a whole region, to adopt this model. You do not need more than 4-5 charismatic educators to get things started. From thereon, things go forward and in 3-4 years you might be ready to propose it to the Ministry for inclusion in the curriculum."*

- **Include experts who have experience with the analytical curriculum who can advise teachers "***I would advise that the people who prepare your programme are people that have experience with the analytical curriculum so they can advise the teachers how they can integrate this model in their curriculum teaching itself. In practice, not just in theory. Personally, I consider it a challenge and I would like to know how other schools integrated it in their analytical curriculum in the other countries."*
- **Align the SIE with the analytical curriculum** *"Also, you should do a research on what are the goals of the Ministry and of the analytical curriculum in relation to the skills that SIE can offer and make it clear to teachers who will come for the training that the skills/goals of SIE and the analytical curriculum overlap on various levels. So if teachers are motivated to believe that SIE can accomplish to a great degree the goals that the Ministry and the curriculum have set and that SIE will help them draw the interest of students, they would be more inclined to adopt it as a model. "*
- **Engage with motivated educators** *"The first thing is to convince educators to take part. Because without the support of teachers, students cannot start by themselves. So, giving motivation to teachers to participate is of primary importance. For example, it could count in their evaluation. But being honest, as teachers are very busy with the analytical curriculum it is very difficult to convince them. But there are those that can be convinced and that can be pushed towards participating.*
- **Target teachers who have a more relaxed curriculum** *"And also, there are some academic background teachers that do not have very heavy schedules and can be convinced, for example those teaching Religious education. So they could be involved in some action programs that deal with social issues."*
- **Clearly communicate the benefits for the student "***So you could start with a teacher training, a very targeted one so you raise interest and draw the appropriate teachers, those that want to participate. And you have to make sure and communicate that it will not be a burden to students and teachers, not be a burden that might inhibit the teaching of the analytical curriculum. "*
- **Adapt to local context "***I believe that there should be a new/separate study concerning the application of SIE in Cyprus with the participation of students, teachers, parents and researchers and then a comparison with the application of SIE in other countries. The reason why I say this is because each country has its own culture and way of seeing things, particularly the way they deal with social issues as well as the way we seek to improve society more generally."*
- **Include practical examples and good practices "***Just to say, educators need practical examples and good practices. Theory might be useful but without practical examples and good practices, educators will not be drawn to it."*
- **Align SIE with the school priorities and consider a multidisciplinary approach"** *You have to think how you will bring it in the school. I believe that bringing one entire lesson in the analytical curriculum will be very difficult to impossible. But aspects of this model can be applied in various lessons already existing in the analytical curriculum. For example, in Junior Achievement, our students are producing and selling a hand-cream, which incorporates elements from Economics and Business, Chemistry, Philology, Geography and other lessons."*

- **Integration at high school level might be difficult due to the heavy curriculum "***The most important is not to put further burdens on the analytical curriculum. I do not know whether you have discussed this with the Ministry. Because for Lyceum it will be very difficult. Perhaps you can seek to integrate it in the different levels of schools in different ways; so in Primary it can enter schools in one way, in Gymnasiums in another way and in Lyceums in a different way.*
- **Integrate it as part of an action program "***In Lyceums it could enter, as I told you, as an action program. Also, something to consider; there are lessons that are almost extinct (because students do not pick them) such as the "Family Economics" lesson and SIE could enter as part of such lessons, for example as an action program in such lessons. And there you will have appeal from teachers also as since students do not pick it, they are afraid they will lose their jobs."*

Policy makers mentioned potential partners for scaling and implementing social innovation Education however they recognize that this may depend on further decisions. "*It depends on the topic and it depends on what each organization does. Maybe* ***Hope for Children, or UNHCR****, or the* ***House for Cooperation*** *might be interesting but you must consider that each has its own context and goals and must consider these also.* ***The Pedagogical Institute*** *also, to run the training programmes and for research purposes. I would say the* ***Universities, especially the Departments of Education.*** *I mentioned before that you should consider involving the* ***Municipality Councils.*** *But apart from them, you must have connections with groups like Parents' associations, the local governments and municipalities as well as other organized local groups like scouts, NGO's, cultural associations, etc. which would be willing to participate in such localized action programs.*

In the end the representative of the Ministry of Education proved to be supportive if the goals are aligned with their goals *"If an organization seeks our cooperation and its material is of quality and its goals in alignment with the strategic goals of the Ministry, then there can be various cooperation. We can also cooperate in the training. Once you prepare something, you can send it to us, we offer feedback and then the Ministry can decide whether this guide can move on to the schools."*

4.4 Civil society priorities

Cyprus context and needs analysis also included interviews with civil society representatives to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Cyprus 5 individuals who were interviewed come from the Youth for Exchange and Understanding, Junior Achievement, Association for Historical Dialogue and Research, IDEA Innovation Center and Parents' association - Paphos 10th primary education school 'Evagoras Pallikarides'. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

Civil society area of work

The diversity of civil society representatives is linked together by their **mission to advance students education** using different methods *"**support and empower young people** (ages primarily between 18-35), not only in the context of Cyprus but also at a European level"* and *"**the development of a set of skills dealing with entrepreneurship, economic literacy and readiness for the job market.**"* As well as an intercultural mission from the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research aiming to ***"bring a dialogue concerning history, historiography and history education** in the context of a democratic society."* There is also an entrepreneurial focus from IDEA Innovation Center "*The goals are the creation of start-up businesses and a **culture of entrepreneurship and innovation** that would make Cyprus a center in terms of the latter two."* Lastly, the parents' association emphasized their supportive role *"we support the work done in schools, by providing technical and material infrastructure or by participating in various actions with teachers and students."*

Educational priorities

- **Recognition of non-formal education and provide opportunities for young** *people "Our priority as an organization is the recognition of non-formal education and non-formal educational methodologies and their introduction in our educational system. Generally, we try to provide opportunities for education to young people."*
- **Entrepreneurship, Economic Literacy, and readiness for the job market "***The three priorities are those I have mentioned above: entrepreneurship, economic literacy and readiness for the job market."*
- **Historical teaching and Peaceful existence "***As I mentioned above, we have two main focuses: historical teaching and historiography, and other more general issues of peaceful existence."*
- **Supporting New Entrepreneurs ``IDEA** *provides various kinds of support to new entrepreneurs from the stage of the idea to the stage of sales, so these businesses can become viable. We can provide both capital and support during the 9-months that the training takes place. We offer intensive entrepreneurial training (3 times per week for 4 months) including 44 sessions, an initial capital of 12,000 euros, mentoring, support and advice on various issues (accounting, legal, cyber-security, etc.), use of the facilities in our Centre, contacts with other entrepreneurs in their sector and guidance in European programmes.*
- **Provide technical infrastructure to facilitate the learning process "***As I said before, we provide material/technical infrastructure (for example interactive boards or other technological equipment not offered by the ministry) which sometimes the ministry does not have the capacity for, or we organize various seminars for parents focusing on children's welfare and better education. The last seminar we organized for example was for cyber-bullying. Generally, we do not have much power to interfere in the education of children. But we do organize various actions with teachers and students in order for us as parents to learn how to facilitate the students' learning.*

Social Innovation Education

Civil society representatives seem to support the SIE model and believe it has a lot of potential "*I believe that as a model it has a lot of potential if you manage to integrate it in our educational system. This kind of education is what young people we communicate with say they would have liked to have in school. To have the opportunity to co-create things as members of a society, to have the*

opportunity to bring the change they want to see in the society. So managing to acquire skills and having the space to express their opinions and create projects offering solutions, is an idea that has a lot of potential." **And to give back to society** *"Firstly, I would like to say that we support such innovative educational models. The culture that we ourselves try to cultivate through the training and consultations to our start-ups offer the message that they have to "give back" to society. "* **They also emphasized similarities with other models in the field of entrepreneurship and support the action oriented method "***Similar educational models exist also in other fields like entrepreneurship, social innovation, environment, cultural heritage, etc. And this is something we try to promote as well. From the moment that students are encouraged to have a critical eye and locate social issues in their society, this is vital. Very rarely are students allowed to do something like this through the analytical curriculum as those focus mostly on theory. Additionally, the fact that they are encouraged to do something about it, this is what transforms the overall learning experience. So, the model is excellent as it focuses on experiential education, students pass through various stages until they implement an idea that they had, tackling an issue that they face. "Civil* society representatives recognize that **SIE is aligned with Education trends moving away from content towards practice** *"I have heard about similar programmes either at a research level or at a practice level. I find it remarkably interesting as I believe this is the future of education. Education will be going towards new methodologies, which will be more participatory and will involve other societal agents - not just from within the school - rather than simply adding further content.* **They also recognize the gap in the educational methodologies and the opportunities for the field to cultivate youth emotional intelligence** *"In Cyprus such educational methodologies do not exist. The youth in Cyprus do not have the education necessary to develop their emotional quotient as our education is knowledge-centered and no one cares about their emotional intelligence. There is no consideration of students' reflexivity and critical abilities. This is mostly connected to the kind of content they are taught (which is given by the ministry) as the books and texts they are given do not allow them to engage in dialogue."*

Three out of five civil society representatives have similar initiatives to SIE. One of them emphasizes the co-creation aspect towards addressing social issues *"As an organization, our programs seek to understand what kind of issues young people face, and what they would like to deal with on a social level. And we try to co-create projects and programmes so that we bring about the change we want to see in our society, always in cooperation with other agencies at the local, national or European level."* **JA has a program called Student company which is remarkably similar but is more focused towards entrepreneurship and less on innovation when addressing social issues** *"We have a programme called "Student Company". The goal is for students to locate a social issue that they want to improve and to take action in order to deal with the issue identified. For us, innovation is not a goal in itself as it is very difficult to do something innovative. What is important for us is that students pass through this process of locating a social issue and acting to do something/ anything about it. But as our program is a competition, all winning teams are usually those that offer something innovative, something new. I believe that using such models is the only way to plant a seed in their minds that they can be the change that they want to see in the world."* **IDEA Center also has an initiative combining entrepreneurship, student competition, project-based learning and STEM** *"We supported a seminar called "Lindt Stand", whose aim was to encourage teenagers in becoming entrepreneurs and to support their digital skills. Another one was "Life through*

Innovation", a competition for secondary education students, co-organized with the Bank of Cyprus and the Cypriot Mathematical Society that aimed at creating projects regarding issues faced in everyday life using technology, mathematics and economics. We have also brought together University students and secondary education students with our start-ups. We also organize visits to schools and universities to present entrepreneurship as an alternative pathway."

The organizations who do not have such initiatives shared that the groups they are targeting are different and they also try to do something similar "*We try to do something similar, involving our target groups in the process of the programme implementation as much as possible. For example, through the training, the evaluation, etc. Generally, we seek to have an immediate impact on the people who take part. But as our target groups often do not involve students directly, we have not done something similar."*

Other initiatives like SIE are "*For over 18 years old, I am familiar with some organizations that do these kinds of co-creation projects, such* ***as Plan B, Key in Limassol, the Friends of Forest club in Agros, and Youth Dynamics. Another project is also the Famagusta Avenue Garage***. As well as *" I had heard about something that was happening in schools in Limassol and in Faneromeni in Nicosia with the inclusion of migrant children's parents in the school, even within the teaching time. I do not know what exactly they did though."*

CSS-EU recommendations

- **Include organizations who have experience working with primary and secondary education** *"Without knowing too much detail about the project, I would say that you have to include organizations such as ours, that deal with primary and secondary education and that can support the implementation of SIE both during and after the project's duration.*
- **Build the program with sustainability in mind** *"These organizations can ensure that there will be a sustainability for the project, to continue the action programmes so this does not stay as a one-off. I believe that if young people, the schools and other organizations come into contact and create bonds, it would be easier to come up with more actions and have sustainability for the project."*
- **Align the project goals with the analytical curriculum "***The most important thing is to find a way that connects SIE with the goals set by the analytical curriculum, by the ministry. To align your goals with the objectives of the ministry."*
- **Provide incentives and find motivated teachers if framed as extracurricular activity "***Second, since most likely the project will appear as extracurricular activity, you will have to find teachers that are willing to engage with this project. You have to provide incentives, perhaps gifts, travels or presents. Or if the program coincides with the goals of his/her lesson and they can include your program in their teaching then better for you. Third, you have to have a success story that you can convince Principals that this model works, either from Cyprus or from abroad. Principals are a huge aspect of this; if you can convince Principals to work with you then you will make your life easier. "*

- **Engage the entire ecosystem of teachers, parents, principals, the Ministry, the Pedagogical institute and NGOs** *"Anything targeting the formal education, I believe that you should engage with various agents at various different levels. You have to engage teachers, Principals and eventually the Ministry, no matter how complex and difficult it might be. Also, what we are trying in the last years is to not just be confined to one region. Also, educators, if something is good, they will disseminate for you through word-of-mouth. Additionally, make sure you have good alliances, for example the Pedagogical Institute. If you choose to go through non-formal education, I believe that you should engage the community and the non-governmental organizations.*
- **Start earlier in the school process. We believe** *that your piloting should start with integrating SIE in schools' culture. We also believe that you should offer the opportunity to students to be exposed to this social innovation culture from early on in their school years and not only towards the end. Also, we believe that in your piloting you should target specific students that can facilitate the completion of the projects in order to show that this model is working. So basically, a careful choice behind the people that will be engaged in the projects during the pilot.*
- **Consider integrating it with special needs students. I want** *to speak about my school and my area for this question. In our region, there are some special schools for children that have learning difficulties/disabilities. And we could organize days out or events with these schools, so students (from both schools) and their parents come into contact. Such events can raise awareness to our children and us as parents of our responsibility to help the students and parents in these special schools.*
- **To build sustainability consider the curricular path "***I think mostly this, to ensure that SIE will not just have a firework effect, to have sustainability. How it can perhaps enter the curriculum or if that is not possible, how it can be maintained as an extracurricular activity.*
- **Ensure the project is very clear "***The project has to be as clear as possible. Clear content/theory, clear activities. Do not ask teachers to prepare things because they will not.*
- **Ongoing collection of feedback and have less bureaucracy "***Always get feedback from teachers, focus groups, etc. An advice is also to start first with the private sector because private schools are more open and have less bureaucracy.*
- **Good communication with the Ministry** *Also, having good communication with the ministry is vital.*
- **Start small and go step by step. I think** *that you have to go step-by-step. Because something new might be intriguing but you have to take it slow so you make sure that it will have a long-term impact.*
- **Be sensitive to society differences "***You should pay attention to the diversity that our society is characterized by and this should be reflected in the actions and the teams that will be created for each programme."*
- **Consider the local and community context "***Just that you pay attention to the local context, the community context. For me, this connection with special schools is important. The first year I took over as President of the Association, we financed a trip for some final-year students of ours to meet some students of a special school. This is the kind of activity I proposed above but this one was on a smaller scale and without the parents. So if we can take an experience like*

this and expand it to include more people as well as reflection on behalf of students, that would be great."

At the end civil society representatives sent their best wishes and were willing to collaborate further. "*I wish to say that I want to help in every way possible for the implementation of such programmes and good luck with your project."* **They also raised concerns regarding the best way to integrate SIE in schools** "*I just want to say that* ***entering the analytical curriculum is practically impossible****. We have been running the program above for 8 years now with considerable success and despite my efforts, it is impossible to enter in the curriculum. Even for supporting the teachers that take part in the project, it is very difficult to hear back from the ministry. So you should focus more on the extra-curricula. And finding someone within the Ministry to guide you and support you is highly important."*

4.5 SWOT Analysis

CSS-EU - Cyprus	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Aligned with existing priorities - Tested methodology - Engages the extended community - Student's center - Ensures sustainability - Increases student's self-esteem, empathy, and collaboration skills - Inclusion of vulnerable groups – priority wellbeing of students – special focus on migrant groups	- Ensure Long term sustainability
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Teachers have experience - Existing health education curriculum - Interest from local governments - Parents associations involvement - Aligned with existing trends towards developing competencies - Changes of the evaluation system – Evaluation overall is a big priority for teachers - Good IT infrastructure – 76% students have access to computers	- Rigid system - tight curriculum focused on analytical curriculum and basic skills - Lack of time 76% - Many initiatives in this area

Chapter 5 – Serbia

Each country analysis starts with an overview of the educational context followed by the results of the survey and focus group as well as interviews with civil society and policy makers and key findings.

5.1 Social Innovation Education Context

The Social Innovation Education Context is the result of the desk research conducted by our partner in Serbia KidHub and includes an overview of the National Education System, the evolution of Social Innovation, Innovation in formal and non-formal education and Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities for Social Innovation Education.

5.1.1. Overview of the National Education System

National education in Serbia is primarily based on the education system established in Socialist Yugoslavia. Education is divided into four distinctive parts:

1. *Pre-school education* – it may start when a child is six months old. For the most part, pre-school education is optional.
2. *Primary education* – Primary school – Mandatory part of education, it consists of 8 grades. Children start primary school when they are between 6 and 7 years old, lasting for eight years.
3. *Secondary education* – High school – children enter it when they are between 14 or 15 years old. It lasts four years for Grammar schools, three years for some variants of Professional schools.
4. *Tertiary education* – Faculty or College - field of study determines how long the education will last. Postgraduate education is integrated into this part.

The Ministry of Education, Development, and technological innovation is considered a key policymaker for all laws, regulations, or strategies concerning both state and private education. Several institutions, both government (such as National Educational Council) and non-government, became partners to the ministry in developing various bills and regulations that aim to improve education. During the 90s, first private educational institutions - high schools and universities - were formed and joined the educational system. All private educational institutions need to follow the state law concerning educational programs (some institutions, like private foreign schools aimed at children from the diplomatic core, can have their curriculum).

Based on the level of education, every student gets its qualification level, which may be considered a prerequisite for employment (at least in the public sector). The National Frame of Qualifications in Serbia (NOKS) is working on establishing an overall integrated national frame of qualifications (NOKS, 2017), based on the idea of lifelong learning and informal as well as formal education:

NOKS Level	Qualifications
1	• Primary education and upbringing • Adult primary education • Basic music/ballet education
2	• Vocational training (1 year)

		• Education for work (2 years) • Training (120-360 hours of training)
3		• Secondary vocational education lasting three years • Non-formal adult education (min. 960 hours of training)
4		• Secondary education lasting four years (professional, artistic, high school)
5		• Master and specialist education
6	6.1	• Basic academic studies (OAS, 180 ECTS) • Basic vocational studies (OSS, 180 ECTS)
	6.2	• Undergraduate Academic Studies (OAS, 240) • Specialist vocational studies of the first degree (medium education, 180 + 60 ECTS)
7	7.1	• Integrated academic studies (IAS, max. 360 ECTS) • Master of Academic Studies (MAS, 180 + 120 or 240 + 60 ECTS) • Master of Vocational Studies (MSS, 120 ECTS)
	7.2	• Specialist Academic Studies (SAS, 60 ECTS)
8		• Doctoral studies (DS, 180 ECTS)

Pre-school

Pre-school education is divided into three parts – *jaslice* (between 9 months and up to 3-year-old), *vrtić* (kindergarten – for children between 3 and 5 ½ years old), and *pripremni predškolski program* (preparatory preschool program – a mandatory part of pre-school education for kids between 5 ½ and 6 ½ years old).

A preparatory preschool program consists of half-day or whole-day educational activities and special programs based on children and parents' interests. It lasts for nine months at least. The main objective is to expand the child's social and cognitive experience to bypass social and cultural differences between children and simulate the school environment to prepare them for primary school (Obrazovanje, 2016)

Primary education

Primary school education is divided into two cycles: (Eurydice, 2021)

1. Lower grades primary schools (from 1st to 4th grade) - students have only one teacher who teaches them in all classes (except English language and Religious education). The focus is on obtaining general knowledge in various areas.
2. Higher grades in primary schools (5th to 8th grade) – students get separate teachers for most classes and get more specific knowledge from each subject they learn.

Public schools are free, while private schools have tuition. At the end of primary schooling, students do the final exam, after which they get a Primary School certificate. Students that want to continue their education need to choose three high schools in order of preference. With a combined score

from the final exam and their success in primary school, and the number of open places in school they want to enter, they may continue their schooling in one of the schools they choose.

Secondary education

High schools are divided into three types:

- **Gimnazija/Grammar school** lasts for four years and offers general education. They usually have the General Course, Science-Mathematics Course, Humanities-Linguistics Course, Information Technology Course, and the Bilingual Course. The students' recommendation (and the usual practice) is to continue their education after grammar school, as finding a job with a high school diploma can be challenging. There are also high schools for children interested in specific areas (for example, Mathematical grammar school where students are focused on STEM or Philological grammar school where the focus is on languages). Those schools also last four years and offer specific, focused education, and their student usually continue education on faculty of a similar type (i.e., Students from philological grammar school typically continue their education on faculty of philology, on the language department of their preference)

- **Stručna škola/Professional school** also lasts for four years, and students who finish them get their first professional degree. Craft schools are variants of professionals' schools that last three years and are focused on crafts such as bakery or woodwork. If a student wants to continue education on faculty or college, he needs to finish his 4th year.

- **Umetničke škole/Art schools** are schools focused on developing students' artistic skills in various areas, from graphic design to ballet. The school lasts for four years, and students usually continue their education in art academies.

At the end of high school, students that want to continue education choose a faculty or college they wish to attend. Some faculties or colleges have prerequisites for courses or classes that students need to have in high school to apply for the faculty or college. Every institution maintains control over its admission process that usually consists of one or several tests. Combination of scores on tests and students grades from high school determine wherever the student joins the faculty or college they want. Art academies usually do their admission process earlier so that the candidates who do not join them may apply to other faculties or colleges.

Tertiary education

There are two types of tertiary level institutions:

1. **Viša škola("Higher School")/College** – lasts for three years. They can be considered the same as professional universities. After graduation, students get a bachelor's degree in Applied sciences or an equivalent diploma.
2. **Fakultet**/f**aculty** and **akademija umetnosti/art academy** of University – last for 4 years until baccalaureate, 5 years until magistracy and 8 years until doctorate. In Medical schools, after six years, you earn the title of Doctor of Medicine.

Studying at public universities varies between free and low tuition. Tuitions are mandatory for foreign citizens (but are still considered low compared to similar institutions throughout the EU). Tuition costs at private schools vary far and wide. Serbia has seventeen Universities, of which eight are public, and nine are private; Sixty-three colleges of applied sciences, of which forty-seven are

public, and seventeen are private; and eight colleges of academic studies – three are public, and five are private.

Special education

Special education includes:

- **Education for persons with disabilities** - handled in special schools as well as regular ones.
- **Dvojezična nastava/Bilingual education –** since 2009, both higher grade primary and high school students can have bilingual education. Subjects are taught in Serbin and another language (English, French, Italian)
- **Celodnevna nastava/Full-day classes** – since 2009, this type of education was created for children in lower grades in primary school with busy parents. Students spend extended time in school and can finish their homework there.
- **Adult education** – launched in 2011-12 under the name **Druga Šansa/Second Chance**. Focus is on people who did not graduate in primary or high school, increasing their chance for employment. Most attendants are from the Roma minority, especially those who missed enrolment in primary school.

Reforms

Up to the year 2000, there were no significant changes to the education system – it was based on socialist education, using frontal teaching, and students had to reproduce their knowledge for grades by tests. Some tests were given in written form, others were oral, and there were combinations as well. In 2001, the Ministry of education started its first reform of the educational system, which included descriptive evaluation in elementary school's younger grades, introduction to civil and religious education in primary and high school.

In 2005/6, guidelines from the Bologna Declaration were adopted into higher education. Graduate students became equal to master status. In 2006 part of pre-school education was deemed obligatory.

In October 2012, the government adopted the Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2020. Key goals were to increase the quality of educational processes and outcomes to the maximum attainable level; increase population coverage; improve the overall effectiveness in the use of education resources.

From 2016, the focus of the ministry (and government) was on introducing dual education and focusing on the entrepreneur approach to education.

In 2017, the Law of dual education was introduced to the practice. With this, Serbia became the only country in the region that has this kind of work experience given to students (MPN, 2020).

In 2018, Serbia became the 31st member of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. Membership is considered a strong signal that Serbia is working on inclusive education. This year also saw the introduction of the new Law on Textbooks, which introduced digital textbooks into the educational system. Also, Bylaws on pupil's cooperatives introduced the extracurricular activities focused on entrepreneurship.

In 2019, a guide for pupils' cooperatives was established with a practical road map and the idea of the development of teacher's and students' entrepreneurial competencies (MPN 2019). The bylaw on career guidance standards and counseling was also introduced, with a cross-sectoral document

that serves as guidelines for planning and coordination career guidance in primary and secondary school and higher education.

In 2020, the dual education law was expanded. Also, significant changes to regular schooling were made because of the Corona pandemic, and the focus was put on online education.

This year, the ministry started a debate about strategy for the development of education in Serbia by 2030, focusing on increasing teaching and learning quality, availability of pre-tertiary education, and expanding the pedagogical role of educational institutions. Also, another focus is on raising quality and relevance in higher education as well as digital transformation, innovation, ICT and professional development of teachers. ICT focus will be on using artificial intelligence programs to be implemented in primary schools.

Concepts – 21st competencies, entrepreneurial thinking, sustainable development, democratic values, citizenship education

Concepts at the heart of SIE are present in the Serbian education system, but their introduction and existence are varied both in quality and quantity. As a general rule, it mostly is based on efforts of individuals and organizations, rather than the state.

Citizenship education

Civic education was introduced in 2001 as an elective subject and is still in that status. It is attended by primary and secondary school students, choosing between civic education and religious education - every school year. It is held once a week. Teachers are mainly psychologists, pedagogist and social sciences teachers who work in school. Although there are many manuals, there are still no official textbooks. Through conversation, everything is left to the motivation and inspiration of the teacher. There are many manuals and textbooks, ready-made teaching plans and literature on the website of the Citizen Initiatives organization. The quality of teaching varies and is subject to the individual effort of the teachers. Also, the fact that you cannot go to religious studies and citizenship education at the same time sparked the debate about the artificial split between citizen/"progressive" and religious/"conservative" Serbia. There are claims that the subject that was introduced to expand democratic ideals and values failed to do so, as Serbia was declared a state with transitional or hybrid regime in 2020 by Freedom House.

Entrepreneurial thinking

Entrepreneurial thinking was present in mainly IT start-ups, coworking spaces and generally around the IT community. However, it became the focus of the government and ministry of education in 2016. and with the introduction of the Law of Dual Education in 2017, it was applied for the first time for generations of students in 2018/19. In 2019/20 there were 37 Dual education profiles, that include 7.000 students and 880 companies (RAS, 2020). Depending on the type of high-school, students may spend up to 50% of their school time working and learning the tools of the trade in a company.

The law itself and its application were, and still are a controversial topic in Serbia. There were issues when the law was proposed about work hour payment for students (it started as 50 % of full-time worker, but was later raised to 70%) and also the idea that students should be paid not by work hour but "hour of effective work", which was an unclear concept that could lead to manipulation and bad practices from the employers (luckily, this concept is removed from the final version of the law and the regular work hour is applied). The students are not considered employed and do not receive any

benefits (Social security, pension etc.) nor it counts as years of work for their pension status in the future. The money they get for their work (up to 30 hours a week) is below the minimum wage in Serbia (around one 1/3 of it), which sparked the debate about ethical aspects of the law's application.

Apart from that, entrepreneurial thinking is still being developed and nurtured in several coworking spaces around Serbia. Those are the places where mostly IT start-ups, but also small companies are developing their products and ideas. Various workshops with experts from Serbia and abroad are regularly held in those spaces, and up until year 2020 the IT sector was booming and becoming an increasingly popular area of study and work for students in high school.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is still in development in Serbia, both as an idea and practice. National strategy for sustainable development was first introduced in 2007 (National Strategy, 2017) and up to 2018 many regulations were adopted, but the central problem remained – the application of laws and procedures in practice.

The report from CEVES based on the research stated that concerning all 17 goals of sustainable development, Serbia is lacking in many areas, but has potential that is often not used or misused (CEVES, 2018)

In terms of education, sustainable development is part of education of various individuals or organizations (such as KidHub). In Grammar schools, there is a possibility to choose Education for sustainable development as an extra subject, but many teachers do not still see the benefit of it or grasp the essence of the SD (Research on Pedagogies, 2020)

21st Competencies

21st competencies are discussed first and foremost with teachers, as to teach students those competencies, teachers need to know them and practice them first. The most important competency is using IT in education, as it is something that teachers often state that they feel lacking and would love to be a teacher about different ways with which they can implement technology in their everyday class.

5.1.2. The evolution of Social Innovation in Serbia

Social Innovation in Serbia is strongly connected with Social Entrepreneurship (Serbia has only draft law on Social Entrepreneurship initiated in 2016. by ngos working building solidarity sector for more than 15 years (Smart Kolektiv, Trag Foundation, European movement in Serbia, Group 484 etc) without governamental consensus on this law sector https://solidarna ekonomija.rs/). History of social enterprises in The Republic of Serbia begins in the 1950s and is about establishing employment for persons with disabilities. In today's form, social entrepreneurship has become interesting in 2008 after the global economic crisis in the world and even in Serbia. The quest for innovation and alternative solutions to economic problems and the development of entrepreneurship has led to the development of a social economy and social entrepreneurship. In the period after 2008, from the state level, according to the publication "Social Innovations: people-centered public policies" (Social Innovation, 2021). Serbia has taken certain measures in order to encourage the development of social entrepreneurship, primarily by improving the legal framework, through programs for small and medium enterprises and training of the National Agency for Regional Development and the network of regional development agencies (In 2008, 17 Regional Agencies were active in the Republic of

Serbia, active in all regions: Vojvodina, Belgrade, Central Serbia, Eastern Serbia, Western Serbia and South Serbia). In 2007, the development of a program for crediting start-ups in the Republic of Serbia started, which is not officially recognized as a social economy program, but the benefits in using funds from young and other hard-to-employ people are placed in the tool of development of social entrepreneurship in the Republic Serbia. At the same time, within the social economy there was mutual recognition and networking of social entrepreneurs and civil society organizations, with the aim of contributing to the development of social entrepreneurship through cooperation, knowledge exchange, experience, and information. The consequences of prolonged transition, poor and outdated social services, as well as many socially excluded citizens have made individuals and groups increasingly decide to seek solutions for aggravated socio-economic problems themselves. The integration of refugees and internally displaced persons after the civil war in 1990s, then the needs of persons with different types of disability, unemployment are just some of the challenges that civil society organizations, primarily citizens' associations, and business initiatives create as forms of social entrepreneurship. In the start of social entrepreneurship in Serbia stakeholders of social entrepreneurship are companies for employment of people with disabilities and non-governmental organizations (foundations, associations, and cooperatives).

According to the latest research (How to start social Entrepreneurship Business in Serbia, European Movement in Serbia, 2014), today in Serbia, there are about 1,200 social enterprises. If we exclude agricultural cooperatives, which still need to be transformed into modern cooperatives, it is estimated that there are more than 400 healthy and sustainable social enterprises in our country. About 3/4 of them are associations of citizens and foundations, while other legal forms include professional rehabilitation and work integration of persons with disabilities, companies (limited liability companies and entrepreneurs), cooperatives and endowments.

The development of social entrepreneurship in Serbia is largely limited and is at the level of initiatives that are unsustainable. The problem of social entrepreneurship in Serbia reflects the lack of understanding of social entrepreneurship among representatives of state institutions, who oversee the issue of social entrepreneurship, economy and population. In the Republic of Serbia, the competence of social entrepreneurship lies with the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans Affairs and Social Protection. The competent ministry monitors social entrepreneurship as an entrepreneurship that contributes to the employment of a heavily vulnerable category of population. The Ministry of Economy has no contact with social entrepreneurship, which is not in line with the economic activity of social enterprises. The state institutions of the Republic of Serbia do not have a clear picture and vision of the social economy and social entrepreneurship. In the NGO sector, there are organizations like Smart Kolektiv and The Coalition for Solidarity Economy Development (CSED), which work towards solidarity and social economy policies for more than 15 years and business incubators like Impact Hub (Impact businesses in Serbia are more focused on creating social values to society, but not including vulnerable groups in core business and management) which is working with impact not social businesses. On governmental level, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of The Government of Serbia (SIPRU)'s main role is to strengthen the Government's capacities to develop evidence-based social inclusion policies, as well as to coordinate and monitor their implementation in line with the international standards and good practices in Europe. KidHUb is also in the CSED network, and all mentioned organizations will be part of the piloting of SIE in Serbia.

In December 2021. Serbia adopted the Draft law on social entrepreneurship. The draft law on social entrepreneurship was agreed with the members of the Working Group for drafting this draft law, as well as with all interested parties and non-governmental institutions. The working group, formed by the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, consisted of, in addition to the relevant ministry, numerous representatives of the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of

Economy, the Agency for Business Registers, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, the Ministry of Human and minority rights, the Office for Information Technologies and Electronic Government, the Republic Secretariat for Public Policies, the Team for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction, the Tax Administration, the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, the National Alliance for Local Economic Development, the Union of Employers, representative trade unions, the Coalition for the Development of Solidarity economy, the "Business on Heels" Association, Citizens' Initiatives, the professional public and others. The implementation of this law implies, first of all, that within nine months from the date of entry into force, the Social Entrepreneurship Development Program will be adopted, which will define the measures of active support subjects of society of entrepreneurship for a period of five years. The mentioned measures of active support include not only financial support, but also non-financial measures, in the sense of education about social entrepreneurship, promotion of social entrepreneurship, etc. In July 2022, the Council for the Development of Social Entrepreneurship was formed. After the adoption of this law, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, in cooperation with other bodies and organizations, will inform the public about the establishment of a legal framework in this area.

5.1.3. Innovation in Formal and Non-Formal Education

- **Entrepreneurship Education**

In 2002, Serbia started reforming High school education with the help of funds from the EU. Among various initiatives, the ministry started introducing entrepreneurship into professional and experimental high schools (Social Innovation, 2016). It also introduced education for adults wishing to start their own business and is done today through national service for employment and regional education centers.

Student Entrepreneurship started in 2003 and is based on the Norwegian model adapted for the Balkan region. It introduces the idea of student companies where students obtain knowledge through practice in real life, with the help of teachers trained to act as mentors.

Dostignuća Mladih/Junior Achievement began its activities in Serbia in 2005. The program was accredited and approved for the educational system and became immensely popular, with more than 60.000 students from 286 schools around Serbia, both primary and high schools.

Social Impact Award is an international program for young entrepreneurs which was introduced by a non-profit organization Razlivalište created in 2014. The idea is introducing young people to social entrepreneurship and creating an encouraging environment for the development of youth entrepreneurship (Junior Achievement, 2014)

StartIT initiative was created in 2007 with the idea of building a community of IT-focused entrepreneurs and companies that would offer ideas and suggestions to the government to improve the working climate for start-ups and entrepreneurship in general. It fosters and supports various education initiatives about entrepreneurship.

- **Active Citizenship Education**

During the 90s, the main driving force for establishing Active Citizenship in education were non-government organizations and civil society in general. They were vital in several aspects – they enabled contacts and brought in new practices while the country was under sanctions; they started introducing creative ways to education, such as workshops, active seminars, and similar activities. After the year 2000, many experts from NGOs started to cooperate directly with the government or

work as a part of it, which influenced the number of enacted reforms. One of them was Citizen education, based on teaching students about what it means to be an active citizen in a society. Today, many NGOs focus on local communities, working on solving various problems on the local level – from ecology to poverty. In 2020, NAGVIS (National Association of Citizen Education Teachers) network of active citizens education practitioners was started in Belgrade with the main goal of connecting all teachers holding citizenship education in the Serbia (nagvis.rs)

- **Social Innovation Education**

Most of the programs and models like SIE were done outside of the education system, usually through the civil sector or individuals' work. Some of the noteworthy initiatives are:

- **MAP (Music Art Project)** – founded in 2010. In Serbia is based on the international The El Sistema program which operates with the system of concentric circles, where the beginning of the change in the behavior of the children, which changes his family, then the broader community and then the society. The pursuit of musical excellence contributes to the process of change, which in turn leads to transformation of the society.
- **Designathon Works Serbia** – maker-based program from the Netherlands that is part of ASHOKA network.Started in Serbia in 2018. by KidHub. The program encourages children to take an active role in shaping their future and looking for solutions to today's social and ecological problems of using design thinking, new technologie and steam. Focus of the program is education for Sustainable Development.
- **Design for change** – based on the international program that puts children and young at the center of problem-solving, with methods that borrow heavily from the design thinking methodology. The program was introduced in Serbia in 2016, with several schools using DFC methodology in solving various problems.
- **LiceUlice –** a street magazine founded in 2010. that people with various disabilities sell, and they keep half of the profit. Even though it is not an education per se, magazine articles are very much connected with the SIE ideas. It is focused on social themes – fight against poverty, social change, social entrepreneurship, sustainable development, etc.

5.1.4. Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities

Influence of socialist history on education

During Socialist Yugoslavia, education was considered important, and the government invested in it. Illiteracy was steadily dropping after WW2 as primary schooling became obligatory. Teachers were respected and considered an essential part of the community, especially in small towns and villages. However, minorities such as Roma people fell out of the system and were not tracked or invited into the system. The same thing happened with children with disabilities, who often did not participate in school at all. Entrepreneurship and citizen education were not encouraged and only existed through professional schools and faculties. Socialism in Yugoslavia had its peculiar aspects, in a way that many working collectives were based on the principle of *samoupravljanje/self-governing*. In essence, it meant that every worker employed in a specific institution or enterprise had the right to participate in the decision-making process. While it was an exciting idea, it was hit-or-miss, mainly depending on the collective and leaders' quality in practice. Many anecdotes from the older generation refer to cleaning ladies ' challenging the GM of the institution on some completely unimportant note. Still, it was an important aspect that influenced both entrepreneurship and education to some extent.

Today, the socialist past is something that most people look at with disdain and do not see the good things it brought and helped establish. It is still a conflicting topic in Serbia, and it can be hard to analyze properly.

During the 90s, with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the civil war, the education system suffered the same problems as the rest of the society. With economic and cultural sanctions, the exchange of ideas and flow of information was stopped. The economic crash, along with hyperinflation and rise of poverty, also hit schools extremely hard. Teacher's strikes for better conditions and interruption of classes were a common thing. Tycoons and criminals who got rich and powerful but usually had only minor or no education marked the rise of the concept of "self-made but suspicious businessmen." Wide parts of society considered them successful, which lessened the value of education in general, and school and teachers position as well. Also, during the 90s, the first private educational institutions were formed, but they were largely considered as "pay to get diploma" types and were not considered equal to public schools in terms of quality and demands from students in terms of knowledge and work.

Between 2000 and 2001, the regime changed, and economic and other sanctions were over, but the problems remained. The new government began reforms, but there was a lot of resistance from the teachers and various experts. There was no national consensus on what education outcomes would be – many were supporting the old system that gave broad knowledge but few valuable skills in everyday life.

Since then, various reforms were enacted, many were done only partially, but the core of education is still organized similarly as in Socialist Yugoslavia.

Influence of status of EU accession candidate

The status of EU accession candidates influenced changes in the education policy, but we cannot be sure to what extent. Serbia started to change its educational system long before it was granted the status of candidate (in 2001) and follows practices from the EU (Bologna implementation being one of them), along with the introduction of various methods and ideas from the EU (Dual learning, entrepreneurship in education). Serbia got its candidate status in 2012 and started negotiations in 2014. However, Chapter 26, which is focused on Education and Culture, was opened at the beginning of 2017, and immediately closed. There are no indications that it will be opened anytime soon. On the other hand, the position of candidate opened possibilities to access EU funds, such as the Erasmus+ program, and particular NGOs are focused on helping schools and educational institutions apply for grants. We also see a number of primary and high schools that are applying for Erasmus+ grants for various projects, many in line with the SIE ideas. So, we see this aspect to introduce cooperation with countries from the EU and connect them with schools in Serbia. Exchange of ideas is one of the linchpins of SIE methodology.

Historical, social, cultural, and economic factors of change in education

Many of these factors were mentioned in various places above, so we will state only those that were mentioned before:

- **Political climate** – Politics and political parties heavily influence public service in Serbia. In many public schools, employment is traded by assisting certain political parties, and teachers may have a hard time getting a full-time contract. The pressure is put on teachers who do not have full time contracts to help political parties in various ways. All this leads to questionable motivation by the teachers to do extracurricular work.

- **The minor focus of every Government** – After almost 20 years of various reforms, the prevalent feeling is that education is not on the list of essential things for every government up to this point. Even though multiple reforms were enacted, with almost every new MP in education the new round of reforms would start, sometimes changing or completely backtracking what was done in the previous mandate. This also created resistance in the teachers as frequent changes interrupt the process of change.
- **Status of teacher** – teachers are one of the professions that are not getting enough respect in current day Serbia. In small towns or villages, it may be somewhat different, as there is still respect for the teachers as educated people, but in large, populated areas, respect for the effort and hard work they put in their job is really low.
- **Influence of COVID** - Like the rest of the world, the COVID pandemic is currently hitting heavily on the students as they are presenting a solid challenge to any work with both students and teachers. It is considered the most considerable influence on the changes in education. It pushed both students and teachers to adapt to online learning and embrace technology usage.

Opportunities for introducing the SIE in Serbia

With similar programs that were introduced in Serbia and found their audience, there is a positive idea that SIE can establish its roots here. Let us look at some of the opportunities.

- **Established networks** – KidHub already have projects that are focused on teachers and students, and it may be a starting point to introduce SIE based activities. Also, programs like Junior Achievement can also be contacted and look for partnership or ways to cooperate. Also, personal recommendations from established organizations both on local and national level is a key to introducing it to as many teachers as possible.
- **Community focus** – at the heart of SIE lies the community-based work that encompasses both schools, parents, and the local community. With the NGOs that are already working in their communities, and with many of them working with schools, SIE looks like a bridge that can connect schools with local authorities and initiatives. As far as we know, no program tried to connect all these aspects together, so this would be SIE's strong selling point.
- **Focus on IT technologies** – Since the economic situation is not very good in Serbia, many see working in the IT sector to solve their economic problems. The urban legend about coders that are paid in 1000s of EURs that are doing cozy jobs made a lot of students to consider IT and Communication as a 1st choice for career. This is related to entrepreneurial education, as many of them think about creating their own start-ups or companies. This is also the place where SIE can connect with the entrepreneurship community and become a bridge between schools and practice.

5.2 Teachers' needs and preferences

To understand teachers' understanding and experience regarding Social Innovation Education as well as training needs and preferences, we designed and conducted a survey to collect teachers' input. This quantitative inductive research was followed by a deductive qualitative research using a focus group with a subgroup of the survey respondents. The aim of combining the two tools was to clarify some of the answers in the survey and to explore any hypothesis we did not consider during the survey in a deductive manner. The main takeaways and findings will be presented below.

5.2.1 Survey

The survey was deployed by KID HUB using google forms between April 4th to May 1st. In total 38 teachers answered the survey in conformity with the GDPR regulations.

Teacher profile

Students Age groups	Teachers	Proportions
Adult (+25)	0	-
Highschool (14-18)	18	47%
Middle School (11-14)	15	39%
Elementary (6-11)	5	13%
TOTAL	38	100%

Teachers who answered the survey teach a variety of subjects from Biology, Geography, Mathematics to Serbian language and literature, Entrepreneurship, Informatics and Computing, French, Civic Education and so on. In terms of students' level, the teachers are teaching mainly students about **11 years old with 47% teaching at high school level (14-18) and 39% Middle school (11-14)** and a smaller number of teachers who are teaching at elementary level (6-11) 13%. The breakdown is like the one in Croatia.

On average a class has around **19 students with the lowest at 8 students and the highest at 30.**
When it comes to collaboration with other initiatives **almost half of the teachers (17 out of 38) 44% are not part of any educational association, professional association or engage with any other organization in extracurricular activities.** The more than half of teacher of teachers (21 out of 38) mentioned the Euroklio Association for Social History, Eco Schools, Society of Teachers Belgrade (board member), Association of Zivojin Misic, Educational program Oracle Academy, Participation in the pilot project InnoShool learning within RARE, NGOs Osvezenje Pirot, AUN- Active learning classes, Razvionica- AUN project among others.

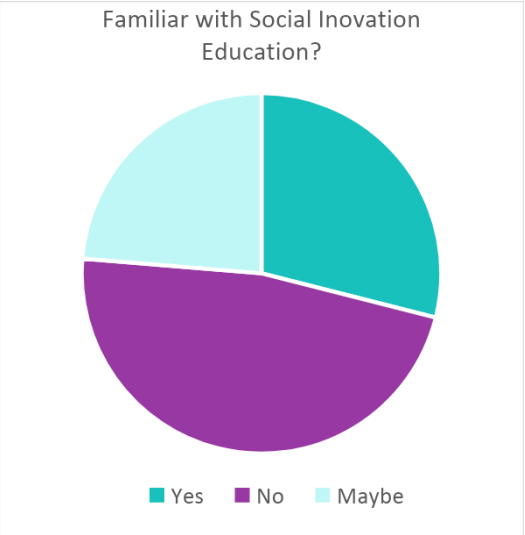
Socio Economic Context

Teachers who answered the survey come from both **urban and rural areas to mention a few Požarevac, Novi Sad, Belgrad, Aranđelovac,Pirot, Vranje,Sopot, Veljiovic, Lozinca among others**. In terms of schools socio-economic context we have 55% of schools who do not have a vulnerable group, the next more significant category is Roma community with 16% followed by Newly Arrived

Socio-economic characteristic which applies most to the school	Responses	Proportions
None	21	55%
Roma Community	6	16%
Newly Arrived Migrants	2	5%
Other vulnerable groups	9	24%

migrants with 5% and other groups mentioned by the teachers were Students from poor families, areas with predominantly male students and are required to work on the integration of girls, learners disadvantaged as well as artists, LGBT, deaf, blind, epileptics, psychiatric patients.

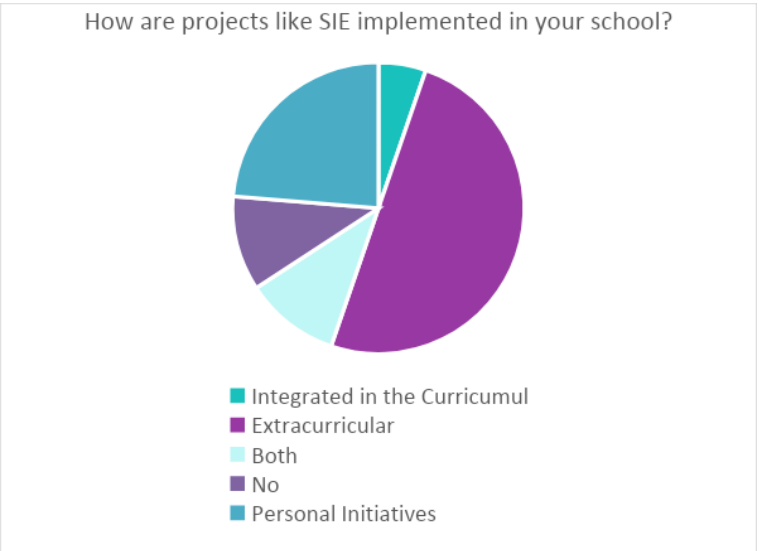
Social Innovation Education (SIE)



As part of the survey, we investigated teachers' experience with SIE or other similar concepts. At the start of this section, we also included a definition of the concept so that teachers who are not familiar with the terms could relate to it and share from their experiences. The definition provided was "*Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, businesspeople, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future.*"

When asked if they are **familiar with the term Social Innovation Education most of the teachers said "no", 47%, only 29% said "yes" and 24% answered "maybe".**

When asked what they think it means, teachers associated the name of the method with **innovation towards addressing social issues** *"Solving social problems - through cooperation with relevant institutions."* The terms are also **associated with the reform of the educational system** as this teacher shared *"Modernization of the educational system and its role in the region".* Development of skills and competencies "*The development of attitudes and skills of users for the purpose of capacity building for project thinking and social activity."* Inclusiveness "*Comprehensive inclusive education model to empower and prepare students for the world of tomorrow."* and integration of technology *"Application of ICT in teaching, application of modern methods of work, training children to work in modern conditions."*



In terms of **experience with applying the SIE model 37% of teachers responded that they had used the method** when **50% said no and 13% said not sure**. This is a significantly larger number than in both Croatia and Cyprus. Out of those who said yes, gave a few examples as follows: *"Erasmus project of Drama in Education, Education for the 21st Century", "The contest'' ``mts app"" - a competition for exquisite gymnasium with the theme of creating innovative applications for mobile devices." "Climate change and the vulnerability of the environment, digital I, access to social and other services in the community, the*

impact of multiculturalism", "Startup Development Center, Raising employability among youth, career counseling, youth work", "The digital-to-digital classroom teacher, teachers Digital Branicevo region, diversity around us". These responses also highlight that Erasmus projects are associated with new and innovative teaching and learning methods but also that many outside the curriculum could be categorized as social innovations for one reason or the other.

School Context

In this section of the survey, we looked at the overall school context, how extracurricular projects are being implemented, who are the key stakeholders as well and enable and potential barriers.

In terms of extracurricular activities**, there are few mentioned by teachers** from Science to arts, drama, journalism, sports, languages, robotics, and many include in this category the Erasmus projects. There are also 21% of schools who do not have any extracurricular activities.

When asked how projects like SIE are implemented in their school most of the teachers said that "Both regular classes and extracurricular activities" 50%, as Extracurricular activities, 24% Personal initiatives 5% curricular, 11% integrate it both as curricular and non-curricular and 11% do not have any experience with similar projects. These results indicate that **SIE is more likely to be implemented as an extracurricular activity from personal initiatives.**

In terms of **obstacles** some of the most common were **lack of finance, and time** *"Lack of time, money, ideas; respectively*", **lack of teachers and student's motivation** *"Insufficient involvement of teachers and lack of interest of student*"**, lack of information** *"Lack of information and poor motivation, lack of interest"* **and school administration attitude** *The rigid attitude of the school administration".* **Compared to Croatia and Cyprus, teachers in Serbia seem to mention colleagues' attitude as a big obstacle and this may be linked to the reason why many initiatives are started through personal initiatives.**

Some of the strategy's teachers applied to overcome these barriers related to the school environment were "*Independent **taking the initiative**".*" as well as *"through personal initiative and **help of colleagues and parents as well as businesspeople."*** and ***"Interdisciplinary and involvement of representative speakers from other organizations".*** In **terms of overcoming students lack interest, teachers' share the following strategies** were "*Its ideas and persistence engagement and cooperation with students*"

When we asked teachers "What enablers are there to integrate new projects into your school?" Teachers mentioned *"We make our decisions in the school across multiple teams that are in this domain"* as well as "*Talented students and directors with a vision".*

It is encouraging to see that **most teachers 63% had collaborated with local stakeholders/association during projects** however there are 21% who did not collaborate and 16% who responded maybe. The collaboration with them included *"They helped about **advertising**", "Through **school finance."** **experts** "iTeenity - support adolescents **by young psychologists.** I*

recommended the administration to allow them access to students and provide space within the school as they did" partnership "When organizing the trade fair at the school, asked the local artisans who are the children presented their crafts. On another occasion, Divac Foundation has financially supported our action Books in hand, which is aimed at promoting reading among citizen"&"s of Pozarevac and during which the students donated school books to the citizens in the street action.", and space "Providing space for a play or museum visits with a professional guide"

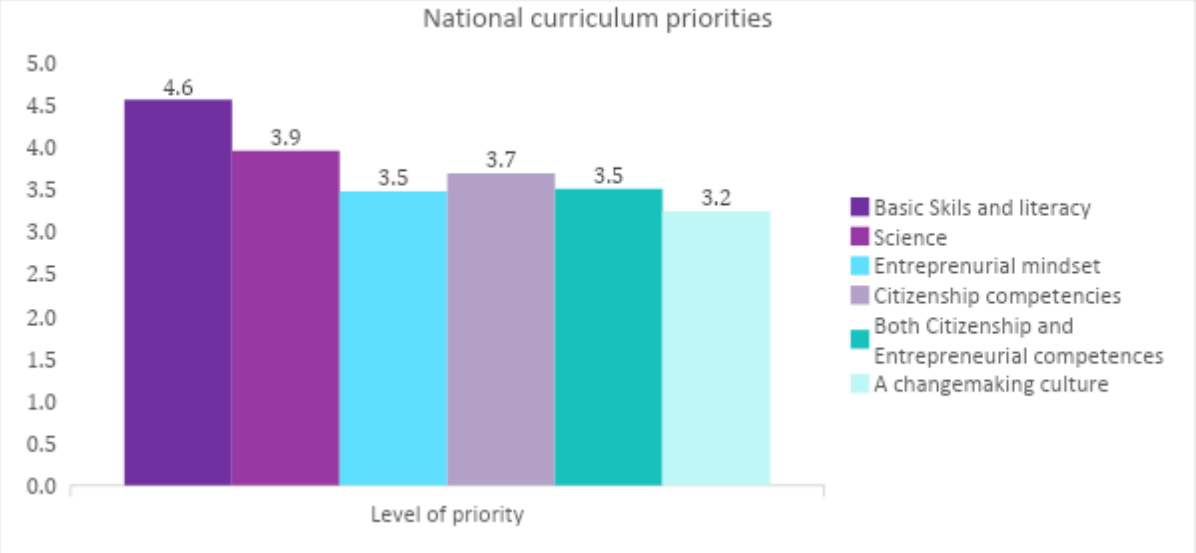
A significant percentage of parents **53% of parents are involved in projects** and this collaboration could be improved through *"I think that cooperation is now adequate **or more communication** never hurts", "More **frequent meetings, constructive discussions, greater commitment**"* and *"Through the **increase in the number of projects** in which the school participate", "Through the **support of children** in the projects as well as providing financial and social security."*

National context

In this section we looked at national context in terms of openness to innovation, teacher professional development, available resources, and national curriculum priorities.

50% of teachers believe that the Serbian national education system promotes flexibility and openness to innovation in education while 37% do not know. Only 13% of teachers disagree. In terms of opportunities for teacher training and continuous professional development in innovation to education the percentages are almost the same 47% of teachers agreeing, 34% do not know and 18% disagree. Since the answers are remarkably similar, it can indicate a **correlation in teachers' perception of national system priorities and practices reflected in professional development opportunities offered to teachers.**

Teachers were asked to rate on a scale of not a priority (1) to high priority (5) the priorities of national curriculum towards developing the following competences for students: Basic skills and literacies, Science, Entrepreneurial mindsets, Citizenship competences, Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences and A changemaking culture. **The top priority perceived by teachers is Basic skills and literacy followed by Science, Citizenship competences,** Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences, Entrepreneurial mindsets and lastly A Change making culture.



An important concern for the project is that the majority of teachers 47% shared that they lack the time and support to work on innovative educational practices such as SIE, 23% said that they do not know and only 28% shared that it will be possible.

Pandemic impact

Since all educational systems have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, we investigated how teachers and students have access to technology well as how the teaching process was impacted by the pandemic.

In Serbia **only 68% of all students** who were targeted in this survey **are equipped with the necessary equipment to participate in online classes** while in 26% of cases only some students have the necessary equipment and for 5% none of the students are capable of connecting to online classes. In terms of teachers the situation is similar. 26% teachers have partial access to equipment and **73% of teachers share they have access to necessary equipment and tools to conduct online classes**.

The teaching process has greatly been impacted by technology and its impact is reflected in the adaptation of the lesson in the digital space as these teachers share "*Brought new challenges and greater anxiety due to inadequate two-way communication with students"* and "Poor students can not appear anywhere else and no way to reach them*"* Teachers seem to associate it with **negative impact** of the teaching process as these teachers share *"Terribly difficult to learn on line requires communication", "There is an evident decline of students' knowledge".* There are also teachers who see it **more in the gray** "*There were many challenges and difficulties due to the enormous workload, but I can say that I learned a lot and gained a lot of new skills"* or **more positively** *""I'm more the benefits of ICT in teaching" and "greater creativity in the use of digital content, tools, and use a variety of platforms for teaching" and "Not much changed way of working, because I already have most of the tools already used, only the increased flexibility"*

Teacher training preferences

Since an important output of CSS-EU is teacher training we investigated past teachers training experiences and tried to understand teachers' preferences and the ongoing support they would like to receive.

When asked to describe a **training experience they enjoyed** and why they enjoyed it, teachers gave a wide variety of answers highlighting the **interactivity aspects** "*The best in my experience were the IREX workshop on media literacy. It was very interactive, it was clear that teachers ruled the methodology of these workshops and above all it was very convenient, although all the time intensive*." "*Training of Civic Initiatives from back in 2000 because it was a good example of organized training. Maximum were active, learned more, consisting of two modules (4 + 3 days)*"" the **practicality aspects** ***"Theory and practice*** *are time slots were in balance and quickly alternated so that the material is absorbed crown with experience rather than through memorization*" the **relevance of the content** "At training on children's rights. I enjoyed it because I gained knowledge that I need to convey to students". As well as the training needs to be well organized *"I always enjoy when maximally participating in the work and I'm open to products designed and complimented on their own vision."*

In terms of priorities for training needs and ongoing support teachers shared that it needs to be **practical and applicable** *"Practical, straightforward, with large participation, concrete"* **professional development "***One that will help me be a better teacher",* **in the area of support and mentoring** *"Support in the form of counseling / mentoring to those of ordinary skill and people who have success in these fields' teachers either as academics and activists, financial support."* *"Training modernization and innovation in teaching and pedagogical work"* as well as **related to online learning** "*About the use of digital tools."*

5.2.2 Focus group

In Serbia 6 teachers participated in the focus group 3 from primary and three from secondary schools. The focus group gathered participants' opinions and understanding in relation to Social Innovation Education, it is integration in the curriculum, community involvement, resources, decision making and training preferences.

Understanding of Social Innovation Education

When it comes to **teachers understanding of Social Innovation Education** teachers perceive it as a **project-based method** "*Project based learning where children have the opportunity to explore their ideas and be part of the decision making and changing of their environment" and* emphasize the **collaboration between different classes** *"possibility to connect different classes and explore various aspects of them"* as well as the **possibility to include parents** *"possibility to challenge existing structures in schools, which are organized in strict hierarchy and also possibility to include parents as well."*

In terms of **activities Social Innovation Education can include teachers mentioned** *Project based learning, cooperation from various classes and outdoor activities.* Social innovation education is characterized by" helping *children understand their ideas matter and that they are innovators"*

Integrating Social Innovation Education in the curriculum

Teachers recognize there are paths to integrate SIE in the curriculum but one of the challenges is **teachers' attitude** as this teacher shares "*We have laws that enable integration of this kind of work into the curriculum, but one of the key issues are teachers, who are not motivated to do anything outside of their regular activities* ". Also, teachers share that sometimes **they are punished for conducting such activities** *"to quote one of my teacher friends - when I invited her to join me on some extracurricular project, she told me "Listen, when I do anything, I get in trouble. If I do not do anything, I'm sure I won't get into trouble"*. Teachers also recognize that the educational system should accept the integration of SIE *"This should not be presented as a revolution, but as something that our system is ready to accept".*

Some teachers are recognizing that they are already including the **multidisciplinary** aspects of Social Innovation Education as this teacher shares "*Yes, I'm already working with other teachers from different subjects in order to create joined classes."* And for *Serbian language, I already did similar things in my classes, talking about various subjects like politics, media and such, and connecting it with Serbian literature"* and **collaboration between multiple teachers** "I *already worked with some of the teachers from other classes and I think it could work."*

Some teacher already used SIE methods such as Designathon however they had highlighted some of the **challenges such as coordinating the student groups and the time needed to conduct activities** "*We used aspects of Designathong method and it worked pretty well, but we only focused on some aspects of it (idea or prototyping). Sometimes things that take too much time may discourage students. It may also be hard to coordinate groups of students as well."*

Enables

Teachers identified **student collaboration and involvement in community** issues as one of the advantages of the SIE method and it could contribute to enable more teachers to collaborate within a school "*First we need to understand what education means. And that is the problem with our educational system. If we see education as learning a bunch of facts, this is useless. Luckily, the global approach to education has changed, so young people are given the opportunity to think, experiment and develop their creativity, which is one of the key competencies. Since it's not globally understood like that in Serbia, it is extremely hard to state what are advantages, or disadvantages of using this method. We have a system that enforces that the main value of education is to learn facts. That influences everything - from how the classrooms are organized to the furniture. This could be seen as a change of paradigm, that will be spread if enough people would enforce it - sort of changing trends."*

Challenges

Teachers who participated in the focus group insisted that the crucial part of introducing new educational approaches in schools would be by motivating the teachers. They feel that there are too

many various new methodologies and that they do not have enough time and that they are not paid enough to engage in everything *"lack of motivation from the teachers - there is a small number of intrinsically motivated teachers that are ready to try new things".* Also, they think that implementing SIE in Serbian schools would be best if after training teachers receive some financial support to test it within their schools and – or teach them how to fundraise for the school projects. They say that directors usually insist that teachers need to find resources for new projects and rarely they invest in them *"lack of motivation from the school principals, that are usually key figures in schools and are principal decision make" They* added that teachers working on the project then should encourage and motivate others to join to create better results.

Community Engagement

During the focus group, teachers said **that they usually cooperate with NGO's, other schools, and museums. libraries and city halls, but rarely with companies** ``*Local NGOs may be interested, especially if the topics that children focus on are about ecology of sustainable development, as those topics are getting more and more followers on the local level".* Not many teachers see parents as potential supporters ``Parents *are mostly in a passive role or someone who is there to provide money for school trips or similar activities. This program has the potential to change that."*

Resources and infrastructure

Teachers recognize the **importance of technical staff and IT resources** as there are still places where the internet connection and equipment are lacking *"Continuous support after the project is over # money or resources for working on projects and using SCI in classroom"*

Decision making

Teachers shared that the curriculum is **normally decided at the start of the school year taking into consideration the ministry recommendations** but that each school can decide which project to implement *"It is centralized and goes mostly through the Ministry of Education, but teachers are at liberty of using different teaching methods (workshop, lecture, debate...) and they can connect various classes and work together."*

Teacher training preferences

In terms of training preferences teachers prefer **both theory and practice** *"With valuable information that could be used in classroom*" and **continuous support** *"consistent support from the KidHub"* and **connecting with other teacher**s *"possibility to connect with other teachers that think similarly or are ready to employ new methods***."** They agree that **live training** for introducing new technologies would be important "*Training happening live # when we have a big group sharing info, ideas, working together*" and "*we are all a little bit tired from the online work, it's not the same"*

5.3 Policy makers priorities

Serbia context and needs analysis also included interviews with policy makers to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and

other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Serbia 6 individuals were interviewed and even if they were all categorized under the umbrella of policy makers bring in a variety of roles within the broader educational system from Serbia.This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

ZUOV (Institute for the Advancement of Education and Upbringing), government organization, policy maker, Belgrade

We talked to a person who is head of professional training of teachers, works on approving seminars for teachers, which are further realized with the support of the Ministry of Education, she has also previously worked in education as teacher. According to her, the topic of education for social innovations is very current, necessary and in accordance with the draft strategic direction of education development in Serbia. Also, one of the focuses of the strategy is to improve training for teachers and their professional development. The Ministry of Education is currently working on the Strategy of Education in Serbia until 2030. The suggestion was that this year we apply for potential training for teachers for accreditation (which will open in October) because it is the only official channel for entering schools and it is important for teachers because they receive points for professional development and that is their key motivation to implement a topic in teaching. We were suggested that such training be prepared to be online. It would be important for the training to involve parents, teachers and children together. Also, in the context of this project, we should address the Ministry of Education with a request for support for implementation as soon as we have more information about what the project actually envisages in working with teachers.

SIPRU (Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Team), government organization, policy maker, Belgrade

A government organization formed as a body that gives recommendations to the Government of Serbia in the field of labor, employment, marginalized groups and education. The person we spoke to is the coordinator of the education sector within the institution, a former teacher and has worked on creating and implementing training for teachers, principals, but also organizations and other institutions. He believes that the time is right for the development of Education for Social Innovation in Serbia and that there is essentially a big gap, although there are many programs that deal with this topic. He believes that the right solution is to include parents, teachers and children together, that it is necessary to devise a way for there to be continuous cooperation. He wants to help develop the program through contacts, professional help and mentoring, as well as more concrete support when we have the first results. She suggested that it would be necessary for the program to be accredited by the Institute for the Advancement of Education as soon as possible.

UNICEF SERBIA, ngo, policy maker, Belgrade

This organization actively works on the improvement of education in Serbia through programs of early education and innovation, youth education. We spoke with the director of the education program in the organization, who has decades of experience in education as a teacher and school principal. They conduct training for teachers independently and in cooperation with other organizations and institutions and directly with the Ministry of Education. Although they believe in the topic of this EU project „Education for social innovation“, they feel that they do not have enough

information about the program itself to be able to get involved in more detail. In general, this topic is interesting for them and they could get involved in the implementation and provide professional support, communication, and visibility, when KidHub offers more detailed information about the teacher training plan, program content and especially the sustainability plan for teacher training. Their suggestion is that the training should go to smaller territories and a smaller number of schools, so that the further course of programs and training could be monitored, evaluated and improved. For them, the solution is „deep impact“ and not educating a lot of teachers from different cities and schools since we can’t make a deep impact with that approach. They also pointed out that the difference between our Civic Education, Entrepreneurship Education and this program is not clear to them.

MODS network (National network of children organizations in Serbia), ngo, policy maker, Belgrade

As a network, MODS is very interested in the topic of inclusive education and participation of children and youth and therefore represents one of the potential partners in this project since KidHub is also part of this network and involved in the work of these groups. At the moment, there is a great need for an innovative approach to involving children and youth as active members of society, but there are no adequate mechanisms in Serbia that would enable this in a quality way and this is a topic currently being worked on by the network. The network does not train teachers, but they are willing to give their support through experts, communication channels and participation in the advocacy campaign.

BOŠ (Belgrade Open School), ngo,policy maker, Belgrade

This organization deals with the development of other organizations through training, grants, workshops through more than one program covering education, ecology and environmental protection, career guidance, youth entrepreneurship and the like. They have a cooperation agreement with KidHub within the "Education for the Future" program, where they train master's and doctoral students and young professionals in natural, social and technical sciences for a year through mentoring for the professions of the future. Their beneficiaries become mentors and collaborators within KidHub programs. We spoke with the coordinator of the "Education for the Future" program and the coordinator of the "Youth Education" program. Their position is to see more chances for the introduction of innovations in teaching through direct work and training of youth workers and cooperation of organizations with schools. Also, it is recommended that there is mentoring cooperation in this process, as well as that teachers should have a mentor outside the school system who would be involved in the work process.

NAPOR (National Association of Youth Work Practitioners), ngo, policy maker, Novi Sad

A non-governmental organization that deals with the education and certification of youth workers in Serbia, education and development of organizations that conduct youth work. Youth workers are all those who work with children and youth within non-governmental organizations through non-formal education. Youth work has been recognized by the work of this organization as an official profession in Serbia since 2019. The person we spoke to is in charge of communications within the team. He believes that education for social innovation is a very necessary topic in schools, that working with parents is important and that they have recognized it as something that the organization will deal with through the training they prepare. Their position is that it is necessary to educate youth workers and organizations that would be partners with schools and teachers. That it is necessary to have strategic partnerships with schools in order to be able to work in this way. They want to support KidHub in the context of tailoring training for youth workers, promoting programs and connecting with other actors in the field of education.

5.4 Civil society priorities

Serbia's context and needs analysis also included interviews with civil society representatives to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Serbia 5 individuals were interviewed coming from multiple civil society organizations. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

EDU LINK, NGO, Aranđelovac

The organization deals with the advancement of education through non-formal education. It consists mainly of teachers who create programs and train other teachers. The representative of the organization - director of educational programs with whom we spoke, pointed out that she worked as an advisor in the sector of primary and secondary education at the Ministry of Education, that she participated in a project dealing with inclusive education and social innovation, as well as the introduction of dual education in Serbia. She is now the coordinator of the education group within the MODS network. She believes that social innovations in teaching have not come to life because the area is too wide and that there has not been enough perseverance on the part of the Ministry of Education. She would like to get involved in this project because she believes that she can support it through mentoring and professional support, as well as connecting with the necessary actors in the education sector. She also believes that it is necessary for the program to be accredited.

KORSE (Coalition for the Development of the Solidarity Economy), NGO, Belgrade

An organization that deals with the promotion of social innovations and social entrepreneurship, creating and monitoring public policies in Serbia. We spoke with the program director. They do not deal with education, but they are very interested in the possibility of designing an educational program for schools that would deal with social innovation because there is a need for it. They believe that in parallel with the implementation of this project, a public campaign should be launched through which various entities would gather that could encourage the topic of innovation in education to be institutionalized in Serbia.

Udruženje Roditelj – Association of parents Serbia, NGO, Belgrade

The association consists of parents and various professionals in the field of education who most often deal with topics related to parenting. They agree that there is a need for education for social innovation, but they believe that similar projects were done in the period from 2012 to 2017. And that they never came to life because there is no substantial and continuous support from the Ministry of Education. The association does not train teachers. They believe that the role of parents in the school system is unclear and that the key potential and importance of involving parents in working with teachers and children has not been recognized. They had a project to develop clubs of teachers and parents who did not come to life. We talked a lot further about the parent-school relationship. In the context of education, they are currently working on researching the work and cooperation between the Parents' Council and the Student Parliaments in Belgrade. The Parents'

Council is a body formed by the parents of the representatives of all classes, which meets in regular annual terms (at least three times a year) and makes decisions at the school level. The Student Parliament is a body composed of representatives of students from all classes and grades of a school managed by students. The conclusion of their research is that the Parents' Council has an exclusively informal role because parents are not sufficiently informed to be able to give their suggestions for improving the work of the school, education and relations with students. This body usually does not have good cooperation with teachers who do not understand how parents could be involved in the work of the school, except to approve, for example, excursions or pay some expenses for the school. Cooperation occasionally exists at the level of class teachers and parents' representatives, but even that cooperation is in the function of the needs of teachers who believe that they also represent the needs of children in the best way. Student parliaments do not exist in all schools, nor do they meet regularly, and where they do exist there is no cooperation with the Parents 'Council or teachers, so neither teachers nor parents are actually aware of students' needs.

Association „Teach me“, NGO, Niš

An association that deals with education and brings together teachers who work in innovative ways with high school students. Since the director of the organization is also a high school teacher, his opinion is that the topic of social innovation in education is underrepresented, that teachers do not have sufficiently developed digital competencies, are not motivated to introduce innovation in teaching because it means extra effort that is not paid and is not valued by a colleague. The reason why he does that is because of the student’s value and recognize the efforts to do something different than usual. According to him, teachers can be divided into two groups - those who need to be better teachers and learn modern tools, do projects, innovate their work and the work of their students because they understand that in this way, they prepare them for the unpredictable future. They are individuals for now and the only way to support them is to have continuous support in training and means of work (financial and technical). He believes that there is an opportunity for the development of better and more accessible education in Serbia through educational networks that would function outside the official education system, which is changing very slowly.

SMART KOLEKTIV (Smart collective), NGO, Belgrade

An organization that deals with the development of other organizations and social enterprises through various support programs and mentoring. KidHub has been supported as a social enterprise since its inception through involvement in mentoring and business programs of this organization. We spoke with the program director in charge of the development of social enterprises through the youth program. They believe that the education program for social innovations is necessary in primary schools, but not through entrepreneurship, but the development of civic competencies and activism, and in high school it would already be important for youth to get their first entrepreneurial skills. In Serbia, the oldest program that deals with entrepreneurship of children and youth is Junior Achievement, which works on the development of entrepreneurial skills of elementary and high school students and has the great support of various ministries, companies and organizations. The advice is to find our niche through a clear differentiation with existing programs. They would like to support KidHub through cooperation with representatives of socially-owned companies in Serbia, which they believe would be an inspiration to children and young people, as well as through support in the development of partnerships in the business sector and greater visibility.

Group 484, NGO, Belgrade

Organization deals with migration, inclusion of marginalized groups in society, peace projects and social entrepreneurship. We spoke with a person who is a researcher within the organization and a

coordinator of migration programs within the organization. Social innovations are at the center of all programs that this organization deals with, and the closest to them is the combination of art and social engagement. They do not train teachers, they work directly with children and young people. For the past few years, they have been actively dealing with migrants who passed through Serbia, primarily providing health, psychological and educational support to children and youth who traveled without adults. There are currently 49 migrant children in the school system of Serbia without or with parental care. Most of them, about 90 percent, are from Afghanistan, and among others are Khazars, Iraqis, Iranians and Syrians. They are located in the centers in Bogovađa, Sjenica, Preševo and Sombor in Serbia. Unaccompanied minors are, in addition to women, the most vulnerable group among refugees and migrants and at the highest risk of violence, sexual exploitation and human trafficking. There are few opportunities to get to know others and show their good sides, and that is why they are often victims of discrimination and violence. They are not fully integrated into the school system because they do not stay long enough to complete the entire cycle of primary or secondary school. The problem is that teachers in Serbia are not trained to work with them, so they receive support in the form of an interpreter - a cultural mediator from a small number of trained people from the non-governmental sector.

5.5 SWOT Analysis

CSS-EU - Serbia	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- KidHub is an established organization that is known for using creative and non-formal educational programs, especially for Primary school children. - There is an established network of teachers who are familiar with the KidHub's work and are interested in other programs organization can offer	- There are few of us in the team for this project, and coupled with other activities it may become hard do deliver
Opportunities	**Threats**
- There are few programs similar to this that are focused on primary school children, so competition is low and there is a niche for the SIE - This year, there is a possibility to accredit the program with the Ministry of Education, which could be a big plus for teachers using this program in classrooms - Every stakeholder we talked so far stated that Social Innovation is important and it should be introduced to schools, either as a part of curriculum or through non-formal education	- Lack of motivation from the teachers. They also fail to see how parents can be constructively included into the education process. - Highly centralized decision-making system, be it country wide (Ministry of Education) or school wide (Principal that has the complete power over school, while school councils are there just to approve it) - Similar programs were done before, between 2012 and 2017, and they failed at sustainability

Chapter 6 – Romania

Each country analysis starts with an overview of the educational context followed by the results of the survey and focus group as well as interviews with civil society and policy makers and key findings.

6.1 Social Innovation Education Context

The Social Innovation Education Context is the result of the desk research conducted by our partner All Grow and includes an overview of the National Education System, the evolution of Social Innovation, Innovation in formal and non-formal education and Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities for Social Innovation Education.

6.1.1. Overview of the National Education System

The Romanian Educational System is very centralized and the main responsibilities for educational strategy, policy making and delivery are conducted by the Minister of Education. The Minister received input from specialized bodies and elected authorities have little contributions towards educational policies. The Minister is governing from central level and monitors the implementation of policies though the County School Inspectorates. Overall schools lack influence over important dimensions of teaching and learning even if in theory they have autonomy over one-third of the curriculum called" optional subjects" however they are rarely used (OECD Report on Romania, 2017).

In terms of reform in 2005 Romania adopted the Quality Law and in 2011 the Educational Law which have introduced significant changes towards increased" quality, fairness, decentralization and involvement of all stakeholders" (MEN, 2011). However, the Law suffered many adjustments and some of the measures were reversed. The president of Romania, a former teacher, in 2016 started a new program" Educated Romania" to involve local stakeholders in solving social issues and a new law of education is currently under consideration.

Currently Romania's educational system priorities according to the 2011 Law are: "reducing early school leaving, improving the quality of tertiary education and VET, developing lifelong learning and investing in educational institutions' infrastructure"

In terms of curriculum important progress has been made after over 20 years of stagnation. The new curriculum has a competency-based approach to learning and in 2015 eight main competencies aligned with the EU Reference Framework have been set*: 1. communication in the mother tongue, 2. communication in foreign languages, 3. mathematical competence and basic competencies in science and technology, 4. digital competence, 5. learning to learn, 6. social and civic competencies, 7. sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and 8. cultural awareness and expression (OJEU, 2006).* Even if the new curriculum has been adopted in classroom teachers facing difficulties since the roll-out was rapid, one year, and teacher training and appropriation of the new concepts lacked. Romanian teachers are used to teaching and learning focused heavily on memorisation and content knowledge and transforming teaching towards inclusion, student engagement and complex competencies require further professional development.

Students' performance at PISA tests is one of the lowest in Europe with the highest share of students (38.5%) performing below PISA level 2 among European countries (OECD Report, 2016). The low results may suggest that the current teaching and learning approaches may be inappropriate for

complex and higher-order skills. Furthermore, students who come from the rural area where 70% of the poorest population lives underperform students from urban areas. The ministry has launched in 2016 an Anti-Poverty Package which include after-school remediation programmes, integrated services in schools and second chance programmes, the reach has been very limited, and some initiatives are yet to be implemented.

Civic Education is part of Primary students' curriculum (3rd and 4th grades) and has allocated 1h per week during the entire school year and is focused on civic and moral literacy, developing positive attitudes towards themselves and others and fostering civic and moral behavior in a democratic society.

In low secondary classes (5th to 8th Grade) Romania has Social Education part of the student's curriculum. Critical thinking and Children's rights is covered in 5th Grade, Intercultural Education 6th Grade, Democratic Citizenship Education 7th Grade and Economic and Financial Education 8th grade.

At high school level students have Entrepreneurial Education in 10th grade and includes Ethics in business, Risk and success in business, Management of personal resources and Starting a business tools and practices.

When it comes to the School Decision Curriculum there are various more innovative classes however none includes Social Innovation Education however that would be an opportunity for innovative practices to enter the curriculum.

In 2017 started the largest teacher training program called CRED focused on developing competency-based teaching for over 55,000 teachers. The program is scheduled to run between 2017 to 2021.

6.1.2. The evolution of Social Innovation in Romania

Social Innovation in Romania is a relatively new field and has been championed by NGOs and Civil Society in general. Initiatives like Ashoka since 2017 have been focused on building awareness in the area, recognizing social entrepreneurs and mapping the ecosystem. Another important initiative is Social Impact Award and Social Innovations Solutions working in this field. Overall the term Social Innovations creates confusion regarding what it means and the term is being imported from renowned organizations such as Skoll foundation who defines it as" innovative activities and services created to meet a social need which are developed and scaled through social driven organization" and educational materials in this area have been developed mainly as part of EU projects. However the term innovation is often used and is understood as" new ideas which work„ (Barbu, Fundația Orizont, 2019).

For Ashoka ``*Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social, cultural, and environmental challenges "*and if we are to look at Ashoka Romania mapping of social innovators over *"932 changemakers and supporters of changemakers were identified*" however social entrepreneurship and social economy in Romania are relatively new concepts and have been championed by NGOs and CSOs. Social innovators in Romania work mainly in the education and social inclusion field however they lack connections with other fields.

Besides Ashoka there are other organizations working in this field such as Innovating Society who draw a clear line between Social Innovation vs Social Entrepreneurship. Social Innovation is understood as a more abstract field focusing on ideas, concepts and projects putting first the gains of the society rather than individuals. On the other hand, social entrepreneurship is seen as the more

practical field where there is a sustainable business model at its core which has been tested and implemented and where the beneficiaries are empowered to find solutions.

In the last few years, the field of Social innovations became more popular and a lot of it takes the shape of competitions for social innovation concepts to be scaled through an incubator program where social innovators receive access to resources, mentoring and finance. One of these competitions is Innovators for Children implemented by Impact Hub Bucharest and Basel with financial support from Botnar Foundation. A lot of the progress in this field has been done through European Funding in terms of research and building awareness around this topic. As it is a new field, its understanding is still evolving in Romania.

6.1.3: Innovation in Formal and Non-Formal Education

- **Entrepreneurship Education**
- **Active Citizenship Education**
- **Social Innovation Education**

The new curriculum focused on competencies adopted in 2015 and its follow up teachers training program CRED in 2017 - 2021 introduced a greater focus on students competency development in terms of both entrepreneurship and active citizenship education. Entrepreneurship Education and Active Citizenship is included in the broader Human and Society curricular area. The Romanian curriculum also includes Civic education and human rights which is a separate topic in the curriculum for both primary and secondary students. At a broader level we can notice a greater alignment with the European Standards and the Romanian Curriculum moving from teacher center traditional approaches towards student center competency approaches (CRED, 2018) however greater progress needs to take place in terms of translating the high-level changes into the classroom. So far, the CRED program has been the largest initiative for teacher training aiming to reach over 50,000 teachers and so far it has reached 35,000 primary and secondary teachers.

Entrepreneurship Education in Romania is limited and less than 10% of those who have initiated and developed a business also have a theoretical basis in this respect compared to 30% average at European level. (Domilescu, 2019) The West University from Romania analyzed the curriculum from the entrepreneurship education secondary and high school level across 17 syllabuses. In terms of competencies belonging to social studies half of the syllabuses cover the same social concepts " organization of knowledge and explanation of facts, events, and real life processes; the application of specific social sciences information in solving problematic situations, as well as in analyzing the personal possibilities for development; cooperating with others in solving theoretical and practical problems within different groups; expressing an active and responsible social behavior appropriate to a changing world; participation in decision-making and community problem solving," however the critique is that the entrepreneurial competences are deficient and formulated in a technical manner.

Besides this formal structure the civil society had been active in the area of Entrepreneurship Education with both local initiatives of Romanian Business Leader who started a program for youth called Vreau să fiu Antreprenor - I want to be an Entrepreneur (https://vsfa.ro/en/home-english/) as well as larger global initiatives such as Junior Achievement (https://www.jaromania.org/). Entrepreneurial Education initiatives focus mainly on youth at high-school level and the activities took the form of competition, conferences and incubators. The entrepreneurial education initiatives were successful in bringing in connection with the private sector. We could see that at the

high-school level many of the initiatives led by youth were at primary and secondary level teachers were involved in engaging their students in entrepreneurial education initiatives.

Active Citizenship Education has also been a priority for Civil society in Romania and organizations such as Funky Citizens had specific initiatives for students (https://educatiecivica.ro/) this initiative focuses more on the institutional aspects as well as human rights and advocacy. Many of the Active Citizenship Education projects are part of brother initiatives supported by the European Union or EEA Grants under the Active Citizens Fund started funding new projects both in terms of education and active citizenship https://activecitizensfund.ro/.

In terms of social innovation there are numerous initiatives to foster social innovation but a lower number of initiatives focused on social innovation education. Ashoka (https://www.ashoka.org/en-ro/country/romania) has been one of the pioneers in this field in Romania however they haven't focused much directly on education but rather educate the civil society and the stakeholders operating in the social innovation field. An organization who has been championing service learning is New Horizon Foundation (https://www.noi-orizonturi.ro/en/) who has been working in the field since 2007, and they developed a model focused on building local impact clubs championed by school teachers. The model has been at the core of their work and since then they have developed training for teachers, capacity building projects and numerous tools and resources for teachers relevant to cultivate social innovation education. The civil society also helped in teacher training and forming communities of teachers such as SuperTeach (https://www.superteach.ro/) or Teach for Romania https://teachforromania.org/ initiatives as such which helped with teachers capacity building and transfer of know how.

Another important initiative which links formal and non-formal sectors is Romania Educată (http://www.romaniaeducata.eu/despre/) an initiative of the Presidency which is now supporting civil society initiatives for teacher training such as SuperTeach.

6.1.4. Enablers, Challenges and Opportunities

As described by OECD "Romania's education system has made major advances since 1989. Learning outcomes have improved and it has established modern institutions with technical expertise. However, educational attainment and performance continues to be strongly influenced by a student's background, and learning levels remain low for many. This reflects systemic challenges of low funding, unstable governance and early selection based on high stakes tests, putting students into different educational tracks of uneven quality."

The major progress has been made after Romania became a member of the EU when many teachers participated in exchange projects such as Erasmus+ and in parallel took place the reform of the curriculum which was aligned with the EU priorities which influenced many of Romania's policies. For example the European Union's (EU) jobs and growth strategy for 2010-20, the EU 2020 was at the core of the Romania's Educational Reform and the Educational Law adopted in 2011 focused on the following challenges "reducing early school leaving, improving the quality of tertiary education and VET, developing lifelong learning and investing in educational institutions' infrastructure" (OECD Report, 2017). Even if progress is being made there are still structural problems which need to be addressed from teachers' profile and training, to inequality, funding, organizational structure and governance, assessment, and evaluation to mention a few.

Furthermore since 2006 social enterprises have been recognized as an important factor for social and economic development in Romania and key actors have been associations and foundations. New

policy approaches influenced by EU membership were adopted and played a key role in addressing key societal challenges and meeting the arising needs of local communities (Lambru, 2019).

When it comes to Social Innovation Education the research has shown that this field is in its early stages in Romania and there is a great appetite for the field, however there is little formal understanding of what Social Innovation Education is as well as practice in this area. This can also be an enabler as well as a challenge.

Enablers:

- Existing competency-based curriculum: In formal education there is a great need for teacher training and translation of the competency based curriculum in the classroom practice, therefore initiatives which cultivate competencies are encouraged by the ministry as well as the overarching EU frameworks.
- There are already initiatives like Innovators Children focused on Social Innovation however they operate as incubators and less as Educators therefore Social Innovation education could be an important stepping stone for this existing trend.
- Teachers training and teachers communities are becoming more popular and there is a greater tendency to invest in lifelong learning and teacher's competency development.

Challenges:

- Evaluation and assessment is still focused on theoretical knowledge and it needs to transition therefore alignment of assessment with the new vision takes time and reform of the school structure
- The pandemic has brought to light some of the existing challenges of the educational system. The discrepancies between urban and rural communities in terms of teacher training, access to technology and digital skills are enhanced by the pandemic. Many initiatives in this field have started and social innovation education will not be on the priority lists for many schools and communities.
- Social innovation is still vague and hard to define

Opportunities:

- Curriculum at school decision is a great opportunity to integrate Social Innovation Education into the formal curriculum and have dedicated classes to it
- The civil society, private sector and public sector have been collaborating closely since the pandemic and this environment for collaboration could be a good opportunity for promoting social innovation education in a more inclusive approach.
- Training teachers in the social innovation education practices could be integrated as part of Romania Educata the new initiative of the Presidency

6.2 Teachers needs and preferences

To understand teachers' understanding and experience regarding Social Innovation Education as well as training needs and preferences, we designed and conducted a survey to collect teachers' input. This quantitative inductive research was followed by a deductive qualitative research using a focus group with a subgroup of the survey respondents. The aim of combining the two tools was to clarify some of the answers in the survey and to explore any hypothesis we did not consider during the survey in a deductive manner. The main takeaways and findings will be presented below.

6.2.1 Survey

Students Age groups	Teachers	Proportions
All Cycles (6-18)	5	7%
Highschool (14-18)	2	3%
Middle School (11-14)	23	34%
Elementary and Middle School (7-14)	4	6%
Elementary (6-11)	28	42%
Kindergarten (2-6)	5	7%
TOTAL	67	100%

The survey was deployed by All Grow using google forms between March 29 and April 15. In total 67 teachers answered the survey in conformity with the GDPR regulations.

Teacher profile

Teachers who answered the survey teach a variety of subjects from Biology, chemistry, environmental protection, Geography, Religion, Social Science, French, English, Romanian Languages however most teachers 42% are Elementary/Primary level teachers. In terms of students' level, they teach, the teachers are teaching mainly students in elementary (42%) and middle school (34%) and a smaller number of teachers who are teaching at high school (14-18) 3% and 7% who teach across all levels, at this survey 7% of respondents were kindergarten teachers.

On average a class has **around 22 students with the lowest at 7 students and the highest at 33.** When it comes to collaboration with other initiatives **a large majority of teachers (71%) have been involved with educational association, professional association or engage with any other organization in extracurricular activities.** The high number of teachers involved in partnerships could also be attributed to the tools we used to find respondents to the survey, mainly leveraging the existing AllGrow network and networks of teachers on social media. The organizations mentioned were Asociația HoltIS, SOS Satele României, Save the children, All Grow and De-a arhitectura, Dascăli emeriti, Save the Children, JA Romania Noi Orizonturi, eTwinning, Erasmus+, Ovidiu.ro and other teachers in Romania and Moldova.

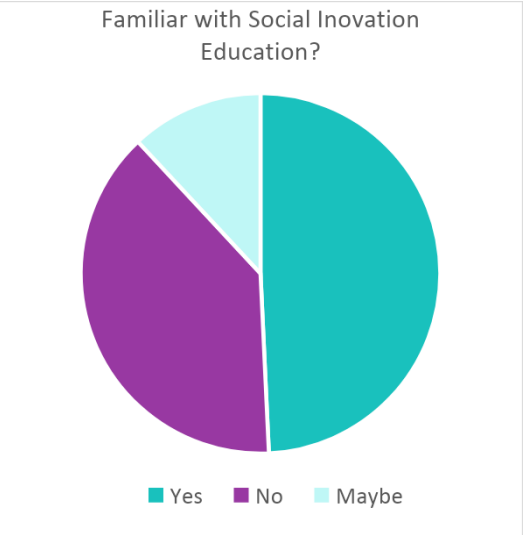
Socio Economic Context

Socio-economic characteristic which applies most to the school	Responses	Proportions
None	32	48%
Roma Community	13	19%
Newly Arrived Migrants	2	3%
Other Groups	20	30%

Teachers who answered **the survey are equally split 52% from urban areas and 48% from Rural ones and come from all across Romania**. In terms of schools socio-economic context, we have 48% of schools' who do not have a vulnerable group, the next most significant category is Other Vulnerable Groups with 30% next is Roma community with 19% and last is Migrants 3%. Other

vulnerable groups mentioned by teachers very often were "children with parents who migrated to work abroad and coming from poor and unstable families, learning disabilities Children with unavailable parents, Poverty, low level of literacy of the parents, alcoholism.

Social Innovation Education (SIE)



As part of the survey, we investigated teachers' experience with SIE or other similar concepts. At the start of this section, we also included a definition of the concept so that teachers who are not familiar with the terms could relate to it and share from their experiences. The definition provided was "*Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, businesspeople, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future.*" When asked if they are **familiar with the term Social Innovation Education most of the teachers said "yes", 49%, only 12% said "maybe" and 39% answered "no".**

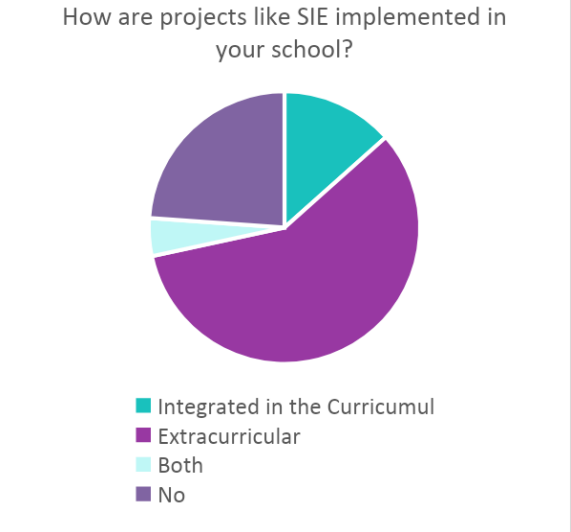
When asked what they think it means teachers associated the name of the method with **collaboration and innovation** in the educational system *"Enhancing the educational process by introducing diverse activities to be implemented together with parents, grandparents, students and the community." "Innovative educational model which helps students find social problems in their community and solve them together with their parents and the extended community "*towards **solving social issues** *"Involving students in finding social problems in their community and finding solutions*." The terms **are also associated with the development of active citizenship** "Developing social competencies and skills necessary for active citizens'' and key competencies "**and fosters inclusiveness and support for vulnerable groups** *"Accepting members from different communities and ethnical minorities''*

In terms of **experience with applying the SIE model 55% of teachers responded that they had used the method** when **36% said no and 9% said not sure**. Out of those who said yes and are not sure only three gave examples as follows "*I wrote and implemented a service-learning project. We also applied Citizen Project with multiple classes of students'', "Community projects: environmental, charitable, integration of Roma children.", "We performed a traditional school museum objects, I warned school leavers by equipping students with backpacks vulnerable have access school equipped for all kinds of programs and projects that improve the lives of students in school"* However there is still a lot of confusion of what SIE is and many teachers included here any outside curricular and community initiatives ``*Volunteering" "We donated products elders, I collected plastic bottles etc.", "planting trees''*

School Context

In this section of the survey, we looked at the overall school context, how extracurricular projects are being implemented, who are the key stakeholders as well as enable and potential barriers.

In terms of extracurricular activities**, schools mentioned a wide range of activities** such as *Design Futures, Health Education, our community, Fast Heroes, Cultural, Sports, Volunteering, Erasmus projects, Environmental, charitable, competitions and school competitions, participation in festivals promoting local traditions and customs, activities that mark the different cultural, literary or historical.* Teachers recognized that these activities have been impacted by the pandemic *"now their number has decreased, and we only have exhibitions. "*



When asked how projects like SIE are implemented in their school most of the teachers said that "extracurricular activities" 58%, Integrated in the curricula 13%, and 24% do not have any experience with similar projects. These results indicate that **SIE is more likely to be implemented as an extracurricular activity**.

In terms of **obstacles** some of the most common were **lack of finance, teachers lack of motivation** *"Reluctance colleagues."*, **lack of finance and time** *"financial resources", "one of the obstacles is time and understanding by parents and children of meanings participations to these projects, need motivation and attraction to them."* **, Students lack of interest and motivation "***Lack of motivation, poor cooperation, lack of time (teachers), student absenteeism."* and **the Pandemic "***The lack of a physical presence."*

Some of the strategy's teachers applied to overcome these barriers related to the school environment were "***Involving several colleagues and collaboration***" as well as *"Working with associations and collaboration with parents."* and *"Involvement of school mediators and the local community".* In **terms of overcoming students lack interest, teachers' share the following strategies** were "*Motivating students through various methods"* and *"Teamwork cooperation communication students eager to get involved*"

When we asked teachers "What enablers are there to integrate new projects into your school?" teachers mentioned collaboration with the entire ecosystem *"Involving all educational factors", "A favorable environment and willingness to be involved in carrying out these projects", "School-family-community collaboration"* **Personal example and desire to create change** *"The desire to involve teachers, attractive design theme", "Desire again* ***change and motivating students as possible, the best example is you****."* "Involving all educational factors

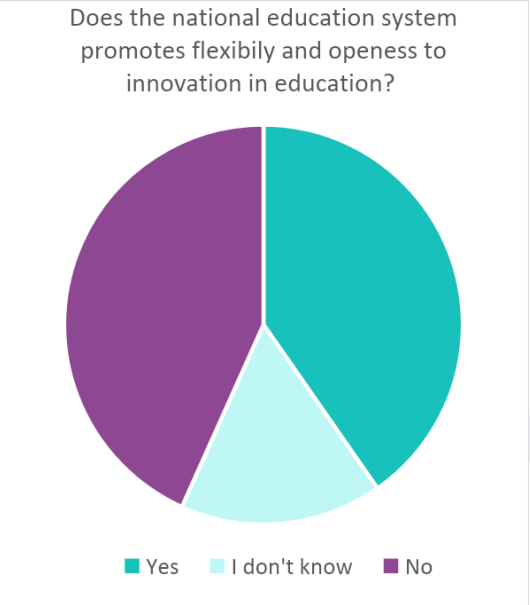
It is encouraging to see that **most teachers 75% had collaborated with local stakeholders/association during projects** however there are 18% who did not collaborate and 7% who responded maybe. The collaboration with them included *"Some were directly involved with their experience, some financial" "We have received in their institutions have provided logistic, held activities voluntarily came with their experience, etc.", "community members helped in the development of certain activities", "The direct involvement in the development of educational activities."*

The collaboration with parents **is very present and 87% of teachers share that parents are involved in projects** and this collaboration could be improved through *"Good communication is key to success", "Permanent involvement in school activities", "Parents cooperate, but their migration keeps them away from children", "Awareness of student involvement and the effects of their participation in extracurricular activities and the effects these behaviors on their children's personality development", "Greater awareness of the need for social education", "more accountability and a desire to make a difference"*

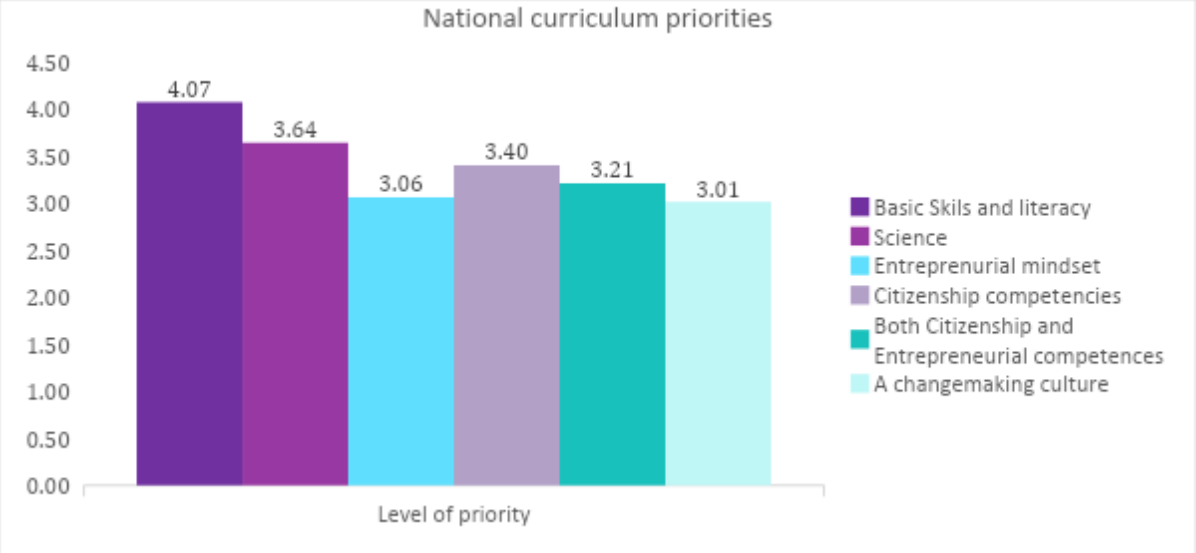
National context

In this section we looked at national context in terms of openness to innovation, teacher professional development, available resources, and national curriculum priorities.

40% of teachers believe that the Romanian national education system promotes flexibility and openness to innovation in education while 16% do not know and 43% of teachers disagree. In terms of opportunities for teacher training and continuous professional development in innovation to education the percentages are almost the same 37% of teachers agreeing, 13% do not know and 49% disagree. Since the answers are remarkably similar, it can indicate a **correlation in teachers' perception of national system priorities and practices reflected in professional development opportunities offered to teachers.**



Teachers were asked to rate on a scale of not a priority (1) to high priority (5) the priorities of national curriculum towards developing the following competences for students: Basic skills and literacies, Science, Entrepreneurial mindsets, Citizenship competences, Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences and A changemaking culture. **The top priority perceived by teachers is Basic skills and literacy followed by Science, Citizenship competences,** Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences, Entrepreneurial mindsets and lastly A Change making culture. The order of priorities is the same as in all countries analyzed, however the differences are just one point between the highest and the lowest areas.



An important concern for the project is that a large majority of teachers 53% shared that they lack the time and support to work on innovative educational practices such as SIE, 11% said that they do not know and only 34% shared that it will be possible.

Pandemic impact

Since all educational systems have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, we investigated how teachers and students have access to technology well as how the teaching process was impacted by the pandemic.

In Romania **only 46% of all students** who were targeted in this survey **are equipped with the necessary equipment to participate in online classes** while in 53% of cases only some students have the necessary equipment. In terms of teachers 41% of teachers have partial access to equipment and **52% of teachers share they have access to necessary equipment and tools to conduct online classes and 5% of teachers do not have access**.

The teaching process has greatly been impacted by the technology and its impact is reflected in the adaptation of the lesson in the digital space as these teachers share "*I did all hours synchronously online. For a while there were children who could not enter the platform, in short supply, but we made good by communicating with them on whatsapp. The good part was that I improved digital skills and I could give children access to various sources of training, school thing I could not do without equipment"* and *"More time spent preparing classes"* Teachers seam to associate it with **negative impact** of the teaching process as these teachers share *"Lack of communication / empathy / networking", "Online classes put myself in the situation of not being able to do complex exercises to correct mistakes, to monitor the real progress of students", "Students from disadvantaged backgrounds, lack the devices, early age children (10-11 years old), no digital ed, non-involvement of parents" Lacking feedback from at least 25% of pupils.".* There are also teachers who see it **more in the gray** *"I was forced to learn to work on multiple applications and platforms in a short time"* or **more positively** *"It was a continuous adjustment of methods, materials. Teaching strategy also*

included new tools and resources". The pandemic affected the emotional well-being of students and teachers *"Context pandemic-imposed rules and restrictions that have created emotional and behavioral discomfort among both teachers and among students."*

Teacher training preferences

Since an important output of CSS-EU is teacher training we investigated past teachers training experiences and tried to understand teachers' preferences and the ongoing support they would like to receive.

When asked to describe a **training experience they enjoyed** and why they enjoyed it, teachers gave a wide variety of answers highlighting the **interactivity aspects** *"I loved training activities in which I learned energizing games, educational games and they've practiced."* **Online learning experiences** "CRED course was an experience that I liked. We carry out through online applications. We have in-depth knowledge of specialized disciplines." the **practicality aspects** *"I loved the Design Futures project training done because when I started this project, I knew exactly what to do.",* the **relevance of the content** "*I really appreciated the CRED - RELEVANT EDUCATION CURRICULUM open to all because it has focused on modern methods and many practical activities*", *"National Conference of Community Education Sciences, where I learned how to engage students in learning science through activities on the eve of the conference, in Magurele*". As well as the **benefits it has for students** *"Activity within the Digital Directory because I discovered new digital resources that have enabled me to make the activities more attractive to students."*

In terms of priorities for **training needs and ongoing support teachers shared that it needs to offer support regarding getting finance** "*I wish I knew how to work to obtain financing projects in education and improving the lives of disadvantaged children "* building long term connections "*Training and related support staff to create connections between the same class (pandemic and made to think individually, not as a group)"* including digital aspects "*Training in digital skills development " very practical "How do I implement an innovative social project step by step "* or more general support "*Any kind is welcome, because the challenges are different".* Once again teachers like practical, relevant, and applicable activities "*Flexible, innovative, that can be put into practice at school."*

6.2.2 Focus group

In Romania 6 teachers participated in the focus group. The focus group goal was to gather participants' opinions and understanding in relation to Social Innovation Education, it is integration in the curriculum, community involvement, resources, decision making and training preferences. The participants in the focus group were selected from those teachers who completed the survey and demonstrated a good understanding of social innovation education and similar methods.

Understanding of Social Innovation Education

When it comes to **teachers' understanding of Social Innovation Education, teachers** perceive it as a **new teaching method.** "*It is a method we use to teach students to* ***solve a problem by introducing***

something new and trying to innovate in the technological or concept fields. *We teach students to first think that there is a need to bring something new and then take actions " and* emphasize **the competencies aspects** "*We teach them how to identify problems and from there to critically think and innovate. First using surveys, interviews we teach them how to identify a problem. Sometimes we don't know there is a problem until we look further into it and next, we can think about solutions."* Teachers also mentioned **challenges when implementing the projects** *"The students are tempted to go directly to the solution, and they have difficulties pointing out what the problem is. We need a playground, we need trash cans,* ***they go directly to the solution the challenge for teachers is to helps students think about the root cause of the problem"*** **and teachers' role** *"Teacher's task is to find a way to* ***help students look into the depth and find things which not work and thing about why.*** *When doing so students develop critical skills such as empathy, tolerance which contributes to active citizenship. Students have a certain set of values and help them decide, teach them about the voting system and decision making. In the end it is also important to* ***dedicate time to reflection which is critical for students' learning****. This is the moment when the knowledge really settles and when students realize the competencies they have developed: how to communicate, how to collaborate and so on."*

In terms of **activities Social Innovation Education can include teachers mentioned that it takes place in steps and some steps could be Research, Learning, Practical implementation, Reflection:** "*The steps are really important - we research, we learn, we do..... The research part is important. We live in a world of fake news and it is really hard to make a difference"*

Integrating Social Innovation Education in the curriculum

Teachers recognize there are multiple paths to integrate SIE into school activities "*It can be used as an activity during personal development or civic education. It can be an extracurricular activity. As an elective. There are many ways, it is important for each one of us to find a way to integrate it"* As part of **existing subjects** *"I All children need to be exposed to social innovation regardless of what they will become. This is a good project for Dirigentie or for 6th grade under intercultural competencies. I did a service-learning project in history and social education. In this project we have a monument for the heroes from WWII and we never looked into the history of that place. We started researching and we looked into the families of those war heroes, we did a short documentary. It was an important challenge for the students and the parents jumped in. The parents became really involved. They supported us in filming, they helped us with transportation, they were also excited about the project. We discovered important stories about the people who were listed on the monument. It was a wonderful project and I recommend you all to do a similar project in your community."*
An alternative path is to become **a standalone new subject under curriculum under school decision**.

Some teachers are recognizing that it **is easier to integrate it at primary level but at middle school level might be more challenging** *"we can easily integrate projects at primary level we can work on a project using different subjects. Its gymnasium might be a bit more difficult but I am aware that students learn a lot more during projects.*

Teachers believe the **SIE activities align the project with school curriculum which promotes competency development and there are parts of the project which could be done across multiple**

subjects such as arts, math, science, etc. "*Integrating this project is really important to know where to integrate them. We can also do this at the primary level in arts, communication, math, environmental science and so on. I manage to do this project because I can integrate them into the student's curriculum. I can integrate the activities into my curriculum.* **Teachers also emphasize that they need flexibility and creativity to be able to integrate SIE** "*I am flexible to conduct the activities because I can link the competencies in the curriculum with what I do." We must be creative, and any one of us can do it. I am aware that knowledge accumulation is important but easily forgotten."*

Enables

Teachers identified **the long-term effects of SIE when implemented in early education. "***We built a community of 25 teachers in my school to conduct the Citizen project. I was able to see students who participated in the project later in the educational level and it was way easier to work on projects in 7th grade since they participated in the projects in primary levels.* **When engaging multiple teachers from one school not all teachers will have the same level of engagement** *"We had to present the project at the city hall, they saw the opportunity and invited press and other people to showcase the students work. In this project teachers who really worked hard wanted to promote the work, not all teachers are the same and those who worked hard with the kids were confident to present the projects at the city hall. Those who were not very much involved did not present. We had a genuinely nice experience, and the posters were everywhere."*

Around the schools where focus group teachers work, they believe that their colleagues would be interested to collaborate "*In my school there are teachers who could be interested to collaborate and participate in the project".* "I *am sure I can find teachers in my school; I am responsible for projects in my school and I am mobilizing them to participate in projects.* T**eamwork, incentives and having a project leader made a big difference when involving more teachers in the same project. We even** *got rewards and teachers realized that teamwork was really important, and that collaboration made a difference. Because of these experiences teachers join and we are happy when we have good results.*

Challenges

When asked about challenges teachers mentioned the **limited time dedicated which could be allocated to extracurricular activities** "*Time is a big challenge if it is not in the curriculum. As an extracurricular activity it is hard to find time. Students also have other projects at school and outside the school. I was lucky to have an elective and I had time to conduct the projects during those classes." "*Another challenge is related to **financial resources** especially in rural and vulnerable communities "*Financial resources are a big challenge. We contribute with our own funds. We are happy when we get support from the government or other organizations. We did many environmental projects. Our community is quite poor, and we can't ask our parents. For activities such as prints we can manage but if we need to make a purchase it is hard. If kids bring things from home, we can do something but resources add up when working with many students.* Teachers are also concerned with online **education** as this teacher shared "*Online Education would be a big challenge. We hope we can do the activities in person, online is more difficult.* **Another challenge raising awareness regarding the importance of project-based learning activities** *"As an*

Extracurricular activity it is important to find those who are interested if it is an extracurricular activity. At 7th grade in social education there are 10 to 12 h dedicated to projects. Teachers can create their own project or participate in Citizen project and learn what you need to do and implement the project. Even in this context there are teachers who don't want to do the project because of lack of time and do not realize how important the project is to develop the skills as well as a requirement from the ministry. A lot of teachers are not clear that they need to conduct projects. Teachers are not used to the idea of a project - during which the students can develop competencies. We are too much focused-on knowledge accumulation because those can be forgotten. Competencies are developed for life such as critical thinking, communication. Time is very important, and we need to think about where we integrate it as extracurricular, and target interested students or integrate it into the curriculum during 7th grade social education and support teachers to understand why projects are important.

Emphasizing the benefits of the project was mentioned by teachers as some of the strategies they had applied to mitigate potential challenges as these teachers share "*We can now find teachers interested to participate in this kind of projects. Teachers are tired of writing stories and drawing competitions but projects like this which help students be involved in their communities. In each school it is easier to find teachers who are interested in participating in projects which take the students outside the classroom."* Another **effective strategy is to make it fun for students and have clear goals and activities** *"when students go outside the comfort zone, they love having a game at start. For teachers it is easy to follow the activities when those are well organized* "Teachers mentioned that the method is also beneficial to give a voice to those students who normally don't stand out "*for teachers to be able to observe and think critically. In this kind of project, we can find kids who normally don't stand out but when they participate in a project, we can discover them again and see them in a different light.* **Providing inspiration and putting the projects into a broader perspective and developing skills for lifelong learning such as critical thinking and problem solving "***In our school we have interested teachers even at high school level. Maybe students can even build some apps. Some of our students went to shark tank with one of their apps. Think critically, find solutions and sometimes there might be a breakthrough. As adults they will be more innovative and will be able to adapt, identify problems and think about solutions."*

Community Engagement

During the focus group teachers brought out some differences when engaging with the local community. In large communities it might be more difficult to engage the authorities. "*We are in a large community and it is hard to reach the city hall but we can reach them through the parents and can provide resources for us*. **Engaging with local authorities in big cities may be difficult as this teacher shares ``For** *SIE - the most important is the human resources - specifically the local authorities. with them is really hard to engage. It is good to work with businesses, but local authorities need to be supportive and support the schools which conduct such projects. They need to have awareness on what important role they have. We now have a project with a poster we want to put on the sidewalks; we have been waiting for 2 months to hear back and we tried to get to them. Local Authorities are especially important and the school as well. The school needs to have the initiative and the local authorities support''*. **In big cities authorities are very busy and can get**

suspicious regarding project intentions ``The *local authorities don't realize that they need to serve the community. Often authorities when they hear about projects, they get suspicious that there might be other interests, in this way it is important to go personally and speak to them and clarify why we are doing it. It is easier in small communities and it is hard in big cities."*

Teachers think there is always someone who can be engaged, and the most important part is for teachers to start conducting such projects. *"It really depends on the context. There is always someone to reach out to a mayor or a business person who has students. It is really important that the teachers want to conduct such projects and if doing so we can find resources."*

Resources and infrastructure

Teachers recognize the **importance of IT resources** and a lot of efforts have been made to equip the schools with computers during the pandemic however the level of access varies, there are schools with equipment like these teachers share "*We have computer rooms, we have projectors in each classroom, we have an interactive board and we want some more. ", "we have good infrastructure - we receive tablets from the government and local authorities. We had a project and we got more computers using our own work. We did many projects like Start ONG and Ateliere fara frontier -Da click pe Romania.* But there are also teachers who share that the school lacks IT know-how and infrastructure. "*I work in a school outside Iasi and we are under served - we have received resources but some of them couldn't be used. We had issues in this period with the computers because the computers we received need laptops and we cannot use them because we don t have laptops. We couldn't give all teachers the infrastructure to conduct projects. We applied for a POC application to receive interactive whiteboards. We are underserved and many students lack resources to participate in online classes. It is good we work in rural area but also schools which are at the periphery of big cities where the needs are big as well."*

Decision making

Teachers shared how projects are normally implemented in schools *"We make a proposal in the projects commission, in the teachers commission the project gets approved and in the administrative committee it gets approved if it is a larger project."* **School principal's role is to approve projects.** *"The directors normally are informed and approve the projects."*

In regard to project implementation there are schools where teachers are tired of after school activities and lack motivation "*In my community we have after school and financial incentives to motivate teachers and in many projects, there are no projects from my community, because we are so tired due to after school and we are not involved in other projects. For me the pandemic offered me the time to get involved in other projects. This was an advantage because I could learn from this project. In our community it is hard to get teachers involved."* **Parents add a lot of pressure to participate in projects** ``Our *parents put a lot of pressure because they want their kids to perform well and enter a competitive high school and keep them in school longer. It is hard to involve teachers. IT is easier to find those teachers who are naturally involved or those who want to receive graduation.* **Navigating the school approval system is not difficult if the project does not require**

financial resources or time of the school principal but finding motivation can be challenging "*We need teachers who want to give other opportunities to their students. We need motivated and dedicated teachers who really want to do good work. The directors are not very much motivated either. They ask if we are paid, and when we say we volunteer they warn us that there is a lot of work. Projects in our school don t need a lot of approval but don t ask the directors for too many responsibilities - the directors approve but don't want to be involved."*

Teacher training preferences

In terms of training preferences, teachers prefer **both theory and practice.** *"I like training when we have both practical and theory. I like to spend around 2 hours in trainings"* **with clear guidelines''.I** *like if they explain very clearly what we need to do in our classroom with the students. At the end of the training to clearly know what we have to do* ***" including*** **an overview of all activities involved I** *like training focused on practice. We want to clearly know what we have to do with the students and during the training to walk over the activities"*

Teachers would prefer the training to take place during the working week "*As time I like the weekend to be off and we all need to relax during the weekend. If the training is short and efficient it is better to be conducted over the week and not on the weekend. "***Teachers also share that they prefer in person trainings** *"We really want face to face training - we are tired of online."*

6.3 Policy makers priorities

The Romanian context and needs analysis also included interviews with policy makers to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Romania 5 individuals were interviewed and even if they were all categorized under the umbrella of policy makers bring in a variety of roles within the broader educational system from the Ministry of Education Council, National Institute of Educational Studies, Institute for the Quality of Life and the Ministry of Youth and Sports with roles ranging from academia, Curriculum creators, teacher training programs, youth program coordinator, specialist of extracurricular activities. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

Policy makers expertise areas

The **expertise palette of policy makers is very rich and broad,** and it includes both researchers who created the curriculum "Curriculum development, research and policy making" and teacher training as well as extra-curricular activities and social issues "*Specialist on drug prevention and extracurricular activities and partnerships".*

Priorities for the educational sector

- **Translating the new competency-based curriculum into the classroom** "*The new curriculum and how it is translated into the classroom is one of the biggest priorities. It is a long conversation about how the new curriculum is being applied. The new school curriculum has been designed in a common effort to transform the system and direct it towards key competencies, we adopted the EU key competencies and include general and specific competencies placing the school in the unique position to prepare the students to acquire lifelong competencies. On edu.cred under resources we had published an official document helping those who want to design curriculum and what the process, how it is developed and the profile of the student at the end of each educational level. The guidelines include the competencies such as "the students' needs to know how to do X to be able to accomplish Y and this will help him to Z" this entire structure is centered on competencies and it revolutionizes the entire system. In the law there are 11 competencies and the main priority for us is to develop these competencies and build from there.*
- **Training teachers to focus on competency building** *"In this context the biggest priority is to make sure that this new competency-based curriculum reaches the students and we had designed a teacher training program called CRED targeting 55K teachers so far we had trained 35K teachers. The training is focused on helping teachers translate the competency-based curriculum into their classrooms. This is one of the largest efforts to upgrade our educational system and to make sure we build a favorable place for competency development. There is a need for coherence. This training did not have any funding from the Ministry and was built with EU funding. There is also Romania Educata - a project started in 2018 focusing on system building and ensuring the new curriculum is applied and building a support system which is adapted to the learning context.*
- **Lack of vision** "*The main issue is that the lack of vision the law includes aspects which are not clear in practice. The mission of education does not stop at teachers and directors level. It needs to assume its purpose and not focus on memorization to receive good grades, conduct evaluation because it needs to happen but not to support the progress. "*
- **Build collaboration at local level to address social issues the communities face "***There are other issues which could be addressed by small projects - social issues are not often included when designing projects, we don't look at how many individuals are poor, especially in rural communities where we end up with students who are extremely poor. We also need to link it to the social protection system which needs to be more efficient and a school which assumes its role in the community. There is not much collaboration - we often do not think about the role of the school inside of the community which needs to collaborate with the families, with social services, with public health specialists, NGOS and so on. There is not much collaboration at the overall level. On the other hand the school does not assume it's role and it abandons the students blaming their families.*
- **The school is broken from society and society is very polarized. The** *schools are broken apart from the society and the society is very much polarized. We have the issue of mobility, which affects especially students from rural areas, students abandoned by their parents and the school does too little to break the poverty circle.*
- **Need to prioritize Inclusivity "***Furthermore, the school enhances the inequalities inside the society and offers too little resources to those who need it. We have an elitist culture - we promote those who succeed at national exams, but we don't reward the schools who managed*

not to have schools drop out. There are many students at risk, and they are not seen by the system. How can we move outside the paradigm of 5% who are the top performers. Let's look at students' progress and how they collaborate with others and support them."

- **Social Inclusion** *"Social Inclusion - since the pandemic it is harder to tell how things in education are especially when it comes to social inclusion, it is not clear how many youngsters are left outside the system and with the digitalization it is becoming even harder. There are many youngsters who do not have access to the labor market. The pandemic has brought to light the issues related to social inclusion and even worsen the situation and we need to wait and see the impact of the pandemic*
- **Many teachers are not suitable for the job. A more drastic reform is needed -** *We need to reform the system - there are many teachers who are not right for the job. There is a need for more training programs such as CRED where multiple methods are integrated. We need to center ourselves on the students but it is very hard when the teachers are not emotionally involved.*

Priorities for teachers

- **Teachers' recruitment and selection and pre-service training** *"Recruitment and selection - initial training. We haven't been too strict when it comes to who is becoming a teacher. We need to be more firm and think in depth regarding the type of people we want into the system.*
- **Creating avenues for continuous professional development "***Continuous learning and support systems. The Erasmus program had a tremendous impact because teachers can see they can do things differently and create change, their perspective changes. The teachers lack the confidence in their work but there is also space for improvement.*
- **Masters for teacher's professional development integrates socio-economic aspects of the community "***We are running a pilot on Pedagogical Master program which aims to enhance the existing limits of the system created by the actual pedagogical classes and enhance the complex role of the teacher in a complex, intercultural environment where the teacher needs to understand the society and adapt to the needs of the classroom inclusively special needs children. In this context we didn't change much. We had accepted people who lacked the training to become part of the system. We need better filters to enhance the current training system we are currently bringing in people who lack the training to be teachers.*
- **Teachers lack training, vision and visibility and sub optional pre-service training "***Teachers lack training, vision and visibility. Pedagogical training is low quality and lacks vision regarding what a teacher needs to know besides the subject they are teaching. The role of the school is missing. Everything is done on fast forward, there are legislative issues, the training is done in a few months with the goal to get a few credits. When there are multiple types of pedagogies, it is impossible to do a serious job, some are done during the school year and others are not more concentrated in a short format.*
- **Continuous training** *The Second issue is continuous training - it is more on paper a formal talk but it is not taken seriously. For example, now with the pandemic teachers' digital competencies were tested and it was found out that teachers participated in training programs and had no idea how to use the computer, lacking basic skills. From here we also have management problems - younger teachers who are now entering the system do not think it is an attractive job.*

- **Teachers need to have the skills to be able to understand the community they work in "***there are many administrative and financial difficulties, and the school management does not prepare teachers to understand the community and its dynamics. What are the expectations, what is the school history, what kind of school there is? How do we interact with a school where we have more diversity, and how can we engage with students? There is an opportunity to learn from others and observe how they are doing it. Many of the new teachers are replicating old models, and have no experience teaching centered on students.*"*
- **Large classrooms make it difficult for teachers. "***Another issue is that the number of students in a classroom is very high, and students who are not performing well move up into the system, but they lack basic knowledge."*
- **Education needs to be sensitive to socio-economic issues "***The teachers do not assume their role and do not take efforts to change. We need an education which is more sensitive to ethical differences and socio economic differences as well as sexist mentality which is present in the system. The expectations projected on students influence their own perception and the same happens for institutions, as a service provider it needs to assume the role of defender of human rights. "*
- **Teachers lack competencies to teach the new curriculum "***Teachers lack the competencies for the new curriculum and how to integrate the school curriculum to develop competencies and apply them, Second priority comes to multi curricular competencies transfer - such as digital competencies and it is important to design strategies centered on the motivation to learn. The root cause is often outside the school and there are many factors which influence the learning motivation"*
- **Teachers are not incentivized to enhance their skills** *``Teachers are not pressured to enhance their skills - once they are in the system, they apply for the "definitivat" and this is it for many. There are many opportunities from the Ministry as well as NGOs but those teachers who engage in additional activities can adapt to any challenge as we saw with the Pandemic. The good teachers adapted regardless of the fact that the lessons move in the online environment. the challenge is to reach those teachers who have potential but lack access to information.``*
- **Using proper language when communicating with teachers as well as translating the new context to their understanding "***The language used is not accessible to many teachers or they had bad experiences in the past for example they participated at CCD classes and they had participated in projects damned to fail. There is a lot of work in mapping and finding those individuals with potential. There is a lack of understanding of the conditions some teachers live in and it comes from lack of understanding the issues and the context in which the teachers live."*

- **Teachers who lack vocation are in teaching position"** *Teachers now have higher salaries than before but there are many who do not have the teaching vocation and are in the right place."*

Priorities for students

- **Ensure the educational process is centered on students** *"Everything has to make sense for the students. We have a students' profile who needs to be enabled - the entire process needs to be centered on students. We need to ensure there is a minimum level of competency and if the student does not demonstrate those capabilities the school needs to be held accountable. Too*

often if students fail we blame them. We need to start looking into how we can support them and develop them at their full potential."

- **Personalized education "*There is not a one size fits all and this model does not work anymore. In the future student centered and personalized learning experiences will become a priority***. *We need to try to understand why some students are where they are and try to think honestly how we can help them to develop from where they are, we do not hear their feedback, and this blocks the advancement. We need to work on this and make personal investments. We need a personalized direction focused on concrete needs; we can't continue using the full classroom system."*
- **Create mechanisms to have students' voices heard "***When it comes to students it is important to listen to them, to get to know them and learn where they are coming from, and follow their progress in the system. Individual portfolios are a headache for ARCIP (the quality control branch).*
- **Update the Evaluation and Assessment methods** *To follow the progress, you need a good initial evaluation which can be made in a playful format and not to punish - an evaluation of the abilities relevant for teaching. "*
- **Large size classroom requires additional human resources otherwise teachers promote discipline and silent students "***There is also a need for an additional teacher - it is hard for one teacher to manage an entire classroom and they do so by promoting well behavior - staying silent - this behavior is rewarded and is a strategy used in order to manage the students and it comes from lack of finance. "*
- **Social Services could play an important role to improve the educational process and consider the social context of the students "***The teachers could also collaborate with other specialists who can monitor the progress. The collaboration with social services is also important - in rural areas they know well the situation of the family and their support could be relevant to the educational level. Let us work together and think about ways we can be supportive. It is especially important to know the overall context in which the student lives. "*
- **Students need to be able to voice their opinions when it comes to subjects they take.** "*It is also a need to give students more freedom to think and select what they want to do. The students are left out of the decision-making process, the curriculum is rigid and there is no penalty. "*
- **Competency based curriculum should bring the students closer to local communities "***With the competency-based curriculum you should be able to engage more with the local community on subjects relevant to that area and in this way, they will develop the competencies. In the area of civic education, they could learn how the systems work, institutions, how they can engage with the institutions and become more practical and move away from abstract concepts."*
- **Focus on practical and experience learning "***It is a need to focus on practical learning, move away from rigid models and develop competencies through experiences. There are many examples in other systems and it is not easy to find something that works without collaboration and adaptation to local context. It needs to be connected to day-to-day life. "*
- **Developing students' competencies and focus more on socio-emotional competencies and active citizenship** *"We are really lacking in students' competencies. We also need more digital*

education, and we lack it when it comes to socio-emotional competencies and active citizenship."

- **Prepare students for life with relevant skills and knowledge.** *"It is the classic saying that school does not prepare you for life. It is a system focused on memorization and transfer of knowledge and next checking if the knowledge has assimilated."*
- **Schools are disconnected from the world we live in, there is too much bureaucracy and this needs to change. There** *are places where the teachers don't have emails and schools are not keeping up with the world we live in. The school is not connected with real life - there are too many politics when it comes to the school administrative council and even student councils. In this entire ecosystem the students are the ones who are the most open. "*
- **Empowered teachers and engaged students "***We need* ***teachers who can build their own content, relax the curriculum, and engage the students."***
- **Improve teacher's motivation and competencies** *"We really need to increase teachers' motivation but it is really hard when they hate their job - we need real classes with professionals in communication, collaboration."*
- **Prioritize student's participation in extracurricular activities "***When it comes to extracurricular activities there are targets and evaluation which has proven the positive impact of extracurricular activities. I would include IQ in all the subjects but adapt it to the curriculum. For example when we speak about resilience, we can link it to physics or other subjects. With a bank in Romania, we did a program focused on introducing financial literacy and linking it to school subjects such as history and so on. It was fresh and well received by all."*

Social Innovation Education

The **Policy Makers interviewed wanted to hear clarifications to understand what we refer to when we say Social Innovation Education. This may indicate that the notion has a lot of confusion and may embed multiple elements. Once the definition was shared, all policy makers responded positively to the initiatives "***It is really something that the teachers need to learn more about '' and* **shared their perspectives. On one hand policy makes think it is an initiative for the "hippies" "***There are few initiatives, it is an area with lack credibility is more of a sector of hippies and is more linked to social entrepreneurship which is understood more like profit reinvested. The SIE is difficult work especially in small communities to engage people to care about their community and contribute to its development. In Romania it has more potential in larger communities where there is more competition- it is a concept that needs to grow and to do so we need to grow people".* **They recognize that it could be integrated as an extracurricular activity** *" It is about extracurricular learning and involving students in community activities with the support of teachers*'' and **the Ministry is encouraging such initiatives** *"In the ministry we have SNAC which tried to get the students involved in extracurricular activities - there is important impact and there is an increased necessity to conduct such activities - we need more of it.".* **Social Innovation Education could also be integrated in the curriculum as the practical part of existing subjects** *"it could be integrated under the Social Education umbrella where teachers need to dedicate up to 30% of the classes towards community projects. The teaching needs to include practical activities. One of the projects we used is Citizen Project where there is such an approach. The schools is not only for training it is the actual place where project learning is taking place - I have noticed a tendency to bring the school in the*

community Pulchra (Horizon project)https://pulchra-schools.eu/ for instance starts from a scientific problem and it starts with defining it and after move into solution finding and implementation, the students are like scientific reporter who are reporting to the local community, they are growing the level of awareness. There are 5 high schools working in an applied level with multiple communities. It is an initiative linked to the written curriculum but also to others and eliminates the need to wait for "Saptamana Altfel" to conduct community projects."

SIE is also associated with the topic of entrepreneurship "*I associate the innovation issue close to entrepreneurial education. It has become a bit of an obscene topic in Romania, and it is overused and I am disappointed that often people don't know the rights of employees and so on*. **One of the policy makers sees SIE as an efficient method to foster collaboration and bring the school into the community and the other way around** "*Social innovation Education can be a method to focus on the community you want to be part of. Look around and think how can you grow together, to talk about the real issues and acknowledge that we do not live in a perfect world and there are no perfect solutions and it is possible it will not work out. Innovation is a thing which we know may not work and it is about adapting to the specific needs of each community. Is not only about rural but it is rather about what goes around the school and to try to do something for the group.*

SIE is often linked to philanthropy and less Social Responsibility and this policy maker who worked with NGO's highlighted the divide between government and the civil society and lack of collaboration "the *In Romania SIE is more linked to philanthropy and less social responsibility. In the Ministry of Youth I was implementing projects with youth and I was working with an NGO when I got into the ministry I got antagonized by my former colleagues.* **The lack of collaboration is also felt at local level where the school management and the overall community are disconnected and this is the example students grow up around** "*The school can improve certain things like school management and the management should assume their role and how the school is managed at local level, how to think about partnerships, and develop the educational pedagogic to discuss and less dictation. The dictation is toxic for development and this could be reinvented, including discussions, teamwork and actual experiences. "*

Social Innovation Education is often linked to teachers in the humanities area and the policy makers emphasize the need to also involve the school counselor in such projects since they are aware of socio-economic issues "*There are subjects taught by teachers from the humanities area. Student councils go more towards counseling and there is a conflict of interests - it is difficult for the counselor to conduct such activities, but they can provide feedback. The counselor knows well the school's vulnerabilities and could step in in those areas where the schools lack. There could be projects focused on a specific intervention started by the school in the community.* **Finding the right balance between the community and school activities is really key for** *SIE "If it comes from the community the school sees it more like a weight and it already has too much work to do. The school barely survives the management lacks and teacher's mobility is also an issue.*

In terms of organizational priorities, **Social Innovation Education is on the agenda of the Ministry of Education who is recognizing the common goals to promote competency-based curriculum** as they

share this interview *"It is in the direction in which we are heading. It could be integrated as an optional subject; the process is not as complicated as it seems'' as well as believe it could be integrated in the curriculum as an elective."* **Policy makers also recognize it could be an important factor for teacher's motivation**" It *is one of my priorities because it links to teacher's motivation.*" Policy makers also highlighted that in this area more teacher training is needed "*It is more in the experimenting area - and teachers need training - they are afraid of chaos in the classroom and for this reason we have one way communication. When students work in groups teachers panic there are associated risks and they don't know how to handle it "*

In terms of policies which favor the integration of SIE the policy makes shared that teacher training initiatives such as pre-service training is an option to explore "*The Pedagogical Master program is a project which could be explored. This is a project using structural funding which could help in teacher training. "***Policy makers also recommend looking into informal networks and communities of practitioners which promote SIE** "*Besides formal training it is also important to investigate informal networks and communities of practitioners.* As mentioned earlier building communities of teachers is a priority for the ministry and teachers training programs as CRED are a good platform for SIE "*As is also the case with CRED. It is important to create a space where teachers can stay in touch, share experiences, and support each other."* **Another initiative around social innovation policy makers mentioned was Ashoka and the business and civil sectors being more dynamic than the government one** "*There are few initiatives - Ashoka does some work in this area and there are many global models there are more activities in multiple areas. There is a lot of work in the social business area. Then it comes to SIE it needs to have social inclusion and stimulate those who are interested. "*

Experiential learning, project-based learning, community projects are a priority since now "*The teaching is focused on exam subjects when the other subjects are minimized. There are more opportunities for interdisciplinarity, community projects, Physical education and so on"* **Social Innovation Education could be an extracurricular activity or integrated in existing subjects** "*Social function of education enhanced using extracurricular activities or school subjects under social education area focus on competencies for social innovation - this is not integrated and it could be easily integrated in other subjects such as geography or human and society or communication"*

Public policies in the area are not evolving and there is a lot of talk around evaluation, assessment and feedback. "*There are some new policies where we are trying to bring in a new evaluation mechanism for the semester and change the system. One discussion is about feedback but it is hard to use it - we do not know how to give constructive feedback and we come in with hate - teachers evaluate themselves based on those whom they like but not on performance. We need to change Evaluation."*

In terms of similar programs with SIE, the policy makers recognize that **the area still needs to be developed** and mentioned ***"Reper 21** - it is an organization which work in the Sustainable Development Goals area and they have a big projects with schools", **"FDSC** also has some work but*

*you actually need to go community by community to identify those who have potential", "**CRED** is a program but more work needs to be done when it comes to inter-evaluation"*

CSS-EU recommendations

- **Think about how you can take electives to be part of the curriculum. An important** *way to integrate this initiative is to investigate supporting schools in deciding the electives at school and those choices to be real - to pick an area of interest to their community and develop it further. ", "Also thinking about how it can be integrated in the formal curriculum."*
- **Create interaction between younger and older students** *You can make groups of students who are not from the same classroom - Encourage collaboration between younger and older students.*
- **Creating a common vision** *Solving problems is important as well as vision. It would be good to think of a way in which the teachers could think about their purpose and how it could be different, where do I need to progress and focus on those areas.*
- **Have a teacher project** *Another idea is for teachers to work on their own project, including things where they can present their school with the ups and downs and the advantages to be students and teachers in that specific community.*
- **Find motivated teachers** *Find a group of teachers who are motivated, even better if they are from that community. Once you bring them in make sure they are supported, valued inside and outside the project.*
- **Follow school calendar of activities "***Training is very important but the project needs to follow the school activities calendar and support activities. Do not rush and do not force your way in.*
- **Include parents "***Parents are especially important as well and include them in the process - as well as consider the social aspects of the family, how parents meeting take place and make sure the project is rooted into the community.*
- **Have a good project management "** *Have a change management plan - think about building a common vision and have a action plan with planned activities, resources and M&E*
- ***Be sensitive to local differences, language and include locals as much as possible*** *"Make sure you have a local perspective. Also be careful of the language you are using. It is important to start with a community mapping to understand who the people are, who the teachers are and who the student's universe looks like.*
- **Pay attention to schools you are selecting** *"You need to be extra careful when selecting the schools and what is their motivation –*
- **Include incentives for teachers and build a supportive community** *"make sure you bring in some incentives for teachers - classes - resources - regular meetings - support groups - mentoring - coaching and to give them the chance to talk about what bothers them and praise each other. If they have issues to work together to find the solutions - a physical meeting always helps and it should include relaxing activities.*
- **Align project priorities with teacher priorities as well as national and EU priorities** *"Pay attention to what the real needs are for teachers, and support teachers to create learning contexts which facilitate the development of key competencies leveraging the subjects they teach. It is an opportunity to align national, regional and European priorities*

- **Do not impose** *"Make sure you do not impose people to do things they do not agree with, to only do things because they have to. 2 avoid presentations which are stereotypical and not overly simplify issues which are more complicated. 3. Make sure you create projects which are based on real needs and not needs the teachers imagine there us such as custom and assumed needs - make sure the activities reflect the reality*
- **Do not paternalize/control** *- Try to build practices which can be integrated in a larger strategy which includes social partnership - make recommendations at school management level and towards teachers and authorities, There are teachers who really need to have clear information. Make sure you are building a community of teachers and test with them multiple scenarios.*
- **Localize "***Bring in local examples and showcase diversity. Localize - bring in local examples. If you can bring in some local facilitators who can present. The local community and authorities have no idea what is happening inside the schools.*
- **Inclusivity** *"Make use you have something for everyone - and have diversity*
- **Transparency** *Be honest - start with more schools - be honest what is your ask - Have clear responsibilities - and use recommendation - schools which may be interested.*
- **Look at past experiences and track record when selecting schools** *"Teacher's resilience, lack of motivation and will to involve school directors. It is not good if directors impose activities on teachers. You can look into the school who participated in the past in Erasmus programs - and it is a honor for schools to keep the title of EU school*

In terms of **organizations which could be interested in SIE the policy makers recommended UNICEF, Alaturi de voi, CRED.**

In the end the policy makers were informed that we will keep them updated with the progress of the projects and they were opened to offer their advice in the future.

6.4 Civil society priorities

The Romanian context and needs analysis also included interviews with civil society representatives to capture their perspectives, recommendation, and insights regarding Social Innovation Education. The interviews took place in March and April 2021 and took approximately 45 minutes. Due to the pandemic and other logistical arrangements the interviews were conducted remotely using phone calls and online communication platforms in accordance with project data privacy guidelines and GDPR.

In Romania 5 individuals were interviewed coming from civil society organizations working in the field of education such as Aspire Teachers, Romanian Business Leaders – I want to be an entrepreneur – Ashoka, Synerb and Social Innovation Solutions. This diversity of experiences offers our project a rich pull of information and insights which will be detailed below.

Civil society area of work

The diversity of civil society representatives is linked together by their **mission to advance students' education** from *"Better teaching for authentic learning, Excellent teachers - Teachers training"* to *more towards entrepreneurial education "Entrepreneurial education and good governance. Recognizing teachers' best practices and open mindset. Innovation and entrepreneurial education. Linking communities with business" as well as "helping organizations and purpose-driven entrepreneurs to grow social ventures and economic development programs that serve vulnerable or marginalized communities."* **and social business incubators and capacity building** *" work with entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs to develop programs and social enterprises focusing on 4 key areas: 1. support small producers, 2. create jobs in green enterprises, 3. develop projects for community and economic development 4. develop a common region for development"***. Our civil society experts also include leading organizations in the area of Social Innovation such as Ashoka** who *"builds and cultivates a community of change leaders who transform institutions and cultures so they support changemaking for the good of society***." And Social Innovation Solutions whose mission is to** *"find, expand and create solutions for the future. We work mainly with young entrepreneurs. We aim to help the youth to perceive entrepreneurship as a career option, understand the business, conduct the business and work with policy makers to create and include entrepreneurs "*

Educational Priorities

- **Training teachers and building communities of teachers** "*Building quality resources for teachers, translation of resources, transfer of know-how towards schools and teachers. Building communities of professional practice and teaching them to collaborate and work together to be better.*
- **Support the youth to develop an innovative and entrepreneurial mindset** *"We have two main priorities - on one hand youngsters' education in the innovation and entrepreneurial area and second recognizing those who create value and building an open mindset.*
- **Provide Technical Assistance to the education field -transfer of know-how and support** *"We mainly provide technical assistance - access to resources. Some of our support includes non-formal education using formal classes and peer to peer learning. With our young participants we focus on developing their courage and awareness with different impact models, part of the education is focused on concepts and the philosophy of social enterprises and lifelong learning focusing on management finance, budgeting, tools for work as well as provide a theoretical framework and concepts. For the first group we focus on courage and develop and action-oriented attitude and for 2. group we focus on developing entrepreneurial competencies. Our work goes from ideation for social enterprises, development of social enterprises, financial analysis and development as well as mentoring and solving strategic problems such as pricing and strategic advice.*
- **Transform the organizational culture in schools** *We aim to transform the organizational culture in schools and see how we can connect the teachers, parents and directors to build a community of co-creating with the students.*
- **Connect existing initiatives to create collective impact** *We aim to connect existing initiatives which try to support the educational ecosystem in Romania, an ecosystem which creates value and can bring collective impact.*

- **Building sustainability** *"Social innovation without a business model - is just a good idea - it needs a business model -without it will be there in the lab and die and become invisible*

Social Innovation Education

Civil society representatives have a positive opinion in relation to Social Innovation education however highlighted that **there is not a clear understanding of what it is and the terms are used widely and vaguely** "*Social innovation is really a buzz word - and is not social entrepreneurship, and there are different definitions. When we talk about innovation it is rather adaptation and imitation - rather than innovation which is critical - practical - design solutions on fixing - focus on social entrepreneurship. Social innovation is an accidental output. On the other hand, entrepreneurship, we work on it in schools and there is no key to success. Designing technological solutions - for challenges needs to include a deep understanding of the effects and causes of the problem. Inventing something that did not exist takes too many resources. On the other hand social entrepreneurship relates to adaptation and is focused on understanding the problem, what are some of the solutions, however it needs to be adapted it can't be copy paste."*

Civil society representatives recognize that the field is just taking shape and there are organizations who are practicing it but are not aware of what it is "*the idea of social innovation is just starting. So far Ashoka worked with organizations practicing social innovation. Many of the NGO's and the Romanian society have been practicing social innovation but did not know it is called social innovation,* ***therefore there is a lack of awareness of what Social Innovation actually is****. At Ashoka when it comes to education, we are focusing on changemaking skills and empathy and how we can bring this conversation with directors, parents, and teachers. To start this, we need to build capacity and look at the world from each stakeholder's perspective. First, we need to make sure they understand that students need change making skills and this is a benefit for their organization and for the beneficiaries to be able to speak about it without feeling pressure. Second Social Innovation Education is taking place, but we do not perceive it, we do not speak about it with awareness and knowledge and this limits our ability to scale.* **Building awareness and using the right language is key for building a robust SIE field "***the language we use and building awareness regarding the impact of what we do is critical. The work needs to include an important impact assessment activity which is supportive of the work and pay attention to how and what we measure.*

The early stages are recognized by all civil society representatives and it is also being researched by those in the field "*I think in Romania Social Innovation Education is in its early stages - it is not clear what it means but it sounds good, and it is commonly used but there is not a clear understanding of what is the difference between innovation and social innovation when it comes to the entrepreneurs.* **Entrepreneurship seems to be a significantly more popular field than innovation among the youth "***The youngsters seem to like better entrepreneurship than innovation. We did a study in this area with Insights, and we discovered that 27% of them were interested in entrepreneurship and only 4.2% in innovation." (Insights, VSFA, study 2020)*

When defining SIE civil society representatives found it a challenging process and highlighted that many initiatives may be places under this umbrella, but rather key elements need to be present to

call something a Social innovation such as sustainability, replicability, and scalability *"I will say what is not - **first it is not any creative idea students have to solve a problem it has to be sustainable, replicable and scalable**. It needs to **have an element of novelty which brings a benefit to a community and is built based on diligent research.** The research part is particularly important because you need to go beyond misconceptions and build strong competencies **for research using data and the literature available** to understand why the problem is happening. The solution can be quite simple, but we need to spend time to understand the causes and why the problem is happening. We need to see the problems using the correct lenses. Social Innovation Education is a tool which helps students put on the correct glasses to solve the problem.* **The key role of teachers as facilitators is also highlighted** *In this process teachers are critical they need to be able to have critical thinking and understand data for finding the root cause.*

Experiential learning and innovation led by students has a huge potential *"There is huge potential when it comes to the youth, they have this wish to revolutionize the world and many of the challenges come from the lack of resources. The educational process needs to include an experiential component because this is when the students learn.* **In this ecosystem innovation comes often from organizations rather than individuals** *"The civil society is very much alive, and a lot of the innovation comes from organization and not from individuals. We need to move away from the person and build organizations. I am looking at it from the perspective of where we are in Romania."*

Investment in Social Innovation as well as transfer of knowledge remain key for the development of the field *"one of our initiatives is SOCIAL IMPACT AWARD which is a franchise - a model we see that when implementing an idea that worked somewhere else it needs a local flavor to be put in place. We need to invest in social innovation - we need to look around how others have done it."* **Being inclusive and relevant to the context where we innovate is crucial** *"There are some innovations coming up in fashionable domains and there is an added pressure to invent new things however we don't need to be the first - we need to be inclusive and have community responsibility and be cooperative."*

Three out of five civil society representatives shared that they have Social Innovations Education initiatives "*Yes, we consider ourselves a social innovation lab and we aim to help teachers improve in the areas they need the most specifically reporting. We are now building a data science lab with modules for teachers which are being tested. We think innovation comes from bottom up and you don't have to be an expert, but you need to be able to listen actively and make informed and realistic choices. Those who resonate with our mission join us."* **Some of the SIE initiatives are more in the area of incubators of ideas which provide mentoring and support "***We act as an incubator which provides mentoring and support to develop the solution further. In the past many of the initiatives had a strong focus on education and now there is a focus on mental health and environment. Education is still massive but many of the ideas presented are not sustainable. Many of the entrepreneurs are afraid to make money, which is still seen as dirty work however there are more people who are making money for doing good. Solutions are not sustainable. We work with schools in Bucharest where we try to personalize educational experiences - let us have a class - create an educational experience which allows them to progress. Social impact award has been for the 10 years*

in Romania, and we work with high school students. We work with students at high school level who generate ideas for their community and enter the community - 20% were in high school.

Since the field is in its infancy a lot of initiatives are focused on capacity building "*We are not very big in Romania and we focus on finding those changemakers who have the potential to change the DNA of the country, and this is what we do through our Fellow initiative. We continue to do so and to increase the pull of people who are considered. Education is relatively new and it comes from multiple directions. 1. We have* ***social innovation education classes*** *focused on those who have potential and there we cover topics from assessment to strategies, system thinking. We want to take this* ***educational component beyond civil society and bring it to companies, especially CSR departments who should be educated on how to evaluate the impact when reviewing projects for funding****. They should look at the social impact as a company in the long term and change the approach they have when it comes to projects. 2 Second we also focus on government and* ***building Social innovation competencies at government level*** *so that they can collaborate better. 3. At communities' level we don't look only at education but at different types of ecosystems. There are many small initiatives who do not have the strength and create the value they have potential for innovation.*

Those who shared that they do not have SIE initiative think the field is too new and it is too early to get involved "*We don't have any initiative in this area because of lack of resources we think it is too early to invest in this area. We work with companies and young people to develop new competencies which can be used inside companies and we connect the young people with the companies and the other way around.***" Others emphasize other components of SIE the ecosystem lacks and the need for know-how transfer** "*There is a need to connect and build together in multiple directions. There is a strong need for know-how and learning and how we can create more impact in the educational field in the long run", "We do a lot of mentoring and we try to help youth develop their ideas and translate those from their mind into something concrete.* ***Youth lack the process and ability to build connections with users. The solutions they build are abstract and are not based on real experiences****.* ***We focus on operationalizing these ideas and solutions, develop a rapid prototype for testing and in doing so have a process****. Some of these ideas are great on paper but they lack the field experience and knowledge.*

A Civil Society representative mentioned a few Social Innovation Education Initiatives "*There are few programs outside the curriculum such* ***as Scoli cu Sclipici, Ateliere de literatie, Scoli comunitare****, etc. however these programs are either after school or outside the curriculum. There is an increased pressure on teachers to integrate such activities into the school curriculum. Another example is* ***Edulab*** *which involves entrepreneurs who start by finding a problem and help them come up with solutions. There is also* ***Teach for Romania*** *which requires a huge investment however they were able to adapt the model to the local context. There are also other people from Teach who started their own innovative projects who continue to create a change. Many of the Teach teachers create a change in the communities they work in and their role is beyond teaching they become local leaders. There is also* ***Edubuzz*** *from teach as well. To me innovation comes also from adapting an existing model to the local context. Edu networks - is a network of schools who work with each other.* **Others**

had difficulties mentioning what initiatives could be included under Social Innovation Education "*It is hard to say. Social Innovation Education is still vague and it is hard to say who is doing it. I could say Ashoka as an organization, NEsst, and Future Labs have been using the term and working in the area. "*Civil Society representatives also mentioned one of the limitation "*There are **few initiatives but not long term focused** - such as Social Impact Award, Impact Hub as well as Erasmus"*

When talking about **SIE is often integrated as part of entrepreneurship programs as this respondent shared** *"I know few small initiatives. One initiative where they speak, and study social entrepreneurship is Entrepreneurship Academy who has many programs to support and incubate ideas. Impact hub also has few initiatives however they go in the screening area and have calls for proposals and include environment, inclusivity. There are projects also in education. Social Impact Award and Future Makers are few of the organization who assumed themselves in this space specifically however there are more organizations who work in this space and create social innovations."* **There is also hard to make a distinction between who is a social innovation education and organizations who run SIE initiatives. Many of the SIE are in the format of competitions and incubators focused on fostering innovation and developing an entrepreneurial mindset "***Social Impact awards, Impact hub, Ashoka.-A new project - Educativa - Edison - technology and clubs - 40 clubs in 40 high schools 1600 youth - offer opportunities on how the future might look like - entrepreneurship and technology to engage with them - offering them entrepreneurial education - SDG challenge - a competition for each club - large option of technology AI to VR to coding to robotics biotech - Purpose is to make them understand the large pull of opportunities - and help them develop an entrepreneurial mindset."*

CSS-EU Recommendations

- **Have clear and quantifiable objectives** *"The project needs to have clear and quantifiable objectives."*
- **Include resources and clear materials regarding how it could be integrated in the curriculum "***It needs to include resources, know-how and build communities, include materials which are clear and integrate the activities into the students curriculum."*
- **Include it as a separate elective or part of existing classes such as entrepreneurship in high school** *It can be an elective, or it can be integrated at high school level during entrepreneurial classes. Many of the entrepreneurial classes are poor quality since teachers lack know how and processes"*
- **Investment in teachers training "***Overall investment in teachers training is very important. Incentives are another important aspect."*
- **Incentivize collaboration** *Provide know how, processes, and tools to incentivize collaboration.*
- **Create mechanism for feedback "***Teachers should be audited and receive honest feedback, use an observation sheet and discuss what can be improved and what went well. Roald Dahl speaks about collaboration and the fact that it needs to be specific and measurable.*
- **Collaboration- Trust – Precision "***Andy Harveys also speaks about the middle way and that there are many examples of people who collaborated and formed strong networks. To do so you need Collaboration - Trust and Precision. IF we have low trust and high precision we run*

into apathy. To be professional in our collaboration we need trust and tools such as research, open classroom, models well defined where everyone has a role to play and a goal to achieve.

- **Include hand holding for teachers** *The project needs to include hand holding for teachers and start from their motivation, their age.*
- **Might be difficult to implement it online -** *If it is online, many teachers are tired. The project needs to have clear materials and a clear process.*
- **Pay attention to your on-boarding process***" Onboarding is very important as well because it sets the tone of the collaboration*
- **Think about sustainability from day 1** *Social Innovation Education needs to be sustainable - you have to look at the entire ecosystem.*
- **Promote teacher's collaboration** *- The team is very important, the teachers need to collaborate.*
- **Center on the students and build experiential learning experience** *" The entire curriculum needs to be centered on people and not on subjects and the processes need to be targeted on people as well. The students need to experience the process of working together, there needs to be a simulation of real context as much as possible.*
- **In Rural areas build strong connections with the local community -** *If you will work in rural areas you need to build strong connections with the community. The goal should be for those who are in the process to have a physical experience to meet the community , to work in a team to make some activities, to negotiate, to have contact to adapt and to research.*
- **Include students from the beginning** *"It is very important to include the students from the beginning, build the solution with them and how to help teachers to use learner driven and student centered processes.*
- **Show don't tell "***It is very important to show the approach you are preaching and less tell. What does Social Innovation actually mean? What it means for the organizations, what means a participative process and how can we support them to do the same in their communities. Practice what you preach and include the students in the co-creation process.*
- **Include other stakeholders and practitioners beside teachers** *"The project needs to include people who are not teachers, people and organizations who are doing social innovation. You can bring in high schoolers and younger people doing this. "*
- **Teachers need to be empowered "***To be successful the teachers should become entrepreneurs themselves - the teachers need to be empowered - the teachers should be able to practice or experiment with the method in their school community."*
- **Include collaboration and support mechanism** *"There needs to be support - the collaboration can be extended between the groups and schools. You need to pay attention to who is at the center and who is really important in this process.*
- **Selection of schools is really important. The** *schools need to be enthusiastic but also realistic they need to dive deep and research the real context. The selection process needs to look at the existing collaboration and how are they selecting people together with teachers, parents and the business community.*
- **Consider the existing social norms** *There is fear of the system that they would be judged if they bring up the issues from their community. which are ignored by the community.*

- **Include teachers voice needs, interest, and limitations** *You need to pay attention to teachers' existing activities, how their schedule looks like, how much time they have available, and what is in this for them. Teachers need validation and the school wants to come up in front and be recognized.*
- **Align the training with existing trends in the educational and public policy space "***Pay attention to their training, what kind of activities did they join in the past. It is also a very important alignment with existing trends in the public policy space as well as existing proposals for reform of the system."*
- **Learn from schools and those who implemented similar programs such as JA** *Speak with the schools, learn from them and connect with other organizations who did something similar such as JA as well as Entrepreneurship Academy who has a social entrepreneurial education class and they also include social innovation education and they have their own incubator.*
- **Zoom in and out** *You should pay attention to providing insights into the model, what is the process at macro level, you need to build a system with a school which is capable of taking the principles and applying them. What is the role of a changed mindset and provide examples of schools who are successful using flexible models and not competitive models?*
- **Changing the mindset needs to take into account the reality in which teachers operate "***Think also what mindset shift you want to introduce? Think about the school directors who could be partners? Schools in Romania are very hierarchical, using an industrial model on command and control. If teachers want to change something there is little support for them and if there are teachers with initiative it is hard for them to create change alone.*
- **Leverage Principals role "***The Directors are key to create the cultural and behavioral change.*
- **Have clear working principles for a transparent and efficient process** *"In your project think about the PRINCIPLES you will use to select the schools to pilot the project with. The clearer the principles are it will be easier. For example, one principle can be that the director supported similar projects in the past - or that the community has a very active community of students. Are the students interested? You need 3-4 principles - it needs to be simple and transparent - develop a transparent and efficient process. "*
- **Keep the project grounded in the reality and as practical as possible** *Make it as real as possible -real people - real problems - kids are not stupid. Ensure the projects include outside the school activities - go to see the problem - read and write."*
- **Schools as co-creators** *I recommend you involve the schools in the co-creating process. Each school is a mini ecosystem of learning and you need to allow schools to see the areas where they can have direct impact. People are more open to things they can use. and which are practical. Include in your work the value the schools get from participating in this program in terms of mindset shift they could carry with them over the long term.*
- **Give autonomy to the children** *"Give as much as possible autonomy to the kids - learning by doing - make them do it.*
- **Include incentives for students** *- competitive communities - put a stake on it - if you do something you get something in return. Introduce incentives.*

At the end civil society representatives advised us "*You need to have a very clear vision and objectives and make sure the others share those with you."*

6.5 SWOT Analysis

CSS-EU - Romania	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Interest in such programs - SIE is a buzz work – sounds cool - Aligned with the Ministry objectives - Schools and teachers as co-creators - Centered on students - Good network of schools - Interest from schools and teachers to engage - Develops students' competencies	- Competing curriculum - SIE is a buzzword and can create confusion
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Integrate it as an Electives - Integrate with existing subjects – Social Education - Aligned with teacher's interest - Change mindset - Create a common vision	- Many initiatives in education - Teacher lack of time and resources - Teacher training and evaluation mechanism

Chapter 7 – Cross Country Comparison

In this chapter we will compare the four countries Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, and Romania by looking at their similarities as well as differences to determine what needs to be standardized and what needs to be adapted to each context. To do so we will look at the National Context, Social Innovation Education and Teacher Training preferences and how they enable and challenge the implementation of SIE.

7.1 Cross country comparison

Teachers who shared opinions, mostly teach at high school level 50% in Cyprus, 47% in Croatia and Serbia. In Romania, most teachers come from elementary 42% and middle school 34%.

National Contexts

- **All countries are in the process of updating the curriculum and aligning it with the EU competency framework which promotes 21st century skills,** however they are in different stages of development. Serbia is in the process of aligning with the EU frameworks, Croatia aligned the content in 2019, Romania in 2015 and Cyprus in 2015 totally changed the evaluation systems.
- **All systems are highly centralized** however Teacher's perception regarding systems promoting flexibility, openness and innovation is quite different. In Croatia 63% perceive it incredibly open, followed by Serbia with 50%, Romania with 40% and the lowest in Cyprus 6%.
- **The priorities for the educational priority perceived by teachers are Basic skills and literacy followed by Science, Citizenship competences, Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences, Entrepreneurial mindsets and lastly A Change making culture.** This order in priorities is common for all four countries however in Cyprus the gap is wider (1 point) compared to other countries where the subjects are closer on the priority list.
- In all countries the **SIE is linked to civic education, active citizenship, and social studies**
- In Croatia and Romania, the necessity for teacher training, capacity building as well as flexibility and sustainability of teaching are highlighted as priorities when in Croatia the focus is more on teacher's evaluation and feedback
- **Curriculum is decided at central level** however teacher's contributions are more encouraged in Croatia compared to other countries
- In Croatia, the ministry is emphasizing the need for flexibility, sustainability and interdisciplinarity.
- In Croatia, the priorities are to prepare students for the future shared by all countries, however more specific inclusive education and intercultural skills.
- In Croatia and Romania, the policy makers emphasize the need to link the school and the community and the need for more collaboration between the two for the betterment of the society
- In terms of vulnerable groups many of the schools have a small percentage 24% in Cyprus, 34% in Croatia, 45% in Serbia and 52% in Romania.
- In Cyprus integrating migrants' students is a priority which is not shared by other countries.

- In Romania, Croatia and Serbia Roma communities are among the vulnerable groups of students
- **All countries have been impacted by the pandemic and this crisis highlighted the need for digitalization**, which is a priority for all counties, however teachers shared that the level of IT infrastructure varies across countries. In Cyprus 76% of students have access to internet and equipment, 68% in Serbia, 46% in Romania and 33% in Croatia. There are also important differences when it comes to access to technology between the urban and rural areas across all countries.
- In Cyprus mental health and student's welfare are high on the priorities list of authorities
- In all countries the European Union has been key in transfer of know-how and best practices across the educational systems
- A large majority of teachers in Romania (71%), Serbia (66%) and Croatia (50%) are part of educational association, professional association or engage with any other organization in extracurricular activities. The situation is different in Cyprus where only 6% are engaged in such activities.
- **Teachers are engaging with the local stakeholders** in Romania 75%, Serbia and Croatia 63% and Cyprus 53%. In terms of parents 87% of parents are involved in the educational process, 53% in Serbia, 50% in Cyprus and 33% in Croatia.
- **Across all countries the need for students to have real life experiences, hands-on experiences are agreed as a priority by all stakeholders from policy makers to teachers and civil society.**
- Classrooms across all countries are on average 20 students with relatively larger classrooms in Romania which is also a challenge for teachers.
- Socio-economic differences should be take into consideration when implementing programs

Social Innovation Education

- In Cyprus, the analytical curriculum is extremely strict and there are already subjects like SIE called Health Education included in the curriculum in 2011 and EUROSCOLA – collaboration, community, and citizenship skills. In other countries the curriculum is more flexible, and teachers have more time available.
- **SIE is recognized as a priority by all counties and their policy makers**
- In Serbia SIE field is more linked by individuals and organizations and less by government
- The SIE field is in its infancy in all countries, and it is mostly championed by civil society with whom the schools and teachers collaborate
- In all countries defining SIE has been challenging. In some places such as Romania SIE is seen more as a buzzword and an area of hippies.
- In general SIE is linked to Civic education and change of attitudes towards developing civic competencies and Entrepreneurship education
- Civil society in Romania emphasized the need for Replicability, Sustainability and Scalability as key characteristics of social innovation education
- **SIE is in its infancy across all countries, and it needs further development, testing and validation.**

- In general teachers are not familiar with SIE and in Romania 49% said that they have heard about it, 29% in Serbia, 17% in Croatia and 3% in Cyprus
- **SIE is associated with innovation, collaboration, inclusiveness, project-based learning, multidisciplinary, collaboration with community,** among others.
- **The strategies for integration of the method varies from country to country.** It can be part of existing subjects, as extracurricular activities or as a standalone elective subject. This depends on the level of flexibility the ministry has as well as current priorities.
- **The SIE is understood as a process which has specific steps and components such as research, group work, presentation, reflection.**
- **The SIE is understood as a student-centered collaborative method which fosters agency, and addresses relevant social issues**
- **Across all countries teachers agree on the benefits of the method towards developing students' competencies**
- The stakeholders across all countries perceive that the **unique feature of SIE is the capacity to link the school activities with the ones in the community**
- Teachers across all countries are faced with multiple challenges such as limited time, mandatory curriculum, lack of interest and motivation of fellow teachers and students, restrictive school environment and bureaucracy, among others.
- **Lack of the time and support to work on innovative educational practices is mentioned as a challenge** by 76% of teachers in Cyprus, 70% in Croatia, 53% in Romania and 47% in Serbia.
- Some strategies teachers applied to overcome challenges have been collaboration, communication, and bringing in incentives for students.
- Across all countries policy makers and civil society spoke about **the importance of considering sustainability when talking about SIE**
- In Romania SIE is present as an outcome of competitions for students and incubator programs
- **Teachers have identified Reflection as an important and innovative aspect of learning they need to dedicate more time to**
- In Romania teachers shared that SIE is easier to be implemented at primary level where the curriculum is more flexible. A similar suggestion is given in Cyprus as well who advise to target teachers with more flexible curriculum.

Teacher Training

- Across all country's teachers shared a common preference for how the **training should look like. The words used by them were interactivity, practical, relevance of content, including peer to peer learning, having clear goals and activities which in the end will benefit the students.**
- In terms of platform **in general teachers prefer in-person training but also recognize the benefits of online training** especially in terms of interacting with individuals from another context.
- In Cyprus it was suggested by multiple stakeholders to leverage Cyprus Pedagogical Institute for teacher training
- In Romania preservice teacher training and overall professional development and continuous training is a priority

7.2 Opportunities and challenges to integrate SIE

Opportunities

- Social Innovation Education is aligned with EU principles and policies
- Strategies implemented by teachers to overcome challenges were communication, collaboration, having incentives, providing rewards for students
- Schools have good collaboration with local stakeholders who are supported with finance, promotion, and overall support.
- Parents Association are seen as key to get involved with in Cyprus
- In Cyprus, the change of Evaluation systems might be an opportunity for SIE
- In Cyprus teachers have experience with conducting community projects
- SIE is seen as a method to increase students' self-esteem, collaboration, and active citizenship
- Local Government has demonstrated interest in school project and there is an opportunity to link the projects to existing priorities
- In Romania Curriculum at school decision is a great opportunity to integrate Social Innovation Education into the formal curriculum and have dedicated classes to it
- The civil society, private sector and public sector have been collaborating closely since the pandemic and this environment for collaboration could be a good opportunity for promoting social innovation education in a more inclusive approach.
- Training teachers in the social innovation education practices could be integrated as part of Romania Educata the new initiative of the Presidency
- Existing competency-based curriculum: In formal education there is a great need for teacher training and translation of the competency-based curriculum in the classroom practice, therefore initiatives which cultivate competencies are encouraged by the ministry as well as the overarching EU frameworks.
- There are already initiatives like Innovators Children focused on Social Innovation however they operate as incubators and less as Educators therefore Social Innovation education could be an important stepping stone for this existing trend.
- Teachers training and teachers communities are becoming more popular and there is a greater tendency to invest in lifelong learning and teacher's competency development.
- Have clear goals and objectives and put the SIE project in perspective – long term goals.

Challenges

- Teachers lack time, motivation, capacity, and bureaucracy
- The pandemic and if online learning continue is seen as a challenge by many teachers
- In Cyprus and Croatia there are many school activities and there is competition for students' time.
- In Cyprus, the curriculum is stricter and only 6% of teachers believe that the educational environment promotes flexibility
- Stakeholders identified long term sustainability and having incentives for teachers as important challenges.
- Evaluation and assessment are still focused on theoretical knowledge, and it needs to transition therefore alignment of assessment with the new vision takes time and reform of the school structure

- The pandemic has brought to light some of the existing challenges of the educational system. The discrepancies between urban and rural communities in terms of teacher training, access to technology and digital skills are enhanced by the pandemic. Many initiatives in this field have started and social innovation education will not be on the priority lists for many schools and communities.
- Social innovation is still vague and hard to define
- Raising awareness regarding the importance of project-based learning activities

Chapter 8 – Conclusions

This report provides a good understanding of SIE in the four counties analyzed and how the SIE model could be scaled and implemented considering the specificities of each country. The four contexts are quite different when it comes to flexibility of the curriculum, challenges faced by teachers, teachers training and past experiences. The contexts are also unified by common teacher's preferences for teacher training, prioritizing students' needs and desire to give them a voice. Overall, all educational systems are also aligned with the SIE projects which creates an environment favorable for CSS-EU.

SIE is in its infancy and a lot of work needs to take place in awareness, capacity building as well as creating means for sustainably integrating it in the curriculum. Without a thorough implementation, SIE risks being applied superficially, losing its momentum, and failing to engage with key stakeholders. Since, the contexts, opportunities and challenges for SIE are different from country to country, the implementation of SIE needs to take into consideration national context and priorities.

A unique feature of this analysis is the capacity to integrate stakeholders from across the board and capture specific recommendations from the project from both civil society representatives and policy makers. In this last chapter we will also include recommendations for CSS-EU projects and Lessons learned.

8.1 Recommendations for CSS-EU

- Put together a professional team with good project management, clear goals, and objectives
- Have clear core values and ensure originality of your work
- Have the activities practical, clear
- Ensure stakeholders needs, wants and limitations are considered
- Look into avenues to motivate students
- Collaboration and Communication at all levels across the board are key
- Ensure Sustainability from Day 1 and build with sustainability in mind
- Put students' needs at center and create avenues to give them a voice
- Leverage existing know how and include experts
- Consider schools who took on similar initiatives
- Provide teachers with relevant training
- Align the project with existing priorities and curriculum
- Target teachers who have a more relaxed curriculum
- Adapt to local context and be sensitive to it
- Include practical examples and good practices
- Include experienced organizations
- Introduce incentives and find avenues to motivate teachers
- Engage the entire ecosystem
- Start early and align with school culture and calendar
- Include feedback mechanisms and less bureaucracy

- Have good communication with policy makers and Ministry of Education
- Include interactions between younger and older students
- Have a teacher project so they become familiar with the method
- Create a common vision for the project with the entire group
- Engage with motivated teachers
- Be transparent and have key driving principles
- Do not impose
- Look at past experiences and leverage lessons learned
- Have clear and quantifiable objectives
- Have clear materials and resources
- Incentivize collaboration and promote teacher's collaboration
- Include support mechanism and hand holding for teachers
- In rural areas there are stronger connection with local community
- Include students from start
- Show, do not tell
- Include other practitioners from other domains
- Zoom in and out regularly
- Consider existing social norms
- Include teachers' voices
- Keep the project grounded
- Have schools as co-creators
- Give autonomy and incentives to students
- Leverage school principal's role
- Have efficient processes

8.2 Lesson Learned

- The data has been collected entirely remotely using remote tools to conduct interviews, organized focus groups and teachers' surveys. This shows CSS-EU team capacity to adapt and capacity to work collaboratively.
- Collecting the data remotely introduced new challenges such as limited capacity in observing participants behavior and body language, limited availability of teachers and students to participate in interviews.
- Due to Covid19, all stakeholders have been more reflective and re-evaluated the role of education, methods used and capacity to adapt.
- The data we collected was reach and provided key insights into teachers' experiences, policy makers and civil society perspective however the sample is relatively small and is more of snapshot of the group interviewed in all four countries.

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Appendix

Script - Interview Civil Society

Interview Civil Society			
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The goal of this interview is to identify the Policy requirements and trends when it comes embedding Social Innovation Education into school. The ChangeShaping Schools project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. This interview is part of CSS-EU' needs and contextual analysis. This interview is conducted in the countries where the project will be implemented, which includes Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Serbia. In [Your Country] our organization, [Name] is one of the strategic partners and SIE Ambassador. We would like to thank you for taking the time to speak with us. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes. The information you will provide will not be attributed directly to you (anonymity). We will need you to fill out the consent form prior to starting this conversation. If you are ready we can start.			
Section	**Question**		**Answer options**
Background	1	Where do you work?	Open
	2	What is your position/role?	Open
	3	What is the mission of your organization and in what sector/s do you work?	Open
Education priorities	4	When it comes to education what are some of your or your organization priorities?	Open
Social Innovation Education in general	Talk about SIE and the project deffinition: [Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, business people, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future.]		
	5	What is your opinion when it comes to SIE?	Open
	6	Does your organization have any SIE initiatives?	Open
		If yes, why	Open
		If no, why not	Open
	7	Do you know other SIE initiatives? What do they do?	
CSS-EU	Describe the project: ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) aspires to scale up a thoroughly researched, evidenced based educational model that resulted through an empirical study involving teachers, students and researchers in 8 schools in Europe. Specifically, ChangeShaping Schools wishes to become the gateway project for diffusing “Social Innovation Education” (SIE) in Europe as a comprehensive inclusive educational model for empowering and preparing students for tomorrow’s world.		
	8	What does CSS-EU need to include in order to be successful?	Open
	9	What does CSS-EU need to pay attention to?	Open
Close	10	Is there anything else you would like to add?	

[Thank you for your time and contributions to the development of ChangeShaping Schools needs and contextual analysis. We will keep you informed regarding our project. Thank you very much again.]

Script Focus group

Focus Group

Welcome (10 minutes)

Welcome

Description: The facilitators will introduce themselves and will present the organizations they work with. The goal of the focus group is briefly presented, and all participants will receive an identification number which they can put when they rename themselves in zoom or other conference call platform.

Script
[Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group part of the ChangeShaping Schools Needs and contextual analysis. In [Your Country] our organization, [Name] is one of the strategic partners SIE Ambassador. [Short description of your organization]. My name is [name] and I am here together with my colleague [note keeper name] who will take notes and make sure we finish on time.

The information, ideas and insights that you will provide will help us design better materials for the students and for training teachers.

This focus group will last for approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes]

Introduction of the rules
[There are no right or wrong answers, so you shouldn't feel bad if your opinions differ from the rest of the group. Participation in this session is completely voluntary and nobody is required to answer any question they do not want to answer. Everything that is discussed in the Focus Group is used only for our research without identifying any individual participant. The privacy and confidentiality of the opinions of other participants needs to be respected. If you didn't fill in the consent form, please take a few minutes now to fill it out.

The session will be recorded to help us in our analysis.
In order to have a successful meeting, it is necessary to establish some ground rules to ensure mutual respect during and after the discussion.

Here are the basic rules:
Please respect others and do not disclose what other participants say during the session.
Please speak one at a time. In this way, everyone can listen and react to the contributions of others properly. If you have something to say, please raise your hand and wait to talk.
Please treat each other with respect. This means avoiding doing or saying things that might make others uncomfortable.

If you must leave the focus group for some reason, please raise your hand and report it promptly.

Part 1. Understanding what Social Innovation Education (10 minutes)

Objective:	The goal of this activity is to have a common understanding of what Social Innovation Education is. Participants who are not very familiar with the topic are able to learn from other participants' responses.
Facilitator Instructions:	Start by reading the SIE definition or show a video– Next ask them the questions
Notetaker Instructions:	Fill out observations and record all the answers given by the participants

SEI Definition:

[Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, business people, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future.]

Social Innovation Education	**1**	***From your experience, can you describe briefly what Social Innovation Education is?***
	1.1	*What activities can include?*
	1.2	*What are their characteristics?*
Part 2. Integrating Social Innovation Education (40 minutes)		
Objective:		The goal of this activity is to get the participants to reflect regarding how Social Innovation Education could be integrated into the school curriculum and what could be some of the barriers and favorable factors.
Facilitator Instructions:		Start by creating a JAM board with 3 slides (one for each question) let the participants brainstorm one question at the time and at the end review the activities together.
Notetaker Instructions:		Fill out observations and record all the answers given by the participants
Integration into the curriculum	**2**	***How do you think Social Innovation Education could be integrated into the curriculum and aligned with students' learning objectives?***
	2.1	*Are there activities that you are already doing which integrate Social Innovation Education?*
	2.2	*Think about the subjects you are already teaching, how could you integrate Social Innovation Education?*
	2.3	*Think of another / a similar initiative and share how you manage to integrate it, what worked and what didn't work and for who etc.*
Favorable factors	**3**	***What would be some of the advantages of integrating such activities into the classroom?***
	3.1	*Are there any existing targets or objectives you already have such as benchmarks, points, etc. towards which SIE can help you improve?*
Unfavorable factors	**4**	***From your experience what are some of the challenges which could be faced when introducing SIE into the classroom?***
	4.1	*What were some strategies you applied to overcome those challenges?*
Part 3. Context and resources (30 minutes)		
Objective:		The goal of this activity is to get the participants to reflect regarding what is needed to integrate Social Innovation Education?
Facilitator Instructions:		Read each question and if needed bring up the secondary questions. Make sure all participants are able to contribute even those who might have contradictory opinions
Notetaker Instructions:		Fill out observations and record all the answers given by the participants

Community involvement	**5**	***From your community, whom do you think can be interested and will support Social Innovation Education?***
	5.1	*What about parents?*
	5.2	*What about civil society?*
	5..	*What about local government?*
Resources	**6**	***What resources do you need in order to introduce SIE in your classroom?***
	6.1	*Does your school have access to IT infrastructure such as computers and the internet?*
Decision making	**7**	***What is the process to decide what is part of the school curriculum and how is that reflected in the classroom?***
	7.1	*How is your school environment when it comes to implementing projects? How does it work?*
	7.2	*Would you be able to take the students outside the classroom to conduct activities?*
Training Preferences	**8**	***What would a perfect training look like for you?***
	8.1	*What worked really well in the past?*
	8.2	*Was it online or in person?*
	8.3	*What activities were successful?*
	8.4	*What kind of ongoing support would you like to have after training?*
Closing	9	*Is there anything else you would like to add?*
[Thank you for your time and contributions to the development of ChangeShaping Schools needs and contextual analysis. We will keep you informed regarding our project and a potential collaboration. Thank you very much again]		

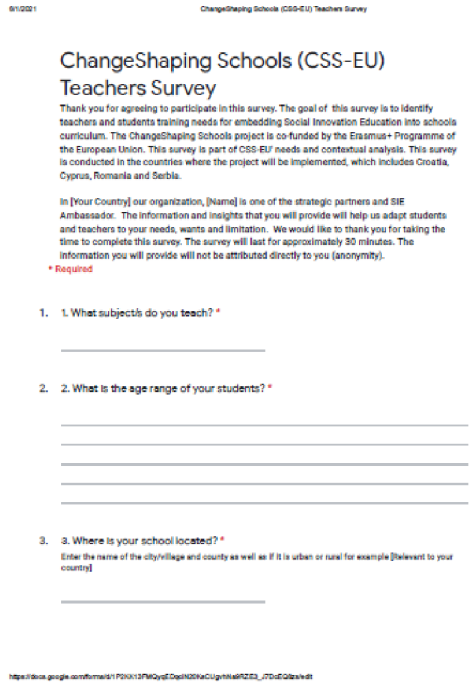
Script Interview Policy Makers

Interview Policy Makers
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The goal of this interview is to identify the Policy requirements and trends when it comes to embedding Social Innovation Education into school. The ChangeShaping Schools project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. This interview is part of CSS-EU' needs and contextual analysis. This interview is conducted in the countries where the project will be implemented, which includes Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Serbia. In [Your Country] our organization, [Name] is one of the strategic partners SIE Ambassador. We would like to thank you for taking the time to speak with us. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes. The information you will provide will not be attributed directly to you (anonymity). We will need you to fill out the consent form prior to starting this conversation. If you are ready we can start.

Section		Question	Answer options
Background	1	Where do you work?	Open
	2	What is your position/role?	Open
	3	What are some of your main responsibilities when it comes to education?	Open
Education priorities	4	From your perspective, what are some of your main priorities for the educational sector?	Open
	5	When it comes to teachers, what are some of your or your organization priorities?	Open
	6	When it comes to students, what are some of your or your organization priorities?	Open

Social Innovation Education in general	Talk about SIE and the project deffinition: [Social Innovation Education (SIE) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, business people, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future.]		
	7	What is your opinion regarding Social Innovation Education?	Open
	8	Where does SIE fit when it comes to your or your organization policy priorities?	Open
	9	Are there relevant policies/initiatives that facilitate the introduction of SIE (or similar initiatives) in the education system?	Open
	10	Are there special teacher training programmes for supporting teachers that embrace innovative educational approaches such as SIE?	Open
	11	Are you aware of educational programmes/initiatives relevant to SIE that take place in your country? Indicate a few examples	Open
CSS-EU	Describe the project: [ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) aspires to scale up a thoroughly researched, evidenced based educational model that resulted through an empirical study involving teachers, students, and researchers in 8 schools in Europe. Specifically, ChangeShaping Schools wishes to become the gateway project for diffusing “Social Innovation Education” (SIE) in Europe as a comprehensive inclusive educational model for empowering and preparing students for tomorrow’s world.]		
	12	What does CSS-EU need to include in order to be successful?	Open
	13	What does CSS-EU need to pay attention to?	Open
Close	14	Are there any organizations and people that would be interested in getting involved in scaling / being involved in SIE we should reach out to?	Open
	15	Is there anything else you would like to add?	Open
[Thank you for your time and contributions to the development of ChangeShaping Schools needs and contextual analysis. We will keep you informed regarding our project. Thank you very much again.]			

Teachers Survey



6/1/2021 ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) Teachers Survey

ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) Teachers Survey

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. The goal of this survey is to identify teachers and students training needs for embedding Social Innovation Education into schools curriculum. The ChangeShaping Schools project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. This survey is part of CSS-EU needs and contextual analysis. This survey is conducted in the countries where the project will be implemented, which includes Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Serbia.

In [Your Country] our organization, [Name] is one of the strategic partners and SIE Ambassador. The information and insights that you will provide will help us adapt students and teachers to your needs, wants and limitation . We would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The survey will last for approximately 30 minutes. The information you will provide will not be attributed directly to you (anonymity).

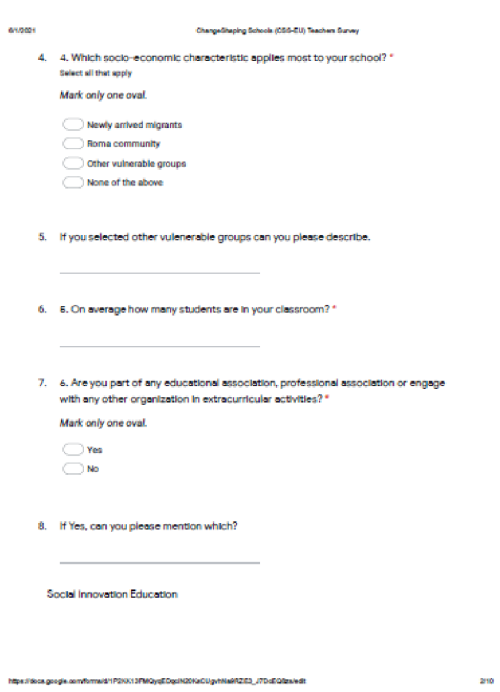
* Required

1. 1. What subject/s do you teach? *

2. 2. What is the age range of your students? *

3. 3. Where is your school located? *
Enter the name of the city/village and county as well as if it is urban or rural for example [Relevant to your country]

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1P2KK13FMQyqEOqsIN20KaCUgvhNeiRfZID3_/7DsEQ8zs/edit 1/10



6/1/2021 ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) Teachers Survey

4. 4. Which socio-economic characteristic applies most to your school? *
Select all that apply
Mark only one oval.
- Newly arrived migrants
- Roma community
- Other vulnerable groups
- None of the above

5. If you selected other vulenerable groups can you please describe.

6. 5. On average how many students are in your classroom? *

7. 6. Are you part of any educational association, professional association or engage with any other organization in extracurricular activities? *
Mark only one oval.
- Yes
- No

8. If Yes, can you please mention which?

Social Innovation Education

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1P2KK13FMQyqEOqsIN20KaCUgvhNeiRfZID3_/7DsEQ8zs/edit 2/10

Social Innovation Education (SEI) is an innovative educational model that gives young people the opportunity to identify social issues in their local area and address these issues by working with adults (parents, business people, community members...) to co-create and carry out social innovation projects. Through this process they develop social innovation competences, such as empathy and collaboration, to drive and effect positive social change, now and in the future.

9. 7. Are you familiar with Social Innovation Education? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

10. Can you describe what you believe it means? *

11. 8. Have you been involved in Social Innovation Projects or community projects? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

12. If yes, what was it about?

School Context

13. 9. What type of extracurricular activities are there in your school? *

14. 10. How are projects like SIE usually adopted in your school? E.g. extra-curricular activities, through other initiatives, in the curriculum... *

15. 11. What barriers are there to integrating new projects into your school? *

16. 12. What has worked to address any barriers? *

17. 13. What enablers are there to integrating new projects into your school? *

18. 14. During school projects have you worked with community members, local officials, NGOs, business people etc? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

19. If yes, how did you involve them and what exactly did they do?

20. 15. Are parents involved in projects initiated by the school? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

21. If yes, how could that cooperation be improved?

National context

22. 16. Does the national education system promotes flexibility and openess to innovation in education? *

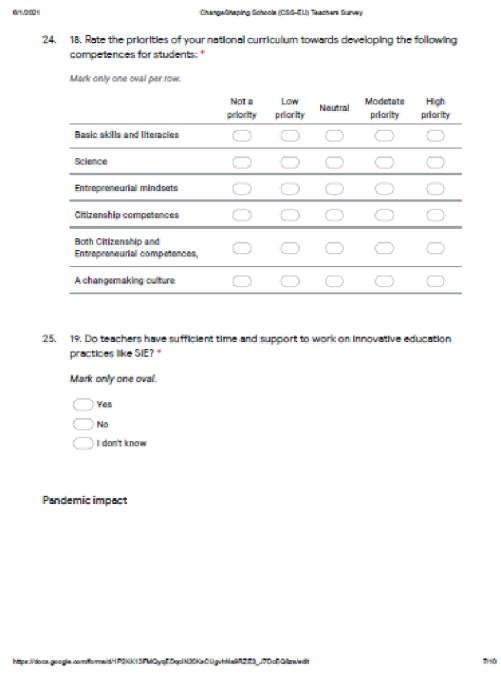
Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

23. 17. Does the national education system supports innovation to education through opportunities for teacher training and continuous professional development? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- I don't know



6/1/2021 ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) Teachers Survey

24. 18. Rate the priorities of your national curriculum towards developing the following competences for students: *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not a priority	Low priority	Neutral	Moderate priority	High priority
Basic skills and literacies					
Science					
Entrepreneurial mindsets					
Citizenship competences					
Both Citizenship and Entrepreneurial competences,					
A changemaking culture					

25. 19. Do teachers have sufficient time and support to work on innovative education practices like SIE? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Pandemic impact

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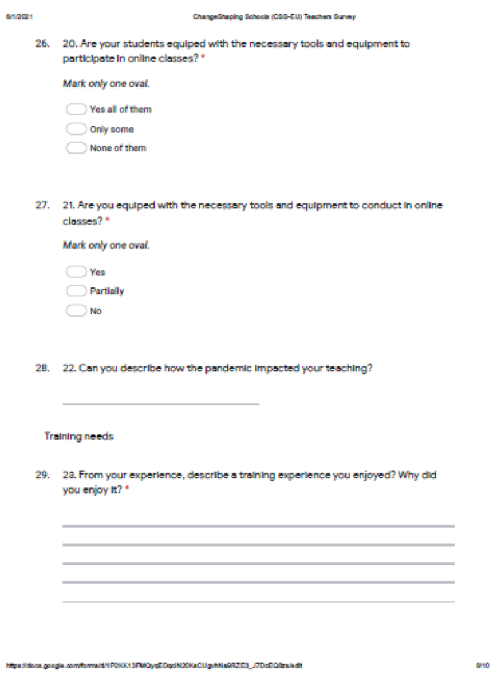

6/1/2021 ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) Teachers Survey

26. 20. Are your students equiped with the necessary tools and equipment to participate in online classes? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes all of them
- Only some
- None of them

27. 21. Are you equiped with the necessary tools and equipment to conduct in online classes? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- Partially
- No

28. 22. Can you describe how the pandemic impacted your teaching?

Training needs

29. 23. From your experience, describe a training experience you enjoyed? Why did you enjoy it? *

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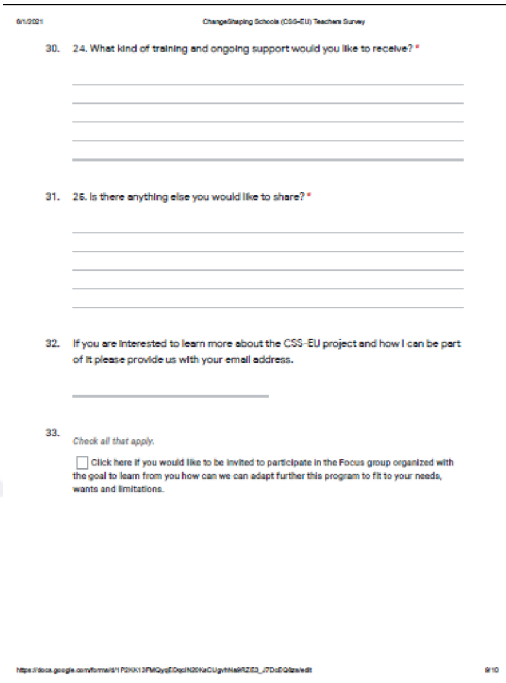

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30. 24. What kind of training and ongoing support would you like to receive? *

31. 25. Is there anything else you would like to share? *

32. If you are interested to learn more about the CSS-EU project and how I can be part of it please provide us with your email address.

33.

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Click here if you would like to be invited to participate in the Focus group organized with the goal to learn from you how can we can adapt further this program to fit to your needs, wants and limitations.

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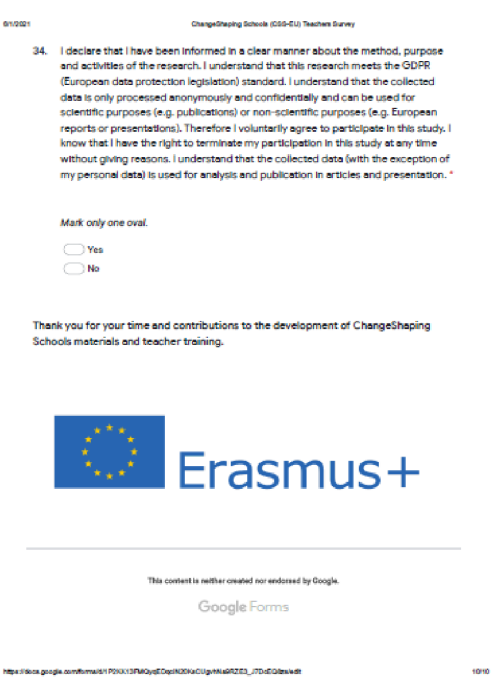

6/1/2021 ChangeShaping Schools (CSS-EU) Teachers Survey

34. I declare that I have been informed in a clear manner about the method, purpose and activities of the research. I understand that this research meets the GDPR (European data protection legislation) standard. I understand that the collected data is only processed anonymously and confidentially and can be used for scientific purposes (e.g. publications) or non-scientific purposes (e.g. European reports or presentations). Therefore I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I know that I have the right to terminate my participation in this study at any time without giving reasons. I understand that the collected data (with the exception of my personal data) is used for analysis and publication in articles and presentation. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

Thank you for your time and contributions to the development of ChangeShaping Schools materials and teacher training.

Erasmus+

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Consent form

Consent Form

CSS-EU
ChangeShaping Schools: Scaling up an impactful Social Innovation Education model in schools around Europe

* Required

1. I *
(enter name)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

hereby declare that:

1. I have been informed about the CSS-EU project and I have understood what the project is about and what it aims to achieve.

2. I have accepted to take part in this research as my personal experience will contribute much to the understanding of issues under study.

3. I may choose not to answer anyone or more of the questions that I will be asked and may stop participating in the interview session at any time I wish. During the interview, or at its end, I can ask to modify or remove some of my remarks.

4. My name will not be published or communicated to anyone outside of the research team. Only the researchers will be able to identify me in relation to the number code and will keep my name and code confidential.

5. Reference to my participation will be made only by a number code. When quoted or cited, information and data provided during the interview will be referenced with this number code.

6. The information I will provide will only be used for this study.

7. I agree to the recording of the interview or focus group discussion. All the recordings and all data collected during participation will be used internally, in the context of the project, and will not be accessible to third parties. Likewise in all the reports to be developed, there will be no connection to the identity of the participants or contact information.

8. My participation is entirely voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time.

2. Place *

3. Date *

Example: January 7, 2019

4. I consent to participate in this study. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

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