Developing the conditions for Education for Citizenship in Higher Education

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Children's Identity & Citizenship in Europe

Thematic Network   Socrates

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The key questions surrounding education for citizenship in higher education

- what is education for?

- what are universities for? and

- what values should education systems aim to develop in young people?

raise complex issues. As these are such challenging questions and as there is little agreement about them, this raises for the public, students, academics and educationists, as many issues as definitive answers. Nearly all of us who chose education as a career did so to make a difference; not just degree results, but to the lives and aspirations of young people and society as a whole. Thus, although we champion the development of critical abilities, the skills of enquiry and questioning, activity based approaches to learning and the notion of rights as something to be cherished, this is not in itself merely a chronicle. It is to suggest that a mixture of creative content, ethos and a participatory, consultative, democratic approach in the framework of macro and micro improvements can lead to better, deeper learning and crucially a fairer and more just society.

This trend towards a larger role for education for citizenship has been global, shown by, for example, calls from the European Ministers of Education every year at their standing conference that there is a need for a more coherent and sustained approach to education for democratic citizenship and the emphasis on it in the Action Plan adopted by the heads of state and Government of the Council of Europe at their 3rd summit in Warsaw in May 2005. And this itself was reaffirming the Council's decision that 2005 was the Year of Citizenship Through Education (Council of Europe, 2006). Further, in central and eastern Europe, the ending of communist one-party rule and uncertain movements towards democracy has put the issue of education for democracy to the fore. Outside Europe, mass movements, such as the movement for democracy in China and the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square and in the early 1990s the overthrow of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa, were inspiring moments. Yet hand in hand with welcome movements towards global democratic movement, has developed a war on terror, which can have an unfortunate consequence in demonizing whole sections of the world population.

While citizenship education has primarily been developed for schools, most countries officially recognise its importance post-16. Clearly higher education has an important role to play in the development of citizenship education and this relates to its longstanding role as a civilising force within complex industrial

societies. The expansion of higher education raises questions about how this role is to be carried forward in the twenty first century. The incorporation of a business and consumerist model into higher education has reinforced the notion that civil relationships are primarily contractual. In such an environment, how can graduates be prepared for citizenship and, potentially, a leadership role in civil society?

One way this can be achieved is through the establishment of academic programmes that also incorporate forms of community based learning, an international trend that highlighted the importance of work in community and voluntary organisations for undergraduate students (Annette, 2000 and 2005; Arthur and Bohlin, 2004; Chen, 2007; Long et al, 2001; Mattson and Shea, 1997; NCIHE, 1997). Many higher education institutions around the world now offer their students opportunities to become involved in various kinds of community, service learning and voluntary work. However, if such initiatives are to become part of a broad based citizenship education within higher education, they must help to cultivate skills of critical thinking and social and political analysis. In this sense, citizenship education is a combination of academic skills combined with the actual experience of active citizenship.

Reflecting these developments in citizenship education, a key objective should be for students to explore the contested meaning of citizenship and citizenship education. In developing this critical approach to citizenship education, students should be able to evaluate and assess the application of different strategies for teaching citizenship within schools. It was envisaged that students would develop critical and analytical skills through supporting and reflecting upon the delivery of citizenship in schools. Nonetheless, as Annette (2005) points out, there is a lack even of rhetoric about the values of civic republicanism and the promotion of citizenship from most of the statements of many of the higher education institutions throughout Europe.

What is citizenship?

Almost all sections of society internationally now accept citizenship as a legitimate goal. That is not to suggest that there is much agreement about what it means, other than that it is a 'good thing'. The debate tends to be around maximal and minimal interpretations of citizenship. Evans (1995) summarises this as:

Minimal interpretations emphasise civil and legal status, rights and responsibilities - the good citizen is law-abiding, public-spirited, exercises political involvement through voting for representatives. Maximal interpretations, by contrast, entail consciousness of self as a member of a shared democratic culture, emphasise participatory approaches to political involvement and consider ways in which

social disadvantage undermine citizenship by denying people full participation in society in any significant sense.

Faulks (1998, 2000) identifies three main types of definition of citizenship. Firstly, legal definitions of citizenship (Oliver and Heater, 1994) stress nationality, rights of residence and duties; secondly, philosophical definitions are determined as being the relationship between the role of the state in providing for needs and the duties of the individual to the state. It has been argued (Deuchar, 2007; Faulks, 1998, 2000; Gardner, 1994; Maitles, 2005; Turner, 1993) that this definition misses out the central issue of the modern world, that of inequalities in society. The third interpretation, socio-political, is defined by Turner (1993:2) as 'that set of practices (juridical, political, economic and cultural) which define a person as a competent member of society, and which as a consequence shape the flow of resources to persons and social groups'.

All definitions tend to stress the nature of the relationship between the individual and the state. Yet, it would be fair to say that although discussed by policy makers, these debates rarely impinge on the way the discussions are framed in educational establishments.

Citizenship education and competencies

Researchers (Fullan, 1998; Ozmon and Craver, 2007; Jarvis, 2001) analysing a changing global world point out features of postmodernity such as social, cultural, economic and political relationships, which have a major impact on how we both view and shape our world. A person living in such a complex society has to be enabled to manage his or her life. And education for citizenship can play an important role in such circumstances especially when democracy is seen as a form of government and as a practice, in which participation and involvement are key points. Although, democracy is a concept in continuous development and a topic for discussion without definitive answers, there is a broad recognition of the centrality of democracy to contribute to the learning to live together. In the project "Education for Democratic Citizenship" the Council of Europe describes democracy as an 'ability of solving conflicts and differences of opinion in a non-violent manner'. Nonetheless, practice at local level can turn out in ways that resemble more those of old socio-cultural traditions than the modern - western oriented - conception of democracy. Active citizenship is more a democratic practice, to a large extent culturally and politically based. The Dakar Framework for Action maintains that '…education must lead to the acquisition of…the knowledge, values and abilities that are needed for individual development, and for the exercise of participatory and responsible citizenship in a democracy'.

But can any of this be measured? And, if it can, would we want to? It has been pointed out by some (Janoski, 1998; Lister and Pia, 2008;

McDonough and Feinberg, 2005) that an active citizen could be described through developing "citizen" competencies which are needed to participate in the management of personal and social life in a harmonious society. Some of these competencies might be:

- being able to vote and assume one's responsibilities in a democratic political system and in community life, trade unions, etc.;

- in order to survive in a society of free competition, being able to find accomodation, start a family and conclude and abide by contracts (relating to marriage, work, rental, insurance, etc.);

- being able to invest and spend intelligently one's resources in a free and transparent market, using in a rational manner information about products and services;

- being able to find one's way about in the educational system, receiving training, and learning and using available information;

- being able to access culture and media by making informed choices of recreational and cultural activities;

- being able to look after one's health by preventative and responsible use of the medical and hospital system;

- being able to defend one's rights and interests by asking for police protection and making use of legal procedures and the courts.

The European Union (EU, 2006) outlines the competencies as:

A. Social competence is linked to personal and social well-being which requires an understanding of how individuals can ensure optimum physical and mental health, including as a resource for oneself and one's family and one's immediate social environment, and knowledge of how a healthy lifestyle can contribute to this. For successful interpersonal and social participation it is essential to understand the codes of conduct and manners generally accepted in different societies and environments (e.g. at work). It is equally important to be aware of basic concepts relating to individuals, groups, work organisations, gender equality and non-discrimination, society and culture. Understanding the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity is essential.

The core skills of this competence include the ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints, to negotiate with the ability to create confidence, and to feel empathy. Individuals should be capable of coping with stress and frustration and expressing them in a constructive way and should also distinguish between the personal and professional spheres.

The competence is based on an attitude of collaboration, assertiveness and integrity. Individuals should have an interest in socio-economic developments and intercultural communication and should value diversity and respect others, and be prepared both to overcome prejudices and to compromise.

B. Civic competence is based on knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, and civil rights, including how they are expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international declarations and how they are applied by various institutions at the local, regional, national, European and international levels. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as the main events and trends in national, European and world history. In addition, an awareness of the aims, values and policies of social and political movements should be developed. Knowledge of European integration and of the EU's structures, main objectives and values is also essential, as well as an awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Europe.

Skills for civic competence relate to the ability to engage effectively with others in the public domain, and to display solidarity and interest in solving problems affecting the local and wider community. This involves critical and creative reflection and constructive participation in community or neighbourhood activities as well as decision-making at all levels, from local to national and European level, in particular through voting.

Full respect for human rights including equality as a basis for democracy, appreciation and understanding of differences between value systems of different religious or ethnic groups lay the foundations for a positive attitude. This means displaying both a sense of belonging to one's locality, country, the EU and Europe in general and to the world, and a willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels. It also includes demonstrating a sense of responsibility, as well as showing understanding of and respect for the shared values that are necessary to ensure community cohesion, such as respect for democratic principles. Constructive participation also involves civic activities, support for social diversity and cohesion and sustainable development, and a readiness to respect the values and privacy of others.

Whilst there can be some justification in developing a competency model, there are problematic areas related to the overly prescriptive form it can take. Indeed, since the building of an efficient economic and political system ought never to be an end in itself, but only the means to such goals as building a fair, democratic and culturally enriching society, an equally important premise has to be that programmes of education for citizenship are central in preparing people for life as fair minded and competent citizens. Citizenship is

thus not something to be segregated into discrete programmes, but should permeate many types of study – literature, history, geography, politics, science, religion. The student who learns how to debate the meaning of a poem or a novel or a film or to weigh the evidence for and against wind farms or genetic modification, or to understand the reasons why Islam and Christianity have sometimes been in conflict is in fact well prepared for life as a citizen.

Thus, it is contested what we should reasonably expect our graduates to know and be able to do, at an advanced level. At the moment, it is hard to know whether and to what extent existing programmes of higher education are any kind of common basis for citizenship at all. And that of course is one of the aims of this CiCe working group.

Indeed, there seems to be a tendency within the universities to the opposite, with an increasingly narrow vocational focus. The need for students to get a job on leaving has always been there. The lack of grants and the tuition fees paid by most of our students add to the pressures. Nonetheless, the idea that our university experience should be solely about finding a job should rightly be regarded as inappropriate.

Democracy and rights

Inside the educational establishment, there is the thorny issue of whether one only learns about democracy or also lives it. The 'living' model has implications for universities and for society as a whole. For universities, it means there should be proper forums for discussion, consultation and decision-making involving students and it should be noted that articles of the United Nations Convention on Human Rights insists that young people should be consulted on issues that affect them and does insist on functioning democratic processes. Finally, in terms of rights, the whole issue of inequalities in society and their impact on the educational attainment and aspiration of students must be taken into account.

However, there is a concern in most representative democracies around the world that young people are apathetic, alienated and uninterested in politics. Yet there is also evidence that though alienated from formal politics, they are active and interested in single issue, environmental, political and animal welfare issues.

Whilst there may be elements of a moral panic about political alienation, it must be put in the contexts of both a long term trend to decline in the participation rates of adults in voting and party membership and of a number of government and/or media panics about young people over the last decade – child mothers, street crime, drug use, elderly frightened to go out, binge drinking (Hall, Williamson and Coffey, 1998; Jones, 1995; Macdonald, 1997; Rees, Williamson, and Istance, 1996).

Winning hearts and minds

Initial training of new teachers and the continuing professional development of existing teachers needs to concentrate on winning hearts and minds to education for citizenship. Research into the attitudes of student teachers in the UK suggests that education for citizenship needs to permeate the curriculum in faculties of education. We should note that if, as the evidence suggests (Wilkins, 1991 and 2001; Robbins et al, 2003), there is limited citizenship understanding amongst student teachers, it is fair to extrapolate that outside faculties of education these citizenship values will be at least as weak.

This research has implications for our initial teacher education institutions and indeed for competences that we should be developing. Whilst education for citizenship is now a part of this, there is no evidence that it plays more than just a relatively cursory part, with many students able to avoid deep discussion or thought on the subject. Similar to the school audits, it is possible for the teacher training faculties to develop policies which look good on paper but do not make a significant impact in practice. It needs to permeate the curriculum of initial teacher education and be developed enthusiastically by tutors, particularly as student teachers and those on the probationary year are exposed to some very cynical views in the subject departments where they spend most of their time.

There is much to be positive about. We need to do more research into the effectiveness of learning in the three areas of citizenship: political literacy, involvement in one's community and values. However, it is also clear that we have to keep some kind of realistic perspective on the influence of education for citizenship or any kind of other civic or political education. There was widespread political education at the content level in the communist bloc and that did not prevent a large number of citizens opposing the dictatorships. Equally, there has been a return, albeit limited, in terms of influence of the old communist parties, sometimes under a new name, in parts of central and eastern Europe. As Colin Power, Assistant Director-General for Education UNESCO, (Power, 1995) noted: 'as history has often shown, knowledge about human rights is insufficient to guarantee their observance in practice'. Teaching democratic values will not be a panacea where governments 'let down' the aspirations of their populations. However, even within this perspective there is clearly value in the population being politically literate. Indeed the experiences of the lessons of the 20th Century, in particular that of genocide, suggests that this headteacher in the United States, who is a Holocaust survivor, sums up a strand of the case for education for citizenship (Ginott, 1972: 317):

> I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what
> no man should witness. Gas chambers built by learned
> engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants
> killed by trained nurses. Women and babies shot and burned
> by high school and college graduates. So, I am suspicious of
> education. My request is: help your students become more
> human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters,
> skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing,
> arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our
> children more humane.

Education for citizenship throws up the central questions as to what
sort of education we want. That is why the continuing high profile of
debate around the subject is so important and valuable. We could
come out of it with not just a better understanding of citizenship but
a better feel for education as a whole.

Methodology and sample

To start finding out what was happening in the universities we
developed a twin strategy. Firstly, we issued a questionnaire to all
CiCe members in order to get a feel for both content and democratic
practice within their institutions; we received a 20% return and this
highlighted for us the barriers and good practice evident across
Europe in universities where there was at least some commitment to
citizenship through their membership and involvement in CiCe.
Secondly, we devised and implemented 3 case studies – Greece,
Lithuania and Scotland – through our knowledge augmented with
some structured interviews with key university personnel. These case
studies are examined comparatively to determine differences and
similarities across the countries.

Our intention with this methodology is to establish evidence of good
practice and barriers to implementation of education for citizenship
in Higher Education and to draw some recommendations for
consideraton.

**Citizenship education in higher education – the case of Greece,
UK/Scotland and Lithuania**

In this section the results of the study on issue of Citizenship
Education in three Higher Education systems in Europe are
presented. A short note is firstly made on the situation at the
normative level regarding the central policies and the administrative
issues as well as the tendencies at all the levels of governance local
and (the possibly influencing) European. Then, a closer description is
made of the status of CE at the institutional level with special
reference to specific cases of HE institutions and in the context of
the existing culture and climate. The investigation was carried out
using various techniques and sources in an effort to get a deeper

understanding of the various aspects of the investigated theme, including:

1. The history of citizenship education through published texts as well as through the relevant information gathered from our empirical work.

2. The study of the curricula in the Universities.

3. The data collected through: a) interviews with academics and members of the administration in a sample of universities and b) questionnaires distributed to academics in various HE Institutions.

The main case studies findings, as shown in the table below, can be summarized in five main points, these being:

1. Lack of resources means large class sizes, favouring a didactic approach;

2. The traditional view of academic teaching involves an authoritarian approach to learning;

3. Lack of an understanding of the pedagogy of student-centred learning;

4. Mainly introduction of formal procedures for some student involvement;

5. HE systems tend to be assessment orientated, mitigating against Citizenship initiatives.

The above could be considered as common "issues" or "trends" that may be identified in all three country cases; these points could be addressed in a variable way though in each case because of the different historical and socio-political contexts of the three HE systems. This is clear in the Table below in which our findings are presented in a comparative way according to our major categories of investigation.

Citizenship Education in Higher Education – case studies of three selected countries

CATEGORIES	GREECE	UK/SCOTLAND	LITHUANIA
Socio-political/ historical characteristics of HE	The developments in the European space and, mainly after 1992 influenced the system of HE in Greece that consists of two differentiated sectors (university and technological) and three cycles of study according to the requirements of the Bologna process as refined in Prague. By constitution, universities are public institutions and the establishment of private HE institutions is not allowed. Universities are fully self-governed legal entities of public law, under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs (MoE). The Technological Education Institutions (TEI) function by their own status which is similar but not the same with that of universities. As a result of the Bologna and through the Directive 89/48 TEI were granted university status (HETEI). A transitional period (until 2008) is set to allow TEI to reorganize and submit new status. The binary system still stands as TEI hold their technological character. They are, currently, granted the right to conduct research, to establish joint master's programmes in cooperation with universities and to confer the corresponding degrees. They do not all offer third cycle degrees Centralized system with academic freedom on issues teaching/learning and research. Limited resources on teaching/research (in the context of increased student numbers and below EU average funding on research). Traditional didactic approaches. EU funding through Community Support Framework influenced the HE Curricula towards "modernization".	Since 1999, a devolved political system has HE in the remit of the Scottish Government; this has led to some tensions as the Scottish and English HE systems diverge. For example, in English HE there are top-up fees, but not in Scotland. Traditional 4 year undergrad degree; Rise over the last 30 years from approx 10% in HE to nearly 50% now. Worries as to impact of rising class sizes and academic rigour.	Restoration of statehood of Lithuania in 1990 changed the whole socio-political context of Education in general as well as characteristics of HE. The reform of HE (up till 2001) was carried out (Tereseviciene, 2004); the following reforms should be mentioned: The legal base of the system of HE was changed: in 1991 the new Law of Higher Education was adopted; main tendencies and priorities of change towards contemporary higher education were outlined. Non-state establishments of HE emerged in 1999; a dual study system of HE was established in 2000; universities and colleges in Lithuania provide higher education. A three-stage study system of HE education was established in Lithuania. ***HE consists of:*** I stage: basic studies. Upon completion of basic studies (lasting four to five years), a bachelor's degree or a professional qualification is awarded. II stage: specialized professional or master's degree studies. III stage: A doctorate takes no more than three to four years. A proportion of resources for the studies, research and other services provided by institutions of HE increased in budget of institutions. The model of governance was changed from a centralised to a more decentralised one, bodies of self-governance function. Studies are being internationalised: included into study programmes of EC; A credit system was introduced; A system of evaluation and accreditation institutions and programmes is being established.

CATEGORIES	GREECE	UK/SCOTLAND	LITHUANIA
Socio-political/ historical characteristics of CE in schools	Traditional view on CE (mostly as civics) until recently. Traditional methodologies used in schools (teacher-cantered). Teachers are not specifically trained to teach CE.	CE an explicit central aim of every Scottish school. Citizenship a core plank of 'Curriculum for Excellence', a major initiative 3-18. CE permeates the curriculum – no separate subject. Rights based approach, entailing content and ethos. Discomfort in some schools as to pupil voice. Conflict in some schools between CE and assessment agenda.	National core-curriculum for citizenship education that is obligatory for all secondary schools. Teachers are not sufficiently prepared for teaching Citizenship subject; mostly they are History teachers (but some language, geography, ethics teachers). The assessment of citizenship achievements is still the problem in the sense of measurement instruments. Culture of democracy at schools is beginning to be established.
Socio-political/ historical characteristics of CE in HE	Discipline based academic culture. Not necessarily value CE related subjects. The "teaching methodologies" are mainly "didactic-traditional". Individual initiatives. Initiatives through the EU funding.	Discipline based, furthered by a market and vocational orientation. Formal procedures for some student involvement.	Some **special courses on CE** are implemented in universities; for example: "Basics of Citizenship Education", "Civic Participation" at first level of studies; "Community based practises", "Theories and models for citizenship education" at MA level. **Integrated topics** into Politics courses, into Ethics courses, into Social study courses, ect.
Examples of good practice in CE in HE	Cross Curricular themes and extensions in any discipline – based course. Introduction of interdisciplinary optional subjects related to CE (e.g. Bioethics, Human rights etc). Attempts to introduce student-centred participatory approaches (debates, visits, events...) in courses wherever appropriate.	There are varied approaches to student voice in the running of the universities. Moves in some disciplines (eg. Law, Medicine, Social Work) to problem based (PBL), student centred (SC) approaches. Initiatives such as personal developing planning for students. Attempts to develop sustainability and global citizenship issues into undergraduate core.	Students self - governing approach. Students voiced at the university management. Students participatory approach in public discussions, deliberations.

CATEGORIES	GREECE	UK/SCOTLAND	LITHUANIA
Barriers to the implementation of CE in HE	The bureaucracy in HE centralized management makes any organizational change very difficult. Lack of resources means large class sizes, favouring a didactic approach. The traditional view of academic teaching involving an authoritarian approach to learning. Lack of an understanding of the pedagogy of student-centered learning towards LLL.	Ever larger tutorial groups favour didactic approach. Labour intensive nature of PBL discourages its spread. System is assessment orientated.	Professors are not qualified enough for teaching CE issues. It is still difficult to assess students. Very big groups of students at one time could be a serious barrier to teach Citizenship which requires smaller groups in order to exercise the forms of participation, group discussions, etc. Shortage of students' motivation. Lack of teaching and learning materials on CE.

Questionnaire to CiCe members

Specially formatted and piloted questionnaires were distributed (via e-mail, through post or in person) to 200 members of the Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) network. 38 questionnaires were filled in and returned. The response rate was approximately 20% and, given the wide range of countries involved from Greece to Iceland and from Ireland to Lithuania, it could be claimed that the information provided was representative in terms of offering the opportunity to make sense of the situation that exists in HE institutions in relation to citizenship education. We could expect that these responses reflect a wide range of initiatives going on in the field of citizenship education in HE. This information was to be referenced with that collected via interviews carried out with a number of academics, administration officers and policy makers in the three countries of the case studies (Greece, Lithuania and Scotland), outlined in Section 2.

The table below shows the profile of our respondents:

Countries	Social and Human Sciences	Teacher Education Departments	Natural Sciences and others	Administrative staff
Austria		1		
Cyprus		1		
Denmark	1	1		
England		3		
Finland		2		
France	1	1		
Germany	1			
Greece	1	2		
Hungary		1	1	
Ireland		2		
Israel		1		
Italy		1		
Norway		1		
Poland	1			
Portugal		1		
Romania	1			
Slovenia	2			
Spain		1		
Sweden	1	4		
The Netherlands		1		
Turkey		1		1

We obtained relevant information from all the items of the questionnaire, but especially from numbers 15 and 18. Item 15 asked about the supportiveness of higher education institutions to citizenship education, and item 18 requested data about good practices and conditions for developing citizenship education within higher education institutions.

We must be wary of over-generalising from our 20% return, both as evidence of CiCe members or HE as a whole across Europe, but we did find some trends which are of interest regarding citizenship education in HE:

Question 15: How far and in what ways does your institution support citizenship education?

- A relationship was identified between the support to a citizenship education policy and the current political framework within the countries. Essentially, those political parties with a conservative ideology tend not to develop a explicit support and initiatives towards the implementation of citizenship education.

- A perceived contradiction between managerial level support for citizenship education in theory and barriers for practical implementation. Further, according to our respondents, the larger the higher education institution is, the more the institutional managers pay only lip service to citizenship education.

- We found regional variations: respondents from Scandinavia and the UK suggested that the environment here is supportive; those from central Europe, less so.

Question 18: Examples of good practice and helpful conditions

- Most answers showed that respondents consider that good practices are related to methodology as well as content; that "how" the students learn is more important than "what" teachers teach. However, surprisingly most of respondents coming from Mediterranean countries consider that best practices are closely related to content as opposed to methodology.

- Our data show that the respondents think that a new profile of university teacher is needed. Some comments refer to recruitment requirements, initial commitments and basic competences in the field of tuition in general, and in citizenship education as a specific topic. It is no use to develop programmes of implementation where the academic culture only promotes rigid lectures and written examinations as the major elements of university activity.

- Respondents consider that best practice is a cross-curricular approach rather than segregated courses. This point is extremely relevant as it puts the stress in the need for cross-curricular strategies and the need of networking within the higher education institutions.

- Some of the respondents consider that good practices on citizenship education within higher education institutions should include:

- E-learning activities
- Institutional based seminars/conferences
- Co-operation networks in an international framework

- Our data shows that wherever citizenship education is introduced, it is mainly optional and not compulsory. This suggests the status and the role of citizenship education in the framework of university curricula is low, emerging and new.

- Matching statements on the need for a new teacher profile, respondents who focused on methodology thought good practice in citizenship education in higher education institutions should be based on:

- Experiential, learning by doing – Citizenship education must cover the development of activities that put the topic into practice

- Student-centred learning as opposed to the teacher-centred didactic approach – Democratisation of academic culture is a requirement to fulfil faculties of good practices in citizenship education.

- Participatory environment, co-operative learning – Active methodologies are coherent to these principles.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is important not to take too much from this small-scale study of Education for Citizenship in Higher Education. Further, there are specific socio-historic conditions which have impacted on these developments. Nonetheless, there are some positives and some barriers which have clearly come from the research and some recommendations can be suggested.

The positives

- a commitment by governments, university bodies such as courts and in most cases members of staff to an education for citizenship agenda in Higher Education;

- an understanding from many of the students of education for citizenship which comes both from their current experience in Higher Education and their prior learning and experiences in school education;

- experiences of being involved and consulted in the running of universities and, in many cases, of consultation within departments and courses;

- programmes in the universities in some departments and by some members of staff which stress democracy/rights/values at their core;

- a commitment in some departments and by some staff of giving the students genuine say in how their learning occurs, involving student centred, problem based learning at its core.

The barriers

- an increasingly market orientated neo-liberal agenda which, at its worst, has universities as competing entities based on league tables;

- a 'downgrading' of teaching resulting in larger sections mitigating against student- centred learning;

- the involvement of students in a formalistic and tokenistic manner, having structures in place but giving no real say to the student body as a whole;

- an increasing vocational orientation by the universities and the student body encouraging a narrower agenda;

- a lack of expertise by some university staff in relation to problem based learning.

This only sums up the various strands that we investigated. In reality the emphasis on positives and barriers depends on whether one sees the glass as half full or half empty. Our investigation has suggested

that there is excellent work going on to develop young people's interest, knowledge, skills and dispositions in areas of citizenship and democracy; yet it is very limited, indeed rare, to find examples of genuine democracy based on human rights. It is a matter of hearts and minds. No amount of hectoring and/or government instructions can counter this; academics need to have a sense of mission, to grasp the fullness of moral and social aims. Field research now needs to concentrate on the impact of education for citizenship initiatives and look towards highlighting instances of good and effective practice. Academics, who understand in general the importance of education for citizenship but are concerned about large classes and the encroaching neo-liberal agenda, remain open to the ideas and willing and waiting to be fully convinced as to its value.

Recommendations

From our results, we suggest consideration of the following points:

■ It is essential that there is not an over-arching link between educational policy on citizenship education and the particular (perhaps short-term) ideology of the political party in power. Citizenship education should be assumed as a priority for the whole political framework of every state as an imperative need for the social development of European society;

■ In this sense, the European Union should be encouraging the following:

   ■ The introduction of courses of an interdisciplinary nature on citizenship education for all the degrees within higher education institutions. Citizenship education is not a specific matter for social sciences students and faculties but for all the students;

   ■ The promotion of programmes which promote citizenship education in all countries. Citizenship education must not only be an issue of some states but for all. It is worth investigating the possibility of the EU suggesting a policy which considers citizenship education as a part of the core curriculum.

■ Following from the last point, there should be strong support for institutional initiatives that allow the introduction of themes and practices related to citizenship education within ALL faculties. (e.g. bioethics, interculturalism, and education for sustainability). This will itself raise certain issues:

   ■ Bureaucracy – if education for citizenship is to be a process, bureaucracy should be kept to a minimum; education for citizenship should be natural in the courses not a bureaucratic add-on;

- The required competencies for academic teaching – the need for a student-centred, active learning approach will be significantly aided by incentives relating to class sizes and preparation time;

- The responsibility to create space in the curriculum by managers – this will ensure that the academic status of citizenship initiates can increase.

- We suggest that the creation of a positive ethos for citizenship education means the engagement of all staff, not just academics and academic managers but support staff also;

- The implementation of citizenship education should be through a methodological approach instead of a content-centred approach, and cross-curricular instead of disciplinary. A CiCe working group based in this perspective should be created.

- The situation in Mediterranean countries, which we found in this small-scale study, should be further examined.

- Implementation of citizenship education in higher education should not be seen as segregated from the global transformation of higher education towards the Bologna process, which requires a new understanding of student learning.

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The Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) Thematic Network links 28 European states and some 80 universities and college departments which are engaged in educating students about how children and young people learn about and understand their society, their identity and citizenship.

A cross-disciplinary group, we include lecturers in social psychology, pedagogy, psychology, sociology and curriculum studies, and those who educate various professions such as teachers, social pedadogues, psychologists, early childhood workers and youth workers.