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Young People and the European Dimension in a Norwegian Context. Migration and National Critical Events as Challenges to Citizenship Education¹

The article discusses the 'European dimension' in a Norwegian context with focus on the relevance for young people in particular. Against a backdrop of literature discussing Norwegian majority self-understanding in relation to Europe, the article discusses some examples that are relevant for addressing the overall theme, namely recent work-migration to Norway and the terrorist attacks of 22. July 2011. As different as they may be, both these cases are raising urgent issues related to socio-cultural diversity, inclusion and resilience and it is suggested that this may be addressed more in citizenship education.

Keywords:

Citizenship education, European dimension, Norway, resilience, terrorism, work migration

1 Introduction

Many European countries today experience economic crisis or are affected by this in different ways. Norway is in some ways an exception from the rule in Europe by being very affluent, largely thanks to the oil revenue. Norway is not a member of the European Union, contrary to most of its Nordic neighbours, but member of the European Economic Area since 1992. Historically, Norway used to be among the poorer countries in Europe. It became an independent nation as late as 1905 and this together with the German occupation 1940-45, has contributed to a broad support for and emphasis on national self-determination as a value. Having been one of the countries in Europe with highest emigration rate some hundred years ago, the situation today is different, with work immigration from parts of Europe, including a significant amount of young people. The middle aged and older generations still possess a narrative of moving from a less prosperous history as well as a narrative about threatened national independence, while the younger generations do not have the same experience having grown up in a well-to-do welfare state with a solid economic basis. Their economic worries are related to the near future, one being the rising property prices, which means that even if there is work, a very high part of the income goes to pay for housing, due to neo-liberal changes in housing policy (Skeie 2004).

The European economic crisis has certainly been part of Norwegian public discourse, but mainly as a description of the actual situation in other European countries and less to explain the effects this has on Norway. There are debates about causes and effects of the crisis and a significant part of the political debate is concerned

with what should be the Norwegian response to the crisis, particularly in terms of preventing it from spreading to Norway. Occasionally feature stories have been presented in media, showing how people in European countries are affected by the crisis and how they struggle to make ends meet. It may therefore be fair to say that there has been a general awareness of the crisis. In terms of direct contact with the crisis, it is more likely that Norwegians discover the situation in other parts of Europe on the regular holiday travels that many undertake to countries like Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal than to see it as part of their own neighbourhood. The debate about beggars from Romania can be an illustration of this, where the European dimension has been a part of the debate, but where there are also ways of framing the issue that ignores the complex transnational aspects of the issue (Engebriksen 2012).

Another example of a European dimension in Norwegian society is related to the many Europeans coming to Norway to find work. This has meant that workers in certain parts of the private sector have an increasing number of colleagues with immigration background and that young Norwegians meet other young people coming from Europe to Norway for unskilled work. The background is partly the European crisis and partly that sectors of the Norwegian economy are demanding increased workforce. So, also in this case, the European crisis is not interpreted as something Norway is part of, but the effects has entered into public discourse. While the need for skilled labour at least is acknowledged, the policy towards 'European crisis refugees' is much less developed, possibly due to a lack of established political strategy in the field of immigration (Jevne 2013).

Migration as a political issue tends to challenge the traditional consensus-oriented foreign policy discourse across party lines and today this becomes visible at the top level. The Norwegian government from 2013

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features for the first time a right wing party in coalition with the conservatives. This happened to the surprise of many observers from abroad, only a couple of years after the terror attack of Anders Behring Breivik which was met by a strong popular support for openness, democracy and a multicultural society. Norway is in the rare position of having a right wing immigration-critical political party in government position and this means that the increasing support for right wing parties seen in large parts of Europe is manifested also in Norway.

The main aim of this article is how to locate the 'European dimension' in a Norwegian context, with particular focus on some aspects of this that are relevant for understanding the situation of young people and their perspectives. This is of course a big issue that cannot be fully covered, therefore some examples are chosen in order to address the problem. I start by offering some general reflections on the relationship between Norway and Europe which can be seen as the backdrop of the following discussion. Further the article takes a closer look at two different examples that have relevance for the relationship between Norway and Europe. The first are some aspects of immigration to Norway with particular relevance for work life and education and the second example deals with reactions to the terrorist attacks of 22nd of July 2011. The immigration issue represents an ongoing process, while the reactions to the terrorist attacks are (still) more concentrated in time. The argument is that the two are raising challenging issues of socio-cultural diversity and inclusion and by this actualising a European dimension. Since the two examples are relevant for the education of young people, I will finally address some issues related to citizenship education.

2 Norway and Europe

The relationship between Norway and Europe is complex to unpack and has many aspects that are not possible to cover here, but in order to address this I will offer some reflection about recent historical events that is relevant. The majority of the Norwegian population has voted against membership in EU both in 1973 and 1994, unlike close and in many ways similar countries like Finland, Sweden and Denmark. This happened irrespective of strong support for EU membership from the political and economic 'establishment' and therefore may tell something about strong currents among Norwegian citizens that cannot be explained simply by referring to economic and political structures. In 1973 finding oil in the North Sea was only a possibility, twenty years later at the time of the next referendum, Norway was an oil economy. Both times the result was the same. The national leadership both times argued strongly that membership was a necessity for political and economic reasons. Since the Norwegian economy was and is heavily export based and strongly oriented towards Europe and the political cooperation with European countries is strong, it seems relevant to ask what is behind this Euroscepticism?

The character of the relationship between Norway and 'Europe' has probably more to do with issues of collective identity than with economy and political integration. Even if collective identities are complicated to research and discuss, it does not mean that they are irrelevant. Today, theories about identity tend to underline its relational, changing and plural features, and also a possible collective Norwegian (majority) identity should take account of this (Eriksen and Neumann 2011). The referendum in 1973 against EU membership has been interpreted as a movement mainly against European integration, fearing that this would threaten Norwegian identity. This means that the collective national identity was relating itself to Europe in a way that saw 'Norwegian' in some way as opposed to 'European'. The context of the second referendum in 1994 was in many ways quite different; the Iron Curtain had disappeared in its old shape and Norway had established a strong oil-based economy. By that time real integration into the EU system had already gone a long way legally and politically, also in Norway, but this did not change the majority position. After 1994 discussion about membership in the European Union almost disappeared from parliamentary politics, while the discourse about national identity has been much more preoccupied with socio-cultural diversity in a global perspective and what this means for being Norwegian. Socio-political values like gender equality, democracy, human rights and welfare state seem to have entered the national collective identity to some extent, thereby 'universalising' the content of national identity. In this way the relationship between Norway and the rest of the world has become a more central issue than the relationship particularly towards Europe and the values mentioned are often drawn on in order to characterize Norway and Norwegians. At the same time, it may be argued that the focus on challenges of socio-cultural diversity de facto brings Norway in line with trends in many European countries and that the new right wing government is a sign of this being the case.

Another aspect of national identity is rooted in the strong position of the local, often rural communities as part of collective memory, even if this today is competing with a more urban orientation and therefore makes the role of the local more complex (Schiefloe 2002). The 'localism' does not lead to the national identity falling apart, but rather gives it a distinct flavour. It has been argued that it even contributes to the ideals of equality and 'sameness' that play such a significant role in the understanding of 'Norwegianness' (Gullestad 1992). On the political level, the strength of the 'local' is reflected in an electoral system that secures a parliamentary representation from 'peripheral' areas which is higher than their population proportion and the opposite is the case with central, urban, highly populated areas. It may be argued that this is one explanation for the somewhat more limited centralisation and higher investments in 'peripheral' infrastructure in Norway compared with e.g. Sweden. It may also be noted that local dialects play a



strong role in Norwegian public life and may be used on all levels of society, including ministers, senior civil servants, celebrities and business executives. These are among the features that have and still may puzzle immigrants and non-Norwegian visitors (Høgmo 1998). The puzzlement increases by the fact that while there is emphasis on sameness, homogeneity, local communities and welfare state equality as characteristics of Norway, the country today also displays increasing socio-economic differences, a strongly gendered labour market, urbanization and increasing international travelling. In the last years, increasing work immigration is also part of the picture.

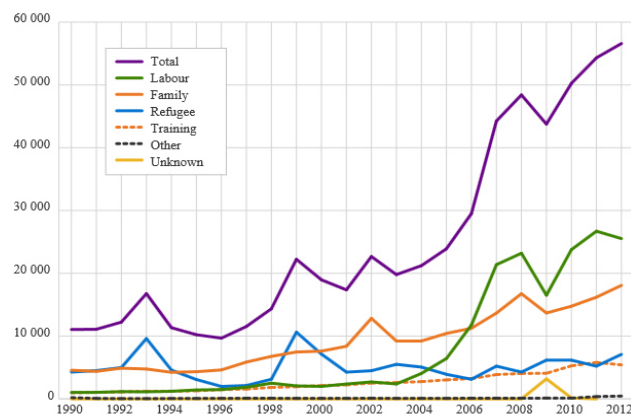
3 Migration in the Norwegian context

Recent migration patterns to Norway can be described as occurring in three phases (Brochmann and Kjelstadli 2008). The first phase which started in the 60's and continued into the 70's consisted of work migrants mainly from Southern Europe, Turkey and Pakistan. In 1975 the Norwegian government as well as many others introduced a labour migration stop due to strong labour market pressure. In this period with the exception of experts, primarily within the oil and gas industry, work migration more or less ceased. This second phase from the mid 70-ies and thirty years onwards was characterised by a gradually increasing migration of asylum seekers, refugees and their families as well as families of earlier work migrants. These were mainly from Asia, Africa, South America, and the Balkans. After the 2004 EU enlargement, labour migration from the new EU countries initiated a third phase with labour migrants dominating the migration patterns. Since then there has been a considerable and growing work migration from Central and Eastern Europe, in particular from Poland and the Baltic states (Friberg 2012). Estimates foresee that the future will bring an increase in work migration flows both in and out of the country, making both the composition of the population and also migration patterns more diverse and difficult to predict (Texmon 2012). Below is an overview of the size of immigration displaying the different reasons for migration (Figure 1).

There are today approximately 600 000 persons who themselves have migrated to Norway, roughly one half from EU, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and one half from Asia, Africa and Oceania. In addition to these figures, approximately 120 000 persons are born in the country, but have parents who were both born abroad.² Taken together this means that 14, 9 per cent of the total population of 5 million may be defined as immigrants. There are of course several differences within this large group and one significant division line in the policies towards migrants goes between refugees and migrant workers.³ Refugees are people who have settled due to agreements with the national integration authorities. An important aspect of this is that when they settle in Norwegian communities, the municipality gets funding to support the public services needed. Labour

migrants have arrived mainly due to the 2004 enlargement of the European Union combined with the crisis in European economy in later years. As part of the ordinary labour market, they are not followed by public funds, the municipalities have to provide the services needed based on their regular tax income and the immigrants get the full support of ordinary social service, health and education. In practice it is not always easy for small communities to do this and to cater for the needs of different types of immigrants.

Figure 1. Immigrations by reason for immigration, 1990-2012



Source: Statistics Norway.

Figure 1: Reasons for migration to Norway (Statistics Norway), first time migration of migrants of non-Nordic origin⁴

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4 The work and education situation of young migrants in Norway

Two thirds of the immigrants in Norway are in the age of 20-54, which means that the immigration population is younger than the rest of the population (Tønnessen 2014). Especially young adults are larger cohorts among immigrants. Due to new immigrants coming in, the age profile is not changing much, and this contributes to the image of the 'the immigrant' as a younger person. Since there are significantly more men than women immigrants, the image is also gendered. The low unemployment in Norway been combined with a demand for workforce in certain sectors like health, shops, restaurants and the health sector. Here, part-time labour is much used and the formal qualification is often low. This type of work is often done by students and other young people on a part time basis. A particular case of interest in a youth perspective, is the increasing amount of young Swedes who has come to Norway in recent years for this



kind of work, and that they partly push the Norwegian youth out of this section of the labour market. Since 2000 the number of Swedish youth working in Norway has risen from about 10.000 to more than 25.000 (Sundt 2012). With more than 15% of the youth population (18–25) in the eastern part of Norway being Swedish migrant workers periods, the competition for certain jobs is strong. The young Swedes prefer to work for a couple of years in order to save money for travels and/or further education. While there has not been any big conflicts related to this work migration, there has been a noticeable public attention towards aspects of the situation.⁵ The salary level is higher in Norway than in Sweden, but so are the living costs, especially in the south-eastern and urban parts where these young Swedes tend to come. Their living conditions are therefore not always too good and there has been allegation of being ‘exploited’ or ‘offended’ because of the social role assigned to them by employers or Norwegian youth.

Moving upwards in age, there has in the recent years been a significant work migration to Norway where the demand is not for unskilled workers in the service sector, but more towards skilled labour in construction and industry. Especially along the west coast this has been a very noticeable development and of particular interest is the many Poles who have been coming in recent years, some with family, thereby constituting by far the largest national group among the immigrant population both historically and today.⁶ So far, many of these immigrants seem to pass through stages of migration that leads to settlement in Norway rather than to return, partially due to the permanent need for their labour. This may lead to more ‘traditional’ migration patterns in years to come (Friberg 2013). If so, many young people in many small communities will grow up with a significant number of peers having a Polish background.

From these two examples illustrating developments in the labour market, I now turn to the situation of young immigrants who are permanent residents in Norway and are going through upper secondary schools. I am here referring to students with a diverse international background often born in Norway, but with parents that are born outside. In spite of having a well-developed welfare state system and formal regulations securing support systems and equal rights, the Norwegian society has not succeeded in the establishment of a truly including education and work life for young people, and those with a migrant background seem to be among the most vulnerable in this situation.

The general rate of students who are not completing their upper secondary education in Norway is at least 20%. This is higher than the other Nordic countries except Iceland and it is higher among boys than girls (Sletten and Hyggen 2013).⁷ The effect of this is that many of this drop out group also have trouble finding work later, and if they do it is usually not well paid. Some stay marginalised over longer time with negative long term effects, but many are able to manage quite well and it is difficult to establish the reasons for different

trajectories here. The mechanisms behind are many and complex, related to both structural and socio-individual dynamics, but the results are affecting measurable parameters like grades, fulfilment of upper secondary education, employment and wages and is a matter of concern (Brinch et al. 2012; Brochmann and Hagelund 2011; Djuve and Friberg 2004; Solbue 2013). In addition to immigrant youth, the most vulnerable seem to be youth with a background of being in child care and those with a history of mental health problems. Regarding immigrant youth, it seems that the so-called ‘second generation’ manages reasonably well, while the recent arrived that struggle the most. The Norwegian situation therefore seems to fit with the international literature which argues that if socio-economic factors are taken into consideration, immigrant youth do not necessarily have more difficulties in acquiring education compared with the rest of the population (Lauglo 2010). Within the immigrant group there are no gender differences in achievement, while this is significant in the majority population. Actually, the overall difference in achievement in upper secondary education between girls and boys is higher than the differences between majority and immigrant students and (Lauglo 2010, 4, 15). The conclusion seems to be that class is more important than gender in order to explain difficulties of immigrant youth in school and that gender is more of a challenge within the majority population.

The situation in labour market and education is also a concern for public service, where initiatives are taken in order to understand and improve the situation (Halvorsen and Hvinden 2014). Generally speaking, educational reforms in Norway have not been successful in reducing drop out, but individual follow up and also educational alternatives with a more practical orientation has given positive results. Also in the field of getting jobs, the general approach seems to have been less effective than more individualised and targeted approaches. These are however dependent on committed and often innovative people and many of the initiatives have come in the civil sector, often backed by public money. Research suggests that more indirect approaches focusing on a realistic self-understanding, improved self-confidence and also closer contact with adult mentors are among the promising developments, often initiated from in the civil or non-public sector of society (Sletten and Hyggen 2013). Among the effects are improvement of young peoples’ net-work and position in the local community, which are issues boarding on citizenship virtues and resilience capacities. This raises questions about what role education can play, to which I will return. Before that, I will introduce the second example chosen to approach the Norwegian-European dimension, namely the issue of right-wing extremism and violence.

5 Resilience in times of crisis

As shown above, the people migrating to Norway come for a variety of reasons and with diverse and changing



socio-cultural backgrounds. The complex and intersecting mixture of challenges produced by this migration has not been situated in an economic crisis like in other European countries. Therefore public discourse has been focusing less on economical issues and more on culture, values and politics, but still in ways that are known from other European countries. There has been however, a dramatic exception to the dominating features of rhetorics and discourse, namely a physical and violent expression of the tensions in a plural society. The terrorist attacks on 22nd of July 2011 came as a shock and particularly the killing of young people at Utøya has challenged the resilience of Norwegians in general and young people in particular.

This incident was interpreted from an early stage as a national crisis. It became not only a targeted attack on the social democratic youth organisation, but was interpreted as an attack on a whole generation which is generally positive towards a multi-religious and multicultural society (Blom 2013). Only a few hours before Anders Behring Breivik conducted his terror actions in Oslo and Utøya, he published a 1500 page manifesto online that warned about 'Islamic colonisation' of Western Europe. In this text, '2083: A European Declaration of Independence', which is still available on internet, Breivik writes about an ongoing war where he defends Norwegian and Christian values against Islam and cultural Marxists and/or multiculturalists. He sees this war as being of vital concern for Europe. Immediate reactions ranging from political leaders to the general public supported democratic values, social cohesion and diversity. This mobilisation showed how strong these values are among the population and in particular young adults belonging to the 'Utøya-generation'. After the attacks, there was a massive popular mobilisation in support of democratic values, love and openness and this was, stimulated and rhetorically formulated by the national leadership, in particular Prime Minister Stoltenberg and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon (Jensen and Bye 2013).

The court trial of the terrorist went on for several months in the spring of 2012 and he was finally sentenced to life imprisonment. The public debate focused much on the question of his sanity, while the extreme right wing political message of Breivik was much less debated. It is of course difficult to get insight into the emotions and reflections of people in the aftermath of the attacks, but several research projects have started and will produce results in the years to come.⁸ The long term effects of the critical event on the population are of course difficult to investigate. One of several possible sources of information regarding the immediate reactions is related to the memory messages laid down in central Oslo and Utøya in the first days and weeks after the attack. These messages may be seen as the beginning of a 'memorialisation' of the critical event and researching these may give important insight into the building and content of resilience in the time of crisis. While these messages show strong support for love and

openness, there is also a tendency of depoliticisation by not making the content of the perpetrators ideology and his attack on a multicultural and diverse society a main issue, but rather to see him as a 'domestic alien' (Lödén 2014).

What Löden also finds in his study of the memory material is that the mobilisation for democratic values immediately after the attack, does not seem to have been followed by a stronger focus on these values since 2011. The strong democratic consensus may even have contributed to a lack of self-critical awareness in terms of investigating aspects of xenophobia and racism in the majority population by ascribing these attitudes only to small right wing groups. It is therefore of interest to know whether and how this issue is dealt with in education of young people in Norway.

Information from ongoing research into the 'Utøya generation' in a school setting seems to suggest that they hardly have dealt with 22/7 as part of social studies and religious education in school, even if these school subjects may seem to be particularly appropriate for dealing with Islamophobia, racism, right wing extremism as well as the importance of democratic citizenship.⁹ This does not mean that young people do not support the democratic values to large degree, but it may apply that knowledge about democratic values and the formal democratic system as well as a relatively strong support for the values and the system, is not a guarantee that xenophobia, racism and right wing extremism is sufficiently covered in school education (Mikkelsen et al. 2011).

This raises questions about developing resilience among young people in the aftermath of the Utøya attacks. The international, in particular European, perspective of the perpetrator, seeing Islam as a threat to Europe, has also not been much present in the public discourse after 22/7. Furthermore, the fact that his claim to be part of a larger group was not substantiated in the court case against him seems also to have contributed to a lack of a 'European dimension' in the discussion about 22/7 and its consequences. If Breivik is understood as a 'domestic alien', he is in a way neutralised politically. One alternative would be to see him as representing a political position which is well known from other parts of Europe. It is therefore possible to argue that we may witness a lack of awareness of Norway as being embedded in Europe and also a lack of reflection upon what this may mean for self-understanding in an increasingly diverse Norway. It is an open question whether this will be more strongly introduced from policy makers or if it is left for the 'Utøya-generation' to deal with it themselves. One arena for addressing these issues would be citizenship education. How well is this field of education equipped for dealing some of the issues discussed?

6 Citizenship education and the European dimension

Citizenship education is not present in Norwegian schools as a distinct subject, but is featuring as an integrated part of several school subjects, most



noticeable in social studies ('samfunnsfag'). Norwegian social studies has been criticised for being too focused on formal issues related to societal institutions and electoral democracy. There is a need for research drawing more on international studies and to focus on issues like inclusion and exclusion. Also the actual practice of teaching and learning as well as understanding and reception of content and concepts by different student groups should be addressed more (Solhaug 2012a, 2013). What is of particular interest in light of a European perspective is the central role that both history education and social studies has played in the nation building process in Norway (Lorentzen 2005). In addition, the position of the local community in relation to citizenship issues needs more scholarly attention (Knudsen 2014). Today researchers challenge the history of nation building as educational aim in the light of more global perspectives in Scandinavian countries (Solhaug et al. 2012b). While there has been considerable (critical) interest towards the national perspective, there is hardly research based knowledge about how the European dimension, which is present to some extent in the social studies syllabus, is implemented over time. The general impression is that this is very limited. Therefore some researchers argue that a perspective of cosmopolitan citizenship may be a way forward for Norwegian schools in order to counter this, rather than assuming that the international tests tell the whole story about young peoples' democratic values (Lybæk and Osler 2012). In particular it may be argued that youth with a migrant background are depoliticised even if empirical research finds them to have 'positive political orientations ...compared to Norwegian students' (Solhaug 2012c, p 15).

Also religious education in Norwegian schools has a special relevance for issues of citizenship and resilience. In recent years it has been like a 'seismograph' for tensions and changes in the relationship between diversity, nation, religion, human rights, citizenship and identity issues and has developed into an interesting and increasingly transdisciplinary researched field (Andreassen 2011; Bråten 2009; Haakedal 2001; Plesner 2013; Skeie 2003, 2012). The discourse regarding this school subject is dominated by diversity issues and the majority/minority relationships and it has been argued that the curriculum of religious education is the one that most explicitly addresses the diversity that young people experience (Nielsen 2012). It has also been argued that this subject in practice tends to avoid issues of conflict and controversy (Andreassen 2008), but other empirical research shows that there are promising developments of taking up more controversial issues, resulting in classrooms becoming 'communities of disagreement' (Iversen 2012).

A recent critical study of citizenship in Norwegian education system argues that there is a significant difference between Norwegian and international discourse in this field (Stray 2009). The argument is that the Norwegian discourse about education is dominated by a

focus on human capital and thinking related to work-life situation, with a strong emphasis on improving subject area achievements and in particular certain basic skills, like reading, writing and arithmetic. This leads to citizenship perspectives becoming more or less invisible, they tend to be seen as a subcategory of subject learning, focusing on formal knowledge. The impression is that together with broad perspectives on education like 'Bildung', also citizenship issues are marginalised. On the other hand, the prominence of child-oriented pedagogy among Norwegian teachers and in school culture, may balance this on a more every-day basis and ensures some influence of students in schools life. This egalitarian tradition is sometimes difficult for young people with migration background to interpret and adjust to, since they often are more used to authoritarian and root-learning oriented pedagogical approaches. In this perspective, Norwegian egalitarianism is more understood as an implicit socio-cultural value of the majority population than as part of an explicit political ideology. As such it may paradoxically become an obstacle as much as a democratic resource for minority groups (Gullestad 2002).

This calls for a closer investigation of the overlapping landscape of the 'canonised' national heritage, the implicit aspects of Norwegian majority self-understanding and the differing ways of which Norway is dealing with increasing socio-cultural diversity. This intersects with issues of class, gender and ethnicity, producing the 'multicultural riddle' (Baumann 1999). In terms of school subjects, a particular and common challenge faces history, social studies and religious education, all of which have a strong tradition of including a European perspective.

7 Conclusion

The contention in the beginning of this article was that issues of immigration as well as the critical event of 22/7 could serve as examples of societal challenges that young people face in Norway. The policies on European level are providing the legal framework for immigration allowing other Europeans to enter into the Norwegian labour market and by this adding a certain 'European dimension' to the challenges of a growing international work force. Examples mentioned are beggars from Eastern Europe challenging the self- image of Norwegians as well as the image of Europe, young Swedes competing with their peers about jobs in east Norway, while Polish workers are saving construction and industry from lack of workforce, thus creating more sustainable local communities in Western Norway.

It has been argued that in education the 'European dimension' is not a distinct part of the curriculum, but that issues related to Norway as a plural society can be seen as implicitly 'European'. The discourse about low achievements of minority pupils can be interpreted as partly related to the perception of more diverse student cohorts. A closer look at the research into this points towards more complex challenges than only helping the



immigrants to better their school results. Here issues of trans-nationality, gender and class are in play.

A European dimension is also present in the Norwegian debate about right wing extremism by showing this as a reaction to diversity which is challenging many European countries. Taken together, the examples are cases that tell something about how young people in Norway deal with 'Europe', not as an idea, but as background of everyday life issues in more implicit ways. 'Europe' may perhaps less than before be perceived as different from Norway. The challenges of Norwegian society can be seen as more similar to the ones of Europe at large. I have argued that a mentality of 'imagined sameness' creating 'invisible fences' between 'us' and 'them' is part of the setup of the Norwegian majority population (Gullestad 2002). This is regularly displayed in the media, irrespective of the more complex situation on the ground. The particular setup of the us-and-them mentality on the majority side is confusing and complex because it is full of good intentions and even some times self-reflexive in a way that makes it both demanding to analyse and controversial to criticise.¹⁰

Positive attitudes towards diversity among many young people of the majority population are generally voiced when researched, and this in particular came to the fore after the right wing extremist attacks in Oslo and on Utøya in 2011. While the critical incident at Utøya and reactions afterward showed a strong support for a diverse and democratic Norway, particularly among the younger generations, it seems that these democratic citizenship attitudes may be more fragile than sometimes expected, and there are signs of depoliticisation. This complex picture is also a challenge for citizenship education which is under pressure in an educational system dominated by an educational policy based focus on reading, writing and arithmetic. Still, there are signs in recent citizenship education research and scholarship that these issues are taken up and debated (Solhaug 2013). Even if there are some big challenges for both citizenship education and intercultural education if these intersecting complexities are going to be addressed, it does not make it less important to face them.

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Endnotes

¹ I appreciate the inputs from colleagues Dan Dyrli Daatland and Nils Olav Østrem to this article.

² Statistics Norway, migration statistics, www.ssb.no/befolkning/statistikker/innvbf, (downloaded 19 July 2013)

³ A third important group in OECD's "big three" is family migrants. Persons in this group will have similarities with either refugees or work migrants, but will not be subject of discussion in this paper.

⁴ See Statistics Norway: www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/statistikker/innvgrunn/aar/2013-09-03 (downloaded 01.07.2014)

⁵ See Aftenposten Oct 7. 2013: www.aftenposten.no/okonomi/Innvandring-gir-knallhard-konkurranse-om-ungdomsjobbene-7331456.html (downloaded 20.12.2013).

⁶ See Statistics Norway www.ssb.no/en/innvandring-og-innvandrer/nokkeltal (downloaded 01.09.2014)

⁷ The reference has statistics based on the 20-24 year olds and is a synthetic report based on a range of other research publications. I am drawing on this report also in the following.

⁸ Coordination of research is done by The Norwegian National Committees for Research Ethics: www.etikkom.no/In-English/Coordinating-research-on-the-terrorist-attacks-227/

⁹ I am here referring to initial research results from research colleague Marie von der Lippe, University of Bergen, who is researching 'dialogue in times of crisis' with particular focus on the young people starting upper secondary school in august 2011. (Personal communication May 2014)

¹⁰ Here there may be a parallel to debates about the Norwegian development aid following Terje Tvedt's analysis of 'the Goodness Regime' which argues that precisely the good intentions is part of the problem, since it makes self-criticism difficult (Tvedt 2002).

