

Citizenship Education in Europe

Appendix for Internet



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Main reforms in citizenship education since 2005

June 2012

Belgium (French Community)

In 2007, the Parliament adopted a decree to strengthen education for active and responsible citizenship at school. According to this decree, primary and secondary schools should take a comprehensive approach which involves:

- organising interdisciplinary, thematic activities;
- creating student representative bodies in schools providing compulsory education;
- teaching several citizenship-related topics within French, geography and history classes.

The decree also provided for an expert commission of academic and teaching staff which published a reference document in 2009, entitled '*Etre et devenir citoyen*' (Being and becoming a citizen) as well as pedagogical tools for teaching and evaluating citizenship education in upper secondary education.

In 2009, the Parliament adopted another decree which also impacts on citizenship education. This decree provides for the funding of NGOs and projects that seek to ensure that the memory of genocides, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as the movements or acts of resistance against the political systems under which these crimes were committed, is passed on to the younger generation.

Belgium (German-speaking Community)

In 2008, the Ministry of education introduced framework programmes (*Rahmenpläne*) by discipline or groups of disciplines. One of the main objectives of these framework programmes is to 'empower students to contribute to the shaping of society'. They specify the skills that should be developed and that students should acquire by the end of primary and lower secondary education. In 2012, the ministry will also publish *Rahmenpläne* for upper secondary education.

Belgium (Flemish Community)

The central level curriculum for citizenship education has been reformed as part of a wider reform of the cross-curricular attainment targets for secondary education. Following a 2008/09 academic research project which investigated the social and pedagogical relevance as well as the feasibility of the cross-curricular attainment targets introduced at the beginning of the decade, new cross-curricular attainment targets for secondary education were introduced in 2010. This reform was prompted by the need to update the attainment targets to meet the rapidly changing social context.

Moreover, the reform was intended to improve teachers' familiarity with the attainment targets by awarding schools more autonomy and more responsibility in this area. The number of attainment targets was therefore reduced and applied across the whole period of secondary education rather than to each of the three separate stages of secondary education, as had previously been the case.

The new concept of cross-curricular attainment targets refers to a set of rather broad objectives (e.g. taking responsibility, showing respect, being critically aware, and so on) and a set of more practical objectives within a structure of 'contexts'. The main focus for citizenship education is the political-judicial context, which focuses on four main topics: active citizenship; human rights and basic liberties; the characteristics, procedures and working of democratic systems; and the European and international dimension.

Bulgaria

No relevant reforms have taken place since 2005.

Czech Republic

The general reform of the curriculum launched in 2004 was fully implemented for primary and lower secondary education in 2007, and in 2009 for upper secondary education. The Education Act 2004 introduced a new two-stage approach to the curriculum, divided between national and school level. At the national level, the Framework Educational Programmes (FEP) strengthened citizenship education, with the establishment of civic competency as one of the six key competences to be developed; several related cross-curricular subjects were also designated. In 2010, a new complementary educational field 'Ethical education' was integrated into the FEP for basic education. School education programmes are developed by each school according to the principles prescribed in the respective FEP.

Denmark

No information provided.

Germany

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* issued a resolution 'Strengthening Democracy Education' in March 2009, in the context of the 60th anniversary of the Basic Law and the 20th anniversary of German unification.

Estonia

Since September 2011, new national curricula for basic and upper secondary schools are in the process of being implemented. They emphasise the need for further developing democracy in school and have revised the main aims assigned to the education system in terms of citizenship education, in accordance with the recent membership of the European Union.

Ireland

A syllabus for a new optional subject 'Politics and society' at upper secondary level has been developed and is awaiting implementation. No time frame has been confirmed yet. Until now, at upper secondary level, citizenship education has been embedded in the general objectives and values of the education system, but there are no requirements for a specific teaching approach.

Greece

No relevant reforms have taken place since 2005.

Spain

The 2006 Act on Education (LOE) marked a significant change in the development of education for citizenship. Following the 18 December 2006 (2006/962/EC) Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council, which sets out eight key competences for lifelong learning, the LOE now incorporates the development of the social and civic competences across the entire curriculum for the period of compulsory education.

It also establishes the creation of a new compulsory subject, 'Education for citizenship and human rights', to be taught in one year of primary education, two years of compulsory secondary education, and one year of general upper secondary education. The purpose of the subject 'is to give all students

an opportunity for reflection, analysis and study of the fundamental features and of the functioning of a democratic regime, the principles and rights enshrined by the Spanish Constitution, treaties, and the universal declaration of human rights, as well as the common values that are the basis of democratic citizenship in a global context'.

The implementation of this subject was rejected by the opposition party and the Catholic Church, which encouraged conscientious objection. Some families took legal action to prevent their sons and daughters from being forced to take these compulsory subjects. All appeals presented have been dismissed by the highest Spanish courts, on the ground that Article 27.3 of the Spanish Constitution 'does not protect the right to conscientious objection against this subject as the precept refers only to religious and moral subject matters and not to other subjects' (Ruling of the Supreme Court 943/2011, dated 8 March 2011).

In January 2012, the Minister of Education announced the replacement of the subject 'Citizenship and Human Rights Education' by a new subject, on the ground of the controversy and disagreements that followed the implementation of the subject. Indeed, its content was considered to be going beyond what real 'civic education' should be, according to the guidelines from the Council of Europe. The minister announced that the new subject proposed 'Civic and Constitutional Education' will be free of controversial issues and will focus on:

- knowledge of the Constitution,
- values, rules and institutions of a democratic and pluralistic society,
- history and institutions of the European Union.

France

A 'Common foundation base of knowledge and competences' which specifies the knowledge, skills and attitudes pupils should acquire by several key points during compulsory education was introduced in September 2006. Three of the seven key competences defined in this document are specifically related to citizenship education: 'Humanistic culture', 'Social and civic competences', 'Autonomy and initiative'.

Italy

A 2008 law provided for the introduction of the cross-curricular area of 'Citizenship and the constitution' in primary and secondary education in 2009/10, in order to consolidate the values attached to the Italian Constitution. On this basis, teachers must include objectives related to citizenship and the constitution in the teaching of their subjects or subject areas, and undertake projects aimed at deepening pupils' knowledge of the Italian Constitution as well as developing values for active citizenship.

A further Ministerial Circular (86/2010) aimed to create synergies between the potential stakeholders involved in citizenship education, by requiring schools to establish effective partnerships with local authorities and police forces as well as cultural and sports associations and NGOs.

The Ministry of Education commissions periodical surveys to monitor the projects developed by schools in the framework of the cross-curricular area of 'Citizenship and the constitution'.

Cyprus

The new national curriculum in force since September 2011 strengthens the cross-curricular element of citizenship education.

This curriculum is structured according to three pillars relating to subject knowledge; democratic attitudes and behaviours; and key attributes, competences and skills. The democratic attitudes and behaviours pillar is expressed as a set of indicators to be reached through a wide range of subjects. This new curriculum also contains revised learning objectives for the separate subject taught in lower and upper secondary, i.e. 'Civic and social education'.

Latvia

A comprehensive reform started in 2005/06, which aimed to shift educational approaches and methods from the acquisition of information to the mastery of skills, had an impact on the educational content and new standards for 16 subjects, including social sciences, which incorporates elements of citizenship education.

From 2005/06, a new compulsory subject, social sciences, was included in all nine years of primary and lower secondary education. It incorporates four subjects which were previously taught separately: Health education (in grade 5), Ethics (grade 7), Introduction to economics (grade 8) and Civic education (grade 9). From the standpoint of schools and teachers, this was a more consistent and uniform approach to teaching, especially in the context of demographic decline. The standard for the new subject was the result of work by teachers, specialists in educational content, the curriculum centre, pupils and their parents.

Lithuania

The National Parliament in Lithuania adopted a long term 'National Citizenship Education Programme' in 2006. Since then, the Ministry of Education and Science has been coordinating various nationwide initiatives in the field of citizenship education and the Centre for Civic Initiatives has carried out a number of projects.

A nationwide project intended to make students more actively involved in social and political decision-making processes was introduced at lower and upper secondary levels in 2009 and 2011 respectively. It is due to run until 2013 and makes it compulsory for schools to dedicate five teaching hours per year to social activities, such as activities for students self expression in the field of citizenship education, strengthening school-community traditions and participating in different kinds of socio-cultural projects.

Luxembourg

Textbooks and programmes for various subjects that incorporate elements of citizenship education (e.g. *Formation morale et sociale*) have recently been revised. The Ministry of education is currently developing a new law on secondary education, to be implemented in 2013/14, which will address various aspects of citizenship education. For instance, the new law will introduce the use of portfolios in which students report on their participation in activities in the local community; it will also increase pupil and parent participation in the organisation of everyday school life.

Hungary

In 2007, a new National Core Curriculum for primary and upper secondary education was introduced in order to promote the eight key competences defined at EU level. Among its fundamental goals are several key competences related to citizenship education: social and civic competences, communication in the mother tongue, learning to learn, and developing a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. According to the 2007 national curriculum, abilities, value orientations and attitudes related to 'Education for active citizenship and democracy' should be developed through the entire process of learning at school and by participating in school life.

Malta

A 2005/06 survey on how school life supports education for democratic citizenship revealed that many aspects of school organisation were already promoting citizenship education, but without consistent and comprehensive policies being established at school level. Consequently, in 2007, the Ministry of Education issued guidelines requiring schools to include 'Education for democratic citizenship' in the school development plan, whether as an independent section or as part of another action plan.

At present, a new National Curriculum Framework for primary and secondary education is being developed. In general terms, this new curriculum promotes a shift from an exclusively subject-based approach to a more cross-curricular, thematic, interdisciplinary, and collaborative approach that reflects real life situations. The cross-curricular themes being proposed are: eLearning, education for sustainable development, intercultural education, education for entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation. Citizenship education will be one of the learning areas and will include history, geography, social studies, environmental studies, and aspects of personal, social and health education as well as home economics. The new curriculum also recommends the development of a national policy to formalise the different forms of parental participation in schools.

The Netherlands

After an eight-year nationwide pilot project to gain information about integrating community service into the programme of secondary education, the central government decided that, starting in 2007, students would have to complete a total of 30 hours of community service (*maatschappelijke stage*) during their secondary education in order to obtain the school-leaving certificate.

Austria

Under the Austrian election reform in 2007, young people over 18 have the right to stand as a candidate in most elections and at the age of 16 have the right to vote. This reform, in particular, gave a boost to measures relating to citizenship education. These included the Democracy Initiative launched in 2007 by Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture and the Ministry of Science and Research.

The aims of the Democracy Initiative were the 'politico-democratic' empowerment of (first) voters, awareness raising and sensitisation, as well as the firm establishment of 'Education for democratic citizenship' in school and in initial and in-service teacher training. Led by different groups of experts, the practical implementation of the initiative involved six areas, including:

- an awareness campaign under the motto, 'It's you that counts!', and projects in the area of school democracy;
- the setting up of the Department for the Teaching of Civics Education at the University of Vienna;

- the collection, categorisation and evaluation of existing ideas and policies; and the setting up of a shared Internet platform;
- using new media and the Internet to facilitate participation;
- using the methods of communicating in art and culture and applying them to aspects of 'Education for democratic citizenship'.

The project was scheduled to last until the end of 2008. As part of the final event, the 14th EDC/HRE Coordinators' Meeting was held in Vienna from 13 to 15 November 2008, under the motto 'Education for Democratic Citizenship'.

During the Democracy Initiative process, the formal curriculum was adapted as of September 2008 and citizenship education is now combined with history and social studies and offered from grade 8. In addition, the Educational Standards for grade 4 and 8 which came into effect in 2009, put emphasis on skill-oriented teaching. Consequently, the Austrian Competency Model for Citizenship Education was developed to support young people move towards political maturity.

Federal Minister Schmied widened the scope and provided additional funds for a comprehensive redevelopment of Education for Democratic Citizenship. Three strategic points were addressed:

- evaluating and upgrading 'Education for democratic citizenship' as an overarching educational principle;
- introducing measures designed to anchor 'Education for democratic citizenship' in the grade 8 curriculum (analysis and adaptation of curricula)
- setting priorities for the initial and in-service training of teachers.

As a result, citizenship education has become a compulsory subject for all prospective teachers who attend a university college of teacher education (*Pädagogische Hochschule*) and for all students who study history at university.

Poland

The new 2008 core curriculum for general education introduced learning objectives to be met by every student at the end of every stage of education. Developing active, conscious and responsible participation in the social life of the country, as well as in Europe and the wider world are among the main aims which underpin the new learning objectives. The new core curriculum is being introduced gradually starting in September 2009 in pre-schools, the first grade of primary school and the first grade of lower secondary school (*gimnazjum*). The full implementation of the new curriculum encompassing the whole system (primary and secondary education) is envisaged for September 2015.

In order to encourage young people and their representatives to have a voice in the legislative and political matters that affect them as well as to enable them to participate in international debates, the Polish Council of Youth Organizations was established on 5 April 2011. The Council also aims to help strengthen civic society.

A national level council of parents was established on 14 March 2011. It includes the representatives of the most active parent groups and experts. In order to increase parents' influence on school matters, the Parent Council's role is to consult and issue opinions on problems arising between parents and schools.

Portugal

In 2006, the Minister of Education and the Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers initiated a vast Forum in order to promote a debate on citizenship education. Over a year-and-a-half, around 60 people took part in a series of successive meetings, debates and discussions either on their own behalf, or on behalf of many different private and public organizations. The Forum focused on identifying best practice; giving recommendations to teachers on how the non-disciplinary curricular areas (which include 'Civics training') could be better used; and fostering the development of cross-disciplinary projects.

The Forum resulted in a list of guidelines for an Action Plan for Citizenship Education, which defined seven strategic objectives on global citizenship in its multiple dimensions. These included:

- promoting a culture of individual and social responsibility;
- articulating the culture of individual and social responsibility through networking, largely using new information technologies;
- including global citizenship as a cross-curricular topic as well as a specific area within private and public provision of initial school education as well as lifelong learning;
- providing all students with a common base of knowledge, attitudes and skills through a sound education in terms of rights and responsibilities and with a view to creating global citizens;
- creating conditions for schools to become a special space where citizenship can be exercised and, consequently become a space for the development of global citizens;
- guaranteeing initial and continuing training for teachers, as well as other professional groups and educational stakeholders, focusing on the acquisition of the competences needed to deliver citizenship education in schools, ensuring the creation, adaptation, development and dissemination of resources and teaching materials;
- establishing partnerships between several public and private bodies, including civil society, in order to increase the diversity, quality and relevance of activities within the scope of citizenship education.

Recommendations issued by the Forum also led to the introduction of a separate compulsory subject 'Civics training' in upper secondary general education from 2011/12.

Romania

The 2011 Law of National Education establishes that the main goal of primary and lower secondary education is the development of eight key competences, including social and civic competences. Competences are seen as a multifunctional and transferable set of knowledge, skills and aptitudes necessary, among other things, for social integration and active civic participation in society. In addition, a new curriculum framework which supports the shift of school education towards the development of competences, is being developed. It will enter into force from 2012/13.

For the school year 2011/12, the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports has established as priority objectives the promotion of active citizenship and a healthy life style for children in disadvantaged, especially rural, areas. These objectives are pursued through the organisation of extra-curricular and non formal activities which target 12 800 pupils.

Slovenia

A comprehensive research project 'Citizenship Education for the Multicultural and Globalised World' was carried out between January 2010 and August 2011. An interdisciplinary project group reviewed the content, concepts, approaches, strategies and institutional framework for citizenship education, in the light of contemporary theories on citizenship education and approaches used in other European countries. The research found that the Slovenian approach to citizenship education did not sufficiently address the general social and political environment or the issues that present the main challenges in the 21st century and that teachers did not have sufficient skills. This research project resulted in proposals to bring contemporary global and multicultural content to the curricula of citizenship education and to provide new teaching materials.

Following public debates, the syllabus of 'Citizenship, patriotic education and ethics' (previously named 'Citizenship education and ethics') has been reviewed in order to reduce the emphasis on patriotism and enhance the political literacy component. The new syllabus has been in force since 2011/12.

Slovakia

In accordance with the School Act No. 245/2008, new national curricula have started to be introduced from 2008/09 at primary and secondary levels. They have increased the autonomy of educational providers to create their own educational programmes (in line with the principles and aims of their respective state educational programme) and respond to different educational needs and requirements. These curricula will be fully implemented by 2012/13.

Finland

Between 2003 and 2007, the government carried out a national level action programme, the Youth Participation Project. The project aimed to develop new operational and service models at the local level to assist and develop youth participation. More than 70 municipalities were involved in the project, which they co-financed with the ministry of Education. Both the National Board of Education and Youth Cooperation coordinated and controlled the implementation of projects at local level.

The Youth Participation Project focused on the following areas:

- the provision of opportunities and services by municipalities and the establishment of cooperation on youth matters;
- the place of policies relating to children and young people in political strategies and welfare programmes, and spending by municipalities on young people;
- the school as a safe working place for children and young people; and the role of the students' union within schools,
- youth councils, youth forums, youth parliaments and young people's participation in decision-making;
- personal guidance and assistance for young people moving on from basic education to further education and working life, and individual educational and employment opportunities for young people;
- cooperation between home and school.

Sweden

There have been no new reforms since 2005 but the emphasis on values and attitudes has been further strengthened by the Education Act introduced on 1st July 2011.

United Kingdom (England)

A revised national curriculum was introduced from September 2008 starting with all year 7 (age 11) pupils. According to the revised curriculum, the new Key Stage 4 programme of study for Citizenship became statutory for all pupils in year 10. Alongside it, pupils can choose to take a General Certificate of Secondary education (GCSE) in Citizenship Studies. The revised guidelines for Citizenship in the new 2008 National Curriculum reflected the increased importance assigned to topics such as identity, diversity and community cohesion, as well as children and young people' participation in schools and beyond. The guidelines also introduced a requirement for schools to promote community cohesion.

A major curriculum review in 2011/12 is covering all aspects of the curriculum, with the aim of introducing a new national curriculum in September 2014. Organisations with an interest in citizenship education have been consulted on possible changes to the current approach to citizenship education. A decision about the place of citizenship in the new curriculum has not yet been announced.

United Kingdom (Wales)

The Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year olds in Wales has been amended in a way that reinforces citizenship education. The five major themes covered by this framework now include 'Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship' and 'Active Citizenship', as of 2008. The revised curriculum implemented between 2008 and 2011 also extended the scope of the 'Wales Europe and the World' framework for 14 to 19 year old learners to include political, social, economic and cultural elements.

United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)

A revised curriculum, which was statutory for all year groups in Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, was phased in between 2007 and 2009/10. For Key Stages 1 and 2 (age 6 -11) the area of learning 'Personal Development and Mutual Understanding' includes a focus on becoming 'confident, independent and responsible citizens' At Key Stages 3 and 4 (ages 12-16), it introduced the area of learning called 'Learning for life and work' which includes a strand on local and global citizenship.

United Kingdom (Scotland)

Between 2004 and 2009, Scotland carried out a significant and holistic review of the 3-18 curriculum, known as the Curriculum for Excellence. The new curriculum guidelines were published in 2009 and implementation began in 2010/11.

The revised 3-18 curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need to flourish in life, learning and work. The knowledge, skills and attributes learners develop will allow them to demonstrate four key capacities – to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Each curriculum area contributes to the four capacities. The curriculum also emphasises all the other experiences (outside the curriculum areas and subjects) which play an important part in developing attributes and capabilities such as interdisciplinary learning, ethos and life of the school, and opportunities for personal achievement.

Iceland

A 2008 Act on the compulsory school, implemented in 2010, promoted pupil participation in school governance. According to this Act, each school council must comprise two pupil representatives. A monitoring process carried out in 2010 revealed that this occurred in over 90 % of schools.

A Youth Act, which came into force in 2007, requires municipal authorities to promote the establishment of youth councils. The role of the youth council is, among other things, to advise municipal authorities on the affairs of young people in the community concerned. A monitoring survey carried out in 2009, at the initiative of the Ministry of Education, revealed that about 40 % of municipalities had already established a youth council, including most of the largest communities.

New curricula for primary, lower and upper secondary education began to be implemented as from 2011/12. They strengthen the cross-curricular element of citizenship education which is based on nine key competences, including democracy and human rights, and six fundamental pillars: literacy in a broad sense, education for sustainability, health and welfare, democracy and human rights education, equality and creative work.

Norway

In accordance with the curriculum introduced in 2007 in the context of the Knowledge Promotion Reform, the teaching of a distinct subject incorporating elements of citizenship education is taught. For the last three years of compulsory education, schools must provide a subject focused on the work of the pupil council. The subject is based on classroom teaching, participation in decision-making processes and duties in the school community, as well as the provision of an inclusive learning environment. In 2010, the Directorate for Education and Training carried out a survey to identify the challenges and issues faced by secondary schools in implementing the separate curriculum subject 'Pupil council work'. One of the main findings showed that teachers found work on this subject difficult to implement because pupils' achievement did not have to be assessed. Following this evaluation, the decision was taken by the Parliament to remove 'Pupil council work' from the curriculum from 2012/13. Its content will be integrated into social studies as well as in new optional subjects at lower secondary level. In addition, a kit for pupil participation and democracy will be developed.

Croatia

In 2006, following a pilot-phase of several years, it became compulsory for primary and secondary schools to implement the cross-curricular programme 'Education for human rights and democratic citizenship'. Schools are free to determine the specific learning approach they will use. The objectives of the cross-curricular programme may be implemented through an interdisciplinary approach, as a separate optional subject, as extra-curricular activities, or they may be systematically applied through the entire school curriculum.

Turkey

A pilot project for Citizenship and Democracy Education in secondary schools was carried out in 2010-2011.

The main aims of this pilot project were to enable pupils to:

- improve their awareness and understanding of international affairs;
- become more sociable and adaptable citizens;
- avoid stereotyping and discriminating against other cultures and people;
- work cooperatively and collaboratively with each other on issues such as mutual understanding and effective communication skills.

The project involved several educational activities and the development of a subject syllabus. It led to the introduction of the compulsory subject 'Citizenship and Democracy' in grade 8 of primary education as of 2011/12.