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A Trinity of Transformation, Europeanisation, and Democratisation?

Current Research on Citizenship Education in Europe

Abstract

Although a lot of stock-taking research on citizenship education in European countries has already been done, some key features of citizenship education especially in transformation countries are not understood as yet. The authors briefly outline the state of the art and criticize its main shortcomings. As a result, they suggest a research agenda to enhance the knowledge about citizenship education with respect to its interconnectedness with processes of transformation and to its embeddedness into different political cultures, institutions and democracies. They propose to realise multi-level and multi-actor case studies which perceive citizenship education as an organisational issue, too.

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Keywords

Citizenship education, transformation, democratisation, Europeanisation.

Introduction

In the beginning of the 21st century, citizenship education in Europe is characterised by a remarkable upswing in both political activities and research. Since 1997 the Council of Europe and since 2001 the European Commission have been engaged in policy development, communication campaigns for raising awareness, networking activities and programmes like Education for Democratic Citizenship¹ or Active European Citizenship. These policies are aiming at social cohesion, participation, solidarity and mutual understanding and are also expected to foster the innovation of education systems (CoE 2005, 10). The European Union relies on citizenship

¹„EDC is a set of practices and principles aimed at making young people and adults better equipped to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society“ (CoE 2004, 13).

education² as a means of providing “young people with an idea of what is meant by responsible citizenship within a democratically based society”, fostering “social cohesion in Europe and a common European identity” as well as teaching “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, 7-8, cf. Hettlage 2000, 394-405). Currently, the main driving forces of European citizenship education policies are concerns about democratisation in transforming countries, attempts to create something like an all-European identity, including efforts to bring the “old” and the “new” EU-countries as well as their neighbours closer together, and a growing uneasiness about the increasing general gap between the EU and its citizens which is perceived as alienation caused by missing opportunities of democratic participation. In this paper we try to give some pointed answers to three questions:

- Are these tendencies and interdependencies mirrored and analysed in research on citizenship education?
- What is the state of the art regarding research on citizenship education in transformation countries³?
- What are the main shortcomings of this research?

The first section of the paper gives an overview of existing research on citizenship education in Europe. In the second part we discuss some specific key features of citizenship education in transforming countries and in the third part we outline the main challenges and conflicts resulting from these special conditions. The next step is to critically review current research and to identify its main gaps and shortcomings. To overcome these deficits, the fifth section is dedicated to outline an appropriate research agenda. Finally, we give a brief conclusion of our arguments.

Research on Citizenship Education in European Countries

The Council of Europe (CoE) as well as the European Commission (EC) have organised comprehensive stock-taking research on citizenship education in Europe (CoE 2004, Eurydice 2005). A series of international studies on concepts and outcomes of citizenship education, which analyse data on the political knowledge, attitudes and commitment of 14 year olds, also include a range of European countries (IEA 1999, Torney-Purta et al. 2001, Amadeo et al. 2002, Oesterreich 2002, Oser/Biedermann 2003). A follow-up survey is scheduled for 2009. In addition to this, citizenship education in Europe seems to be a well-studied field because a number of national overviews and comparative surveys are available. These analyse the countries’ policy approaches and basic concepts as well as their main institutions and organisational structures, and they compare their goals, curricula, school cultures, current debates, ongoing reforms, and teacher education (cf. Eurydice 2004 a-i, CoE 2002, 2004, 2004 a-f). But frequently EU studies and reports by the CoE more or less resemble publications by national ministries or affiliated institutes.

² „Citizenship education in the context of the present survey will refer to school education for young people, which seeks to ensure that they become active and responsible citizens capable of contributing to the development and well-being of the society in which they live“ (Eurydice 2005, 10).

³ For the purpose of this review, we use the notion of “transformation” in a summarising way to denote the specific changes a group of countries have undergone which turned away—or are still (not) turning away—from non-democratic regimes, be it of an authoritarian (e.g. Spain) or of a communist type (e.g. Russia, Hungary or Eastern Germany). The contemporary Europe experienced two different “waves” of democratisation: that of the 1970s in Southern Europe (Greece, Portugal, Spain) and that of the late 1980s and beginning 1990s in Central and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.

From the perspective of the mainstream of research, the main problem of citizenship education in Europe appears to be the implementation of a common policy to close compliance gaps occurring in the policy cycle (cf. e.g. CoE 2004, 23-32; UNESCO et al. 2005, 7, 12; Kerr 2002, 9-10; Krek/Losito/Vogrinc 2006, 14). As a result, research is organised on indicator systems for measuring active citizenship and the quality of citizenship education, and it focuses on monitoring procedures, quality assurance tools and examples of best practice to be implemented (Holford/Patulny/Sturgis 2006, Ogris/Westphal 2006, Abs/Veldhuis 2006, Salema 2006, Krek/Losito/Vogrinc 2006, UNESCO et. al. 2005). Multilevel networks of citizenship education policy makers, practitioners and researchers are established and expanded to reach convergence and sustainability of citizenship education (cf. CoE 2005, 21-26). Some kind of convergence of national approaches to citizenship education seems to be an implicit goal and a possible outcome of the common European citizenship education policies pursued by these actors. Is citizenship education becoming a means of Europeanisation?

The tendency towards a kind of European convergence may be coined Europeanisation of citizenship education. Although “Europeanisation” may be used for processes of adaptation or assimilation related to the EU only (e.g. Bulmer/Radaelli 2004, 4)—a phenomenon which should be better termed integration (cf. Axt/Milososki/Schwarz 2007, 137)—research on citizenship education should be based on a broader notion of Europe. For example, the Council of Europe is still a key actor of European citizenship education policy, and also non-governmental organisations enjoy some influence. Furthermore, UNESCO and UNICEF must be regarded as relevant CE actors, too, which may be taken as evidence for an even wider internationalisation of citizenship education beyond Europe. Europeanisation in turn cannot be limited to forms of vertical policy transfer (top-down) as it includes bottom-up and horizontal policy transfer; rather, it should be conceptualised as an interactive process (cf. Howell 2004, 5-8). Europeanisation of citizenship education does not only mean governmental action, but it includes diverse societal actors from the European to the local level. It affects the institutional structures, policies, processes and contents of citizenship education. The European acceptance of the CoE’s education policy framework, provided by Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC), or the approval of the EU’s concept of Active Citizenship indicate tendencies towards convergence (cf. CoE 2004, 31-32).

But at the same time, national governments try to keep “their” citizenship education in line with national models of democracy, citizenship and society, which brings about different concepts, approaches and contents of citizenship education (cf. CoE 2004a, 2004e; Eurydice 2004a, 2004d and 2005, 14-26). Thus, European citizenship education policies and citizenship education policies in Europe simultaneously display both, convergence to a common model and divergence in a variety of adapted models (cf. UNESCO 2005, 24-25; Kerr 2002, 10). Up to now, we only know little about the interplay of Europeanisation and “nationalisation” in citizenship education. The same applies to the interconnectedness of citizenship education and transformation.

Specific Features of Citizenship Education in Transformational Contexts

Research on citizenship education in transformation countries has been included in all-European surveys initiated by the Council of Europe and the European Commission (CoE 2002 and 2004, Eurydice 2005). But if at all, these reports refer to the past of former communist countries only very broadly and in a few sentences. Important features of transformation are only briefly referred to in these comprehensive country analyses: the continuing relevance of forming a common citizenship identity and developing values of a modern pluralist democracy, the problem of dealing with multiple personal identities and with multiple perspectives on the country’s histories (cf. CoE 2004, 89, 94; CoE 2002, 35-39). As a reaction against the communist past, most

Central and South-Eastern European countries have strongly decentralised their education systems and introduced (different forms of) school autonomy (CoE 2004, 71, 89).

Many reports complain about a gap between policies and practices of citizenship education in transformation countries and suggest strategies and instruments to bring consistency into the field of citizenship education. In fact, there is also some general scepticism about top-down models of policy making: "EDC policy is not simply a directive transmitted from authorised decision-makers to peripheral and executive bodies. On the contrary, implementing EDC policies involves large-scale civic participation and a wide range of organisations" (CoE 2004, 33).

Astonishingly, most of the research on citizenship education in transforming countries is neither related to theories of transformation and related research, nor does it elaborate on challenges and processes stemming from transformation. No reference is made to experience made during the European transformation period of the 1970s and 1980s when Greece, Portugal and Spain transformed from authoritarian regimes to democracies. But the nexus between the kind of transformation, contemporary political cultures and schools is important because, even after 30 years, the authoritarian past may still exert a strong influence on the local political culture. For example, a detailed qualitative case study of the political culture in a small Spanish town (Schlee 2008) shows that the adamant collective tabooing of the authoritarian past has led to a restricted understanding of democracy and to partial persistence of traditional, authoritarian forms of policy-making. As schools are embedded in local political cultures, it is reasonable to expect that citizenship education may be shaped accordingly. The "power of the past" (Schlee 2008) was also pointed out by an empirical scientific survey of German pupils (10th grade) in the federal state of Brandenburg (located in the former Eastern part of the country). According to this study (Deutz-Schroeder/Schroeder 2007), only 49% knew that the former communist regime in East-Germany was a dictatorship, while less than 40% fully realized that the socialist government was not legitimized by democratic elections. The study concludes that the topic is often neglected by schools – despite a circular letter by the educational ministry of the state which formally obligates all of them to deal with the history of the GDR.

By and large, approaches to political transformation reflect the big paradigms of social science theory: function, structure and agency (cf. e.g. Beyme 1994, Merkel 1994 and 2003, Mense-Petermann 2000, Kollmorgen/Schrader 2003); some see culturalist concepts as an approach in its own right (cf. Merkel 2003). Recent research underlines country specific features and differences, the relative independence of societal developments and the principal openness of transformation as a process of permanent reflexive and recursive goal-seeking (Mense-Petermann 2000, 13). Post-socialist countries share a common legacy but differ with regard to the main problems they are facing and the available political, economic, societal and cultural resources, which results in different national paths of transformation (*ibid.*, 14; Stark 1992). Different national models of transformation and democracy, as far as perceived by citizenship education actors, may bring about different national models of citizenship education (cf. Merkel/Puhle/Croissant 2003, 142-185; Linz/Stepan 1996, 293-365; Beyme 1994).

Transformation processes change some institutions and leave other institutions largely untouched. An institutionalist approach to the transformation of policies, institutions, organisations and practices takes into account that the inherent logic and inertia of persisting institutions shape transformative change (Mense-Petermann 2000, 44). This means that institutional and organisational change has to be understood as a reconfiguration and rearrangement of existing institutional elements, in short as a recombination (Stark 1994, 130). But at the same time, change is shaped by political rules, political pressure from international organisations and predominant cultural frames (cf. Fligstein 1996, 1078-1079). Both applies to citizenship education, which is closely related to institutions like citizenship, national identity, political education, subjects or classroom culture and organisations like ministries, educational authorities, school headships or civil society groups. Therefore, the idea that prefabricated

institutional or conceptual elements of citizenship education could simply be implemented in transforming countries has to be rejected.

Specific challenges for citizenship education in transforming countries may result from diverse simultaneous processes: nation building and integration into Europe, establishing unified citizenship and acknowledging diversity, building up democracy and developing market economy, distrust in democratic institutions and the threat of a return to authoritarianism, political democratisation and socio-economic insecurity, educating for the future and coping with the past (cf. UNICEF 2000, CDCC 2000, 28-30; Offe 1991, Eurydice 2004a, Pingel 2006, Kraft 2003, Rohrschneider 2003, Jacobs/Müller/Pickel 2003, Ádnanes 2004). Some post-communist countries may still suffer from persisting past political cultures like state paternalism, collectivism or opportunism; others may benefit from private, communal or counter cultures which survived socialist education and ideology (cf. e.g. Bernik/Malnar 2003, Mishler/Pollack 2003, G. Meyer 2003). Research on citizenship education should take these transformation specific features into account.

Challenges and Conflicts of Transforming Citizenship Education

To finally result in a consolidated democracy, democratic transformations of political institutions have to be accompanied by corresponding changes towards a democratic political culture (cf. Rosa 2005, 8-9). On the one hand, it is assumed that democratic citizenship education contributes noticeably to the development and consolidation of a democratic culture (cf. e.g. Kahsnitz 2005, Krek/Losito/Vogrinc 2006, Rosa 2005, UNESCO 2005, CDCC 2000; Edles 1998). On the other hand, persisting institutions and political cultures may impede – or facilitate – effective change and democratisation of citizenship education. Apart from this, the content of citizenship education, ideal notions of citizenship, education and citizenship education itself are contested political issues closely related to controversial concepts like democracy, society, identity, nation, patriotism, Europe, participation or social rights (cf. e.g. Baumann 2004, Bora 2005, EUYOUNG 2005, Faist 2007; Faist/Gerdes/Rieple 2004, Geißel 2006, Ichilov 1998, Kerr 2002, Kristjánsson 2004, Luchtenberg 2004, Ofsted 2006, Osler/Starkey 2001, Radtke 2006, Soysal 2002, Weinbach 2005, Wyle 2004). That is why consistent policies and practices of citizenship education cannot be taken for granted. This especially holds for a common European policy of citizenship education or a common policy of European countries.

Transforming citizenship education in transforming countries may face specific contradictions. A first contradiction is likely to occur between democratic, participatory citizenship education objectives and authoritarian teaching cultures or traditional professional beliefs of teaching the truth (“Soviet style of teaching”, cf. CoE 2004, 75 ff; CoE 2002, 65-66; Eurydice 2005, 27-29; Mátrai 1999, 362-366). A second inconsistency exists between the bad experience of political education and participation rhetoric in the recent past and the “good” approach of current citizenship education fostering active citizenship (cf. Grammes/Schluß/Vogler 2006, 13-47, 517ff; Pye 2003, 14; Menezes 2003).

Moreover, a persisting culture within the public service of dodging the implementation of governmental policies in schools and other public organisations while reporting performance to superior authorities (“double talk”) may impede practical changes in citizenship education (cf. CoE 2002, 17-18; cf. Brunsson 2002, 7-8). The culture of “double talk” may also be a specific feature of a country’s political communication in general. The population may have come to an instrumental accommodation with the new democratic regime exhibiting mainly opportunistic support (Jacobs/Müller/Pickel 2003, 108). Citizenship education policy may deliver rhetorical support for Education for Democratic Citizenship being “a smokescreen that masks either opposition to efforts to promote EDC in education and school systems, or sheer inertia” (CoE 2004, 87).

Results of empirical research emphasize Europeanisation and democratisation as the two main processes challenging citizenship education policies in transforming countries – which also applies to other European countries (Eurydice 2005, CoE 2004, Dürr 2004, Dürr/Spajic-Vrkas/Ferreira-Martins 2000). It is seductive to understand both processes simply as “transition towards” a superior system of citizenship education or at least to a thoroughly improved practice, an approach which obviously implies teleological traits. Taking into account the diversity of transforming countries and citizenship education transformation policies as well as the character of citizenship education transformation as a politically and culturally contested issue (cf. Kerr 2002, 10), the process-oriented understanding of “ongoing transformation” seems to be clearly preferable.

In the process of Europeanisation, transforming countries find themselves confronted with specific challenges (cf. Grabbe 2002). With respect to the EU, countries which recently entered the Union like Bulgaria and Romania or countries which are aspiring to membership like Turkey have to prove compliance with a diverse range of issues entailing “Europeanisation by accession” (“Beitrittseuropäisierung” Axt/Milososki/Schwarz 2007, 143-144; cf. e.g. Aydin/Keyman 2004, Brusis 2006, Canefe/Ugur 2004, Dimitrova/Pridham 2004, Rumford 2001, Steunenber/Dimitrova 2007). Mechanisms of Europeanisation used by the EU are models, money, benchmarking, monitoring, advice, twinning and gate-keeping in the accession process (Grabbe 2002, 9-12).

Young member states with a communist past and accession candidates perceived as culturally different are more closely monitored than countries which are recognized as fully “Europeanised”. The issues observed comprise education and citizenship education, too (cf. e.g. Eurydice 2005, Cayir 2007, Gurkaynak 2007). Thus, citizenship education in these countries may serve as a suitable example of a twofold Europeanisation in transforming countries, which combines general, but diverse national changes induced by European integration (cf. Sturm 2005, 102-104) and specific changes and challenges that are due to the lasting status of a transforming country kept under special surveillance (cf. Bojkov 2004).

Past notions of political education and the political process of transformation towards a new kind of citizenship education are expected to be reflected in narratives, representations and points of reference used by current actors of citizenship education. Notions stemming from the authoritarian or communist past are evident in the grand narratives of the own nation’s history and recent past told in Citizenship Education (or History) and in comparisons between the present and the past political system. This aspect of citizenship education transformation, which may be labelled “transformation from” and implies the past regime as the starting point, is presumably controversially evaluated in current political discourse.

Research Gaps on Citizenship Education in Transforming Countries

Independent social science research on citizenship education, its institutions and organisations in Europe and especially in European transforming countries is still rare. The main sponsors of research like CoE and EC as well as the main sources mostly are at the same time the key actors of the field, and regularly the implications of this feature are not reflected. Recent research is often integrated into studies that were initiated or commissioned by European or national political bodies to develop, monitor, and evaluate their own citizenship education policies. Most research is limited to analyses on the national and international level, whereas the sub-national and local level are neglected. The question of how the institutions of citizenship education function and the mechanisms of how and why they change are not treated. Results are gained from analyses of policy documents and country studies issued by national coordinators and mainly based on reports on authorities, regulations, educational standards and curricula rather than drawing on interviews or focus groups of experts

and stakeholders (CoE 2004, 5-12; Eurydice 2005, 8-9; cf. Eurydice 2004a, 2004d; RE-ETGACE 2004, 24-31). Most of these national structural analyses are not related to research at the school level and classroom practice, some measure average outcomes of citizenship education in terms of knowledge, attitudes and behaviour (cf. IEA 1999, Torney-Purta et al. 2001, Amadeo et al. 2002).

Against the background of this sketchy outline of the state of the art we see three major research gaps regarding citizenship education in transforming countries. Firstly, most comparative reports and case studies only incidentally mention issues of post-socialist or post-authoritarian transformation and recent history of former socialist or authoritarian systems. As outlined above, specific factors influencing the systems of citizenship education must be taken into account for transforming countries, and they are expected to foster multiple and divergent adaptations. It is not least the prevailing focus on an all-European perspective of citizenship education which prevents the deserved special attention to the specific situation of transforming countries (cf. CoE 2004, Eurydice 2005). In addition, static comparisons ignore the processual character of transforming citizenship education. As a result, neither informative case studies nor more or less generalised insights about the transformation of citizenship education in transforming countries are available⁴.

Secondly, national overviews of citizenship education provided within the frame of CoE and EC reports are somewhat biased as they seem to be more or less close to the viewpoints of the respective governments⁵. They are obviously biased in understanding citizenship education mainly as a managerial project in the implementation phase of the policy cycle. Further, the reported policies focus on a common European framework of citizenship education, which is perceived to be demanding some kind of national compliance. Thus, national and regional differences as well as particularly distinctive features of transforming countries are at best implicitly disregarded. Governments of countries which were candidates for the EU until recently, as, for example, Bulgaria and Romania, or countries which are in accession negotiations, as, for example, Turkey, seemingly do not want to be considered as "special cases" (cf. e.g. Rumford 2001, 2002, 2003, Warning 2006). Since citizenship education is understood as an institution that fosters "Europeanness", European bodies, too, show no interest in stressing peculiarities of transforming countries.

Thirdly, a content related bias is immanent in the concept of citizenship education itself as it favours a particular notion of a democratic citizen. To support the creation of a supportive European citizen, the empirical studies on citizenship education and its programmes establish a notion of citizenship which refers to competences that a desired (European) citizen should have. The most prominent examples are "active citizenship" (Hoskins et al. 2006) and "responsible citizenship" (Eurydice 2005). Hoskins (2006) defines active citizenship as the "participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy" (ibid.: 4). Active participation is restricted to the support of the status quo, whereas critical interference remains in the background (cf. Marinetto 2003, Warleigh 2006). In the *Eurydice* report (2005, 10) "responsible citizenship" is defined as the co-existence of well-informed individuals, who are, if at all, only willing to take action in order to secure harmony at all levels of society. The European dimension of citizenship is strongly emphasized, and accordingly some indicators of a democratic attitude are defined as the proportion of people satisfied with European democracy and the performance of the EU

⁴ At least no studies are available in English, French, German or Russian. Wallraven's short study on the transformation of citizenship education in Eastern Germany (2003) and the research of Grammes et al. on citizenship education in the German Democratic Republic are noteworthy exceptions (2006).

⁵ This observation was especially backed by most of the scholars from 15 transformation countries attending the international conference "Transformed Institutions – Transformed Citizenship Education?", Bielefeld University, June 7-10, 2007.

(Abs/Veldhuis 2006, 12). This suits the Commission's interest to fight widespread disenchantment with European politics amongst others by using citizenship education.

Outline of a Research Agenda

First, research on citizenship education should refer to research on transformation. Function and development of the organisational field of citizenship education in transformation countries are not yet understood. This lack of knowledge includes changes in citizenship education policies of transformation countries, institutions and organisational structures and the impact these have on school culture and classroom practice. If research on political transformation is taken into account, organisational fields of citizenship education are expected to reflect specific features of a country's transformation. Previous research on citizenship education has neglected the complex, connected and conflicting contexts of transformation, Europeanisation, democratisation, citizenship policy and naturalisation in its broadest meaning. Political culture and discourse as well as institutional and organisational transformation of education in general and citizenship education in particular have neither been described nor explained. Thus, institutional convergence has only been demanded so far but not really understood. Studies on the transformation of national organisational fields of citizenship education may help to understand the intertwining processes of Europeanisation, transformation and democratisation. The corresponding institutional, organisational and content-related changes of citizenship education may be best examined with case studies of countries which recently entered the EU or are still in the process of moving closer towards it. National citizenship education, including its goals, contents, forms and outcomes, are expected to be influenced by European bodies and discourses.

Second, research on citizenship education is needed which takes its contextualisation into account. The relationship between political culture, institutions, democracy and citizenship policies of a transforming country on the one hand, and its specific organisational field of citizenship education on the other hand has not been studied as yet. On the contrary, existing research prefers a de-contextualised approach to citizenship education largely focusing on its institutional and organisational frame as well as descriptive listings of contents (cf. e.g. CoE 2004, CoE 2004a-e, Eurydice 2005, Eurydice 2004a-i). A more convincing approach had to elaborate a twofold contextualisation of citizenship education by investigating the internal embeddedness of citizenship education in the organized fields of citizenship education and education in general as well as the external embeddedness of these fields in their political and societal environments.

Third, research on citizenship education should overcome the prevailing neglect of content related issues and of their social construction. For example, studies portraying Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Russia confine themselves mainly to a description of the issues taught as headlines of curricula in a rather general way (IEA 1999, CoE 2002, 29). Different notions of citizenship and different approaches to citizenship education are touched on but not put into relation to a broader political context or to country specific institutions (cf. e.g. Eurydice 2005, 13-14, 66-68). As theoretical reasoning on citizenship education and on the criteria used to analyse democratization and its different concepts are mostly absent or superficial, the direction in which citizenship education of a country is transforming cannot be adequately assessed in terms of content. Therefore, research has to identify discriminatory features of democratization and appropriate indicators which allow differentiating clearly between authoritarian and democratic contents of citizenship education—existing approaches and indicators fail to mark this difference—and between approaches to democratic citizenship which may differ deeply from a content point of view although resembling one another on the level of general goals and subject curricula.

Fourth, comprehensive multi-level and multi-actor case studies should be realized. Until today, most research is focussing on the prevailing European models of citizenship education policy and their implementation, as seen from the national level. With the exception of some small countries, where the national level of administration may be the only one, national-level research alone does not help very much to understand a multi-level organisational field of citizenship education down to the classroom level. National-level research cannot contribute to describe the typical practices of teaching and learning about citizenship in schools. The organisational fields of citizenship education mostly are much more complex by structure than existing research does acknowledge so far. These fields often encompass regional and/or local levels, not to mention the variety of actors, influencing the system from outside. From research results we have information on national policies, structures, educational approaches and curricula. But we do not quite understand how a country's organisational field of citizenship education really works at all its levels, from the CoE or the EU down to a single school, with diverse different environments being involved. This applies to all European countries, irrespective of possible effects of transformation. Consequently, multi-level and multi-actor research is necessary to explain the differences occurring in all the structures and processes that are involved from policy development down to final classroom practice. This analysis has to reveal the likely complex inner-system constellation of citizenship education actors (cf. Grammes/Schluß/Vogler 2006, 46). As actors of citizenship education presumably have to cope with diverse environmental demands and internal pluralism, a consistent system and development of citizenship education seems to be beyond the bounds of probability. But current research does not investigate this question and the institutional sources of this likely divergence.

Fifth, research should address to citizenship education as an organisational issue. Citizenship education within the educational system is primarily an organised matter and a managerial issue, but current research does not study the organisational transformation of citizenship education. This prevents current research from a comprehensive understanding of citizenship education because public managerial policies and strategies as well as administrative measures shape and foster conceptual change in citizenship education or prevent it in order to sustain traditional approaches. As a matter of course, even everyday practices in the classroom are multiply framed by organisational features, although individual conceptual changes, introduced by teachers or students, certainly play a role, too. An appropriate frame of research should be applied to the phenomena of conceptual transformation and organisational reshaping of citizenship education in transforming countries. Organisation theory would be such a theoretical framework, but so far research of citizenship education using an institutional approach has been rare, even though some efforts have been rather promising. That is why we suggest using institutional analysis to improve the understanding of citizenship education in terms of policy, politics, programme and practice.

Conclusion

As shown above recent and current research on citizenship education in transforming countries shows some gaps and shortcomings. Under conditions of recent and ongoing transformation, civic education policies and practices are obviously confronted with specific cultural and institutional environments and challenges. Therefore, research is needed which uses institutionalist approaches as well as elements of organisation and transformation theory for sound multi-level and multi-actor case studies. International comparisons based on quantitative surveys are not very telling if not complemented by sound case studies of local cultures of citizenship education. Thin descriptions of data should be enhanced by thick descriptions of vivid cases. This research also must be sensitive for different interpretations of key notions like democracy or citizenship used

and the diversity in local practices they entail. Last but not least qualitative research on citizenship education is needed which carefully investigates the institutional and cultural legacies left behind by the former socialist regimes. Research is required to call upon the key actors to speak and to listen to them carefully—and key actors of citizenship education are above all teachers and students. However, the resulting picture of the European landscape of citizenship education may turn out to be much less politically correct than painted today.

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