

Overview

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) is to investigate the ways in which young people are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens in a range of countries in the second decade of the 21st century. ICCS 2016 is a continuation of this study, which was initiated in 2009. The first ICCS survey reported on student achievement using a test of conceptual knowledge and understandings of aspects of civics and citizenship. It also collected and analyzed data about student value beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and behavioral intentions relating to aspects of civics and citizenship.

In recognition of the need for continuing research on civic and citizenship education and the widespread interest in the establishment of regular international assessments of civic and citizenship education, the IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) decided to undertake a second study cycle of ICCS with a data collection in 2016. The second ICCS survey is intended to respond to enduring and emerging challenges of educating young people in a world where contexts of democracy and civic participation continue to change. New developments of this kind include the increase in the use of social media by young people as a tool for civic engagement, the growing concerns about global threats and sustainable development, as well as spreading recognition about the role of schools in fostering peaceful ways of interaction between young people.

Furthermore, civic competencies can also be viewed as an essential part of a broader skill set required in workplaces, and thus these competencies are not only of interest to political and community leaders, but are also valued by a growing number of employers (Gould, 2011). There is an increased recognition by leaders of the business community that technical skills are important, but that these skills are not sufficient for prospering in today's global economy. Consequently, it is to be expected that employers in the 21st century will be seeking to hire and promote individuals with ample knowledge about significant changes in society, intercultural literacy, ethical judgment, humanitarian values, social responsibility, and civic engagement (OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development], 2015).

ICCS 2016 will allow both the measurement of changes over seven years (from 2009 to 2016) and the assessment of additional aspects of civic and citizenship education, including those related to recent developments in a number of countries. The ICCS instruments include a large range of test and questionnaire material from the previous study, which permits the comparison of changes in civic knowledge, attitudes and engagement over time. In addition, new item material was developed to measure aspects that were not included in ICCS 2009. It is expected that future ICCS cycles will take a similar approach, where instruments include both old and new material to permit comparisons over time at national and international levels, as well as the measurement of additional cognitive or affective-behavioral aspects.

1.2 Study background

Prior to ICCS 2016, the IEA conducted three international comparative studies about civic and citizenship education, with a first survey implemented in 1971, a second one in 1999/2000 and third one in 2008/2009 (Schulz, Fraillon, & Ainley, 2011; Torney-Purta, & Schwille, 2011).

The first IEA study concerning civic and citizenship education was undertaken in 1971 as part of the Six Subject Study (for a summary, see Walker, 1976). Ten countries participated in this data collection and the report was published in 1975 (Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975). The study included assessments of civic knowledge among 10- and 14-year old students and collected questionnaire-based data from students, teachers and school principals.

The second study, the IEA Civic Education Study (CIVED), was carried out in 1999. It was designed to strengthen the empirical foundations of civic education by providing information about the civic knowledge, attitudes, and actions of 14-year-olds. The study had a twin focus on school-based learning and on opportunities for civic participation outside the school. It focused on three civic-related domains: democracy / citizenship; national identity / international relations; and social cohesion / diversity. The focus on these domains was chosen as being particularly useful to policymakers involved in designing or redesigning curricula and preparing teachers.

CIVED was highly successful in achieving its aims and objectives, and established the evaluation of student outcomes in this learning area as an integral part of international comparative educational research. Phase 1 produced a detailed series of national case studies from the 24 participating countries (Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999). Phase 2 produced two data-rich international reports, the first on the results from the mandatory standard population of 14-year-olds in 28 participating countries (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001) and the second from the 16 countries that surveyed an older population of 16- to 18-year-olds (Amadeo, Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Husfeldt, & Nikolova, 2002). CIVED findings have had a considerable influence on policy and practice in civic and citizenship education across the world, in both participating and non-participating countries, and have also influenced further (national and international) research in this area (Kerr, Ireland, Lopes, Craig, with Cleaver, 2004; Mellor, & Prior, 2004; Menezes, Ferreira, Carneiro, & Cruz, 2004; Reimers, 2007; Torney-Purta, 2009).

ICCS 2009 was built on previous IEA studies of civic education, particularly the CIVED study conducted in 1999 (Amadeo et al., 2002; Torney-Purta et al., 2001), and was also established as a baseline study for future assessments in this learning area. Like its predecessor, it included a student test of civic knowledge and understanding, as well as questionnaires for students, teachers and school principals. However, there were some notable changes regarding the design and scope between CIVED and ICCS 2009:

- The assessment framework was broadened to: (i) have a stronger focus on the motivations for, and mechanisms of, participation associated with *citizenship education*, (ii) include a wider range of content, and (iii) place a greater emphasis on reasoning and analyzing in addition to knowing.
- The civic knowledge test was administered using a balanced rotated design of seven booklets (including one with CIVED link items) so as to assess a wider range of content and provide for a more extensive coverage of thinking processes.

- While CIVED collected data from two or more teachers of civic-related subjects in the selected class, the ICCS 2009 teacher survey was directed toward all teachers teaching the target grade in selected schools and thus collected data from a larger and more representative sample at each selected school. This change recognized the influence of the school environment on civic-related learning outcomes.
- To supplement existing published information at country level, additional data on national contexts were collected through a questionnaire completed by national centers drawing on expertise in each of the participating countries.
- For the first time in IEA history, ICCS 2009 established regional modules for three geographic regions (Asia, Europe and Latin America) that included the development of additional student instruments addressing specific aspects relevant to each region.
- An encyclopedia was produced that consisted of detailed descriptions of national contexts, policies and curricula relating to civic and citizenship education for countries that had participated in the study (Ainley, Schulz, & Friedman, 2013).

The results of this study were reported in a series of IEA publications (Fraillon, Schulz, & Ainley, 2012; Kerr, Sturman, Schulz, & Burge, 2010; Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010a, 2010b; Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011). Analyses of data from ICCS 2009 have also led to numerous reports and publications within countries, as well as reports and papers based on secondary research.

1.3 Recent developments and persisting challenges

Since the inception and implementation of ICCS 2009, a number of new global developments that have implications for civic and citizenship education across many countries have occurred:

- The global financial crisis of 2007–2008 and the global recession that followed have had a strong impact on many societies, and underlined the importance of the economy for social cohesion and political stability (Chossudovsky, & Marshall, 2010; Grant, & Wilson, 2012; Shahin, Woodward, & Terzis, 2012). In particular, in those countries that were hit hardest by recession, budget deficits and subsequent austerity measures have been characterized by ongoing dissent about economic policies, high unemployment rates (especially among young people), and the emergent success of protest parties and movements at elections. Since 2011, there has been an economic recovery in a number of countries, while others have experienced a worsening of economic and social conditions. These developments in the economic sphere have consequences for the ways in which citizenship education is envisioned (Kennedy, 2012).
- In many societies, the potential impact of human activity on the environment (in particular on the global climate) as well as the question about the long-term sustainability of development have increasingly become key issues in debates about their future political, social and economic development (Dringer, 2013; IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change], 2014). Under the auspices of the United Nations there have been successive Climate Change Conferences since 1995 in Berlin with recent conferences in 2009 (Copenhagen), 2014 (Lima) and 2015 (Paris). Regard for the environment and its long-term protection are increasingly regarded as integral parts of responsible citizenship with implications for the development of civic and citizenship curricula (Lotz-Sisitka, Fien, & Kethoilwe, 2013).

- In many countries there are also increasing concerns about how schools can ensure peaceful coexistence within school communities. In particular abuse and bullying of students (by other students and often aimed at various types of social minorities) have become salient issues in discussions about schools and learning environments. The recent movement of large numbers of refugees from the Middle-Eastern region to other (mostly European) countries will most likely increase the need for integrating people from different backgrounds into society. This will also result in challenges to schools in relation to their functioning as socially heterogeneous communities. In many countries, civic and citizenship education includes goals related to the promotion of student engagement with a school community (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Willms, Friesen, & Milton, 2009), fostering a peaceful coexistence and providing students with mechanisms for conflict resolution (Johnson, & Johnson, 1996; Mickelson, & Nkomo, 2012).
- Continuing development of information and communications technologies (ICT) has led to an increase in the use of ICT and new social media for civic participation. New social media played an important role in initiating and maintaining support as part of the revolutionary protests in the Middle East, in promoting action on climate change or in organizing protests against austerity measures in the aftermath of the global financial crisis (see for example Kahne, Middaugh, & Allen, 2014; Milner, 2010; Segerberg, & Bennett, 2011).

There are also persisting challenges to the study of civic and citizenship education, which have an ongoing impact on civic and citizenship education across participating countries:

- The concept of democracy is intrinsically linked to the notion of citizenship in the sense that democratic processes are generally conceived as dependent on an informed and active citizenry. Most countries around the world consider themselves as democracies, but in many of them there are concerns about the real state of democratic process due to the exclusion of larger parts of the population and the erosion of liberties (Diamond, 2015; Kagan, 2015). Furthermore, in countries with long-standing democratic traditions, there has been evidence of a general downturn in citizenship participation, in particular among younger people (see for example, Dalton, 2002; Putnam, 2000). While education is widely recognized as an important tool for fostering democratic citizenship (Naval, Print, & Veldhuis, 2002), there are different approaches to citizenship education, which may depend on the underlying basic conceptions of democracy. For example, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) distinguished promoting personal responsibility, active participation, and justice orientation as different approaches in this learning area, and Veugelers (2007) identified adapted, individualized and critical-democratic orientations in civic and citizenship education.
- Increasing globalization continues to influence debate about citizenship education because it challenges traditional notions of citizenship (which have been linked to the nation state), and it has led to supra-national concepts of (global) citizenship and new forms of experiences with citizenship across borders as a result of migration (Brodie, 2004; O'Sullivan, & Pashby, 2008; Reid, Gill, & Sears, 2010; Schattle, 2012; Torres, 2002). Based on research among teachers, Veugelers (2011) distinguished three different interpretations of global citizenship: an open and more culture-oriented approach, a moral orientation emphasizing cosmopolitanism and human rights, and an approach focusing on social justice and political change.

ICCS 2009 collected a rich data set to support comparative analyses of civic and citizenship education and provided many interesting results. However, given that the age group was 13- to 14-year-olds, there were some limitations on the extent to which their knowledge, perceptions and behaviors could be assessed. The following issues were taken into account in the development and refinement of the instruments for ICCS 2016:

- Results from CIVED and ICCS 2009 showed that students at this age tended to report little inclination to engage in conventional forms of political or civic participation. In particular, expectations of active engagement in politics through parties, trade unions or local elections were generally low and tended to be associated with lower levels of civic knowledge. Therefore, ICCS 2016 places more emphasis on aspects closer to young people's interests and possibilities of engagement when it is measuring students' attitudes, behaviors or behavioral intentions.
- Questions about democratic beliefs tended to be endorsed by overwhelming majorities of students and therefore provided little information about differences in attitudes among young people of this age. Moreover, in the Latin American region, the responses contradicted more general findings about positive responses to statements, such as those endorsing dictatorships provided they bring benefits to society (see Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011). In ICCS 2016, when asking student about their views on democracy, preference was given to beliefs that were not necessarily prevalent in their society, such as government influence on courts or nepotism.

1.4 Broadening the scope of ICCS

The development of a framework for ICCS 2016 needed to take account of recent developments and ongoing challenges. To achieve this, the international project team, in close cooperation with experts and country representatives, identified areas related to civics and citizenship education, which had either gained more attention in recent years or were regarded as relevant, but which were not addressed in great detail in the previous ICCS survey. Each of these areas includes some aspects that were included in ICCS 2009 to a certain degree, but are addressed in a more comprehensive and broader form in the current study. Through this approach, the wider conceptual framework for ICCS is also open to including additional aspects in future cycles.

The following three areas were identified for inclusion, to broaden the scope of ICCS 2016:

- **Environmental sustainability in civic and citizenship education:** In many societies, the potential impact of human activity on the environment (in particular on the global climate) and environmental sustainability have become key issues in debates about their future political, social and economic development, which is reflected in many international and declarations (see for example UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization], 2015). Over the past decades, responsible citizenship has been increasingly viewed as including regard for the environment and its long-term protection, requisite for future sustainable development (Dobson, 2003; Dobson, & Bell, 2006; Ferreira, 2013; Hayward, 2006), and nowadays many education systems put emphasis on the protection of the environment or education for environmental sustainability in their citizenship curricula (Ainley et al., 2013; Eurydice [Education Information Network in Europe], 2012; Schulz, et al., 2010b).

- **Social interaction at school:** Reviews of civic and citizenship education curricula across countries provide evidence that at the outset of the 21st century a large number of countries place emphasis on non-formal aspects of civic learning through participation and engagement or social interaction at schools (Ainley et al., 2013; Eurydice, 2005; Schulz et al., 2010b). More generally, research increasingly recognizes the importance of social learning within schools (Dijkstra, & de la Motte, 2014; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Scheerens, 2011). Therefore, ICCS 2016 is designed to include more aspects related to social interaction at school in the survey instruments, in particular items related to relationships within the school community, including those related to conflict and the use of verbal and physical abuse (for example bullying) (Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, & Isava, 2008; Rigby, & Smith, 2011; Smith, Morita, Junger-Tas, Olweus, Catalano, & Slee, 1998).
- **The use of new social media for civic engagement:** There is growing evidence about the importance of new social media¹ and the use of such media has been found to have a profound effect on civic engagement among young people (Anduiza, Jensen, & Jorba, 2012; Bachen, Raphael, Lynn, McKee, & Philippi, 2008; Banaji, & Buckingham, 2013; Kahne, Lee, & Feezell, 2011). Given the further increases in engagement with social media and its relevance for communication on social and political issues since the previous ICCS survey, it was seen as important to explore the use of new social media for civic engagement in greater detail in ICCS 2016.

In addition, two further areas were identified that had been included in previous IEA surveys as deserving more explicit acknowledgement in the ICCS 2016 assessment framework:

- **Economic awareness as an aspect of citizenship:** Students' economic awareness may be regarded as an important aspect of civic and citizenship education (see for example, Citizenship Foundation, 2013; Davies, 2006, 2015; Davies, Howie, Mangan, & Telhaj, 2002). It can be conceptualized as a broad awareness of the ways in which economic issues influence citizenship (rather than financial or economic literacy²). Economic awareness is relevant to civic and citizenship education because economics is a major focus of government, economic conditions provide constraints on some citizenship activities, citizens contribute to the economic well-being of society, and citizens share responsibility for economic problems and remedies.
- **The role of morality in civic and citizenship education:** Concepts of morality and character are often invoked in relation to outcomes of civic and citizenship education programs (Althof, & Berkowitz, 2006; Berkowitz, Althof, & Jones, 2008; Halstead, & Pike, 2006; Oser, & Veugelers, 2008). Many countries have moral education programs (often integrated with civic and citizenship education) and moral education is also often regarded as an independent field of study (Ainley et al., 2013; Veugelers, 2011). Therefore, the assessment framework provides scope for explicit representations of morality in the ICCS 2016 instruments.

1 **New social media:** a collection of online social networking sites and tools (for example, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) and shared content sites (for example, wikis, blogs, discussion forums) that people use to socially interact and distribute content with other groups of people.

2 An assessment of students' knowledge and perceptions of the economy is difficult given the age of the ICCS 2016 target population (aged 13–14). In CIVED, cognitive items measuring economic literacy were only included in the survey of upper secondary students aged 16 to 18 (see Amadeo et al., 2002). The OECD Programme for Student Assessment (PISA) assessed the financial literacy of 15-year-old students in its 2012 survey cycle (see OECD, 2014a).

1.5 Research questions

The key research questions for ICCS 2016 concern students' civic knowledge, their dispositions to engage, and their attitudes related to civic and citizenship issues, as well as contexts for this learning area. Some of the key research questions are similar to those that were formulated for ICCS 2009. Each general research question (RQ) relates to a subset of specific research questions to be addressed in ICCS 2016.

RQ 1 *How is civic and citizenship education implemented in participating countries?*

This research question is concerned the national contexts for civic and citizenship education and includes the following specific research questions:

- (a) *What are the aims and principles of civic and citizenship education in each participating country?* The analyses will be focused on information from the national contexts survey with references to published sources (for example, national curriculum documents) about the background and intentions behind civic and citizenship curricula in participating countries.
- (b) *Which curricular approaches do participating countries choose to provide civic and citizenship education?* The analyses will have a focus on different types of civic and citizenship education implemented in participating countries and may be based on national contexts survey data, published sources and school survey data.
- (c) *What changes and/or developments in this learning area can be observed since 2009?* The analyses will include only data from countries participating in both ICCS surveys and focus on reforms and changes in the national contexts for civic and citizenship education.

RQ 2 *What is the extent and variation of students' civic knowledge within and across participating countries?*

Analyses to address this research question would primarily focus on student test data supplemented by information collected through the student questionnaire in order to answer the following specific research questions:

- (a) *Are there variations in civic knowledge associated with student characteristics and background variables?* These analyses would investigate the influence of student gender, family characteristics, socioeconomic indicators and other background variables on civic knowledge.
- (b) *What contextual factors explain variation in students' civic knowledge?* Analyses would study the relationship between contextual variables such as home background or school characteristics at different levels with variation in students' civic knowledge.
- (c) *What changes in civic knowledge have occurred since 2009?* These analyses would be limited to those countries participating in both ICCS surveys and require comparable measures of civic knowledge over time.

RQ 3 *What is the extent of students' engagement in different spheres of society and which factors within or across countries are related to it?*

This research question is related to indicators of student engagement and encompasses the following specific research questions:

- (a) *What is the extent and variation of students' civic participation in and out of school?* The analyses will focus on student reports on past and current involvement in civic-related activities.

- (b) *What beliefs do students hold regarding their own capacity to engage and the value of civic participation?* The analyses will focus on student perceptions of civic engagement.
- (c) *What expectations do students have regarding civic and political participation in the near future or as adults?* The analyses will address students' behavioral intentions regarding different forms of civic or political participation.
- (d) *What changes in student engagement can be observed since 2009?* The analyses will include data from those countries participating in both ICCS surveys and engagement indicators included in both studies.

RQ 4 *What beliefs do students in participating countries hold regarding important civic issues in modern society and what are the factors influencing their variation?* This research question is related to different student affective measures and encompasses the following specific research questions:

- (a) *What attitudes do students hold toward civic institutions and society?* The analyses will address the way students perceive society in general, its rules and institutions.
- (b) *What are students' beliefs regarding the importance of different principles underlying society?* The analyses should focus on students' beliefs about democracy, citizenship and diversity.
- (c) *What are students' perceptions of their communities and societies?* The analyses will be related to students' sense of identity within their (local, national and supra-national) communities and connections with others in society.
- (d) *What changes in student beliefs can be observed since 2009?* The analyses will include only data from those countries participating in both ICCS surveys and affective-behavioral measures included in both studies.

RQ 5 *How are schools in the participating countries organized with regard to civic and citizenship education and what is its association with students' learning outcomes?* This research question is related to ways schools (within their community) provide for spaces for civic and citizenship education and encompasses the following specific research questions:

- (a) *What are the general approaches to civic and citizenship education, curriculum, and/or program content structure and delivery?*
- (b) *To what extent do schools in participating countries have participatory processes in place that facilitate civic engagement?* The analyses will primarily focus on teacher and school survey indicators regarding the school climate for civic engagement.
- (c) *To what extent do schools and communities interact to foster students' civic engagement and learning?* The analyses will primarily focus on teacher and school survey indicators regarding the schools' interactions with their local communities and opportunities for students' active civic involvement.
- (d) *How do schools and teachers perceive the role of civic and citizenship education across participating countries?* The analyses will address how teachers, principals and policies perceive the role schools and teacher play in preparing young people for citizenship, and to what extent these perceptions have changed since ICCS 2009.

These research questions played a central role in shaping the design of ICCS 2016 and its instrumentation, and in guiding the development of the assessment framework. Furthermore, they will provide the basis for organizing the reporting of findings from this study.

1.6 Study design

Consistent with ICCS 2009, the student population to be surveyed includes students in their eighth year of schooling (on average including students who are approximately 14 years of age). Typically, this will be Grade 8 students, provided that the average age of students at this year level is 13.5 years or above. In countries where the average age of students in Grade 8 is less than 13.5 years, Grade 9 is defined as the target population. In each sampled school, intact classrooms are selected, and all students in a class are assessed for the ICCS 2016 survey.

The definition of the target population of teachers is the same as in the previous ICCS teacher survey. It includes all teachers teaching regular school subjects to the students in the target grade at each sampled school, but is limited to those teachers teaching the target grade during the testing period and employed at school since the beginning of the school year (Zuehlke, 2011). Fifteen teachers are randomly selected from each school participating in the ICCS survey. There is also an international option to ask teachers of civic-related subjects at the target grade additional questions on civic teaching and learning.

An important feature of ICCS 2009 was the establishment of regional modules in Asia, Europe and Latin America (Fraillon et al., 2012; Kerr et al., 2010, 2011; Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011). The regional modules were composed of groups of countries from the same geographic region, which together administered additional instruments to assess region-specific aspects of civic and citizenship education. ICCS 2016 includes regional instruments for countries in Europe and Latin America. The content of the regional instruments focuses on topics that are not covered in the international survey material and of particular relevance in the countries of the particular geographic region.

The following instruments are administered as part of the ICCS survey:

- An *international cognitive student test* consisting of items measuring students' civic knowledge and ability to analyze and reason.
- A *student questionnaire* consisting of items measuring student background variables and student perceptions.
- *Regional student instruments* consisting of questionnaire-type items. These instruments are only administered in countries participating in the European and Latin American modules.
- A *teacher questionnaire*, administered to selected teachers teaching any subject in the target grade. It gathers information about teacher background variables and teachers' perceptions of factors related to the context of civic and citizenship education in their respective schools. As in ICCS 2009, participating countries have the option of offering an online administration of this questionnaire.
- A *school questionnaire*, administered to school principals of selected schools to capture school characteristics and school-level variables related to civic and citizenship participation. As with the teacher questionnaire, the school questionnaire may be completed online in some countries.

- The *national contexts survey*, completed online by national center experts, is designed to gather data about the structure of the education systems, the status of civic and citizenship education in the national curricula, and recent developments. The data obtained from this survey will supplement published information sources about countries and their education systems to assist with interpretation of the results from the student, school, and teacher questionnaires, and in describing national contexts for civic and citizenship education.

1.7 Characteristics and structure of the assessment framework

The assessment framework provides a conceptual underpinning for the international instrumentation for ICCS 2016 and the development of regional instruments for European and Latin American countries. It should be noted that the assessment framework is a continuation of the ICCS 2009 framework and that some parts remain unchanged. However, while its basic orientation and coverage is consistent with the assessment framework for ICCS 2009 in order to ensure continuity across survey cycles, it has also been refined as well as modified in order to capture new developments in the area of civic and citizenship education. It is designed to have the following characteristics:

- It maintains a high degree of consistency with ICCS 2009.
- It reflects contemporary research findings on civic and citizenship education among students at secondary school (for example, Pancer, 2015).
- It appropriately addresses the needs and interests of participating countries.
- It limits content to aspects that can be adequately measured.
- It aims to include all relevant aspects of content that describe the breadth of civic and citizenship education across participating countries.
- It takes the whole range of contexts within which civic and citizenship education occurs into account.

The assessment framework for ICCS 2016 consists of the following three parts:

- The *civic and citizenship framework* outlines the aspects to be addressed when measuring cognitive and affective-behavioral constructs related to civic and citizenship education through the student test and questionnaires.
- The *contextual framework* describes the different context factors that might influence student learning outcomes related to civic and citizenship education, and which are measured through the student, teacher, school and national contexts questionnaires.
- The *assessment design* provides an overview of the ICCS instruments, the coverage of framework domains, the different item types, the assessment design, and the expected cognitive, affective-behavioral and contextual indices.

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