

THIRD ANNUAL POLICY PAPER ON PCD

Slovenia, August 2020

The third year of the three-year project entitled “Developing capacities together: European CSO-university networks for global learning on migration, security and sustainable development in an interdependent world- (InterCap)” was impacted by the spread of the Coronavirus. Therefore, some of the plans made during Year 2 had to be modified. The capacity building of PC(S)D actors in Slovenia was carried out online for members of the PC(S)D Network. The discussions regarding the training of civil servants are on-going and will be adjusted to the health situation. A new task was undertaken, aiming at ensuring the concept of PCSD to be incorporated in the efforts of including global education into the educational curriculum.

Developments at the Slovene National Network on PC(S)D

During the third year of the project “Developing capacities together: European CSO-university networks for global learning on migration, security and sustainable development in an interdependent world- (InterCap)” the Slovene national network for policy coherence for (sustainable) development PC(S)D held one online and one face-to-face meeting. The first one took place on the 27th of May 2020. Thirteen experts from the field of sustainable development, development cooperation, environment, migration, gender equality and global education, from the non-governmental, governmental, private sectors and academia attended this meeting. A PCD expert from the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) also participated at the gathering. The second meeting with the attendance of eight experts coming from the above-mentioned fields, took place on the 2nd of July 2020.

At the beginning of the year, discussions with ECDPM about the training of civil servants and awareness-raising event for decision-makers on the topic of PCD were held. However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, some of the agreed plans on activities for Year three had to be modified. Therefore, the discussion with the ECDPM was held online while the training for members of the network was postponed. The online event focused on the question of *how much coherency is enough to lead to better results and impacts, seeing that no country could be called a PCD champion, yet not neglecting the desired result of creating a systemic approach that would ensure coherency*. Examples of existing successful mechanisms were discussed, serving as the starting point for discussions on the most optimal next steps to further PC(S)D in Slovenia.

The following proposals were discussed in the form of debates during the meeting, while a mixed approach was deemed to bring about the highest levels of progress:

- 1) In order to ensure a better understanding of PCD by relevant actors, it is important to focus, analyse and to promote a specific issue or a topic, with either very low or very high coherence. At this point, referring to COVID-19 can ensure higher visibility.



- 2) Systemic approach: it would be feasible to conduct a comparative study, rating the state of PC(S)D in Slovenia, which would act as a stimuli for decision-makers to improve the situation; also through PCD and PCSD mechanisms, measured at the levels of EU, OECD and UN.
- 3) It would also be efficient to promote the understanding of PCD as a mechanism that ensures no harm done to development cooperation policies.

During the workshop, the effects of the Corona crisis on official development cooperation were discussed. Before the outbreak, a slight increase in non-inflated official development assistance (ODA) was noted, but a drop in financing is expected to arise. After the financial crisis in 2008, ODA levels started rising relatively fast, and it is the hope of ECDPM that a similar trend will occur after COVID-19 crisis. In light of the expected drop, PCD is of utmost importance to maximise aid effectiveness and long run sustainability. During the first wave of the pandemic, redirecting of resources to health-related activities was very common, but unfortunately holistic approaches addressing the broader consequences of the crisis, were lacking.

Slovenia presented its second Voluntary National Review on the implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) at the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2020. The Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, which is the Governmental coordinator for SDGs, initially envisaged a relatively inclusive and participatory process that would have allowed for a broad exchange of views among various actors at the regional and national levels. Due to the Coronavirus and the change of the Government, numerous consultations were cancelled, and recommendations of the civil society were often not included in the final report¹. PCD is not mentioned in the document, while one paragraph is devoted to PCSD, reiterating the continued commitment of Slovenia to the concept. To realise this commitment, the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy “will continue to coordinate the efforts of individual ministries through the already defined contact points for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Coordination between ministries will also continue with regard to the needs of Slovenia’s participation in the meetings of the EU Council Working Group for the 2030 Agenda – this will, namely, ensure the current flow of information between ministries and developments in the international community in the field of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”².

The shadow report³ on the progress of achieving SDGs, prepared by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), calls for strengthening PCSD, as Slovenia ranks 31st among 148 countries according to the PCSD index. To achieve this goal, NGOs asked the Government to create an open, inclusive and participatory mechanism to regularly assess policy coherence. The report among others notes the importance of PCSD for the survival of bees, the inclusion of global education into the curriculum as a tool for ensuring PCSD, and the role of PCSD for fiscal justice. NGOs believe there is not enough cross-sectoral cooperation and recommend capacity building of non-traditional actors for a better understanding of PCD and PCSD.

¹ Government of the Republic of Slovenia. Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: Second Voluntary National Review, SLOVENIA 2020. (2020). https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26450VNR_2020_Slovenia_Report.pdf

² Ibid.

³ <http://www.sloga-platform.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SLOGA-Poro%C4%8Dilo-NVO-Za-trajnostni-razvoj-ki-nikogar-ne-pusti-ob-strani-2020-WEB.pdf>



The second meeting, which was organised in cooperation with the expert group on global education, focused on ways of aligning the concepts of PCSD and global education. Based on the definition of PC(S)D set during the first year of InterCap, the National PC(S)D Network will work during the autumn to create an even more simplified definition, together with the core principles needed, to uphold the concept. This will be followed by joint meetings of the national network and the working group on global education, aiming at developing common substance and principles, which will be used for advocating the inclusion of global education and PCSD into education processes and development cooperation policies. At the moment, three processes are taking place at national level, at which our efforts could be directed in order to succeed the following goals: the renewal of Guidelines on upbringing and education on sustainable development, the renewal of the White Paper on Education in Slovenia, which provides the holistic structure and functioning of the Slovene educational system, and the development of Guidelines on cooperation between NGOs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in the field of global education.

In addition, during the second meeting the issue of systemic racism was addressed, in light of the Black Lives Matter movement. It was noted that the school curriculum is at the moment very Eurocentric and in most instances does not address the issue of diversity in this World. In order to bring this issue to the attention of decision-makers and the public, numerous advocacy efforts will take place during the autumn.

Thematic Example of (lack of) PC(S)D

Due to the Corona crisis, the plans of 2019 for in-depth research about thematic examples in the fields of climate change, energy, tax justice, migration, scholarships and brain drain had to be postponed. The research on tax justice and migration was already carried out and will also serve as the basis for NGO advocacy efforts during the Slovene presidency of the Council of the EU in 2021, whereas the other two topics will be analysed until the end of the year.

Conclusion

As in many other areas, the pandemic affected the original plans set on progressing PCSD at national level, as face-to-face meetings, as well as international travels had to be postponed. Nevertheless, the training within the National Network provided an opportunity to not only broaden the knowledge within the group, but to also start making plans for advocacy efforts at national level. The most important action during this (last) year, was the development of a common substance and principles of PCSD and global education at national level and the efforts set to tackle systemic racism. In that way, we have managed on achieving one of InterCap's goals, namely '*...shifting public perceptions of (in) ... security and risk... in an interdependent world*'. This was achieved through various processes but most importantly by addressing and making visible the terms of 'global education' and 'PCSD'. The National Network will continue its work after the end of the project, ensuring sustainability of the project and further developments at national level.

