This paper is taken from

A Europe of Many Cultures
Proceedings of the fifth Conference of the Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe Thematic Network

London: CiCe 2003

edited by Alistair Ross, published in London by CiCe, ISBN 1 85377 369 7

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
- Cass Mitchell-Riddle, head of the CiCe Coordination Unit
- London Metropolitan University for financial and other support for the programme, conference and publication
- The SOCRATES programme and the personnel of DGXXII for their support and encouragement.

Current educational opportunities for a European citizenship[1]

Emilio Lastrucci
Università di Roma 'La Sapienza' (Italy)

Education for European citizenship: general features and purposes

Education for European Citizenship (EEC) is a specific educational perspective, progressively developed and spread in the context of the European Union in the past few years. We can interpret EEC as a peculiar form of Education for Citizenship (EC), or, more precisely, of Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC). EEC should have a specific role in educational programmes in the EU context and gradually become increasingly more relevant than EC developed in a national perspective.

EEC defines itself as innovative - as does EC - in comparison with more traditional approaches in this field that can be included under 'civic education', to use a very general label. Essentially, EC differs from civic education in that it covers a much wider semantic range of both objectives and contents. Civic education is aimed at the transmission and acquisition of knowledge, skills and values which govern the functioning of society in a formal educational framework; this formal learning is generally through the form of a specific subject, although sometimes also through cross-curricula activities. (Civic education can be conceived as a specific sector of literacy concerning the civic/political sphere: see Lastrucci, 1996.) Citizenship education, on the other hand, focuses on the acquisition and active exercise of a wide set of competencies concerning the aware, active and participatory contribution of the citizen to political and social life. The content of EC is more comprehensive than of civic education: it includes civic education itself, but also other crucial topics such as human rights education, political education and socialisation, legal education, ethical and values education, intercultural education, peace education, global education and more.

However, the most significant difference between civic education and EDC consists in the fact that the former is not necessary inspired by democratic ideals or framed in the context of a democratic society that aspires to develop and increase the forms of social organisation on which it is grounded.

As Duerr, Ferreira Martins and Spajic-Vrka (2000) observe

> If civic education is considered in terms of preparing young people for informed, active and responsible participation in democracy based on respect for universal human rights, equality, justice and pluralism, its goals are similar to the ones of education for democratic citizenship. On the contrary, if civic education is considered as political education which aims at preparing young people to be loyal citizens in democratic regimes that are blind to inequality, social exclusion, lawlessness and social integration, then, the differences between these two approaches are too significant to be easily ignored. For this reason it is important to retain the adjective 'democratic' and to consider EEC as a special form of EDC.

[1] The present contribution is a reduced version of the paper submitted during the conference in Braga. The extended version is available in the respective languages of several European countries.

EDC implies the formation of a wide range of general skills (linked to critical and argumentative thinking, creative and productive thinking, problem-solving, assessment and evaluation, and moral reasoning), specific skills (linked to participation, multiple communication, co-operative and team-work, debating, negotiating and compromising, intercultural comprehension, conflict-prevention/resolution, mediation and facilitation etc.) and attitudes, especially those referring to pro-social and pro-active dimensions, usually defined in terms of involvement in or commitment to (respect, attachment, defence of) something that is recognised as of universal value in society.

This paper presents a state of the art synthesis of EDC in a European context. It represents only a first and preparatory contribution for wider and deeper analysis and understanding of the role of schooling and other educational institutions and agencies, in several European countries, in creating opportunities for EEC and more generally for political socialisation oriented to democratic citizenship at the level of the European political and cultural context. Such research would be oriented towards a comparative framework of educational trends in curricula and educational practice in European schools, analysing their relationship to theories and findings about the processes of construction of social identity in children, adolescents and young adults. It would in particular examine the extent and effectiveness of how principles of human rights, democracy, tolerance and mutual respect, the rule of law and peaceful resolution of conflicts are incorporated into the daily practice of teaching and learning, and also whether these topics are considered in relationship to European citizenship. It would be also useful to investigate the effectiveness of curricula and practices in reaching these objectives, and the real relationship between these objectives and psycho-social dynamics related to the process of political socialisation oriented to the acquisition of a European political identity and citizenship.

This paper has the more limited objective of examining the main trends of EC and more particularly of EEC, referring to the most recent educational theory and practice in this field.

Educational theories for EDC and EEC: main objectives and core competencies

To understand the specificity of the role of EEC, it is necessary to have a preliminary outline of the more general features and purposes of EDC. Educational theories and methods that inspire EEC arise largely from those that that inspire EDC.

Most recent theoretical perspectives in EC are grounded on new fundamental principles, linked to new educational needs. In a world characterised by rapid economic, technological, social and cultural change, the nature of all learning processes is also changing deeply and rapidly. Duerr, Ferreira Martins, Spajic-Vrka (2000) suggest three new basic principles concerning EC.

> Firstly, the term ‘citizen’ does not merely imply a legal status within the political system; rather, it implies competencies, skills and capabilities that must be transmitted in a *life-long learning* process. Secondly, Learning for Democratic Citizenship is a comprehensive task that cannot take place in formal institutions alone, it is rather learnt in *multifaceted formal and non-formal settings* involving the co-ordination and co-operation of the relevant institutions and organisations. Thirdly, during the learning process, the relationship between the transmitter and the learner changes dramatically. The question of how people (i.e. individual

> citizens) are to meet the requirements inferred on them by citizenship in an effective manner will become more and more important.

These principles call for a redefinition of contexts and contents of learning processes as well as a reappraisal of requirements. The institutional framework for EC must be redesigned too. 'Even though this framework is still characterised by the dominance of the formal educational sector, in the future it must be brought into close interaction with another increasingly important area in democratic learning i.e. society' (ibid). Moreover. Innovative and more effective and attractive forms of learning and methods of teaching will be developed for the educational goals of EC defined in this new perspective. It is also necessary to strengthen and enrich the preparation and training of teachers and other professionals in education, to develop the teaching competencies necessary to realise this ambitious programme.

Policy-makers in education, experts, teachers and a large part of public opinion agree on the principle that EC must be oriented to promote 'active citizenship', a concept highlighted by Article A of the Amsterdam Treaty of the EU. One of the main objectives of the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission is to develop citizenship not just in its formal aspects (respect of law, tolerance, etc.), but above all through encouraging people's practical involvement in democratic process at all levels. For this purpose, the European Commission assigns a crucial role to actions in the field of education.

However, as the official document affirms, and as educators and politicians would probably agree, 'the level of awareness among European citizens of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society is far from satisfactory'. From this point of view, education should have the task 'of preparing the individual for life in a democratic society by enabling him/her to carry out his duties and responsibilities as a citizen', and not only teaching the fundamental principles and values at the root of our society, but also 'introducing him to politics' (Council of Europe, 1997). Consequently, new theories about EC are focused on a set of educational goals defined on the basis of a new framework of core competencies involved in acquisition of active citizenship.

Audigier (2000) provides a review of most relevant basic classifications of competencies for democratic citizenship. These models represent for this author different theoretical frameworks which can be used to define, orient, motivate and analyse educational activities. He stresses that 'these constructs are intended to help us, so let us take them as such and try to improve them through constantly comparing them with reality'.

The first classification comprises three broad categories of competencies - a triangle of interdependent dimensions - (a) cognitive competencies; (b) affective competencies and those connected with the choice of values; and (c) capacities for action (social competencies).

Cognitive competencies can be separated into four families:

- competencies of a legal and political nature, which are 'weapons' with which 'citizens can defend their freedoms, protect individuals and challenge abuses of power by those in authority' and are especially connected to knowledge about the rules of collective life and about public institutions in a democratic society;
- knowledge of the present world;

- competencies of a procedural nature, which are transferable and hence usable in a variety of situations (in addition to various general intellectual capacities, they concern particularly the ability to argue, which is related to debate and the ability to reflect, i.e. the capacity to re-examine actions and arguments in the light of the principles and values of human rights, to reflect on the direction and limits of possible action, on conflicts of values and of interests, etc.);
- knowledge of the principles and values of human rights and democratic citizenship.

The second field of competencies concerns ethical and axiological dimension. This dimension involves not only cognitive but also affective aspects: 'citizenship cannot be reduced to a catalogue of rights and duties, but entails membership of a group or groups, bringing identities into play in a very profound way. It consequently requires an ethical shift that includes a personal and collective emotional dimension' (ibid).

The third dimension, concerning capacities for action, includes in special way three orders of capacities: (a) to live with others and cooperate; (b) to resolve conflicts in accordance with the principles of democratic law; and (c) to take part in public debate. **'**Knowledge, attitudes and values, take on meaning in everyday personal and social life; they are embodied in these capacities and help give sense to the presence of each to others and to the world' (ibid).

To explain more clearly how the three dimensions interact in a concrete situation, Audigier use the example of the peaceful resolution of a conflict. To reach such an objective

> … implies knowledge of the democratic principles that organise this resolution, a personal attitude which involves controlling one's own violence and accepting not to take the law into one's own hands, and the capacity for action in connection with the debate. The majority of the competences thus classified also refer to the two other fields. For example, argumentation and debate call for a knowledge of the subject under discussion, the capacity to listen to the other and acknowledgement of his point of view, as well as the application of these capacities in the precise situation in which the people find themselves. There is no effective citizenship other than that exercised in and by the actions of the individual; conversely, knowledge of and reflection on his acts and their social and personal, practical and ethical significance are just as important. According to the training and education criteria, the accent should be on the weakest dimension. Another advantage of this type of construct is that it constitutes an instrument which is an aid to the evaluation and reorientation of practices (ibid).

The second classification is that proposed, in particular, by Veldhuis (1997). It is grounded on a distinction - based on an analysis of social life – between four dimensions of citizenship: political and legal, social, cultural, economic.

The political and legal dimension covers rights and duties with respect to the political system and the law. It requires knowledge of political institutions, democratic attitudes and the capacity to participate, to exercise responsibilities at all levels of public life.

The social dimension covers relations between individuals and requires knowledge of what these relations are based on and how they function in society. This dimension is

connected to others, in particular the economic one, through the weight of values such as solidarity.

The economic dimension concerns the world of production and consumption of goods and services. It includes labour and the way it is organised, the fruits of labour and their distribution, and requires knowledge of how the economic world (including the world of work) functions.

The cultural dimension **'**refers to collective representations and imaginations and to shared values. It implies, like the others and sometimes more than them, historical competence, recognition of a common heritage with its varied components, a mobile heritage, a heritage to exchange with others'. Culture is also connected with literacy and linguistic education. In EEC this is a very important dimension, for it is based in great part on a widening of cultural horizons to European civilisation, necessarily also through the acquisition of linguistic competencies in a second and third European language.

Audigier observes

> Although they differ in presentation, both these classifications stress the importance of constructing a critical social consciousness, that is to say a consciousness of belonging to the world, a 'fellow-citizenship' which involves the citizen shouldering his/her responsibilities on a day-to-day basis, but also necessitates a broader dimension beyond any immediate and local concerns. Such a social, but also historical and geographical, consciousness involves developing a capacity for stepping back from oneself, as well as establishing a public forum for debate (ibid).

Specificity of EEC

In the wider perspective of EC, EEC assumes a specific physiognomy, which results when theoretical principles and methods are fashioned to meet the requirements of a citizenship framed in the European political and cultural context.

As I have elsewhere attempt to show (Lastrucci, 2000, 2002), the development of a European citizenship is founded on the possibility of a widespread common consciousness among European citizens. 'This consciousness consists, first, in an historical consciousness founded on a view of the history of Europe as history of an unique civilisation; secondarily, it is founded on a *social identity* build on an aware European citizenship and on the feeling of belonging to European community and civilisation instead to one's own national group' (Lastrucci, 2002). In other words, we must, by means of an organic, coherent and shared educational project, stimulate in each member of the European Union – and above all in children and adolescents - a process of formation of social identity in which, progressively, the European view becomes more central and constitutive than a national and/or local view.

This implies the need to redesign the features and purposes of EDC, shaping them in a perspective of authentic EEC.

In this perspective in particular, there should be found a new and more central role for historical knowledge. As can be inferred from this synthetic review, such knowledge does

not have a principal role, nor does it enjoy specific attention in the majority of the educational models presented, although they appears innovative and incisive.

References

Audigier F. (2000) *Basic Concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Bîrzéa C. (2000) *Education for democratic citizenship: a lifelong learning perspective*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Carey L., Forrester K. (2000) *Sites of Citizenship: Empowerment, participation and partnerships*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Council of Europe (1997) Final Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the member states of the Council of Europe Strasbourg: France, October 11, 1997. [The Declaration and Action Plan can be found on the internet: http://www.coe.fr.]

Duerr K., I. Ferreira Martins I., Spajic-Vrka V. (2000) Strategies for Learning Democratic Citizenship. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Harrison C., Baumgartl B. (2001) *Stocktaking Research On Policies For Education For Democratic Citizenship And Management Of Diversity In Southeast Europe: Regional Analysis and Intervention Proposals*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Heydt J.-M. (2000) *Education for democratic citizenship: words and actions - A survey of NGOs*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Kavadias D. Siongers J., DeGraaf S., Lauwers S. (1999) Belgian site of Citizenship `One-day Parliament'. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Lastrucci E. (1996) Alfabetizzazione civica e civismo, in Corda Costa M., Lastrucci E. et al, Formare il cittadino. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.

Lastrucci E., (2000) History Consciousness, Social/Political Identity and European Citizenship, in Ross, A. (ed) Developing Identities in Europe. London: CiCe , pp. 227-238.

Lastrucci E. (2002) Youth and European identity, in E. Näsman & A. Ross (eds) Children's Understanding in the New Europe. Stoke: Trentham , pp. 175-194.

Manzel S., Dreher M. (2000) Learning for democratic citizenship: Synopsis of approaches, methods and good practices. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Näsman E., Ross A. (eds.) (2002) Children's Understanding in the New Europe. Stoke4: Trentham.

Pticek R. (1999) Collaborative Learning and Shared Responsibility. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Ross A. (ed.) (2000a) Young Citizens in Europe. London: CiCe.

Ross A (ed.) (2000b) Developing Identities in Europe. London: CiCe.

Ross A. (ed.) (2001a) Learning for a democratic Europe. London: CiCe.

Ross A. (ed.) (2001b) Preparing professionals in Education for Issues of Citizenship and Identity in Europe. London: CiCe.

Tantucci. A.P. (1999) Presentation of the Italian Citizenship Site. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Torney-Purta J., Schwille J., Amadeo J.-A. (1999) Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education project. Amsterdam: IEA.

Veldhuis R. (1997) Competencies for EDC. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.