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Teacher Training in Citizenship Education: Training for a New Subject or for a New Kind of Subject?

In recent years there has been a call for the introduction of more active and participatory forms of citizenship education in European schools. However, despite the importance given to this in policy statements, provision for teacher training in new forms of citizenship has been only limited and sporadic. This article considers some of the factors affecting the development of teacher training in this area - in particular, those which derive from the nature of citizenship education itself - and suggests some possible support structures and mechanisms that might lead to a more systematic and coordinated approach.

Keywords:
Teacher training, civic education, citizen, curriculum content, citizenship, teacher education, democracy, approach, the Tool, citizenship education, teaching, citizenship education as a school subject, models of citizenship, citizenship participation, democratic society

1 The Need for Teacher Training in Citizenship Education

Traditional models of citizenship and civic education have in recent years come under increasing challenge from events and changes taking place across Europe - including ethnic conflicts, migration, global insecurity, environmental problems, new information and communication technologies, economic and cultural interdependence, the rise of the individual and demands for new forms of equality, and increasing mistrust of traditional politics and political authority.

The idea that all schools need do in respect of citizenship education is to inform young people about the basics of their political system and the importance of obeying the law and voting in elections has become increasingly untenable in the light of challenges such as these. It has become clear that new kinds of citizen are required: citizens that are not only informed, but active and responsible - able and willing to participate in public affairs in their communities, their country and in the wider world.

This view is exemplified in the report of the advisory group that led to the introduction of a new citizenship education curriculum in English secondary schools (students aged 11 to 16) in 2002:

'We aim at no less than a change in the political culture of this country both

nationally and locally: for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting …'(1)

In response to the need to strengthen and advance democracy through education, countries throughout Europe have sought to develop and implement new forms of citizenship education in their schools(2).

At the same time the Council of Europe and the European Union have, in different ways, set out to define and promote new forms of citizenship education that have application at a European-wide level. The Council of Europe launched a project in 1997 developing a new approach to citizenship education - clarifying key concepts, exploring new teaching and learning strategies and establishing and monitoring innovative practice in so-called 'sites of citizenship'. In 2000 the European Ministers of Education adopted the Cracow Resolution and the Draft Common Guidelines for Education for Democratic Citizenship. This defined the notion of democratic citizenship as encompassing several dimensions - including the political, the legal, the social and the economic - and applying not only at the regional and national, but also at the European and global level. The notion was further clarified in the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation Rec (2002)12 on Education for Democratic Citizenship.

In the Lisbon Strategy, launched in 2000, and in the Detailed Work Programme on the Follow Up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe, of 2002, the European Union included active citizenship among its strategic objectives. Active citizenship has also been recognised as an important goal of the Bologna Process, which sets the goals for higher education and the European Lifelong Learning Strategies, as well as the European youth policies.

However, while the role of education in creating active citizens is almost universally acknowledged in the European context, there appears to be a real gap between the rhetoric of need and what actually happens in practice.

One of the main findings of the All-European Study on EDC Policies was of a 'considerable gap' in member states between policy intentions for EDC and the provision of adequate resources to turn the intentions into effective practice. The study drew particular attention to the failure to develop appropriate forms of teacher education:

"… despite the importance it is given in policy statements, teacher training schemes do not give enough support to EDC implementation efforts."(3)

It found that very little systematic support was provided for initial or in-service teacher professional development in citizenship education. Where it existed, in-service provision was the result of ad hoc initiatives, usually school-based or growing out of school-civil society collaboration. With few exceptions - for example, the Association for Citizenship Teaching in England, or the Federal Centre for Civic Education in the Russian Federation - seldom were EDC teacher training schemes brought together under one government programme or one EDC policy implementation scheme.

The situation is summed up in the regional report on Western Europe:

"The overall pattern in the Western Europe region is of limited, sporadic teacher training related to EDC, with the majority of it generalist in initial

teacher training and optional in terms of in-service training. This does not match with the crucial role of teachers in developing effective EDC practices. It raises serious questions about the ability and effectiveness of teachers to promote the more active, participatory approaches associated with the reforms of citizenship or civic education in many countries."(4)

Given that the successful promotion of a European-wide reform of citizenship education depends upon the development within member states of a teaching profession with the skills and competencies needed to make the reform a reality, two important questions arise:

1. What are the factors affecting the development of teacher training in citizenship education?
2. What kind of support structures and mechanisms might lead to a more systematic and coordinated approach?

2 A New Subject and a New Kind of Subject

Clearly, there are factors affecting the development of teacher training in citizenship education that are specific to particular countries: different access to resources - financial, human and technological; different educational histories and traditions; different existing systems of teacher education. Systems of teacher education, in particular, vary considerably throughout Europe: some are highly centralised, others de-centralised; some emphasise pre-service, others in-service training; some deliver teacher training through government agencies, others rely upon NGOs, private and commercial companies, or even the teachers themselves.

While the importance of national factors such as these should not be under-estimated, it is the contention of this article that the successful reform of citizenship education in Europe depends as much upon factors internal to the notion of citizenship education as upon factors relating to circumstances internal to particular member states.

It is not that citizenship education is just another subject added on to the existing school curriculum, it is that it is both a new subject and a new kind of subject.

As a new subject it requires new forms of knowledge and understanding to be taught - including:

- political
- legal
- social
- economic.

How 'new' these actually are depends upon the tradition of education within the country. In countries with long traditions of civic education, politics, law, social science and economics have often featured in the school curriculum - usually as separate subjects. In others, there has been no tradition at all of teaching in these areas, with the exception of specialised provision for certain elite students - e.g., England(5).

As a new kind of subject, however, citizenship education requires that these forms of knowledge and understanding are no longer regarded just as subject 'disciplines' but blended together into a new pedagogical framework.

This framework seeks to re-define the relationship between students, teachers, schools and their communities. The most important features of the framework are a focus on:

1) The student as a citizen

Citizenship education treats the student not as a private individual but as a citizen of society - specifically, a democratic society - with legal rights and responsibilities. Not as a future citizen, but a present one. With only a few exceptions - perhaps, for example, voting rights - school students in European countries possess virtually the same civil rights as other citizens. As democratic citizens, school students have a legitimate interest in the future of their communities, their country and the world as a whole, and are entitled to play a part in public life.

The aim of citizenship education in a democratic society is not only to equip students for involvement in life as a citizen, however, but also to provide opportunities for them to exercise their citizenship. Thus, for example, citizenship education is not only about teaching students the skills to engage in public debate, but also about providing openings for them to participate in actual debates - on school, local, national or international issues.

2) Real-life issues as curriculum content

The content of citizenship education is not a subject 'discipline' as such - whether it is politics, the law or whatever - but topical, real-life issues, problems and events that affect the lives of students and the world at large, e.g., violence, discrimination, unemployment, environmental degradation. Such issues, problems and events act not simply as stimuli to learning, but are the proper subjects for student enquiry and to be learned about in their own right. In this sense, citizenship education is a 'multidisciplinary' subject: its different constituent 'disciplines' are tools to be brought to bear on real-life issues in such a way as to enable the student to understand and respond to them. Thus, for example, crime should be treated not just a legal issue, it also as a sociological, political and economic one.

Two other features of topical, real-life issues come into play here. Firstly, issues of this nature are often controversial and may be particularly sensitive for certain groups in society. Second, topical issues may not be topical for very long: they quickly date or fall out of fashion. These features have important implications for the kind of skills and competencies required of the teachers expected to deal with - implications which are not immediately apparent in relation to conventional subjects in the school curriculum.

3) Action as a form of learning

As citizenship education focuses on the student as a democratic citizen, so

learning in citizenship education focuses on student's involvement as a democratic citizen. In contrast with traditional forms of teaching and learning which emphasise learning through teacher instruction, citizenship education focuses on 'active' learning. Active learning is learning through doing: it is learning through experiencing situations and solving problems yourself, instead of being told the answers by someone else. Active learning is particularly important in citizenship education because being an active citizen is essentially a practical activity - it is something we 'do'.

One of the central forms of citizenship participation in a democratic society is discussion and debate. Dialogue, insofar as it relates to issues, problems and events in public life, is a form of citizen action in its own right - hence the need to help teachers develop teaching and learning methods in citizenship education which focus on talk and student interaction.

4) The school as a democratic community

The emphasis on the student as a democratic citizen suggests that the school should see itself as a kind of democratic community - both a model community in which students are able to practise their citizenship skills, but also an actual one in which they are able to make real contributions and have a real say in the way in which their school goes about its business. For many young people, the school is their first experience of public life: their first opportunity to debate issues of public concern as citizens of a democratic society - albeit a democratic society in miniature. What is true of the school as a whole is also true of the classroom in particular - democratic participation and learning need not simply be the province of the school or student parliament, but should also be a feature of life in the classroom as well.

5) The teacher as a role model

The teacher must see himself or herself, therefore, as a role model for democratic citizenship, not just a presenter of information or facilitator of discussion. Teachers should model the skills and virtues of democratic citizenship both in their teaching and in their relationships with each other and with their students. This has important implications for the kind of atmosphere or learning environment developed in the classroom, for the general ethos or culture of the school as whole - and also for the part played by school leadership and management in achieving this.

6) The community as a 'site of citizenship'

In this model of citizenship education the community around the school becomes an important source of citizenship learning in its own right. Participation in community life - through school parliaments, out-of-school visits, external speakers, campaigns and community action projects - helps students to see themselves as members of society with a part to play as well as learn new citizenship skills, knowledge and understanding. This is not so much about doing 'good' in the community or volunteering per se, but about having a right to be involved and through involvement developing their capacity for active citizenship. Opportunities for participation do not begin and end with the immediate neighbourhood,

however, but extend to the national, European and global community, too. There is often a close connection between the different levels of community to which citizens belong, e.g., in local responses to national or global disasters.

3 **Implications for Teacher Training in Citizenship Education**

Clearly, the development of a European-wide approach to citizenship education of this nature makes far-reaching demands of the teaching profession and has important implications for the organisation and content of teacher training within member states. Appropriate forms of teacher education will need to take account of a number of key aspects of this approach - including:

1. Citizenship education is a new concept

   The idea of citizenship education discussed here differs quite dramatically from traditional forms of civic education and pedagogical practice and may require something of a 'paradigm-shift' for its implications to be fully understood. As has already been argued, citizenship education is in many ways a new kind of subject. For in-service learning, in particular, it may require a considerable amount of unlearning of deeply-ingrained teaching processes and practices. In some cases - especially in countries with education systems dominated by traditional, 'top-down' approaches to teaching and learning and hierarchical attitudes to authority - it may involve a fundamental change in pedagogical orientation:

   "In providing teacher training programmes in EDC, therefore, there will in many cases be a need to address at a fundamental level the concept of EDC that teachers possess and the types of attitude - or prejudice - that accompany it. Training programmes cannot take it for granted that teachers will either understand what EDC is - at least in the sense now generally accepted at policy level throughout the member states - or regard it as being a good thing."(6)

   Describing the introduction of citizenship education in English schools in 2002, Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) reported that in over half of the schools inspected management of the new subject was unsatisfactory, mainly because:

   "the full implications of citizenship as National Curriculum subject were not understood or, in a small number of schools, because they were not accepted."(7)

   A further issue is that the concept of citizenship education is not only new, it is also not yet clearly fixed and is open to a range of interpretations. In particular, there is room for disagreement about the kind of democratic citizen citizenship education is aiming to produce. What precisely is meant by an 'active citizen'? Is it a political activist, a perpetual volunteer, or simply someone who reads the papers and takes a critical interest in current affairs? Would an active citizen be expected to vote in every election - trades

union, municipal or national - or might choosing on a matter of principle not to vote in an election be regarded in certain circumstances as a mark of active citizenship?

How the concept is understood will also determine how citizenship education is seen to relate to other educational initiatives, such as peace education, intercultural education and global or development education? In particular, the relationship between citizenship education and human rights education: some see these terms as inter-changeable, others see them as different but disagree as to how they are related. It is all very well to describe citizenship education as an 'umbrella' concept, but this fails to explain how it relates taxonomically to the different educational initiatives it encompasses.

2. Citizenship education is implemented in different ways

   Citizenship education programmes differ from those in other school subjects in relating to all aspects of a school's life - including the taught curriculum, the culture of the school and its links with the local community and the wider world. It can comprise a separately-taught subject, a cross-curricular approach, an element in a pastoral programme, a suspended-timetable event, a school or student parliament, a community project - or any combination.

   This suggests that teacher training in citizenship education needs to be geared towards preparing teachers to implement a whole raft of different learning activities, not just towards the ones which apply within conventional subject teaching in a classroom. It also suggests that the kinds of competencies that teachers require to support citizenship education go well beyond a grasp of subject knowledge and appropriate teaching and learning techniques. Teachers need also to develop important management and people skills if they are to be able to make links with community partners, encourage student participation in school life, facilitate school or student parliaments, establish forms of cross-curricular co-operation and arrange special suspended-timetable events.

3. Citizenship education involves the whole staff

   Responsibility for teaching citizenship in a school does not lie with a small team of specialists as with most other school subjects, but with the whole staff. The implication is that teacher training needs to address the school as a whole, not just a small group or set of individuals. It suggests that training is an issue for school principals and senior managers as well as for teaching staff, and that separate forms of training may be required by different groups within the school structure - as well as perhaps a form of in-service training which involves all the staff of a school together as a group. It also raises the question about the possibility of training for non-teaching staff, including school governors or members of school boards.

4 A Systematic and Coordinated Approach

Having considered some of the distinctive factors that need to be taken into account in determining appropriate forms of teacher training for citizenship education and how this is likely to differ from forms of teacher training that currently exist, let us now consider the kinds of procedures, structures and mechanisms that can help to support the development of this training - beginning with the advice developed in the Council of Europe Tool on Teacher Training for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education(8).

The Tool sets out the need for a systematic and coordinated approach to teacher training in citizenship education on a European-wide basis - drawing on the 'Council of Europe' model in which citizenship education is conceived both as a subject in its own right and as a whole-school approach, and outlining a number of ways in which such an approach can be developed.

Central to the development and promotion of an effective system for teacher training in citizenship education, the Tool argues, is the need for governments and education authorities within member states to:

- have a written policy expressing the desirability of a national approach to teacher training in citizenship education and a commitment to finding the resources needed to implement it
- locate responsibility for policy implementation clearly within state agencies
- ensure that policy implementation is overseen by a national coordinating body - e.g., through ministries, universities, pedagogical institutes, national training centres or professional bodies
- evaluate existing practice in teacher training for citizenship education as a basis for policy development
- identify the types of citizenship education-specific teacher competences and the personal qualities needed to support effective citizenship education teaching
- difference between different training needs, e.g., in primary and secondary schools, of generalist and specialist teachers, of senior managers and teaching staff and at pre-service and in-service level
- make provision for training at a range of levels, e.g., subject knowledge, curriculum content, teaching methods, management and people skills, and reflection and improvement
- ensure that the concept of education for democratic citizenship, its relationship to human rights education and other initiatives and implications for practice are clearly understood at all levels.

In addition, the Tool suggests that serious consideration should be given within member states to:

- encouraging specialization - targeting training as a way of building up a corps of citizenship education specialists able to disseminate expertise both to their immediate colleagues and to teachers in other schools
- linking professional development to career development, e.g., through accreditation, professional qualifications, etc.

- developing mechanisms for quality assurance.

The Tool also suggests that consideration should be given to developing forms of collaboration between member states - coordinated at a supra-national level by organizations like the Council of Europe - to help:

- establish appropriate methods for the development and assessment of teacher competencies in citizenship education
- share evidence and experience between teacher educators within and between member states,
- monitor and evaluate teacher training initiatives in citizenship education at a national level
- encourage closer cooperation between institutions involved in teacher training in citizenship education, including education authorities and NGOs, as well as international organisations such as Unesco
- collate and disseminate research on citizenship education, including students' experience of citizenship education, how it is learned, etc.
- provide expert help to assist in the development of policy and practice in teacher training in citizenship education within the member states, e.g., in training the trainers
- disseminate effective practice in the various constituent elements of citizenship education programmes, e.g., school climate, school involvement in its local community, etc.

5 **Additional Support Structures and Mechanisms**

Current practice in teacher training in citizenship education in Europe varies. Different countries are at different stages in the reform process. While all countries surveyed in the Eurydice report offered some kind of training for teaching citizenship in the framework of in-service training, some also included an element in initial teacher education and some offered a special initial teacher education programme leading to a specialist qualification, but only three countries offered all three approaches - Latvia, Austria and the UK(8).

It is possible, however, to draw on recent experience in different countries to begin to identify additional support structures and mechanisms that have the potential to make a significant contribution to teacher training in citizenship education in their own right - some relate to pre-service training, some to in-service training and some to both.

For pre-service training, they include:

1. School placements or specialist training schools

   These provide beginning teachers with opportunities to practise citizenship teaching in real settings. In the case of school placements, however, it is important the schools used are already exemplars of good practice.

2. Citizenship education-specific standards

   While general teaching standards and competencies are in place in a

number of European countries, these have seldom been made subject-specific as yet. However, making the acquisition of a set of citizenship education-specific standards a qualification for entry to the teaching profession can have a powerful effect on the quality of subsequent teaching and learning.

3. An induction period for new teachers

   Once the pre-service training course is over, an induction period in which new teachers teach a limit timetable with additional professional support can help to consolidate initial citizenship education training.

4. Professional mentors/ tutors

   Professional support for beginning teachers can be provided externally by the institutions responsible for the initial teaching in the first instance, or from within the school, or both. It is important, however, that practising teachers expected to act as professional mentors in citizenship education are given the necessary training and time allocation to carry out this responsibility.

For in-service training, they include:

1. Quality assurance

   A system of quality assurance in which schools can evaluate their achievements, audit existing levels of teacher skill and knowledge, and identify development can be an important stimulus to the improvement of practice in citizenship education - both as a separate subject and across the school.

2. Accreditation and formal qualifications

   State-recognised accreditation or certification of in-service training courses can provide a powerful incentive for teachers to undertake additional training in citizenship education - all the more powerful if competence development achieved in this way is linked to a system of financial reward and/ or career development.

For both pre-service and in-service, they include:

1. Peer groups/ teacher networks

   Local voluntary networks or teacher peer groups focusing on citizenship education can be effective in developing and disseminating a shared educational philosophy and set of practices - particular, in countries where state support and other kinds of resources are limited.

2. Professional support teams

   Professional support teams operating at a national or regional level can help to develop and promote citizenship education in schools at the local level - providing a crucial link between national policy and local practice.

3. Citizenship education 'champions'

   Selecting and training up individual teachers to act as citizenship education 'champions' - responsible for the day-to-day management of citizenship teaching and the professional development of colleagues in their school and other schools - can be more effective than spreading training more thinly across a whole teacher

population.

4. Training and demonstration schools

   Establishing certain schools as centres of excellence in citizenship teaching can have the function both of providing high-quality placements for trainee teachers following pre-service training courses and acting as exemplars of good practice for in-service training.

5. Training materials

   Specialist citizenship education training materials - text-based or and/or video-based, available in hard copy or on-line - can help to supplement what is on offer in formal face-to-face training courses, or where these courses do not exist.

6. Curriculum materials

   Teaching materials, such as text books or manuals, drawn up in the right way can help to induct teachers into new forms of practice in citizenship education.

7. A professional association

   A strong citizenship education professional association operating at a national or federal level can act both as a source for and a focus of teacher education, e.g., through arranging seminars and workshops, establishing peer groups or disseminating research in a professional journal or e-bulletin.

6 **Current Practice and Its Effectiveness**

We now have a number of examples of different support mechanisms for citizenship education in place in countries across Europe, e.g., school development teams in Slovenia, teacher certification in Bosnia and Herzegovina, regional coordinators in Poland, a national support service in the Republic of Ireland and a masters course in Denmark.(10) At a supra-national level, we have examples of Council of Europe projects aimed at supporting teacher education in citizenship education, e.g., a Council of Europe tool on quality assurance in education for democratic citizenship, and, with the EC, teaching manuals for use in schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Republika Srpska.

One country where a number of different approaches to citizenship education training have been piloted is England. Citizenship education became part of the National Curriculum in secondary schools (11 to 16 year olds) in 2002. Since that time the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has been involved directly, or indirectly through NGOs and other bodies, in funding a range of training-related initiatives in citizenship education - including:

- a national professional development team (11)
- a secondary-school self-evaluation tool (12)
- training videos for primary and secondary schools (13)

- a full-time, one-year, postgraduate training course (14)
- a formal network of initial teacher training providers (15)
- information leaflets for school governors and parents (16)
- Advanced Skills Teachers for citizenship education (17)
- a teacher's certificate (18)
- a professional association (19)
- a professional development handbook (20)
- specialist schools (21)
- curriculum materials (22).

What remains to be seen, however, is the effect that a range of initiatives such as these will have on the skills and knowledge of the teaching force in English schools. To a certain extent, this depends upon their quality and sustainability. The national support team, set up in 2004, has now been disbanded due to lack of funding. Centres piloting the teacher's certificate for the first time in 2005 have DfES permission to continue for a second year in 2006 - but, unlike this year, without any government funding. At the other end of the spectrum, the professional development handbook - to be issued free of charge to all English secondary schools - is still in publication, and therefore yet to have any effect on citizenship teaching.

Early evidence from school inspections carried out by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) suggests that the quality of teaching and learning in citizenship education in England is very varied, more so than the teaching of other school subjects at secondary level. This is corroborated by interim reports from the 8-year longitudinal survey of citizenship education in English schools currently being carried out by the NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) on behalf of the DfES (23).

7 **Conclusions**

Having considered some of the factors affecting the development of forms of teacher training appropriate for a new European-wide form of citizenship education and some of the ways in which they may be achieved, what becomes clear is that one of the central issues is the innovative concept of citizenship education involved and the wide-ranging demands it makes of teachers and schools. This has significant implications for policy development and implementation and is likely to require a range of initiatives and a level of coordination that would not normally be thought to apply in other curriculum areas.

Notes

1 QCA (1998, 7)

2 Eurydice (2005), Birzea et al (2004)

3 Birzea et al (2004, 22)

4 Kerr (2003, 38)

5 Batho (1990)

6 Huddleston (2004b, 11)

7 Ofsted (2003, 5)

8 Huddleston (2004b)

9 Eurydice (2005) 5.1

10 For more detailed case studies, see Huddleston (2004b)

11 Known as the 'National CPD Team' and consisted of four regional coordinators and one national coordinator

12 The School Self-Evaluation Tool for Citizenship Education - available at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship

13 Introducing Citizenship, a handbook and training video for primary schools (A&C Black, 2001) and Citizenship: Raising the Standard, a handbook and training video (Citizenship Foundation / Connect Publications, 2005)

14 Details of training institutions and courses offered can be found at: http://www.citized.info

15 The network is known as 'Citized' - details at: http://www.citized.info

16 Available at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship

17 Advanced Skills Teachers in England are responsible for leading in-service training in their subject in their schools as well as for 'outreach' work in other schools in their local education authority

18 Information available at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship

19 The Association for Citizenship Teaching - support services include a professional journal, Teaching Citizenship, and a website: http://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk

20 The handbook is a government-sponsored publication aimed at all those involved in teaching, leading and promoting citizenship education with children and young people aged from 3 to 19. It is intended to be a comprehensive guide to the aims and purposes of citizenship education, a guide to good practice in teaching, managing and coordinating the subject in schools and other sites of education, and a source of training exercises and ideas. See Huddleston & Kerr (in publication).

21 Schools in England can apply for specialist status, allowing them to specialise in a particular curriculum area - schools wishing to offer citizenship education as a specialism do so under the heading of Humanities

22 An example is Huddleston (2004a), a teacher support pack developed from a government-sponsored project on political literacy teaching at the Citizenship Foundation

23 Kerr et al (2004)

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