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A Critical Review of International Research on Citizenship and Citizenship Education – Lessons for Citizenship Education in Slovenia

Referring to a critical review of eight international research initiatives (e.g. studies, surveys, research reports) conducted between 2001 and 2010 in the field of citizenship and citizenship education, this paper examines the relationship between different conceptualisations of citizenship and the nature, role and impact of citizenship education. I focus on the European aspects of these research initiatives and draw on the knowledge they disseminate to reflect on the theory of citizenship and the practice of citizenship education in Slovenia. First, I present an overview of the methodology used in the literature review and reflect on the significant limitations in conducting international and comparative research. Second, I reflect on the various relationships between different conceptualisations of citizenship and their effects on citizenship education practices as presented in the overviewed literature. On the basis of the knowledge and results of the literature review, I then make several observations which are relevant to the advancement of citizenship theory and citizenship education practice in Slovenia. Finally, I argue that different conceptualisations of citizenship can have a significant influence on the practice of citizenship education, as evinced by the analysis of the recent results on civic knowledge in Slovenia.

Keywords
Citizenship, citizenship education, civic knowledge, international research

1 Introduction

Conducting research in the field of citizenship and citizenship education has become the core objective of a number of fields in the social sciences and humanities. This focus gained particular relevance in the 1960s when researchers in the field of political socialisation began to systematically analyse how young people acquired knowledge and developed the skills necessary for undertaking their roles as citizens in democracies (Hahn 2010). Nonetheless, the era after 1990 represents a revival in the interest in different aspects of citizenship (Deželan 2009), and Isin and Turner (2002) estimate that more than 50 per cent of all scientific literature on citizenship was published after the 1990s. Therefore, it is not surprising that the most globally dispersed and widely accepted international and comparative studies in citizenship education were carried out in the late 1990s and early 2000s.[1] As multi-layered decision-making has become increasingly relevant

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1 An extensive overview of research by world regions (e.g. the Americas, Europe, Asia, etc.) is available in Hahn (2010).

in the global socio-political context, the relevance of international and regional (e.g. European) research on citizenship and citizenship education has also grown, and recently, several attempts have been made to review the existing international research (Hoskins et al. 2008; Hahn 2010; Johnson, Morris 2011). The results of the international research initiatives concerning citizenship and citizenship education often represent knowledge resources which are significant to strategic policy objectives and which can have positive effects on the development of the field of citizenship education in an individual state. International and regional research, for the most part, reflect upon the state of affairs in an individual state, taking into account the international or regional context, and provide a number of internationally acknowledged good practice cases and initiatives which can, with certain adaptations, be transferred to national education systems. There appears to be a lively discussion in the educational and citizenship fields regarding the issue of transferability, as some argue, particularly within the European or EU context, that some general conclusions and recommendations can be applied to different socio-political contexts and to countries with different traditions in a *one size fits all* manner (Hoskins et al. 2008), while others warn against generalising the findings to other contexts (Hahn 2010).

Furthermore, international and comparative research initiatives promote knowledge and an understanding of structural social change on a global and/or regional level (Holford, Edirisingha 2003) and can, in this manner, represent a significant base for facilitating the development of multiple (and multi-layered) citizenship identities, which transcend the narrowness and limits of the national environment and represent a catalyst for citizens' engagement in a global and multicultural community. The conclusions of many international citizenship and citizenship education research initiatives demonstrate a growing discrepancy between the policy rhetoric (what is intended or planned at the state, regional or local level) and the practice of citizenship education (what *de facto* happens in classrooms) (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002; Bîrzéa et al. 2004; Kerr et al. 2010; see also Kerr 1999). These observations enable us to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the relation between the institutional and normative guidelines (i.e. policy objectives), on the one hand, and the real practice in the field of citizenship education in individual states, on the other hand (i.e. policy results).

Accordingly, the general purpose of this paper is to review the available research, reflect on the theoretical knowledge and, to a lesser extent, the empirical data produced by the international research on citizenship and citizenship education in order to examine how different conceptualisations of citizenship influence the nature, role and impact of citizenship education. Additionally, this reflection will be used to collect international and, in particular, European knowledge in the field, thus, facilitating the theoretical basis for the advancement of citizenship education in Slovenia.

The paper is structured into three main parts. In the first part, I present important aspects of the methodology for conducting the critical review of different international research initiatives and briefly reflect on some of the potential limitations of the methodology for data collection commonly used in international comparative research. The second part of the paper presents the outcomes of the review and reflects on the relationship

between different conceptualisations of citizenship and the nature, role and impact of citizenship education. Adopting an approach similar to that described by Hahn (2010), I identify the highlights of various international research initiatives which bear importance for Europe, rather than provide an in-depth analysis of individual studies, surveys and reports. Although I make some brief direct references to particular results of studies on individual states, the focus in this part is on the understanding and knowledge of the relationship between different conceptualisations of citizenship and their impacts on citizenship education practices. In the last part, I draw on the previous observations in order to provide relevant conclusions for the development of citizenship theory and citizenship education practices in Slovenia.

2 Methodological Overview

Certain methodological limitations of international and comparative studies must be highlighted and taken into consideration. The most apparent limitation is that there is no clear distinction between the terms *international studies* and *comparative studies*, as "international means between nations, implying a potentially comparative aspect whereas comparative refers to explicit, direct comparisons usually across national borders" (Hahn 2010, 15). Consequently, for the purposes of this paper, I will, where applicable, interchangeably use the terms *international research initiatives* or *international* and *comparative studies*. The second obvious limitation is that it would be impossible to review all of the international research initiatives undertaken across the globe (Hahn 2010). For this reason, I have limited my review to those international and comparative studies which bear the most significance for Slovenia and have placed particular emphasis on Europe. Another limitation, which is directly connected to those mentioned above and which is important for the work presented here, is the fact that international research initiatives vary in nature and purpose. In the context of citizenship and citizenship education, some focus on the approaches, practices and results of citizenship education (Torney-Purta 2001; Kerr 2010), and some are developed by gathering data on policies and legislative frameworks (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002; Bîrzéa et al. 2004), while others review the existing literature and reflect on the different conceptualisations, policies and strategies of citizenship, active citizenship and citizenship education (Holford, Edirisingha 2003; Chioncel, Jansen 2004). However, as Kerr correctly notes, citizenship education goes beyond the issue of importing knowledge and needs to be both analysed and developed while taking into account different factors, from policy-making, evaluation and monitoring to the issue of creating an (European) environment which promotes active participation in the larger society (Kerr 2008).

Furthermore, most international research initiatives collect information from national resources and reports (e.g. Harrison, Baumgartl 2002), which is a common practice in conducting international comparisons. In some cases, the approach based on national reports and their results can be

partially misleading, as it is based on qualitative data from national reports produced by individuals or individual institutions and organisations, which can be either excessively positively or negatively oriented towards the state of affairs in different states. In this case, the seemingly objective expert and scientific analysis can potentially become a space of ideological discourse, partial views and misinterpretations, which is of particular relevance for the qualitative evaluation of the state of affairs in different states. At the same time, the synthesis and interpretation of results is subjected to the prevailing, traditional views and analytical frameworks which are apparent in the international environment. There are many similar methodological issues related to international and comparative studies which can, by some accounts, also be contributed to the process of globalisation (Crossley 2002; Hahn 2010), and although attempts to reconceptualise the field of international and comparative studies have been made, only minor changes have been realised in practice.

The purpose of the critical review on which this paper is based was to reflect the international and regional contexts of citizenship and citizenship education and to analyse the existing international research initiatives (with a primary focus on European countries) in the fields of citizenship and citizenship education.[2]

The method used to select the sources of the international research initiatives was structured upon three phases and three criteria as follows:

- A review of scientific literature using key words analysis;

- A review of the research financing history by key European institutions (primarily the EU and the Council of Europe);

- A "snow ball effect" method of reviewing references in the studies already identified through previous phases.

The application of the above mentioned criteria generated a list of 48 international research initiatives. As the large number of studies presented both a methodological and a research challenge beyond the capacity of the research group, the number of studies which were eventually examined was reduced to eleven, using the selection criteria listed below:

- Citizenship education as the key research field (e.g. studies focusing only on political participation without reference to citizenship education were excluded);

- At least three countries had to be presented in the study in order to satisfy the criteria of an international-comparative analysis, and the study had to compare the international and national contexts (e.g. studies solely representing good practice cases without reflecting the possibilities of transferring them into national contexts were excluded);

- The analysis was based on the final reports of the international studies (e.g. scientific articles and books published before or after the period selected were excluded).

Since one of the purposes of this paper is to reflect on the relevant

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2 The review was prepared as part of the institutional approach analyses conducted by researchers at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana in 2011 through the project Citizen(ship) in a New Age, and as such, complements the substantive comparative study of citizenship education in the EU Member States (Pikalo et al. 2011).

international knowledge for the advancement of citizenship theory and citizenship education practice in Slovenia, I decided to include an additional selection criterion as follows:

- Slovenia is included as one of the countries analysed or reviewed by the international and comparative study.

Based upon the three phases and the criteria listed above, a final selection of eight international research initiatives was made (Table 1) to provide with information on the titles of the selected studies, the years of publication of the final reports, the contracting or financing authorities and the participating states, regions or geographical areas. As discussed above, although the nature and scope of the selected international research initiatives varies, it is, nevertheless, significant to review all the different aspects of citizenship and citizenship education at the international level. With this in mind, I decided to add to Table 1 general information regarding the nature and purpose of each study reviewed.

Table 1. International research initiatives included in the review

Title of the study	Year of publica-tion	Contracting/ financing party	Area/countries involved	Nature of the study
Civic Education Study – CIVED 1994-2002	2001	The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)	Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Columbia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and United States of America	The study identifies and examines in a comparative manner the approaches to the **context and meaning of citizenship education**, as well as students' civic knowledge, attitudes and engagement.
Stocktaking Research on Policies on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Management of Diversity in South-East Europe	2002	Council of Europe	Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Monte Negro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia	Based on country reports the study gathers and analyses data on **current policies** in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC).

Title of the study	Year of publica-tion	Contracting/ financing party	Area/countries involved	Nature of the study
Citizenship and Governance Education in Europe: A critical review of the literature - the project ETGACE	2003	European Commission	Great Britain, Finland, Slovenia, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain	Study of the **literature on education and training** for active citizenship. It was produced as a part of the EU research project ETGACE, which aimed to deliver "a scientific basis for educational interventions to involve European citizens more actively in shaping their own futures."
All European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies	2004	Council of Europe	EU Member States and Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Andorra, San Marino, Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Monte Negro, Romania, Serbia	The study analyses and presents different European **policies and legislative frameworks** in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship.
Reviewing Education and Training for Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe - the Central and Eastern European Perspective- Project RE-ETGACE	2004	European Commission	Netherlands, Belgium, Hungary, Romania in Slovenia; focus on Hungary and Romania	The study analysed **different conceptualisations of citizenship, active citizenship and governance**. It also identified and analysed formal policies and strategies linked to active citizenship, and the conditions for practicing active citizenship. Developed as a part of the EU research project RE-ETGACE.
Citizenship Education at School in Europe – Eurydice	2005	European Commission	EU Member States and Switzerland, Iceland, Norway	The purpose of the study was to **analyse how citizenship education is taught** in primary and secondary schools in Europe.

Title of the study	Year of publica-tion	Contracting/ financing party	Area/countries involved	Nature of the study
Indicators for Monitoring Active Citizenship and Citizenship Education	2005	European Commission	31 countries involved in the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (EU Member States, EEA countries and Turkey)	A research report based on a study conducted for the European Commission, which aimed to identify and **propose indicators for active citizenship and citizenship education**.
The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2009 – ICCS European Module	2010	The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)	24 European Member States of the IEA, including EU Member States, candidate countries, potential candidate countries and non-member states	The study analyses and presents different approaches to citizenship education, as well as students' civic knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors.

In order to examine the relationships between different conceptualisations of citizenship and the nature, role and impact of citizenship education, and to reflect on the knowledge relevant to the development of citizenship theory and citizenship education practices in Slovenia, the review was conducted, taking into account the following research questions[3] for each study:

1. How does the study conceptualise citizenship and citizenship education?

2. What are the contextual bases and research questions of the study?

3. In what form, if any, does the study address the local/national/global dimension of citizenship and/or citizenship education?

4. Which topics of citizenship education are addressed by the study?

5. What are the observations with regard to Slovenia?

For each of the selected international and comparative studies, a separate general analysis was conducted first, than a separate report on the five research questions listed above was prepared. Major observations and findings of the comparative analysis are presented below.

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3 In the original review, which presents the basis for this paper, a set of eight research questions was formulated and used in the analysis. Some research questions were omitted in this paper, as their purpose goes beyond the purpose of this paper. Among them were questions related to the form of citizenship education analysed (formal, non-formal, and informal), the methods used for data collection and the general conclusions for each of the research initiatives examined.

3 General Observations

3.1 Concept of Citizenship

Most of the studies reviewed comprise either a broad (maximal) or narrow (minimal) understanding of citizenship (McLaughlin 1992; Isin, Turner 2002). Along these lines, the general hypothesis is that a narrow or minimal understanding of the concept of citizenship, which limits the concept to mere formal, legal and judicial terms (McLaughlin 1992),[4] leads to a narrow definition and function of citizenship education. Such an approach to citizenship education, in turn, provides students and all citizens (from a lifelong learning perspective) with a set of general information on and knowledge of the existing political system, tradition and culture, thus merely equipping the citizens with the realisation of their legal status in society and the state. For instance, both IEA studies (Torney-Purta et al. 2001; Kerr et al. 2010) and the All-European Study (Bîrzéa et al. 2004), and to a lesser extent the ETGACE research, define citizenship through the classic Marshallian perspective of civil, political and social rights (Marshall 1950). Although such an approach to understanding and describing citizenship has become common to the degree that it could be considered as a canon of citizenship studies, for nearly a decade, authors have argued that as a result of the ever-changing socio-political context, Marshallian citizenship has become insufficient for reflecting contemporary forms of citizenship (Turner 2001; Isin, Turner 2007; Kennelly, Llewellyn 2011). In this manner, the ETGACE (Holford, Edirisingha 2003) and RE-ETGACE (Chioncel, Jansen 2004) research initiatives are significant, as they problematise the traditional and solely legal understanding of citizenship as the relation(s) between the citizen(s) and the state and call for (although not explicitly) an understanding of citizenship from the perspective of the republican citizenship tradition, as opposed to the prevailing liberal one (Chioncel, Jansen 2004). Furthermore, the authors of the ETGACE study report argue that the concept of citizenship is a fluid and complex concept based on competing and interchanging theoretical perspectives, which should not be understood solely in terms of national or supranational governance (Holford, Edirisingha 2003).

Both the Stocktaking (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002) and the Indicators study (de Weerd et al. 2005) are built on the concept of active citizenship rather than citizenship in general, and centre the concept around the ideals of human rights and the values of participation, tolerance, non-violence, respect for the rule of law and citizens' responsibility. This similarity is perhaps not surprising, since both international and comparative studies are policy driven, as compared to the others mentioned above. The nature and the purposes of the studies are, in this manner, reflected in their intensely political (in contrast to a more political scientific) understanding of citizenship. Nonetheless, a common factor can be identified in the underlying concept of responsibility, which seems prevalent in several of the international research initiatives, regardless of their nature and purpose. Some authors argue that the contemporary concept of active

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4 In some cases, the terms thick and thin are also used to describe the two different conceptualisations of citizenship and citizenship education (McLaughlin 1992; Kerr 1999).

citizenship is intrinsically connected to the ideal of responsibility, which is one of the determining factors of the prevailing neoliberal rationality (Rose 1999; Kennelly, Llewellyn 2011). Similarly, the Eurydice study (2005) is based on the concept of good citizenship, which is also seen as highly problematic, as it is understood to be increasingly exclusive, to facilitate individualisation and, in the long term, to result in increased socio-political passivity and compliance. "The constant reiteration of active citizenship as a responsibility and not a right [in and of itself] affirms passive messages about the 'good (young) citizen' today" (Kennelly, Llewellyn 2011, 907). As Mitchell points out, "[E]ducating a child to be a good citizen is no longer synonymous with constituting a well-rounded, nationally oriented, multicultural self, but rather about attainment of the 'complex skills' necessary for individual success in a global economy" (Mitchell 2003, 399 cit. Kennelly, Llewellyn 2011, 899).

On the other hand, a broad or maximal (McLaughlin 1992; Isin, Turner 2002) understanding of the concept of citizenship in an individual state or society tends to foster a broad understanding of the role of citizenship education, which equips individuals with the knowledge and skills to critically reflect their role, status and impact on society and the state, and motivates them to critically evaluate the existing societal structures and processes so that they might be questioned (Wolmuth 2010). A broad understanding of citizenship and with it a broad role of citizenship education may be understood as supporting the youth's development of critical knowledge and facilitating them "to become not mere 'responsible citizens,' responding to state needs, but activist citizens who make justice demands of the state" (Kennelly, Llewellyn 2011, 911).

3.2 The International Research Initiatives and Their Contextual Bases

Some authors see the maximal/minimal division and the prevalence of one over the other as a result of different, specific traditions of citizenship and of the governments' political orientation on the left-right continuum (Holford, Edirisingha 2003). In this context, the so-called political right understands citizenship as a narrow rights based concept, while the so-called political left endorses the concept of social citizenship, which is primarily centred on particular social welfare rights. On the other hand, the Eurydice research initiative (2005), without focusing on the left-right continuum, argues that in most of the countries they analysed in their research, an elision of the broader understanding is evident. The narrow understanding is manifested by overemphasizing the importance of respect for the citizens' rights and duties and neglecting what Kennelly and Llewellyn (2011, 911) call "making justice demands on the state." Kerr (1999) notes that changes in government and governance (both in the political and structural senses) have an increasing progressive or retrogressive impact on citizenship education and the educational systems at large. Nonetheless, changes in government and governance in particular can also affect the way that citizenship in general is conceptualised and the

way that citizenship education is developed and practiced. Within a number of contemporary liberal-democratic states and through the introduction and gradual prevalence of the paradigm of lifelong learning, the issue of fostering citizenship education and executing active citizenship has become individualised through the concept of responsibilisation, where addressing socio-political issues is considered as the responsibility of every individual, but not as the responsibility of society as a whole (Rose 1999; Lemke 2002).

In some studies, the different conceptualisations of citizenship are understood as a consequence of individual or group activities in either civic or civil society (Kerr et al. 2010),[5] influencing whether a specific society fosters a culture of and the practices of *civic education* or *citizenship education*. The former is characterised by the predominant focus on the knowledge of formal structures and processes of civic life (e.g. elections, voting), while the latter focuses on the knowledge and understanding of the broader aspects of citizens' participation and engagement (ibid.).

Finally, some authors see the different conceptualisations as a consequence of the processes of transition and the era of post-transition (Chioncel, Jansen 2004).The issue of the discrepancy between citizenship education and students' knowledge in countries with a long-standing democratic tradition and those still in the process of democratic consolidation is discussed in many international studies (Torney-Purta et al. 2001; Chioncel, Jansen 2004). Our analysis revealed that this is an issue which divides many scholars and experts, as different arguments and conclusions are common. For instance, the CIVED study (Torney-Purta et al. 2001) argues that there is no significant difference at the primary level of education between countries with a long-lasting democratic tradition and those yet to consolidate their democracy, while the final report of RE-ETGACE (Chioncel, Jansen 2004) understands transition to democracy as one of the most important factors influencing education for active citizenship. It argues that a number of states which have undergone or are still undergoing the process of (post-)transition tend to overemphasize the importance of the so-called democratic hardware (legal structures and institutions), while neglecting the importance of the so-called democratic software (socio-political relations and mechanisms), which is crucial for informed and collective decision-making in contemporary states and societies.

Most of the studies (with the exception of Torney-Purta et al. 2001) initially address and to different extent problematise the modern concept of citizenship as being exclusively and directly connected to the environment of the nation state. In this manner, the RE-ETGACE research places citizenship and active citizenship in the context of postmodern, post-transitional and globalised environment and argues that the political, economic, social and cultural conditions highly influence the changing nature of citizenship and citizenship education (Chioncel, Jansen 2004). Furthermore, the authors argue that placing all the burden of developing active citizenship in the hands of the educational environment could be fruitless if the political, economic and social environment do not follow suit

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5 Civil society here refers to the connections among individuals and groups in society, not including the state, while civic society refers to societal connections which include relations to the state (Kerr et al. 2010).

and play an active role in de-individualising the nature of active citizenship. Nonetheless, the studies observe that the concept of citizenship within citizenship education in many national systems remains limited to the legal relation between the nation state and its citizens. A further observation in this context was made by the Indicators study (de Weerd 2005), which explicitly warned that insufficient information was available in individual countries on the nature, approach and results of citizenship education. This, in turn, could be understood as a confirmation of the discrepancy (or gap) between the policy rhetoric and citizenship education practices, which several research initiatives found to be a common problem in many countries (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002; Bîrzéa et al. 2004; Kerr et al. 2010).

A common understanding of citizenship, and consequently of citizenship education, is the so-called approach of creating a dutiful citizen (Bennett 2003), where the overall focus is on respect for human rights, non-violence and the rule of law (e.g. Harrison, Baumgartl 2002). Most of the international and comparative studies examined focus on the direct correlation between a narrow/minimal or broad/maximal understanding of citizenship and the nature, practice and role of citizenship education in different states. In this manner, the more narrow *civic education* is seen as private, exclusive, elitist, formal and content led, but also easier to achieve and measure. On the other hand, the broader approach seen in *citizenship education* is inclusive, activist, participative and process led, but much more difficult to achieve and measure in practice (Kerr et al. 2010). By doing so most of the studies try to avoid promoting an individual concept of citizenship and tend to focus on the multiplicity of relations between citizenship and citizenship education. One exception which I must note here is the 2005 Eurydice study in which the concept of citizenship, and consequently citizenship education, is primarily viewed through the lens of good or responsible citizenship. Reference to good and/or responsible citizenship is provided both in the introductory section[6] and the definitions section, where the concept is directly connected to raising awareness on the rights and duties of the so-called responsible citizenship. The use of the concept of good and/or responsible citizenship is highly problematic for several reasons. First, although the concept of good and/or responsible citizenship in the study is undoubtedly democratically based, the concept can be seen as archaic, as it originates from colonial Britain and it is primarily based on training (mostly of affluent young men) for important decision-making positions in society. The concept builds on the idea of continuous loyalty and instinctive subordination to the rules (as it originates from the British army and the imperial power structures) and, thus, does not facilitate the development of critical thinking or question the existing socio-political practices (Crick 2000). Second, its understanding and use can be directly connected to the neoliberal rationality which, as some authors argue (Kennelly, Lywelyin 2011), does not foster critical knowledge and differentiated forms of (active) citizenship, but rather maintains the need for active compliance. Finally, as mentioned above, the concept of good and/or responsible citizenship, which (over)emphasizes respect for citizens'

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6 The introduction to the Eurydice study states "In the interests of social cohesion in Europe and a common European identity, pupils at school need to be informed specifically about what it means to be a citizen, the kinds of rights and duties that citizenship entails and how to behave like a 'good citizen'" (Eurydice 2005, 7). This implies that it is the citizens who are responsible for the task of enabling social cohesion in Europe and that the project of a common European identity and European social cohesion could be unsuccessful if the citizens fail to act in accordance with the ideals of a "good citizen."

rights and duties as a response to the needs of the state, fails to make any reference to the fact that citizens also have the right (and in terms of classical political theory, even the duty) to make demands on the state or even on the supranational governing bodies.

3.3 Local, National and Global Dimensions

Globalisation is seen as one of the determining factors of the modern and/or postmodern socio-political context, characterised by increased individualisation, atomisation, hybridisation, multi-level governance and fragmentation of traditional forms of community life (Pikalo 2010). Globalisation is also one of the key factors influencing different conceptualisations of citizenship, which, as I noted above, directly influence the nature, role and impact of citizenship education. Similarly, local and regional integrations (e.g. the European Union) play an important role in reducing the once prevailing national context of citizenship and citizens' engagement. In this respect, new dimensions of citizenship education are becoming increasingly relevant.

From this perspective, the findings of the most recent international and comparative study on citizenship education (Kerr et al. 2010) are crucial, as they reveal students' superficial knowledge on topics and issues related to the EU and other global events. The global content of citizenship education in most countries is reduced to delivering information on political symbols, political and legal structures, rights and duties and classic forms of political participation. The result is that students' knowledge of basic regional or global topics (e.g. symbols) is satisfactory, while the knowledge of specific regional or global topics (e.g. the processes of policy making in multilevel governance) is significantly lower (Kerr et al. 2010). In-depth information and knowledge about citizenship (not exclusively global) content is often neglected in citizenship education classrooms. The main factor identified by a number of studies lies in the lack of knowledge and confidence among teachers of citizenship education, which can, to a great extent, be attributed to non-existing and/or inappropriate systems of teacher training (Chioncel, Jansen 2004; Eurydice 2005; Kerr et al. 2010) and, to a lesser extent, to the issue of teachers' specialisations and professional backgrounds.

The studies reviewed most commonly refer to the local-national-global dimension of citizenship education through the prism of multiculturalism, particularly when stressing the importance of tolerance and the concept of non-violence in the global socio-political environment. Interestingly, although diversity is one of the main foci of the Stocktaking research initiative, it primarily addresses the subject from a national perspective in terms of fostering respect among different social groups within a particular country (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002). Globalisation and the need to overcome the seemingly anachronous national frames of citizenship (education) is, in many cases, presented as one of the basic premises of the research initiatives, but is rarely (with the exceptions of RE-ETGACE 2004 and Eurdyce 2005) addressed and reflected upon as an individual topic of

analysis or research question. For instance, the All-European Study (Bîrzéa et al. 2004) argues that globalisation represents a significant challenge to the existing national policies of citizenship education, but fails to elaborate on the dilemma. The RE-ETGACE project (Chioncel, Jansen 2004) stresses the importance of the multiple territorial identities which lie at the heart of postmodern forms of citizenship and unveil a number of dilemmas in relation to existing nation states. The authors note that this has a direct influence on the nature and content of citizenship education, as multilevel forms of citizenship call for a diverse set of strategies, competencies and skills to foster active citizenship at the local, regional, national and global levels. Similarly, the ETGACE research initiative (Holford, Edirisingha 2003) addresses the issues of global governance and multilevel decision-making, but does not make any particular connections to citizenship and the consequential effects on citizenship education. The Eurydice study (2005) reflects the dimension strictly from a citizenship education perspective, stating that students should be made aware that local community based activities (can) have global impacts and *vice versa*.

Nonetheless, all the studies agree and build upon the fact that recent socio-political trends and transformations, such as the decreasing levels of traditional forms of political participation and the global nature and impacts of migration, call for comparable information and data relevant to citizenship education.

3.4 Citizenship Education Characteristics and Approaches

Most of the international research initiatives tend to focus on formal citizenship education. The analysis of non-formal citizenship education is predominately approached from a perspective which reduces non-formal citizenship education to a supportive environment of formal education systems and does not define it as a specific field of citizenship education. The exceptions are the research of ETGACE and RE-ETGACE which addresses the importance of non-formal and informal citizenship education and call for civil society's enhanced role in the processes of teaching and learning active citizenship (Holford, Edirisingha 2003; Chioncel, Jansen 2004). These observations are confirmed by the conclusions of the All-European Study which illustrate that formal citizenship education is the cornerstone of (active) citizenship related activities in most of the countries included in the survey (Bîrzéa et al. 2004). In this respect, a lack of specific measures for the development of non-formal citizenship education is also evident from the studies analysed. This is complemented by the fact that an in-depth international analysis of non-formal citizenship education, which some authors call for (Chioncel, Jansen 2004), has thus far not been conducted. The importance of promoting non-formal and informal citizenship becomes even more evident when taking into account the fact that citizenship education tends to be neglected in comparison to other more "traditional" subjects within the formal education system of most of the countries analysed (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002).

Based upon the observations of a number of international studies, three

prevailing approaches to citizenship education have been identified: citizenship education as a *compulsory*, specific school subject; the *integration* of citizenship education content into traditional subjects of social studies (e.g. history, geography); and the *cross-curricular* approach. Three (England, Czech Republic and Slovenia) out of four countries where students perform above average in civic knowledge implement the approach of a specific and compulsory citizenship education subject (Kerr et al. 2010). The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) in England shows that the positive effects of citizenship education (among them a higher level of civic knowledge) increase when schools practice citizenship education as a specific subject with a discrete slot of over 45 minutes per week, when citizenship education is developed by the teachers who are teaching the curriculum, when the curriculum is formally examined and when it is delivered regularly and consistently (Keating et al. 2010, VII).

The Eurydice study (2005) draws attention to the fact that in states where the concept of citizenship is understood solely as a set of relations between the citizen and the state, and where the discourse of citizens' rights and duties is in the forefront, an elision of a broad sense of citizenship occurs in citizenship education classes. The 2001 CIVED study (Torney-Purta et al. 2001) also shows that democratic practices (in schools and the wider local environment) have greater effects on students' civic knowledge and foster socio-political participation to a greater extent than the sole provision of socio-political facts and information. In this context, the importance of cultivating a broad concept of citizenship at the local, national or global level becomes even greater and should be viewed as a potential mechanism for citizens' empowerment, increased socio-political participation and mobilisation. These elements are regarded by most of the international research initiatives as clear indicators of successful citizenship education. Perhaps most importantly, voter turn-out rates among the youth, participation in interest groups, non-violent protests and public discussions are proposed as indicators of active citizenship by the Indicators study (de Weerd et al. 2005). As such, they are also considered as tools for monitoring the success of citizenship related activities. However, some authors argue that overemphasizing perceivably legitimate activities is a discursive strategy which tends to de-legitimise other forms of the dissent driven activities often employed by activists (e.g. political sit-ins, graffiti slogans, breaking of windows) (Kennelly 2009).

Furthermore, Eurydice (2005) concludes that citizenship education in the examined European states is not based on the development of theoretical knowledge, but focuses on developing and fostering civic values and virtues, and as such, primarily acts as a nurturing mechanism, rather than a process of knowledge appropriation. According to Kerr (1999), value explicit citizenship education is characterised by a broad (maximal) understanding of the citizenship concept and a clear public orientation. On the contrary, value neutral citizenship education is related to the private field and is characterised by a narrow (liberal) understanding of the citizenship concept. Countries with a value explicit citizenship education have clearer objectives and aims of citizenship education, but at the same time, these objectives are harder to monitor and implement in practice, which is primarily the consequence of the broad, inclusive, participative,

activist and process oriented nature of citizenship education (Kerr 1999). The results of the recent ICCS study validate this argument (Kerr et al. 2010).

Drawing on these observations, Kerr argues that citizenship education can be categorised as education *about* citizenship, education *through* citizenship and education *for* citizenship. Education *for* citizenship, which includes the relevant characteristics of the first two categories, is predominantly practiced in the countries of Northern Europe (and the United States of America), and represents the ultimate and most desired approach to educating and training active citizens (Kerr 1999).

4 Observations and Effects of the International Studies on Slovenia

The contemporary form of citizenship education in Slovenia is most commonly associated with the effects of the educational reform that occurred between 1996 and 1999, and introduced a national curriculum where the importance of educating students about democratic citizenship had been set as one of the underlying principles of modern education in Slovenia (Sardoč 2008). As such, the educational reform created a legal, political and educational foundation on which a compulsory citizenship education subject was introduced at the primary level of education (grades 7 through 9). Since the late 1990s, the policy rhetoric on citizenship education has been particularly strong (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002), and the primary goals and purposes of citizenship education have been based on the recommendations provided by leading international institutions in the field of citizenship education (e.g. The EU Commission, Council of Europe, OECD) (Sardoč 2008). As noted by ETGACE, the process of transition has been a significant determinant for the development of citizenship education in Slovenia (Holford, van der Veen 2003). One of the most notable effects of the educational transition process, and one which has had long-term effects on citizenship education, was the gradual increase in the autonomy provided to schools, which enabled the development of a strong democratic and participatory environment, where students were given the chance to participate in multilevel school decision-making activities (Bîrzéa et al. 2004; Eurydice, Sardoč 2008).

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the findings of the international studies conducted under the IEA (Torney-Purta et al. 2001; Kerr et al. 2010) show that the students' civic knowledge in Slovenia is just slightly above the international average,[7] and that the data for 2009 show that Slovenia is the only country where the students' civic knowledge statistically increased as compared to 1999 (Kerr et al. 2010). In the case of Slovenia, a positive association can be observed between the students' civic knowledge and the implementation of citizenship education as a compulsory separate school subject. Slovenia is also among a small number of countries which have specifically defined criteria for its students' evaluation, and where external

7 The CIVED study (Torney-Purta et al. 2001) ranks Slovenia 13th among 28 countries according to students' civic knowledge. According to the data of the international ICCS module (Schulz et al. 2010), Slovenia ranks 15th in students' civic knowledge among 36 countries. Among the 23 European countries included in the ICCS study, Slovenia ranks 12th in students' civic knowledge (Kerr et al. 2010).

school review is implemented regularly. Nonetheless, in a recent study on citizenship education published in Slovenia, the authors observed a broad discrepancy between the policy rhetoric and the practices of citizenship education, noting several inconsistencies (e.g. top-down based curriculum development, understanding citizenship as a nationally and legally based concept, education for good instead of active citizenship, relationship between patriotic and citizenship education, lack of systematic in-service training for teachers who rarely have the appropriate expertise for teaching citizenship education) between the policy defined goals and the pedagogical materials, didactic tools and teachers' competencies in the field (Zavadlav, Pušnik 2010).

4.1 The Relation to Citizenship and Its Impact

A number of international studies list the process of transition and the legacy of the former political order as significant elements which have had a great impact on the understanding of citizenship and relate to citizenship education. According to many authors, the prevalence of the legal dimension of citizenship, the exclusiveness of understanding citizenship in narrow terms of the relations between the citizens and their state, and the increasing democratic deficit in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are among the most apparent consequences of the nondemocratic political legacy (Holford, van der Veen 2003; Chioncel, Jansen 2004). These findings are further supported by the recent analysis of citizenship education in Slovenia, where some authors argue that a lack of a broader understanding of the concept of citizenship is evident and that a legal, rights based conceptualisation of citizenship is still prevalent (Zavadlav, Pušnik 2010). Other authors argue that these phenomena could be a result of individuals' negative responses to the principles of collectivism imposed in the past (Chioncel, Jansen 2004).

Another issue which can be raised here is the role of the nation state (and national politics and policies) in the era of transition and post-transition. In the inherent desire of all post-socialist countries to break the ties and praxis connected to the previous regime and political order, policies were formulated relatively artificially and swiftly in order to establish a clear position of otherness and differentiation from the past, regardless of their positive or negative impact upon the citizens' relations to the socio-political environment, institutions and processes. In this context, the ETGACE research initiative notes that trade unions played, and continue to play, an important role in non-formal and informal citizenship education in Slovenia (Holford, van der Veen 2003). The data for 2009 shows that teachers in Slovenia are above average in terms of promoting and stimulating critical thinking and independent reflection on citizenship and the role of individuals in society. Furthermore, the Stocktaking research (Harrison, Baumgartl 2002) exemplifies Slovenia as the only country in South-East Europe which is actively addressing the issue of teacher training in the field of citizenship education. The study also draws attention to specific training which is available for teachers of both officially recognised ethnic minorities

in Slovenia (i.e. Italian and Hungarian), but at the same time, emphasizes that no such measures have been adopted in the case of the Roma population.[8] However, Slovenian researchers note that most teachers are inadequately equipped with the specific competencies needed in citizenship education (Zavadlav, Pušnik 2010) and that no long-term teacher training and specialisation is available, a problem also noted by the All-European Study (Bîrzéa et al. 2004).

4.2 Challenges and Recommendations

Although recent international studies acknowledge the relative progress of citizenship education in Slovenia, they also highlight challenges in several areas where there is still room for improvement. The CIVED and ICCS studies (Torney-Purta et al. 2001; Kerr et al. 2010), which were conducted ten years apart, note that trust in democratic institutions (e.g. national government, parliament, courts) among Slovenian youth is below the international average. Furthermore, according to the studies, the pupils in Slovenia report that the formal education system does not provide them with sufficient information and knowledge on topical issues raised in countries around the world. Within the CIVED study, the results show that the students' trust in media in Slovenia in 2001was among the lowest, comparable only to the results reported in Italy (Torney-Purta et al. 2001). However, the data for 2009 (Kerr et al. 2010) shows a significant yet relative improvement in the area of trust in media, as Slovenia ranked above the European average. As I briefly discussed above, most of the international studies (particularly both studies conducted under the IEA) address these complex socio-political issues and phenomena strictly from a statistically relevant perspective and do not provide in-depth qualitative insight into the impact of citizenship education on students' views and relations to relevant socio-political processes, organisations and institutions. An in-depth qualitative study based upon this statistical data would be more than called for, if we are to critically assess the role and effects of citizenship education.

A persistent issue, and one which may be attributed to the conceptualisation of citizenship education within the research initiatives reviewed, is the students' lack of insight into post-national and globalised forms of citizenship and governance. Although many of the international and comparative studies acknowledge that global and regional (e.g. the EU) content is available through citizenship education in Slovenia (Eurydice 2005, Kerr et al. 2010), the most recent study shows that the students' in-depth knowledge of supranational political processes is below the European average (Kerr et al. 2010). The All-European Study (Bîrzéa et al. 2004), which does not examine Slovenia individually but as part of the South European context, lists four critical challenges for policy development in the field of citizenship education. These are the implementation of sustained teacher training, support for an effective system of developing textbooks and other pedagogic resources, fostering a democratic ethos in schools and

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8 Measures for other ethnic minorities living in Slovenia were not addressed in the study report.

increased cooperation among policy makers and NGO representatives in the field of education. The issue of cooperation among different stakeholders (among them policy makers, NGOs, researchers and experts) of citizenship education in Slovenia is additionally highlighted by the authors of the Slovenian analysis, who note that cooperation is mostly sporadic, unsystematic and predominantly implemented in a top-down manner (Zavadlav, Pušnik 2010).

5 Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to examine how a number of selected international and comparative studies on citizenship and citizenship education reflect the relationship between different conceptualisations of citizenship and the nature, role and impact of citizenship education. Most authors observe that a broad or narrow conceptualisation of citizenship at the national or international level has a significant influence on the purpose, approach, content, delivery and effects of citizenship education. Citizenship theory as presented in the critically reviewed studies and in this article emphasizes that a broad conceptualisation of citizenship leads to the development of citizenship education (rather than civic education) that is inclusive, activist, process led and participative. Although the example of Slovenia seems to negate this hypothesis at first glance, a more in-depth evaluation can provide additional clarifications. As noted, in recent years, Slovenia has showed significant improvement in its students' civic knowledge (Kerr et al. 2010). Since its independence at the beginning of the 1990s, the field of citizenship and citizenship education in Slovenia has been almost exclusively addressed by the legal sciences, which tend to focus on the formal, legal and judicial aspects of citizenship and present the content of citizenship education by information on political symbols, political and legal structures, rights and duties and classic forms of political participation. After the year 2000, citizenship, and citizenship education in particular, became an important stream of research in social sciences. However, this is not a phenomenon which is exclusively linked to Slovenia, as the field of citizenship experienced an international revival among social scientists (particularly in political science) in the mid-1990s (Isin, Turner 2002). In this context, I may conclude that the revival of interest in citizenship education among political scientists was accompanied by a revitalisation and re-articulation of the concept of citizenship in its broadest terms. This, in turn, led to a change in the nature and, ultimately, in the effects of citizenship education, which together with several other factors that must not be overlooked (e.g. the introduction of citizenship education as a compulsory subject at the primary level of education, revisions of the citizenship education curriculum), have yielded results in the recent international comparative studies (Kerr et al. 2010), where Slovenian students exhibited statistically relevant improvement in civic knowledge.

A particular issue raised in this article was the prevalent non-problematic use and application of the concept of responsible and/or good citizenship. A recent Canadian analysis of school curricula shows that the concept of

active citizenship is understood primarily through responsible citizenship characterised by apparently legitimate forms of active citizenship (Kennelly, Llewellyn 2011). It would be worth exploring and conducting similar research at the international, European level and/or national level in order to gain insight into whether citizenship education is understood as a mechanism for enabling critical thought or is simply, as most critics would say, a tool of indoctrination into the prevailing system of governance, which, as such, only reinforces the compliance and passivity of the citizen. In conclusion, I must note that one of the most evident drawbacks of the examined international and comparative studies on citizenship and citizenship education is their lack of research into global, postmodern and multi-layered forms of citizenship. Whether narrow or broad, the concept of citizenship used in citizenship education needs to take into account the processes of globalisation, individualisation, atomisation, hybridisation and multi-layered decision-making (Pikalo 2010), as these have become the determining factors of life in the twenty-first century.

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