



D2.3 Engagement report (Preliminary)

BioBeo

Innovative Education for the BioEconomy



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Abbreviations

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

WP Work Package

Executive Summary

BioBeo is an innovative project carried out through the collaboration of 15 partners from various parts of Europe, meaning also various education systems and governance approaches. It bridges theory and practice by bringing together research, policy making and innovative education practices. Its overall aim is to develop and deploy an education programme to enhance understanding and engagement across society regarding lifestyle, circularity, and bioeconomy, using 5 bioeconomy themes: interconnectedness, outdoor learning, forestry, life below water and the food loop. While the project partnership is committed to promoting the bioeconomy concept through this education programme and aims to provide for better coordination between bio-science and education in schools by developing the Circular Economy Science-Society message with a particular focus on circular lifestyle/behaviours. One of the key outcomes of this collaborative work is to develop a governance framework on society-wide engagement in bioeconomy policy, and in education governance as part of it.

For the development and piloting of the governance framework, the project has carried out desk research to identify institutional and cultural barriers, but also good practices. The efforts have been aiming at enhancing governance of bioeconomy related processes within society by engaging European citizens from young to old in active policy making, starting from the school and non-formal/informal learning spaces.

This report is summarising the efforts in the engagement of children, young people, and their parents and families as well as professionals who can be key advocates of innovative governance initiatives in the first half of the project. Delivered before the mid-term review, it will be updated and substantially enlarged before the project ends.

The activities reported have been carried out in the framework of Work package 2 of the project: Innovative Governance, closely interlinked with Work package 3: the Education Programme. It summarises the work done on:

1. the review of the state of art in student and parent engagement in education, especially the engagement of parents and students in policy making at various levels,
2. creating and piloting a training of trainers who can support those committed to innovative governance structures with special focus on meaningful student and parent engagement, and
3. creating the guidelines for and supporting the preparation of youth engagement activities (that will mostly take place later in the project and reporting on them will be part of the updated deliverable at a later stage of the BioBeo project).

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1. Introduction

The experience from bioeconomy collaboration in education and research shows that it is cross-sectoral in nature and requires co-ordination between different disciplines and all educational levels in developing curricula. The ambition of the project is to bring these disciplines and levels together developing a knowledge-based network that drives forward innovative governance for developing policy and places importance on co-creation of curricula within school environments and also introduces the concept of circular living as early as possible, to even our youngest citizens at preschool level.

Bioeconomy processes are participatory and cannot be successful without the real engagement of all actors. Aiming for behavioural change using formal education as a vehicle needs education governance to consider all actors, but especially the three key actors: students, parents (and families) and professional educators as active agents. This means a conscious effort on the side of formal education institutions to partner with students and parents. This kind of equal partnership is not yet part of education governance in most European countries, however, bioeconomy is a new discipline in teaching and therefore it is essential to approach it this way.

For this reason, the BioBeo project has dedicated a work package, WP2 to innovative governance with the aim of introducing new thinking and approaches to futureproof the governance of education of circular bioeconomy and ensure it is innovative when delivered by the education systems across Europe at the European Commission, national, regional, and local levels.

Subobjectives include:

- (1) identifying the institutional and cultural barriers that exist to introducing circular bioeconomy education programmes into pre-school, primary and secondary schools,
- (2) defining and creating structures and networks for the introduction and delivery of BioBeo curricula in schools,
- (3) ensuring young people's, their parents' and in general citizens' engagement in policy making for the bioeconomy, and
- (4) embedding scientific (STEM) and Social Science and Humanities expertise within governance structures.

The current report summarises the efforts made so far for achieving subobjective 2, 3 and 4 through:

Task 2.3 Engagement of youth in policy making led by the Youth in Science and Business Foundation – Sub task 2.3.1 Bioeconomy Idea Competition, Sub task 2.3.2 European Youth Parliament involvement, and Sub task 2.3.3 Bioeconomy Day of Action

Task 2.4 Engaging parents in policy making & governance led by Parents International - Sub task 2.4.1 Inspiration, Sub task 2.4.2 Skills and competence development, and Sub task 2.4.3 Policy outreach events

All partners have participated in the collection of inspiring practices and have been actively engaged in the delivery of the Bioeconomy Idea Competition, the Bioeconomy Day of Action, Skills and competence development, and Policy outreach events.

2. State of art in student and parent participation in education governance

A very recent study commissioned by the European Parliament (Deželan, 2023) highlighted again the accelerating decline in youth participation in democratic processes. It emphasizes that traditional political parties seem to be unable to provide young people with answers to their concerns. It also highlights that there are new, emerging forms of democratic and political participation that require young people to have higher skills levels in the field of democracy and citizenship than earlier generations. The study is calling for revamping civic education and education governance with a much bigger emphasis on participatory methods. The need for more appropriate citizenship education in the form of participation in democratic processes has been high on the European political agenda since the early 2000s and the European Council identified it as a main means to prevent radicalization and in general young people turning to extremist ideologies and parties.

Student and parent organisations have long advocated for participatory decision making in education at all levels – from European and national policy making to daily decisions at school or class level. This demand has only become more topical after the school closures of 2020–22 when the problems of education systems became more visible to parents and also for students. For many, the need to attend formal education became questionable. Parent organisations have long argued for engagement and participation, and to make school a safe testing field for democratic citizenship skills.

Based on examples such as democratic schools, participatory school boards in different countries and other methods providing opportunities for children and young people to learn democracy by doing, this paper argues for changing the main trend of civic/citizenship education from learning about to learning by doing. For this to happen, we need to understand the attitudes of various stakeholders, to analyse teacher skills and teacher training from this angle, and to evaluate existing practices for impact and implementability in various contexts.

The world has been facing a global learning crisis (World Bank, 2018) even before the school closures that has a number of surprising, but shocking characteristics. It is not only about children with no access to school anymore, but about those who do attend formal education, even receive some kind of school leaving certification, but do not acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, not to mention other skills necessary for the 21st century. School has little to do with real life which is a multifaceted phenomenon. First of all, school curricula are often overcrowded with skills and academic content that is outdated and without consensus on why they are necessary to teach and learn. School is also often sheltered from the outside world meaning that it provides little support and skills development in the field of everyday life situations – present and future – especially for those whose parents are less able to provide such necessary education at home struggling with aspects of everyday life themselves.

At the same time, there is a consensus that there is a need to change as quality, inclusive education is one of the keys to sustainable development worldwide. This is defined in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and education has a highlighted position being given number 4 as an SDG. (United Nations, 2015). There is also a growing consensus on the changing role of school and education that necessitates a change of approach from educating obedient workers for the assembly line to educating creative, critical thinkers for a robotised world.

By now there is a full consensus about the fact that meaningful learning is not confined to schools (rather real learning often only happens outside of school), while nearly all countries are still trying to find ways to acknowledge, build on, evaluate, and certify learning happening in nonformal and informal settings. In 2015

the UNESCO published *Rethinking Education* calling for the world to change its approach to the organisation and governance of education based on treating it as a common good rather than a public one. It is a major move towards not only re-thinking, but also co-thinking about education. Education as a common good implies that the state is still responsible for offering adequate financial provisions for education as all countries are obliged to do so by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), but the organisation and evaluation of education are based on an active citizenship approach, understanding that quality education is the responsibility of all, but it also makes a lifelong learning mindset necessary as everybody in this framework is a learner and an educator at the same time.

Since 2020, the Brookings Institution has carried out large-scale research on the expectations of parents as the responsible people for their children's education and that of teachers as well as the perception of teachers about parental expectations. While some of the research outcomes have already been published, Parents International is currently performing research in European countries that have not been studied earlier. The research measures how important the different actors – now including students themselves – consider the following four main goals of education: gaining academic/subject knowledge, preparation for the labour market, social-emotional learning, and citizenship education. Even in the most academic outcomes centred areas, all three stakeholder groups have a clear preference for the citizenship and social-emotional learning domains (and it is gaining even more momentum after the so-called Covid -period). However, there is a clear mismatch not only between these expectations and curricula, but also what teachers think about parental expectations. In nearly all countries researched teachers think parents have a preference for academic knowledge and preparation for the labour market – due to a lack of proper communication and collaboration.

Parents International has carried out global research in 2020 (Salamon, 2020) that led to the New Education Deal – Parents First initiative. It was carried out in a period when it was proven that parents, families, and schools can share the responsibility for schooling needs – with some families in need of more external support – but they do not necessarily wish to do so, and they have every right to leave this with schools. However, this research reinforced the message that families will only opt for rather than out of school if their expectations towards schools are met. There is a major trend in some European countries, mostly by parents with lower levels of education who realised that what is happening to their children at school is not in their best interests, to opt out of the school system, but it is a trend that should be stopped or at least decreased.

The above global demands make it necessary for the teaching profession to change and for teachers to see themselves as facilitators of learning and not as sources of knowledge anymore. Teachers play a crucial role in acknowledging and curating child agency (Baraldi et al., 2023) and provide fora for school students to exercise it. This change also means that teachers should understand and prepare for their role in supporting parenting and supporting parents in general to become better educators of their children as well as more active citizens, starting from school contexts (EEN 2021.). This also requires a lifelong learning mindset from the teachers, an urge to constantly develop their professional knowledge and skills. A comparison of studies on skills levels of teachers and the general population clearly shows that teachers often lack citizenship skills as well as necessary collaborative and communication skills. The EEN 2021 studies also show that while there is a wide offer of citizenship skills development programmes and methods, deep diving into available programmes has hardly found a handful of initiatives that are aimed at teachers' skills and competence development.

It is of crucial importance that school should open up on the one hand allowing education provisions to be linked with real-life challenges – not restricting it to immediate labour market needs, but the necessity to educate responsible 21st century citizens who understand how to navigate in current and future realities – that means inviting external players into the classroom and the school in general, especially since they are

more likely to have the necessary skills and experiences than teachers. On the other hand, 'school' needs to leave the building and provide guided learning opportunities for their students as well as the community in venues like parks, community centres, businesses or even homes. A high number of inspiring practices have been collected on open school practices in the Open Schools for Open Societies Horizon2020 project, many of them citizenship activities. In the PHERECLOS Horizon project, an analysis of successful STEM initiatives was conducted and one of the most frequent common elements of success was active citizenship practices.

After implementing experiential learning methods for over four decades, a meta-analysis study of over 13 thousand scientific publications (Burch et. al, 2019.) has proven what educators have been seeing and feeling for decades: students learn far better if they can experience curricular content rather than just learning about them. Deželan (2023) emphasises the role of school as a venue for political participation and the impact of learning democracy by doing there.

There is a need to mention two factors beyond teachers in establishing parental engagement and child participation practices and finding solutions for the need to change schools. Legislative frameworks should be in place that makes it necessary for schools to engage parents and also the students themselves in all procedures. There are countries that regulate student and parent representation in main decision-making bodies, such as school boards. Other systems oblige the school to seek the opinion of parents (and students) and in certain topics (e.g. choice of schoolbooks, time of holidays, election of school head) the school's decision is not valid without such an opinion. Some countries give parents (and students) veto rights in certain areas. This in itself will not ensure meaningful participation. Extensive research done in 23 European countries on participation (Salamon-Haider, 2015) clearly uncovered a pattern that it only provides for structures and thus participation is often restricted to formalities. This is a dangerous trend as schools that only wish to tick the boxes will find ways to involve 'tame' parents, resulting in representation of white middle class only in decision-making structures.

This is the reason why the other important factor is the school leader / principal in implementing inclusive participatory structures at school level. Research (Salamon-Haider 2015.) shows that there is no school system in Europe that forbids school leaders to engage parents and students, so inclusive participatory practices can be implemented even in systems where there is no legislative requirement for that. An equally important task for school leaders is to change existing practices in school boards, parent committees and similar structures to provide engagement opportunities for all students and teachers. It depends on the school leader most of all if existing formal structures become meaningful or not. For a short period of time the driving force behind such changes can be a small group of committed parents, but for lasting changes the school leader needs to take a lead in this field, too. According to recent research (Kelly, 2019 and Salamon, 2019) school heads understand the importance of collaborating with parents and engaging students, but they have little professional help in doing so. Ken Robinson in his 2018 book *You, Your Child and School* provides inspiring practices, mostly from the United States, but he also makes it clear that there are no recipes, local solutions must be found understanding the context of that given school, and thus it is the task of the school leader.

Parental engagement and student participation are practical examples of active citizenship, and a perfect training field for present and future active national or global citizens, where they can experience and experiment at a low-risk environment. Teachers also need to look at engagement as an active citizenship practice and support their students and their parents in it. Often, teachers need to approach their own active citizenship as a field where they need more conscious approaches and even training. In short, teachers also need to be active citizens of their own school. Parent-teacher-student collaboration is also a good opportunity to experience the impact of non-participation opting out, but also to learn that active citizenship includes

active bystandership. Thus, parent engagement and student participation are very closely linked with citizenship education – and this link needs to be made clear for all.

Parents organisations in Europe have demanded a learning-by-doing approach based on full engagement in governance (EPA 2015.), to make it part of school culture. In an ideal case, citizenship education starts at a very early age, at home, but given the general levels of democratic practices schools need to play an important role here. As it is not only students who need to embrace this culture of democracy; school has a responsibility to educate parents and teachers in this field (Robinson, 2018). Meaningful engagement in decision making is an important tool for this. Becoming responsible citizens can be a natural process that can be systemised and structured as a knowledge and skills set later in school life for all students. Israel has a well-established tradition of democratic schools, but in most cases these schools only engage students themselves in school decision-making. While it is a major achievement, the engagement of parents is also an imperative.

For definition's sake, let us identify the most important features of democracy. Contrary to general belief and colloquial discussions about it, democracy is primarily not about freedom, but trust and responsibility (Harari, 2018). The general discourse usually focuses on active citizenship, and when it comes to day-to-day practices it discourages many that they do not wish to become candidates in elections, they don't generally take action in most situations. In citizenship education we have two major tasks that need to be highlighted as often neglected areas, but ones that schools can easily offer experience in for students, but also for teachers and parents. One is that school is a safe environment to experience citizenship, including experiencing the consequences of opting out of decision-making. Another field is the education towards and appreciation of active bystandership. Active bystanders are aware of news, trends, event, their active citizenship may not exceed exercising the right to vote, but they are conscious that there might be instances when they need to become active, e.g. by participating in a demonstration or boycotting a product.

In an ideal case both parents and teachers act as trainers, counsel for students in becoming active citizens. The key is to trust in children from an early age, but not to overburden them with decisions and help them make informed choices the consequences of which they have to live with.

It builds on the work of academic experts such as Janice Richardson, Sonia Livingstone and Brian O'Neill and tackles the need for education in 10 digital citizenship domains that are all relevant for bioeconomy education. The 10 domains are grouped into 3 areas: Being online (related domains: access and inclusion, learning and creativity, and media and information literacy), Well-being online (related domains: ethics and empathy, health and well-being, and e-presence and communication) and Rights online (related domains: active participation, rights and responsibilities, privacy and security, and consumer awareness). A Council of Europe expert group that Parents International participated in also defined the necessary competences for democratic culture in order to safely navigate the 10 domains. It is obvious that on the one hand these competences need to be developed in and outside of school, but also that the overwhelming majority of both parents and teachers need competence development for becoming active digital citizens of the 21st century.

It is also clear from literature that in the context of the school and the teachers-parents-students triangle, professional educators have a crucial role in empowering both parents – primarily as educators - and students. For this, it is crucial to investigate the role of parents and their engagement with schooling. The role parents in developed countries are expected to play in their children's schooling has changed significantly over the past 20-30 years expecting parents to be engaged acting as "...quasi-consumer and chooser in educational 'marketplaces'" and "monitor and guarantor of their children's engagement with schooling" (Selwyn, 2011). Research evidence (Harris and Goodall, 2008, Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003) also shows it clearly that parental

involvement results in better learning outcomes and school achievements for young people. This makes it imperative to involve parents in schooling and this approach has gained widespread political traction in many European countries.

However, defining what is meant by parental involvement/engagement in schooling, the kind of interactions and methods most likely to benefit children, the role and responsibility of players, especially that of parents, teachers, and school leaders, remain somewhat complicated. Politicians, researchers, schools, teachers and parents' groups and children are yet to settle on shared definitions or priorities that sometimes lead to confusion. Although often presented as a "unified concept" parental involvement/engagement "has a range of interpretations, which are variously acceptable or unacceptable by different constituents" (Crozier, 1999). Different stakeholders often use this fact in a way that leads to power struggles and tensions between different stakeholders, and sometimes also lead to some kind of a 'blame game'. As Harris and Goodall's 2008 study of parental interaction in schools illustrates, whilst parents were more likely to understand their involvement as support for their children and children, in turn, saw their parents as 'moral support', teachers viewed it as a "means to 'improved behaviour and support for the school'" (Harris and Goodall 2008). This may lead to a void between expectations of schools towards parents and vice versa.

Epstein's (2002) classification has been widely used in establishing a typography for parental involvement with school. It is important to take note of the fact that Epstein goes beyond the notion of involvement or engagement in learning of the individual child, but rather introduces the notion of partnership schools that are governed based on a mutual, balanced appreciation of home and school that has a major impact on establishing participatory leadership structures. This definition is fully in line with our approach to tackle parental engagement as active citizenship. Epstein's Framework defines six types of involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, collaborating with the community. It is important to state that these types have no hierarchy whatsoever, although they are often seen by some schools and teachers as levels of different value and formulating unfounded expectations towards parents whose need for engagement is different (Hamilton, 2011)

Goodall and Montgomery (2013) have argued for an approach that moves interest away from parents' interactions with school generally and back to a more specific focus on children's learning. They make a key distinction between involvement and engagement suggesting that the latter invokes a "feeling of ownership of that activity which is greater than is present with simple involvement" and propose a continuum that moves from parental involvement with schooling to parental engagement with children's learning. This approach includes the recognition that learning is not confined to school and the importance of supporting the learning of children inside and outside school. This approach can be particularly important in the case of parents (and of course children) from ethnic minorities, with low levels of education (and bad experiences with their own schooling) or those facing economic difficulty who, research has shown, are more likely to find involvement in school difficult but who nevertheless have strong commitments to their children's learning.

Goodall (2017) urges for a paradigm shift towards a partnership that is based on the following principles formulated on the basis of reimagining Freire's banking model of education for the 21st century's reality:

1. School staff and parents participate in supporting the learning of the child.
2. School staff and parents value the knowledge that each brings to the partnership.
3. School staff and parents engage in dialogue around and with the learning of the child.
4. School staff and parents act in partnership to support the learning of the child and each other.

5. School staff and parents respect the legitimate authority of each other's roles and contributions to supporting learning."

This approach is also in line with the distinction made between involvement and engagement with regards to school in general, especially with regard to ownership. In the classification traditionally used by parents' association (Salamon, 2017), based on Epstein, parental involvement in school means that the school and teachers initiate that parents join certain activities that are mostly aiming at the better working of current structures of school, while engagement is based on the partnership principles and implies that the school leader, teachers, parents, students and, if necessary, other stakeholders jointly take action for establishing practices and procedures based on the initiative of any of them. In this framework of definition parental involvement in school corresponds to the tokenism levels (informing, consultation, and maximum placation) while parental engagement with school corresponds to citizen power levels (partnership, delegated power or citizen control) on the Ladder of Participation (Arnstein, 1969).

The two approaches, engagement with children's learning and engagement with school has the common feature of ownership, and with time parents' should become active bystanders even if only focusing on children's learning, having enough insight to act as active citizens if a situation making intervention necessary arises.

According to Kendall et al. (2018) these frameworks acknowledge the complex, dynamic nature of relationships between parents, school and children and offer open, meaningful opportunities for dialogue and re-negotiation of roles and responsibilities, but they may not go beyond questioning traditional paradigm of home-school relations. Re-imagining home-school relations need to be based on reflection on the purpose of learning, of school and going beyond the immediate and often narrow priorities based on testing and other policy accountabilities (Grant, 2009). Grant goes on to suggest, many parents may choose, quite reasonably, to invest in insulating the boundaries between school and home life seeing "part of their role as protecting children from school's incursions into the home and ensuring that children socialise, play and relax as well as learn", and this is the underlying thinking in home-schooling and unschooling movements gaining momentum (Robinson, 2018). This also gives us reasons to explore reasons of non-involvement or low levels of involvement with schooling when designing any intervention on parental empowerment and reimagining parental engagement as active citizenship. This is a result of the above-mentioned phenomena in the global learning crisis (World Bank, 2018) that requires a paradigm shift engaging parents in the rethinking process. The only way to ensure equity and inclusion in school is to co-create an offer that correspond to and reflect on the needs of each individual child.

Several reports and studies (e.g. OECD, 2012, MEMA, 2017) confirm that significant obstacles still exist in the educational pathways of children with a disadvantaged background in the educational systems of the EU Member States. This is accompanied by an increase of intolerance and xenophobia in most EU Member States.

At the same time successful, mostly local, or municipality-level initiatives show that there are effective solutions for these issues that are best tackled together. Some countries have implemented effective national policies for inclusion in education (e.g. Austria, Germany, Ireland), but none have introduced a systemic approach to vulnerable parents' inclusion.

The research carried out in 23 European countries (22 EU members and Norway) by the authors in 2015 and again in 2019 was originally aiming at finding correlations between the direct costs of education (costs not covered from taxpayer sources, but burdening family budgets directly) and the legislative provisions related to the participation of parents in decision making related to school activities and processes with some focus

on decisions that have a direct impact on family budgets. While the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union reinforces the UNCRC regulations by obliging EU member states to offer education free, there is no country among those we worked in that has these provisions in place.

The first part of our research focused on school practices and school cost realities, so they do not reflect on legislative provisions. In the second part of the research, we also examined legislative frameworks and their implementation on decision-making levels. This may mean the level of government or the level of a region or municipality. Respondents were asked to refer to the level where decisions are made in their countries. As this greatly varies in countries in Europe, this was the most meaningful way of asking our research questions. Respondents were experienced parent representatives and policy makers with a solid understanding of the situation in their school and country.

The research was done using two separate questionnaires, one on school costs and one on parental engagement/involvement in decision making. These were sent to national parent organisations in the target countries, and they were invited to provide answers based on their national realities. All questionnaires were followed up, thus we managed to receive answers for all countries we wanted to include. The subjects were asked to detail their answer so that we could differentiate between school levels and types. We also collected as much legislation text translated to languages we speak (English, German, Hungarian) as possible, and during the analysis phase we also double-checked answers whenever it was possible with legislative texts.

For the school costs research, we worked together with the European School Student Union, OBESSU and some experienced parent leaders to cover all costs that are school-related. By this we meant such costs that do not normally occur if a child does not go to school but compulsory/absolutely necessary if they do. This includes school material (books, stationery, etc.), special clothing (for sport, for hands-on activities, uniforms), parental financial contribution to school activities (e.g. entrance tickets, room rent), costs of school activities that fall on parents (e.g. photocopying), necessary extra tuition and getting to the school. Putting together this questionnaire happened with the participation of parents with experience at different school levels and countries.

For parental involvement, we were interested in the first place in how the voice of parents is delivered in all aspects of school life given that parents are the ones schools are accountable to and whose needs should be taken into consideration. At the same time, we were also exploring how parents are involved in decisions about schooling and schools, at legislative and budgetary levels. While most of the questions were objective, and were verified through analysing legislation, we were also interested to have the opinion of parents whether a legally regulated involvement form is a meaningful one (meaning that decision makers actively seek and rely on parent opinions) or if it is a formality (meaning representatives, often chosen by the school leader from among the “tamest” parents tick the box by having a representative present, but do not actively encourage meaningful input)

In the analysis phase, we cross-referenced the two questionnaires, making separate analyses for different school levels and types (pre-primary/primary/lower and upper secondary; state/church/private). We also took it into consideration if schooling at the given level is compulsory in the country or a choice of parents how they educate their children. We were also interested to see cultural patterns, similarities and differences depending on schooling traditions, and our assumption that this is a factor was verified by the research.

It is interesting to note that while 58% consider school to be free in their countries, and in-depth analysis has shown that in reality the case is very far from it. While it is school budget that parents have the highest percentage of say in with 56% having consultative and 16% decisive role, when it comes to the choice of

teaching material (books, tools, etc.) only 32% is consulted and 8% has an impact on decisions. At the same time 75% of parents pay directly for compulsory stationery, 42% pay for workbooks and 17% for coursebooks. 29% of parents must pay directly for materials for practical activities such as special paper, wood, metal, 67% are obliged to buy necessary IT equipment from family budgets that also needs investment in 63% of the cases on software. There is no country where compulsory sport equipment is not paid from family budgets and 2/3 of parents also pay directly for other kinds of working and protective clothes. These percentages show the total of parents that surely pay themselves, for others there are local provisions to a certain extent, so school costs largely depend in many countries on where you live. These high numbers should indicate that parents are involved in decision making, but practice does not prove this requirement.

When it comes to active participation in decision-making, the other area where parents are mostly involved is creating school rules with 28% having decision-making powers and another 52% are consulted. It seems that parents are considered to be competent with regards to school meals in most countries, so 60% are consulted and another 8% also has decision-making powers. However, while parents are mostly involved in this field, only 50% of parents pay for meals.

The picture is less bright when it comes to professional matters in education. Only 8% of parents have decisive power over curriculum and 4% over teaching programme contents with 40% and 36% respectively are consulted. In only 20% of the cases parents are even consulted in the recruitment, evaluation, and dismissal of teachers, while 8% have decision-making powers and 32% are consulted when recruiting or dismissing the school leader. Our research was conducted in 2015 in 23 countries, but the same trends were reported in the research on careers of teachers and school leaders in the European Education Policy Network (Kelly, 2019 and Salamon, 2019).

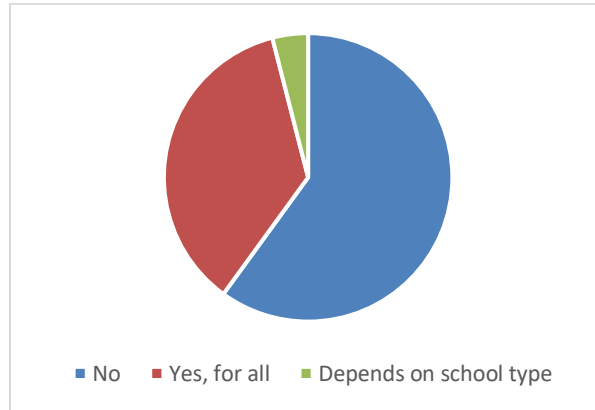
When it comes to school student representation, it is present to a certain extent in 19 of the 23 countries and only in secondary schools in the other 4 (Netherlands, Spain, Liechtenstein, Slovenia), but our research did not go into detail about their extent and form. Student representation is only present in 3 countries up to national level and a total of 7 countries up to municipality level. In only 28% of respondents reported proportionate representation of key stakeholders (parents, teachers and students) in decision making related to school in general (Hungary, Austria, Germany, Norway, Netherlands, Lithuania, Estonia).

On the level of government in 60% of the cases there is no parental representation on government level, and even if there is, it is not equal and proportionate. This was reported in only 32% of cases. In 56% percent of the cases the government is not obliged to involve parents and other stakeholders in decision-making, and in 52% of the cases parents are not consulted about the financing of education. Only 8% of countries offer decision-making powers to parents in relation to national curricula and another 50% is consulted in some form. When it comes to the organisation of the school year and defining school holiday times, 52% of countries do not even consult parents, while 12% of countries offer parents decisive power in this with 4% of them giving parents the right to veto. Overall, 48% of governments are obliged to involve parents in decision making in some areas, but only 24% of respondents reported meaningful participation, the other 24% is just a formality.

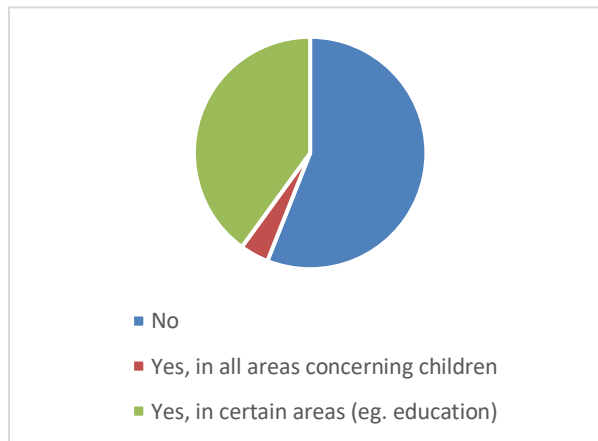
Looking at the full picture it is not only clear that schools and governments don't find it important to consult parents and students in issues that directly concern them, but it is also clear they do not understand the importance of parental and student engagement as a form of active citizenship.

Detailed figures:

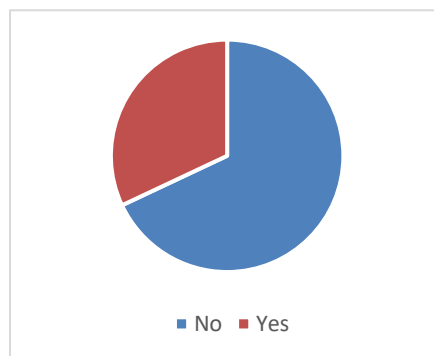
1. Is there an official form of parental representation available for all parents on government level in your country?



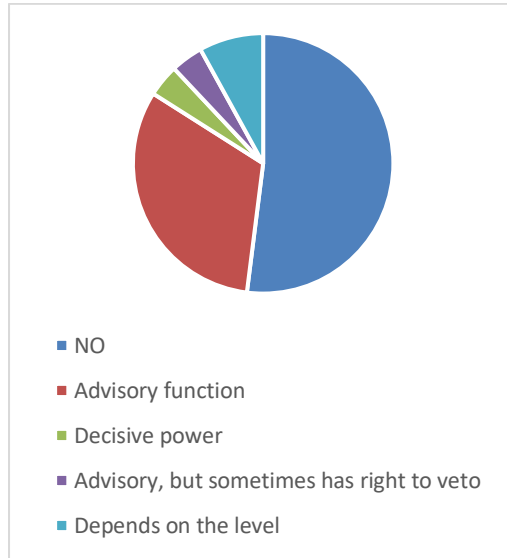
2. Is the government legally obliged to involve parents and other stakeholders in the decision making process?



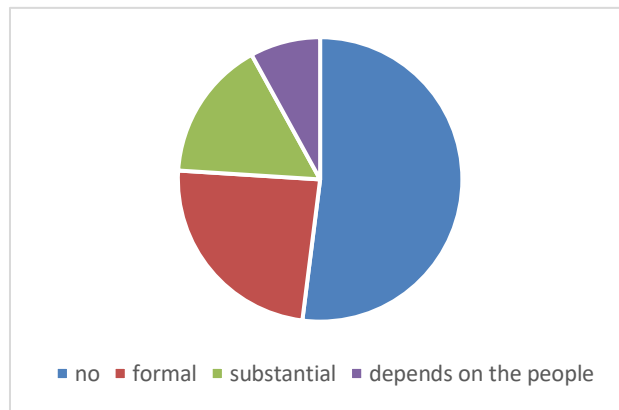
3. Is there equal, proportionate representation for all parents in your country in bodies involved in decision making?



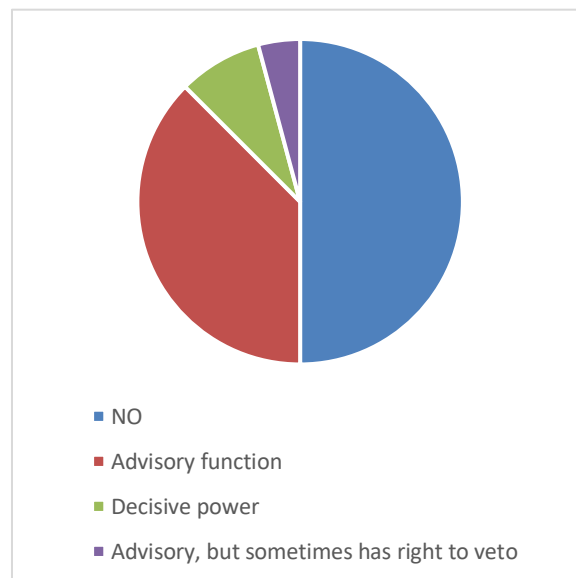
4. Is there an official way of involving parents in decision making in general when deciding on financing education on decision making level?



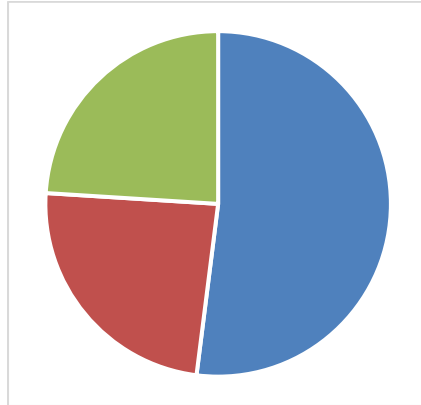
5. Is this involvement compulsory?



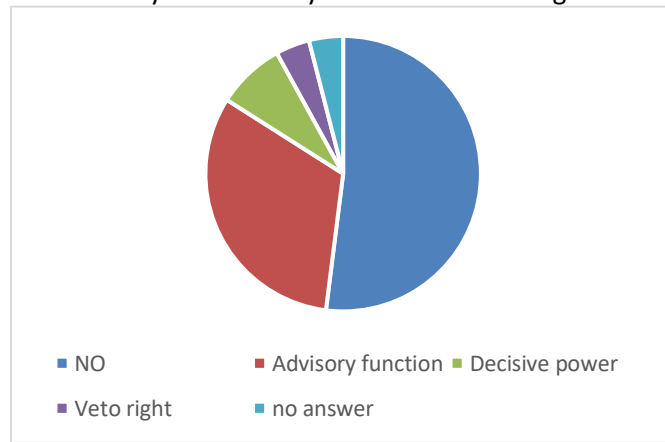
6. Is there an official way of involving parents in decision making in general when deciding on curriculum on decision making level?



7. Is this involvement compulsory?



8. Is there an official way of involving parents in decision making in general when deciding on schooldays and holidays on decision making level?



9. COMPETENCES of parents' representatives

- school programme, profile



- school rules



- content of teaching programme



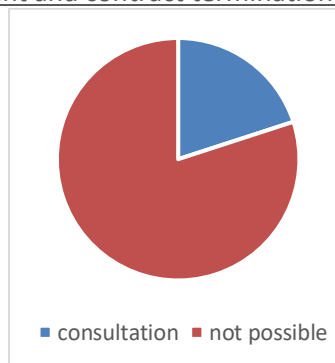
- curriculum



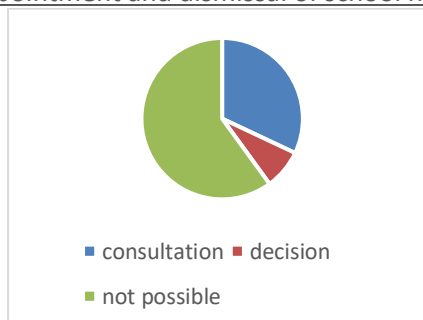
- teaching material



- recruitment and contract termination of teachers



- appointment and dismissal of school heads



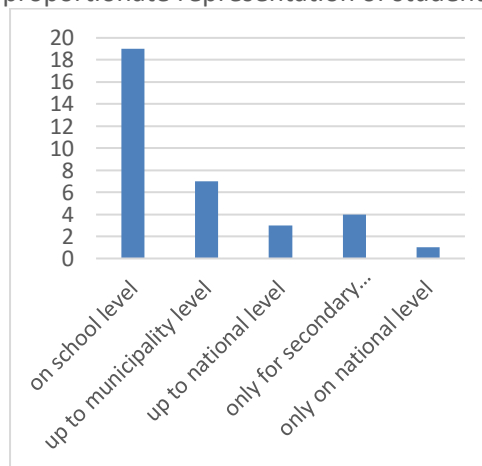
- allocation of school budget



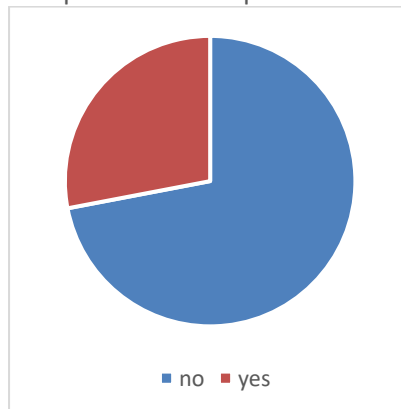
- school meals



10. Is there a proportionate representation of students/learners?



11. Are key stakeholders represented in equal numbers in decision making?



No. of participating countries: 25

3. Activities for the engagement of youth in policy making

3.1 Bioeconomy Idea Competition

One of the initiatives within the BioBeo Project is the Bioeconomy Idea Competition, designed to harness the creativity and innovation of young minds towards sustainable bioeconomic solutions. The competition invites youth participants to submit ideas and proposals that address challenges or opportunities within the bioeconomy sector. It also includes resources created by the project team that allows to guide and support young minds in trying creative techniques to come up with interesting and innovative ideas.

Some of the ideas submitted by young participants at a workshop in Ireland School include:

Idea 1: "Operation Duck Farm"

- Replace chemical pesticides on farms with animals who feed on pests like ducks and ladybirds
- Government supports duck farmers who will provide low-cost ducks to other farmers who are growing crops.
- These farms allow ducks to wander around their crops, eating slugs and keeping their numbers low. They also get the benefits of duck poo to help keep soil healthy!
- Farmers can also link with their local schools by allowing schools to look after young ducks in schools for a short amount of time before returning to the farmer. School could be invited on a field trip to the farm.
- Video presentation by group here: <https://vimeo.com/922498316?share=copy> (Password=BioBeo2)

Idea 2: "Use it Resue It" Transporting Food using Hydrogen Powered ships and cars

- Food that must be transported around the world should be by Hydrogen Powered ships and cars
- The water vapour produced in the process should be recycled.
- In the case of hydrogen powered cars, the roads they are driving on should be able to absorb the water and recycle it.
- In the case of hydrogen powered ships, the water should be recycled and used on board the ships as drinking water or to water any on board plants!
- Video presentation of idea by the group <https://vimeo.com/922500587?share=copy> (Password=BioBeo1)

Idea 3: "Home Fresh" Encouraging people to eat seasonally

- Encourage eating fruit and vegetables that are available in season.
- When in season and grown in an individual country they should not be imported
- When not available, people should be discouraged from buying (except as a treat)
- Make it special- similar to Easter Eggs. People are excited to eat them because they are only available at a certain time of the year.
- Encourage people to be more creative and try new recipes with less known but seasonally available foods.

- Share recipes for jams and other foods which add lifespan to popular foods like strawberries.
- See video presentation here: <https://vimeo.com/922521096?share=copy> (Password BioBio3)

Idea 4: Composting in schools/at home

- Collect food scraps from lunches/gone off food etc.
- Add to composter
- Turn it regularly to speed up process
- Create a school garden to produce your own food and use compost to grow crops in.

Idea gathering events have been in process in Estonia at time of delivering this report. Ideas gathered so far are only in Estonian. Other partners are yet to deliver these events. Selected ideas will be added to the updated version of the report later on in the project (translated to English) in case of outcomes in other languages.

3.2 European Youth Parliament involvement

In addition to the Bioeconomy Idea Competition, the BioBeo Project aims to actively engage with youth parliaments to facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and advocacy for sustainable practices in the bioeconomy sector. Select resources have been created to help with these activities. The resources include a guide to get in touch with youth parliaments across Biobeo partner countries, a Biobeo Policy Memo template which can be used for interaction of Policy Ideas, support material on how to write a policy memo to interact with policy makers, and to create a video for pitching your idea to policy makers.

Forms of engagement with youth parliament include:

1. **Consultative Workshops:** The project provides tools to organise consultative workshops with youth parliamentarians to gather insights, perspectives, and priorities regarding the bioeconomy. These sessions serve as forums for discussion, idea exchange, and co-creation of strategies for sustainable development.
2. **Policy Advocacy:** Through engagement with youth parliaments, the BioBeo Project seeks to advocate for policy measures supportive of the bioeconomy, such as incentives for renewable energy, regulations promoting circular economy practices, or funding for bio-based research and innovation.

3.3 Bioeconomy Day of Action

The BioBeo Project also provides tools to organise a Bioeconomy Day of Action to showcase good practices within school communities related to the bioeconomy. This initiative aims to raise awareness, inspire action, and foster community engagement in sustainable bioeconomic practices. Specially created resources, which include examples, and Try yourself experiments are developed to use during these events.

The resources created can be found in Annex I

4. Engaging parents in policy making and governance

4.1 Inspiration

To prepare further steps in this tasks, partners were provided with a template for collecting and analysing parental engagement practices on education innovation and sustainability. Partners tried to gather inspiring practices and policies exploring “good of good practices” and transferable elements. Also, a section on failed initiatives for learning and avoiding traps identified by others were to be collected. As foreseen, partners were only able to identify a very small number of relevant practices.

All successful projects and initiatives in the field of parent and student engagement include an element that helps to overcome language/vocabulary barriers and also support the inclusion of the parents themselves in society. However, successful, long-term engagement programs often build on the acceptance of differences in languages and culture made visible in school settings.

Another type of program that is in place in many local contexts is aiming at raising cultural awareness and create mutual understanding by that. Inviting parents into school settings to introduce their home cultures create more trust in school. This is especially important in the case of parents who have low levels of education themselves. It is often necessary for school staff to leave their comfort zone and the school premises for successful outreach to parents with migrant background.

The most successful and sustainable programmes (e.g. SEAs or Schools as Community Learning Centres) tackle the whole community as one, consider language and cultural differences, but offer a holistic solution.

There are two main aims of parental involvement/engagement that were explored in inspiring practices and related literature. One is the engagement of parents in the learning of their own children for better learning outcomes, the other is engagement in school life as a form of active citizenship. The second, broader approach necessarily includes the first one, parents engaged in school life also understand the importance of learning and support their own children more. At the same time, it must be mentioned that deeper engagement in your own children’s learning can be successful without more engagement in school, especially if the intervention is aiming at parents’ understanding of learning processes, their role as primary educators and the fact that school plays only a minor role in the learning of children.

Inspiring practices in some cases focus on a certain narrow target group, for example parents of a certain nationality or level of education, while others have a more holistic approach, targeting all migrants or all parents that are generally difficult to reach and engage. Inspiring practices collected during the needs analysis period show that successful models are transferable from one target group to the other, e.g. Roma programmes and migrant-centred ones often use very similar methodologies.

Recommendations and methods developed in Includ-ED as well as FamilyEduNet, building on methodology developed in the Include-ED project and partnership school’s methodology offer a useful universal source that OSD can build on. It supports an approach, where all interested parties participate in designing and implementing inclusion activities. It tackles both sides of parental engagement – in learning and in school life.

Parent Involvement 3.0 is a useful general handbook to help teachers and school heads understand the importance and possible tools of parental involvement. The methods suggested can be implemented by school leadership even in systems, where school autonomy is on a low level.

Schools as Community Learning Centres is an initiative that is very much in line with current policy trends, but implementing it needs full school autonomy and a school leader committed to it. However, even individual teachers may be able to implement certain aspects building on local community.

A simple assessment tool on parental involvement developed by NPC-p, Ireland can be used for awareness-raising as well as monitoring development in practice.

ParentHelp trainings show that its activities are equally useful for parent leaders, teachers, and school heads to understand parental involvement/engagement, embrace diversity and be able to manage challenges.

ELICIT-PLUS, involving a network of 12 member states, has developed different training modules and training manuals for teachers, students, parents and non-teaching school staff in EU literacy and citizenship skills. Covering topics like EU literacy, media literacy, intercultural approach, citizenship, and democracy in a collaborative learning methodology and with a possibility to be integrated in a whole school approach, this project is a valuable resource and inspirational practice. It addresses the contextual and informational levels of Digital Citizenship development, focusing on digital literacy skills, knowledge of rights and reliable information sources.

A child-friendly city is an approach that implements the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the local level. Jyväskylä (Finland) has been a child-friendly municipality since 2018 developing different projects involving schools, teachers, school leaders, parents, and students as well as other community members. Teachers and school leaders are responsible for the implementation of the participation plan within their schools. It is an inspirational practice in the involvement of the whole community, providing opportunity for citizens to actively participate in the development of city infrastructure giving voice to their interests, needs and creativity.

4.2 Skills and competence development

Training and coaching for skills and competence development build on the outcomes of 2.4.1. Parents International has developed a full train-the-trainer handbook available online in a responsive pdf format support self-directed learning of anybody interested in innovative, participatory governance engaging students of all ages and their parents. Parents International has offered partners 'train-the-trainer' events to support schools that are interested in implementing the approach nationally/locally. At time of delivering the current report, two sessions have been organised by partners. The University of Hohenheim organised a national event that also led to the recording of online training videos, and it was part of the Blended Intensive Programme held in Maynooth in March 2024 with the participation of all partners implementing pilots.

Exploring parental engagement in the BioBeo Project took centre stage during the training session held at the University of Hohenheim.

Day 1: Exploring Parental Engagement in BioBeo

The inaugural day commenced with an immersive session led by Dr. Judit Horgas, alongside esteemed colleagues Dr. Evelyn Reinmuth, Sabiha Gökçen Zwack, and several research students. Noteworthy discussions and insights resulted in the recording of over 1 hour of video material. This footage will be utilized to produce a video focusing on parental engagement in the bioeconomy. Additionally, the Resource – Don't Go game, designed by IPA, sparked interactive discussions conducive to BioBeo's mission.

During a lively winter barbecue, the participants could further engage in networking while enjoying a delicious lunch prepared by the teaching staff of the Bioeconomy Department.

In the afternoon, a dynamic online workshop session was conducted, introducing participants to the concept of parental engagement in the bioeconomy. This session not only served as an educational opportunity but also facilitated follow-up contacts, laying the groundwork for continued collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Day 2: Advancing Parental Engagement in BioBeo

Building upon the momentum of day one, the second day emphasized further exploration and enrichment of training content. Dr. Judit Horgas and Sabiha Gökçen Zwack engaged in illuminating discussions, shedding light on pivotal aspects of parental involvement in bioeconomy education. Their insights promise to fuel BioBeo's dissemination efforts and foster community engagement.

The collaborative spirit at Hohenheim exemplifies BioBeo's commitment to driving positive change in bioeconomy education. With an abundance of recorded sessions and interview segments, the path towards sustainable innovation is clearer than ever. Join us in advancing the BioBeo mission, one insightful training session at a time.

Dr Máire Nic an Bhaird and Dr Laoise Ní Chléirigh, both from Maynooth University, Ireland, spearheaded the development of the BioBeo Blended Intensive Programme (BIP). Their initiative brought together students from the University College Dublin, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, and Odisee University of Applied Sciences. The BIP aimed to deepen participants' understanding of bioeconomy concepts and facilitate the dissemination of knowledge. This comprehensive programme included pre- and post-research elements, allowing students to delve into bioeconomy concepts before and after the main learning sessions. The engagement training took place on Day 2 fully embedded into the general programme and supported participants in having

- enhanced understanding of circular bioeconomy concepts,
- practical strategies for integrating bioeconomy content into educational settings,
- improved ability to engage children, families, and communities in bioeconomy learning,
- hands-on experience through guided tours, nature retreats, and biodiversity exploration,
- opportunities for networking and collaboration with peers and experts in the field.

4.3 Policy outreach events

As part of the advocacy efforts by the BioBeo consortium, consortium members had or will organise policy outreach events in each Partner country to raise awareness of the importance of supporting education at home and aligning it with school education in the spirit of education for sustainable development, based on the fact that education at home can have a much bigger impact on children's learning than education at school.

For these events to be successfully implemented, Parents International has developed detailed guidelines and some key messages that link bioeconomy education to main European education policy efforts especially in the field of citizenship education / education for democracy, and education for sustainable development based on the following key recommendations of the Innovative Governance Report (D2.2):

- When introducing new content into schools, it is important to involve the widest possible range of stakeholders including students, parents, and teachers.
- It is important to ensure a variety of procedures enabling the introduction of new content into schools within the education system, so that they are tailored to different needs depending on the nature of the desired changes.

- Ensuring good, innovative governance in education allows for better adjustment of the content taught in schools.

The guidelines can be found in Annex 3. Short summary reports of all policy outreach events will be part of the updated version of the current report towards the end of the project.

5. Conclusion

As a result of the work carried out in WP2 so far, including the desk research done by partners for identifying instructional barriers and opportunities in Task 2.1, the collection of inspiration in Sub task 2.3.1 and the research carried out by Parents International and its external expert from the Organising Bureau of Secondary School Students, we have a clear picture of student and parent engagement in governance structures at various policy making levels from school (even classroom) to national and European level. While the landscape is relatively bleak, introducing a new educational topic such as bioeconomy makes it easier to change the status quo than changing governance structures of long-established educational processes. For this to be a success, student and parent leaders as well as bioeconomy and bioeconomy education advocates need to be equipped with tools from organising engagement events and systematically including engagement in daily practices to supporting the necessary change in policy making at various levels. The main aim of these efforts needs to be the enhancement of inclusiveness, especially creating structures for really meaningful (and not formal) participation of parents and students at all policy making levels with special emphasis on the engagement of younger (12-) students, and generally students of parents from diverse (rather than majority middle class) backgrounds.

While the project is continuing for another year, and many activities, especially youth engagement activities and policy outreach events will take place later on, when partners have all necessary tools, including the fully developed education programme, and the report on innovative governance, at the mid-point of the project, when this document is being delivered, we have

- a clear picture of the state of art, including inspiring practices of innovative governance engaging students and parents,
- a tried and tested training programme for the necessary competence development for engaging students and parents in governance, and
- tried and tested guidelines for youth engagement and policy outreach events.

The team has also identified the need to not only bridge Task 2.1 and 2.2 with WP3, the Education Programme, but also to link innovative governance with engagement activities in the Education Programme. Thus, while a separate chapter has been delivered by Parents International on the engagement of students of all ages, but a similar chapter on parental engagement has also been delivered alongside parental engagement tips for every element of the Education Programme.

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7. Annexes

ANNEX 1: Materials prepared for youth engagement

- *BioBeo Creativity Techniques*: The BioBeo Creativity Techniques has three versions based on the needs of the learners.
 - a. BioBeo Creativity Techniques – Long Detailed: The module includes an explanation about what creativity is. A detailed information about a list of creativity techniques. A brief explanation on why our world needs to move towards bioeconomy practices. Examples of bioeconomy ideas using the creativity techniques, and a do yourself exercise based on a video, and by using the creativity techniques in the module.

Basecamp link:

<https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245536150>

- b. BioBeo Creativity Techniques – Long: This module includes a slightly altered version from the Long-Detailed version. In this, the Creativity techniques are explained, along with examples and steps on how to develop these techniques. Although, the module excludes the Bioeconomy idea examples, and why bioeconomy is needed, it includes the do yourself exercise based on the video.

Google drive:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1JNEVhKPWK2xpgMrj_OPERt93YjLBVmUq/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=107833602154234165370&rtpof=true&sd=true

Basecamp link:

<https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245537100>

- c. BioBeo Creativity Techniques – Short: The shorter version includes a brief explanation on the different creativity techniques with examples from bioeconomy context. The module also includes the do yourself exercise based on the video.

Google drive:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1swhpUrl8sSxh4RIZYIXqHhb1yzGudZ9d/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=107833602154234165370&rtpof=true&sd=true

Basecamp link:

<https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245537625>

- *BioBeo Experiments to Try*: The module includes experiments which can be tried at home to create bio-based products such as grass paper, bioplastic, bio-enzyme cleaner, and rainwater filter. The Module encourages to come up with a bioeconomy idea in school or community.

Google drive:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1rPSdrvuAtQkIlodsXGVXsyFTVFD0HiKl/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=107833602154234165370&rtpof=true&sd=true

Basecamp link: <https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245538081>

- **BioBeo Guidelines for Ideas:** The module explains about bioeconomy and advantages of bioeconomy. It explains about biobased products and shows videos on how select biobased products are manufactured across the world. The module also includes some creativity techniques, and methods such as writing policy memo, making a video pitch, some other methods, for communicating ideas with policy makers. This also includes examples for the learners to understand how to proceed. The learners are encouraged to come up with ideas and communicate with policy makers in their area or school.

Google drive:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1yI4JlOIosk8Eu5D5HPScpOrTPqSoOXFML/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=107833602154234165370&rtpof=true&sd=true

Basecamp link: <https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245538319>

- **Policy Pitch Video Example:** The video provides an example of how an idea can be pitched to policy makers by creating a video. The example video show cases an idea by a schoolgirl in Estonia, named Mia, who is an environmentalist, and is trying to pitch her idea about having bio-gardens in their school through the medium of this video.

Google drive:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yHLSYF2Ji2p2DbzJHnTHj8kd2sDlCCsb/view?usp=drive_link

Basecamp link: <https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245535410>

- **Contacting Youth Parliament Instructions:** This document includes instructions for event organisers on how to contact the European Youth Parliament in their country to engage with them on the topic of bioeconomy and gather ideas.

Google drive:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13lJdVeYrzkYui1QYK42rAo6yVtJoAdD7/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=107833602154234165370&rtpof=true&sd=true

Basecamp link: <https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245538519>

- **BioBeo Memo Template:** The memo template is to assist partners in contacting the youth parliament by sending them a memo.

Google drive:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uqgKMBWOBGJLh6tQVfspUL1cNCSha3uk/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=107833602154234165370&rtpof=true&sd=true

Basecamp link: <https://public.3.basecamp.com/p/9TpA4t367LCdW8yLT9fyfeEq/vault/7245538430>

The modules prepared as a part of task 2.3 can be used by individuals, as well as in classroom settings, or at workshops. They allow for creating flexible lesson plans and presentations, to get youth involved in policy making process to help build bio-based and sustainable communities.

ANNEX 2: Training programme contents

The Train the Trainer Manual (D2.1) was delivered as a separate deliverable and its level of dissemination has been changed from sensitive to public with the following content:

Practical arrangements including

- Number of participants
- How to Attract Participants to the Training
- Ensuring the quality of your training
- Make Your Training Successful
- Practical Advice for Planning and Implementation
- Things To Consider
- Before The Session – Checklist For Organisation
- After The Session – Questions For Self-Reflection Of The Trainer:

Theoretical background

TRAINING MODULES

0. Introduction, getting to know each other
 1. Parental and community engagement, child participation
 2. Communication in diverse groups
 3. The whole school approach and open schooling
 4. Universal design and student-centred teaching methods
 5. Shared leadership at different governance levels
 6. Advocacy
- +1 Harvesting and evaluation of the training

ANNEX 3: Policy outreach events guidelines

The aim of the event

The aim of the policy outreach events is to raise awareness of the importance of supporting education at home and aligning it with school education in the spirit of education for sustainable development, based on the fact that education at home can have a much bigger impact on children's learning than education at school.

Partner tasks

- Preparing the event agenda (subjects to be presented, speakers, representatives of the target groups, stakeholders, etc.);
- Defining target groups and other special invitees (policy makers and policy influencers at various levels);
- Elaboration and distribution of invitations to the identified target groups;
- Promotional activities for the event in order to inform, invite, and recruit participants;
- Arrangement of the venue and other practical organizational issues;
- Preparation of documents / attendance list, evaluation form;
- Collection of the materials to be presented.

Format:

in-person

Preferred time span:

1-1.5 hours

Ideas for promotion

1. Send the invitation, personalized to your relevant contact at least 15 days before the event
2. Ask them to forward it to all their relevant policy makers and policy advocated, ask them to invite
 - a. High level policy makers such as Members of Parliament and City Councils,
 - b. Their advisors,
 - c. School/kindergarten leaders who might be interested,
 - d. NGO representatives in similar fields
 - e. Other policy influencers
3. Send it to your newsletter recipients or a carefully picked sub-segment of it.
4. Follow up the invitation 10 days before the event.
5. Remind confirmed participants about the event 5 days and 2 days before the event.
6. In case you use social media for promotion, make sure to have a registration form participants need to fill.
7. Use the project logo on all materials – slides, hand-outs, in the venue.

Practical organizational ideas

This event is planned to be a face-to-face activity, especially since we need to win their long-term commitment and it is easier when there is proper face-to-face interaction. It is better to postpone it by a couple of weeks than switching to online.

Choosing the venue and the time

Choose a venue with

- comfortable and flexible seating to cater for both plenary and interactive settings,
- all necessary technical equipment you define before the event (you need to know if you will use a laptop and projector, flipcharts, papers and pens, white and/or smart boards, wifi connections, etc.),
- clean facilities, including toilets,
- facilities for you to offer catering,
- child-friendly settings in case people bring younger children along,
- accessible settings for disabled people,
- free parking,

Choose a time when

- targeted policy makers are likely to be available,
- people are not too sleepy or tired.

Preparing your presentations

1. Only use slides if it is absolutely necessary. Use interactive methods such as World Café or FishBowl instead.
2. If you decide to use slides, make sure to have the project and Horizon Europe logos as well as the project number and the official disclaimer on the first or last slide, and include the project logo on all slides.
3. Make sure your slides are not crowded and there are no sentences, just a few words and/or graphics on them.
4. When using pictures, make sure you are authorized to use them. Preferably, use stock photos. Make sure to not include any photos of children who are recognizable in the photo.
5. Remember to KISS – keep it short and sweet. People don't like to listen passively.
6. Ask questions that they will elaborate on in the world café.
7. You can be country-specific, but remember that this is an international project. Education stakeholders will be interested in the situation and solutions in other countries.

Closing the session

Make sure to have preliminary commitment from some of the participants to continue working with you on the bioeconomy education topic.

Follow-up

Send all participants a thank you e-mail within 3 days after the event, sharing presentations, links, photos of world café papers, etc. Remind them to keep in touch – and don't forget to do it yourself either.