This paper is taken from

Developing Identities in Europe: Citizenship education and higher education Proceedings of the second Conference of the Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe Thematic Network

London: CiCe 2000

Edited by Alistair Ross, published in London by CiCe, ISBN 1 85377 3239

If this paper is quoted or referred to it must always be acknowledged as

Koutselini, M. (2000) Citizenship education in context: the role of professional collaboration for citizenship in Europe*, in Ross, A. (ed)* Developing Identities in Europe: Citizenship education and higher education. *London: CiCe, pp 101-113*

CiCe
Institute for Policy Studies in Education
London Metropolitan University
166 – 220 Holloway Road
London N7 8DB
UK

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

Acknowledgements:

This is taken from the book that is a collection of papers given at the annual CiCe Conference indicated. The CiCe Steering Group and the editor would like to thank

- All those who contributed to the Conference
- The CiCe Central Coordination Unit for both the organisation of the conference and this collection, and in particular Martin Sundram and Cass Mitchell-Riddle for seeing this book through revisions, layout and to press
- The University of North London, for financial and other support for the programme, conference and publication
- The SOCRATES programme and the personnel of DGXXII for their support and encouragement

Citizenship education in context: the role of professional collaboration for citizenship in Europe

Mary Koutselini
Panepistimio Kyprou (Cyprus)

Introduction

The important role of context in citizenship education has been underlined in a number of comparative studies. Although it is generally agreed that schools prepare students for their role as citizens as well as for their reciprocal rights and obligations, there is no agreement on either the content of civic education nor on the processes through which the balance of rights and duties are internalised. Consequently, curriculum requirements for civic education vary across countries (Torney et al., 1975; Torney-Purta & Schwille, 1986; Torney-Purta et al., 1999; Kerr, 1999). Historical tradition, geographical position, socio-political structure, economic system and global trends have been suggested (Kerr, 1999: p. 5) as the main contextual factors influencing not only citizenship education but also the concept of citizenship.

It is generally agreed that 'citizenship represents a relationship between the individual and the state, in which the two are bound together by reciprocal rights and obligations' (Heywood, 1994: 155). Nevertheless, what constitutes the meaning of 'rights' and 'obligations' is an issue of international debate, and a highly topical one in many countries at present. In this context the concept of citizenship has been defined broadly as social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy (Pearce & Spencer, 1999), and involves values to be internalised, skills to be acquired and knowledge to be taught.

It is worth noting that the current definition of Citizenship Education refers not only to differences between countries but also to differences between schools within the same country. For example, studies in Cyprus investigating headteachers' understanding of the content and the teaching of civic education in primary schools revealed many differences across schools in the conceptualisation of civic-social education. These differences concerned certain emotional aspects of civic education, the process of conformity to the rules of the school, the development of students' community and self-government, the process of participation in the broader community, the acquisition of good habits and the processes of self-control and self-discipline (Persianis, 1992).

Citizenship in context: the case of Cyprus

It has been suggested that the case of Cyprus, an occupied country with long unresolved political problems, can provide a new perspective on the study of citizenship. Such a perspective requires new theoretical insights that will not only account for state and global politics but will also contextualise the pervasiveness of a uniquely stable national culture. It has been further argued that the almost autonomous functioning of the national culture in Cyprus is due to the unresolved political situation, and that unfulfilled national expectations have enhanced a national consciousness (Koutselini, 1997a). Moreover this tends to dominate not only civic education but also educational culture and school curricula.

In societies with long-standing political problems the question of effective citizenship is of great importance, not only to governments and policymakers, but also to the international community in general. From this point of view, distinguishing citizens from non-citizens and from foreigners becomes a very difficult task: is the distinction a legal issue, or – in the case of the legal coexistence of different ethnicities – is it a serious obstacle to the sense of belonging to the same state? Moreover, what is the relationship between citizenship as a member of a state and a citizen's other identities, such as nationality and religion? (Papanastasiou & Koutselini, 1999).

Cypriot citizenship does not correspond with national identity, and for that reason issues of nationalism and regionalism are crucial. When, for the newly established independent Republic of Cyprus, the 1960 Zurich Constitution recognised two different national communities, the Greek majority (80.1%) and the Turkish minority (18.6%) (Papanastasiou, 1994), the articles of the Constitution enhanced their different national characteristics. The independence granted by the Zurich Constitution (1959-60) was disliked by both the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. By giving the Communal Chambers responsibility for the provision of education (as opposed to a central body), the Constitution strengthened the elements of division between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Education continued to have as its basic aim the strengthening of the Greek national identity for Greek Cypriots and a Turkish national identity for Turkish Cypriots.

After the Turkish invasion of Cyprus (1974) the aims of education in general and those of civic education specifically were directed towards students' acquisition of a Greek national identity and a strong consciousness of their national heritage, as well as to their mission (as citizens of an independent country with part of its territory under foreign occupation) to work towards the ultimate goal of freedom for the island as a whole. Thus the political situation enhanced ethno-cultural differences and strengthened the impact of specific contextual factors on the definition of citizenship, such as the impact of the occupation of 36.4% of Cypriot territory, the unresolved political problem and the shift in the socio-political structure of Cyprus created by an influx of migrants from Turkey. While United Nations resolutions declared Turkey's action to be a violation of human rights in Cyprus, almost 30 years later Turkey continues to illegally occupy territory in Cyprus. Since the 1974 invasion the most important political goal of the government has been the survival of Cyprus as a unified independent and sovereign country, and this has been a major factor in Cyprus's efforts to become a full member of the European Union, where human rights are guaranteed by all member states. In 1990 Cyprus applied for membership of the European Union and declared the European orientation of its formal education.

In this context issues of nationalism and regionalism have been crucial in Cyprus, and seem to dominate discussions on citizenship and civic education. Officially, after 1974 there was an attempt to base educational policy on the concept of democratisation rather than national identity. At this time an attempt was made to redefine the concept and the meaning of national identity, and the terms 'democratic training' and 'mutual understanding between different people and civilisations' were added to the statement of the aims of education, as well as to the statement of the objectives of civic education (Ministry of Education, 1993, 1994a, 1994c). Thus in all subject areas covering civic education, one stated aim is the appreciation of the contribution of each nation to human civilisation and the avoidance of chauvinism (Ministry of Education, 1994c). Moreover,

in secondary school civic education classes, the concepts of 'state' and 'nation' are differentiated, so that students will understand that the concept of the independent state of Cyprus does not conflict with the Greek national identity of the Greeks of Cyprus (Ministry of Education, 1993, 1995).

Additionally, according to the state-defined general aim of education as well as to the school curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1994b), students are to be taught to respect minority groups and their rights. Nevertheless, 'minority groups' do not constitute a specific topic of civic education and civic education textbooks contain no material related either directly or indirectly to minority groups; neither are there any discussions promoting tolerance or respect towards minority groups.

A content analysis of primary school textbooks for civic education (Koutselini & Papanastasiou, 1997) revealed a major discrepancy between the aims of civic education as they are proposed by the Ministry, and the textbooks and the actual teaching of civic education. The main reasons for this were seen to be uncertainty and the importance of the political situation, which make teachers and textbook writers hesitant in dealing with biting issues. Thus, the concept of co-operation, for example, seems to dominate at the expense of discussions of consensus or conflict. Indeed, co-operation is taken for granted as the societally accepted attitude to which young students should conform. Students are not taught to understand that conflict between groups with different interests and power can be healthy for society, and may lead to consensus or reform and change. It is important to teach students that some problems have no easy answers and that 'what looks like a good solution often has a negative impact on an important segment of the community' (Rowe, 1990: 44).

Consequently, the concepts of duties and rights are presented as givens, rather than as constructed through social and political life. There is no discussion about protest in the case of oppression, nor for procedures of conflict resolution when the balance of rights and duties does not appear as a given. Although students are introduced to the procedures of democratic elections and have direct experience of participation in student elections, they participate in an idealistic way, as if no problems exist. As Wood (1990) has stated 'We take for granted that our schools are communities, when in fact, they are merely institutions that can become communities when we work at it' (1990: 34).

In conclusion, two major deficiencies of the Cypriot civic education curriculum can be directly attributed to specific contextual factors (Koutselini & Papanastasiou, 1997). First, the aims and objectives of civic education remain general, non-operational and consequently 'contentless', and second, curriculum implementation is ineffective because of the inadequate and superficial presentation of the content. The textbooks used for civic education in Cyprus superficially present a static reality, which aims mainly at introducing students to the realm of adults where their role is both pathetic (they have to feel sadness for the occupied areas and the consequences of the Turkish invasion) and passive (they are not expected to do anything about resolving the political problem). This education falls far short of a true civic education, which would enable students to develop responsible ways of thinking, believing and acting (p. 127).

Transcending the deficiencies: the context of Europe

Three questions arise from this discussion and research findings: What are the appropriate processes to arrive at a consensus concerning the concept of citizenship? Can

the broader context of Europe help member states transcend their narrow national context? How might the broader context of Europe be defined, enabling obstacles embedded in the narrow context of each European country to be overcome?
In the new era of globalisation, meta-modernity, solidarity and competition, healthy citizenship education demands the construction of a robust political philosophy that can provide new grounds of consensus for the traditional conflict between individual freedom and social solidarity. The European Union defines itself as an enriched democracy with an active citizenry, mutual understanding, acceptance of difference, and social justice grounded in respect for human rights. The unification of Europe demands and cultivates new viewpoints and attitudes to depict a new political model of communicative national consciousness which will discourage xenophobia and encourage the right to be different. Having both European Union and national citizenship implies new rights and obligations at national as well as supranational levels. This dual citizenship is also associated with a shift in each state's sovereignty (Janssen, 1993) as well as the need to respect and protect each country's cultural integrity and autonomy. Furthermore, Europe aims both to maintain internal and external peace within Europe and to encourage the willingness to defend it (Kästner, 1993).

Student teacher education is an effective means towards cultivating a European dimension in education and constructing the broader context of Europe. However, although this is a policy decision (Council of Europe, 1987, 1988) the European dimension has not been taught effectively, mainly because it was construed to mean an additional unit within other courses (of European studies for example) and it has not been incorporated into the 4-year program of student teachers at University level. Student teacher education and teacher training should be based on the concept of mutual dependence in Europe. This implies the interlinking of different courses, i.e., research courses, teaching, comparative education, educational administration, assessment and evaluation. In this context, teachers would not simply be taught the European dimension but, rather, would be educated as members of the Union, a mutually dependent system. The new ideological and institutional frameworks of our era prefigure a meta-modern paradigm for a curriculum based on the modernisation of modernity (Koutselini, 1997b). A meta-modern paradigm will transcend the misfortunes of modernity, including the objectification and depersonalisation of contemporary education. A healthy European citizenry would be achieved when individuals are not regarded as marketable products, and the human experience is not fragmented into useful tasks and technocratic procedures (Eagleton, 1992).

The European paradigm for a European citizenship education suggests a process-oriented curriculum for teacher education. Teachers would be taught how to develop a dialectical relationship and communicative actions with Europe in relation to their world, namely the European Union. (Habermas, 1985, 1987)

Within this context, education for a meta-modern citizenship must be adapted to certain hyper-national factors, such as the economic, moral, environmental and technological environment, and must also include studies on the theoretical frameworks of science, epistemology, philosophical ethics, and national languages and cultures (Pinar and Bowers, 1992). It must also consider that all areas of politics have acquired a broader meaning and are no longer limited to decision-making procedures within one country, in isolation from others with conflicting interests or values (Featherstone, 1990; Giddens, 1991).

Student exchanges, as a means of familiarisation with other educational systems, training schemes, and cultures, have proved to be inadequate to create a European Union consciousness or a European identity. Student exchanges could however be an effective supplementary tool to intercurricular training, focused on the harmonisation of interests and the recognition that a unified European course of action is needed to solve common and interrelated problems.

The role of professional collaboration for citizenship for Europe

European identity does not intend to supplant national identities. The USSR's unsuccessful 70-year long effort to educate its various ethnic peoples to conform to a common identity demonstrates the unacceptability of giving up a national identity. The European paradigm therefore attempts to replace the less desirable effects of national identities - nationalism, xenophobia, intolerance and imperialism - with the cultivation of a culture of human rights, mutual understanding and solidarity.

How can this kind of citizenship for Europe be successfully promoted? Beyond political decisions, declarations, and treaties, the role of professional collaboration at all levels appears more than crucial. The sharing of ideas and discussion among schools and teachers is insufficient; universities and scholars must research and plan for the education of teachers on university courses that apply across countries. Within such a curriculum, student teacher exchanges will reinforce and enrich knowledge with practical experience. Exchanges alone cannot cultivate what is not focused and not common in teacher education, and without such a common focus they may be reduced to becoming a superficial procedure. As Hargreaves (Pearce & Spencer, 1999: 221) states, 'Active citizens are as political as they are moral; moral sensibility derives in part from political understanding'. Thus citizenship education must be primarily grounded in political literacy and an understanding of the values, skills and knowledge required for effective community involvement. Moreover, schools, universities and entire communities must practice what they teach. Students on an exchange should focus not merely on the experience, but also on possible discrepancies between theory and practice, between how citizenship for Europe has been defined and how it is actually experienced. In this way exchanges could become a process able to reinforce policy makers, professionals and teachers. Professional collaboration would provide the criteria for assessment and evaluation of the exchange system.

On a second level, professional collaboration among universities and countries is necessary for the writing of textbooks on citizenship for Europe. International research studies aimed at analysing citizenship education textbooks can promote consensus on the content, context and teaching of citizenship education for Europe. This would require a slow but system-wide change. A genuinely European education policy would not aim at uniformity at the national level, nevertheless the European Union can only find its expression in a basically uniform citizenship education for Europe. This premise will not be understood unless a genuine dialogue opens up among professionals who will clarify the concepts, share practices and experiences, and facilitate the implementation of the European paradigm for citizenship.

Conclusion

This paper suggests that citizenship education for Europe is a very different issue from citizenship education in Europe. A number of comparative studies have examined policy and the teaching of citizenship education across countries, but they have not added to our knowledge about a citizenship education for Europe.

It has been argued that the European paradigm for citizenship advocates the transcendence of obstacles to communication and interaction, imposed in the past by national identities. To be successful, new theoretical insights are required that will not only account for national contextual factors affecting citizenship across countries, but will also focus on the repercussions for Europe of each nation's ethno-cultural characteristics. A transcendence of the specific characteristics of nationality does not imply the elimination of national identities. On the contrary, it supports the harmonization of the negative aspects of nationalism and coexistence of different units in a broader union.

In conclusion, the discussion in this article supports the hypothesis that educating Europeans to be citizens of Europe, without eliminating the national context, can facilitate the transcendence of its deficiencies. This is especially true for countries like Cyprus with unresolved political problems and conflicts between national and regional citizenship. If Cyprus can function at the European supranational level, ethnocentric attitudes and violent conflicts can perhaps be eliminated. Citizenship for Europe will support tolerance towards contrasting views, foreigners, minorities and different religions.
Professional collaboration will produce new theoretical insights, as well as the research framework for teacher education, training, and school textbooks. For this to be done, teacher education and training must be based on a healthy political philosophy which promises to provide an alternative to the contemporary standard and postmodern despair.

References

Council of Europe (1987) *New challenges for teachers and their education*. Strasbourg

Council of Europe (1988) *The effectiveness of in-service education and training of teacher and school leaders*. Strasbourg

Eagleton, T. (1992) Capitalism, modernism and postmodernism. In P. Waugh (ed.), *Postmodernism a Reader*. London: Edward Arnold

Featherstone, M. (Ed.) (1990) *Global Culture: nationalism, globalisation and modernity*. London: Saga.

Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and Self-identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Habermas, J. (1985) Neoconservative culture criticism in the United States and West Germany: an intellectual movement in two political cultures. In: R. Bernstein (ed.), *Habermas and Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Habermas, J., (1987) *Theory of Communicative Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Heywood, A., (1994) *Political Ideas and Concepts: An Introduction.* London: MacMillan Press

Janssen, B., (ed.) (1993) *The European Dimension for Teachers*. Report on the Second Conference on the European Dimension, Teaching and Education. Bonn: Europa Union Verlag-European Education Series: Vol. 13

Kästner, H., (1993) What does ' Good Practice' mean in terms of the development of the European dimension in schools and education? *Verlag-European Education Series: Vol. 13* 48-57

Kerr, D., (1999) *Citizenship Education: an International Comparison*. NFER: UK

Koutselini, M., (1997a) Curriculum as political text: The case of Cyprus (1935-90), *History of Education, 26* (4), 395-407

Koutselini, M., (1997b) Contemporary trends and perspectives of the curricula: towards a meta-modern paradigm for curriculum, *Curriculum studies, 5* (1), 87-101

Koutselini, M., & Papanastasiou, C. (1997) Civic Education in Cyprus – Issues in focus: A curriculum Research Study, *Children's Social and Economics Education, vol. 2:3*, 113-129

Ministry of Education (1993) *Becoming a Good Citizen* (for the sixth grade). Nicosia: Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education (1994a) *Becoming a Good Citizen* (for the fifth grade). Nicosia: Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education (1994b) *Yearly Report of the Year 1994*. Nicosia: Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education (1994c). *Primary School Curriculum.* Nicosia: Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education (1995) *Civic Education for the 2nd grade of Lyceum*. Nicosia: Ministry of Education

Papanastasiou, C. & Koutselini, M., (1999) National Identity in the Civic Education of Cyprus, In Purta et al. (eds.) (1999), *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*. IEA, 162-177

Papanastasiou, C., (1994) Cyprus: System of Education, In T. Husen and T.N. Postlethwaite (eds.). *The International Encyclopedia of Education* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Pergamon Press

Pearce, N. & Spencer, S., (1999) Education for Citizenship: The Crick Report, *Political Quarterly*, April-June 1999, V70, (i2), 219-224

Persianis, P., (1992). *The Social Education in Cyprus* (in Greek), Research Report. Nicosia

Pinar, W. and Bowers, C.A., (1992) Politics of curriculum: Origins, controversies and significance of cultural perspectives, *Review of Research in Education, 18*, 163-190

Rowe, J., (1990). To develop thinking citizens, *Educational Leadership, 48* (3), 43-44

Torney, J., Oppenheim, A.N. and Farnen, R.F., (1975) *Civic Education in Ten Countries: An Empirical Study*. New York: Wiley

Torney-Purta, J, and Schwille, J., (1986) Civic values learned in school: Policy and practice in industrialized countries. *Comparative Education Review, 30*, 30-49

Torney-Purta, J., Schwille and Jo-Ann Amadeo, (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*: IEA

Wood, G., (1990) Teaching for democracy., *Educational Leadership, 48* (3), 32-37