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### Editorial: Young Europeans in an Era of Crises. Citizenship Education in a New Perspective

#### Keywords:

Young Europeans, crises, citizenship education, resilience, research, teaching and learning in schools and Universities

The current political, social and economic crises have serious consequences for the citizens in Europe, and at the same time in some countries a massive loss of trust in the democratic institutions is experienced. Since this is combined with an already existing decrease in political participation and the rise of populist movements in many European countries we are facing major challenges not only at the national level but also at the European level. The developments put to the test the very pursuit of European integration and its legitimacy in the eyes of citizens. This issue, structured in three parts, is focusing on young Europeans in an era of crises and the possible consequences for citizenship education.

In Part I the authors examine various aspects of the crises in general and more specifically the consequences for the youth in some European countries. Jover, Belando and Guio are analyzing the effects of the crises on Spanish youth. Mrnjaus, Vrcelj and Zlokovic on the Croatian youth. The Spanish contribution is describing the effects in terms of employment, mobility and

education and outlines the subjective perception of the crisis, i.e., how it is being experienced by the young people and expressed in the movement called 15-M and it concludes with implications for civic education at schools. The Croatian authors present the results of a qualitative study conducted on Croatian students with the aim to unveil how young people in Croatia develop resilience in times of crises; they conclude with remarks on citizenship education in Croatia and provide an overview of the curriculum of civic education.

In the next two articles from Cyprus and Norway the authors discuss one of the most sensitive topics in our times in Europe: migration. Vryonides exemplifies about the discourse concerning multiculturalism in Cyprus. Skeie exemplifies issues concerning European youth and adults who are coming to Norway, a country not affected by the crisis, but yet influenced by work immigration. In the final two articles of Part I the authors concentrate on groups who are rather optimistic about their future: Dekker, Amsing, Hahurij and Wichgers present research on recently graduated and unemployed Dutch academics and Aprea and Sappa present re-search on secondary school students in Germany.

In Part II the authors analyze the consequences of the crises on citizenship education. In the German contribution of Onken and Lange the impact of the financial and economic crisis in Europe on political attitudes, as one of the important aspects, has been considered. The conclusion indicates that a group-specific educational approach, taking into account the social background, is the most promising one for reaching the normative goal of civic education: that is politically self-determined citizens. Given the decline in the support for European integration among the public over the past years, the Dutch contribution of Oonk focuses on the improvement of the quality of citizenship education on European issues, the necessity to use a more critical approach and a good instruction by the teacher in combination with an attractive teaching and learning approach. The central question in the paper of Print is: what are the elements in a school curriculum that can build resilience in times of crises? This proposition might then be linked with a new curriculum that could address issues of

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how to build resilience amongst young people in schools. Papadiamantaki investigated students in a Greek university. The focus is their exposure to current problems, heightened by the specificities of the crisis in Greece and how this affected students' behaviour and their understanding of the concept of "active citizenship" as promoted by European Union policy. Finally implications are drawn for the prospect of promoting active citizenship through university education. In the final article of Part II, Merrigan discusses whether the ethical concept of individual responsibility as a complement to the legal human rights framework and a Kantian concept of moral 'human rights' duties in citizenship education can contribute to overcoming the crises in Europe.

In Part III Bombardelli reports on a European project, the Comenius ECLIPSE project (European Citizenship Learning in a Programme for Secondary Education) developed by six European partners with a view to develop, test and implement a Programme of European Citizenship of 8<sup>th</sup> grade pupils. Bickes, Otten and Weymann report on the Greek financial crisis and the role of the media discourses of difference and solidarity during this crisis. Finally Fischer, Fischer, Kleinschmidt and Lange report on the ideas about globalization that 9<sup>th</sup> grade students at grammar schools and secondary modern schools have.

Needless to say this is one of the many 'first' international attempts to pinpoint the character of the current crises and the impact on citizenship education. As the crises are manifold and citizenship education is definitely multifaceted there is a need for more and (as time and work proceed) deeper investigations and reports of the kind presented here. We strongly hope that this issue contributes to a better understanding and paves the way for more in depth analyses.

