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# BEYOND BORDERS: BECOMING AGENTS OF CHANGE IN A CONNECTED EUROPE

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Quiosq

The Netherlands



QUIOSQ  
HERITAGE PROJECTS

# ***Table of contents***

<b><i>1. Introduction</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><i>2. Activity Implementation</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1 Activity Objectives</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2 Activity Description and Methodology</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.3 Tools and Resources</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.4 Suggested integration</b>	<b>5</b>
<b><i>3. Debriefing and Feedback</i></b>	<b>7</b>

## 1. Introduction

Global Citizenship is more than a concept. It is a mindset and a lived commitment to recognizing our deep and growing interconnectedness. In a world shaped by transnational challenges like climate change, forced migration, rising inequality, pandemics, and digital transformation, no single nation can act in isolation. Our lives are increasingly influenced by decisions made far beyond our borders, and our actions, as consumers, voters, and community members, ripple outward into the global fabric.

For adult learners in Europe, this activity provides an opportunity to explore what it truly means to be a global citizen: someone who sees beyond national borders, embraces shared responsibility, and values human dignity and sustainability for all. Yet this vision exists alongside growing political and cultural tensions, including Euroscepticism, the questioning or rejection of European integration and institutions. While some view such skepticism as a call for democratic reform and accountability, it also risks turning attention inward at a time when collaboration is urgently needed.

This activity encourages participants to critically engage with both perspectives. Rather than dismiss Euroscepticism outright, it offers space to understand its roots, economic disenfranchisement, cultural anxiety, or democratic disconnect while also exploring how European and global cooperation can enhance, not diminish, local agency and identity. Participants will examine how global citizenship and European identity can coexist, overlap, and even reinforce one another when grounded in principles of justice, solidarity, and inclusion.

Ultimately, the activity invites learners not just to think globally, but to act locally. To see themselves as active agents in shaping a future where national and global responsibilities are not in conflict, but part of the same ethical continuum.

## 2. Activity Implementation

### 2.1 Activity Objectives

By the end of this activity, participants will:

- Gain a grounded understanding of the core principles of Global Citizenship, including interdependence, sustainability, social justice, human rights, and cultural diversity. They will explore how these concepts intersect and how they manifest in both global systems and everyday life. Through discussion and examples, participants will begin to see Global Citizenship not as a distant ideal but as a practical and ethical framework for engaging with the world.
- Engage in meaningful self-reflection on their own values, privileges, and responsibilities within the global community. They will consider questions such as: How does my

background shape the way I see the world? In what ways am I connected to or complicit in global issues? This reflection will encourage empathy, humility, and a deeper awareness of positionality, helping learners understand how local identities and global responsibilities coexist.

- Identify and analyze local issues or initiatives that connect to global challenges, particularly through the lens of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants will develop their capacity to "think globally and act locally" by recognizing that everyday decisions, what we buy, how we travel, how we vote, can have global implications. They will also be introduced to tools that help trace the link between local actions and global outcomes.
- Design a practical, small-scale project or awareness campaign that applies Global Citizenship principles in a real-world community context. This will allow participants to translate knowledge and values into action, whether through advocacy, education, volunteering, or collaboration with local organizations. The emphasis will be on feasibility, inclusivity, and sustainability, empowering participants to become proactive contributors to a more just, equitable, and interconnected world..

## 2.2 Activity Description and Methodology

The activity consists of the following elements:

- Duration: 90 to 120 minutes
- Group size: 8 to 20 participants
- Format: in-person or virtual

### Step 1: Icebreaker, "Where in the world?" (15 minutes)

Participants are given a world map or access to an online map tool (e.g., Google Maps). Each person marks or names a place outside of Europe they feel connected to (e.g., birthplace of a relative, a product origin, a travel experience). They share their reasons and reflect briefly on how global their everyday life already is.

### Step 2: What is a global citizen? (20 minutes)

Facilitator presents a short definition and examples of global citizenship. Participants discuss in small groups:

- What does Global Citizenship mean to you?
- Can you be a global citizen and still feel rooted locally?
- Group insights are shared with everyone.

### Step 3: Zooming in. Local actions, global impact (25 minutes)

Using real-world examples (e.g., fair trade shops, food waste reduction programs, refugee support groups), the facilitator illustrates how local initiatives have global relevance. Participants brainstorm local problems or opportunities linked to global issues. They use a worksheet to map:

- The issue
- Global connection (e.g., SDG)
- Stakeholders involved
- Possible action

#### **Step 4: Action planning. My global citizen project (30 minutes)**

Each participant (individually or in pairs) drafts a basic action plan for a community-based activity that reflects Global Citizenship values (e.g., awareness campaign, intercultural event, sustainability workshop). Plans can be presented in a gallery walk or informal pitch format.

#### **Optional follow-up**

Participants may implement their idea over the following month and reconvene to share results and challenges.

### **2.3 Tools and Resources**

At least the following is required for this activity:

- Printed or digital world maps
- Pens, paper, flipcharts, or digital whiteboards
- “Global Citizenship” definition handout (e.g., from Oxfam or UNESCO)
- Worksheets for mapping and planning
- Example cards: SDGs, real-life local-global initiatives
- Optional: access to internet-enabled devices for research
- Voting dots or stickers
- Timer or bell

### **2.4 Suggested integrations**

This activity can be integrated into:

- Adult education courses on social studies, sustainability, or civic engagement
- Erasmus+ learning exchanges or intercultural dialogue workshops
- Community centers and lifelong learning programs
- NGO training sessions focused on global development or human rights
- It complements themes such as sustainable development, migration, cultural diversity, and climate action, aligning with both the European Education Area and the UN Agenda 2030.

Pairing this Beyond Borders activity with complementary activities can deepen learning and reinforce the themes of global citizenship. Some suggested pairings, grouped by type and learning focus:

### **Pairing 1: Values and identity**

Activity: Who am I in the world?

Purpose: Help participants reflect on their cultural identity, privileges, and biases.

Description: Use a concentric circles exercise where participants map their personal, local, national, and global identities. Follow with group reflection: How do these identities influence how we see others?

### **Pairing 2: Critical media literacy**

Activity: Decoding the news, whose story is it?

Purpose: Foster critical thinking about global narratives and media bias.

Description: Analyze different news articles about the same global event (e.g., climate protest, refugee crisis). Discuss tone, framing, missing voices, and how media shapes our global understanding.

### **Pairing 3: Intercultural dialogue**

Activity: Walk in my shoes

Purpose: Build empathy and cultural awareness.

Description: Role-play or storytelling activity where participants share or assume real-life stories from people in different global contexts (e.g., migrant worker, climate activist in the global south). Follow with a debrief.

### **Pairing 4: Digital global citizenship**

Activity: My digital footprint, our global future

Purpose: Link online behavior to global impacts (privacy, misinformation, activism).

Description: Participants analyze how their digital habits (e.g., social media, online shopping) connect to global systems. Explore responsible digital engagement and activism.

### **Pairing 5: Global goals in practice**

Activity: SDG action lab

Purpose: Connect abstract Global Goals (SDGs) to real-life local opportunities.

Description: In teams, participants “adopt” one SDG and create a mini-campaign or solution tailored to their community. Showcase in a gallery or pitch session.

## **Pairing 6: ethical dilemmas**

Activity: What would you do? Ethical compass workshop

Purpose: Navigate moral complexity in global issues.

Description: Present participants with real-life dilemmas (e.g., fast fashion vs. job creation, humanitarian aid with political strings). Use discussion, debate, or voting to explore conflicting values.

## **3. Debriefing and Feedback**

To enhance the "Beyond Borders" activity and ensure it leaves a lasting impact, consider weaving in opportunities for emotional engagement and personal storytelling throughout the session. When participants connect the abstract ideals of global citizenship to their own lived experiences, their families, work, consumption habits, or cultural roots, the concepts become more tangible and motivating. Integrating moments of reflection, whether through journaling, open dialogue, or shared stories, fosters a sense of ownership over the learning. Additionally, creating space for collaborative problem-solving, rather than simply presenting issues, empowers learners to see themselves as capable change-makers. You can also extend the activity beyond the session by inviting participants to join a follow-up challenge or share their action plans with the wider community. Ultimately, the more learners see their agency in shaping a more just and connected world, the more meaningful and transformative the experience will become.

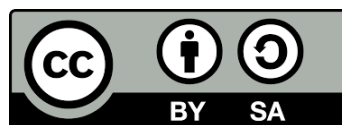
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