

Learning and Teaching Package 5

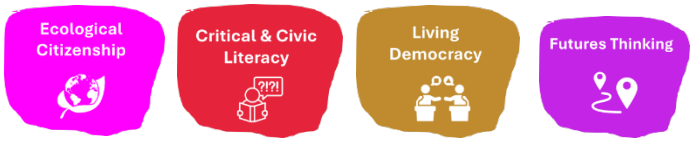
Eco-Preneurial Competences for Democratic Citizenship Education

Foundations for teacher educators and secondary school teachers.

Teacher Academy Project
DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
Co-funded by the European Union

LTP 5 aims to connect democratic culture with sustainable innovation by empowering students to transfer values such as responsibility, participation, and respect for the environment into concrete action. Building on the understanding that democratic engagement extends into everyday decisions around consumption, production, and community life, the LTP fosters entrepreneurial competences that enable young people to identify sustainability challenges, develop creative solutions, and implement environmentally and socially responsible initiatives.

Democratic Citizenship Education Goals of LTP 5:



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Contents

1. Why Eco-Preneurial Competences for Democratic Citizenship Education?...4

2. What do we understand by Eco-Entrepreneurship? From Entrepreneurship to Agency 6

Entrepreneurship and Democratic Citizenship in Academic context..7

What Frameworks enrich the understanding of Eco-Entrepreneurship in TAP-DCE?.....11

3. LTP 5 Themes and Methodologies: What to expect? 12

Theme 1. Understanding global challenges – Seeing society as an interconnected system.....16

Theme 2. Imagining Futures – Designing the society we want to live in.....17

Theme 3. Democracy in Action – Participation and collective decision making 18

Theme 4. From Ideas to Action – Strengthening Agency for Societal Transformation.....19

4.Methodological Tools to Support the LTPs Themes.....20

5. Examples of Practice.....22

6..Challenges and Prerequisites for Supporting Eco-Preneurship Competences for DCE 25

Glossary.....29

1. Why Eco-Preneurial Competences for Democratic Citizenship Education?

Education is increasingly expected to prepare learners for a world characterised by ecological pressures, social complexity, democratic challenges and accelerating economic and technological change. Contemporary societies require individuals not only to acquire knowledge but also to develop the capacity to navigate uncertainty, engage with complexity and contribute actively to shaping sustainable futures.

The present Learning and Teaching Package responds to this educational challenge through an integrated framework built upon three interconnected pillars:



Sustainability: provides the future oriented perspective. It supports learners in understanding the interdependence of environmental, social and economic systems and encourages responsible decision making with regard to present and future generations.



Democracy: provides societal perspective. It strengthens participation, dialogue, inclusion and collective responsibility and enables learners to understand how societal transformation emerges through cooperation and shared engagement.



Agency: provides the action-oriented perspective. It supports learners in developing the confidence and competences needed to transform ideas into meaningful action and to engage constructively with real world challenges.

The three dimensions are **mutually reinforcing principles**. Sustainability without Agency may generate awareness without implementation. Agency without Sustainability may result in action detached from social and environmental responsibility. Democracy without Agency may encourage participation without enabling meaningful contribution. In this sense, Agency is the enabling force that connects knowledge with action. Without individuals who are willing and able to act, neither democratic participation nor sustainable development can be fully realised.

Together, Sustainability, Democracy and Agency establish an educational foundation that empowers learners to critically understand societal developments, imagine alternative futures and contribute responsibly to social transformation.

Therefore, the key objectives of LTP 5 follow **three interconnected stages**:

Develop the ability to identify and critically analyse real-world problems, recognising their environmental, social and democratic dimensions.

Generate creative, sustainable and inclusive solutions, drawing on collaboration, systems thinking and democratic dialogue.

Implement solutions or mobilise others to act, developing the confidence, initiative and leadership required to create positive change.

This progression reflects the central role of Agency within the Eco-Preneurship framework. Entrepreneurial competence is not only about recognising opportunities or generating ideas; *it is fundamentally about developing the disposition and capacity to act.* The highest level of entrepreneurial competence is therefore not individual action alone, but the ability to facilitate democratic processes that enable collective problem-solving, shared decision-making and community engagement.

Through this developmental approach, the Learning and Teaching Package enables educators to develop capacities in young people to identify challenges, co-create sustainable solutions and engage others in democratic action, contributing actively to more resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities.

2. What do we understand by Eco-Entrepreneurship? From Entrepreneurship to Agency

Within this Learning and Teaching Package, the concept of Agency is intentionally adopted as the central educational perspective and serves to broaden the understanding of entrepreneurial competences beyond business creation and economic activity.

Rather than focusing primarily on economic outcomes, **entrepreneurial competences are interpreted as capabilities** that enable individuals to recognise opportunities, develop ideas, mobilise resources and contribute to positive change across social, environmental and civic contexts.

This understanding reflects contemporary educational approaches that emphasise **learner empowerment, transformative learning and active participation** in society. It draws particularly on Transformative Learning, which highlights transformation through

- critical reflection;
- Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which promotes responsible and future oriented action;
- Competence Based Education, which emphasises the application of knowledge in authentic contexts;
- Democratic Education approaches that position learners as active participants in collective processes.

Within this perspective, competences traditionally associated with entrepreneurial education, including *initiative, creativity, collaboration, problem solving and innovation*, become capacities for responsible action and democratic participation.

Agency therefore provides an educational framework that supports learners in becoming active contributors to sustainable and democratic development rather than preparing them exclusively for entrepreneurial careers.

This perspective further strengthens applicability across diverse European educational contexts, where entrepreneurship may carry different historical, cultural and institutional meanings. Agency offers a shared educational language that preserves the transformative potential of entrepreneurial competences while increasing their relevance for broader educational goals.

Entrepreneurship and Democratic Citizenship in Academic context

A comparison of different approaches to Entrepreneurship in its relation to Democratic Citizenship Education reveals several critical points for reflection.

Approach	Description	Key idea	Key sources
Civic or democratic entrepreneurs hip	This approach argues that entrepreneurial activity can be a form of civic participation when it addresses societal challenges and contributes to the public good. Entrepreneurs are not only market actors but also agents who shape social institutions and community development.	Entrepreneurship becomes part of democratic life when **citizens use entrepreneurial action** to address collective problems such as environmental issues, inequality or local economic development.	Sarasvathy, S. D., & Venkataraman, S. (2011). Entrepreneurship as method. Academy of Management Learning and Education. https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2011.0005 Audretsch, D. (2007). The Entrepreneurial Society. Oxford University Press.
Entrepreneurial citizenship	This concept links citizenship with the ability to take initiative, mobilise resources and create solutions for societal problems. The idea is that democratic societies require citizens who can transform **ideas into collective action.**	Citizens are not only voters but also problem solvers who create social, economic or institutional innovations.	Hoskins, B., & Crick, R. (2010). Competences for Learning to Learn and Active Citizenship. European Journal of Education. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.111 1/j.1465-3435.2009.01419.x European Commission (2016). EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework. https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC101581
Entrepreneurship education for democratic participation	Another research stream focuses on entrepreneurship education as **a pedagogical approach that strengthens agency,**	Entrepreneurship education develops competences that are also essential for democratic participation.	Lackéus, M. (2015). Entrepreneurship in Education. What, Why, When, How. OECD report. https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/BGP_Entrepren eurship-in-Education.pdf

	responsibility and participation. It is argued that learning to create initiatives or projects fosters democratic skills such as collaboration, decision making and responsibility for outcomes.		European Commission (2012). Rethinking Education. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0669
Social entrepreneurship and democratic innovation	A major academic debate connects entrepreneurship education with social innovation and democratic problem solving. Social entrepreneurs are often described as actors who address social needs and strengthen civic engagement.	Entrepreneurial activity can contribute to democratic innovation by developing new solutions for societal challenges.	Mair, J., & Marti, I. (2006). Social Entrepreneurship Research. Journal of World Business. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2005.09.002 Nicholls, A. (2006). Social Entrepreneurship: New Models of Sustainable Social Change. https://academic.ou
Education for democratic citizenship and entrepreneurial competences	In European policy discussions the strongest link between democracy and entrepreneurship education is the connection between **the Council of Europe framework for democratic competences and the European Commission EntreComp framework.**	Both frameworks focus on values and responsibility, cooperation, creativity, initiative and agency as essential competences for shaping society.	Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture European Commission - EntreComp Framework https://entrecomp.eu

Transformative entrepreneurship education	Another emerging approach argues that entrepreneurship education should not only aim at economic growth but also at societal transformation. This perspective links entrepreneurship with sustainability, ethics and democratic responsibility	Entrepreneurship education should empower learners to transform economic systems in ways that support democratic and sustainable societies.	Neck, H., Greene, P., & Brush, C. (2014) Teaching Entrepreneurship: A Practice Based Approach Lackéus, M., Lundqvist, M., & Middleton, K. (2019) Bridging the traditional progressive divide in entrepreneurship education.

The following reflective questions can help you detect similarities and differences among the above different conceptual frameworks.

Civic or Democratic Entrepreneurship

- How can entrepreneurial action contribute to solving societal rather than only individual problems?
- Which local or global challenges are meaningful for my learners and their communities?
- How do learning activities encourage learners to consider the public good when developing ideas?
- In what ways can entrepreneurial initiatives strengthen communities and democratic life?

Entrepreneurial Citizenship

- Do learners have opportunities to identify problems that matter to them?
- How do I encourage learners to take initiative rather than wait for instructions?

Entrepreneurship Education for Democratic Participation

- Do learners experience authentic participation and shared decision-making?
- How are collaboration, negotiation and collective responsibility embedded in my teaching?

- Are learners involved in making meaningful decisions about projects and learning activities?

Social Entrepreneurship and Democratic Innovation

- Do learners develop solutions that address real social or environmental needs?
- How do we encourage learners to consider diverse perspectives when designing solutions?
- Are learners supported in evaluating the social impact of their ideas?

Education for Democratic Citizenship and Entrepreneurial Competences

- Do learners experience agency alongside responsibility for others?
- How do my teaching practices balance individual initiative with collective responsibility?

Transformative Entrepreneurship Education

- Do learners critically question existing systems and imagine alternative futures?
- How do I encourage learners to connect sustainability, ethics and democratic responsibility when developing solutions?
- Are learners supported in moving beyond awareness towards meaningful action?
- How do I help learners understand that lasting societal transformation requires both individual initiative and collective democratic action?

What Frameworks enrich the understanding of Eco-Entrepreneurship in TAP-DCE?

Along the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, we draw on EntreComp: The entrepreneurship competence framework, developed by The Joint Research Centre. EntreComp defines **entrepreneurship as acting upon opportunities and ideas and transforming them into value for others. The value that is created can be financial, cultural, or social**

EntreComp consists of 3 competence areas:

- Ideas & Opportunities
- Resources
- Into action

Each of these split in five specific competences.

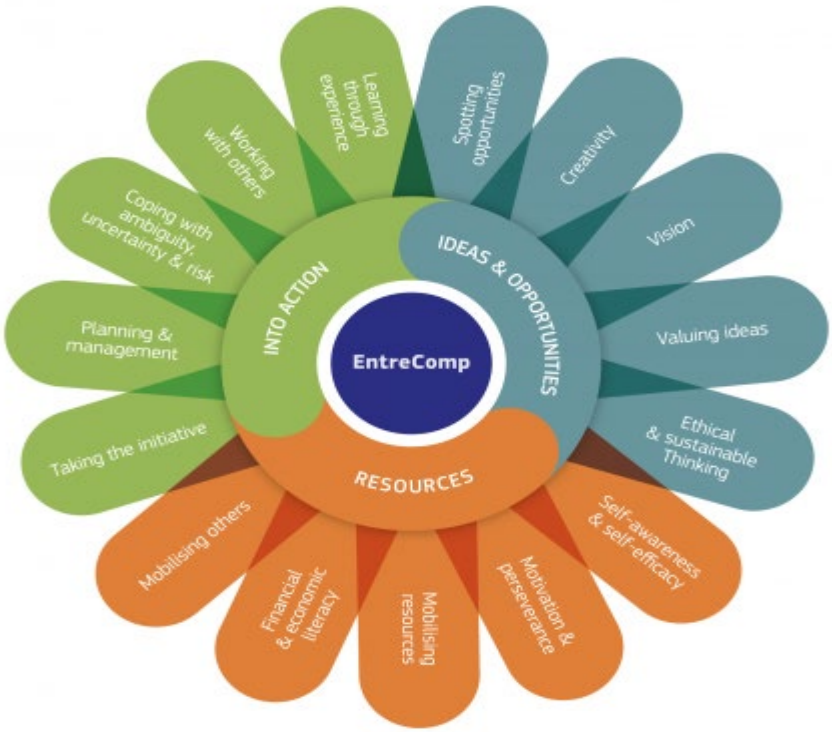


Figure 1EntreComp Competence areas and competences. Source: https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/entrecomp-entrepreneurship-competence-framework/competence-areas-and-learning-progress_en

3. LTP 5 Themes and Methodologies: What to expect?

The Eco-Preneurship Learning and Teaching Package (LTP) aims to strengthen learners' capacity to understand societal complexity and actively contribute to sustainable and democratic futures. It combines Sustainability, Democracy and Agency as interconnected educational principles and translates them into concrete learning experiences. This is done through simulation game called:

Design and Create the Society You Want to Live In

What if young people were asked not to adapt to society, but to redesign it?

Imagine being given the opportunity to pause the world for a moment and ask fundamental questions:

- How do we want to live?
- Which values should shape our future?
- What should remain and what should change?

At a time when global developments often appear overwhelming and beyond individual influence, imagining alternative futures may seem unrealistic or even naive. Yet throughout history, societies have never remained unchanged. They have evolved through ideas, collective decisions, civic participation and the willingness of people to question existing realities and imagine new possibilities.

Today's world is increasingly characterised by interconnected challenges that affect both present and future generations. Armed conflicts, humanitarian crises, increasing social inequalities, democratic tensions, accelerated technological transformation, climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental disasters, resource scarcity and growing pressure on social systems challenge existing ways of living and governing. Faced with this complexity, it is often difficult to imagine how citizens can actively contribute to positive change.

This simulation game deliberately starts from a different assumption:

Future societies are not something we wait for. They are something we collectively shape.

Design and Create the Society You Want to Live In creates a space in which teachers and learners become future designers of society. Through collaborative exploration, role play and collective decision making, participants investigate societal challenges and develop alternative visions that reflect their values, priorities and aspirations.

Rather than searching for a single correct answer, the simulation encourages participants to explore multiple pathways towards sustainable, democratic and desirable futures and to recognise that ideas become meaningful when they are translated into action.

Educational Approach

The simulation combines principles of **Design Thinking, democratic participation and future oriented learning**. Participants move through a process of exploration, reflection, negotiation, idea generation and societal redesign. The activity encourages participants to engage with complexity, consider multiple perspectives and transform abstract challenges into concrete visions and actionable proposals.

Throughout the simulation, learners are encouraged to continuously reflect on the three Eco-Preneurship pillars:

	**Sustainability:** How can future societies operate within ecological limits while ensuring social wellbeing?
	**Democracy:** How can participation, inclusion and shared responsibility shape collective futures?
	**Agency:** How can ideas become meaningful action and contribute to societal transformation Simulation Scenario?

Participants become members of **a Future Society Council**. Working in groups, they take responsibility for redesigning one or more essential dimensions of society (depending on the number of groups created for the simulation game).

Groups are formed and each group receives or randomly draws one societal dimension:



Figure 2 Dimensions of Society: Author's own visualisation generated using artificial intelligence based on the conceptual rationale of the Simulation Game "Dimensions of society"

The game process

The simulation game guides learners through **a four-step process** that moves from understanding society towards shaping future oriented solutions.

1. learners explore global and local societal challenges and analyse how different dimensions of society influence everyday life. Working in groups, they **identify key issues and reflect on their causes, consequences and underlying values**.

2. groups present their findings and engage in collective prioritisation. Through dialogue and democratic decision making, participants **negotiate which societal challenges should become the focus of further development**.

3. Groups redesign society by developing future oriented concepts and solutions. Guided by key questions and collaborative exploration, groups **create scenarios, models or proposals** that reflect their visions for sustainable and democratic futures.

4. participants **present their ideas to a Future Council**. Through discussion, evaluation and negotiation, proposals are reviewed and selected collectively, making democratic processes and shared responsibility visible and tangible.

From Global Challenges to Local Futures

As members of society, young people continuously experience the consequences of global developments in their everyday lives and challenges in society are often perceived as distant and difficult to influence. At the same time, these challenges shape local realities including schools, communities, families and individual life opportunities.

The simulation game deliberately follows a deductive approach and begins from a global perspective before gradually moving towards local contexts and individual spheres of action.

Participants initially explore major societal and global challenges and reflect on their interconnections across different domains of society. From this broader perspective, they progressively **translate global developments into concrete questions concerning their own environments**, including school life, community structures and everyday experiences.



This educational approach is designed to strengthen systems thinking and to encourage learners to move beyond isolated perspectives. Instead of understanding societal challenges as separate or abstract phenomena, participants are invited to recognise interdependencies, tensions and reciprocal effects between global and local processes.

By connecting global developments with personal and local realities, the simulation supports learners in understanding that societal transformation does not emerge exclusively through political institutions or large-scale interventions. **Change also develops through local initiatives, collective engagement and everyday decisions.**

The process therefore shifts the educational perspective from observing societal change towards **actively engaging with** it. Through this transition from global reflection to local action, learners develop the ability to interpret complexity, identify opportunities for intervention and recognise themselves as capable contributors to sustainable and democratic futures.

Link with more resources:

TAP-TS: Learning and Teaching Package Sustainable Entrepreneurship Education, URL: https://tap-ts.eu/course/index.php?categoryid=16

TAP-TS: Learning and Teaching Package Digitality and Sustainability, Unit 4

Theme 1. Understanding global challenges – Seeing society as an interconnected system

This theme introduces learners to the complexity and interdependence of contemporary societies. Learners explore how global developments influence local realities and how environmental, social, economic and political processes interact. The focus lies on developing **systems thinking and understanding that societal challenges do not emerge in isolation but through interconnected structures and decisions**. Learners analyse current and future developments and reflect on how global challenges become visible in everyday contexts such as school, family and community.

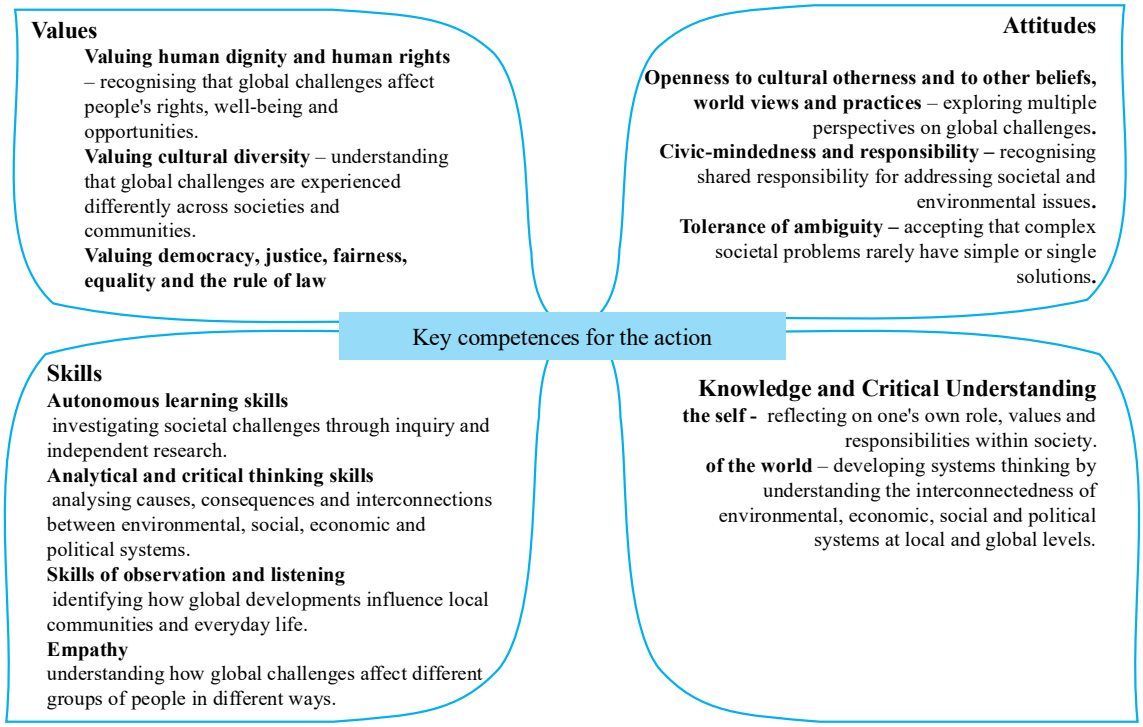
For example, learners may investigate the relationship between climate change, food security and local consumption patterns. By connecting global developments with local experiences, learners develop a broader understanding of societal interdependencies and strengthen their capacity to interpret complexity and identify areas for action.

Related Frameworks

EntreComp – opportunity identification, initiative, mobilising resources, ethical and sustainable thinking

GreenComp – responsibility toward the environment and sustainable resource use

Key Competences in relation to RFCDC



Theme 2. Imagining Futures – Designing the society we want to live in

This theme focuses on future imagination as an educational practice and explores how learners can **engage with uncertainty, complexity and societal change through creating future oriented visions.**

Learners are encouraged to think beyond existing structures and to explore how societies could evolve under different social, environmental and democratic conditions. Through role play and simulation-based learning, learners experiment with alternative possibilities and develop future scenarios across different dimensions of social life. The emphasis lies on **recognising that futures are neither fixed nor predetermined but emerge through values, choices and collective imagination.**

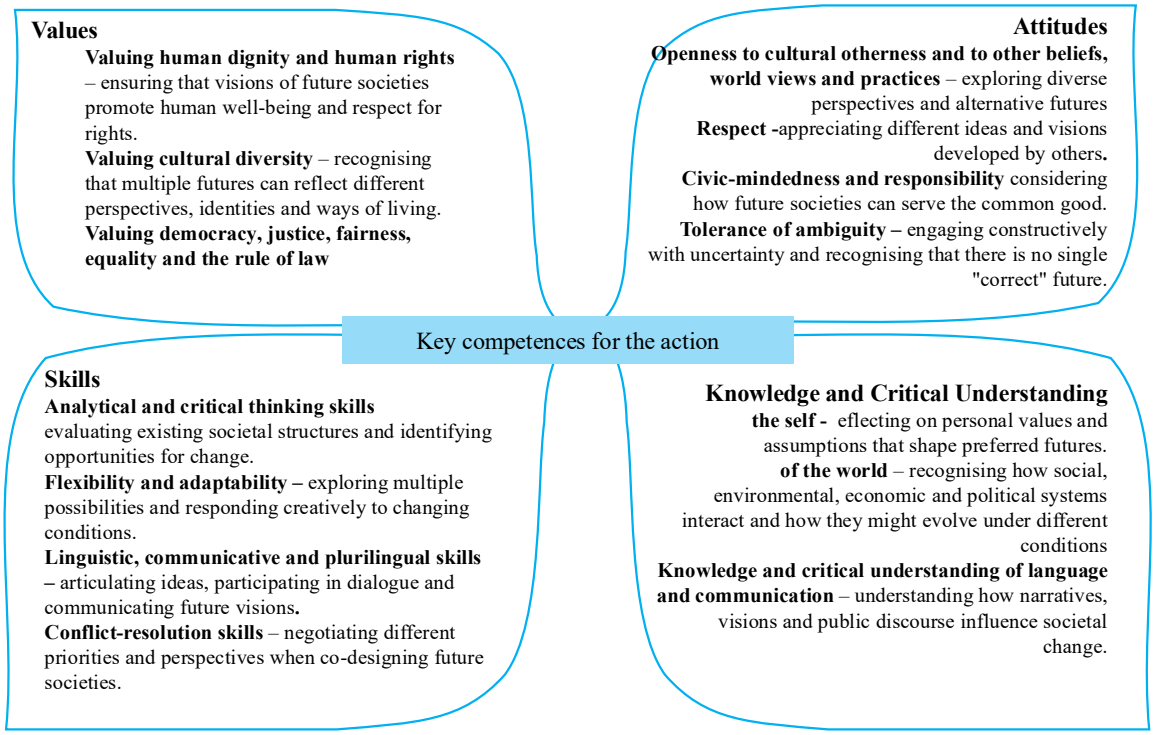
Learners participate in a simulation game in which they redesign one or two (based on the number of groups) societal dimensions such as Education and Learning, Work and Economy, Community and Social Life, Governance and Democracy, Environment and Sustainability or Technology and Innovation (see Figure 2).

By designing concrete visions of future societies, participants reflect on how societal change can become visible and actionable in everyday contexts such as school life, community structures and family environments.

Related Frameworks

EntreComp – opportunity recognition, mobilising others, working with others, initiative and planning

Key Competences in relation to RFCDC



Theme 3. Democracy in Action – Participation and collective decision making

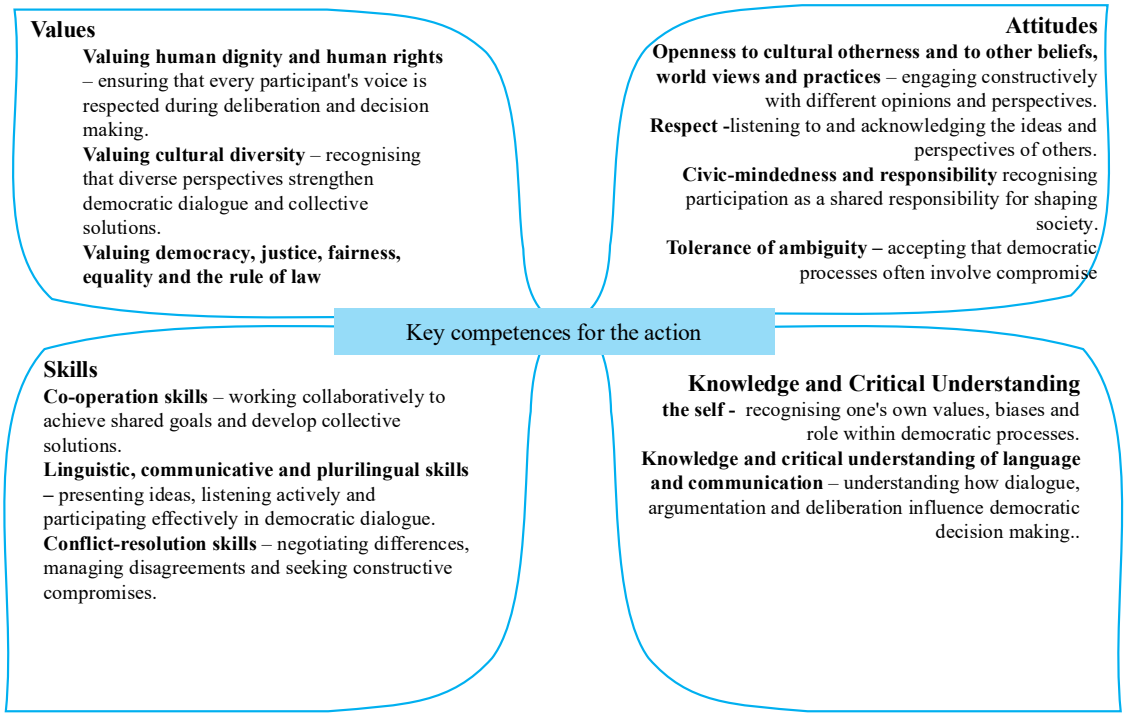
This theme explores **democratic participation as an active and collaborative process.** Learners experience how collective decisions emerge **through dialogue, negotiation and balancing different interests and perspectives**. Democracy is understood not only as a political system but as a practice that requires participation, inclusion and shared responsibility.

After developing societal visions, learners present their ideas and form **a Future Council.** Participants discuss, negotiate and democratically decide which proposals become part of the final societal model. The process makes democratic principles visible and tangible.

Related Frameworks

EntreComp – opportunity recognition, ethical and sustainable thinking, mobilising resources, working with others

Key Competences in relation to RFCDC



Theme 4. From Ideas to Action – Strengthening Agency for Societal Transformation

This theme focuses on **Agency as the capacity to transform ideas into meaningful and responsible action.** Learners move from reflection and vision building towards identifying realistic pathways for implementation. The emphasis lies on recognising opportunities, mobilising resources and developing feasible actions that contribute to sustainable and democratic futures.

Learners refine their societal concepts by considering practical questions such as participation**, financing, long term continuity and environmental responsibility.** They identify first steps that could already be introduced in their local contexts.

To strengthen relevance and transferability, participants are encouraged to translate broader societal visions into **concrete school-based or community-based initiatives** and **reflect on how local action can contribute to wider societal transformation.** This may include ideas for school projects, community initiatives or everyday practices that connect future aspirations with learners' own realities and experiences. Through this process, learners experience that societal change does not only emerge through large scale political decisions but can also begin through collective action in schools, local communities and everyday life.

Related Frameworks

EntreComp – mobilising others, working with others, planning and management, ethical and sustainable thinking

Key Competences in relation to RFCDC



4.Methodological Tools to Support the LTPs Themes

When addressing themes such as solving societal challenges, societal provision and access, global inequalities and democratic governance as an integrated perspective, teachers need educational approaches that connect Agency with democratic participation, sustainability and critical reflection.

Such approaches should **support learners in recognising societal challenges, understanding diverse perspectives, engaging in collective decision making and transforming ideas into responsible and meaningful action within their communities.** Agency in this context is understood as the capacity to imagine alternative futures, identify opportunities for positive change and contribute actively to sustainable and democratic development.

At the same time, these approaches should support teachers' professional learning by providing practical structures for inquiry, reflection, collaborative learning and participatory pedagogy. To learn more about the kind of teachers' professional learning is needed, consult LTP 2.

Tools that can support teaching and learning	
Tool	**Inquiry based learning tools, e.g. Community mapping**
Explanation	Learners explore their local environment to identify societal needs, access barriers or opportunities for improvement.
Example	Through observation, interviews or surveys with local stakeholders' learners develop a deeper understanding of how resources, opportunities and responsibilities are distributed in their community. Community mapping helps learners connect abstract concepts such as responsibility, participation and resource distribution with concrete local realities.
Tool	**Stakeholder analysis**
Explanation	Learners analyse the interests, responsibilities and perspectives of citizens, businesses, public institutions, community organisations or vulnerable groups and explore how decisions influence different groups in society.
Example	This method helps learners understand the complexity of democratic decision making and economic activity. It also encourages empathy and critical thinking, as learners learn that societal challenges often involve conflicting interests and require negotiation and compromise.

Tool	Role based simulations and case studies
Explanation	Through simulations learners take on the roles of different actors such as entrepreneurs, local politicians, community members or activists. They analyse a societal challenge and discuss possible solutions from their assigned perspectives.
Example	Through debate and negotiation learners experience how decisions about resources, priorities or community development are shaped by dialogue and collective deliberation. These simulations allow learners to practise communication, argumentation and collaborative problem solving in a structured learning environment.

5. Examples of Practice

In this section, describe some examples of projects, materials which align with the LTP Theme. These aim to give an idea of how eco-preneurship concepts, methodologies can be implemented in practice.

Title	**SchoolFood4Change**
Nature of the example	Project
Description	The European project SchoolFood4Change impowers learners to actively participate in improving school food systems and reducing food waste. Young people are involved in analysing school food environments and developing solutions for healthier and more sustainable meals.
Age Group	Secondary level
Link	URL https://schoolfood4change.eu
Title	**FoodCIRCUS**
Nature of the example	Project
Description	FoodCIRCUS is a European project that works with schools to reduce food waste and develop circular solutions in school canteens. Schools test practical solutions and create guidelines for reducing waste and reusing resources.
Age Group	Secondary level
Link	https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/foodcircus/
Title	**Youth Food Waste Campaigns in Schools**
Nature of the example	Campaign
Description	High school learners participate in campaigns that raise awareness about food waste and encourage behavioural change in schools and communities.
Age Group	Secondary level

Link	https://www.interregeurope.eu/
Title	**Digital Generations Project**
Nature of the example	Project
Description	The Digital Generations project brings young people and older adults together in intergenerational learning programmes where youth teach digital skills to seniors. The goal is to empower older citizens to participate in the digital society and access online services such as communication platforms, public services and information.
Age Group	Secondary level
Link	https://digitalgenerationsproject.eu
Title	**Hi Digital Intergenerational Programme**
Nature of the example	Project
Description	The Hi Digital programme in Ireland trains young volunteers to support older adults in developing digital skills and confidence. The initiative aims to bridge the digital divide and increase participation of seniors in digital society.
Age Group	Secondary level
Link	https://agefriendlyireland.ie/
Title	**Fairtrade Student Groups**
Nature of the example	Project
Description	University and school-based Fairtrade student groups organise workshops, campaigns and events to raise awareness about fairness in global trade and the situation of producers in developing countries. These groups take responsibility for planning and implementing their own initiatives. Students organise a “Fair Trade Week” where they explain supply chains, host discussions about global inequality and offer ethically sourced products.
Age Group	Secondary and tertiary level

Link	https://www.hochschule-rhein-waal.de/en
Title	**Global Schools Programme**
Nature of the example	Initiative
Description	The Global Schools Programme is an international initiative supported by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. It helps schools integrate global issues such as inequality, poverty, sustainable development and responsible consumption into teaching and student projects. Students investigate global production chains such as clothing or food and develop projects that promote fair trade or responsible consumption in their schools. In many participating schools students organise awareness campaigns, exhibitions or school events to explain how resources and economic value are distributed globally.
Age Group	Secondary level
Link	https://www.globalschoolsprogram.org
Title	**Brooklyn Free School**
Nature of the example	Whole School Approach
Description	Brooklyn Free School operates through weekly democratic meetings where students and staff collectively decide on rules, activities and school management questions. Students experience democratic participation and responsibility in everyday school life and learn how institutions can be governed collectively.
Age Group	Secondary level
Link	https://brooklynfreeschool.org

6..Challenges and Prerequisites for Supporting Eco-Preneurship Competences for DCE

Implementing Eco-Preneurship for DCE requires more than introducing new teaching activities. It involves creating learning environments in which learners can understand complex societal challenges, imagine alternative futures, participate in democratic decision making and transform ideas into meaningful action. Several challenges may arise at different levels.

System and Policy Level

Many education systems remain strongly oriented towards curriculum coverage, subject-specific learning outcomes and standardised assessment. As a result, teachers often have limited time and flexibility to introduce interdisciplinary, inquiry-based or project-based approaches that connect learning with authentic societal challenges.

Although entrepreneurship education, education for democratic citizenship and global citizenship education are increasingly recognised in European and international policy frameworks, these areas are often implemented as separate initiatives rather than integrated approaches. Consequently, schools may struggle to connect sustainability, democracy and entrepreneurial agency within coherent learning experiences.

In addition, topics such as social inequality, economic justice, migration, global trade, climate change or democratic participation may be perceived as politically sensitive. This can lead educators or institutions to approach these issues cautiously or avoid them altogether, limiting opportunities for learners to engage critically with contemporary societal challenges.

School Level

Successful implementation depends on a school culture that values participation, collaboration and innovation. However, institutional structures within schools may restrict opportunities for meaningful learner participation. Decision-making processes are often hierarchical, leaving learners with limited opportunities to experience genuine participation, shared responsibility or democratic leadership.

Curriculum structures can also create barriers. Subject boundaries, fragmented timetables and pressures to prepare learners for examinations may reduce opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and longer-term projects that reflect the complexity of real-world challenges.

Resource constraints further influence implementation. Schools may lack sufficient time, funding or partnerships with local authorities, civil society organisations, businesses or community groups that could support experiential and community-based

learning. In socially disadvantaged contexts, schools may face additional challenges related to inequality, limited digital infrastructure or reduced access to local networks and initiatives, making it more difficult to implement collaborative projects beyond the classroom.

Educator Level

Teachers play a central role in facilitating Eco-Preneurship, yet many have limited preparation in entrepreneurship education, democratic citizenship education or education for sustainable development. While these concepts are increasingly present in educational policies, educators often lack practical training on how to integrate them into everyday teaching and how to facilitate complex, learner-centred activities.

Eco-Preneurship also requires a shift in professional practice. Rather than primarily transmitting knowledge, educators become facilitators of inquiry, dialogue, collaboration and action. This involves supporting learners through open-ended investigations, encouraging democratic participation and managing uncertainty as learners explore complex societal issues.

Assessment presents another challenge. Competences such as agency, creativity, systems thinking, collaboration and democratic participation are often more difficult to assess than factual knowledge. Educators therefore need assessment approaches that recognise learning processes, reflection and collective problem solving alongside final outcomes.

Lerner Level

Learners may initially find it challenging to understand the interconnected nature of environmental, social, economic and political systems. Developing systems thinking requires moving beyond simple explanations and recognising that societal challenges are characterised by complexity, uncertainty and multiple perspectives.

Participation also requires confidence and agency. Some learners may hesitate to express opinions, engage in dialogue or take initiative, particularly if they have limited prior experience of democratic participation or collaborative decision making. Others may find it difficult to move from identifying problems to developing realistic solutions and implementing them in practice.

Working collaboratively presents additional challenges. Learners need to develop skills for negotiating different viewpoints, managing disagreement constructively, sharing responsibility and balancing individual interests with collective goals. These competences require sustained opportunities for practice and reflection.

Possible Supportive Mechanisms

Despite these challenges, educators still have significant opportunities to support democratic learning and entrepreneurial competences through realistic and context sensitive interventions within their professional roles. One of the most effective approaches is to **integrate societal challenges into existing subjects through inquiry based and project-oriented learning.** Rather than introducing entirely new curricular structures, teachers can use real world problems as entry points for critical analysis, discussion and creative problem solving within their subject areas.

Small scale investigations within the school or local community can provide meaningful learning opportunities without requiring extensive resources. Learners can analyse issues such as food waste in the school cafeteria, access to public spaces for young people, digital inclusion for older citizens or the environmental impact of everyday consumption. Through research, interviews, surveys or observation, learners develop a deeper understanding of societal challenges while also practising analytical and collaborative skills.

Educators can also create participatory **learning environments that allow learners to experience democratic processes in practice.** Structured dialogue, group deliberation and collective decision-making activities can help learners understand how different perspectives, interests and values influence societal decisions. Role based simulations or case studies in which learners represent different stakeholders such as community members, businesses, policymakers or civic organisations can help them explore complex problems from multiple viewpoints.

Another realistic intervention is to **build connections between the classroom and the local community.** Partnerships with local organisations, small businesses, municipal institutions or community initiatives can provide authentic contexts for learning and action. Even small collaborations, such as inviting local actors to share their experiences or involving learners in community-oriented activities, can help bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world engagement.

Teachers can also encourage learners to develop small scale initiatives that respond to identified problems. These initiatives may take the form of awareness campaigns, school-based initiatives, community events or proposals for improving local practices. Through these activities learners learn to identify opportunities for positive change, mobilise resources and collaborate with others.

Importantly, educators can support **reflective learning processes that encourage learners to consider ethical questions related to responsibility, fairness and sustainability.** Discussions about the social consequences of economic decisions, the distribution of resources or the responsibilities of individuals and institutions can help

learners develop a deeper understanding of democratic values and global interdependence.

Even small-scale pedagogical interventions can contribute to broader democratic aims. When learners experience that their ideas are taken seriously, that they can analyse real challenges and that collective action can lead to meaningful outcomes, they begin to develop a sense of agency and civic responsibility. Over time, these experiences can strengthen learners' willingness to participate in democratic processes and contribute to addressing societal challenges.

In this way, educators play a key role in connecting sustainability, democratic culture and Agency within educational practice. By creating learning environments that foster participation, critical reflection and responsible engagement, teachers support learners in recognising how social, environmental and democratic processes interact and how individuals can contribute to shaping sustainable and inclusive societies.

Glossary

Agency: Agency is understood as the capacity to set a goal, reflect and act responsibly to effect change.

Entrepreneurship competence: Entrepreneurship competence refers to the capacity to act upon opportunities and ideas and to transform them into value for others. The value created can be financial, cultural or social.

Practical entrepreneurial experiences are educational experiences where the learner comes up with ideas, identify a good idea and turn that idea into action. They require the involvement of external partners in the design and/or delivery of this learning, to ensure relevance to the real world.

Value creation: Value creation is the outcome of human activity transforming purposeful ideas into action which generates value for someone other than oneself. This value can be social, cultural or economic.

Uncertainty: Uncertainty is a situation which involves imperfect and (or) incomplete information, and which affects the predictability of outcomes. Uncertainty entails a risk of undesired effect or loss, whose probability and magnitude cannot be calculated.

Sustainability: Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.