

SOLIDinEDU

Fostering Solidarity Through Education



Youth Labs' results

EKO GREECE



Content

SOLIDinEDU Youth Labs' results

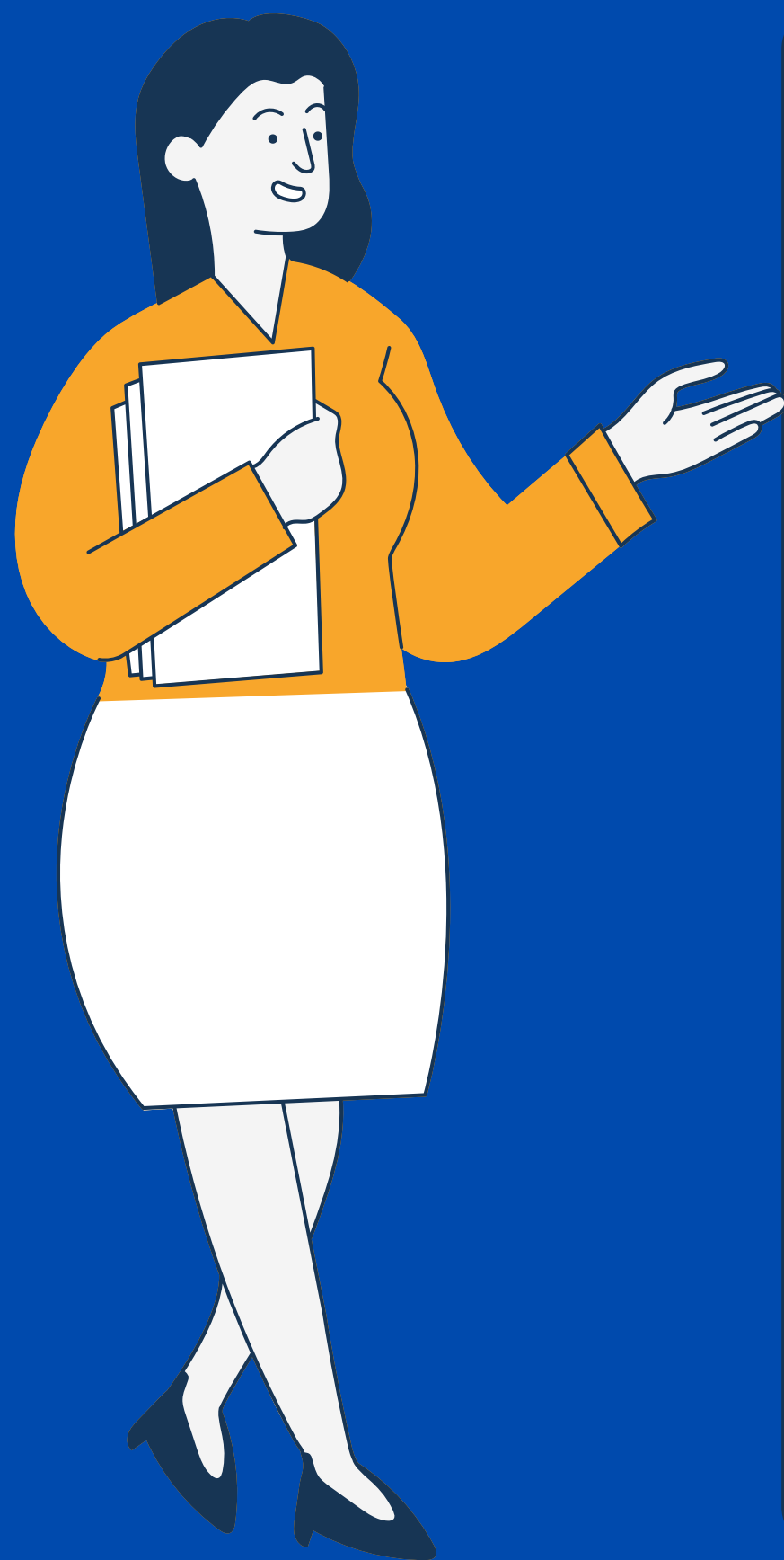
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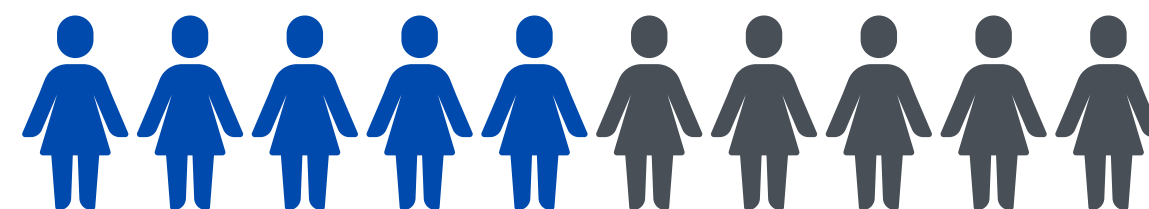
Overview of the respondents:



71.4 % University Students

24.5 % Alumni

4.1 % School Pupils



42.9 % aged between 23-26

28.6 % aged between 18-22

16.3 % aged 30 years old and older



90 % high school teachers

10 % professors

Diversity & Inclusion



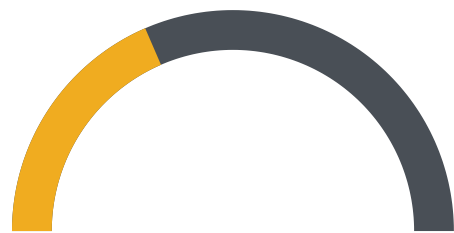
Notable Insights



Around 20% of the respondents stated that they do not feel represented or faced special obstacles in the context of their curriculum.



Some of the respondents referred that they faced racism because of their backgrounds.



35.7% of respondents stated that they never had discussions in their education institutions about diversity and inclusion. Only 7% had it on a regular basis.



Evaluation of the support measures given to students/pupils with special educational needs by institutions were evaluated 5 out of 10.

Notable Insights



Most institutes provide adapted transport facilities and building infrastructure for pupils/students with physical mobility limitations.



Schools enforce a code of conduct/non-discrimination policy which is supporting people with special needs.



Schools/universities have not established rules that would be effective in meeting individual educational needs.



There are no available support services to deal with students' special needs, psychological and mental health issues.

Summary of experts' interviews

"National education system of Greece doesn't offer the support that we need in terms of inclusive education"

The people who face difficulties are receiving the same treatment as the others. The educational professionals believe that it is important to establish a system in order to support equally the students according to their needs. Almost all respondents stated that there is no support for these people who face difficulties and have special needs.



Three best practices that the educators use in order to support the students with special needs:

- **Working in teams** is a good practice that gives the opportunity to the students to support each other, create empathy and learn from each other.
- **A different way of education** (non-formal/informal).
- **Personalized learning.**

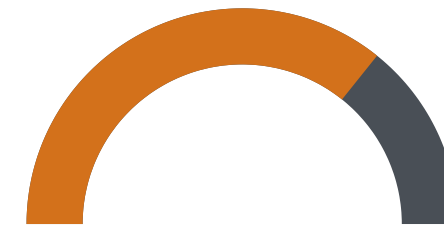
Solidarity, Empathy & Democratic Culture



Notable Insights



30% felt that their voice was unheard inside schools/universities.



The majority (71.5%) felt that in most cases their teachers/professors have been supportive when problems occurred.



50% had evaluations/discussions between students and professors less than 2 times per semester.



Students are afraid that a bad evaluation on their professors would negatively impact their school grades.

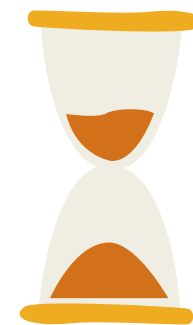
General overview

In general, respondents stated that they felt that their voices were taken into consideration and their professors/teachers have been supportive throughout their learning process. However, it is stated that less than 2 meetings per semester take place, in order to discuss school/university problems, even though students are given the opportunity to take action and participate in school governance. Lastly, the big majority of the students did not feel that their schools didn't put enough focus on democratic values, solidarity and empathy. On the contrary, they mentioned that the schools were grades-focused and made them work mainly independently.

Notable Insights



Less than 15% of students answered that they had frequent chances to discuss at their schools/unis about social and political issues and the majority had such meetings less than 2 times per semester.



Less than 1/5 students had the opportunity to discuss their problems frequently (more than 2-3 times per semester), even though most of them had the chance to gain access in the governance of their schools/universities.



Human rights discussions are mostly on superficial level.



Most students never discuss about the Declaration of Human Rights .

The methods used to facilitate Human Rights education and democratic principles/democratic culture in the curriculum:

- Discussion about students' problems
- Exposure to role models
- Classroom/Uni governance
- Clubs, Unions, Student societies, newspapers
- Declaration of Human Rights Teaching (in most cases they were not taught about it)
- Team-work projects

The level of satisfaction of the respondents concerning their civic competences' improvement (sense of responsibility, understanding of social issues, proactive stance, team-work, communication):

In most cases, students feel that there is not enough talk about it or organized discussions, they don't learn it at Schools. They feel they lack life/social skills. On the other hand, there is some more information provided in Universities, where students can get informed mostly through fractions (junior political parties), about social issues, faculty problems and talk about the migrants. On some Universities, team-work is cultivated through different essays needed to be completed to get the final grade.

Students in general don't feel that the values of solidarity and empathy are promoted and are very effective on the High School/University level (except in some cases where the topic was one of the subject required/University courses were involved). They feel like they don't receive much information that is not relevant with the basic material/classes they already have in schools.

"There are a lot of gaps in educational system and it doesn't actually provide us much about democracy, empathy and solidarity"

The preparation that the national education system provides to the experts and the main gaps in terms of solidarity, empathy and democratic culture:

- The national educational system does not provide them the preparation that is needed. Most of them stated that everything depends on them and on their personal effort.

“We are not prepared and there are no adequate facilities”

- There is no preparation, stemmed from Schools or the Law. Most of the Teachers/Professors that are familiar with the subjects of solidarity, empathy and culture, are the ones doing the research on the topics at hand by themselves and working on their own personal development by taking some courses or going to seminars.

“The system doesn't help”

Most common teaching practices about human rights and democratic principles/democratic culture, applied by the schools/universities according to the experts:

There are different projects, initiatives, homeworks, organized workshops, talks with students and also there are some subjects concerning social and civil rights. Some of the classes are held by different teachers, so it seems that they are not so consistent. Also, it is again mostly up to the educators to do the search, to learn and to organize events by themselves.

3 best ideas to cultivate empathy by the experts:

- Secret friend, as a method, through which an older kid “adopts” younger kid as a mentor
- School/University Counselor
- Celebrations, Events, discussions, theatrical plays, role play
- Reinstatement of Psychology as a course
- Teams of self-reflection and empowerment

Sociocultural identity & reflection



Notable Insights



50% of the respondents stated that socio-cultural background did not affect their learning experience.



30% of the respondents stated that they have faced obstacles that affected their learning experience.



The majority of the respondents stated that teachers/professors provide support to students/pupils, who belong to a minority group, in order to integrate, but these efforts usually are not enough.



More than 90% of the respondents stated that there were no special events or only very few, in order to educate students about socio-cultural differences, perceptions, and identity.



According to the results, **cultural understanding, minority inclusion, and the reflection** on local and global issues are at a good level. First of all, many respondents (approx 80%) stated that at their school/university the diverse social and cultural perspectives are embedded in the way courses are taught. Also, the textbooks, sources and course materials used at schools/universities include perspectives and issues from various world cultures and minority groups.



The **effectiveness of the different methods and approaches that educational institutes provide** and that support student-derived assessment of the teaching practices as well as self-reflection of their learning was evaluated 3 out of 5.

Level of satisfaction concerning formal education efficacy in reflecting on sociocultural identity:



- The majority of the respondents stated that formal education is not reflective of socio-cultural identity.
- However, some of the respondents marked that it's being reflected through the non-formal education part of their studies.
- Just less than 20 % of the respondents stated that formal education is efficient when it comes to this subject and students are particularly encouraged to be aware of socio-cultural identity through classes like religion, history, and social and political studies.

Three best practices by the experts to support the students to raise their awareness and self-reflection on their learning experience and outcomes:

- To promote participation in educational process and raise awareness of the values of solidarity and cooperation in relation to their achievement.
- Recognition of emotions, offer, communication, reward.
- To work with children in self-knowledge and empowerment groups, to cultivate skills other than those related exclusively to the learning process - the development of social skills.

Volunteerism



Notable Insights



35 % considering schools as a relatively positive space for improving social engagement.



35% believe that schools/universities have done a good job combining academic knowledge with activities that contribute to the society.



Approx 70% of respondents participated in a maximum of 2 voluntary activities per semester.



Approximately 30% of respondents did not participate in any voluntary activities per semester.

Notable Insights



Most students don't believe that they had been taught enough about volunteerism in schools/universities



Local communities organizations are rarely invited at schools/universities



ECTS points are not really provided as an award



Most school/universities curricula don't include volunteerism as part of formal courses

Effectiveness of formal education in social and civic skills development:

Only 7.1% of the respondents stated that they learn about volunteerism regularly. There is a common opinion that volunteerism is useful, but the students are not enough informed about the activities they could do during their studies in the context of volunteerism.

Frequency of special events that are provided by the institution in order to engage young people with the community:

The majority of the respondents indicated that events to engage young people with the community are infrequent or there is a total lack of the events provided by the educational institutions.

The extent to which schools/universities are means of promoting volunteering opportunities

Most of the respondents in the field investigation disagree or fully disagree with the statement that there is enough information provided about volunteerism. There seems to be a general lack of events, sources of information about the opportunities to enroll in volunteering activities.



Ways that schools/universities try to encourage young people to actively participate in volunteering activities:

- The results show that around **30% never** have conversation/talks and half of the participants (50%), have these kind of conversations less than two times per semester in the context of promoting volunteerism activities.
- There is **no frequent support** to get involved in a community agency or apply for a local volunteering project (e.g. counseling and support through student engagement offices).
- **Local community groups are not invited** almost at all. It seems, that relevant presentation or workshops are only addressed to teachers or students.
- Some way of encouragement, in the form of awarding academic credits to participating students, is particularly absent for participating students (except for some Universities since a few years ago). Also, **no courses**, or just a few, are available for students to participate in volunteer programs.

Should Volunteerism be mandatory?

Most of the respondents in the field investigation agree that volunteering **should not be mandatory**, because in that way the main reason, the true will for helping someone or for bringing change, would be missing. Moreover, it could lead to the situation, that volunteers would not enjoy their work. There were few respondents who indicated, that it would be a good option to make volunteerism mandatory since it would increase contribution to local community. However, there is a common concern though is the **risk of exploiting the volunteers** on behalf of the employee.





Educators' point of view regarding:

Students' involvement in volunteerism

- Most educators perceived students involvement in volunteerism positively
- One expert stated that the moment a voluntary activity becomes a part of the official school/uni program it loses the spirit of volunteerism

Main ways of encouraging and including volunteerism in educational institutes

- “Liberating” school time, by reducing school hours dedicated to official courses and instead incorporating voluntary activities. This way both teachers/professors and students would have the time to participate in voluntary activities.
- Proper training of the school/university staff in order for them to be capable to promote volunteering and its benefits to the individuals and the community.
- The establishment of good relations with NGOs and organizations that are active in voluntary activities.

Main problems/difficulties pointed out by experts in including volunteerism in formal curricula:

- Heavy school/university schedules, not permitting the participation in extra-curriculum activities;
- The students' of fear being taken advantage of by the state through voluntary service;
- The lack of relations between schools and NGOs, organizations, etc;
- The lack of teachers'/professors' training;
- Bureaucracy.

