



# RAISING SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRATED ECONOMICS,  
ETHICS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION  
FOR 9TH AND 10TH GRADE STUDENTS

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# INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS SOCIAL AWARENESS?

**Social awareness is the ability to understand societal processes,**

the relations between them and their effects on oneself, others and the world. Poverty, consumerism, labor, pollution, inequality, health, migration, social networking, elections and propaganda are the topics everyone is confronted with<sup>1</sup>. These realities include problems that need to be addressed from different perspectives. First of all, we should take a personal perspective by asking the question of how can I help the poor? What can I do to live like Bill Gates does? Will immigrants steal my job? Am I addicted to Facebook? Other solutions are being sought out in society. Is it possible to eliminate poverty? Is it better to get 300 euro in unemployment benefits or 300 euro as your salary? Should we open our national borders? Do we really enjoy the freedom of expression? Also, a global approach is required to tackle some problems. Why does hunger still exist? Will artificial intelligence replace humans? Is it possible to have a world without borders? How do we fight against propaganda? These are big questions widely explored in various fields, from the media to academic discourse, introducing different and usually conflicting opinions.

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**The key weapon in the context of information and diverse opinions is**

critical and independent thinking. This type of thinking about social problems should be encouraged and taught in schools; especially in high schools, when realities become important on a personal level, when pupils need to understand them in order to make responsible decisions and contribute to the overall solution of the problem.

Educational principles that encourage social awareness are as follows: discussion; understanding human beings to be the central figures of social processes; active participation in public initiatives; ability and reflective learning oriented education, where the teacher acts as a guide, a facilitator, and the progress is measured by means of self-evaluation.

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**Main subjects that teach the understanding of social phenomena are**

civic education, ethics and economics. Knowledge of civil society, politics, law and history is closely related to economic logic. Moreover, values play an important role in the understanding and evaluation of social phenomena. Integration of all three of these subjects helps in getting to the root of the problem. For example, a personal perspective on the issue of how can I help the poor may be explored through such economic topics as

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<sup>1</sup>Standard Eurobarometer 86 [interactive]. European Commission, 2016 accessed on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 in <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/>

private support and non-profit organizations. On the societal level, non-governmental organizations and active civic participation. The question also includes ethical principles

such as friendship and empathy; therefore, integrated teaching and learning is key to understanding social realities.

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## DO PUPILS LACK SOCIAL AWARENESS?

**A lack of social awareness is clearly reflected in the worldwide success of populist political forces,**

irresponsible management of public and personal funds, resulting in national and personal debts; emigration in pursue of social security or willingness to give up part of their freedom for the simulated security. This study presents educational guidelines on the most efficient means by which to cultivate young minds to think about social problems and their solutions.

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**First of all, young people often do not have rational opinion on**

what is going on in the social media. Instead of using consistent arguments to base their position, they often repeat stereotypical clichés heard amongst family members or friends, a set of opinions that they do not reflect upon or question in any way.

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**Second, young people often do not see themselves as decision makers,**

who can influence the economic, social or political situation. They tend to put the blame for their personal misfortunes and dire economic situation on outside factors, such as the government, the media or corporations. According to 2016 Eurobarometer survey, half of the questioned youths think that the most effective way of public contribution is voting in general elections. Hence, the pursue of change in society is minimized to voting and expecting representation. Only every fifth respondent thought that it was effective to actively watch the government after the election, for instance, by taking part in the public political debates, demonstrations or participating in NGO activities. A third of the respondents tend to agree that personal initiative is important in solving social issues<sup>2</sup>. *The Youth and Politics* survey done in Lithuania in 2015 shows that even though 41 percent of the surveyed identify themselves as politically active and familiar with the programs of political parties (69%), most of them do not recognize their main ideas and slogans<sup>3</sup>. This

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<sup>2</sup>AKROMIENĖ, Judita; DIRŽINSKAITĖ, Aušrinė. *Apklausa: Jaunimas ir politika [interaktyvus]*, 2015, accessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017 in: <http://eurohouse.lt/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Apklausos-Jaunimas-ir-politika->

[apibendrinimas.pdf](#)

<sup>3</sup>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE.

*Pagrindinio ugdymo bendrosios programos: socialinis ugdymas*, Accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: [http://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/6\\_Socialinis-ugdymas.pdf](http://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/6_Socialinis-ugdymas.pdf)

illustrates that while the youth understand and value political involvement, they often do not have a very deep insight into political processes.

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**The situation is understandable and is being aimed to be corrected in the formal educational system.**

Social aspirations are clearly determined in the general provisions of social education: “to develop active social, communicative and networking skills; pursue socially and personally beneficial goals; develop social and national awareness with its basis in democratic, cultural and national values”.<sup>4</sup> These provisions are also being implemented

**It is extremely important to encourage critical thinking on social processes in the final years of high school ,**

when a student not only has a personal relation to and role in society, but also a need to understand the surrounding societal processes. As the student becomes more and more

independent, makes decisions that influence his or her and the society's future and engages

in practice to make lessons less theoretical, more relevant to the problems of students and society and oriented towards reflective learning, rather than memorization. According to the Lithuanian National School Evaluation Agency, 88 percent of teachers apply active teaching methods and agree that lessons are practical and critical thinking-oriented. 81 percent of parents agree with this statement. Students themselves (67%) say they often participate in group exercises<sup>4</sup>. It is important to assure that such practice is accomplished and the goals are met in using the best suited educational principles and tools based on the experience of other countries.

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in the labor market and the general elections. The education of students aged 15 and older needs to be directed in a way that they could formulate ideas on the progress of their country and the world, organize and work towards progress on a personal level as well as active members of society<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE. *KITAS ŽVILGSNIS / UGDYMO PROCESŲ. Ką apie pamoką galvoja mokytojai, mokiniai, tėvai ir išorės vertintojai? [interactive]*, 2014 Accessed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://www.nmva.smm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Kitas-%C5%BEvilgnsis-%C4%AF-ugdymo-proces%C4%85.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Child & Youth Finance International. *A Guide to Economic Citizenship Education Quality Financial Social and Livelihoods Education [interactive]*, 2013 accessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <https://issuu.com/childfinanceinternational/docs/a-guide-to-economic-citizenship-education-cyfi>

# KEY PRINCIPLES OF OF RAISING SOCIAL AWARENESS

## Critical Thinking

German socio-political theoretic Friedrich Naumann, who was one of the first people to analyze political education and political awareness in relation to media, marks that the media *provides information with no interpretation, and therefore takes away the reader's safety rooted in the ability of personal judgement*<sup>6</sup>. Choosing, processing, evaluating interpreting facts require free thought, and free thinking together with its expression is the basis of a free society. Critical thinking means questioning ordinary theories and deconstruction in order to understand the underlying logic of thinking and flaws in the argumentation, so that students can stay open to discussion and critique, understand the core of the problem and reinterpret the situation if the conditions change. The German philosopher, who analyzed educational themes, Immanuel Kant says, *Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the*

*guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude! Have courage to use your own understanding!*<sup>8</sup> Education frees human beings from manipulation, it empowers independent thinking and personal opinion.

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## Discussion

In order for students to understand the current issues, they need to be introduced to the public discussion as well as shown a variety of ways of explaining them. It is key in provoking discussion between students; cultivating the ability to forge new arguments; in teaching to be more accepting of other beliefs, understand the underlying logic of other people's thinking and values, not to be afraid of a failure or to change one's opinion. It helps in forming a reasoned personal opinion as well as respecting the opinions of others, understanding their premises and outcomes. Discussion is one of the main means by which we can develop independent thinking and grasp the logic behind opposing views. During a conversation opinions may complement each other, an insight is gained. Discussion creates assumptions from which arises an educational conflict, while at the same time it

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<sup>6</sup>KANT, Immanuel. *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?* [interactive], 1784 accessed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: [http://www.xn--altiniai-4wb.info/files/literatura/LF00/Immanuelis\\_Kantas.\\_Atsakymas\\_%](http://www.xn--altiniai-4wb.info/files/literatura/LF00/Immanuelis_Kantas._Atsakymas_%)

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[http://library.standrews-de.org/lists/CourseGuides/religion/rs-vi/oppressed/kant\\_what\\_is\\_enlightenment.pdf](http://library.standrews-de.org/lists/CourseGuides/religion/rs-vi/oppressed/kant_what_is_enlightenment.pdf)

gives means to overcome that conflict through conversation. In participating in a discussion pupils can actively check their understanding and explanations which would in turn help them gain important knowledge and discussion, "reasoned opinion on how to value and solve a certain problem is that what turns discussion into a real discussion. Opinions are interpretations from different perspectives clarifying the problem. Interpretations are different, because all the participants have different, unique experience and viewpoints. <...> The aim of in class discussion is not to gain knowledge, but rather to reflection of different perspectives and knowledge<sup>7</sup>."

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### **An individual as a central figure of social processes**

An individual is able to change any unsatisfactory situation; one is in control of his or her own life, the life of one's family, school, and country. This applies in educational

and perception by comparing it with the experiences of others; gain information

understanding of the matter. When talking about social approach as well, because all social development theories are individual-centered. The key methodological principle of this approach was developed using the ideas of the Gestalt psychologist Kurt Goldstein<sup>8</sup>, who was later followed by Carl Rogers<sup>9</sup> and Abraham Maslow<sup>10</sup>, who both complimented the principle with the idea of self-fulfillment. An individual is responsible when free and free when responsible (Richardson, 1985). The concept is relevant to social theories as well. Society is a system of interacting individuals rather than a mechanism with separate rules and goals. Societal processes are not cyclical. The principle of determinism, usually applicable in natural sciences does not apply here, because at the center of society is a human being<sup>11</sup>. Thus processes are influenced by different choices and partnerships. Prices are either rising or falling, new laws are being

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<sup>7</sup>VASTERLING, Veronica. *What is the aim of discussion? A provisional answer with the help of Habermas and Arendt. Arts and Humanities in Higher Education journal [interaktyvus]*, 2016, p. 2 – 12 Accessed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1474022216629124>

<sup>8</sup>GOLDSTEIN, Kurt. *The Organism: A Holistic Approach to Biology Derived from Pathological Data in Man*. New York: Zone Books, 1995. ISBN 0942299973

<sup>9</sup>Person-Centered Therapy (Rogerian Therapy). GoodTherapy.org. Paskutinį kartą atnaujinta 2015 m. vasario 7 d.

Accessed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types/person-centered>

<sup>10</sup>Abraham Maslow. *The pursuit of happiness*. Accessed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/abraham-maslow/>

<sup>11</sup>HAYEK, Friedrich. A. *The Counter-revolution of Science: Studies on the Abuse of Reason*. Glencoe, Illinois: „The Free Press“, 1952. p. 209. ISBN 0913966665



passed and bullying still exists – all resulting not from some abstract laws, but human activity. Economic, political and cultural events are all the reflection of human interaction. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the direct and indirect consequences caused by one's actions to himself and the others, while being able to reflect, learn and improve. According to the educologist and philosopher Liutauras Degėsys<sup>12</sup>, our life seems to be a lifelong experiment, in which the importance and its subsequent positive change. This type of rationalization requires complex skills and knowledge of the main principles of certain subjects.

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### **Acquired Knowledge and Skills**

comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and, finally, evaluation, considered to be the top objective. While following the traditional concept, the educational process is kicked off starting from the lowest objectives and moving towards the highest, nevertheless, due to the changing circumstances and traditions in education teachers are forced to turn this system upside down and achieve their objectives through creative activities and projects. Though the tools are changing, the goal is still the same, directing the learning process in a way that information would be learned instead of memorized. Information is only perceived as

is in the process itself rather than its result. Therefore, the theory and practice of social development seek to use methods and instruments that empower us to act independently, pursue and work upon the end result, reflect on it and change our behavior accordingly. An analysis based on the interpretation of real situations, discussion and sound arguments is key to a better worldview

The educational task classification introduced in 1950s by Benjamin Bloom turned out to be the basis for planning and organizing educational processes and is widely applied today. According to this classification, knowledge is considered to be the lowest objective of studying, followed by important when its value is understood, as we autonomously look for answers to questions or ways to solve a problem. Rapid acquisition of information and knowledge through technology enables the educational process to concentrate upon the development of skills. The concept of blended learning is becoming more and more popular, in which information is looked for online, while the teacher and classmates help to understand and discuss it. When all the necessary information is just one click away, it is important to teach students how to interpret, critically evaluate and pick out relevant information, as well as connect it to facts, compare it and draw conclusions. For

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<sup>12</sup>DEGĖSYS, Liutauras. *Theory of Education as the Deconstruction and Interpretation of Social Reality*. 2009. p. 45  
Accessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in <http://>



instance, it is way more important to ask the question “why did Lithuania have to change their capital so often throughout the history?” instead of asking what and when were the capitals of Lithuania. Skills as basic as creative thinking, problem analysis, searching for solutions, and teamwork are way more important these days than a school diploma or even an academic degree.

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### Value Diversity and Tolerance

In talking about social reality, limiting oneself to logical arguments is unrealistic and not very productive because values are an inseparable part of understanding. It is important to separate the moral system from the act of moralizing.

The moral system is a collection of individual and internal values, as well as an openness to other moral attitudes and the ability to understand and adapt to the diversity of values existing in society. Moralizing is an attempt to create the “right” moral theory and treat actions that do not follow its rules as immoral. Economist and philosopher Friedrich August von Hayek noted that *Society which does not acknowledge each and every individual's values, does not respect individual dignity and does not acknowledge freedom*<sup>13</sup>. When talking about certain social problems and their

solutions, it is important to ask ourselves the question of whether it is just and fair, without seeking for the “right” answer, to discuss the causes behind formation of certain values and the consequences behind strictly sticking to one value system.

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### Involvement in the Life of Society

If education could be understood as a social process, then the social environment of the process is significant. The development of a pupil's cognitive skills as well as thinking habits depend on the quality of social interaction. Interaction is a factor that determines whether a student will successfully develop cognitive abilities or fail to do so (L. Vygotskis)<sup>14</sup>. *Countries which lack political involvement are doomed for oligarchy, where the government is controlled by one person. Democracy will not survive in the long term without active citizens*<sup>15</sup>. Therefore, it is necessary to enable active participation in public life. One of the most effective forms of social learning is experiencing, learning from examples and actively participating in the daily life of schools and communities. Social participation is acknowledged to be one of the

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<sup>13</sup>HAYEK, Friedrich A. *The Constitution of Liberty: The Definitive Edition*. New York: „Routledge“, 2011. p. 141.

<sup>14</sup>ВЫГОТСКИЙ, Лев С. *Психология развития человека*. Москва: Издательство „Эксмо“, 2005. p.208-547 ISBN 5-699-13728-9

<sup>15</sup>MAIELLO, Carmine, OSER, Fritz, BIEDERMANN, Horst. *Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills and Civic Engagement*. *European Educational Research Journal* [interactive]. 2003. p. 384. Accessed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.2304/eeerj.2003.2.3.5>

main ways to social development (Degėsis, 2009; Ruškus, Mažeikis, 2007; Zaleskienė, 2011; Burvytė, 2015; Targamadžė, 2014,2015; Kvieskienė, Kvieska, 2012,2014,2015; Kvieskienė, Briedis, Čiužas, Zaleskienė, 2014).

Researchers of civil society (Putnam<sup>16</sup>, 2004, 2015), while putting the importance of social capital for individuals and their groups, stress the necessity to encourage individuals to develop and strengthen social networks, to help and trust each other. Participation as a means of forming social capital, as well as new social mechanisms can be looked at not only from the perspective of economy, but also from viewpoints of social, ethic, psychologic, emotional and civic responsibilities. This accentuates the significance of participation by strengthening the social identity and defining its ways of expression.

When the motifs are known, involvement may be encouraged. According to a survey done by the Ministry of Education, when identifying the main reasons of involvement, most students define it as an opportunity to test themselves, learn to participate in a team

The discourse of social education empowers discussion about the participation of different individuals in the life of society, their *involvement and closeness to the social environment* (Mažeikis, 2007, p.40).

and gain participation skills. Students who do not participate in such activities, blame their decision upon lack of provided information, lack of encouragement from the outside, or simply being busy with other, more interesting, activities<sup>17</sup>. While introducing the importance of social processes, lessons in social education raise the motivation to actively participate in public life. Such participation does not necessarily have to involve special external initiatives, since all of the school activities are the reflection of the community processes and decisions, that should be made not only by the administration and the teachers, but the students and their parents as well. *The social maturity of a student is encouraged by the life of the entire community of the school: organization of the educational process; informal education; friendly communication and teamwork between members of the community, the relationship between the school and the local community, promotion of healthy habits. <...> A pupil's social activity is especially significant for the development of practical social skills*<sup>18</sup>. By

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<sup>16</sup>PUTNAM, Robert D. *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015. ISBN 9781476769899

<sup>17</sup> ŠVIETIMO IR MOKSLO MINISTERIJA. *Tyrimo ataskaita: 16*  
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METŲ AMŽIAUS JAUNIMO VISUOMENINIS DALYVAVIMAS. accessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: [https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/kiti/16-24\\_amz\\_jaun\\_visuom\\_dalyv.pdf](https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/kiti/16-24_amz_jaun_visuom_dalyv.pdf)

<sup>18</sup>ŠVIETIMO IR MOKSLO MINISTERIJA. *Pagrindinio ugdymo*

participating in the community, children learn culturally appropriate thinking and communication skills, they adopt the cultural heritage while creating new forms of communication and propose norms that they consider to suit the needs of themselves and society.

Education can also be understood as a positive factor for social change, cultural continuity and at the same time cultural renewal. Education based on the theory of sociocultural learning may also be called transformative. This type of education is directed towards the transformation of the individual and the environment in order to achieve personal pragmatic goals (for example, to empower pupils to adjust to changing conditions) and through that, the development of community. According to John Dewey, social education is successful when a school's teaching methods encourage social partnership, teamwork, internalization of values, and when moral principles become behavioral habits rather than simple rules.

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### Teacher as a Guide to Discovery

Directing the educational process towards capabilities transforms the traditional concept of a teacher. It is acknowledged that changes

in the world, information dissemination and technologies have a huge impact on the role of the teacher; an expert has to become an assistant and a consultant during the process of learning (Dwyer, Ringstaff and Sandholtz, 1991, Hadley and Sheingold 1993, Ravitz, Becker and Wong 2000). Even though a teacher cannot make any direct impact on a student, and one can only learn independently, a teacher can motivate, empower and arouse curiosity. To reveal this role, Lev Vygotsky draws a parallel between a gardener and a teacher, where teacher is a creator of educational environments. In cases where the teacher replaces a book and becomes the main source of knowledge, one loses the role of an educator and a facilitator. A teacher's role is best played when he manages to step back, but enables a favorable environment for education. The motivation and beliefs of a teacher are tools with which we can motivate a pupil towards self-development<sup>19</sup>. As today the internet provides an opportunity to learn from the best teachers in the world, it is very important to make optimum use of the live in-class communication and the ability to analyze local realities. The teacher picks the tools, the material, tasks and guidelines for evaluation. Teacher-guide enforced blended learning provides flexibility, empowers the ability to independently plan learning activities as well

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*bendrosios programas: socialinis ugdymas. accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: [https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/6\\_Socialinis-ugdymas.pdf](https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/6_Socialinis-ugdymas.pdf)*

<sup>19</sup>KATZ, Idit; SHAHAR, Bat-Hen. *What makes a motivating*

*teacher? Teachers' motivation and beliefs as predictors of their autonomy-supportive style. School Psychology International journal [interactive]. 2015 accessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0143034315609969>*

as makes them easier to access, make them relatable to real life and helps to save resources<sup>20</sup>.

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### Self-evaluation

In order for a student to take responsibility for studying, it is important to let him/her evaluate their own progress, show the extent of knowledge and abilities the student should have acquired by the end of the term, help him or her self-evaluate their current level of knowledge, and encourage them by guiding the learning process in a needed direction in order to reduce the gap. Feedback is really

important throughout the process of studying, nevertheless it should not be detached from the actual wish to know your progress, checking if you are going in the right direction. In Finland, the leading country in the field of education, self-evaluation is facilitated by the students' portfolios, diaries and reviews. *Tests teach answering to test questions. There are no test questions in reality or in job market, there are real situations, in which you need to apply information and communicate in a way that you can be understood.*

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## INTEGRATED ECONOMICS, ETHICS AND CIVIC CLASSES

**Since the 90s, the social constructivism approach to knowledge is becoming stronger,** based on the assumption, that any sort of knowledge and the reality itself are a construct of collective social activity. This approach is the base of integrated education. *Due to globalization and the spread of technology, the flow of information has become significantly faster, therefore schools and the general curriculum stresses the importance of interdisciplinary relations and meaningful ideas of*

*studying. This focus is associated with new research that shows that the main feature of the brain is to look for and recognize models and common meanings. It is thought that in some occasions the human brain can resist learning separate, unassociated facts, hence, using the basis of neuropsychology, scientists joined educational ideas that could be applicable in the process of integrated studying<sup>21</sup>.*

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<sup>20</sup>CIMO, The Centre for International Mobility. *Strategia 2020 – Suuntana aidosti avarakatseinen Suomi. [interaktyvus]* 2010 accessed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: [http://www.cimo.fi/instancedata/prime\\_product\\_julkaisu/cimo/embeds/cimowwwstructure/17891\\_CIMOn\\_strategia\\_](http://www.cimo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/cimo/embeds/cimowwwstructure/17891_CIMOn_strategia_)

[2020.pdf](#)

<sup>21</sup> Phenomenon Based Learning. *Phenomenal Education officialus puslapis*. Accessed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://www.phenomenaleducation.info/phenomenon-based-learning.html>

### **The teaching of social awareness and the understanding of reality has to follow certain educational principles**

and integrate traditional subjects. In order to have wholesome view of the social world, we need to refer to the information, insight and logic throughout different disciplines. This is also stressed in the social development program: *The social education axis that is being integrated is an aspiration to develop a mindful and an active member of a nation and civil society. In learning social education subjects, engaging in school and social life, the students are encouraged to form an overall view of the world they live and act in*<sup>22</sup>. A meaningful learning process should be based on real world phenomena, which are to be analyzed through critical thinking, principles of different disciplines, as well as general and specific knowledge. The goal is to teach the students understanding of the world, its processes, laws and lack of certainty. Integrated education is a process oriented towards sensitivity that joins the knowledge and skills of multiple disciplines<sup>23</sup>.

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### **An integrated approach to problems is productive as long as**

it is based on the comprehensive learning of students, dialogic and problematic teaching, based on which, according to John Dewey<sup>24</sup>, a

student must find a problem and solve it independently, by applying his or her knowledge. Problem solving methods and projects provided by Dewey and his followers are the road to integrated education, which is primarily concerned with complex and continuous teaching and the application of the principle of correlation. By solving problems and preparing projects, the pupils integrate their knowledge on separate subjects, resulting in a deeper understanding of the relation between reality and education. The problems chosen are usually not textbook (theoretical), but rather those of practical nature, that are more useful and relatable to the environment of children. John Dewey and his followers see schools and other educational environments as a means to help young people integrate into social life. Therefore, subjects such as ethics, civic education and economics help in solving practical problems and provide successful social integration.

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### **The Lithuania 2030 strategy provides the following summary of the barriers posed to integrated social education:**

Lack of citizen participation, inadequate implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, lack of responsibility, creativity and entrepreneurship skills. These factors

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<sup>22</sup>Ministry of Education and Science. *Pagrindinio ugdymo bendrosios programos: socialinis ugdymas*. Accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: [https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/6\\_Socialinis-ugdymas.pdf](https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/6_Socialinis-ugdymas.pdf)

<sup>23</sup>SAVAGE, Jonathan. *Cross-Curricular Teaching and Learning*

*in Secondary School*. New York: Routledge, 2010. p. 8. ISBN: 9780415565035

<sup>24</sup>FIELD, Richard. John Dewey (1859—1952). *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/dewey/>

encourage the use of creative socialization elements while integrating subjects of social education. Elements of experience-based learning, survival, live education experiences, when the teaching process takes place in areas by facilitating local communities are the main ways of improving the quality of education.

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**Social education has witnessed the highest degree of integration of various subjects in social sciences and the humanities across the world.**

Integrated social education has the oldest tradition in the United States of America and Canada, where the majority of educational material and curricula are based on an intradisciplinary approach. Australia's Adelaide declaration (DETYA) encourages the teaching of autonomous decision-making, assuming moral, ethical and social responsibilities, developing abilities to discover the meaning of life and teaching of how to become active and informed citizens, who are obliged to preserve the principles and ideals of democracy. The national education policy in Japan demands that all students study integrated subjects such as *People and the Industrial Society*. The constitution of the Republic of China (Taiwan) states that civic education is necessary in order to develop

Susan Kovalik<sup>25</sup> and Erik Klein<sup>26</sup> explore the ideas of a child-friendly educational environment and integrated education. Kovalik

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<sup>25</sup>Susan Kovalik. Nine brain-compatible elements that influence learning identified in „Integrated thematic instruction“. Accessed on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017 <http://www.hope.edu/academic/education/wessman/unit5/braincompatible.htm>

a national spirit, autonomy, morale, health, knowledge, entrepreneurship and self-management (Article 158). In the educational programs of the Republic of South Africa, there is no separate social education course, however, the Ministry of Education and Science demands that schools teach *respect to human rights, civic responsibility and respect to one's surroundings*. In other countries such as Ghana, Zimbabwe, New Zealand, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and other Asian and European states, the term "Social Education" is usually used in contexts of social sciences, high schools and universities, by historians, anthropologists, sociologists, economists, etc.

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**Disciplines integrated most often are history, geography, economics and civic education .**

Integrated social education programs encourage personal responsibility and civic participation. The most popular way of integrating educational content is by choosing a general topic and analyzing it from the perspectives of different disciplines. Educational experts agree to act as one, plan, create integrated content and select different subjects together. This type of integration is defined as *thematic*. Educators

aims to create models of effective integrated studying that would ultimately concentrate on the importance of the bigger picture and

<sup>26</sup>KLEIN, Erin. *10+ Tips for Using Brain-Based Methods to Redesign Your Classroom*. Paskutinį kartą atnaujinta 2016 m. gegužės 1 d. Accessed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017 <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2016-03-01-10-tips-for-using-brain-based-methods-to-redesign-your-classroom>

thematic education. In order to teach about social reality, the themes are chosen according to relevant and current social processes that are analyzed as a whole, in the real context, and in overstepping the boundaries of different disciplines and school years. They are identified through raising a question or a problem( e.g. How to tackle poverty?) Learning is most efficient when the students themselves are able to raise questions and look for answers. This is what makes the learning process interesting and motivational to students. Information that is gained this way is better absorbed than the information gathered through reading purely theoretical material. In integrating subjects, the Ministry of Education of Ontario (Canada) recommends considering social realities and raising awareness . Integrated subjects provide students with the opportunity to participate in the creation of new content. Teachers integrate new subjects, agree upon specific knowledge and skills needed in certain subjects and include them in the study plan. Integrated studying experiences provide students with an ability to strengthen and present their knowledge and abilities. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006 p. 23).

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**In Finland, which is considered to be among the most advanced countries in the field of integrated education,**

Schools enjoy the right to freely choose educational content, create study programs

based on the specifics of the area, cultural circumstances, infrastructure of the school and the local community and the teachers' competence. The aim is to introduce a pupil to his/her real environment, help him or her develop networks to the local community and businesses in order to plan future career opportunities. Experience and teamwork based education is highly encouraged. The pupils do the planning, self-evaluation and take responsibility by themselves. Topics such as active civic involvement, entrepreneurship, work, welfare , development, culture, communication and technology are not only included in the curriculum, but are actively applied in the daily life of the school. Pupils independently create educational environments, participate in the management of the school, get involved in local communities and businesses and observe public institutions.

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**Thematic scope of integrated social education**

Here is an example on how to develop the idea of thematic social education in grades 9 and 10 through the choice of a single relevant topic – a social phenomenon that is analyzed from three different perspectives: personal, societal and global. Every topic is based on the development of skills and transfer of knowledge that are provided for in the curricula of the three subjects<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup>Vidurinio ugdymo bendrosios programos. Oficialus švietimo portalas. Accessed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, 2017, in:

[http://portalas.emokykla.lt/bup/Puslapiai/vidurinis\\_ugdymas\\_bendras\\_2.aspx](http://portalas.emokykla.lt/bup/Puslapiai/vidurinis_ugdymas_bendras_2.aspx)





## Issue no 1. POVERTY

### **Personal perspective: How can I help the poor?**

ECONOMICS: private support and non-profit organizations.

ETHICS: friendship and empathy.

CIVICS: civil society organizations and active civic participation.

### **Societal perspective: Is it possible to eliminate poverty?**

ECONOMICS: wealth and poverty, employment, government aid and private support, charity and inflation.

ETHICS: poverty reduction and family ethics and finance.

CIVICS: solidarity and social justice.

### **Global perspective: Why does famine exist in the World?**

ECONOMICS: limited recourses, shortage, employment, private property, equality before the law, Constitution, transnational exchange economic systems.

ETHICS: the right to life.

CIVICS: social and economic wealth.

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<sup>28</sup>Friganizmas („freeganism“, angliškas naujadaras, sudarytas iš žodžių „free“ ir „vegan“) JAV pradėjo populiarėti dar 9-ajame dešimtmetyje, tačiau plačiau apie šį socialinį judėjimą sužinota tik pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais dėl padidėjusio

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## Issue no 2. CONSUMERISM

### **Personal perspective: I buy therefore I am**

ECONOMICS: demand and supply, exchange and price.

ETHICS: individual needs.

CIVICS: free choice and free market.

### **Societal perspective: *Freeganism*<sup>28</sup>**

ECONOMICS: society and business and money

ETHICS: different concepts of life and social groups.

CIVICS: social groups.

### **Global perspective: Do we live in a materialistic world?**

ECONOMICS: the object of economy and value.

ETHICS: moral ways to tackle the culture of consumerism.

CIVICS: consumer rights.

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## Issue no 3. EMPLOYMENT

žiniasklaidos dėmesio šiam reiškiniui. inter. inf. 2007. Naujųjų skolinių duomenų bazė [interaktyvus]. *Lietuvių kalbos institutas, 2013. Accessed on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017, in: <http://nsdb.sociolingvistika.lt/zodziai.htm?zodis=friganizmas&id=1190>*

### **Personal perspective: How can I live like Bill Gates does?**

ECONOMICS: personal budget, saving and accumulation, investment and business.

ETHICS: authority and partnership.

CIVICS: free market.

### **Societal perspective: Is it better to get a 300-euro unemployment benefit or earn a 300-euro salary?**

ECONOMICS: employment, income, salary, unemployment and state budget.

ETHICS: self-realization in professional activity.

CIVICS: the importance of knowing how to learn and functions of the government.

### **Global perspective: Will artificial intelligence replace people?**

ECONOMICS: the division of labor, productivity, technology, innovation human capital

ETHICS: the relation between people and technology.

CIVICS: social and economic wellbeing.

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## **Issue no 4. POLLUTION**

### **Personal perspective: My Planet –my responsibility?**

ECONOMICS: private property.

ETHICS: honesty.

CIVICS: civil rights, obligations and responsibilities.

### **Societal perspective: Environmentally friendly business: a myth or the reality?**

ECONOMICS: social responsibility external consequences.

ETHICS: recognition of other's activity; why do we judge others but justify ourselves?

CIVICS: civic initiatives.

### **Global perspective: Global warming – global decisions?**

ECONOMICS: innovation government in the economy.

ETHICS: the reduction of pollution.

CIVICS: environmental protection.

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## **Issue no 5. INEQUALITY**

### **Personal perspective: Being different or equal?**

ECONOMICS: alternative expenses.

ETHICS: identity.

CIVICS: equality before the law.

### **Societal perspective: The gap between the rich and the poor**

ECONOMICS: economies and taxation.

ETHICS: gender-based stereotypes.

CIVICS: the source of social exclusion.

**Global perspective: Can globalization minimize the gap between the rich and the poor?**

ECONOMICS: globalization and intergovernmental exchange.

ETHICS: equal rights and opportunities.

CIVICS: the essence of globalization.

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#### Issue no 6. HEALTH

**Personal perspective: Should schools ban junk food?**

ECONOMICS: demand and supply and monopoly.

ETHICS: freedom and responsibility.

CIVICS: the essence of self-governance.

**Societal perspective: Corruption in the healthcare system**

ECONOMICS: public goods and services.

ETHICS: honesty.

CIVICS: private and public interests.

**Global perspective: Genetically modified food: a threat or an opportunity?**

ECONOMICS: innovation, alternative expenses, competition market.

ETHICS: respect and animal rights.

CIVICS: sharing and information society.

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#### Issue no 7. MIGRATION

**Personal perspective: Will immigrants steal my job?**

ECONOMICS: specialization and competition.

ETHICS: respect for national differences.

CIVICS: the reasons of emigration and cultural diversity.

**Societal perspective: Should state borders be open?**

ECONOMICS: the division of labor the economic situation of a country..

ETHICS: nations' feud.

CIVICS: Constitution, EU law system, racial, national and religious tolerance and peaceful community.

**Global perspective: World without borders**

ECONOMICS: international trade restrictions, specialization of countries exchange rates.

ETHICS: national values and different religions.

CIVICS: the essence of national, cultural and political identity, international solidarity and cultural heritage.

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#### Issue no 8. SOCIAL NETWORKS

### **Personal perspective: Am I addicted to social networks?**

ECONOMICS: alternative expenses.

ETHICS: freedom and responsibility, dependency upon technology; what influence does it have on your lifestyle?

CIVICS: problems of information society.

### **Societal perspective: Safe social networking. Whose responsibility?**

ECONOMICS: economic systems.

ETHICS: online communication: advantages and threats.

CIVICS: the problems of information society.

### **Global perspective: The era of internet society**

ECONOMICS: technology, innovation international trade.

ETHICS: the evaluation of real and virtual communication.

CIVICS: the information society and creative society.

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### **Issue no 9. VOTING**

#### **Personal perspective: Am I a rational voter?**

ECONOMICS: economic rationality and economization.

ETHICS: the relation between an individual and a crowd.

CIVICS: country, sovereignty, political process and election system.

#### **Societal perspective: Should the majority decide?**

ECONOMICS: economic systems, government and society.

ETHICS: the notion and values of a democratic society.

CIVICS: the principles and values of a democratic society, the importance of independence and the essence of representation.

#### **Global perspective: A wave of populism?**

ECONOMICS: limited resources and demand and supply.

ETHICS: morals and politics.

CIVICS: ideologies and government's responsibilities.

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### **Issue no 10. THE MEDIA AND PROPAGANDA**

#### **Personal perspective: Do I live in an isolated bubble of the media?**

ECONOMICS: competition.

ETHICS: contemporary information society.

CIVICS: mass media and its influence on an individual.

**Societal perspective: Does freedom of expression exist in our country?**

ECONOMICS: the government and society.

ETHICS: truth and sin.

CIVICS: the essence of the freedom of expression.

**Global perspective: How to fight against propaganda?**

ECONOMICS: international competition.

ETHICS: attitude towards pop culture.

CIVICS: the role of independent media, national security and civil resistance.

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In raising social consciousness it is advisable  
to:

**PROMOTE:**

1. the understanding that social processes depend on people;
2. critical thinking, the evaluation and questioning of different theories;
3. tolerance for different values;
4. the analysis of different opinions and argumentative discussion;
5. active interaction with society's life.
6. capacity building, ability to check, evaluate and understand given facts by connecting them to real life.
7. teacher's role as a facilitator.
8. self-evaluation of one's knowledge, skills and progress
9. integrated disciplines that teach the understanding of the real world and its phenomena.

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**REFRAIN FROM:**

1. explaining social processes as self-powered.
2. reliance on the traditional approach towards reality;
3. ignoring values or moralizing;
4. relying on one-sided opinion without taking other arguments into consideration.
5. taking the environment environment and social processes as something that do not affect education;.
6. teaching to memorize facts detached from the reality.
7. placing the teacher at the center of education;
8. forced testing and standard tests;
9. the separation of disciplines and focusing on the exploration of different disciplines rather than phenomena.

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