

Focus Group Consultation Reporting Form

Please provide the following information about your consultation.

I. Basic information

Date of consultation:	15th December '20			
Modality:	<input type="checkbox"/> in person		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> online	
Location:	ITCTS Vittorio Emanuele, Bergamo - Italy			
Hosting organization:	ITCTS Vittorio Emanuele in Bergamo, Rete Dialogues Nazionale, Accademia delle Arti e delle Nuove Tecnologie in Roma			
Name, title, and affiliation of facilitator(s):	Patrizia Giaveri, school leader of ITCTS Vittorio Emanuele in Bergamo, CTS Rete Dialogues			
Name and email address of key contact person:	Giovanna Barzanò, Ispettrice Ministero Istruzione, coordinatrice scientifica Rete Dialogues <i>dott.giovanna.barzano@gmail.com</i>			
Language of consultation:	Italian			
Time spent in consultation:	3 h			
Consultation model(s) applied	<input type="checkbox"/> Model 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Model 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Model 4
Number of Participants:	14 + 2			
Participants' profiles: (please describe briefly the composition of the group)	e.g. student activists working on issues of climate change			
Identify the main stakeholder group that participated in the consultation: (please check one box only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth	<input type="checkbox"/> NGOs	<input type="checkbox"/> Civil Society	<input type="checkbox"/> UN
	<input type="checkbox"/> Academia	<input type="checkbox"/> Private businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):
List any other stakeholder groups that participated	Academia, Environment Association, Religious Association, Private companies, Foundations			

II. Synthesis of inputs

MODEL 2

Thematic focus: **Citizenship and Participation**

Prompt 1.

The discussion on threats to democratic participation was rich and effectively dialogical, rooted in the different backgrounds of the participants, all involved in teacher professional development on global citizenship, but belonging to different fields: inter-religious dialogue, intercultural dialogue, environment, technologies, training. The main "threats" mentioned concern the issues of the growing *intolerance for diversity* and the disregarded of human rights, addressed along a very wide spectrum: from the rights of the least and minorities, to the rights enacted through democratic participation.

A tendency to misinterpret the idea of democracy was pointed out, almost as if the theatre of action where democracy is acted out were an arena where diversities oppose each other, rather than a dialectical space for dialogue and confrontation where diversities can become integrated. In the space-arena, therefore, subjectivities overflow, and there seems to be more interest in the clash than in the composition. In the meantime, social inequalities are nurtured rather than contrasted: education, which should be the privileged place for equality, is not very accessible for refugees, among whom very low attendance rates, particularly at highest levels are found.

A sort of *tribalization* seems to be taking place, and the traditional tools of mediation that have for long been provided by important institutions, parties and churches are missing.

Closely connected to this scenario the theme of truth emerged, understood as the ability to faithfully represent reality through the categories of critical thinking, the reading of complexity and the possibility of correctly accessing information. Instead we often have a polarization of truths, rather than a dialogue intended as a real confrontation. In a moment of *infodemic*, such as that of the current COVID pandemic, when the excess of both accurate and falsified information makes it difficult to understand phenomena, a discourse on *truth* become more crucial than ever.

On the religious side, an insensitive and scarcely intelligent management of religious pluralism was observed: either there is a tendency to deny pluralism and therefore identity differences, or there is a tendency to homologate or equate to a model that must be a reference for all the others religions. This creates a standardization of the plural and diverse religious identities, which is both a sacred and a cultural artifice.

A theme tackled by several participants, and consistent with this scenario of scarce enactment of an articulated and constructive dialectic, concerns the risk of language impoverishment. If one embraces a Vygotskyian perspective, this translates into an impoverishment of thought, which in fact finds few opportunities to "construct itself" through language.

The unavoidable role of communication technologies is obviously intertwined with all these critical issues: they offer positive potential but confront us with serious dangers. The epidemic offered a sudden test bed in this regard: it led a large part of the population that had remained more or less distant from it, to a forced and sudden literacy, it provided great opportunities to compensate for the absence of physical presence, but has highlighted unexpected limits and gaps even in the eyes of experts. Of particular importance is the issue of the online relationship and its psychological and affective implications: the fact that they cannot replace presence has always been obvious, but with the COVID emergency, new evidences and questions have arisen.

Participants in daily contact with students, underlined the atmosphere of disorientation and distrust they are faced with in the classroom, that hinders active participation. They focused on students' tendency to an *"everything and now"* and hedonistic attitude. Schools have a hard time dealing with these problems: education lacks an adequate support by politicians and the society in general and struggles unsuccessfully to implement paradigm shifts, it is observed, quoting Kuhn.

Prompt 2.

The leitmotif that animates the reactions to prompt 2 concerns taking initiatives and "doing": the great potential of grappling with finalized actions, in their most concrete aspects, therefore learning the notions of citizenship and participation by living them. In the face of the serious concerns raised when tackling prompt 1, the discussion highlights a wide range of positive and engaging actions. Participants explain how these initiatives were conceived, illustrate the problems overcome and the mechanisms through which they have had an impact. They shed light on what, in their opinion, can contribute to "change".

There are innovative practices in schools and many are mentioned. However, it is recognized that it is difficult to make projects and programs sustainable and systematic.

In particular, three aspects shared by successful innovative practices that promise to become internalised:

1) *Ability to transition from the impromptu nature of the single project to its replicability* and deeper belonging to the school, to its accommodation in every-day teaching. This involved an adequate evaluation of what is happening, a consolidation, a development of educational actors' know-how and skills and above all convincing knowledge-sharing processes. There was participatory construction, the balance between systematicity and flexibility was crucial. All the opportunities for ongoing renewal were exploited.

2) *Opening of the school to the "outside"*. The practices that work are capable of involving various subjects with different identities and different backgrounds: from the world of work, from companies, local territorial communities, social and religious actors, public institutions, universities, international partners that can cooperate in exchange and dialogue projects. In this regard, *boundary crossing* and the relevance of new synergies between schools and different stakeholders were mentioned. It was emphasized that being open also means shaping the objectives of educational projects and innovations as capable of *having a social impact*, rather than being exclusively limited to the school world. It was observed that this also involves the conception of a new relationship between knowledge and information.

3) *Centrality of the student, main recipient of the interventions, understood as centrality of the person, of the educational and human relationship*. In this sense, the importance of focusing projects on students' potential for growth was underlined, together with the need to make students experience their sense of self-efficacy. The lively and dynamic *use of technologies* can create a multifaceted space for dialogue, where the human and educational relationship could flourish at its best, opening up new scenarios of construction, experience of awareness and personal responsibility. New questions of meaning arose. In this context, it is necessary to focus on the tensions between falsification and authenticity and rediscover new forms of loyalty to experience.

Some examples:

-a book: in 2018 a group of teachers from a school network discovered, translated and adapted to the Italian context the American text by Fernando Reimers *Empowering Students to Improve the World in Sixty Lessons* (in Italian *Cittadinanza Globale e Sviluppo Sostenibile: 60 lezioni per un curriculum continuo*). The text was edited and distributed free of charge by a major publisher like Pearson, has had many requests and editions over the course of a year and have inspired concepts and discussions of new school textbooks.

- a monographic and in-depth longstanding project on the adaptation of urban space (in Italian "Ricareare una piazza") which takes place in a Roman square and involves various stakeholders from the worlds of art, technologies, institutions and lasts over time. Teachers and students are confronted with the need to "negotiate" their proposals with other actors and experience the sometimes turbulent but very concrete developments of real planning, where successes alternate with moments of uncertainty and despair.

- seminars on environmental issues organized between actors of different religions interested in sharing a common theme from different perspectives: a case of boundary crossing that gives value to individual actors and strengthens the idea of a universal space

- a platform designed to create organized and facilitated dialogues and confrontation experiences between classes from different countries of the world, addressing topical issues on which they prepare in parallel. Here students can experience "otherness" from various perspectives (Generation Global, TBI).

- a project run by an association created by refugees to fight refugees' drop out from formal education and support students (Mosaico, Turin)

-teacher professional development on environment and health food based on classwork organised by an environmental association and a company engaged in sustainable production (Rome, Bari)

Prompt 3.

The reactions to prompt 3 show how an interesting co-constructive dialectic had developed among the participants: listening and exchange were intense. Some of the topics covered in the reactions to the previous prompts are taken up to project them into the future, reflecting on how the critical issues and opportunities mentioned can be addressed in a positive way, to enhance citizenship education and participation.

A widely shared crucial element emerges: the need to provide support and tools for education that are not existing at the moment. Innovation, which is sporadically present in numerous and illuminating examples, fails to produce shared models, fails to become current practice. Without adequate support for the schools' action, it is difficult to imagine positive scenarios. The school should play a central role in the development of the individual and of society and instead seems to have progressively lost its credibility,

Acting in a real context, using technologies with openness, reflecting on human values and producing social value, fighting inequalities, making critical thinking a mental habitus: these are all issues that must be supported with appropriate initiatives. The teachers risk being "pilloried" as the only responsible for failures, while they do not have adequate tools. The field of education for active citizenship and participation, even more than others, requires lived experiences, concepts embodied by actions in reality, setting up of spaces for experimentation in different contexts. All this should be supported by an organizational commitment that cannot be within reach of the single school or of individual teachers.

An articulated discussion developed on the strategies to be implemented in this regard to face the future. Some important elements emerged, which refer to a school perspective but also, and above all, to a meta-school perspective and are intended as policy references / solicitations from different angles:

1) actors and synergies

- the need for *mediation roles* who act in synergy with teachers for the conception, organization and monitoring of initiatives

- *recognition of the administrative and organizational commitment* underlying the actions necessary for teaching active citizenship

- *networking between schools* of different local, national and international contexts to create learning professional communities, to be facilitated with appropriate resources and acknowledgments

- the synergy between *the school and stakeholders from different fields*: art, university and research, business, associations, to be stimulated with invitations, indications, solicitations.

2) contents and transmission

- attention to the *transdisciplinary development of the concepts of citizenship*, participation and diversity, using the most important and problematic issues - such as the issues of the environment and sustainability as a flywheel to develop new models of action.

- attention to the *new characteristics of the knowledge transmission*, the knowledge-information relationship and its impact on the *direct and multimedia human and educational relationship*.

- the setting up of multimedia and non-multimedia sharing and comparison spaces, which give value to the activities carried out and allow them to be modelled and replicated in flexible ways.

3) training and research

- *innovative and active teacher training and professional development* on different and intertwining topics such as e.g.: technologies, communication and their application, new educational perspectives with respect to the fundamental values of humanities, the needs of living in a plural world, the needs for valuing diversity and freedom, the needs of today's students etc

- the promotion of *participatory research* that sees the active collaboration of educational actors with the research world, with universities, through shared knowledge production models, which imply cooperation and professional development for the participants and focus on contents of mutual interest.

It is reiterated that all the elements mentioned above are already present here and there in the education scenario, however, they fail to be implemented and displayed in an organic way. Good examples may be celebrated as such, but so far they do not find the means to form a system, it is important to figure out how they can do it.

III. Feedback on Consultation

<p>Are there any other questions that should be posed in the context of the <i>Futures of Education</i> consultations?</p>	<p>XX</p>
<p>Is there anything else you wish to relay to UNESCO and/or the International Commission?</p>	<p>Comments on the development of the consultation</p> <p>The focus group resulted in a truly rich and dense meeting. As someone commented in chat, it could be called a "firework" (in Italian it sounds like a pun: focus group/fuoco d'artificio).</p> <p>The design of the adventure in which <i>Futures of Education Unesco</i> invites co-constructors has revealed a remarkable strategic acuity: it can inspire other adventures, such as those that many of us nowadays experience day by day in the many online meetings. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The invitation to participate in the co-construction of the Learning to become report</i>: a task inspired by solid values to be shared, which in itself engages and involves in imagining a shared product. - <i>A choice of clearly defined contents expressed in engaging questions</i>, effectively shaped, with which suggests the possible usefulness of the solicited answers with respect to the intended purposes. - <i>An ex-ante project monitoring mechanism</i> that already secures a priori recognition: investiture as a "Unesco co-builder", if the proposed idea is approved and the Unesco logo can then be used. - <i>Simple but dense background documents</i>, which illustrate the context and expectations and guide the discussion process. - <i>Precise guidelines</i>: criteria for participants' selection, setting, chairing, time management, yet with room for flexibility. Time seemed to be a cruel constraint (in particular for Italian speakers). However, it made everybody more committed and became an opportunity for synthesis and focus that enhanced listening and exchange. - <i>Overall a stimulating space for interpretation</i>: the task was clear and engaging, the "technical" tools offered support, but there was room for creativity and ad hoc organizational choices. - <i>The opportunity to develop the outcomes of the meeting with further sharing "objects"</i>, in addition to the report to be sent to Unesco. In our case it will be the elaboration of the chapter of a new Pearson's book on global citizenship education, but also a training opportunity for invited external listeners and for those who will listen to the recording. Thus, this tools' design, led participants to be captured by the adventure. The meeting organization was a demanding task which was accomplished with all the possible care, the request for participation was very demanding too in a difficult moment such as the one we are experiencing. Yet the sense of engagement and commitment with which the task was fully fulfilled by participants was also very gratifying for the organisers. <p>A working method and a set of procedures that can indeed be adopted in other contexts.</p>

VI. Consultation Sign-In Sheet

Mr/Ms	First Name	Family Name	Organization/ Affiliation	Please provide your email address if you wish to receive updates on the project	If you wish to be acknowledged please tick here
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Francesca</i>	<i>Amenduni</i>	Istituto Universitario Federale di Formazione Professionale (Lugano, Svizzera)	amendoonia@gmail.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Giovanna</i>	<i>Barzanò</i>	Ispettrice Ministero dell'Istruzione e coordinatrice scientifica Rete Dialogues	dott.giovanna.barzano@gmail.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Diana</i>	<i>Ciullo</i>	Accademia Arti e Nuove Tecnologie (Roma)	diana.ciullo@gmail.com	X
<i>Mr</i>	<i>Enrico</i>	<i>de Tavonatti</i>	Sarnico Servizi SPA, Azienda di raccolta e trattamento rifiuti urbani solidi (Bergamo)	enricodetavonatti@libero.it	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Valeria</i>	<i>Fabretti</i>	Fondazione B. Kessler, Centre for Religious Studies (Trento)	fabretti@fbk.eu	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Loredana</i>	<i>Fisichella</i>	Liceo Scientifico <i>Galileo Galilei</i> (Catania)	loredana.fisichella@gmail.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Patrizia</i>	<i>Giaveri</i>	Dirigente Scolastico ITCTS Vittorio Emanuele di Bergamo, CTS Rete Dialogues	dirigente@vittorioemanuele.org	X
<i>Mr</i>	<i>Yagoub</i>	<i>Kibeda</i>	Associazione Mosaico Azioni per i Rifugiati (Torino)	kibeda@gmail.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Beatrice</i>	<i>Ligorio</i>	Università Aldo Moro (Bari)	bealigorio@hotmail.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Pasqualina</i>	<i>Morzillo</i>	WWF Italia	rigelina@gmail.com	X
<i>Mr</i>	<i>Yahya</i>	<i>Pallavicini</i>	COREIS COMunità RELigiosa Islamica Italiana (Roma)	roma@coreis.it	X
<i>Mr</i>	<i>Alberto</i>	<i>Peratoner</i>	Facoltà Teologica del Triveneto (Padova)	peratoner@libero.it	X
<i>Mr</i>	<i>Lorenzo</i>	<i>Raffio</i>	Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (Londra)	info@lorenzoraffio.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Patrizia</i>	<i>Stano</i>	Andriani spa Natural Innovators (Gravina di Puglia)	p.stano@andrianispa.com	X
<i>Ms</i>	<i>Elena</i>	<i>Zacchilli</i>	Liceo Linguistico, Scienze Umane, Economico S., <i>Niccolò Machiavelli</i> - Scuola UNESCO – (Roma)	elenazacchilli@hotmail.com	X
<i>Mr</i>	<i>Emilio</i>	<i>Zanette</i>	Pearson editrice Italia spa	emilio.zanette@pearson.com	X