



# ICCS 2009 Encyclopedia

## Approaches to civic and citizenship education around the world

Edited by:  
John Ainley  
Wolfram Schulz  
Tim Friedman



Università degli Studi Roma Tre  
Laboratorio di Pedagogia sperimentale

**ICCS 2009  
Encyclopedia**



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# Foreword

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) is the largest international study of civic and citizenship education ever conducted. Over 140,000 Grade 8 students, 62,000 teachers, and 5,300 school principals from 38 countries participated in this study, carried out by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The association is an independent, international cooperative of national research agencies, which, for over 50 years, has conducted large-scale comparative studies of educational achievement and reported on key aspects of education systems and processes.

ICCS was the third IEA study on civics and citizenship education. The first was conducted in 1971 (nine countries participating) and the second in 1999 (28 countries). Both played an important role not only in terms of initiating or adding to the debate on the education of future citizens but also in terms of triggering education reforms in this area in a number of countries. ICCS was able to help some countries evaluate their reforms 10 years on from the second study and to help several others clarify concepts and policy in preparation for reforms.

The ICCS assessment addressed students' civic knowledge and understanding, perceptions and attitudes, and engagement and behavior. It also collected information on various aspects of students' home backgrounds. Separate regional modules (Asian, European, and Latin American) investigated issues of specific importance to civic and citizenship education in those regions. ICCS furthermore collected data from policymakers, school principals, and teachers on various civic and citizenship education-related aspects of the participating education systems and their schools and classrooms.

ICCS has contributed substantially to our knowledge about civic and citizenship education in schools and about how diverse countries prepare their young people for citizenship. The study's approach of collecting data at a number of levels and from different perspectives disclosed many issues important for policymakers and practitioners in this area of education.

The study's findings have been published in a series of reports presenting international and regional data on students' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, and on related family and school-level factors. This volume presents a broader context within which to review the findings on preparing future citizens. Elements of this context include each participating country's historical background and political characteristics, the structure of its education system, and the place of civic and citizenship education in its curricula at the time when data were collected from students and their teachers. By complementing the assessment data, this current publication helps education stakeholders and the educational research community, as well as interested others, better understand the associations among civic and citizenship education-related policies, practices, and outcomes.

International studies of the scale of ICCS would not be possible without the dedication, skill, cooperation, and support of a large number of individuals, institutions, and organizations from around the world. The study was organized by a consortium of three partner institutions: the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) in the United Kingdom, and the Laboratorio di Pedagogia sperimentale (LPS) at the Roma Tre University in Italy. These institutions worked in close cooperation with the IEA Secretariat, the IEA Data Processing and Research Center (DPC), and the study's national research coordinators.



I would like to express thanks, on behalf of IEA, to the study's leaders—John Ainley, Julian Fraillon, and Wolfram Schulz from ACER, David Kerr from NFER, and Bruno Losito from LPS, as well as to all the researchers from the consortium institutions involved in the project. I also extend special thanks to the members of the Project Advisory Committee for the guidance they offered throughout the four years of the study, as well as to other experts who helped develop the instruments and reviewed the reports.

The IEA Publication and Editorial Committee provided helpful suggestions for improvement of earlier versions of the report, and Katy Ellsworth and Paula Wagemaker edited the document.

Much of the credit for the content of the encyclopedia must be reserved for the authors of the chapters from the participating ICCS countries as well as for Tim Friedman (ACER) and Alana Yu (IEA Secretariat) for preparing chapters for this volume.

IEA studies rely on national teams headed by the national research coordinators in participating countries. They are the people who manage and execute the study at the national level. Their contribution is highly appreciated. It is therefore with deep regret that I note the passing away of two of our colleagues, Ms Graciela Sosa Salguero from Paraguay and Professor Constantinos Papanastasiou from Cyprus. Both were national research coordinators and co-authors of their country's encyclopedia chapter, and both died in 2012 before completion of this volume.

This study would not be possible without the participation of many students, teachers, school administrators, and policymakers within the participating countries. The education world benefits from their commitment.

Finally, I would like to thank the study's funders. A project of this size is not possible without considerable financial support. Funding for ICCS was provided by the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture in the form of a grant to the European countries participating in the project, and by the Inter-American Development Bank through SREDECC (Regional System for the Evaluation and Development of Citizenship Competencies). Funding also came from the ministries of education and many other organizations in all participating countries.

*Dr Hans Wagemaker*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IEA



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# Introduction

## Overview of ICCS 2009

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2009) investigated the ways in which countries prepare their young people to undertake their roles as citizens. It studied student knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship as well as student attitudes, perceptions, and activities related to civics and citizenship. ICCS also examined differences among countries in relation to these outcomes of civic and citizenship education, and it explored how differences across countries relate to student characteristics, school and community contexts, and national characteristics.

ICCS 2009 built on the previous IEA studies of civic education (Amadeo, Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Husfeldt, & Nikolova, 2002; Schulz & Sibberns, 2004; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001; Torney-Purta & Schwille, 2011). In 1971, the IEA Civic Education Study surveyed 14-year-olds in nine countries (Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975). In 1999, the IEA CIVED study assessed 14-year-old students in 28 countries (Torney-Purta et al., 2001) as well as older students, 16 to 18 years of age, in 16 countries (Amadeo et al., 2002).

In addition to building on these studies, ICCS 2009 responded to challenges regarding the education of young people within contexts of democracy and civic participation that underwent many changes at the beginning of the 21st century. The conceptual background and underpinnings of ICCS are described in the assessment framework that was the principal point of reference for the development of the study's instruments (Schulz, Fraillon, Ainley, Losito, & Kerr, 2008).

The content and conduct of civic and citizenship education within and across countries varies considerably. However, school education typically values and fosters the knowledge, understanding, skills, and dispositions that prepare young people to comprehend the world, to secure productive employment, and to be informed and active citizens. The ICCS 2009 research team systematically investigated differences in these outcomes across the participating countries and in how these countries provide civic and citizenship education. ICCS 2009 also explored differences within and across countries with respect to the relationship between the outcomes of civic and citizenship education and student characteristics and school contexts.

During 2008 and 2009, ICCS researchers gathered data from more than 140,000 students studying in Grade 8 (or equivalent) at more than 5,300 schools from 38 countries. These student data were augmented by data from more than 62,000 teachers in those schools and by contextual data collected from their respective school principals and national research centers. In addition to collecting data via the international instruments, most countries also administered instruments developed as part of the three regional ICCS modules for Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

The results of ICCS 2009 have been published in a series of reports. The international findings have been published in an initial findings report (Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010a) and an international report (Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010b). Regional reports have been produced for Europe (Kerr, Sturman, Schulz, & Burge, 2010), Latin America (Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011), and Asia (Fraillon, Schulz, & Ainley, 2012). The technical report for ICCS 2009 (Schulz, Ainley, & Fraillon, 2011) describes the study's instrument development, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods. In addition, many of the ICCS national research centers have produced reports focusing on the results for their respective education systems and featuring comparison of these results with the results from other participating countries.



## Purpose of the ICCS 2009 Encyclopedia

The ways students develop civic-related dispositions and competencies and acquire understandings with regard to their role as citizens are strongly influenced by their respective education systems and the contexts in which those systems operate. Each country's historical background, political system, educational structure, and curriculum need to be taken into account when interpreting the results of this international assessment of civic and citizenship education. The ICCS 2009 assessment framework addressed the relevance of contextual influences at the level of education systems and countries in its Research Question 5:

*What aspects of schools and education systems are related to knowledge about, and attitudes to, civics and citizenship, including:*

- a. *general approach to civic and citizenship education, curriculum, and/or program content structure and delivery;*
- b. *teaching practices, such as those that encourage higher order thinking and analysis in relation to civics and citizenship;*
- c. *aspects of school organization, including opportunities to contribute to conflict resolution, participate in governance processes, and be involved in decisionmaking?* (Schulz et al., 2008, p. 10, italics original)

In order to address this research question with regard to national differences, ICCS 2009 developed a national contexts survey that was designed to systematically collect relevant data on the structure of each country's education system, education policy, civic and citizenship education, teacher qualifications for civic and citizenship education, and the extent of current debates and reforms in this area. The survey also collected data on processes at the national level regarding assessment of and quality assurance in civic and citizenship education and school curriculum approaches. In addition to collecting information through the online survey, ICCS 2009 requested more detailed descriptions from the national ICCS research centers in each country of the particular characteristics that the country deemed relevant to its approach to and its implementation of civic and citizenship education.

The results of this qualitatively oriented data collection are presented in this encyclopedia. This information is set out in country chapters, one for each of the 35 of the 38 countries participating in ICCS 2009 that were able to provide the requested information. These countries were those of the total 38 countries that participated in ICCS 2009 that were able to provide the requested information. The three countries not included in this volume are Indonesia, Spain, and Lithuania. However, their data are included in the summary tables in this introductory chapter and are drawn from the findings of the ICCS 2009 national contexts survey and other published sources.

Each chapter, written by one or more members of the country's national research center, begins with a description of the country's general demographic features as well as its political characteristics. Authors then detail the background and structure of the education system, the general approach to civic and citizenship education, how it is included in the national curriculum, which school activities relate to it, and whether this learning area is subject to current reforms and debates. Authors also outline the requirements for educating teachers for teaching in general and for teaching civic and citizenship education in particular. With regard to the latter, consideration is given to the extent to which teachers receive teacher education (both preservice and inservice) that prepares them to teach issues related to this learning area. Each chapter concludes with a description of the national approaches to assessment and quality



assurance of educational outcomes on the one hand and of learning topics related to civic and citizenship education on the other.

## Participating Countries and the ICCS 2009 Research Design

Thirty-eight countries<sup>1</sup> participated in ICCS 2009. Among these were five from Asia, 26 from Europe, six from Latin America, and one from Australasia. Figure 1 provides an alphabetical list of these countries and their geographic location on the world map. As in all its studies, IEA invited all countries affiliated with the association to participate. The authorities in each invited country decided whether their country would participate or not.

The ICCS 2009 student population was defined as students in Grade 8 (students approximately 14 years of age), provided that the average age of students in this grade was 13.5 years or above at the time of the ICCS assessment. If the average age of students in Grade 8 was below 13.5 years, Grade 9 became the target population. In four countries (Greece, Norway, Slovenia, and Sweden), national centers surveyed Grade 9 in addition to the target grade (Grade 8) in order to have data comparable with those collected by these countries for the CIVED survey of 1999.

The population for the ICCS 2009 teacher survey was defined as all teachers teaching regular school subjects to the students in the target grade (generally Grade 8) at each sampled school. It included only those teachers who were teaching the target grade during the testing period and who had been employed at school since the beginning of the school year.

The main survey data collection took place in the 38 participating countries between October 2008 and May 2009. The survey was carried out in countries with a Southern Hemisphere school calendar between October and December 2008, and in those with a Northern Hemisphere school calendar between February and May 2009.<sup>2</sup>

The following instruments were administered to students:

- *The international student cognitive test:* This consisted of 80 items measuring civic and citizenship knowledge, analysis, and reasoning. A balanced rotated design was used to assign the assessment items to seven booklets, each of which contained three of a total seven item-clusters. Students were given 45 minutes to complete their assigned booklet.
- *An international student questionnaire:* This was used to obtain student perceptions about civics and citizenship as well as information on each student's background. It took 40 minutes to complete.
- *A set of regional instruments:* These took between 15 and 30 minutes to complete and focused on particular issues associated with civics and citizenship in three regions—Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

ICCS 2009 also included a set of instruments designed to gather information from and about teachers, schools, and education systems. The set consisted of the following:

- *A 30-minute teacher questionnaire:* This instrument asked respondents to give their perceptions of civic and citizenship education in their schools and to provide information about their schools' organization and culture as well their own teaching assignments and backgrounds.
- *A 30-minute school questionnaire:* Here, principals provided information about school characteristics, school culture and climate, and the provision of civic and citizenship education in their schools.

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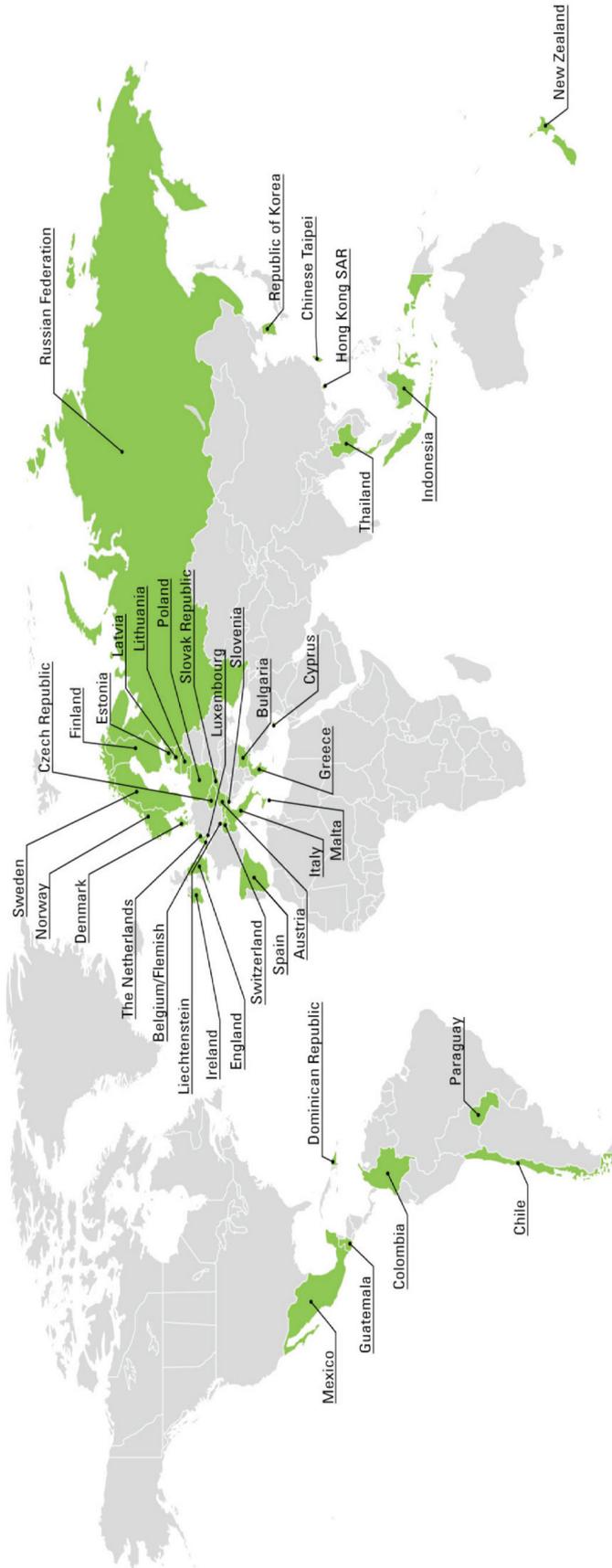
1 A few of the ICCS participants are distinct education systems within countries. We use the term "country" in this publication to refer to both the countries and the systems within countries that participated in the study.

2 In three countries with a Southern Hemisphere school calendar, the survey was conducted in early 2009, at the beginning of the next school year, when students were already in Grade 9. In a few countries, the teacher survey data collection was extended in order to achieve better participation rates.





Figure 1: Countries participating in ICCS 2009



**Participating Countries**

Austria	Denmark	Indonesia	Malta	Slovak Republic
Belgium (Flemish)	Dominican Republic	Ireland	Mexico	Slovenia
Bulgaria	England	Italy	Netherlands	Spain
Chile	Estonia	Korea Rep. of	New Zealand	Sweden
Chinese Taipei	Finland	Latvia	Norway	Switzerland
Colombia	Greece	Liechtenstein	Paraguay	Thailand
Cyprus	Guatemala	Lithuania	Poland	
Czech Republic	Hong Kong SAR	Luxembourg	Russian Federation	

## Demographic, Economic, and Political Characteristics of the Participating Countries

As indicated in the previous section, the countries that participated in ICCS 2009 came mainly from three regions of the world. As a group, and even within their regional groupings, the countries displayed considerable diversity in terms of demographic, economic, and political characteristics, and in terms of student, school, and teacher characteristics. Table 1 shows selected demographic characteristics for these countries either at or near to the time when ICCS 2009 was conducted.

The first column in Table 1 sets out the land area of each country. The smallest country, Liechtenstein, has a land area of only 160 square kilometers whereas the largest country, the Russian Federation, occupies 16,376,870 square kilometers. These enormous differences in size are also reflected in the second data column, which records estimates of the countries' populations, which range from only 36,000 or so people in Liechtenstein to almost 240 million inhabitants in Indonesia.

Countries also varied considerably with regard to population density and urbanization. When looking at the ratio between population size and land area, we can see that population density (estimated by dividing square kilometers by population) ranges from only nine inhabitants per square kilometer in the Russian Federation to 6,783 in Hong Kong SAR. In most of the participating ICCS 2009 countries, a majority of the population lives in urban areas; in 11 out of the 38 ICCS 2009 countries, the proportion exceeds 80 percent.

The last column provides information on the life expectancy in ICCS 2009 countries at birth. In 17 countries, life expectancy at birth is 80 years or above whereas in two countries it was estimated to be below 70 years.

Table 2 shows selected economic characteristics of ICCS 2009 countries. These characteristics include the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, the income Gini coefficient,<sup>3</sup> and the percentages of public expenditure on education.

Considerable diversity is evident in Table 2 with respect to the country scores and rankings for the ICCS 2009 countries on the HDI. Twenty-six countries have a very high HDI, seven have a high HDI, and five have a medium HDI. The top-ranked country is Norway and the bottom-ranked is Guatemala. The five Asian countries participating in ICCS 2009 were categorized as very high or medium on the HDI, the European countries as very high or high, and the six Latin American countries as high or medium.

Table 2 also shows considerable variation across the ICCS 2009 countries with respect to the GDP per capita (in US dollars). This index established Luxembourg, Norway, Switzerland, and Denmark (set out here in descending order) as having a relatively high GDP per capita, and Paraguay, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, and Thailand as having a relatively low GDP per capita. We caution, however, that some of these rankings may have changed as a consequence of the global financial crisis.

When comparing the Gini income coefficients, which show the extent of equality in the income distributions across households, we can again see considerable differences. The national coefficients (where available) range from a value of 24.7 in Denmark, indicating a relatively equal income distribution, to a value of 58.5 in Colombia, where households tend to have unequal income distributions.

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<sup>3</sup> The Gini income coefficient is a measure of the deviation of the distribution of income (or consumption) among individuals or households within a country from a perfectly equal distribution. A value of 0 represents absolute equality. A value of 100 represents absolute inequality (see United Nations Development Programme, 2010).



Table 1: Selected demographic characteristics of ICCS 2009 countries

Country	Area/Size of Country (in square km)	Population Size (in thousands)	Population Density (inhabitants per square kilometer)*	Urban Population as % of Total Population	Life Expectancy at Birth (in years)
Austria	82,430	8,385	102	68	80
Belgium (Flemish)	13,522 <sup>a</sup>	6,162 <sup>a</sup>	456	97 <sup>b</sup>	80 <sup>b</sup>
Bulgaria	108,560	7,543	69	72	73
Chile	743,530	17,114	23	89	79
Chinese Taipei	32,261 <sup>c</sup>	23,025 <sup>c</sup>	714	47 <sup>c</sup>	75 <sup>c</sup>
Colombia	1,109,500	46,295	42	75	73
Cyprus	9,240	1,104	119	70	79
Czech Republic	77,250	10,525	136	74	77
Denmark	42,430	5,544	131	87	79
Dominican Republic	48,320	9,927	205	71	73
England	130,410 <sup>d</sup>	51,446 <sup>e</sup>	394	90 <sup>f</sup>	80 <sup>f</sup>
Estonia	42,390	1,340	32	70	75
Finland	303,900	5,364	18	64	50
Greece	128,900	11,319	88	61	80
Guatemala	107,160	14,389	134	50	71
Hong Kong SAR	1,042	7,068	6,783	100	83
Indonesia	1,811,570	239,871	132	54	68
Ireland	68,890	4,481	65	62	80
Italy	294,140	60,484	206	68	81
Korea, Republic of	97,100	48,875	503	82	80
Latvia	62,180	2,243	36	68	73
Liechtenstein	160	36	225	14	80
Lithuania	62,670	3,321	53	67	73
Luxembourg	2,590	506	195	82	80
Malta	320	413	1,291	95	80
Mexico	1,943,950	113,433	58	78	76
Netherlands	33,730	16,612	492	83	81
New Zealand	263,310	4,368	17	87	80
Norway	305,470	4,885	16	78	81
Paraguay	397,300	6,455	16	62	72
Poland	304,200	38,187	126	61	76
Russian Federation	16,376,870	141,750	9	73	69
Slovak Republic	48,090	5,433	113	57	75
Slovenia	20,140	2,053	102	48	79
Spain	498,800	46,082	92	77	81
Sweden	410,340	9,379	23	85	81
Switzerland	40,000	7,825	196	74	82
Thailand	510,890	69,122	135	34	74

**Notes:**

Data sourced from the World Bank database except where otherwise stated.

a Data relate to 2008. Source: <http://statbel.fgov.be/de/statistiken/zahlen/population/structure/residence/index.jsp> [09/09/2010].

b Data refer to the whole of Belgium.

c Data sourced from the *CIA World Factbook* <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tw.html> [26/10/11].

d Data relate to 2008. Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/homepage/homepage\\_uni\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/homepage/homepage_uni_en.htm) [26/10/11].

e Data relate to 2008. Source: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_compendia/AA2010/aa2010final.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_compendia/AA2010/aa2010final.pdf) (Table 5.5.) [09/09/2010].

f Data refer to the whole of the United Kingdom.

\* Estimated from previous two columns.

**Source:**

World Bank database—indicators: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator> [17/01/12].

Table 2: Selected economic characteristics of ICCS 2009 countries

Country	Human Development Index (value, rank and category)			Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Capita (in USD \$)	Income Gini Coefficient	Public Expenditure on Education (% of GDP)
Austria	0.851	(25)	Very high	49,599	29.1	5.4
Belgium (Flemish)	0.867 <sup>a</sup>	(18)	Very high	47,085 <sup>a</sup>	33.0 <sup>a</sup>	6.1 <sup>a</sup>
Bulgaria	0.743	(58)	High	6,546	29.2	4.1
Chile	0.783	(45)	High	10,084	52.0	3.4
Chinese Taipei	0.000 <sup>b</sup>	(25)	Very high	32,000 <sup>c</sup>	Data not available	4.4 <sup>c</sup>
Colombia	0.689	(79)	High	5,416	58.5	3.9
Cyprus	0.810	(35)	Very high	31,410	Data not available	7.1
Czech Republic	0.841	(28)	Very high	20,673	25.8	4.6
Denmark	0.866	(19)	Very high	62,118	24.7	7.9
Dominican Republic	0.663	(88)	Medium	4,576	48.4	2.2
England	0.849 <sup>d</sup>	(26)	Very high	43,541 <sup>d</sup>	36.0	5.6 <sup>d</sup>
Estonia	0.812	(34)	Very high	17,454	36.0	5.0
Finland	0.871	(16)	Very high	51,323	26.9	5.9
Greece	0.855	(22)	Very high	31,670	34.3	4.0
Guatemala	0.560	(116)	Medium	2,848	53.7	3.2
Hong Kong SAR	0.862	(21)	Very high	30,863	43.4	3.3
Indonesia	0.600	(108)	Medium	2,246	37.6	3.5
Ireland	0.895	(5)	Very high	60,460	34.3	4.9
Italy	0.854	(23)	Very high	38,492	36.0	4.3
Korea, Republic of	0.877	(12)	Very high	19,115	31.6	4.2
Latvia	0.769	(48)	High	14,908	36.3	5.0
Liechtenstein	0.891	(6)	Very high	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Lithuania	0.783	(44)	High	14,098	35.8	4.7
Luxembourg	0.852	(24)	Very high	109,903	Data not available	3.7
Malta	0.815	(33)	Very high	Data not available	Data not available	4.8
Mexico	0.750	(56)	High	10,232	51.6	4.8
Netherlands	0.890	(7)	Very high	52,963	30.9	5.5
New Zealand	0.907	(3)	Very high	30,439	36.2	6.2
Norway	0.940	(1)	Very high	94,759	25.8	6.7
Paraguay	0.640	(96)	Medium	2,561	53.2	4.0
Poland	0.795	(41)	Very high	13,845	34.9	4.9
Russian Federation	0.719	(65)	High	11,832	43.7	3.9
Slovak Republic	0.818	(31)	Very high	18,212	25.8	3.6
Slovenia	0.828	(29)	Very high	27,019	31.2	5.2
Spain	0.863	(20)	Very high	35,215	34.7	4.4
Sweden	0.885	(9)	Very high	51,950	25.0	6.7
Switzerland	0.874	(13)	Very high	64,327	33.7	5.3
Thailand	0.654	(92)	Medium	4,043	42.5	4.9

**Notes:**

Data are taken from the *Human Development Report 2010*, and relate to that year unless otherwise stated.

Data for public expenditure on education relate to 2000–2007.

Data for income Gini coefficients relate to 2000–2010.

<sup>a</sup> Data refer to the whole of Belgium.

<sup>b</sup> DGBAS of Taiwan. (2009). Human Development Index of Taiwan in 2007. *National Statistics*, 192. Retrieved from <http://www.stat.gov.tw/public/Data/910616273671.pdf> [24/08/10].

<sup>c</sup> Data estimated for 2009. Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html> [03/08/10].

<sup>d</sup> Data refer to the whole of the United Kingdom.

**Source:**

*Human Development Report 2010* statistical tables: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2010\\_EN\\_Tables\\_rev.xls](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Tables_rev.xls) [25/10/11].

The table also highlights differences across countries with respect to expenditure of public funds on education as a percentage of GDP. Expenditure ranges from 2.2 percent of GDP in the Dominican Republic to 7.9 percent in Denmark.

Table 3 illustrates selected political characteristics of the ICCS 2009 countries, including legal voting age, whether voting is compulsory, and voter turnout at the last legislative election. It also presents information about the number of political parties in parliament and the percentage of parliamentary seats held by women.

Variation is again evident across the ICCS 2009 countries. For example, the age at which people are legally entitled to vote in elections is 18 years in the majority of countries, with the exception of Chinese Taipei and Korea, where it is 20 years, Indonesia, where it is 17 years, and Austria, where it is 16 years. Slovenia presents the most unusual approach. In this country, voting is legal at age 18, but if people are in paid employment, they can vote from age 16.

Voting is universal in all countries, but compulsory in only nine: Belgium (Flemish), Chile, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Luxembourg, Mexico, and Thailand. However, the extent to which these countries enforce compulsory voting varies.

Table 3 also records voter turnout, which ranges from over 93 percent of the electorate in Malta and Belgium (Flemish) to 40 percent in Colombia, the number of political parties in parliament (ranging from 2 in Malta to 20 in Colombia), and the percentage of seats held by women in parliament. The range for this last characteristic extends from 8 percent in Colombia to 47 percent in Sweden.

### **Characteristics of Education in the ICCS 2009 Countries**

Countries vary considerably in terms of how they structure their education systems. Different educational policy approaches are taken with regard to compulsory schooling, the structure of education programs, and the extent to which education is delivered by public or private providers. Table 4 shows, for each participating country, the age range of compulsory schooling, the years of education at each educational level (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary), and the percentages of students studying at public or government, private, or other schools.

The age at which students begin compulsory schooling varies between three years (in Mexico) and seven years (in nine of the ICCS 2009 countries). The last year of compulsory schooling ranges from age 14 (in four countries) to age 18 in another four countries. The total number of years in compulsory schooling ranges from 8 to 12 years. In some countries, such as Mexico, compulsory schooling includes preschool education.

Table 4 also makes clear the many differences related to the structure of education systems. The columns show the number of years typically spent at three levels, classified according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (UNESCO, 2006), where ISCED 1 refers to primary education, ISCED 2 to lower-secondary education, and ISCED 3 to upper-secondary education.

The duration of primary education (ISCED 1) ranges from four to eight years, the duration of lower-secondary education (ISCED 2) from two to six years, and the duration of upper-secondary education (ISCED 3) from two to five years. In nine countries, lower-secondary education is offered as the second stage of basic education programs (indicated by an asterisk). In many countries, lower- or upper-secondary education is divided into general, prevocational, and vocational programs.



Table 3: Selected political characteristics of ICCS 2009 countries

Country	Legal Age of Voting	Compulsory Voting (y/n)	Voter Turnout at Last Legislative Election (%)	Number of Political Parties in Parliament	% Seats Held by Women in Parliament
Austria	16	No	81.7	5 <sup>a</sup>	27 <sup>a</sup>
Belgium (Flemish)	18	Yes	93.1 <sup>b</sup>	8 <sup>b</sup>	41 <sup>b</sup>
Bulgaria	18	No	55.8	6	21
Chile	18	Yes	87.7	4 <sup>a</sup>	14 <sup>a</sup>
Chinese Taipei	20 <sup>c</sup>	No <sup>c</sup>	58.5	4 <sup>d</sup>	30 <sup>e</sup>
Colombia	18	No	40.5	20 <sup>a,f</sup>	8 <sup>a</sup>
Cyprus	18	Yes	89.0	6	14
Czech Republic	18	No	64.5	5 <sup>a</sup>	22 <sup>a</sup>
Denmark	18	No	86.6	8	37
Dominican Republic	18	Yes	56.5	3 <sup>a</sup>	21 <sup>a</sup>
England	18	No	61.4 <sup>g</sup>	11 <sup>a,g</sup>	22 <sup>a,g</sup>
Estonia	18	No	61.9	6	24
Finland	18	No	65.0	8	42
Greece	18	Yes	74.1	5	17
Guatemala	18	Yes	60.5	11	12
Hong Kong SAR	18 <sup>c</sup>	No <sup>c</sup>	45.2 <sup>h</sup>	12 <sup>i</sup>	18 <sup>j</sup>
Indonesia	17	No	84.1	9	18
Ireland	18	No	67.0	6 <sup>a</sup>	13 <sup>a</sup>
Italy	18	No	80.5	9 <sup>a</sup>	21 <sup>a</sup>
Korea, Republic of	20	No	46.0	6	14
Latvia	18	No	61.0	7	19
Liechtenstein	18	No	84.6	3	24
Lithuania	18	No	48.6	10	18
Luxembourg	18	Yes	91.7	6	25
Malta	18	No	93.3	2	9
Mexico	18	Yes	58.9	7 <sup>a</sup>	28 <sup>a</sup>
Netherlands	18	No	80.4	10 <sup>a</sup>	41 <sup>a</sup>
New Zealand	18	No	79.5	7	34
Norway	18	No	77.4	7	40
Paraguay	18	No	65.5	8 <sup>a</sup>	13 <sup>a</sup>
Poland	18	No	53.9	5 <sup>a</sup>	20 <sup>a</sup>
Russian Federation	18	No	63.7	4 <sup>a</sup>	14 <sup>a</sup>
Slovak Republic	18	No	54.7	6	15
Slovenia	18 <sup>k</sup>	No	63.1	8 <sup>a</sup>	13 <sup>a</sup>
Spain	18	No	75.3	10 <sup>a</sup>	36 <sup>a</sup>
Sweden	18	No	82.0	7	47
Switzerland	18	No	48.3	12 <sup>a</sup>	30 <sup>a</sup>
Thailand	18	Yes	78.5	7 <sup>a</sup>	12 <sup>a</sup>



*Table 3: Selected political characteristics of ICCS 2009 countries (contd.)*

**Notes:**

Data relating to the legal age of voting and whether voting is compulsory were taken from the IPU PARLINE database on national parliaments.

Data for voter turnout relate to elections held between 2004 and 2009 and were taken from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

Data on the number of political parties in parliament were correct from the date of the last parliamentary election in country and were taken from the IPU PARLINE database on national parliaments. Alliances of a number of small parties may be counted as just one party.

Data for percentage of seats held by women in parliament were correct as of date of last parliamentary election in country and were taken from the IPU PARLINE database on national parliaments.

a Bicameral structured parliament. Data refer to Lower House.

b Data refer to the Flemish regional parliament. Source: <http://polling2009.belgium.be/> [09/09/2010].

c Data sourced from the *CIA World Factbook*.

d Source: <http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=27167&ctNode=1921&mp=1001> [09/09/10].

e Yang, W.-Y.(2008). *Critical Mass in Parliament*. Bongchhi Women's ePaper, 259. Retrieved from <http://forum.yam.org.tw/bongchhi/old/tv/tv258.htm> [08/24/10].

f As at 8 September 2010, the Election Commission had not published the final results of the election in March 2010; data refer to previous election period.

g Data refer to the whole of the United Kingdom.

h Source: [http://www.elections.gov.hk/legco2008/eng/turnout/tt\\_gc\\_GC.html](http://www.elections.gov.hk/legco2008/eng/turnout/tt_gc_GC.html)

i Number of parties in parliament includes political parties as well as other political groups. Source: [http://www.ndi.org/files/2408\\_hk\\_report\\_engpdf\\_10082008.pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/2408_hk_report_engpdf_10082008.pdf) [13/09/2010].

j Source: [http://www.legco.gov.hk/general/english/sec/reports/a\\_0809.pdf](http://www.legco.gov.hk/general/english/sec/reports/a_0809.pdf)

k Legal age of voting is 16, but voters of this age must be employed in the workforce.

**Sources:**

*CIA World Factbook*—field listing—suffrage: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2123.html> [09/06/10].

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)—parliamentary—voter turnout: <http://www.idea.int/uid/field-view.cfm?field=221> [09/06/10].

IPU PARLINE database on national parliaments—legal age of voting and whether voting is compulsory: <http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/parlinesearch.asp> [18/01/2012].

IPU PARLINE database on national parliaments—number of political parties in parliament: <http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/parline-search.asp> [08/09/2010].

IPU PARLINE database on national parliaments—seats in parliament (% held by women): <http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/parlinesearch.asp> [08/09/2010].



Table 4: Characteristics of education systems participating in ICCS 2009

Country	Compulsory Schooling		Typical Years of Education at Educational Levels			% of Lower-Secondary Students at ...	
	Starting age	Age at end	ISCED 1 (primary)	ISCED 2 (lower secondary)	ISCED 3 (upper secondary)	Public or government schools	Private or other non-government schools
Austria	6	15	4	4	4 <sup>a</sup>	93	7
Belgium (Flemish)	6	18	6	2	4 <sup>a</sup>	23	77
Bulgaria	7	16	4	4 <sup>*</sup>	4 <sup>a</sup>	99	1
Chile	6	18	6	2 <sup>*</sup>	4 <sup>b</sup>	51	49
Chinese Taipei	6	15	6	3	3 <sup>b</sup>	90	10
Colombia	5	15	5	4	2 <sup>b</sup>	84	16
Cyprus	6	15	6	3	3 <sup>a</sup>	84	16
Czech Republic	6	15	5	4 <sup>*</sup>	4 <sup>a</sup>	98	2
Denmark	7	15	7	3–4	2–3 <sup>a</sup>	86	14
Dominican Republic	5	14	6	2	4 <sup>b</sup>	74	26
England	5	16	6	3	4 <sup>a</sup>	92	8
Estonia	7	16	6	3	3 <sup>a</sup>	98	2
Finland	7	16	6	3	3 <sup>a</sup>	89	11
Greece	5	15	6	3	3 <sup>a</sup>	95	5
Guatemala	7	15	6	3	2–3 <sup>b</sup>	60	40
Hong Kong SAR	6	15	6	3	4 <sup>b</sup>	85	15
Indonesia	7	16	6	3	3 <sup>b</sup>	57	43
Ireland	6	16	8	3	2–3 <sup>a</sup>	45	55
Italy	6	15	5	3	5 <sup>a</sup>	94	6
Korea, Republic of	6	14	6	3	3 <sup>b</sup>	82	18
Latvia	7	16	6	3 <sup>*</sup>	3 <sup>a</sup>	99	1
Liechtenstein	6	15	5	3–4	4 <sup>a</sup>	83	17
Lithuania	6	16	4	6	2 <sup>a</sup>	99	1
Luxembourg	4	16	6	3	4 <sup>a</sup>	80	20
Malta	5	16	6	5	2 <sup>a</sup>	63	37
Mexico	3	15	6	3	3 <sup>b</sup>	92	8
Netherlands	5	16	6	3	3 <sup>a</sup>	27	73
New Zealand	6	16	6	4	3 <sup>b</sup>	95	5
Norway	6	15	7	3 <sup>*</sup>	3 <sup>a</sup>	97	3
Paraguay	5	14	6	3 <sup>*</sup>	3 <sup>b</sup>	90	10
Poland	6	18	6	3	3–4 <sup>a</sup>	98	2
Russian Federation	7	18	4	5	2–4 <sup>b</sup>	99	1
Slovak Republic	6	16	5	4 <sup>*</sup>	4 <sup>a</sup>	94	6
Slovenia	6	15	6	3 <sup>*</sup>	4 <sup>a</sup>	99	1
Spain	6	16	6	4	2 <sup>a</sup>	66	34
Sweden	7	15	6	3 <sup>*</sup>	3 <sup>a</sup>	92	8
Switzerland	6	15	6	3	3–4 <sup>b</sup>	93	7
Thailand	6	14	6	3	3 <sup>b</sup>	88	12

**Notes:**

\* ISCED 2 offered as second stage of combined ISCED 1+2 program.

Data on compulsory schooling and percentage of students at public or private schools collected through ICCS national contexts survey.

Data on years of education at educational levels sourced from:

a Eurydice, *The Structure of European Education Systems 2009/2010*: schematic diagrams at <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/tools/108EN.pdf> [21/10/11].

b IAU, *World Higher Education Database* (WHED) at <http://59.149.202.175:2101/iau/onlinedatabases/index.html> [21/10/11].

The last two columns in Table 4 show the percentages of lower-secondary students in public/government or private/other nongovernment schools. Across the ICCS 2009 countries, most students attend public or government schools. However, these data also show considerable variation: whereas in 20 out of the 38 countries over 90 percent of lower-secondary students are enrolled in public education, in Belgium (Flemish), Ireland, and the Netherlands more than half of the student population studies at private or other nongovernment schools. When interpreting these data, readers need to note that the nature of nongovernment schools also varies across countries with regard to how much public funding they receive and with regard to their management structures, degree of autonomy, and school curricula.

### **Approaches to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education can be approached in different ways. It can be defined as a crosscurricular learning area, its topics can be integrated into related subjects such as history and social studies, or it can be taught as a separate subject. Variation is also evident in the extent to which it is taught at each educational level and the extent to which the learning area is compulsory for students.

Table 5 summarizes approaches to civic and citizenship education with regard to its curricular implementation at each educational level (primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary education), whether it is taught as a separate subject, and whether it is integrated into several subjects or defined as a crosscurricular theme. Table 5 also shows the name of the subject in English for countries where it is taught separately and whether this learning area is compulsory for students. The table furthermore provides estimates of the amount of instructional time devoted to this subject.

The results from the ICCS 2009 national contexts survey showed that in almost all of the participating countries civic and citizenship education was, at the time of the survey, part of the national curricula for primary-, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary education programs. In 19 of the 38 countries, it was being taught as a separate subject, in 31 countries it was integrated into several subjects, and in 27 countries it was conceived as a crosscurricular learning area. The findings also indicated considerable variation with regard to how this learning area was being taught. In Colombia, for example, civic and citizenship education was being taught as part of educational projects specific to individual schools.

The names given to civic and citizenship education subjects (as translated into English) also indicate a wide range of diversity. Whereas in some countries, either “civic” or “citizenship” are the terms included in the subject names, some of the names signal a more general orientation, such as “social studies” or “knowledge about society.” In 20 of the 38 countries studying civic and citizenship education (either as separate subjects or integrated into different subjects), the national centers said the subject is compulsory.

The school can be regarded as a place where young people have their first experiences of participation as citizens, become involved in the democratic process, and develop a sense of being members of a wider community. The national contexts survey asked national centers to what extent their countries had stipulations (mandatory or nonmandatory) regarding the establishment of school governance, school ethos or culture, student participation, parent involvement, and school/community links.



Table 5: National approaches to civic and citizenship education in the curriculum in ICSS 2009 countries

Country	Civic and Citizenship Part of the Curriculum for ...				Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Education Taught as ...			
	Primary education (ISCED 1)	Lower secondary (ISCED 2)	Upper secondary (ISCED 3)	Specific subject	Integrated in several subjects	Crosscurricular theme	Under subject name(s)	As compulsory learning area
Austria	•	•	•		•	•		
Belgium (Flemish)	•	•	•		•	•		
Bulgaria	•	•	•		•	•		
Chile	•	•	•		•	•		
Chinese Taipei	•	•	•	•		•	Social studies learning area (Civics)	Yes
Colombia	•	•	•	•	•	•	Standards of citizenship	Yes
Cyprus	•	•	•		•	•		
Czech Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	Citizenship education	Yes
Denmark	•	•	•		•	•		
Dominican Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	Moral and civic education	Yes
England	•	•	•	•	•	•	Citizenship education	Yes
Estonia	•	•	•	•	•	•	Social studies	Yes
Finland	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Greece	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Guatemala	•	•	•		•	•		
Hong Kong SAR	•	•				•		
Indonesia	•	•	•	•		•	Civic education	Yes
Ireland	•	•		•	•	•	Civic, social, and political education	Yes
Italy	•	•	•		•	•		
Korea, Republic of	•	•	•	•	•	•	Moral education, social studies	Yes
Latvia	•	•	•		•	•		Yes
Liechtenstein	•	•	•		•			
Lithuania	•	•	•	•	•	•	Basic knowledge of citizenship	Yes
Luxembourg	•	•	•	•				
Malta	•	•	•	•	•	•		Yes
Mexico	•	•	•	•	•	•	Civics and ethics formation	Yes
Netherlands	•	•	•	•	•	•		
New Zealand	•	•	•	•	•	•		

Table 5: National approaches to civic and citizenship education in the curriculum in ICCS 2009 countries (contd.)

Country	Civic and Citizenship Part of the Curriculum for ...			Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Education Taught as ...				
	Primary education (ISCED 1)	Lower secondary (ISCED 2)	Upper secondary (ISCED 3)	Specific subject	Integrated in several subjects	Crosscurricular theme	Under subject name(s)	As compulsory learning area
Norway	•	•	•		•			
Paraguay	•	•	•	•	•		Ethics and civic formation	Yes
Poland	•	•	•	•			Knowledge of society	Yes
Russian Federation	•	•	•	•		•	Knowledge about society	Yes
Slovak Republic	•	•	•	•			Civic education	Yes
Slovenia	•	•	•	•	•		Citizenship education and ethics	Yes
Spain	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ethic-civic education	Yes
Sweden	•	•	•		•	•		
Switzerland	•	•	•	•	•	•	Civic and citizenship education	Yes
Thailand	•	•	•		•			

Existence reported: •

Source: ICCS 2009 national contexts survey; reference year is 2008/2009.

Table 6 shows that the majority of ICCS 2009 countries had in place recommendations regarding the establishment of school participation and culture. Thirty-four countries reported having guidelines for the establishment of school ethos or culture and parental involvement, 33 countries for forms of school governance and student participation, and 31 countries for the establishment of school/community links.

Table 7 shows the approaches countries were taking, within the context of civic and citizenship education at the ICCS target grade (equivalent to the eighth year of schooling), to teaching staff, student assessment, and school evaluation. Three categories can be distinguished with regard to teaching staff: (1) teachers of all subjects, (2) teachers of subjects related to civic and citizenship education, but with this material integrated into other subjects, and (3) specialists in civic and citizenship education and therefore teaching this content as a separate subject.

For the majority of participating countries, national centers reported that at least two of these three groups of teachers had responsibility for civic and citizenship education. Thirty-five countries reported that the teachers responsible for this learning area were those teaching subjects that included civic and citizenship education-related content. In 14 countries, the learning area was regarded as a responsibility of teachers across all subjects, and in 13 countries civic and citizenship education specialists were teaching this area of education.

According to the ICCS 2009 national contexts survey, the majority of participating countries were providing some form of student learning assessment in relation to civic and citizenship education; only eight countries reported no such provision. Twenty-two national centers reported evaluation of schools' provision of civic and citizenship education. Nineteen of the participating countries reported assessing both students and schools in relation to civic and citizenship education. However, when reviewing these data, readers should take into account the considerable variation in the extent and type of school evaluation across the participating countries.



Table 6: National approaches to the establishment of school participation and culture in ICCS 2009 countries

Country	Recommendations (Mandatory or Nonmandatory) Regarding the Establishment of:				
	School governance	School ethos/ culture	Student participation	Parent involvement	School/ community links
Austria	•	•	•	•	•
Belgium (Flemish)	•		•	•	•
Bulgaria	•	•	•	•	•
Chile	•	•	•	•	•
Chinese Taipei	•	•	•	•	•
Colombia	•	•	•	•	•
Cyprus		•	•	•	•
Czech Republic		•	•		
Denmark	•	•	•	•	
Dominican Republic	•	•	•	•	•
England	•	•	•	•	•
Estonia	•	•	•	•	
Finland	•	•	•	•	•
Greece	•	•	•	•	•
Guatemala	•	•	•	•	•
Hong Kong SAR	•				
Indonesia	•	•		•	•
Ireland	•	•	•	•	•
Italy	•	•	•	•	•
Korea, Republic of	•	•	•	•	•
Latvia	•	•	•	•	•
Liechtenstein	•	•	•	•	•
Lithuania	•	•	•	•	•
Luxembourg	•	•	•	•	
Malta		•	•	•	•
Mexico	•	•	•	•	•
Netherlands	•	•	•	•	•
New Zealand		•	•	•	•
Norway	•	•	•		•
Paraguay	•	•	•	•	
Poland	•	•	•	•	•
Russian Federation	•	•		•	•
Slovak Republic	•			•	
Slovenia	•	•	•	•	•
Spain	•	•	•	•	•
Sweden	•	•	•	•	•
Switzerland					
Thailand	•	•	•	•	•

Existence reported: •

**Source:**

ICCS 2009 national contexts survey; reference year is 2008/2009.

Table 7: Approaches to teaching, student assessment, and school evaluation for civic and citizenship education in ICCS 2009 countries

Country	Teachers of Civic and Citizenship Education at ICCS Target Grade			Assessment of Students in Relation to Civic and Citizenship Education (y/n)	Evaluation of Schools in Relation to Civic and Citizenship Education (y/n)
	All teachers	Integrated subjects teachers	Specialists in civic and citizenship education		
Austria	•	•		No	No
Belgium (Flemish)	•	•		No	Yes
Bulgaria		•		Yes	Yes
Chile	•	•		Yes	Yes
Chinese Taipei			•	Yes	Yes
Colombia	•	•		Yes	Yes
Cyprus	◆	•	◆	No	No
Czech Republic			•	No	^
Denmark <sup>1</sup>	•	•		No	No
Dominican Republic		•		Yes	Yes
England	•	•	•	Yes	Yes
Estonia		•	•	Yes	No
Finland	•	•		Yes	No
Greece <sup>2</sup>		•		Yes	Yes
Guatemala	•	•		No	No
Hong Kong SAR	•			No	Yes
Indonesia		•	•	Yes	Yes
Ireland	•	•	•	Yes	Yes
Italy	•	•		Yes	No
Korea, Republic of		•	•	Yes	Yes
Latvia		•	•	Yes	Yes
Liechtenstein		•		Yes	No
Lithuania	◆	•	•	Yes	Yes
Luxembourg		•		Yes	No
Malta	◆	•	◆	Yes	Yes
Mexico	•	•	•	Yes	Yes
Netherlands		•		No	Yes
New Zealand <sup>3</sup>		•		Yes	No
Norway		•		Yes	No
Paraguay		•	•	Yes	No
Poland		•		Yes	Yes
Russian Federation		•	•	Yes	Yes
Slovak Republic		•	•	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	•	•		Yes	No
Spain		•		Yes	No
Sweden	•	•		Yes	Yes
Switzerland <sup>4</sup>		•		Yes	No
Thailand		•		Yes	Yes

• Existence reported    ◆ Data not available    ^ No data provided or not applicable.

Table 7: Approaches to teaching, student assessment, and school evaluation for civic and citizenship education in ICCS 2009 countries (contd.)

**Notes:**

1. No formal national curriculum but a series of ministry guidelines that form a "common curriculum" which includes civic and citizenship education.
2. Civic and citizenship education is not taught in the <target grade> and there is no intended integration. However, civic and citizenship topics can be evident in a number of subjects.
3. Civic and citizenship education is a major part of the social studies curriculum.
4. There are considerable differences in approach between the Swiss cantons. In some cantons, civic and citizenship education is a curriculum subject, while in others it is integrated into several subjects.

**Source:**

ICCS 2009 national contexts survey; reference year is 2008/2009.

## Summary

The *ICCS 2009 Encyclopedia* includes an overview of selected background characteristics of all 38 countries that participated in this survey as well as detailed descriptions of civic and citizenship education in 35 of the 38 countries. It accordingly provides readers with an opportunity to set the results of the ICCS 2009 survey into national contexts featuring information on the historical, political, economic, and sociodemographic backgrounds of the respective education systems, as well as on relevant educational policies and practices. The qualitative nature of the information included in this publication is important because it emphasizes the diversity across participating countries that individuals need to take into account when endeavoring to interpret the empirical survey data reported in the ICCS 2009 international and regional study reports.

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# Austria

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

At the beginning of 2010, Austria, whose land area encompasses 83,878 kilometers, had 8,363,000 inhabitants, 34 percent of whom were under 30 years of age. Nearly 11 percent of the population at this time had foreign citizenship, and almost 18 percent of the population came from migrant backgrounds—either they or their parents were born abroad. The major groups of immigrants in Austria in 2010 had come from the former Yugoslavia as well as from Germany, Turkey, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Italy (Statistics Austria, 2010a). In that same year, 67 percent of the population were living in urban areas (Statistics Austria, 2010b).

Austria's official language is German. Some areas of the country also recognize as official languages Croatian, Slovenian, and Hungarian. In 2001, Austria ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages for the following languages within specific federal states: Croatian in Burgenland, Slovenian in Carinthia and Styria, Hungarian in Burgenland and Vienna, Czech and Slovak in Vienna, and Romani in Burgenland (Federal Chancellery of Austria, 2010.) The foreign languages most commonly spoken by immigrants in Austria are Turkish and Serbian (Statistics Austria, 2007).

In 2009, Austria's gross domestic product was €B274.32 (Statistics Austria, 2010c).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Austria is a democratic federal republic (Austrian Foreign Ministry, 2010). The nine constituent federal states are Burgenland, Carinthia, Lower Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol, Upper Austria, Vienna, and Vorarlberg.

Austria has a bicameral parliamentary system of governance. The two chambers of parliament are the *Nationalrat* (National Council) and the *Bundesrat* (Federal Council). Both enact federal legislation. The *Bundesrat* represents the interests of the federal states, but each state parliament exercises its own legislative power and is responsible for designating its members of the *Bundesrat*.

The supreme federal executive agents are the federal president and the members of the federal government, which is headed by the federal chancellor. The supreme state executive organizations are the state governments, each of which is headed by a state governor.

Austrian citizens elect the country's head of state (the federal president) every six years and the 183 members of the *Nationalrat* every five years. Citizens within the federal states vote for the members of their respective state parliaments.

A notable constitutional reform—lowering the voting age from 18 to 16 years—occurred in 2007, a year before the national elections took place. To prepare the newly enfranchised young voters for their first ballot, the Ministry of Education introduced various measures, including ones pertaining to civic and citizenship education.



## Education System

### Overview and Background

In 2009, there were 6,223 schools in Austria and 1,182,471 enrolled students (Statistics Austria, 2010d).

Federal and state agencies are jointly responsible for enacting education legislation and implementing educational policies. Federal agencies cover legislative and executive matters relating to compulsory education (including the appointment of school staff), teaching and curricula, private schools, and the structural organization of the educational authorities. The agencies are also responsible for the entire system of higher-level secondary general education as well as for intermediate and higher-level technical and vocational education.

The federal and state agencies responsible for school administration co-exist at the state level. Federal responsibility covers the development and enactment of *framework legislation*, that is, the legislation setting down the principles and practice covering educational provision throughout Austria. State responsibility focuses on how public compulsory schools are organized and run. Federal legislation therefore encompasses the parameters guiding Austria's education system and leaves each state free to detail, through its own legislation, how those parameters play out within its schools.

State school boards include, as voting members, representatives of the state government as well as parent and teacher representatives. State school inspectors, representatives of social agencies and religious communities, and (occasionally) students serve as consulting or advisory members on the boards. The boards have a wide range of responsibilities with regard to appointing the teachers and school principals of secondary-intermediate and higher-level schools. Although the boards do not have the same power with respect to appointing the staff of the general compulsory schools, they always have the right to comment and to advise on this matter. The concept of school autonomy allows schools to shape their own curricula within the given framework, but the state school boards monitor schools to ensure they are operating within the strictures of the general framework.

Communities are also involved in educational matters. Their main responsibility involves the establishment and maintenance of general compulsory schools.

### Structure of the Education System

Children in Austria enter the compulsory schooling system in the term following their sixth birthday. They can leave at age 15. Primary schools (for children aged 6 to 10) are designed to provide all students with a basic and well-balanced general education that fosters their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Specially trained tutors can be deployed to provide extra support to special needs students and to those who find it difficult to follow lessons in German. Schools catering exclusively to children with special needs exist, but mainstream primary schools can include integrated classes in which students with special needs learn alongside their peers.

The first two years of primary school are considered a unit. This means that all children proceed to the second year after attending the first year, irrespective of how well they have done during that year. In addition to learning compulsory subjects, primary-school students choose from elective subjects, which are designed to foster special interests and skills. At the end of the fourth year of primary education, teachers inform parents about their child's interests and levels of achievement. Teachers use these criteria to advise parents on which kind of secondary school they think will best suit their child.



Austria's secondary education sector is differentiated and selective. Lower-secondary education (for young people aged 10 to 14) is divided into two major types of school—the *Hauptschule* (general secondary school) and the *Gymnasium* (the first phase of academic secondary schooling). Criticism of this dual system led to piloting of a “new secondary school” (*Neue Mittelschule*) at the start of the 2008/2009 school year.

*General secondary schools* are operated by local communities or municipal associations; the federal government runs academic secondary schools. General secondary schooling conveys basic general education and prepares students for entry into employment and active working life. Students can also enter higher-level schools and colleges after completing general secondary school.

General secondary students studying German language, mathematics, and modern languages are streamed into different tracks according to their achievement levels in order to meet individual needs; students learn mainly in small groups. Students in the highest-level achievement group must meet the requirements of the academic secondary school. Curricula are wide-ranging, including both compulsory and optional subjects as well as practical experience-based components. General secondary schools can adjust their course provision to suit their specific situation and can even issue autonomous curricula within defined limits. In the third and fourth forms, particular attention is paid to preparing students for working life. Students must attend compulsory “occupational orientation” classes, which introduce them to different types of work through job-experience days and visits to various workplaces.

The *lower cycle of academic secondary school* offers students a comprehensive, indepth general education. During this cycle, encompassing two years, students experience an orientation phase in which they all follow the same curriculum, but in parallel classes. In general, the curriculum corresponds to that of the general secondary schools. The third and fourth years offer three distinct tracks: humanistic (*Gymnasium*), which focuses on classic and modern languages; natural science (*Realgymnasium*), which places particular emphasis on geometry and mathematics; and economics (*wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*).

In order to cater to the increasingly evident distinctive abilities and talents of students as well as to the different qualification requirements of society, the *upper cycle of academic secondary school* offers differentiated courses of study: from Grade 9 (the last mandatory school-year) on, students continue their education by entering either a vocational-technical or a university-preparatory track. A variety of schools offer these discrete courses of study:

- Prevocational (polytechnic) school (Grade 9);
- Upper cycle of academic secondary school (Grades 9 to 12);
- Training schools for nursery school teachers and nonteaching educators (Grades 9 to 13);
- Parttime compulsory vocational school (Grade 10 to Grade 13 maximum);
- Medium-level technical and vocational school (Grade 9 to Grade 13 maximum); and
- Higher (secondary) technical and vocational colleges (Grades 9 to 13).

Polytechnic students are required to attend only the one remaining year of compulsory schooling (Grade 9) but can then elect to complete an optional second year (Grade 10). The training that they receive through studying required subjects relating to a wide variety of careers in trade and industry provides them with the key abilities, skills, and qualifications they need for securing jobs in this sector of the workforce. Students' individual talents and learning abilities are encouraged by means of practical, career-oriented learning.



Students in all upper-secondary academic schools experience a core curriculum that is taught up to the final examination (*Reifeprüfung*). However, the various forms of secondary academic schools have different profiles (i.e., offer specialist courses of study). Each school requires its students to study compulsory subjects that align with that profile. Students can thus set their own priorities with regard to their future career by choosing from the range of programs offered by the respective schools.

Students who enter the different types of secondary technical-vocational schools and colleges stay there from three to five years. Here, they experience initial vocational training. On graduating, they immediately enter the workforce or go on to further study, the nature of which depends on how much time they spent in their technical-vocational school and what they studied there. The right that schools have to modify the framework-guided curriculum means that each of them can develop courses specific to certain occupations, most notably those in the engineering, business, social services, agriculture, and forestry sectors.

According to the document setting out the government's education program (*Regierungsprogramm 2008–2013*, 2008), one purpose of education is to promote creativity, social competency, intercultural understanding, tolerance, and active appreciation of the principles of democracy, all of which fall within the province of civic education (*Politische Bildung*). This purpose is also evident in reforms designed to make the school system more open and autonomous and able to form strong participatory partnerships among students, parents, and teachers. The government considers broadening school autonomy an important means of modernizing school administration and management. It also promotes the development of school-based partnerships as a means of enhancing the quality of educational provision.

Another priority for the government is to decrease the number of young people who leave school with neither vocational training nor school qualifications by offering students greater access to training programs and advanced schooling. Mindful of the work-based opportunities that membership of the European Union provides, the government visualizes offering bilingual classes, having students learn the languages of neighboring countries, enhancing student-exchange programs, and engaging in transborder school projects. Also planned are measures to ensure students with poor German-language skills (notably those students with migrant backgrounds) receive the help they need and to make coursework on effectively integrating migrant students into schools an integral part of preservice and inservice teacher education. Currently, all graduates from teacher education institutions are expected to have "intercultural competence." Finally, the government is working to encourage people with a migration background to become teachers.

At the institutional level, government reform is directed toward replacing state and district school boards with advisory boards at the state level consisting of student, parent, and teacher representatives. The aim of the "new secondary school" scheme, currently being piloted, is to create a joint school for 10- to 14-year-olds and thereby avoid the early separation of children into different educational tracks. It is also hoped that these schools will develop a new culture of teaching and learning wherein curriculum content is shaped to each child's individual needs and interests rather than the child being shaped to course dictates.

Another government plan is to implement an external assessment of students' learning outcomes benchmarked to nationwide educational standards. Students will experience these assessments after several years of learning. A final plan is to introduce standardized, competence-oriented final examinations into upper-secondary academic schools (*Reife- und Diplomprüfung*) as another means of monitoring and improving school quality (Eurydice, 2010).



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

In Austria, civic and citizenship education is conceived as a crosscurricular learning area and therefore part of every subject and every grade. It is also a specific subject, offered from Grade 7 on and mostly in combination with history, contemporary history, law, or economics.

The main legal impetus for civic and citizenship education in schools is the Principal Decree on Civic Education (*Grundsatzlerlass Politische Bildung*, Ministry of Education, 2010a), promulgated in 1978 and remanded without change in 1994. Seven other aspects of education underpinning national curricula have direct relevance for civic and citizenship education: education for equality between women and men, media education, environmental education, intercultural learning, economic education, Europe-related education, and development policies education.

Paragraph 1 of the Decree on Civic Education sets down the rationale for requiring Austrian schools to provide civic education:

Civic education is a prerequisite both for individual development and for the development of society as a whole. In a time characterized by growing complexity in all spheres of life, civic education contributes proactively towards shaping society and translating democracy into practice. A major concern of civic education is to educate students towards a democratically inspired awareness of Austria, towards pan-European thinking and open-mindedness supported by an understanding of the existential problems of humankind.

In line with these values, civic education in schools is expected to provide students with civic-related knowledge, understanding, skills, and insights and to inspire them to act responsibly. The decree establishes civic education as “the mandate of all teachers ... to be implemented within the scope provided by school type, grade and subject ... [and reliant on] coordinated co-operation among all teachers.” The decree opens the door to a whole-school approach when it advises that civic education is most successful “when schools and parents use the existing facilities for cooperation (school community committees, parents’ days, parents’ associations).”

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

Civic and citizenship education curricula conform to general educational goals directed toward teaching and learning the common values of humanity, solidarity, tolerance, peace, justice, and awareness of the natural environment. Possession of these values enhances the likelihood of the individuals concerned not only being receptive to the nature and needs of the wider world but also understanding the problems facing humanity. The way that this area of education is taught and the nature of its content should be such that students learn how to present judgments, express points of view, make decisions, and take action in ways that contribute to an effectively functioning democracy based on human rights.

In primary school and in Grade 5, civic and citizenship education is a crosscurricular learning area. In 2008, legislation made this area of educational provision an explicit part of the curricula for Grades 6 to 8 of secondary education. At this level, the subject is called “history, social studies, and civic education.” From Grades 9 to 13 of secondary education, civic and citizenship education is integrated into different subjects in all schools, except vocational training schools, where it is a specific subject.

In lower-secondary education (Grades 6 to 8), the objectives of civic and citizenship classes are to give students information about and to help them understand diverse political and civic ideas and institutions and to bring to their attention the dichotomies of and tensions between



societal laws or rules and individual freedom, participation and nonparticipation, and war and peace. Civic and citizenship education is thus seen as an important contribution to education for democracy and the rule of law, for the formation of a critical facility with respect to diverse ideologies, for tolerance and readiness to understand, and for a will for peace, all of which “are important prerequisites for civic action.” Students are expected to learn not only how to argue and represent their own opinions but also to respect the opinions of others, such that they can engage in meaningful, productive dialogue.

### **Civic and Citizenship Activities in Schools**

The Austrian School Instruction Act (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz*; Ministry of Education, 2010b) requires teachers, students, and parents to work in partnership to realize the goals of education. In order to promote and strengthen this community of teachers, students, and parents, every school must establish a school committee that has well-defined decisionmaking powers and gives these three stakeholder groups opportunity to discuss matters particular to these decisions before they are implemented. The matters concerned include modes of instruction, choice of teaching tools, use of funds entrusted to the school, planning of school events, house rules, elective subjects and other curricular provisions, and the formation and division of various administrative and learning groups. Stakeholders are represented by members of the class forum (*Klassenforum*), the school forum (*Schulforum*), and the school and community committee (*Schulgemeinschaftsausschuss*).

The School Instruction Act stipulates participation rights for students as individuals, as representatives at class and school levels, and as members of the school committee (i.e., the decisionmaking body of each school). The law relating to student representation, the Student Representation Act (*Schülervertretungsgesetz*), mandates student representation at both state and federal levels. Other rights specified by law entitle students to help determine, in accordance with their abilities, how lessons are conducted and the teaching resources used for classroom activities. Students also have the right to express concerns, suggestions, and opinions about their schooling to school management.

Except in primary education, all students in each class vote to elect a student representative. In addition to participating in the ways described above, elected students engage, in accordance with democratic principles, in projects relating to political, civic, and cultural education. They also work on projects designed to develop socially responsible and useful behaviors among their fellow-students as well as activities that align with students’ leisuretime interests. Producing school magazines, visiting public institutions, and inviting guest experts to schools are just some examples of these projects.

Student representatives also have the right to be informed about relevant school matters. This means that all laws, regulations, and decrees concerning student issues in general are made accessible to them. The Grades 5 to 8 class representatives elect, from among themselves, a chairperson, who has advisory rights on the school committee. One third of the Grades 9 and above class representatives participate on the school/community committee. Class representatives are also members of the student representative assembly, a forum that allows these students to discuss issues concerning student interests and participation in school life. The assembly also provides a channel for the school representative to pass information to the class representatives.

At the end of each school year, all school representatives in each state elect their state’s student representatives for the following school year. State-based student representation, which is not subject to directives, fulfills the legal requirement for student interests to be voiced to state-level school authorities and the state parliament. The federal students’ representation consists of



29 members. These students are the top-ranking student representatives of each state. Student representatives at the federal level are tasked with representing student interests, the importance of which extends beyond the state scope. Representation is thus made to the federal minister of education, the parliament, and the employee and employer associations.

Since 1990, the Student Representation Act has regulated the rights and tasks of the state and federal student representation bodies. These bodies offer comments and advice on major issues relating to education in general and classroom matters in particular. They also present statements and suggestions on draft education laws and decrees, and submit requests and complaints. They furthermore organize training seminars for student representatives.

### **Current Reforms in and Debates on Civic and Citizenship Education**

The School Organization Act 1962 (*Schulorganisationsgesetz*) was the first document to include civic education in its modern sense. School-based education was, from this time on, directed at facilitating students' independent thinking, social understanding, political tolerance, and participation in the economic and cultural life of Austria, Europe, and the world. School year 1970/1971 saw civic education introduced as a nonmandatory part of the curriculum of the academic secondary schools.

In 1973, Austria's political parties developed respective proposals on the content and conduct of civic education. These proposals reflected the particular interests of each party, but all parties called for the development of extensive resources for civic and citizenship education. In the same year, the government established a department of civic education within the Ministry of Education. Also at this time, debate began on the advisability of implementing civic and citizenship education as a separate subject in schools. In short, civic education was positioned as a politically contentious area of educational provision.

The developmental stage of the 1978 civic education decree involved controversial and heated discussions and demands for numerous modifications and adaptations. Compromise and content subject to a wide range of different interpretations characterizes the decree that was eventually put in place. The decree defining civic and citizenship education as a crosscurricular learning area remains in place.

The lowering of the voting age in a number of states from 18 to 16 years during the early 2000s posed a new challenge for schools because many students could now vote during or at the end of their compulsory schooling. The need to prepare students for this responsibility gave civic and citizenship education renewed impetus. Since school year 2008/2009, civic and citizenship education has been part of a subject that combines history, social studies, and civic education, and is taught in Grades 6 to 8. The curriculum for this subject places a particularly strong emphasis on civic education.

The amended curriculum (Grades 6 to 8) is marked by a conceptual shift within civic education from content to competence. The concept underpinning this shift was developed by a group of national and international experts, working on behalf of the ministry. The goal of "competence-orientated education" is (self-)reflective civic consciousness (Zentrum Polis, 2010). Instead of "feeding" knowledge to students, teachers are required to devise activities and exercises that help students think about and act from civic stances. The starting point for these exercises is students' lives and experiences. Across time, students are expected to learn and acquire four competencies: judgment, action, method, and knowledge. Method and knowledge are not skills as such but instruments that students can employ in the quest to become independent and active citizens.



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

In Austria, compulsory general-school teachers are educated at university colleges of teacher education, where the emphasis is on pedagogical practice. To gain entry to a college, students must have the general qualification for university entrance and pass a qualifying examination. Once in a college, students study for six semesters, which end with the granting of a Bachelor of Education. The colleges also provide professional development for inservice teachers.

Preservice teachers intending to work in academic secondary schools have to complete at least nine semesters of university study, at the end of which they receive a diploma. Depending on their subject area, students wanting to teach in technical and vocational schools may also have to complete university courses. Prospective sports and arts teachers must also pass a qualifying examination, while students training to teach theory and practice at technical and vocational schools need to have relevant professional backgrounds and experience. Courses for students training to teach in secondary schools thus focus on subject-related academic and didactical training.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Because civic and citizenship education is a crosscurricular learning area in Austria, it is taught by every teacher in every subject and every grade. However, with civic and citizenship education now being taught as a specific subject (history, social studies, and civic education) in Grades 6 to 8, teachers of that subject must have a university degree in it. In the upper cycle of secondary education, teachers of law or business and economics education typically teach civic and citizenship education in the technical/vocational schools, but they can only do so if they have completed university studies related to the subject, have a minimum of four years of teaching practice, and have participated in relevant professional development courses. The curricula of civic and citizenship education in the university colleges of education vary because of the fact that every state has jurisdiction over that state's colleges. Tertiary-level teacher training in civic and citizenship education also varies because of the right that universities have to determine—free of state and federal influence—what they teach.

Since academic year 2008/2009, university colleges of education have been offering professional development in civic and citizenship education for inservice teachers. The education on offer ranges from half-day seminars through to courses lasting one or more semesters. Universities also provide civic and citizenship education as a subject that can be studied in its own right, as well as a Master's degree in this subject.

## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Students in the compulsory education sector do not have to write formal external examinations. In Grade 4, primary school students complete written examinations in German and mathematics. All students receive end-of-term as well as annual reports. When preparing these reports, teachers follow the evaluation criteria defined in the Austrian School Instruction Act (Ministry of Education, 2010c). The annual report documents students' achievement during the entire year. It covers students' classroom participation and the results of their oral, written, practical, and graphical work and assessments. Performance is graded as follows: very good (1), good (2), satisfactory (3), sufficient (4), and insufficient (5).

In general, students transfer to the next level of education but do not do so if their work in one or more compulsory subjects is graded as insufficient in their annual report. However, under existing educational law, students with one insufficient grade may be able to progress



to the next year. In addition, students with more than one insufficient grade in compulsory subjects can write tests in those subjects at the beginning of the next year. If they fail, they have to repeat the school year. Transfer to the lower-secondary level depends on successfully completing Grade 4 of primary school. Admission to an academic secondary school is linked to achievement or admission testing. After Grade 8, students can transfer to the general academic or technical/vocational schools at the upper-secondary level if they successfully met specified achievement criteria during their time in Grade 8. Students failing to meet these criteria have to take an admission test.

Students who pass the school-leaving examination at the end of their secondary higher academic schooling receive a matriculation certificate (*Reifeprüfung*). Possession of this qualification provides access to studies at institutes of higher education.

At the beginning of 2012, Austria began rolling out nationwide standards of educational competence. These standards define the learning outcomes deemed necessary for students to achieve in order to progress to the next stage of schooling or to work toward professional careers. The standards are also seen as a means of providing teachers with feedback on the effect of their classroom work and thereby promoting a culture of continuous quality development for teachers and within schools.

The first routine testing of Grade 8 students' achievement in mathematics began during school year 2011/2012. English will follow in 2013/2014 and German in 2014/2015. The first testing of Grade 4 students' competency in mathematics will be conducted in 2012/2013 and in German in 2013/2014. Data collected from the initial assessments of Grade 8 students during spring 2009 and of Grade 4 students during spring 2010 are serving as benchmarks.

The introduction of a standardized, competence-based matriculation examination should also enhance school quality. The new matriculation examination will be introduced in secondary academic schools during school year 2013/2014 and in all secondary technical and vocational schools during school year 2014/2015 (Eurydice, 2010). Austria's participation in the international assessment projects conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also provides a means of monitoring the quality of Austria's educational provision. This participation focuses on key competencies: reading comprehension (Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA] and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), mathematics and science (PISA and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Education Study), and civics and citizenship (International Civic and Citizenship Education Study).

#### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Students' competency in civics and citizenship is determined mainly through assessment of their performance on the Grades 6 to 8 subject "history, social studies, and civic education." The ICCS survey, conducted in Austria during the first year after civic and citizenship education was implemented as a specific subject, has also provided an important means of assessing students' understanding of civic principles and behaviors. The ICCS results have additionally provided valuable baseline data from which to study how well this new subject is serving students' civic and citizenship competency.



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# Belgium (Flemish Community)

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

According to the most recent population data available, the number of people in the Flemish region of Belgium (i.e., the area excluding the capital, Brussels, known as Flanders) is almost 6,252,000, a number that represents 58 percent of the Belgian population (Statistics Belgium, 2010a). Flanders encompasses 13,522 square kilometers (Statistics Belgium, 2010b). About 22 percent of the Flemish population lives in the 10 largest cities, and around 70 percent live in urban areas (Kesteloot, 2010).

On January 1, 2008, six percent of all Flemish residents were of foreign nationality. In the southern part of Belgium, Wallonia, this proportion is nine percent, and in Brussels, it is 28 percent (Statistics Belgium, 2010c). In Flanders, 30 percent of the immigrant population comes from the Netherlands, eight percent from Morocco, six percent from Italy, and five percent from Turkey. These are the four largest groups of immigrants.

The official language of policy and schools in Flanders is Dutch. The Brussels-capital region is bilingual, but has an overall majority of French-speaking people. The members of the Flemish-speaking minority have the legal right to use and speak their own language in policy documents and in schools in the Brussels-capital region (Wetwijzer Language Center, 2002).

In 2008, Flanders' gross domestic product (GDP) was €M199,547.30 (at market prices). This sum represents 58 percent of Belgium's GDP (Institute for National Accounts, 2010).

### Characteristics of the Political System<sup>1</sup>

From 1970 on, Belgium gradually developed, through several constitutional reforms, into a federal state consisting of regions and communities. The onset of this development meant that political power was no longer exclusively vested in the national government and the national parliament.

Leadership of Belgium is now in the hands of various partners, who independently exercise their authority within their domains. These domains are mainly divided along cultural and language lines for the three communities (Flemish, French, and German) and along economic interests for the three regions (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels-Capital). Flanders is a region (without Brussels-Capital) as well as a community (with powers in Brussels on behalf of the Flemish-speaking community). The federal state retains important powers in the areas of foreign affairs, national defense, and the core parts of justice, finance, social security, national health, and domestic affairs. However, the communities and the regions also have the power to establish and maintain foreign relations.

Recently, Flemish political parties established, as a core objective, delegating more functions and power to the regions and communities. The current constitutional design—different levels of government responsible for varying domains within the same area—makes the work of government very complex.

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<sup>1</sup> The information in this section is taken from the website "About Belgium" ([http://www.belgium.be/en/about\\_belgium/index.jsp](http://www.belgium.be/en/about_belgium/index.jsp)).



Another tier of administration is made up of the provinces and communes. These authorities have the most direct contact with people. Both, however, operate under the supervision of the higher authorities. The extent to which each is supervised by the federal state, the community, or the region depends on the power being exercised. In general, they are financed and audited by the regions.

Belgium is a hereditary constitutional monarchy. King Albert II is the current head of state. The real political power, however, is exercised by six parliaments and six governments. The federal level of governance is made up of the prime minister, the cabinet (consisting of 12 ministers, six from each language group), the federal parliament, and the federal senate. In Flanders, regional and community powers are exercised by a single parliament and a single government: the Flemish Parliament and the Flemish Government. The Flemish Government consists of a “minister president” (equivalent to a prime minister) and a cabinet of up to 10 ministers. The four other governments and parliaments are those of the Walloon Region, the Brussels-Capital Region, the French Community, and the German-Speaking Community.

Under the Belgian electoral system, all citizens 18 years of age and over must vote. However, voters can submit “blank votes.” Voter turnout at elections is relatively high, at around 91 percent of all eligible voters (Buelens, 2008).

Over the last few years, Belgium has experienced community- and language-based issues severe enough to create a political crisis. Since the federal elections of June 2007, three different governments have resigned. New elections were finally held on June 13, 2010, but a new government was not formed until 541 days later.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Education is almost entirely a community matter in Belgium, and it is the reason why the Flemish, French, and the German-speaking communities have their own education systems. Within the Flemish Government, the Flemish Minister of Education is responsible for almost every aspect of educational policy, from nursery through to university education. However, the federal authorities still have some control. They determine the start and the end of compulsory education, the minimum conditions for obtaining a school diploma, and pensions for education staff.

Schools have a high level of autonomy. The (Flemish) government sets only the final and developmental objectives (or attainment goals/targets) of the education system and the minimum amounts of time that must be spent on subjects comprising the core curriculum. The developmental objectives and final objectives define the minimum standards that students should achieve, but do not stipulate how schools should meet these targets. Schools are free to decide on teaching methods, a practice which leads to different approaches and allows for differentiation. These differences, in turn, have resulted in a diversity of curricula in Flemish schools. In many cases, educational networks, which are representative associations of schools' governing bodies, assume some of the responsibilities of those bodies (see further details below).

Thirty percent of Flemish schools are public schools, 22 percent of which are organized by the Flemish Community and eight percent by municipal or provincial councils. Seventy percent of the schools in Flanders are publicly financed but privately run. These are mainly schools with a Catholic tradition. Diversity in curricula therefore exists between rather than within the three major educational networks. However, all schools have to incorporate the government-imposed subject-related final objectives and developmental objectives in their curricula.



The concept of a governing body is a key facet of educational organization in Flanders. Under Flemish law, the governing body is the agent responsible for initiating the school and is therefore responsible for its operation. It is responsible for one or more schools and can consist of an authority, a single person (a citizen), or a group of people constituted as a legal entity, such as a company.

The governing bodies exercise a considerable degree of autonomy with respect to their school responsibilities. They can, for example, establish the pedagogical direction of their schools, determine teaching methods, and provide education based on a certain philosophy or educational view. They can also determine their own curriculum and timetables and appoint their own staff.

The governing bodies share management of their schools with the schools' principals. In some instances, school principals execute the majority of this work. However, schools that want government recognition or financial support must meet attainment targets, conform to minimum timetable requirements, have their curriculum approved, be adequately equipped, and have sufficient teaching materials. Schooling must also take place in buildings that are habitable, safe, and orderly.

In school year 2008/2009, Flanders had 953 secondary schools, 17 of which were based in Brussels. A total of 436,146 students were enrolled in these schools (Flemish Government Ministry of Education and Training, 2010).

### Structure of the Education System

Mainstream primary education encompasses children from 6 to 12 years of age and comprises six consecutive years of study. Before attending primary education, about 96 percent of Flemish children attend noncompulsory nursery education, which they can enter from two and a half to five years of age. Compulsory education starts in September of the year in which the student turns six years of age and continues until he or she reaches the age of 18. From the age of 16 onwards, compulsory education is not necessarily fulltime (see below).

Mainstream secondary education comprises three stages, lasting (in most instances) two years apiece. Decisions about which study streams students will enter are not made until the second stage of secondary education, which means that students can be introduced to as many subjects as possible during the first stage.

The first stage (Grades 7 and 8) has two different study streams:

- *A-stream*—mainstream education; and
- *B-stream*—a bridging class between primary and secondary education for those students who experience learning difficulties or delays during their primary education. Students then work through a “preparatory” year focused on vocational education.

During the second and third stages of secondary education, students can opt to study one of four distinct types of education:

- *General secondary education (ASO)*: The emphasis is on a broad general education that provides students with the foundation they need to continue to tertiary education.
- *Technical secondary education (TSO)*: This program focuses on general and technical theoretical subjects. After TSO, young people can enter the workforce or continue on to some form of tertiary education.
- *Secondary education in the arts (KSO)*: Students experience a broad general education combined with an applied art education. After completing KSO, young people can enter the workforce or begin some form of tertiary education.



- *Vocational secondary education (BSO)*: Here, young people learn a specific profession in addition to receiving a general education.

Students who successfully complete six years of ASO, TSO, or KSO, or seven years of BSO receive a diploma of secondary education. This qualification gives students unrestricted access to tertiary education, irrespective of what school, type of education, or course of study the certificate comes from.

For students, secondary education generally continues on a fulltime basis until they reach 18 years of age. However, students who successfully complete the first stage of secondary education can transfer to part-time secondary education combined with part-time work (DBSO or apprenticeship) when they reach 15 years of age. Students who complete this type of education receive a qualification certificate. This certificate is not, however, equivalent to the diploma delivered at the end of full-time vocational secondary education.

Those students whose physical, psychological, social, or intellectual development is affected by disabilities, learning problems, or behavioral difficulties may receive special education (at both the primary and secondary levels), which varies in approach. The years in special secondary education (BuSO) rarely coincide with the school years in mainstream secondary education because students only pass on to the next “learning stage” when they are ready for it.

The final objectives for subjects within the core curriculum are minimum objectives that reflect the knowledge, insight, skills, and attitudes that authorities consider *necessary and attainable* for a specific student population. Schools are evaluated in terms of their achievement of these final objectives. The objectives pertaining to mainstream secondary education align with education stage and form. The subject-related final objectives are accompanied by crosscurricular final objectives. These do not pertain to a particular area of study but are associated with a number of different subjects or educational projects.

The core curriculum for the first stage of the B-stream is the only curriculum that has developmental objectives instead of final objectives. These are minimum objectives that focus on the knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes that the educational authorities deem *desirable* for a particular student population and that the school must *strive to achieve* for all its students. Developmental objectives can be subject-related or crosscurricular.

Secondary education in Flanders is currently undergoing reform. Major reform challenges include improving the achievement of the weakest-performing students, reducing the reproduction of social inequality in education, decreasing the number of young people who leave school without qualifications, and improving students’ wellbeing in general. The division between grades will remain, but the distinction between education forms will disappear and be replaced by domain-specific disciplines. The reform also emphasizes acquisition of specified competencies.

Legislation enacted in 2004 states that every school has to have a school council and that the council must have an equal number of representatives (three to five) from the following groups: parents, school staff members, members of the local community, and students. Schools participating in the educational network “community education” are exempted from including students, if they so wish. These schools have used school councils since 1998, and their representatives have always comprised parents, school staff, and people from the local community, but not necessarily students.

Schools can also delegate representatives of the teacher/pedagogical council, the student council, or parent council to the school council. If any of these three councils do not appoint representatives to the school council, or are not in existence, the school council is required to organize elections to select the appropriate representatives.



School councils exercise considerable advisory powers, have well-defined consultation power with regard to school policy (such as informing the school plan, school rules, extracurricular activities, wellbeing of students and staff, safety at school, and so on), and a general right to information. They must also provide staff, students, and parents with information on how they use their powers. School principals attend school council meetings and can exercise an advisory vote. They keep the school council informed about school affairs and are required to make transparent decisions. School principals, whether in conjunction with the school board or alone, have the right to make final decisions on school matters.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

The goal of education for citizenship is to shape every young person into a person who thinks and acts democratically. Education for citizenship consequently focuses on equipping young people with a number of basic skills that enable them to participate in a constructive and critical way in social life.

In accordance with its overarching goal, civic and citizenship education seeks to accomplish three subgoals:

- Emancipatory—educating young people in a way that enables them to become independent and act with maturity;
- Social—encouraging every young person to become socially involved;
- Ethical—educating young people to be receptive to and gain skills associated with analyzing and clarifying values.

More specifically, education for citizenship includes:

- Learning facts about and gaining insights into economic, social, and cultural realities, the mechanisms that define and lead to these realities, and the political decisionmaking that can be used to intervene in these realities at all levels of the community;
- Appreciation of the values of the democratic system; and
- Mastering the skills that enable individuals to give shape to the aforementioned knowledge and insights and to be aware of the values that guide their own lives.

Education for citizenship is included in Flemish education as a crosscurricular theme, along with several other themes—learning to learn, social skills, health education, environmental education, expressive/creative education (included only in the second and third stages of secondary education), and technical/technological education (included only in general education). Crosscurricular final objectives were introduced into the first stage of secondary education during school year 1996/1997 and have been progressively introduced into the second and third stages of secondary education since school year 2001/2002.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

Since September 2010, the existing crosscurricular themes, which were introduced for the first time in 1997, have been updated (see the section on “current reforms” later in this chapter). The description below applies to the period before 2010, when the ICCS survey was administered.

Up until 2010, students in primary and secondary education were familiarized with a number of phenomena and processes evident in the following social arenas:

- *Political and legal*: Includes aspects such as power, consultation, representation of interests and interest groups, decisionmaking, institutions, and procedures;
- *Socioeconomic*: Covers labor, trade, and prosperity; and
- *Sociocultural*: Focuses on education, leisuretime, families, and group formation.



These three arenas formed a framework from which schools could choose specific contents and situations, with each being as meaningful as possible for the young people concerned.

This requirement led to a decision to include, during the first stage of secondary education (Grades 7 and 8; ISCED 2), four “realities” that concern young people of this age. These are school, home situation (family forms), the media, and democratic forms of administration. The aim underpinning provision of this content was to enable students to gain a deeper understanding of these aspects, to become more competent in dealing with them, and to develop attitudes that show respect for other people.

Two socially relevant and topical themes addressed during the second stage (Grades 9 and 10) were human rights, and active citizenship or decisionmaking. The topics for the third stage (Grades 11 and 12) were democratic parliaments, rendering social services, and world citizenship. Citizenship was not a distinct subject or an explicit point of attention in primary education, but part of the more general domain, “individual and society” (situated within the broader field of “world orientation”).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education During the First Stage of Secondary Education**

During this stage of schooling, education relating to each of the four realities is guided by a specific set of student achievement objectives:

- *Reality 1, school.* By this stage of their secondary education, students should:
  - Be able to give specific illustrations of their rights and obligations with respect to the school regulations;
  - Know the functions and responsibilities of everyone involved in the school, and use the resources available to make known their questions, problems, ideas, and opinions;
  - Be nondiscriminating of people of different gender, race, and ethnicity;
  - Be able to think of ways of solving conflicts with contemporaries and be prepared to implement those solutions; and
  - Be prepared to participate in class- or school-based campaigns that have, as their focus, empathy and care for others.
- *Reality 2, family, peers, and other social circles.* By this stage of their secondary education, students should:
  - Be able to describe various family forms and cultures in a way that demonstrates understanding of them;
  - Understand the roles (both real and perceived) of men and women within society in general and in the family in particular, and to test this understanding in their own social circles; and
  - Know where they can go for help if they have problems in their own social circles.
- *Reality 3, the media.* By this stage of their education, students should:
  - Understand the influence of the media on their own thinking and actions and discover ways to use it to benefit their own education; and
  - Be able to adopt a critical attitude toward all types of reporting.
- *Reality 4, democratic forms of administration.* By this stage of their education, students should:
  - Be able to explain, in simple terms, the basic elements of their country’s democratic system (elections, groupings, consultation and compromise, majority and opposition) and how they operate;



- Be able to explain, using examples, how a government obtains its income and how it uses this income; and
- Be able to explain and illustrate why any policy must take into account the ideas, points of view, and interests of the various parties involved.

In theory, all teachers are required to incorporate civic and citizenship education into their lessons, no matter what the subject is. However, in the day-to-day practice of schools, the teachers most likely to heed this requirement are those teaching languages, history, and religion (or “life philosophies” for the secular students) (Kavadias & Dehertogh, 2010).

### **Civic and Citizenship Activities in Schools**

Under the Act on Participation 2004, all secondary schools must have a student council. The only exception to this mandate applies to schools where students are involved in some other accepted way in school affairs and where over 90 percent of students do not ask for a student council to be established.

The student council can request information on school-related matters and is required to disseminate information to students and information from students to teachers and school managers. It also has advisory powers. Student representatives are elected via a secret ballot. Every student has the right to stand as a candidate. The student council draws up its own internal rules, and the school provides the council with the necessary infrastructural support. Students can voice their opinions during council sessions without fear of censure or reprimand.

Every school is free to organize other extracurricular activities related to civic and citizenship education. This freedom leads, in practice, to a diversity of activities and projects in Flemish schools. Most schools, however, exhibit only a moderate degree of engagement in such activities (Kavadias & Dehertogh, 2010).

At the time of writing, the Act on Participation 2004 was being reviewed.

### **Current Reforms and Debates on Civic and Citizenship Education<sup>2</sup>**

The idea of bringing a crosscurricular approach to civic and citizenship education arose early in the 1990s when citizens’ trust and involvement in government was a highly topical issue. One outcome of this concern was a demand to introduce civic and citizenship education in schools. This demand was also fuelled by acknowledgement on the part of both citizens and government that young people and adults of today face a fast-changing and complex society and so need the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to participate effectively in it.

By bringing a crosscurricular thematic approach to civic and citizenship education, the government hoped to create a “safety net” that would allow schools to tackle socially relevant matters in a structured “across the board” way and would prevent the need to resort to a large-scale reorganization of the curriculum. The government considered that this approach would stimulate schools to draw on new and relevant pedagogical methods that would have schoolwide applicability and that would see the hidden curriculum and informal education operating to good effect. The government also anticipated that the change would open the door to closer cooperation between schools and sectors such as sociocultural associations and social welfare.

On September 1, 2010, the existing crosscurricular themes were updated (Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Training, 2010). Evaluative policy-based research conducted two



<sup>2</sup> The information in this section was drawn from content in <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/DVO/Secundair/faq/faqvoe.htm>

years earlier (Elchardus, Op De Beeck, Duquet, & Roggemans, 2008) had suggested that a more integrated and feasible application was necessary to cope with the needs of schools and teachers on the one hand, and with societal, educational, and scientific developments on the other.

In general, the changes reflected a current, forward-looking approach, with themes more coherently related to defined educational targets. Overlap across the themes and crosscurricular targets that were no longer relevant were eliminated, and the focus moved to providing a broad basic education in this learning area.

One marked change concerned the targets for the crosscurricular theme of “education for citizenship.” The change saw education for citizenship spread over seven contexts—physical health and safety, mental health, sociorelational development, the environment and sustainable development, political/juridical society, socioeconomic society, and sociocultural society, each of which could be woven into any specific course. Education for citizenship now encompasses not only a relatively broad set of objectives (e.g., taking responsibility, showing respect, engaging in constructive criticism) but also a set of more concrete objectives related to three of the contexts: political/juridical, socioeconomic, and sociocultural.

The changes have been underpinned by three reform-based aims: integration, coherency, and simplification. Thus, for example, schools and teachers can now establish their own civic and citizenship path through secondary education. Also, because the new crosscurricular targets are not particular to grades, schools can combine any of the contexts in any grade. The context approach has furthermore allowed for inclusion of new content and learning opportunities. These include emphases on prevention rather than cure with regard to health and welfare, and on sustainable environmental and economic development. The approach also provides students with opportunity to think critically about political and economic systems such as Europe and the Belgian state structure, to acquire basic understandings of entrepreneurship, socioeconomic issues, and cultural matters (e.g., the arts), and to become media literate.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General<sup>3</sup>

Teacher education is differentiated according to the grade level and type of program that prospective teachers intend to teach. Integrated teacher-education courses provide a three-year program (Bachelor of Teaching) for prospective teachers wanting to teach preprimary, primary, or secondary school (with the latter covering the first two grades of secondary education, or all secondary vocational education). This program comprises 180 credits, 45 of which pertain to teaching practice. Prospective teachers intending to teach Grades 9 to 12 of secondary education must have a Master’s degree.

Individuals with a Bachelor’s or a Master’s degree from a university or some other form of tertiary education provider and who want to enter teaching can gain the necessary qualifications by working through a 60-credit teacher training program. Half of these credits must be gained through teaching practice.

All teachers must be proficient in a core set of competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) as well as in competencies particular to the level of education they are teaching. They must also exhibit a high degree of professionalism with respect to collegial relationships and teamwork, willingness to learn, organizing and decisionmaking, creativity, flexibility, language use, and overall sense of responsibility. The Curriculum Division of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training is responsible, in collaboration with teacher educators, for establishing and monitoring teachers’ professional standards.



<sup>3</sup> Information in this section was drawn from Standaert (2008).

School managers are responsible for overseeing teachers' ongoing professional development. Professional development courses can be run by the schools themselves or in association with various educational networks and agencies, including governmental ones. Courses encompass a wide variety of matters, ranging from interpersonal relationships (between teachers, between teaching staff and students, between teachers and the wider community, and among students) to assessment methods (e.g., achievement tests).

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

The crosscurricular approach to civic and citizenship education in Flanders means that there are no specialist teachers of this subject. Every general classroom teacher, regardless of his or her subject specialty, is expected to contribute to civic and citizenship education. This requirement also applies to lower-secondary teachers (ISCED 2), even though their training (a Bachelor of Teaching degree acquired in a tertiary education institution other than a university) has no compulsory coverage of civic and citizenship education.

The most obvious evidence of preservice teachers receiving some grounding in civic and citizenship education during their training is seen in project work. Institutions training lower-secondary teachers generally offer specific initiatives relevant to civic and citizenship education. These include courses or workshops on diversity and multiculturalism. Various organizations, such as the Flemish Parliament, educational networks, and more specialized agencies, such as Vormen ([www.vormen.org](http://www.vormen.org)) and the King Baudouin Foundation ([www.kbs-frb.be](http://www.kbs-frb.be)), provide training and workshops for both preservice and inservice teachers on topics related to civic and citizenship education.

However, because civic and citizenship education is crosscurricular in approach and because teacher training institutions have the freedom to determine program content beyond government-required provision, there is no guarantee that teachers, both preservice and inservice, will receive any form of education in this area. During their evaluation of the teaching of crosscurricular subjects, Elchardus et al. (2008) found that most teachers do not feel adequately prepared to teach civic and citizenship education. A greater focus on crosscurricular targets in teacher training therefore seems necessary (see also, in this regard, Standaert, De Coninck, Maes, Sleurs, & Van Woensel, 2002).

### **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

#### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

The Curriculum Division of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training divides quality control into three areas: freedom of educational provision, schools, and teacher professionalism (Standaert, 1996).

In the Flemish Community, education is expressly regarded as more than training and instruction; schools must also convey values, attitudes, and convictions according to its freely specified pedagogical framework. Because this autonomy leads to student outcomes that cannot be easily measured, Flanders has no externally imposed tests and no national examinations. The schools or their governing bodies decide whether students have attained all of the objectives (i.e., those determined by the Flemish Government and those set by the school). Schools can therefore choose their own evaluation policy and tests and award qualifications and certificates as they see fit (Kennedy, Mullis, Martin, & Trong, 2007).

At the primary level, schools determine students' eligibility to move into the next grade. Students who successfully complete Grade 6 of primary education receive a certificate of primary education that entitles them to enter Grade 7 of the A-stream of secondary education. Students who do not obtain this certificate can go on to study at Grade 7 of the B-stream of secondary education, after which they can transition to Grade 7 of the A-stream of secondary education or continue on to vocational education.



Students' transition from one year to the next during their secondary education is determined by a council made up of all of the students' teachers. Teachers base their decisions on students' achievement throughout the school year and on the performance of these students on their internal examinations. As a result of this process, students are each given an "orientation" certificate. If they receive an A-certificate, they can move on to the next year. If they receive a B-certificate, they can move on to the next year but are excluded from taking certain courses of study. If they receive a C-certificate, they must repeat the year (Synopsis Flanders, 2009).

At the level of the education system, quality of education is monitored by both the Education Inspectorate and a calendar (program) of large-scale assessment—the *Peilingen*. The Education Inspectorate visits all schools regularly (on average every five years and at least once every 10 years). Inspectorate visits concentrate on the functioning of the school as a whole and concern such matters as compliance with education regulations, health and safety, and internal quality assurance. After each visit, the inspectorate produces a qualitative report on the school. The report is publicly available.

Large-scale assessments are implemented at designated points in the education system. These are carried out every year according to the *Peilingen*, which determines what subjects will be assessed and when. These tests are administered to a representative sample of schools and students, and are used solely for monitoring the attainment of learning objectives at the system level. There are no consequences for individual schools or students.

#### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

As noted earlier, schools are not mandated by government to meet crosscurricular final objectives, such as those relating to civic and citizenship education. Instead, they are obliged to have as many students as possible meet those objectives. How successful schools are in this regard is not evaluated. However, schools must show evidence, during visits of the Education Inspectorate, of having implemented the crosscurricular final objectives. Schools are free to choose how they teach civic and citizenship education, the amount of time they will spend on this area, how they will evaluate learning outcomes, and even if they will do the latter, given that they are not obliged to do this. If, however, they do decide to evaluate student achievement, they can choose their method of assessment.

In 2008, the Minister of Education commissioned the King Baudouin Foundation to work toward a stronger support structure for schools in the area of civic and citizenship education. The foundation developed a two-year program that brought together the various organizations currently or likely to offer this support in order to discuss how that support could be better coordinated. The anticipated revisions to the general school curriculum provided a starting point for the discussions, and the expectation thus far is that the main outcome of the foundation's work will be the formation of a Forum on Active Citizenship and Education, which will work cooperatively with the Flemish Parliament. It is hoped that one of the long-term effects of such a development will be changes (obviously for the better) to how schools approach and position civic and citizenship education in their respective curriculums (Kavadias & Dehertogh, 2010).

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# Bulgaria

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Located in the heart of the Balkans, Bulgaria has an area of 110,994 square kilometers and a population of 7,364,570 people (National Statistical Institute, 2011). Most of the Bulgarian population (about 71%) lives in cities. More than a million people live in the capital city of Sofia. The official language is Bulgarian, and the dominant religion is Orthodox Christianity.

In 2008, the gross domestic product (GDP) of Bulgaria was approximately US\$52, or 69 million Bulgarian lev (National Statistical Institute, 2011). According to the World Bank's World Development Indicators, this sum was equivalent to a GDP per capita of US\$6,800 in 2008. Statistics from the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance show that Bulgaria spent 3.5 percent of its GDP on the education sector in 2011.

### Characteristics of the Political System

Bulgaria is a parliamentary republic, with a three-way division of powers—legislative, executive, and judiciary. The National Assembly (a single chamber parliament) exercises legislative power. Its members are elected by the general populace for a four-year period. The government (the Council of Ministers), the main body exercising executive power, is headed by the prime minister. Members of the National Assembly or the Council of Ministers have the right to draft and introduce laws, but the council determines and conducts internal and foreign policy. The assembly determines and oversees the activities of the council.

The president of Bulgaria, the country's head of state, is elected through general elections, held every five years, but can serve no more than two terms. The president is the supreme commander of the republic's military forces and is chairperson of the Consultative Council, which oversees national security.

The status and powers of the local executive authorities align with the territorial structure of the country. The region is the biggest administrative territorial unit. Bulgaria has 28 such regions, each of which is administered by a regional governor, appointed by the Council of Ministers. This decentralization of government power means that government policy can be more effectively implemented throughout Bulgaria.

The municipality is the main administrative territorial unit for local government. Municipal councils approve municipality annual budgets and development plans and determine policy relating to areas such as economic development, the environment, education, cultural matters, and local activities.

The Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, adopted in July 1991, is based on the fundamental principles of modern constitutionalism. The constitution ensures a multi-party parliamentary system and human rights for all people.

In 1989, Bulgaria initiated a process of political and socioeconomic reform, which was underpinned by the fundamental aim of establishing democracy. During the transformation that Bulgarian society experienced in the 1990s, the education system and civic education,



in particular, were strongly influenced by these political, economic, and social changes. The education sector experienced widespread reforms, the purpose of which was to align it with the education systems of the European Union (EU) countries. Bulgaria is a member of the United Nations (1955), the EU (2007), and NATO (2004).

## EDUCATION SYSTEM

### Overview and Background

The main aims of the Bulgarian education system are to ensure education and training of a high quality and equality of access to education for all students.

The Bulgarian education system is grounded in the principles of the Bulgarian Constitution, which declares that education is a fundamental right of all citizens regardless of gender, social background, ethnic origin, and religious affiliation. The main democratic principle of free access to education is also affirmed in the National Education Act 1991, which sets out the particulars of the education system. Schooling is compulsory up to the age of 16. School education in state and municipal schools is free of charge.

The 1990s' adaptation of national education to EU standards, legally, academically, and administratively, strongly challenged previous Bulgarian policy and practice, and substantially changed the nature of education offered in schools. Today, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria has a principal role in determining the governing and curricular focus of school education. The legislative framework informing this role includes the National Education Act 1991, the Level of Schooling, General Education Minimum Standards, and Syllabus Act 1999, and the Vocational Education and Training Act 1999.

Educational administration encompasses four levels—national, regional, municipal, and school. The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Science (MEYS), which operates under the Council of Ministers, develops and implements national education policy in education. Regional inspectorates of education are territorial units of the MEYS. As their name indicates, they manage education at the regional level. There are 28 such units in the country. Municipal education bodies, which are operated by municipal councils, are responsible for implementing, within national guidelines, educational policy at the municipal level. They have substantial administrative and financial autonomy. The school is a legal entity, and the extent to which it can exercise managerial and financial autonomy has expanded considerably in recent years.

### Structure of the Education System

Elementary or basic education is divided into two stages—a primary stage (Grades 1 to 4) and a junior high (or lower-secondary) stage (Grades 5 to 8). Secondary education encompasses comprehensive education and vocational training (Grades 9 to 12). Education is compulsory for all children between seven (or six at parents' discretion) and 16 years of age. Preschool education is compulsory for five- and six-year-old children.

Parents determine which type of elementary school their children will attend. There are four types:

- Primary school (preschool year and Grades 1 to 4, ISCED 1);
- Basic school (Grades 1 to 8, ISCED 1/2);
- Lower-secondary school (Grades 5 to 8, ISCED 2); and
- Secondary comprehensive school (which actually encompasses both elementary and secondary education, that is, Grades 1 to 12, ISCED 1/2/3).



Students wanting to continue their education at the upper end of secondary schooling may pursue comprehensive education (made up of comprehensive and specialized schools) or vocational education. Comprehensive schools (all ISCED 3) cover Grades 9 to 12, and the specialized schools (focusing on, for example, foreign languages, art, or sport) cover Grades 8 to 12. The vocational schools encompass Grades 8/9 to 12. Student entry to the specialized schools and some vocational schools is determined by students' results on external national examinations held at the end of Grade 7.

Bulgaria's Level of Schooling, General Education Minimum Standards, and Syllabus Act 1999 sets down what must be taught and when during each stage of the education system, while the State Educational Requirements determine the minimum level of knowledge and skills that students are expected to achieve with respect to each subject and to have attained by specified stages of their schooling.

Three types of subject make up the curriculum of each school:

- *Compulsory subjects:* These include Bulgarian language and literature, foreign languages and literature, history, geography, mathematics, physics, biology, philosophy, physical education and sport, theoretical subjects of study relevant to specific occupations, and practical training. These subjects form the core compulsory curriculum; students must study them in order to meet the Act's required level of educational attainment.
- *Compulsory or elective subjects:* These subjects, offered by comprehensive and vocational schools, provide students with opportunity to choose subjects they are interested in studying in depth. However, the content of these subjects and the number of hours of study per week during the school year are mandated by the aforementioned Act. Just which subjects are available in a school depends on the school's orientation and specialization.
- *Optional subjects and activities:* These subjects sit outside the compulsory and core curricula and align with various student interests. Schools can elect which subjects to offer, with choice generally dependent on the school's ethos and resourcing.

During the primary and lower-secondary stage of elementary education, all students learn the same compulsory curriculum, but their particular school may also offer compulsory or elective subjects, including mother tongue, music, and information technology (IT). Students in lower-secondary schools must all study a core curriculum as well as elective subjects, with the latter chosen in accordance with the need to develop individual students' knowledge and skills in particular areas. The manner in which subjects are taught at this level depends on subject and student age. In addition to attending compulsory classes in the specialized and vocational schools, students can choose other subjects to study from a set that corresponds with the specialization or vocational orientation of the school. In all instances, schools and their teachers have the right to select which textbooks to use for instruction.

The mix of compulsory, elective, and optional subjects offered in each school is determined by the school's pedagogical council (an assembly of all teaching staff in the school). Schools specializing in arts and sports and schools catering for children with special educational needs have their own differentiated curriculums. The MEYS and the regional educational inspectorates approve the study programs of all schools (i.e., elementary schools, vocational schools, secondary comprehensive schools, and schools for children with special needs), in accordance with the education legislation.

As previously stated, schools have considerably more autonomy today than they did even in relatively recent years. Decentralization of school governance has been accompanied by changes to how schools are financed. Currently, the level of state funding that each school receives



depends primarily on how many students are enrolled in the school. Additional funding comes from a variety of other sources.

Each school is managed by its pedagogical council and its head teacher, or principal. He or she is usually assisted by one or more deputy head teachers. The management team is responsible for ensuring that school organization and pedagogy meet nationally specified quality standards. Each school also has a board of trustees, the purpose of which is to provide an interface between the school and its community. Members include the principal, teachers, parents, and other people from the community.

School principals are fully responsible for all school activities, including the school budget, development of the school plan, school management, and the coordination and monitoring of teaching. Principals also appoint deputy principals, teachers, and other staff members and determine the monthly salary of each person through reference to nationally prescribed criteria.

The major trends informing Bulgaria's educational development are evident in the country's National Program of School and Preschool Education and Preparation 2006–2015 and in its Program for Development of Education, Science, and Youth in the Republic of Bulgaria 2009–2013 (MEYS, 2011a, 2011b). These documents focus not only on the skills and competencies that students are expected to acquire but also on curriculum priorities (notably, foreign language learning and information technology) and the comprehensive, systematic application of new technologies and pedagogical methods in formal and nonformal education.

The documents also provide for changes to the structure of Bulgaria's education system. Once the new system is fully implemented, students will complete their basic education (ISCED 2) at the end of Grade 7 (rather than 8), and the upper-secondary level (ISCED 3) will consist of two stages—compulsory (Grades 8 to 10) and optional (Grades 11 to 12). The second stage is for students intending to study in tertiary education institutions after successfully completing their secondary education (i.e., being awarded a diploma).

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Bulgaria's National Education Act embraces the principles of democracy, ethics, and enterprise. Schools are therefore charged with developing young people who are respectful of the law and of the rights, cultures, languages, and religions of other people. Bulgaria's government considers that equipping students with basic civic knowledge is necessary for ensuring their successful "orientation, adaptation and realization in society" (Level of Schooling, General Education Minimum Standards, and Syllabus Act, Article 9; Ministry of Education and Science, 1999).

In Bulgaria, providing civic education in schools is seen as an important means of instilling democratic values in students and providing them with a basic understanding of not only human rights, civic society, state and civil institutions but also the workings of their own and other political systems, and preparing them for competent and responsible participation in society. Civic education in Bulgarian schools is generally conveyed through an interdisciplinary subject area called "social sciences and civic education," which is taught in tandem with history, geography, and philosophy.

How civic education is taught in Bulgarian schools varies by education level. At the lower levels, civic education is integrated into several school subjects—principally history and geography—and is also offered as a crosscurricular theme, which means that its concepts, ideas, and principles are part of all school subjects. At the upper levels, civic education continues to be integrated into history and geography, and it is also integrated into philosophy, which



comprises ethics, psychology, and logic. Civic education also exists as a separate compulsory subject at the upper-secondary level of education, with Grade 12 students studying a mandatory civics-related subject named “world and personality.”

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

State education standards specify the knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and attitudes that students are expected to achieve as a result of civics-related education integrated into the subjects of the compulsory curriculum (Ministry of Education and Science, 2000, pp. 62–67). The standards state that the aim of civic education in Bulgaria is “to prepare students for their role as active, responsible, autonomous citizens in society.”

Civic education should therefore work toward “developing and endorsing the young person as a citizen who is an autonomous and responsible person; knows and respects others’ rights, freedoms and responsibilities; understands that he or she belongs to the Bulgarian nation, motherland, culture, and European community; and participates constructively in society.” More specifically, civic education is charged with developing the political literacy, civic attitudes, and values of students, and stimulating their active participation in their school and community. Students are therefore expected to:

- Acquire knowledge about important social spheres (family, school, local, and national community);
- Develop civic attitudes and values;
- Know the universal values and main principles of democracy;
- Understand the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and the structure and function of governmental organizations in Bulgaria and in the EU, as well as of civic society; and
- Understand the regional and global processes in the dynamically changing modern world, and to participate responsibly in society (Ministry of Education and Science, 2000, p. 47).

As noted earlier, the interdisciplinary subject of social sciences and civic education plays a leading role in conveying these principles in schools. Other key civic-related concepts woven into the school curriculum are:

- Citizens, politics, and democracy;
- Human rights and responsibilities;
- Citizens vis-à-vis authorities (legal, judicial, social);
- National identity and social diversity;
- Contemporary global problems; and
- Bulgaria and the world.

During their elementary education, children are introduced to ideas and practices relating to the following:

- Civic principles and values;
- National symbols and basic state institutions;
- Basic human rights, freedoms, and responsibilities;
- The rights of children and the major organizations protecting these rights;
- Europe’s place in the world and Bulgaria’s position in modern Europe;
- The significance of family; and
- Various aspects of school life.



The notion that everyone belongs to a community or communities—school, local, national, international—is emphasized through such themes as:

- My world and me;
- I am a citizen of my state;
- The world and me;
- Protecting life;
- Safety and wellbeing (especially during critical situations).

In regard to the last item, children are taught how to act (both inside and outside the school) should they encounter life-threatening or health hazards, disasters, emergency situations, and accidents.

Students attending lower-secondary school experience civic education not as a dedicated subject but rather through the integration of civic principles and practices in social science subjects, especially history and geography. During this stage of their schooling, students learn about:

- The world's political and economic landscape;
- Ethnic, cultural, religious, and lingual diversity/identity;
- Citizens' rights and responsibilities;
- The main principles directing Bulgaria's political system and government institutions;
- The role and activity of political and nongovernmental organizations in society; and
- The main problems affecting today's world.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The intent of civic education is to provide students not only with theoretical knowledge but also with the experience and skills that enable them to translate theory into practice. A key component of civic education in Bulgaria is therefore student participation in school and community life. Schools encourage students to become actively involved in school governance and to engage in activities such as simulations, school newspapers, debating clubs, projects, and extracurricular activities.

Essentially, civic education is seen as part of the hidden curriculum of schools, which means that this area of educational provision is an integral part of the daily life of schools and how they are run. There are many examples throughout Bulgaria of students engaging in civic practice because of their involvement in the consultative and decisionmaking processes of their schools. Student participation in school management most typically includes participation in school parliaments, student representative councils, student representation on the pedagogical councils, and student associations. Schools thus provide an environment wherein students can develop civic competencies by contributing to a school climate that is secure, democratic, and positive.

Since Bulgaria joined the EU, many of the country's schools and students have participated in partnership projects and student exchange programs with schools from other countries. More and more Bulgarian schools are also opening up their premises to their local communities, so that members of those communities can visit their respective schools and meet and talk with students and teachers.



## **Current Reforms in and Debates on Civic and Citizenship Education**

In Bulgaria, civic education became a matter of public interest during the educational reforms of 1999. In 2000, the government introduced civic education as an independent, clearly defined component of the core curriculum of social studies, which comprises geography, history, and philosophy.

In recent years, civic education has again been the focus of national discussion, particularly with respect to its aims, content, organization, and pedagogy. This discussion is taking place at many levels, is invoking different attitudes, and is characterized by different interests and orientations. Nevertheless, nearly all of the people discussing this topic seem to agree that civic education must be a priority in school-based education.

## **TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATION**

### **Teacher Education in General**

In order to teach, candidates must have a Bachelor's or a Master's degree as well as a teacher qualification certificate. The latter requires candidates to study topics on the theory and practice of teaching, as well as to take part in teaching practicums. Teachers of Grades 1 to 4 teach all subjects of the syllabus. Teachers in secondary schools teach individual subjects. Initial and inservice training of teachers is provided mainly in the universities in the form of qualification programs in relevant subjects as well as seminars and refresher courses.

All teachers are evaluated according to the same monitoring system. Evaluations are carried out by school principals and the regional inspectorates on education. As yet, the evaluation system has not been linked to career progression. Teacher training institutions provide professional development for inservice teachers. This provision includes general or theme-based courses, subject- or area-specific content, workshops, seminars, and conferences. Professional development activities can take place in the schools and at regional and national levels.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Teachers of history and geography at the lower-secondary level are required to pay particular heed to civic education, but all teachers throughout the system must have proficiency in this area, given its crosscurricular nature. The principles and practice of civic education are therefore a set component of preservice teacher education, and students must demonstrate competency in this area in order to qualify as teachers. Teachers can choose whether or not to take civic education courses as part of their ongoing professional development. However, such courses are gaining popularity, as are those on interactive teaching methods and student-directed learning, both of which are relevant to the precepts of civic education.

## **ASSESSMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

High-quality methods of assessing secondary-school students' learning are subject to ongoing development and improvement. Teachers regularly assess their students' knowledge and skills through oral, written, and practical assessment, assigning grades according to a numbered scale ranging from poor (2) to excellent (6). In 2007, the government introduced national tests, but these were for Grade 4 students only. Today, students take nationally implemented standardized assessments of their achievement in the major school subjects. These are carried out at the end of Grades 4 to 7 and 12. One of the main purposes of these assessments is to monitor the efficacy of the education system.



The state matriculation examination (introduced in 2008), which students undertake at the end of Grade 12, is a certified assessment. Students must pass two compulsory subject areas—Bulgarian language and literature and a subject of each student's choosing—in order to matriculate. Students who pass this examination obtain a diploma of secondary education, which entitles them to further their studies in tertiary education institutions.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

Because civic education is an integral part of the curriculum, student achievement in this area is the focus of assessments of curriculum subjects in general as well as of formal school-based and national assessments of civic education-related subjects in particular. Bulgaria's national curriculum specifies the methods to be used in order to assess students' civics-related knowledge, and stipulates the attitudes and skills that students should have achieved by the end of each education stage. Student participation in national students' Olympiads, school projects, conferences, and similar initiatives provides another basis for assessing students' civic knowledge and for informing civic education content and pedagogy.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

The regional inspectorates on education carry out regular inspections of school performance. Civic education instruction is subject to thematic inspections. Bulgaria also continues to participate in international assessment surveys carried out by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (Progress in Reading Literacy Study and the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Programme for International Student Assessment and the Teaching and Learning International Survey), and the EU (European Survey of Language Competences). The national findings of these surveys provide detailed information about the quality of education in several key areas, including reading, mathematics, science, learning of foreign languages, and civic and citizenship education.

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# Chile

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The Republic of Chile is located in the southwest part of South America. It borders Peru to the north, Bolivia and Argentina to the east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west (National Institute of Statistics, 2009a). Chile's territory also includes islands in Polynesia and 1,250,000 square kilometers of territory in the Antarctic (Institute of Military Geography, 2007). Chile's continental territory is 4,337 kilometers in length, with an average width of 177 kilometers and a total area of 755,776 square kilometers.

Chile's estimated population in June 2009 was 16,928,873 inhabitants, 8,379,571 of whom were men and 8,549,302 women.<sup>1</sup> Just over 13 percent of the population (equivalent to 2,209,627 inhabitants) were living in rural areas at this time. The estimated national population density was 22.39 inhabitants per square kilometer.

The regions with a higher proportion of rural residents are Maule and La Araucanía. Slightly more than 40 percent of the national population (6,814,630 people) lives in the metropolitan region, which has the greatest population density of the country (442.4 persons per square kilometer; National Institute of Statistics, 2009a).

According to Chile's 2002 census, 4.6 percent of the population said they belonged to an ethnic group (indigenous pre-Hispanic groups). Of these people, just over 87 percent were Mapuches, seven percent were Aymaras, and three percent were Atacameños. Colla, Rapanui, Quechua, and Yámana y Alacalufe made up the remaining three percent (National Institute of Statistics, 2002).

The official language in Chile is Spanish. However, some ethnic languages are also spoken, such as Mapudungún (the language of the Mapuche people from the south), Aimara (the language of the Aimara people of the Northern Andes region), and Rapa Nui (the language of the people of Easter Island) (National Institute of Statistics, 2009a). The language of educational instruction is Spanish.<sup>2</sup>

The General Law on Education, passed in 2009, established the current legal framework for Chilean education. It states that students must be able to communicate effectively in Spanish, both verbally and in writing. Under this law, and in line with stipulations in the national curriculum, students must also be able to understand and express themselves in a foreign language. Schools with a high number of indigenous students offer those students programs in their indigenous language (Ministry of Education, 2009a).

According to data from the World Bank (2010), Chile's gross domestic product (GDP) for 2009 was US\$M203,442. The per capita GDP was US\$9,672.

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1 Estimated figures using data from the Seventeenth National Census of Population and Sixth Census of Housing, conducted in April 2002. At that time, the total population was 15,116,435.

2 There are also a few bilingual schools where the language of instruction is a foreign language.



## Characteristics of the Political System

Chile is a democratic republic comprised of three public powers: the legislature (bicameral congress), the judiciary (judiciary power), and the executive (president of the republic). Under the Political Constitution of the Republic of Chile, the president is the elected head of government and head of state. Appointment to this position depends on the presidential candidate receiving an absolute majority of all valid votes. Presidential elections are conducted together with parliamentary elections every four years. The ministers of state are the president's closest collaborators with respect to governance and administration of the state.

Administratively, the country has 15 regions, which are divided into 51 provinces. These, in turn, are divided into 346 communes. Every region has an intendant (administrative official), who is in charge of local government and represents the president of the republic. Intendants are supported by regional ministerial secretariats. Every province has a governor, who is a subordinate to the intendant. Communal administration is conducted by the municipalities, and each is headed by a mayor and a council. Both the mayor and the members of the council are appointed through public elections held every four years (National Institute of Statistics, 2009b).

In Chile, citizens are eligible to vote on reaching their 18th birthday. Since 1988, the incidence of young people registering as voters has declined, which means the voting population has become, on average, progressively older over the last two decades (Electoral Office, Republic of Chile, n. d.).

## Education System

### Overview and Background

In December 2009, Chile had 9,627 schools (Ministry of Education, 2009b). The country has three types of school: municipal (48% of all schools), private subsidized (41%), and private fee-paying (7%).<sup>3</sup> They differ from one another with respect to their administrative relationship with the state. The first two are funded by the state and the latter by parents. Although municipal schools are state funded, they are administered by the municipalities, which may supplement state funding. These schools receive technical assistance and supervision from the education authorities within provincial governments. Private subsidized schools, which are also financed by the state, depend administratively on their private owners. These schools can also require parents to contribute financially. Private schools are privately administered and privately funded, through fees paid by parents. However, this funding may not exceed a certain limit (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

Schools are responsible for curriculum implementation and for their students' achievement outcomes. National tests, implemented by the Ministry of Education, are used to regularly assess students in Grades 4, 8, and 10. These assessments take place every year for students in Grade 4, and every two years for students in Grades 8 and 10 (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

### Structure of the Education System

Chile's current school system consists of eight years of basic school (*educación básica*), which is made up of primary and lower-secondary education, and four years of high (upper-secondary) school (*educación media*). These 12 years encompass compulsory education.<sup>4</sup> In 2008, 95 percent of the age cohort was enrolled in basic education, and 81 percent in high school (Ministry of Education, 2009d).



<sup>3</sup> Percentages relate to schools that had Grade 8 in their grade range in 2008.

<sup>4</sup> The General Law of Education of 2009 established that basic and high school education would each be of six years' duration. This change has yet to be implemented.

Chile's General Law of Education 2009 requires children to begin school when they are six years old. Children can also attend up to five years of preschool education. Although preschool attendance is not compulsory, the government has been widely promoting enrolment in this type of education during recent years. Over 85 percent of children participate in kindergarten (the last year of preschool) and over 50 percent participate in preschool education prior to kindergarten, which children can enter on reaching four years of age. In general, few very young children attend preschool. The same can be said for children from poorer families and from rural communities. Both preschool institutions and schools offer preschool education.

Schools offering basic education serve Grades 1 to 8; high schools encompass Grades 9 to 12 (although some start at Grade 7). There are also schools that combine both types of education (complete schooling). Some basic education schools, particularly the very small, municipal, rural ones, offer only Grades 1 to 4 or Grades 1 to 6. Most schools offering Grade 1 also provide preschool education (Department of Research, Ministry of Education, 2008). High school programs can be made up of humanities and science subjects, technical or professional content (vocational), or both. Students are not directed into these tracks until Grades 11 and 12 (Department of Research, Ministry of Education, 2008).

The Ministry of Education determines Chile's national core curriculum. Although all schools must offer this curriculum,<sup>5</sup> they have the right to include additional subjects and topics of their own choosing. The ministry also provides optional study programs, and most schools use them. The remaining schools usually develop their own study programs. There are few nationally prescribed restrictions governing pedagogic approaches in schools (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

Private schools have more autonomy than public (municipal) and subsidized schools. Two examples of this relate to textbooks and the appointment of teachers. The latter two types of school must choose from a list of textbooks provided and paid for by the ministry, whereas private schools may choose their own textbooks (Ministry of Education, 2009c). Private and subsidized schools can directly hire teachers, but municipal school teachers are hired by municipal authorities. Public teachers' conditions of employment are determined by the *estatuto administrativo docente* (educational administrative standards), which determine, amongst other matters, national pay rates and conditions of tenure, including the grounds on which teachers can be dismissed (Ministry of Finance, 1997).

In general, the Ministry of Education has no direct control over school governance. It exerts its influence, however, through public policies concerning school ethos, including the recommendation that students participate in matters of schoolwide interest. Decisions about schools' programs of study are typically made by the school principal, sometimes in consultation with the technical pedagogic coordinator or with the board of teachers. All municipal and subsidized schools (just over 90% of all schools) must have a school council consisting of parents, students, teachers, the school principal, and representatives of the owner or intendant. The council's role is to keep abreast of and discuss various school matters, such as extracurricular activities, school goals, and discipline. Teaching, curricular, and administrative matters are generally not the council's concern. The school intendant (which can be a municipal authority or a private corporation or foundation, among others) is usually responsible, sometimes in consultation with the school principal, for administrative decisions (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

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<sup>5</sup> The curriculum currently in use is the 2002 version in the case of basic education (Decree 232/2002), and the 2005 version for high school education (Decree 220/1998). However, both of these curriculums have a 2009 adjusted version that was gradually implemented during 2010 and 2011 (Decrees 256/2009, 254/2009, 220/1998).



Current debates on Chilean education are dominated by issues of quality and equity and, to a lesser extent, the availability and uptake of preschool education (Ministry of Education, 2009c). One policy attracting particular attention is a special additional subsidy for students from underprivileged backgrounds. Subsidized and municipal schools can apply for this benefit, but their receiving it depends on, among other things, the schools committing themselves to improving aspects of their educational programs. Each school can design its own improvement plan and use part of the subsidy to hire additional help for this work (Department of Research, Ministry of Education, 2009).

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

Chile's curricular civic and citizenship education framework is defined by the Ministry of Education and is mandatory for schools. The 2009 framework specifies "fundamental goals"—the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that students should acquire. The goals fall into two distinct sets. *Vertical goals* are those that relate to specific grades and specific subjects, especially social science, as well as language, philosophy, and some elective subjects (Ministry of Education, 2009c). The goals are captured in content that must be taught as part of these subjects. *Transversal goals* are crosscurricular in nature (integrated into all school subjects) and so relate to the whole school experience. This crosscurricular approach applies to all school levels, and the goals focus on, among other things, promoting student respect for diversity and building students' ability to actively participate and collaborate in school activity in ways that exemplify the principles of honesty, justice, and peace. The manner in which the schools promote these goals depends on student age and level of maturity (Ministry of Education, 2009a).

Social science, the subject most associated with civic and citizenship education, seeks to develop the abilities, knowledge, and dispositions students need to understand their social environment and to take a critical—yet responsible—stance toward the workings of Chilean society. The values and principles underlying the subject include solidarity, pluralism, care of the environment, democracy, and national identity. Students are encouraged to apply these precepts within a context of understanding that positions their world as one that is constantly changing and that is becoming ever more complex and interconnected (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

Social science is also informed by a number of particular objectives that require students to:

- Develop a civic sensibility;
- Know and understand the rights and duties of a democratic lifestyle, including responsible participation in community activities;
- Recognize the legitimacy of different points of view;
- Value the principles of liberty, freedom, justice, pluralism, social responsibility, and respect for human rights;
- Value the dignity of all people; and
- Respect cultural diversity at national and international levels (Ministry of Education, 2002).

The prominence given to civic and citizenship education in social science varies according to grade level. Some grades are required to address the vertical goals of civic and citizenship education and to incorporate compulsory content, whereas others are not (Ministry of Education, 2002, 2009a).



## **Civic and Citizenship Activities in Schools**

Activities are typically built around the crosscurricular goals of civic and citizenship education. For example, students in Grades 1 and 2 of basic education experience opportunities to work, within the scope of social science, on activities that have a community service orientation. Students work together to propose ways to deal with community problems.

The extent to which students are encouraged to take part in activities related to civic and citizenship education and the characteristics of these activities depend entirely on each school's interpretation of the goals of this area of education. Schools with students in Grade 7 or above are mandated to have student councils, which provide students with a means of engaging in civic responsibilities. However, schools vary in how they actually implement and utilize school councils (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

## **Current Reforms and Debates on Civic Education**

Chile constantly reviews and revises its national curriculum in order to keep it up to date. This process means that civic and citizenship education in general and the subject social science in particular are also subject to review. Changes to the curriculum in 2009 did not affect the general purpose of social science but did result in some improvements, for example, to its sequence of contents. Consideration was also given at the time to suggestions made by a national committee convened in 2004 to evaluate and offer recommendations on improving the curricular approach to civic and citizenship education (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

Concerns regarding the extent to which teachers implement the transversal goals of civic and citizenship education continue to be voiced (Curriculum and Evaluation Unit, Ministry of Education, 2001). There is little official information about teacher practices related to civic and citizenship education, but anecdotal evidence suggests that curricular approaches and teaching practices might not be sufficiently aligned (Cox, 2010).

There are also concerns beyond the curriculum that have relevance for civic and citizenship education in schools. Violence and bullying in schools is one such concern (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

Outside the education system, there is concern over the limited participation of young people in formal democratic mechanisms, such as elections. However, young people are increasingly becoming involved in politics in nontraditional ways. In 2006, for example, high school students formed a strong movement which was built on the notion that students should have a say in the workings of the education system. One important consequence of this development was that school student representatives were included in the committee charged with discussing and developing a new general law of education (Ministry of Education, 2010b).

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

Teacher education in Chile is decentralized. Teaching certificates are awarded by universities and professional institutes, and these organizations are free to design their own curricula. There is no national certification.

The type of teaching certificate that a teacher holds depends on the grade level taught and the university or the professional institute he or she attended. The amount of subject specialization that is expected of teachers increases according to the grade level of their students. Teachers of Grades 1 to 4 generally teach all subjects. Teachers of Grades 5 to 8 are likely to have one or more subject specialties alongside their teaching of other areas of the curriculum, while high school (upper-secondary) teachers teach entirely according to their specialist subject or subjects.



Prospective primary and lower-secondary teachers usually study pedagogy for four years, and their studies generally include a specialization in a specific subject, especially if they intend teaching Grades 5 to 8. High school teachers have a Bachelor's (or higher) degree in a specific discipline, and will also have completed a one- or two-year teaching course that enables them to teach in high school. Alternatively, they may choose a combined program of disciplinary and pedagogical courses lasting from four to five years. There are also other pathways into teaching or securing a teaching qualification. For example, people working as teachers who do not have the necessary degree (e.g., translators working as English teachers) can become officially qualified by engaging in teacher education programs that offer intensive courses delivered over relatively short time periods (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Before Chile introduced curriculum changes in the 1990s, civic and citizenship education was taught as a dedicated subject in high schools. High school history teachers employed during or before this time studied to become both history and civic education teachers, because both disciplines were covered by the same certificate. Primary and lower-secondary teachers neither studied nor taught civic and citizenship education (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

Because civic and citizenship education is no longer a separate school subject, teachers of social science are expected to cover civics topics as part of their classroom teaching. However, they are social science teachers first and civic and citizenship education teachers by default (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

In lower-secondary schools, teachers of social science are required to have a specialist qualification in social science, which covers topics related to civic and citizenship education. However, if they are older teachers, a history or civic education teaching certificate will suffice. General classroom teachers in primary schools and lower-secondary teachers may not have had any civic and citizenship education training. According to a survey of Grade 8 social science teachers conducted by the Ministry of Education (2009e), the majority of these teachers comprised those with a general basic education background (38%) and those who were high school social science teachers (36%). Only a small percentage of the surveyed teachers (14%) had social science as a specialist teaching subject.

The current approach to training teachers (both preservice and inservice) to teach civic and citizenship education has been identified as inappropriate, and so is considered a major issue with regard to the effectiveness of civic and citizenship education. Some commentators argue that if teacher training in this area is not improved, students are unlikely to receive any high-quality civic and citizenship education (Ministry of Education, 2004).

## **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

### **General School and Student Assessment**

In Chile, students are individually assessed in every subject by their subject teacher. Students must reach specified levels of achievement in order to move on to the next school grade. Primary, lower-secondary, and high school students all receive certificates from their schools once they have met the necessary requirements. There are no national tests governing the transition from grade to grade or the procurement of a school certificate (Ministry of Education, 2009c).

At the national level, the Ministry of Education assesses student learning through the national examination, SIMCE, which is conducted every year for fourth-graders and every second year for eighth-, and tenth-graders. The results of this evaluation are used to assess the quality of educational provision at school, regional, and national levels, and they have no direct



consequences for individual students. SIMCE assesses science, social science, mathematics, and reading in Grades 4 and 8, and mathematics and reading in Grade 10. The results are provided as test scores and also as achievement levels (Ministry of Education, 2010d). As has been previously described, content areas related to civic and citizenship education are mostly found in the subject social science, which means that student proficiency in this area is assessed as part of SIMCE. It also means that there is no set of results specifically denoting achievement in civic and citizenship education (Ministry of Education, 2010c).

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Chile has two national inservice teacher assessments. Both are conducted by the Ministry of Education and both include social science teachers. The aim of the first one, called *Asignación de Excelencia Pedagógica* (Teaching Excellence Program), is to identify teachers exhibiting professional excellence. Teachers from municipal and subsidized schools can apply to be considered for this honor. Applicants have to submit a portfolio of activities and complete a test. Those teachers who are identified as “excellent” receive an annual bonus, equivalent to a month’s salary, over a period of 10 years. This program has been in place since 2002 (Ministry of Education, n. d.).

The other teacher assessment system, the National Evaluation System for Teachers, is compulsory for teachers employed at municipal schools. In place since 2004, it aims to identify teachers who are not performing as well as they should in some areas of their work so that they can receive the necessary remedial inservice training. The evaluation consists of several instruments: a portfolio of activities, an assessment from the school principal, a peer assessment, and a self-assessment (Ministry of Education, 2010d).

In 2009, the Ministry of Education implemented a new diagnostic voluntary assessment program called *Inicia*. It assesses students who are studying to become teachers. Its immediate goal is to provide universities with feedback on how well they are educating future teachers, but its ultimate purpose is to enhance the overall quality of the teaching profession in Chile (Ministry of Education, 2010e).

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# Chinese Taipei

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

In 2009, the population of Chinese Taipei (Taiwan) was 23,119,772, with the majority of the population (98%) reporting Chinese ethnicity (National Statistics, Republic of China on Taiwan, 2009). Taiwan has five main ethnic groups: Holo (also known as Minnanren), Hakka, Waishengren (Chinese who immigrated after the Second World War), aboriginals, and new immigrants. The first three groups are of Chinese origin, and the people of each speak their own dialect. The country has 256,210 Aboriginal people in 14 tribes.

In general, new immigrants are foreign spouses from China and Southeast Asian countries, and their children. According to the Ministry of the Interior, the ratio of Taiwanese people who marry a foreign spouse constituted 15 percent of the total number of marriages registered in Chinese Taipei during the first half of 2010. Of the partners in foreign-spouse marriages, 63 percent were from China, Macao, and Hong Kong SAR, and 37 percent were from other countries that included Vietnam and Indonesia (Department of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior, 2010).

As in other Southeast Asian countries, notably Singapore and Japan, Chinese Taipei has experienced a decline in its birth rate in recent years. In 2000, newborns comprised 14 percent of the population. In 2009, the rate declined to eight percent and is expected to continue falling.

Chinese Taipei's official language is Mandarin Chinese. Dialects include Min-nan, Hakka, and the country's indigenous languages. Older people who were educated during the Japanese colonial period (1895 to 1945) also speak Japanese. The language of instruction in schools is Mandarin. English is the most commonly used foreign language in Taiwan and is compulsory in schools, where it is taught as a second language.

### Characteristics of the Political System

During the 17th Century, Chinese people from Fujian and Guangdong provinces began immigrating to Taiwan and soon came to form the majority of the population. From 1948 to 1987, Taiwan was under martial law, and the country was, at this time, a one-party state. Tension between Chinese Taipei and the People's Republic of China was high during this era. The abolition of martial law in 1987 signified the end of centralized control by the Kuomintang (National People's Party) government and the beginning of democratization in Chinese Taipei. Chinese Taipei's first major opposition party—the Democratic Progressive Party—had been formed the year before. In 1990, Chinese Taipei's first locally born president, Dr. Lee Teng-Hui, was elected. President Lee promoted Taiwanese identity and culture. During his presidency, recognition was given to Taiwan's history.



In 2000, Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic Progressive Party won the presidential election. Under Chen's presidency, Taiwanese identity, culture, and history continued to be emphasized, and tension between the People's Republic of China and Chinese Taipei reached its peak. China viewed Taiwanese efforts to reclaim its culture and history as a political move designed to cut the link between the two countries.

In 2008, Chinese Taipei's Kuomintang Party won the national election of that year, gaining a majority in the country's parliament. In the same year, the Kuomintang's presidential nominee, Dr. Ma Ying-jeou, became president. The current Kuomintang government enjoys better relations with China and tensions have lessened. In 2010, the two countries signed an Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA),<sup>1</sup> under which Taiwan is benefiting economically from tariff reductions on many categories of goods and gaining greater access to world markets. The agreement also marked the resumption, after more than 60 years, of direct air flights between Taiwan and China.

In addition to entering an era of greater trade and economic cooperation with China, Chinese Taipei recently (2010) passed two draft documents focusing on cooperation in education. The first document concerns students from Mainland China studying in Taiwan, and the second recognizes education certificates from Mainland China. The former focuses on higher education while the latter applies to the public education system (Laws and Regulations Retrieving System, 2011).

## Education System

### Overview and Background

In 2009, Chinese Taipei had 8,060 schools and 5,066,017 students (Ministry of Education, 2010a). Approximately 68 percent of students were attending public educational institutions at this time.

The Ministry of Education operated the education system in a highly centralized fashion prior to the educational reforms launched in 1994. Today, Chinese Taipei's education system is continuing to move toward greater decentralization.

### Structure of the Education System

Chinese Taipei's education system follows a 6-3-3-4 system. Students spend six years in primary education and six years in secondary education, with the latter subdivided into three years of junior secondary and three years of senior secondary school. Undergraduate degrees are typically of four years' duration.

### Compulsory Education

Compulsory education in Taiwan spans nine years and covers the primary and junior secondary levels. Children enter primary school at age six. The country has both public and private schools: approximately 60 percent of students are enrolled in public schools. In 2011, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to expand compulsory education from 9 to 12 years, beginning in 2014. This change had been a contested issue in Taiwan for some years (Ministry of Education, 2011).

### Noncompulsory Education

Under the current system, students completing the nine years of compulsory education and wishing to further their education can choose either an academic or a vocational track. The academic track leads to senior secondary education, college or university education, and



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<sup>1</sup> More details can be found at <http://www.ecfa.org.tw/index.aspx>

postgraduate education. The vocational track leads to senior vocational schools, junior colleges, technology colleges or universities, and postgraduate education. Students can, however, move from one track to another during this period of their education.

Taiwan has 164 higher education institutions that include 105 universities, 44 colleges, and 15 technological colleges. Of these higher education institutions, 110 are private and 54 are public (Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics, 2010). Before 2002, the only way students could enter higher education was by passing the Joint University Entrance Examination. After 2002, the number of admission channels expanded.

Students who graduate from vocational senior high schools not only are expected and equipped to enter the job market but can also pursue a degree at a regular or technological institution of higher education. Undergraduate programs usually require four years of fulltime study, with the exception of dentistry and medicine, which require six to seven years of fulltime study.

### **The Curriculum**

Reform of the curriculum for Grades 1 to 9 is one of the most significant current educational initiatives in Taiwan. Its aim has been and is to change the previous, subject-oriented curriculum design to one that emphasizes interdisciplinary learning. The new curriculum also represents a shift in pedagogy from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach. Developing school-based curricula is a key theme of curriculum reform.

The new curriculum has seven learning areas and seven major crosscurricular strands. The seven learning areas are language arts, integrative activities, mathematics, social studies, health and physical education, arts and humanities, and science and technology. The strands include information and communication technology education, environmental education, gender education, human rights education, career development education, home economics education, and marine education.

Under the curriculum guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2010b), schools are expected to help students develop 10 core competencies by adhering to principles and engaging in practices focused on the following:

- Enhancing self-understanding and exploring individual potential;
- Cultivating appreciation, expression, and creativity;
- Planning career trajectories and developing an appetite for lifelong learning;
- Fostering knowledge and skills pertaining to expression, communication, and sharing;
- Respecting others, caring for society, and facilitating teamwork;
- Learning about different cultures and understanding the world;
- Strengthening knowledge and skills related to planning, organizing, and practice;
- Learning to utilize technology and information;
- Encouraging the attitude of active learning and studying; and
- Developing the ability to think independently and problem solve.

Another significant initiative during the decentralization process has been the opening up of the textbook market. In the past, students in primary and secondary schools were required to use textbooks published by the government-operated National Institute for Compilation and Translation. In 1999, in order to achieve greater diversity in education, the Ministry of Education implemented the government's "one standard, multiple textbooks" policy. Today, schools can choose textbooks that meet their needs.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

According to the Grades 1 to 9 social studies curriculum guidelines, the aims of citizenship education are to develop students' civic knowledge, civic virtue, and civic participation through studying nine themes: people and time; change and continuity; people and space; individual, group, and interpersonal relations; power, rule, and human rights; production, distribution, and consumption; science, technology, and society; global connection; and meaning and values.

In 2009, Chinese Taipei's Ministry of Education combined the guidelines for implementing civic education with those for its human rights education program in a document that offered four strategies for implementing the guidelines: building rules that promote friendly campuses; developing curriculum and teaching materials on human rights and civic education; providing teachers with professional development on teaching human rights and civic education; and promoting human rights and civic education.

In addition to encompassing the area of social studies, citizenship education in Taiwan covers the seven major crosscurricular themes set down earlier in this chapter. School activities such as class meetings, school meetings, student self-governance committees, flag-raising ceremonies, and schoolwide self-governance elections also contribute to citizenship education in Chinese Taipei.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

#### General Overview

While citizenship education is integrated into various subjects in primary education, it is approached as a specific curriculum subject at the junior and senior secondary levels of Chinese Taipei's education system. At all levels of the education system, the citizenship education curriculum aims to help students:

- Gain an understanding of the environment, humanity, diversity, and issues facing local and other communities;
- Comprehend interactions among people, society, culture, and ecology, and the significance of environment protection and resource exploration;
- Enrich essential knowledge in the social sciences;
- Develop local and global identities and understand local and global concerns;
- Cultivate democratic literacy, an appreciation of rule and order, and an attitude of responsibility;
- Nurture self-understanding and self-fulfillment;
- Develop the capacity for critical thinking, value judgments, and problem solving;
- Develop social participation, decisionmaking, and practice skills;
- Foster the abilities of expression, communication, and cooperation; and
- Harness curiosity by facilitating the skills of exploration, research, creativity, and information processing (Ministry of Education, 2010c).

At the primary level, citizenship education in Taiwan is taught as part of social studies. Social studies, in turn, is taught as part of the "life" component of the curriculum for students in Grades 1 and 2 and as a separate learning area within the curriculum for Grades 3 to 6 students.



At the junior secondary level (Grades 7 to 9), social studies consists of three components—history, geography, and civic education. Here, the emphasis is on helping students become participatory and responsible citizens. Students are expected to engage in activities underpinned by the principle of “global thinking, local practice.”

When producing social studies textbooks, publishers follow the social studies curriculum guidelines that stress the importance of tolerating diversity, communicating rationally, and respecting differences. Content of both textbooks and lessons are also expected to reflect students’ life experiences. The role of teachers is to facilitate open-minded discussions in classrooms and a classroom environment that respects diversity among students. Teachers are also required to present different opinions and to encourage students to think independently and to analyze problems.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

According to Article 10 of Chinese Taipei’s Compulsory Education Law, primary and junior secondary schools must involve their school councils when making decisions on important school affairs. The school council is composed of school leaders and teacher, parent, and other staff representatives. Each junior secondary school is also required to have a student council whose role is to represent students’ ideas and issues regarding school matters. The council has the ancillary purpose of strengthening students’ abilities to self-govern and their understanding of the workings and nature of democracy.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

The new curriculum guidelines for social studies position learning as a more student-directed process than a teacher-directed process. The previous curriculum emphasized the teachers’ role as “guiding” students, while the current curriculum guidelines stress “cultivating students’ essential abilities.”

The new curriculum guidelines have also been strongly shaped by the issue of national identity, which has been a longstanding concern and subject of debate not only in the political arena but also with respect to the school curriculum. The shift from a China-centered national identity to a Taiwan-centered one raised a number of questions of relevance to school curricula, such as these two: What counts as worthwhile and legitimate knowledge? What is the appropriate way to present the issue of national identity and the relationship between the cultures of Taiwan and China? A definitive answer to the second question in particular has yet to be found given that there is no consensus on this matter among the people of Chinese Taipei or among the country’s political parties (Liu, Hung, & Vickers, 2005). The major political parties, in particular, have frequently influenced and contested the Ministry of Education’s policies on this issue.

The question of whether “civics and society” should be included as a subject in the examination that determines entry to higher education feeds into another ongoing debate. Although the Ministry of Education decided to include civics and society as a subject in the examination, various stakeholders such as parent groups, some teacher associations, and students opposed the decision. These opposing views were expressed in a public hearing at the Legislative Yuan on how citizenship education should be taught. One of the main arguments expressed was that while citizenship education is important, there is no need to make it an examination subject. A major concern fuelling the debate is based on the premise that having another examination subject increases the burden on students. However, despite the controversy, the policy has been in effect since July 2009.



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Teacher education in Taiwan has experienced widespread change since 1994. Before 1994, teacher education was highly controlled by the Ministry of Education and followed the central government's policies. At that time, teacher education was a monopoly belonging to three normal universities, and nine teachers' colleges. However, enactment of the Teacher Education Law in 1994 enabled all universities that already had or planned to have teacher education programs to compete for students.

Chinese Taipei currently offers two routes to teacher certification. The first route is through a teacher education university, which might be a university of education (for prospective primary teachers, although National Changhau University of Education trains secondary school teachers) or a normal university (for prospective secondary teachers). The training programs at these universities last four years. Alternatively, students attending other universities can complete a one-year teacher education program if their university has a center for teacher education. Students who complete the one-year program need to engage in a half-year teaching practicum. Students must also pass a qualifying examination administered by the Ministry of Education to obtain a teaching certificate. The qualifying examination tests students' competence in three areas: literacy, educational principles and systems, and specialist subject areas such as English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Students pay most of the tuition and fees of their teacher education programs, but full scholarship and partial financial assistance are available for a limited number of students. After acquiring the teaching certificate, students with a full scholarship are sent to schools in remote areas. The remaining qualified teachers usually need to attend a teacher screening examination held by individual schools or local government in order to gain a permanent position at a school.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Citizenship education in Grades 7 to 9 is taught by teachers who have specialized in the area of citizenship or another, related social science area. The teacher education universities offer programs dedicated to training citizenship education teachers. Alternatively, students from legal studies and social science disciplines in universities that do not specialize in teacher education can attend teacher education programs in universities that do.

## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

The examination system in Chinese Taipei is both extensive and intensive. Nationwide examinations are mandatory at the end of Grade 9 and at the end of senior secondary school. In order to gain admission to senior secondary school or vocational school, Grade 9 students need to take the Basic Academic Competence Test for Junior High School Students, which is held twice a year. The results of the examination are part of senior high schools' selection criteria. The test comprises six examination sections: Chinese, English, mathematics, social studies, science, and Chinese writing composition.

A multi-route entrance program provides senior secondary school students with three alternatives for entering colleges or universities, namely recommendation, application, and examination. Students who choose the recommendation approach are required to take the General Scholastic Attainment Test (GSAT) after receiving a recommendation from their senior secondary school. Students who are not recommended by their schools can take the GSAT and then apply to a program on their own volition. Under the third approach, students can gain



admission into a university or college by passing the GSAT and then taking the Designated Subject Examination (DSE). Having considered the students' results and their choice of institution, the College Entrance Examination Center notifies students as to which university or college they will attend.

The examination subjects included in the GSAT are Chinese, English, mathematics, social studies (history, geography, and civics and society), and science (physics, chemistry, biology, and earth science). The aim of the test is to determine whether a student has the basic subject knowledge and skills required to embark on university study. The emphasis is on students' comprehension and application abilities.

The DSE is composed of the following examination sections: Chinese, English, mathematics, history, geography, civics and society, physics, chemistry, and biology. Students can choose to sit some or all examination subjects in line with their own specialties and the requirements of the various teacher education programs available to them.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Students in junior secondary schools are assessed both summatively and formatively with respect to civic and citizenship education. In addition to using summative, pen-and-paper examinations, teachers also evaluate through essays, projects, presentations, classroom participation, self-assessment, and peer assessment.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Schools are evaluated not only by state inspectors and other external agencies, but also through parental feedback, student feedback, and school self-evaluations. Teachers, school management personnel, the Ministry of Education (through its website and various documents), parents' associations, and other related organizations keep parents informed about school practice in this area of educational provision.

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# Colombia

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

At the time of the most recent census in Colombia (2005), the country had a total population of 42,888,592 people (National Department of Statistics, 2010, p. 103). It was estimated that this number would increase to 45.5 million by 2010. Around 78 percent of the population lives in urban areas (Economic Commission for Latin America, 1999).

Colombia's Constitution confirms the official language of the country as Spanish (Political Constitution of Colombia 1991, Article 10). However, the country also has 64 Amerindian languages along with the diverse dialects of ethnic groups, which are recognized as official languages in different parts of the country (Rodríguez Palau, Hernández Romero, Salamanca Rodríguez, Ruiz, & Fabio, 2007, p. 16). Those communities that have their own linguistic traditions also have bilingual teaching at their schools.

The 2005 census identified 87 indigenous groups, comprising 1,392,623 people and representing approximately 3.4 percent of the national population (Rodríguez Palau et al., 2007, p. 34). The great majority of the indigenous population lives in rural areas within the country. Some of them live in *resguardos*. These territories, the limits of which are established by law, are occupied by one or more indigenous groups who possess their own social organization and have collective property titles, which are nontransferable and cannot be seized. Others live in indigenous territories. These indigenous descendant groups are very aware of their identity and shared values, cultural customs, forms of government, and nursing systems, all of which distinguish them from other communities. However, these people do not possess the legal status of indigenous *resguardos* but have individual or community titles to their lands. There are also indigenous Colombians who live outside of these legally defined territories (Rodríguez Palau et al., 2007, pp. 16–18).

The Afro-Colombian population in 2005 was made up of 4,311,757 people, representing 11 percent of the total national population (Rodríguez Palau et al., 2007, p. 34). These people are geographically distributed in four main groups. The first contains people who inhabit the Colombian "Pacific Corridor," which is made up of about 132 Black Communities Collective Territories that occupy a land area of 4,717,269 hectares, representing four percent of the country's total territory. The second is the Raizal community in the San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina archipelago, whose Afro-Anglo-Antillean sociocultural and linguistic roots distinguish them from the rest of the Afro-Colombian population. The third, the San Basilio de Palenque community, is characterized by the use of the Afro-Colombian Creole language called El Palenquero. The fourth and last group is the population residing inside the municipal and metropolitan areas of the big cities such as Cartagena, Cali, Barranquilla, Medellín, and Bogotá. Due to rapidly increasing migration to urban areas, which is a direct consequence of forced displacement, the latter group represents just over 29 percent of the Afro-Colombian population (Rodríguez Palau et al., 2007, pp. 19–20).



The Romani or Gypsy community has 4,858 people and represents 0.01 percent of the country's population (Rodríguez Palau et al., 2007, p. 34). These people live mainly in urban areas and reside in units of co-residence called *kumpanias*, which are located inside non-Gypsy areas. Some Romani form family groups of different sizes that nevertheless maintain cultural and social bonds with some *kumpanias* (Rodríguez Palau et al., 2007, p. 22).

In 2009, Colombia's gross domestic product per capita was US\$9,200 (PPP) (Central Intelligence Agency, 2010).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Constitutionally, Colombia is defined as a social state of law, organized in the form of a unitary republic, decentralized, with autonomy over its territorial entities, and embracing both democratic and pluralistic principles. Public power is divided into three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. The legislative branch consists of senators and representatives. They form the republic's congress and have the power to reform the constitution and make laws that exercise control over Colombia's administration and government. The executive branch is headed by the president of the republic, who is also the head of state, chief of government, and supreme administrative authority. The president is responsible for ensuring the rights and freedoms of all Colombians. The executive branch also includes the offices of governors and mayors, public establishments, and the state's industrial and commercial companies. Administration of justice resides with the judiciary branch, which is represented by the judges of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Justice, and the State Board (Political Constitution of Colombia 1991, Articles 1, 113, 115, 228, 232).

One of the Colombian Government's priorities has been to try to end the decades-long political conflict that includes confrontations between military forces, insurgent groups, and, more recently, the paramilitary. This conflict has become more acute due to drug trafficking and corruption, which has led to the displacement of a substantial portion of the civil population, especially in rural areas. This context is reflected in the high rates of intimidation, aggression, and other forms of interpersonal violence in educational institutions, families, and communities.

Specific civic and citizenship education policies have been proposed as a response to the violent situation in Colombia. These focus on developing skills, attitudes, actions, and thoughts that contribute to coexistence (living together peacefully). They also focus on peace, encouraging community and societal participation, and strengthening the enrichment brought about by cultural, social, and gender diversity (Jaramillo Franco, 2008, p. 66).

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Colombia's national educational policy is mainly oriented toward three objectives: making education universal at all of its different levels (ISCED Levels 0, 1, 2, and 3), improving quality, and strengthening educational administration. This policy, defined by the National Ministry of Education, is included in the National Development Plan, which is scrutinized and approved by Congress and is valid for four years, thereby corresponding to the presidential term of office. Under Colombia's 715 Law of December 21, 2001,<sup>1</sup> the Ministry of Education distributes and oversees the financing of education according to allocations set down in the government's budget. Resourcing flows from the ministry to Colombia's regional departments (equivalent to regions or provinces) and within departments to those municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants and those that meet the requirements for being certified as a territorial entity.

1 "By which organic rules with respect to resources and competencies are dictated in conformity with articles 151, 288, 356 and 357 (Legislative Act 01 of 2001) of the Political Constitution and other dispositions are dictated in order to organize services offered in health and education among others" (Law 715, December 21, 2001).



Educational funding for all other municipalities comes from the administration funds of the department in which they are located.

The National Ministry of Education also defines the national standards of quality for all educational levels, monitors compliance with national educational policies, and evaluates the results of these assessments. However, the territorial agencies have the freedom (economic and administrative) to implement these policies as they see fit. Local educational authorities (LEAs) are responsible for staffing the schools (teachers and administrators) in the towns within their jurisdiction and for ensuring that these schools are sufficiently well resourced in terms of funding and staff. The LEAs are also responsible for implementing and monitoring educational quality plans.

Law No. 115 of 1994, or the General Law of Education,<sup>2</sup> guarantees schools the right to determine their own teaching programs and methods, governance and culture, student participation and assessment, relationships with parents and the community, design and application of curricula, and selection of textbooks. However, the government requires each school to develop an “institutional education project” (PEI) and to use it as the platform from which to design its own curriculum. Schools are required to include compulsory subjects in their respective curriculums but can choose how they will fit these into their teaching programs and local contexts. Schools must also reference quality guidelines (national standards) when developing and delivering their courses.

All schools have to make sure that their students acquire specified basic skills during their education. Schools define their own institutional system of student assessment, which incorporates classroom evaluation and determines the standards that students need to have met in order to transition from grade to grade and from level to level of the education system. Schools are also required to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses against their improvement plans, and to modify these as needed.

### Structure of the Education System

Compulsory education covers a period of 10 years. Students must start school at age five and continue with their education until age 15. Compulsory education encompasses a preschool grade (ISCED 0) and nine grades of basic education, made up of five grades of primary schooling (ISCED 1) and four grades of lower-secondary schooling (ISCED 2). At the preschool and primary level, there is one appointed teacher for each grade. At the lower-secondary level, there is one teacher for each subject. However, in rural and remote areas, schools take a flexible multigrade approach to teaching that is primarily characterized by one teacher simultaneously teaching students from different grades and levels inside the same classroom. The schools taking this approach are variously known as *escuela nueva* (new schools), *postprimaria rural* (postprimary rural), and *telesecundaria* (secondary education that delivers learning content through videos and other distance education communication technologies).

Each school can also develop crosscurricular or special programs made up of elective subjects and projects, some of which are offered or promoted by the Ministry of Education (e.g., environmental education, sex education, human rights education). These subjects/projects typically involve more than one teacher, and students from one or more grades.

Upper-secondary education (ISCED 3), which is called *educación media*, consists of two grades, 10 and 11. It caters to young people 16 to 17 years of age. Upper-secondary education has two tracks: general (academic) and technical (*educación media técnica*). Completion of both types of education leads to acquisition of the *Bachillerato*. Young people wanting to enter university



<sup>2</sup> “By which the general law of education is expedited” (Law 115, February 8, 1994).

education have to complete upper-secondary education and pass the State Test of Middle Education (SABER 11°). Entry is also subject to the particular requirements of the university they want to attend.

According to 2008 data, just over 57 percent of Colombian schools are public and nearly 43 percent are private. Slightly more than 83 percent of primary and lower-secondary students attend public schools, while nearly 17 percent attend private schools.<sup>3</sup>

When hiring teaching staff for public schools, the LEAs publish advertisements detailing the nature of the application process. Schools define the educational requirements for their teachers, and select teachers on the basis of their qualifications and the needs set out in their respective school improvement plans. Private schools have complete autonomy when it comes to the selection and professional development of their teaching staff.

Schools democratically elect members of the school government, which generally consists of both an administrative board and an academic board. The administrative board, which includes the principal and representatives from the school's teaching, management, student, and parent communities, makes those decisions that affect the school's functioning. The board has complete freedom from the jurisdiction of any other authority when making these decisions. The administrative board also has a role in conflict resolution and is responsible for guaranteeing the rights of the school's students and teachers. The board is furthermore responsible for facilitating planning and for managing and evaluating school and community activities.

The academic board includes the principal, teacher representatives, and student representatives. Its role is to consider and guide implementation and delivery of the curriculum, and to monitor and adjust it as deemed necessary. The academic board also has a role in setting out and implementing educational plans, evaluating the quality of the school's educational provision, and ensuring that the school is functioning as it should.

Every school must have a *manual de convivencia* (student coexistence handbook) or some sort of regulations manual that specifies codes of behavior and sets out the rights and duties of students, teachers, and managers. The government requires schools to revisit the handbook at regular intervals and to use it as a study resource in the classroom.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, civic and citizenship education is one of the priorities of Colombia's national educational policy. In Colombia, the aim of citizenship education is to work toward the establishment of more peaceful, democratic, inclusive, and fair communities. Citizenship education emphasizes developing moral codes with respect to human rights and developing teachers' and students' cognitive, emotional, and communicative skills. Civic education is understood as knowledge relevant to political participation and all that is necessary to provide a person with the ability to exercise his or her civic rights and to accord others those same rights.

Colombia's National Program of Citizen Competencies focuses on the school's ethos, which should reflect democratic principles. In pursuit of this aim, the National Ministry of Education has defined objectives that need to be considered in any policies concerning civic and citizenship education. The ministry has also established basic standards for the civic and citizenship competencies that students should have acquired by the end of their primary, lower-



<sup>3</sup> The data for 2009 given in this paragraph are preliminary and subject to change (National Ministry of Education, 2010a).

secondary, and upper-secondary schooling (ISCED 1, 2, and 3). These basic standards are the result of agreements reached between the various stakeholders who are directly or indirectly involved in the educational sector.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

In Colombia, civic and citizenship education is a crosscurricular subject. It is therefore regarded as part of all subject areas, and its purpose is to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that, taken together, enable young Colombians to act in a constructive way in society (National Ministry of Education, 2010b).

Colombian students do not follow a common (nationwide) curriculum. Instead, as noted earlier, schools can develop the content of subjects and activities according to the priorities set down in their PEIs and in accordance with the government's basic education standards. The basic standards establish the essential aspects of citizenship education that all students in all regions of the country should attain. These differ according to grade level:

- ISCED 1: Grades 1 to 3 and 4 to 5;
- ISCED 2: Grades 6 to 7 and 8 to 9; and
- ISCED 3: Grades 10 to 11.

They are encapsulated in different themes, such as:

- Building coexistence and peace;
- Participation and democratic responsibility; and
- Identity, plurality, and respect for differences.

The common and specific themes of civic and citizenship education vary in their level of complexity. The aim of the standards, in addition to aiding the development of citizenship knowledge, is to bring about a holistic development of communication, emotional, and cognitive skills, and a favoring of moral development. The standards also require the themes to be underpinned by the notion that the aim of civic and citizen education is to contribute to the construction of peace and coexistence, promote participation and democratic responsibility, embrace pluralism, encourage personal, national, and global identity, and value human differences (National Ministry of Education, 2006a).

The crosscurricular approach to civic and citizenship education in Colombia is also achieved by treating the standards as transversal components of school programs, classroom experiences, classroom ethos, and even as specific "spaces" wherein students can exercise their civic knowledge and practice their citizenship skills. Throughout all levels of their schooling, students engage in school assemblies, special events, and extracurricular activities commensurate with the compulsory teaching of the precepts of Colombia's national constitution.

The National Standards of Citizenship Competencies establish the topics or concepts of civic and citizenship to be taught to lower-secondary (ISCED 2) students. These are:

- The institutions and principles of the democratic system; the state, its structure and institutions; the law and culture of the legal and judicial systems; and the criminal justice system and the police force.
- Political organizations in a democratic society; the rights and liabilities of the citizen; risks to democracy; the economy, sustainable development, and globalization; democratic participation; rights and duties with regard to voting; methods of representation; critical judgment with respect to political information; consensus and dissent; decisions made by majorities; and respect for minorities.



- Plurality and diversity; stereotypes and gender and racial prejudices; the values of equality, diversity, and tolerance; discrimination and exclusion; inclusion, coexistence, and peace; and illegitimacy of the use of force or violence by people or groups.
- Conditions for the legitimate use of force by the state; pacific and negotiated resolution of conflicts; deliberation on and achieving of agreements; emotional coexistence skills; identity, nationalism, and Latin American identity; civic principles; and freedoms, social cohesion, concern for the commonwealth, human rights, social justice, and solidarity.

Because each school organizes its own curriculum and pedagogical activities according to its PEI, the amount of time assigned to civic and citizenship education can vary from one school to another. Parents play an integral role in this educational area through dialogue with teachers, public information campaigns, and consultation on published resources featuring civic and citizen education topics. The National Ministry of Education makes available a resource known as the *Citizenship Skills Program Portfolio* (National Ministry of Education, 2006b, pp. 93–95). Here, teachers can find different ways (and discussions on them) of teaching topics and skills related to civic and citizenship education. The ministry constantly provides updated information on these alternatives, and features new ideas.

One prominent civic and citizenship initiative in Colombia is the Legal Culture Program. Developed by the National Ministry of Education with support from the Presidential Program for Fighting Corruption and the United States Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Strategy Information Center, the program and its usefulness are jointly monitored by the LEAs and the schools that have implemented it. The aim of this program is to promote a society whose social organization and coexistence is established by the “rule of law,” which is grounded in respect for society’s collective agreements. The program has a teacher-training component. It also distributes appropriate educational resources and (through the LEAs) monitors schools. The biggest challenge currently facing the program is bringing it to all regions of the country (National Ministry of Education, 2006b, pp. 57–58).

Another initiative is the Plan for Education in Human Rights (PLANEDH), jointly developed by the National Ministry of Education and the Defensoría del Pueblo (an institution for the promotion and protection of human rights). The Presidential Program of Human Rights, The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the human rights program of the United States Agency for International Development-Management Sciences for Development also lend their support to this initiative. The purpose of the plan is to establish a framework for public policies that can serve for reform based on the constitutional mandates relating to human rights (Article 67 of the national constitution). It proposes a focus on human rights in educational policies, identifies the rights and duties of target groups within educational contexts, emphasizes the need to secure quality education for children from minority ethnic groups and young people in vulnerable situations, and promotes protection of multiethnic diversity. PLANEDH is seen as a tool that can aid research on pedagogy that embraces education grounded in human rights. The program also promotes training of teachers in this area (National Ministry of Education, 2007, 2009a, 2009b; United Nations Human Rights Commission on Colombia, 2009).

A NGO called the Fundación Presencia provides important citizenship education experiences for students throughout Colombia. The components of this educational program include “the fundamentals of democracy and human rights ... citizenship within the context of the constitution ... [and] the Citizenship Project.”<sup>4</sup> The foundation has redesigned these components so that they are suitable for students at different levels of basic and upper-



<sup>4</sup> This program was originally designed by the Civic Education Center (Los Angeles, California) and was then adapted by the Fundación Presencia.

secondary education (National Ministry of Education, 2006b, pp. 93–95). Several other NGOs also work inside schools, encouraging and supporting students to participate in their communities and in civic matters.

A variety of community projects concerned with environmental education facilitates relationships between schools and their communities. These initiatives have been generated in conjunction with the Ministry of Environment, Housing, and Territorial Development. All schools are required to have an environmental education program that is crosscurricular and involves all teachers and students, and that may also include parents, representatives from business, the farming community, and local authorities. Examples of these initiatives are the Environmental School Projects and the Citizen and Community Projects for Environmental Education (Colombia Aprende, 2010).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Students as well as parents and community representatives participate in school governance. School governance is a responsibility of the aforementioned administrative board, which comprises the principal and representatives of teachers, school administrative staff, businesspeople, parents, and students (students in this role must be in the last grade that the school offers). Civic duties are also exercised and exemplified for students through the following: the academic board, which consists of the principal, members of the school's management team, and a teacher of each grade and subject; the parents' council, with parent representatives for all grades and levels; and the student council.

Students who participate in student councils represent their classmates and mediate between students and teachers on matters of student interest and concern. The council is chaired by the *personero* (spokesperson). One student currently studying in the last grade of his or her school is elected to this position by his or her peers. The elected student acts as a promoter of students' rights and duties and presents to the principal all proposals considered necessary to protect the rights of the students and to enable them to carry out their duties with ease.

This varied participation in school government encourages students to participate in creating and reviewing their school's student coexistence handbook. The spokesperson takes suggestions from students pertaining to the handbook and presents them to the student council, the members of which then review it in collaboration with the administrative board, with a view to determining what changes might or should be made. Parents and teachers can also participate in this process by offering their suggestions on content development and changes.

### **Current Reforms and Debates on Civic and Citizenship Education**

According to the General Law of Education (Law 115 of 1994), the National Ministry of Education, in collaboration with territorial entities (departments and municipalities), is required to revise Colombia's National Plan of Educational Development at least once every 10 years. This revision work includes actions necessary for fulfilling constitutional and legal mandates relating to educational provision.

More than 1,300 working groups from throughout the country participated in the development of the Decennial National Plan of Education, 2006–2016. Seventy percent of these groups expressed interest in topics related to values, citizenship education, human rights, and civic knowledge. Currently, the different political groups in Colombia are debating the best way to teach civic and citizenship education. The value of civic and citizenship education and discussions on which pedagogical approaches are most effective in creating better learning environments have been widely discussed in the mass media as well as within families and workplaces.



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Colombia requires its teachers to have a normal school degree in order to teach at preschool and primary schools or to have a professional university degree specializing in a particular subject area for teaching any level of the school system. During their professional practice, teachers may receive training sponsored by the school they work for or by the LEAs or the National Ministry of Education. Inservice teachers can voluntarily attend professional development programs, including those relating to citizenship topics, offered by NGOs and universities. Participation in professional development can help teachers advance their careers and salary bands.

In order to teach Grade 8 (the ICCS target grade in Colombia), teachers must have in hand a university diploma, passed a selection test, and satisfactorily completed interviews and teaching internships. The Ministry of Education certifies relevant studies carried out at higher (tertiary) education institutions abroad so that the individuals holding these qualifications can teach in Colombia (National Ministry of Education, 2010c).

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Because of the crosscurricular nature of civic and citizenship education, teachers of any subject-matter can assume responsibility for citizenship education, in accordance with the framework of their school's PEI and their personal interests. However, the teachers who exercise leadership in this learning domain are generally those who have training or education in areas related to the social sciences, such as history, geography, philosophy, and religion.

Teacher education with respect to citizenship education is carried out through coaching, networking, lectures, and workshops, which the teachers either attend in person or access through internet media prepared by the Ministry of Education. The ministry also prepares print resources, which they send to the LEAs for distribution to municipalities and remote rural areas.

The ministry's Citizenship Competencies Education Program ensures that teachers receive ongoing training in civic and citizenship education. This provision helps teachers reference and make appropriate use of the government's basic standards for education and assess citizenship competencies. The program also encourages teachers to develop innovative classroom and schoolwide projects. It furthermore supports schools' efforts to bring civic and citizenship education into their school improvement plans (Jaramillo Franco, 2008, pp. 65–76).

## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

The Colombian Institute for the Assessment of Education (ICFES) carries out regular assessments of school quality through tools prescribed by the basic standards. There are three types of tests, each of which is associated with a different cycle of the school career.

SABER 5° and 9° test students in Grades 5 and 9. These assessments, which have been carried out every three years since 2002, measure the competencies that students up to Grade 5 (the first five grades of elementary school) and Grade 9 (the first four grades of lower-secondary school) have acquired in core subjects such as Spanish, mathematics, and natural sciences. Results are reported to schools, towns, and departments as feedback for school improvement.

The State Test of Middle Education, SABER 11°, monitors the level of skills students who are about to finish Grade 11 (the last grade of ISCED 3) have acquired. SABER 11° assesses students in Spanish, mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, social sciences, philosophy, English, and interdisciplinary areas, including “violence and society” and “the environment.”



Results are presented at both the individual and institutional levels through municipal, departmental, and national reports. The results of this test have many purposes:

- Providing students with feedback so that they can determine their strengths and use this information to help them choose their professional career;
- Providing tertiary education institutions with information that aids their student selection processes;
- Giving schools information useful for their self-assessment process and for guiding their pedagogical practices; and
- Providing educational authorities with information that helps them build school-quality indicators (Colombian Institute for the Evaluation of Education, 2010a).

All students in their final undergraduate year at university level are assessed by the National Assessment on Quality of Higher Education, SABER PRO. Results are provided at the student, institutional, municipal, and national levels. The test assesses the generic and specific skills of students in different training and academic programs and provides a source of information to aid in the construction of quality indicators of higher education institutions and their programs. The results also provide information that allows stakeholders to compare programs, institutions, and methodologies, as well as trend data (Colombian Institute for the Evaluation of Education, 2010b).

Colombia has participated and continues to be involved in a wide range of international assessments such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Second Regional Comparative Study (SERCE), Civic Education Study (CIVED), International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The results from these studies are used for guiding efforts to improve teaching and learning in the assessed areas. While the national evaluation undertaken through the SABER assessments provides a means of assessing educational provision and student performance across Colombia, international testing programs allow Colombia to assess its educational provision against that of countries in the region and worldwide.

### **Assessment and Examinations in Subjects Related to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Lower-secondary students (ISCED 2) are assessed through homework, essays, written tests, and projects, and through their presentations and participation during lessons. Although schools have the freedom to define their own curriculum and study programs, the Basic Standards provide a national framework that allows schools to assess how well they are doing compared to other schools throughout Colombia. This framework also provides a means of assessing the quality of the national education system and guiding the design of assessment practices inside schools and other educational institutions (National Ministry of Education, 2006a, pp. 10–11).

The results of SABER 5° and 9° in school years 2002/2003 and 2005/2006 raised questions about how well schools were building students' citizenship competencies, as determined by the basic standards. In general, the assessments at this time aimed to establish if students had developed the series of skills in their daily lives that would allow them to act, reflect, feel, and communicate in ways commensurate with maintaining the welfare of their communities. The questions also focused on the social milieus in which children and young people normally interact, and the extent to which these environments favor the development of civic skills (National Ministry of Education, n. d.). In response to these questions, the tests have been further developed to evaluate topics related to citizenship education as well as those related to the national constitution, human rights, and the state's governance and laws. The tests also assess attitudes toward citizenship, civic actions, democratic environments, and cognitive, emotional, and communication skills (Jaramillo Franco, 2008, p. 71).



### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Diverse yet complementary strategies are used to assess the performance of schools in this area of educational provision. Assessment ranges from periodic evaluation through to external national evaluations and focuses on civic and citizenship activities that schools develop within the context of their PEIs. Academic research also plays a part in monitoring the quality of civic and citizenship education.

Teachers and school administrators keep parents of lower-secondary students (ISCED 2) informed about the development of their child's civic and citizenship skills. Attempts to create public awareness of the importance of this area of education include mass media campaigns. All interested parties can obtain information through the National Ministry of Education's website as well as through brochures and official documents. The National Ministry of Education and different educational authorities are increasingly endeavoring to involve parents and guardians in this area of education, in particular with regard to efforts to change attitudes and behavior that are contrary to its aims.

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# Cyprus

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The Republic of Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, with an area of 9,251 square kilometers, of which 1,733 are forested. It has a maximum length of 240 kilometers from east to west and a maximum width of 100 kilometers from north to south. It is situated at the northeastern end of the east Mediterranean basin, at a distance of 380 kilometers north of Egypt, 105 kilometers west of Syria, and 75 kilometers south of Turkey. The Greek mainland is some 800 kilometers to the west. The nearest Greek islands are Rhodes and Karpathos, 380 kilometers to the west (Government of Cyprus Press and Information Office, 2011).

The population of Cyprus is estimated to be 854,300. Approximately 77 percent of the total population belongs to the Greek Cypriot community. The Turkish Cypriot community comprises approximately 10 percent of the population. The remaining 13 percent comprise foreigners residing in Cyprus. The above figures do not include immigrants from Turkey residing in the occupied area of Cyprus (Government of Cyprus Press and Information Office, 2011).

In 1960, Cyprus gained its independence from Britain. The independence treaty established Cyprus as an independent republic. In 1974, the Turkish military invaded Cyprus and since then has occupied the northern part of the island. Approximately 37 percent of the island's territory is now under Turkish-Cypriot control (Government of Cyprus Press and Information Office, 2011). In 2004, Cyprus became a member of the European Union (EU).

The official languages of the country are Greek and Turkish, but English is also broadly used. The language of instruction depends on the type of school. As discussed later in this chapter, if a school is a public one, the language of instruction is Greek. If a school is private, the language of instruction is usually English, although there are some schools where the language of instruction is French.

The gross domestic product of Cyprus was recorded in 2008 as US\$B24.96. Cyprus has an open, free-market, services-based economy with some light manufacturing. Cyprus promotes not only its geographical location as a "bridge" between three continents but also its educated English-speaking population and its extensive airline connections and telecommunications network (Government of Cyprus Press and Information Office, 2011).

Cyprus has been a member of the Eurozone since January 1, 2008, when it replaced the Cyprus pound with the euro.

### Characteristics of the Political System

Cyprus is an independent and sovereign republic with a presidential system of government. Executive power is vested in the president, who is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term in office. The president exercises his or her power through a Council of Ministers that he or she appoints (Presidency of the Government of Cyprus, 2012). The Constitution of Cyprus stipulates that a Turkish Cypriot must hold the office of vice-president. The position is currently vacant due to the 1964 withdrawal of Turkish Cypriot leadership from the government. For the



same reason, the ministries and public service positions allocated to the Turkish Cypriots are now held by Greek Cypriots (Government of Cyprus Press and Information Office, 2011).

The legislative power of the Republic of Cyprus is exercised by the House of Representatives, whose members are elected for a five-year term. At the time of its establishment, the House of Representatives consisted of 50 members, 35 of whom were to be Greek Cypriots and 15 Turkish Cypriots. Through a constitutional amendment in 1985, the number of seats was increased to 80, 56 of which are now allocated to Greek Cypriot members while the remaining 24 are reserved for Turkish Cypriot deputies. The president of the House of Representatives also serves as the acting president of the Republic of Cyprus in the absence of the president (Ministry of the Interior, 2012).

Since the withdrawal of Turkish Cypriot members in 1964, the House of Representatives has functioned with the Greek Cypriot members. Under the 1960 constitution, the Maronite, Armenian, and Latin communities who opted to belong to the Greek Cypriot community can also elect representatives. These individuals attend meetings but do not have the right to participate in deliberations. They are consulted, however, in matters particular to their respective religious groups.

The judicial system in Cyprus is separate and independent. The Supreme Court, the assize courts, and the district courts are the main judicial institutions of Cyprus (Ministry of Justice and Public Order, 2008).

Local governance is the responsibility of municipal and community councils. The former are concerned with providing local government services and administering towns and large rural areas, while the latter are responsible for managing village affairs. These councils are independent bodies whose members are elected by universal suffrage.

With respect to its foreign policy, the Government of Cyprus generally aligns itself with the EU position within the framework of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. Since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the government's efforts have primarily focused on ending Turkey's military occupation and the division of Cyprus. Even though Cyprus has generally been allied with the West, it has also developed close relations with the rest of the world. Cyprus is a member of many international organizations, including the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and, as mentioned earlier, the EU (Government of Cyprus Press and Information Office, 2011).

In Cyprus, voting is compulsory for every citizen 18 years of age and over and in every type of election, including presidential, House of Representatives, and local authority. A relatively high percentage of Cypriots belong to a political party.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for education in Cyprus. A second authority, the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus, is responsible for editing and publishing school books, contracting research about education issues, and attending to other education-related matters. The third authority is the Council of Educational Evaluation Accreditation, whose members are appointed by the Board of Ministers for a five-year term that can be renewed once (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010a).

The Cypriot education system is highly centralized. The Ministry of Education and Culture controls the curriculum, textbooks, and other educational resources. The Education Service Commission, which is appointed by the government, in turn appoints teachers. Local school boards are funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and their role is restricted.



Schools are directly controlled by the ministry through an inspectorate and school principals (Michaelidou, 2010). The inspectorate controls many school activities and is responsible for teacher support, disciplinary matters, and curriculum development. It also carries out a wide range of administrative functions.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is organized into departments that largely reflect the structure of the system: a primary department (responsible for preprimary and primary education), a secondary department, a tertiary and higher education department, and a technical education department. There is also a department for personnel administration and a department of technical services that is responsible for planning and building schools.

### **Structure of the Education System**

Preschool education is provided by Greek-language state schools and by Greek-language and foreign-language private schools. Children aged from 3.0 to 5.8 years attend preschool, with attendance being compulsory for children 4.8 years of age and older. Attendance at one of the 188 private nursery schools costs from €1,500 to €3,500 per year; the cost at state schools is lower (and free for the period of compulsory attendance). There are also state and private child care centers for children up to three years of age (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010a).

Primary education is provided free of charge at state schools for children 5.8 to 8.11 years of age. Age is the only criterion for admission to primary education. Proof of attendance at the compulsory portion of preschool is a condition for enrolment in primary schools. The duration of primary education is six years, and the school year is divided into three terms of three months, with attendance on five days per week. Primary education is also provided by English-language, French-language, and Russian-language private schools.

Lower-secondary education is provided free for children between 11.8 and 15.0 years of age. Children are admitted to lower-secondary education based on age and subject to the completion of a primary school-leaving certificate. The duration of lower-secondary education is three years and is the last phase of compulsory education. As is the case with primary education, the secondary school year is divided into three terms of three months, with attendance on five days per week. Lower-secondary education is also provided by English-language and French-language private schools.

Upper-secondary education, with a duration of three years, is provided free of charge for children between 15 and 18 years of age. At this level, the school year is divided into two terms of four months, with five-day attendance. Students who wish to be trained in a technical occupation can attend a technical school, the diplomas of which are equivalent in standard to an upper-secondary education. There are also private English-language and French-language upper-secondary schools. Children who do not speak Greek are given special lessons in the Greek language.

A number of private schools operate at the first compulsory and upper-secondary levels. They operate according to the precepts of foreign education systems, mainly English and French (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010b, 2010d). In total, there are 26 private primary and 31 private secondary schools (Greek-language, English-language, French-language, and Russian-language) operating with Ministry of Education and Culture approval. The cost of attendance at these institutions is between €4,500 and €6,500 per year.

Several special schools for children with disabilities (i.e., visual, auditory, mental, mobility, or behavioral challenges) operate at the first compulsory and upper-secondary levels. However, the majority of students with disabilities attend the same schools as their nondisabled peers.

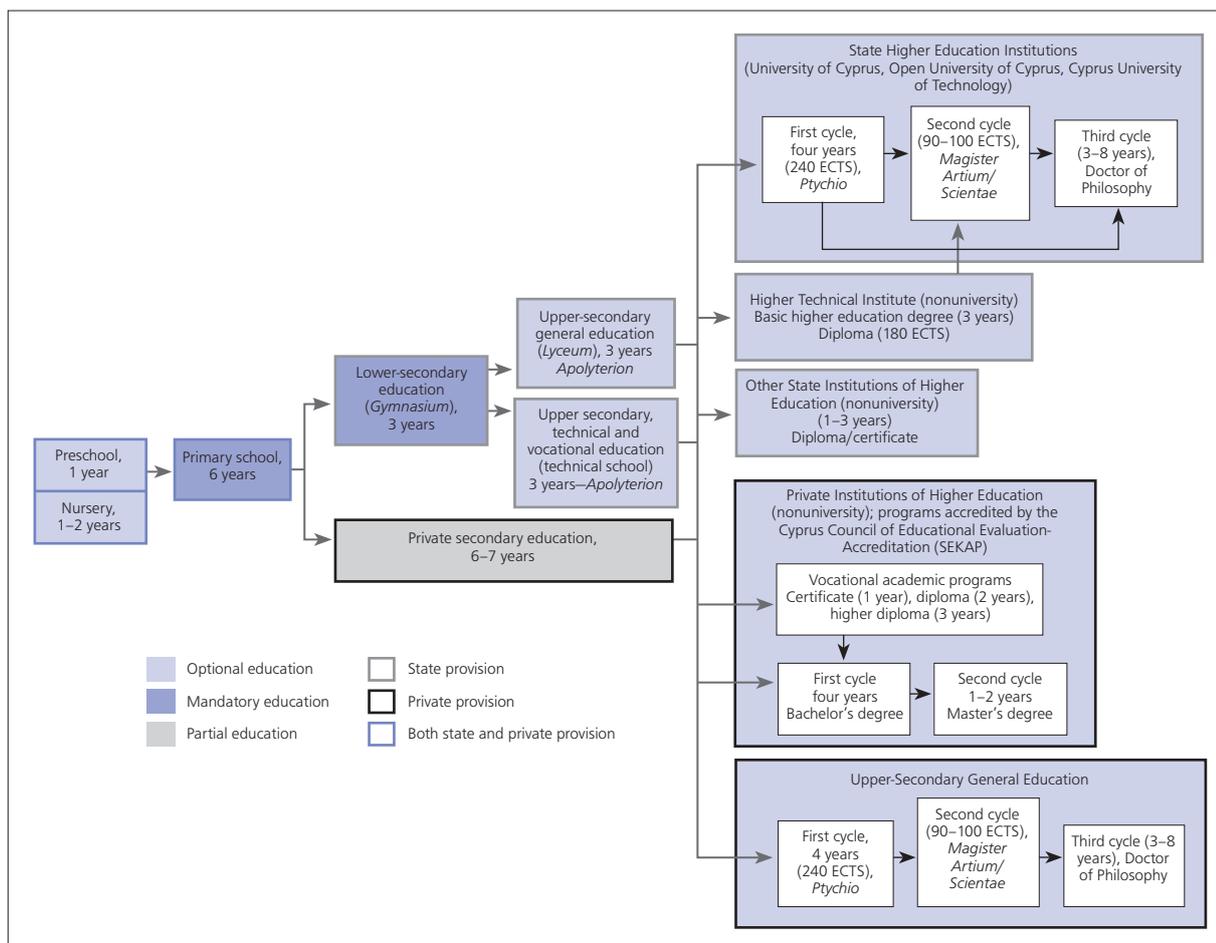


At the tertiary level, Cyprus has three state universities (the University of Cyprus, the Technology University, and the Open University) and three private universities (the University of Nicosia, the European University of Cyprus, and the Frederick University). There is also a large number of private tertiary-level colleges. The Ministry of Education and Culture has approved 25 private tertiary schools, and it evaluates and certifies the academic standing of these schools every two years. The duration of higher education depends on the type of institution and the type of program undertaken. At the university level, undergraduate studies last for four years.

Each school service department is responsible for its own curriculum provision and has its own team of school inspectors. Curriculum development is carried out by separate curriculum development centers for preprimary and primary, for secondary, and for technical education. The Pedagogical Institute, a department of the Ministry of Education and Culture, is responsible for the inservice training of teachers as well as for certain aspects of curriculum support.

Figure 1 shows the structure of the education system in Cyprus (see also Michaelidou, 2010).

Figure 1: Structure of the education system of Cyprus



Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Culture (2009).



## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Until now, there has not been a common approach to civic and citizenship education across the three levels of the Cypriot education system. This is because all three levels follow different curricula. Despite this discontinuity across levels, the aims for civic and citizenship education, especially those that relate to Cyprus's political situation, are relatively similar.

The Cypriot education system is currently undergoing general reform. Beginning in 2008, new curricula for all subject areas were created and shaped according to the theme of “a democratic and humanitarian school of the 21st century” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011f). School year 2010/2011 was declared a year of educational reform, and the new curricula were piloted during the 2011/2012 school year.

Current aims for citizenship education in Cyprus are defined within the new national curriculum. The Curriculum for Social and Political Education sets out the principal aims of civic and citizenship education in line with the following precepts:

- It contributes to the promotion of creativity, free thought, and democratic awareness of the knowledge of values, rules, and legislative activities of the democratic system of government; to the development of an engaged citizenry that respects the natural and cultural environment;
- It contributes to awareness of human rights and universal values; to the understanding of peaceful co-existence and creative participation in the social and political life of local, Cypriot, European, and global societies; and to respect for difference and an appreciation of the uniqueness of each student (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010d. p. 2).

The previous curriculum took a different approach to the delivery of civic and citizenship education. In primary schools, there was no individual subject with that title. Instead, schools took a crosscurricular approach to civic and citizenship education and also delivered this content through specific subjects. A teacher resource book intended for the last grades of primary school was available, but teachers rarely used it. In secondary education, students experienced civic and citizenship education as a specific subject in Grade 9 and could take the subject again in Grade 12. There were significant differences between the two levels in terms of the complexity of the curricular content. In addition to experiencing direct teaching, students were encouraged to acquire knowledge and values related to democracy indirectly through the study of related subjects and as part of the crosscurricular approach (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010e).

Each year, the Ministry of Education and Culture suggests priority aims related to European issues. Extracurricular activities are organized in accordance with these aims, which focus on, for example, using education as a means of helping prevent social discrimination. This approach relies on a school climate that is democratic and humane. It also endeavors to cultivate a culture of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and cooperation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011c).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

According to the new curriculum, citizenship education develops a range of skills, knowledge, and understanding for students aged 6 to 12. The curriculum encourages students to

- Learn about themselves as members of social communities, including the family, the school, and society;
- Think, judge, reason, compare, and make decisions as consumers or users of the media and the internet, while being environmentally conscious;



- Learn about their country, Cyprus, within the context of Europe, as well as about European influences on Cyprus; and
- Gain an understanding of and appreciation for human rights.

Civic and citizenship education in the lower-secondary school (ISCED 2) is delivered in two ways: as a specific subject, where it is taught for half a semester during Grade 9, and integrated into specific subjects in the curriculum, such as geography, science, technology, Greek, history, and English. The crosscurricular approach also encompasses educational projects, including Comenius, Ecoschools, the European Network of Health Promoting Schools, Mentor, Rely on My Feet, and new learning areas, such as health education, consumer education, environmental education, intercultural education, and education for road safety. However, the content that is delivered in these areas depends on each school's individual plan and on teacher initiative, as there are no time requirements for this learning area in the curriculum.

Extracurricular activities and projects also feed into civic and citizenship education. Examples include Progress 2009: Creativity and Innovation Against Discrimination (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009) and Project Xenios—School Action Against Social Exclusion: Respect, Responsibility, Solidarity (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010b).

One of the two textbooks used for teaching civic and citizenship education (*Social and Political Education*, 2006) was published by the Pedagogical Institute of Greece, whereas the other (*Introduction to Political Education*, 2000) was released by the Pedagogical Institute and Office of Development of the Curriculum of Cyprus. The use of Greek school books for this learning area results from the close social and historical bonds between Cyprus and Greece. However, much of the content in the former book refers to Greek political institutions.

Some primary schools participating in a pilot project follow a special curriculum that again requires civics and citizenship to be taught in two ways—through a lesson called “education for life,” which is taught for four hours a week, and through lessons that take place in the afternoons and are built on areas of interest to each student (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011d). In pilot schools, unlike in other Cypriot schools, this area of educational provision is part of the regular curriculum (for up to four periods a week) and is compulsory for all students. It is also studied during elective classes, which give students opportunity to develop initiative, responsibility, social skills, and communication skills.

In line with the 2010 educational reform in Cyprus, the new curriculum is aimed exclusively at Cypriot students and does not use content developed for other countries. The new curriculum ensures that there is continuity in civic and citizenship education at all three levels of the education system by providing a “cohesive and sufficient body of knowledge” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2008).

The curriculum, in its entirety, aims to help young people become successful learners, responsible citizens, and skilled individuals. In order to achieve these goals, students need to act responsibly in the school and the community, be able to develop and defend a position, and to engage in critical thinking.

In line with these curriculum underpinnings, Cyprus's revised school curriculum has also brought in the aforementioned new civic-related learning areas such as health education, environmental education, intercultural education, and other areas that are part of the “hidden curriculum.” A clear statement about this provision is evident in the curriculum document, which references four thematic areas relevant to civic and citizenship education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011e):

- *The individual and society*: Students learn about interrelationships between the individual and society, and the impact of social positions, roles, stratification, and mobility. They also



study the role that the economy and the state can play in building social cohesion, and they explore how family, school, religion, the state, and the media can be important factors in social stability.

- *The individual and the state:* Students learn about government structures, particularly those of Cyprus, while developing an understanding of the interactive relationship between citizen and state. They also study the laws that citizens must follow, as well as political matters such as parliament, political parties, elections, constituencies, and the functions of the state.
- *The individual and the European Union:* Students study the creation of the EU, as well as its history, progress, institutions, and practices. They learn about the importance of EU membership for Cyprus and are encouraged to recognize their obligations and rights with respect to the EU, and to evaluate the prospects that the EU offers the Cypriot Government and its citizens.
- *The individual and the international community:* Students study the role of international organizations in improving the human condition in Cyprus and abroad. They learn how international organizations help people and societies take responsibility for and combat global problems such as poverty, unemployment, racism, and ecological destruction.

Grade 12 students have opportunity to learn about and analyze civic-related issues at a more advanced level of consideration:

- *Basic issues:* Students focus on fundamental human rights in the world and in Cyprus, as well as in relation to the Turkish-controlled territory. They also explore youth-oriented topics such as drug abuse and antisocial behavior.
- *The individual as citizen:* Students learn about civic engagement, administration, taxation, annual budgets, and economic issues pertaining to Cyprus.
- *The individual as a citizen of the international community and of Cyprus:* Students learn about the United Nations, the European Council, and the institutions of the EU.
- *The individual and his or her environment:* The focus here is on citizenship and environmental issues in Europe, energy problems, environmental destruction, communications, and the media.

The teaching methods suggested by the new curriculum encourage a connection between theory and practice, giving students the opportunity to drive their own research-based learning. Students can use questionnaires, conduct interviews, collect data, do case studies, and organize discussions or conferences. More specifically, teachers are encouraged to present students with real-life scenarios and problems so that they can devise solutions based on information from, for example, the relevant branch of government.

Student performance under the new curriculum is typically evaluated through portfolios containing self-selected literature, newspaper, television, and radio reports, photos, movies, narrative, and individual projects. Portfolios may be self-evaluated or peer evaluated. Teams of students are responsible for different thematic subjects related to civic and citizenship education. Students can build on group outcomes during their following year; they can also exchange those outcomes with other student groups (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2004).

The new curriculum specifies a common policy regarding educational aims, including civic and citizenship education, with the goal of achieving continuity across the three levels of the education system. A significant part of the new curriculum aims to develop students' participatory skills. The curriculum also relates to European-wide aims regarding 21st century skills and pan-European cooperation in education.



Citizenship education in Cyprus continues to be dominated by issues related to the country's political situation, where the Greek-Cypriot society claims the right and the possibility to live peacefully and without restrictions in a unified country. This aim has been a priority in the Cypriot curriculum since 1974. A new priority is cultivating a culture of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and cooperation between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. This aim sits alongside the aim of retaining national identity and awareness of issues related to Cyprus's occupied areas.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Encouraging students to become involved in civic and citizenship education activities may take several approaches. At both the primary and secondary levels, students are encouraged to participate in elections of class representatives. The role of these students is to speak to student interests in school-governing bodies.

Upper-secondary school also has student unions at the local level (the Provincial Coordinating Committee of Students) and the national level (ΠΣΕΜ, PSEM, Pan-Cypriot Coordinating Committee of Students). Elected members of school councils help develop school rules; they also participate in teacher meetings.

Student monitors are responsible for classroom cleanliness, as well as for communicating with the teacher regarding discipline, school textbooks, teaching methods, curriculum, school events, and projects.

Students are represented in both the Cypriot and Greek Parliaments through the Child Parliament and the Parliament of Adolescents. Here, students have the opportunity to present their views to audiences consisting of students from other schools. The number of student representatives in these assemblies is exactly equal to the actual number of members of the two parliaments (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011b). Students can also participate in clubs featuring areas of personal interest, such as journalism, theater, literature, and music, where they cooperate with one another to achieve agreed-on aims. In addition, large numbers of students take part in activities conducted by nongovernmental agencies (NGOs) and offer their services to public institutions such as the Red Cross, UNICEF, and youth centers. Many students also develop an interest in civil affairs by becoming members of political parties.

Due to the political situation related to the Turkish occupation, students are perhaps more likely than students in many other countries to be politically motivated and to participate in organized events and projects that relate to the history of Cyprus and Greece.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

All preprimary and primary or basic school teachers in the public sector must have a University of Cyprus degree (*Ptychio*) or an equivalent degree in pedagogical studies. Primary teachers receive full initial training before their appointment (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010c).

All secondary school teachers are university graduates, but only a few of them have any initial teacher training. Probationary teachers are required to attend inservice training courses (known as INSET courses). This compulsory training was previously provided by the Pedagogical Institute and is now delivered by the University of Cyprus in an effort to upgrade the quality of the seminars. Participants attend lectures two days per week with a corresponding reduction in teaching hours. This approach means that newly appointed teachers receive "sandwich-course" training from the University of Cyprus and the school in which they are serving. The content



includes general pedagogical approaches as well as subject teaching. The programs also seek to deliver a homogeneous approach to pedagogy for graduates who have taken their degrees in countries other than Cyprus (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010d).

Other training courses offered to teachers are optional and prepared in consultation with the school inspectorate. Each year, the Pedagogical Institute publishes a program of all available seminars and invites teachers to apply. The programs are well attended despite the fact that they are offered during afternoons when teachers are not teaching at school. The programs are aimed at individuals and not related to any specific school needs. The inspectorate receives no specific training to guide them in the planning and provision of INSET 4, 7, 8, and 9.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Social, civic, and citizenship education, including areas such as human rights education, intercultural education, and environmental education, is new territory for Cypriot schools and their teachers. Civic and citizenship education is also a new concept in the tertiary education curriculum. This recent development means Cyprus currently has a shortage of qualified teachers proficient in teaching civic and citizenship education. Typically, this area of educational provision is taught through history, literature, ancient Greek, and social studies and by teachers who specialized in these subject areas (secondary education) during their preservice education or by teachers without any specialization (primary education).

Primary education teachers' programs at the university level include subjects such as intercultural education, environmental studies, and inclusive education. Moreover, as part of the University of Cyprus's preservice program, secondary teachers receive training in their subject area as well as in other subjects of their choice. Some of these subjects relate directly to civic and citizenship education. They include modern sociology, the modern European school, and modern European civilizations, as reflected in music and cinema (see, for example, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011a). The programs also focus on methods of teaching students about issues and matters related to immigration, youth, and the European Parliament. The subject "immigration and intercultural education" aims to help teachers implement differentiated action plans in schools, while "gender issues" focuses on enabling teachers to create an environment conducive to helping students understand the importance of gender equality (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010a).

The Pedagogical Institute coordinates inservice teacher education and professional development. Teachers can voluntarily elect to attend seminars on health education, environmental education, education about emotions and emotional wellbeing, intercultural education, the process of scientific educational action research (called MERA), and European aspects of education as part of a lifelong learning program.

During the implementation of the current educational reform, lower-secondary education inspectors delivered seminars on the aims of the general curriculum, including the aims of civic and citizenship education and related subjects such as history, Greek, geography, and ancient literature. The civic-related content of these subjects is typically based on information gleaned from newspapers, television, and position papers from international communities, political parties, and other agencies and institutions. Teachers can also obtain material and ideas from a database on the Ministry of Education and Culture's website.



## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

All students must attend school until they are 15 years old. At the end of primary school, students receive a leaving certificate (*apolitirion*). Primary school students do not receive grades, but at the end of the school year, teachers evaluate each of their students using a marking system that ranges from A to E. The marks are not available to students.

Cypriot students do not need to sit examinations in order to enter secondary school. Once in these schools, students are awarded a grade, again ranging from A to E, at the end of each semester. They also sit examinations at the end of each school year in four compulsory subjects: Greek, mathematics, history, and one of physics, chemistry, or biology. Until recently, the secondary school year comprised three three-month terms, but the current system now consists of two four-month semesters. Students earning low grades during the year in other curriculum subjects are required to pass an examination in that subject. If they fail it, they can repeat it at the beginning of the next school year.

In order to receive a school-leaving certificate that provides access to public higher education institutions in Cyprus or Greece, upper-secondary students have to pass pan-Cypriot examinations or university entrance examinations that they take in the final year of secondary school.

Some primary and secondary education students also participate in international examinations such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), as well as in European and/or international competitions.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

There is no national plan for assessing civic and citizenship education in Cyprus. Teachers can assess student learning as it occurs through observation, by utilizing peer or self-assessment, and by sampling a range of student work over a period of time. Students are invited to present their work, conducted through or evident in questionnaires, movies, poems, posters, and newspapers.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Several institutions are responsible for improving the quality of civic and citizenship learning, by conducting seminars, offering advice, and making suggestions. An example of their activities is the Coordinating Committee of Health Education and Citizenship, which was created in 2004 to address drug abuse and violence at school as well as road safety issues. It consists of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Health, and the Anti-Drug Committee. The coordinating committee offers both educational material and training seminars.

Another example is the earlier mentioned project called Creativity and Innovation Against Discrimination (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009), in which students create movies, newspapers, and posters with the help of various organizations such as the Reporters' Union and other NGOs that include the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, the Association for Family Planning, and the Movement for the Support of Immigrants (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2008).

Schools must convince the Ministry of Education and Culture that their civic-related projects are of value and will yield results that advance the aims of civic and citizenship education. For example, during a recent project on health education and citizenship, each school submitted a proposal that set out a description of the project (as presented at the school), the rationale for



the project, a list of target groups, the project team, the institutions that would be involved, anticipated project activities, and what sort of evaluations would be conducted (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2004).

Various civic organizations suggest educational policies to the Ministry of Education and Culture. These organizations include the Commissioner for Children's Rights, the Teachers' Association, the Parents' Association, the Parliamentary Committee for Education, the church, other government ministries, the Cyprus police force, youth centers, and the Office of the European Parliament in Cyprus.

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# Czech Republic

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

In 2009, the population of the Czech Republic was 10,500,000.<sup>1</sup> Since the “velvet revolution” of 1989, the Czech Republic has adopted demographic processes that align with those of western European nations. Life expectancy has increased, the birth rate has fallen, and the ages at which women marry and give birth have risen.

The official language is Czech, which belongs to the western Slavic group of languages. Several regional dialects are spoken, but these do not linguistically constitute separate languages. Dialects are spoken only by smaller groups and do not have major implications for schooling. Citizens are free to declare themselves part of a national minority and claim the corresponding legal rights. National minorities include Slovaks (2%), Poles (0.5%), and Germans (0.4%). Other national minorities such as Moravians and Silesians speak Czech.

Romany represent an ethnic minority. Their precise population numbers cannot be determined, as members must self-declare in order to be counted. The official 2001 census estimated the proportion of self-declared Romany (around 0.1%) to be about only one-tenth of the actual Romany population, which, in its entirety, is understood to comprise around one percent of the Czech population.

The Czech Republic’s gross domestic product (at market prices) in 2008 was €B14.0.

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Czech Republic is a democratic parliamentary republic. Legislative power is vested in a bicameral parliament, which consists of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Besides issuing laws, parliament also ratifies international treaties and elects the president. The Senate counterbalances the Chamber of Deputies by acting as the basis for a thorough legislative process and by providing continuity within parliament should the Chamber of Deputies be dissolved. The Chamber of Deputies has 200 members; the Senate has 81 senators.

The Government of the Czech Republic holds executive power. Consisting of the prime minister, vice-prime ministers, and ministers, it is accountable to the Chamber of Deputies. After parliamentary elections, the president appoints a prime minister and, following a proposal from the prime minister, also appoints the members of government who manage the ministries and other authorities. Within 30 days of its appointment, the government presents itself to the Chamber of Deputies and asks for a vote of confidence.

The president is elected by both houses of parliament and acts as head of state. He or she represents the country internationally and embodies the Czech Republic’s domestic and international sovereignty. The president assumes office by making an oath to the chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies at a joint session of both chambers. The president’s term of office is five years.



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<sup>1</sup> Information for this section was sourced from the Czech Statistical Office ([www.czso.cz](http://www.czso.cz)).

The main political parties are the Civic Democratic Party, the Social Democratic Party, TOP 09, and the Czech Communist Party. The government is usually formed by a coalition of the two or three parties that received the majority of votes in the last parliamentary election. The government is led by the leader of the highest polling party. In 2009, this was the Civic Democratic Party.

## Education System

### Structure of the Education System

Compulsory schooling in the Czech Republic begins in the term following a child's sixth birthday, although recently there has been an increase in the number of children starting school after their seventh birthday. Compulsory education comprises nine grades, which extend through to the time when students reach 15 years of age. The majority of children attend Grades 1 to 9 at basic schools. About one-tenth of children receive their education in special secondary schools called multi-year *gymnasia*, which begin at Grade 6.

Schools are divided into the following types according to the level of education and the nature of education provided: kindergarten schools (*mateřské školy*), basic schools (*základní školy*), secondary schools (*střední školy* or *gymnázia*, *střední odborné školy*, *střední odborná učiliště*), conservatories, colleges, and universities (Eurydice, 2008/2009).

*Mateřská škola* offer preprimary education to children from three to six years of age. This level of the education system is not compulsory, but many parents choose to enroll their children in it. Attendance in the final year of preschool is available to all children. Preschool enhances school readiness and helps to compensate for any developmental difficulties children might have before they enter primary education. Preschool also offers special education care to children with special educational needs.

Basic schools combine the primary and lower-secondary levels of education (ISCED 1 and 2), and are divided into a five-year first stage and a four-year second stage. Secondary schools provide both upper-secondary education (ISCED 3) and postsecondary education (ISCED 4), an approach which enables students to change or broaden their original educational pathway as they progress through their schooling. Colleges prepare those students enrolled in upper-secondary education for a school-leaving examination that, once passed, gives students access to education that leads to a skilled profession. Colleges offer educational programs classified as ISCED 5B, which are part of tertiary education. At the end of their program of study, students sit an examination called the *absolutorium*.

In September 2008, 858,627 students were attending compulsory education in the Czech Republic. The total number of basic schools was 3,688, and these schools employed 59,492 teachers (Eurydice, 2008/2009).

All basic schools offer general education. The upper-secondary level offers general and vocational study programs. *Gymnasia* offer a general upper-secondary education program that leads to a state-leaving examination which qualifies students for university entrance. There are two types of vocational education: programs that qualify students to undertake further education at university and those that do not lead to university education.

### National Curriculum for Compulsory Education

The Framework Educational Program for Basic Education (FEP BC) defines nine main educational areas, each of which consists of educational fields (subject-matter), crosscurricular themes, and supplementary educational fields. The framework specifies the compulsory content of each field as well as of the entire curriculum and sets down the expected learning outcomes at the end of every period of schooling (the first stage is divided into first and second periods, i.e., Years 1 to 3 and 4 to 5).



The FEP BC also includes a framework timetable for each educational area, and prescribes the weekly minimum number of teaching hours for some of them. It also sets the number of hours available for other educational purposes. The hours specified across all educational areas and the hours available for other educational purposes must total up to at least 118 hours during the first stage and 122 hours during the second stage of basic school.

The following crosscurricular themes must be taught during both the first and second stages of schooling, although they need not be included in every school year: personal and social education, civic education for democracy, education pertaining to European and global contexts, multicultural education, environmental education, and media education.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

The thematic areas of the crosscurricular subject “civic education for democracy” in the Czech Republic are defined within the national curriculum according to four broad themes—civil society and school; the citizen, civil society, and the state; forms of citizen participation in political life; and the democratic principles underpinning government functioning and decisionmaking. A brief account of the content taught under each of these themes follows (Research Institute of Education, 2007).

- The content of *civil society and school* encompasses:
  - The school as a model of an open partnership and democratic society;
  - Democratic climate and relations at school;
  - Ways of applying democratic principles and values in the everyday life of the school, including students’ active involvement in student administration, such as student councils and academic senates;
  - Types of student participation in the life of the local community; and
  - Cooperation between the school and administrative bodies and institutions in the municipality.
- The content of *the citizen, civil society, and the state* encompasses:
  - The citizen as a responsible member of society, including his or her rights and obligations, the ability to exercise them actively, to take responsibility for one’s stances and actions, and to be engaged and interested in matters of common societal interest;
  - The Czech Republic’s Charter of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms;
  - Rights and obligations of citizens;
  - The role of the citizen in a democratic society;
  - Fundamental principles and values of a democratic political system, that is, rights, justice, differentiation, and diversity; and
  - The basic principles of coexistence with minorities, notably, relationships with others, respect for different identities, mutual communication and cooperation, and causes of misunderstanding and sources of conflicts.
- The content of *forms of citizen participation in political life* encompasses:
  - Electoral systems, democratic elections, and politics—parliamentary, regional, and communal;
  - The municipality as the basic unit of state administration; and
  - Social organizations and movements.



- The content of the *democratic principles underpinning government functioning and decisionmaking* encompasses:
  - Democracy as a counterbalance to dictatorship and anarchy;
  - Principles of democracy;
  - Basic elements of a well-functioning democracy—justice, order, norms, laws, rights, public morals;
  - The importance of the constitution as the country’s fundamental law; and
  - Democratic methods of resolving conflicts in both personal and societal spheres.

The Czech Republic has no prescribed models for teaching civic and citizenship education in schools. Instead, schools are advised to dedicate approximately three lessons per week to the broader educational area of “humanity and society.” Instructional time for civic and citizenship education is usually approximately one lesson per week for Grades 6 to 9. Instruction typically takes the form of discrete civic and citizenship education lessons, but it can also be integrated into other subjects such as history and family education.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

Citizenship education is a recommended part of basic school education for students in Grades 6 to 9. There is no compulsory civic and citizenship education at the upper-secondary level. Individual schools providing elementary education create a school education program based on the Framework Education Program (Research Institute of Education, 2007). Each school’s education program is quite specific and takes into account student needs and strengths. It focuses on the challenges facing as well the strengths of the school, legal requirements concerning parents and guardians, the school’s position in the region, and the social environment in which learning will take place.

School principals are responsible for preparing the school education program, often in collaboration with deputy principals or other members of the teaching staff. The actual preparation of the program represents the school’s pedagogical autonomy as well as its responsibility for teaching methods and outcomes. For this reason, teachers participate in preparing parts of the program.

The principal publishes the school education program after consultation with the school council. The program is a compulsory educational document that must be made accessible to the public. As part of its inspection activities, the Czech School Inspectorate examines and evaluates the implementation of school education programs and their compliance with legal regulations and the Framework Education Program. Most basic schools implement civic and citizenship education as a discrete subject in their programs.

The crosscurricular subject called “civic education for democracy” has an interdisciplinary and multicultural character (Research Institute of Education, 2007). At its most general level, it comprises a synthesis of values, namely justice, tolerance, and responsibility. At its more specific levels, it includes critical thinking, awareness of one’s rights and obligations, the democratic social order, and resolving problems and conflicts.

Civic education for democracy provides students with a basic level of citizenship literacy, including the ability to orient themselves to the intricacies, problems, and conflicts of an open, democratic, and pluralistic society. Schools are expected to teach the subject in a way that enables students to constructively solve problems concerning the preservation of human dignity, respect for others, and the interests of society as a whole, while being aware of their own rights, obligations, freedoms, and responsibilities. Another expectation is that students should be able to apply the fundamental principles of respectful communication and democratic methods when resolving problems.



Civic education for democracy is closely linked to the aforementioned educational area humanity and society, which covers topics such as democratic principles, democratic decisionmaking and governance, and human and civil rights. It also emphasizes the participation of individual citizens in the social and political life of a democratic society. The Framework Education Program specifies the following aims and outcomes for this crosscurricular subject.

- In the area of knowledge, skills, and abilities, civic education for democracy should:
  - Guide students toward adopting an active approach to defending and respecting human rights and freedoms;
  - Guide students toward understanding the importance of order, rules, and laws for the functioning of society;
  - Make it possible for students to participate in collective decisions while being aware of responsibility for and the consequences of such decisions;
  - Develop students' abilities and skills in communication, formulation, argumentation, dialogue, and presentation;
  - Deepen students' empathy and enhance their ability to listen actively and judge fairly; and
  - Guide students toward considering issues in a broader context while employing critical thinking.
- In the area of attitudes and values, civic education for democracy should:
  - Guide students toward adopting an open, active, and involved approach to life;
  - Teach students respect for the law;
  - Help students develop the skills of self-discipline and self-criticism;
  - Contribute to students' self-esteem, self-confidence, independence, and engagement;
  - Contribute to the formation of values such as justice, freedom, solidarity, tolerance, and responsibility;
  - Develop and support students' ability to take a stance amid a plurality of opinions;
  - Motivate students to be considerate and willing to help others, particularly those who are less advantaged;
  - Make it possible for students to judge and evaluate social phenomena, processes, events, and issues from local, national, European, and global perspectives;
  - Guide students toward respecting cultural, ethnic, and other differences; and
  - Guide students toward being assertive and able to compromise (Research Institute of Education, 2007).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Although the Czech Republic does not prescribe civic and citizenship education activities for schools, about 66 percent of schools have a student council and about 80 percent have class representatives. Most school activities connected to civic and citizenship education are either cultural events (e.g., visits to theaters or cinemas), general civic-related campaigns (e.g., protection of the environment, the rights of minorities, enhancing democracy), and sports events.



### **Recent Reforms in Civic and Citizenship Education**

The tradition of civic and citizenship education in Czech schools began in 1922 when this area of education was included in the “small school law” (Law No. 226/1922). A subject called civic education was subsequently taught as a part of compulsory education in all basic schools, all of which used the same textbook. During the communist era, civic and citizenship education was ideologically biased and promoted compliance with the political system.

After the political change of 1989, discussions about possible modifications to the curriculum commenced, resulting in a full-scale reform that was implemented in January 2005. One of the fundamental changes brought in by the Czech Republic’s Education Act lies in its introduction of a two-phased approach to curriculum development. In 2004, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports approved the Framework Education Program that had been in place since September 2005, and gave schools the task of developing their own school education program. These programs have been a binding part of the activity of all schools since 2007/2008 when they were introduced at the beginning of primary education and lower-secondary education.

In July 2007, the Framework Education Program was updated and implemented in all schools providing basic education (including schools where students with mild intellectual disabilities are taught) and the lower years of multiyear *gymnasia*. The Research Institute of Education provided methodological support. One result of the curricular reform has been increased independence for schools, which are now able to create their school programs in line with the general Framework Education Program. The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports is currently assessing the results of the curriculum reform.

### **Teachers and Teacher Education**

#### **Teacher Education in General**

In September 2008, The Czech Republic had 59,492 fulltime teachers working in compulsory education. Generally, those teaching at the compulsory stage are required to complete a five-year Master’s degree in one or more academic subjects. It is also possible to enter teaching after completing only secondary education and passing the school-leaving examination. These candidates must apply for what is known as a “temporary exception period” of 5 to 10 years, during which they complete the required university education.

Teachers of Grades 1 to 4 of basic school are trained to teach all subjects in the national curriculum. Secondary teachers are specialists in one or two subjects.

#### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools is taught by a range of teachers, most of whom are university graduates with a Master’s degree. In some schools, civic and citizenship teachers are subject specialists with a Master’s degree in a social science specialization, usually combined with languages. In other schools, civic and citizenship education is taught by teachers who have specialized in a related subject such as history or Czech language. There are no specific training or certification requirements for teachers who teach civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary education.

Professional development on civic and citizenship education for teachers is available as part of programs that teachers elect to attend, which means the courses are not compulsory. These courses are typically provided by nongovernmental organizations.



## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Students are assessed continuously in individual subjects (Eurydice, 2009). At the end of every term, they receive a school report that includes an assessment of their school achievement in each course undertaken, as well as a report of their classroom behavior. Assessment is based on an evaluation of the extent to which students have achieved the expected outcomes outlined in the school's education program.

All assessment must be pedagogically justifiable, technically correct, and verifiable. More particularly, assessment of the procedure and the outcomes of education and of student conduct must be unambiguous, comprehensible, aligned with predefined criteria, pragmatic, and universal. Assessment criteria form a part of the school code and include:

- Procedures and outcomes of education;
- Student conduct at school and during school-sponsored events;
- Principles and regulations related to students' self-assessment;
- Levels of assessment for achievement and conduct, including a classification system and related criteria;
- Principles of verbal assessment, including predefined criteria;
- Formulation of student assessment for verbal assessments or for a combination of verbal assessments and classifications;
- Compilation of assessment data; and
- Assessment of students with special educational needs.

According to the Rapid Polling Survey of 2005, which more than half of all basic schools participated in, nearly all schools use a five-point Likert scale to assess students, with the scale as follows: (1) excellent, (2) very good, (3) good, (4) satisfactory, and (5) unsatisfactory.<sup>2</sup> About 60 percent of schools use a verbal assessment, and about 32 percent use quantitative assessment. About 25 percent of schools use class rankings. Assessment in school reports is expressed through marks, written comments, or a combination of the two. Student behavior is assessed using a three-point Likert scale, with (1) indicating very good, (2) satisfactory, and (3) unsatisfactory. According to these survey data, school principals decide on the form of evaluation with the consent of the school council.

The overall assessment of students in school reports is expressed as follows:

- *Passed with honors* if all of a student's marks for the compulsory subjects specified in the school education program are equal to or better than 2, if the average is not higher than 1.5, and if the student's behavior is assessed as very good;
- *Pass* if all of the student's marks for compulsory subjects are not worse than 5;
- *Failed* if the student receives a 5 or worse for any compulsory subject;
- *Not assessed* if it is not possible to assess the student on one of the compulsory subjects at the end of the first term.



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<sup>2</sup> The survey was carried out by the Institute for Information on Education, which closed in 2011. Its website is no longer operational.

Schools issue each of their students with an “output assessment” at the end of their last year. This assessment also contains a statement of the following:

- Opportunities for the student based on his or her skills and talents;
- Prerequisites for further education based on the student’s possible future career options;
- The student’s conduct throughout his or her compulsory education; and
- Further relevant information concerning the student’s education.

### **Assessment and Examination in Subjects Related to Civic and Citizenship Education**

The Czech Republic has no special assessment and examination procedures for subjects related to civic and citizenship education. Any assessment that is conducted is usually based on individual student work (at home as well as in school), and on oral and written examinations. Teachers try to make meaningful judgments of progress in this area of education based on evidence and to inform parents about that progress. This information is usually conveyed through each student’s individual annual reports and through regular meetings between teachers and parents.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Schools conduct their own internal evaluation. External evaluation is carried out by several authorities, including the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports and the Czech School Inspectorate. The governing body of a school or school facility may also conduct an evaluation according to criteria that they must publish in advance.

The Education Act specifies procedures for internal evaluations, which are conducted by principals or teachers, as well as for external evaluations carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate. Under the Education Act, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, regional authorities, and the inspectorate are also obliged to prepare annual reports on the education system. The Education Act furthermore requires basic school principals to prepare annual reports on the activities of their respective schools.

The Czech School Inspectorate prepares conceptual plans of the inspection activities and evaluation methods it will use. It undertakes inspections of all types of schools and school facilities registered in the School Register, regardless of their organizing body. This work includes the following activities:

- Collecting information on student education, on school activities, and school facilities registered in the School Register;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the education system;
- Assessing the conditions, process, and outcomes of education at each school;
- Examining educational programs and validating curricular documents;
- Assessing the content of the school education program and its compliance with legislation and the Framework Education Program;
- Reviewing schools’ adherence to legislation related to providing education and school services; and
- Exercising public administrative control over schools’ use of state funds.

Because civic and citizenship education in the Czech Republic is a crosscurricular subject, there are no established strategies for monitoring how well this subject is taught. However, from time to time, school inspections focus on civic and citizenship education and related curricular areas. The Czech School Inspectorate prepares plans for assessing the quality of individual educational branches, and prepares annual reports based on these results.



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## Further Reading

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# Denmark

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Denmark covers an area of 43,098 square kilometers. In addition to Denmark itself, the kingdom includes the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Both have comprehensive home rule arrangements and their own parliaments. The language of instruction is Danish, although a small number of international schools use different instructional languages.

In April 2010, the Danish population was 5,540,241. The distribution by gender was 50.4 percent females and 49.6 percent males. The total population was composed of 4,992,202 people born in Denmark, 418,431 immigrants, and 129,608 descendants of immigrants. Ninety percent of the population is native-born. The largest ethnic minority groups are from Turkey (60,000), Poland, Iraq, and Germany (29,000 to 31,000 each), and Pakistan, Lebanon, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (20,000 to 24,000 each). As of January 2010, 81 percent of the population were members of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The population of metropolitan Copenhagen is almost 1,200,000. Eighty-seven percent of people live in urban areas. Thirty-five percent live in a city with at least 50,000 inhabitants, 28 percent in a city with between 5,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, and 24 percent in a town with 200 to 5,000 inhabitants. Thirteen percent (almost 730,000 people) live in rural areas. The tendency toward urbanization has continued in recent times, with all cities of more than 40,000 inhabitants growing across the last few years.

Like most of Western Europe, Denmark has an ageing population. The percentage of the population aged 65 years or more is expected to rise from the current 16 to 25 percent of the population by 2042. Average life expectancy in Denmark is 81 years for women and 76 years for men.

In 2009, the gross national income of Denmark was 1,659,705 million Danish kroner, or about €M221,294. The gross national product at this time was 1,365,296 million Danish kroner.

### Characteristics of the Political System

Danish politics take place within a parliamentary representative democracy where the prime minister is the head of the government in a multi-party system. As in most Western democracies, the Danish political and legal system is founded on a division between legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Denmark is a constitutional monarchy, which means the monarch is the head of state. Given, however, that the primary role of the monarch is to exercise ceremonial powers, the Danish monarchy can be defined as apolitical. Queen Margrethe II has been the monarch of Denmark since 1972.

The Danish Parliament, or *Folketinget*, has 179 seats, of which 175 are for members of parliament (MPs) elected in Denmark, two are for MPs from the Faroe Islands, and two are for MPs from Greenland. A general election is held at least once every four years for all *Folketinget* seats. The Danish electoral system is based on the principle of proportional representation, but the system also ensures regional representation. It furthermore ensures that all political parties



which attain at least two percent of the electoral vote will have representation in *Folketinget*. This kind of election system tends to result in a parliament that includes many political parties. During the general election of 2011, a total of eight parties were elected to *Folketinget*. No single party has had an absolute majority in *Folketinget* for the last 100 years, and since the Second World War only four governments have held a majority of seats. A government may hold a minority in parliament but cannot have a majority opposed to it.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Within the national government, the Ministry of Children and Education is responsible for all legislation regarding Danish schools. Embedded in this system are options for how policy may be implemented within municipal councils and at the school level. The Agency for Quality and Supervision, which operates under the Ministry of Children and Education, is responsible for matters related to testing, evaluation, quality assurance, and international comparative studies.

### Structure of the Education System

The education system in Denmark can be divided into two broad areas. The first, encompassing Danish municipal primary and lower-secondary schools, is known as *folkeskole*. Education at this level is compulsory but can take place in a public school, a private school, or at home. The second area is upper-secondary education, which is divided into general upper secondary, vocationally-oriented general upper secondary, and vocational education and training programs.

### Compulsory Education

Danish primary and lower-secondary schooling comprises nine years of compulsory education with the possibility of a 10th year. Grade 10 provides students who need to better or advance their scholastic achievement or clarify their vocational choice with opportunity to complete an upper-secondary education.

In 2009, Denmark made a preschool year compulsory for all six-year-old children. Although this preschool year is officially defined as Grade 0, it is not regarded as a year of schooling but as a year between kindergarten and school. For most students, compulsory school education begins at the age of seven (Grade 1) and finishes at the age of 15 (Grade 9). Most schools cover ISCED 0, 1, and 2 (Grade 0 to Grades 9 or 10). However, a number of schools cover only ISCED 0 and 1 (Grade 0 to Grade 7). Only some schools offer Grade 10.

At the national level, the *Folkeskole Act* provides an overall framework for school activities. Under this Act, all municipal primary and lower-secondary schools share a common aim and standard requirements for subjects taught in specific grades. Standard requirements for teaching individual subjects are termed common objectives. The Act also outlines regulations concerning the leadership and organization of schools.

In general, subject curricula are not mandatory but defined as official main goals for each grade. The official descriptions of goals include recommendations as to how these goals might be achieved. Municipal boards are responsible for determining how each municipality's schools are to be organized within the framework established by law. The municipal boards allocate resources for the *folkeskole* within this framework and can set additional objectives for their schools. Schools have a high degree of autonomy, but are obliged to document their activities and to follow specified procedures and recommendations. Each school has its own school board, consisting of elected parent representatives, teacher and staff representatives, and elected student representatives.



About 78 percent of schools are public schools, and about 86 percent of all students attend these schools. These figures indicate that private schools are often quite small. Private schools receive some government financing regardless of their ideological, religious, political, or ethnic underpinnings. The national *folkeskole* program is not mandatory for private schools, but almost all private schools offer the same leaving examination as the one offered by the *folkeskole*.

In 2006, Denmark's Conservative/Social-Liberal Government amended the Folkeskole Act in order to achieve several objectives: to introduce a "culture of evaluation" (*evalueringskultur*), to introduce mandatory national tests, to add more mandatory examinations after Grade 9, to strengthen knowledge and skills as the purpose of the *folkeskole*, and to introduce a mandatory "student plan" (an individually designed development plan for each student). In 2005, the Ministry of Education set up initiatives to enhance the teaching and learning of physics, chemistry, biology, geography, nature, and mathematics.

### **Education at the Upper-Secondary Level**

Denmark has two forms of general or nonvocational upper-secondary education. The first is the three-year *gymnasium*, and the second encompasses the two-year higher preparatory examination courses. Institutions can offer both courses as a package or as single subjects. The country also offers two vocationally-oriented general upper-secondary education programs, one leading to the higher commercial examination and one leading to the higher technical examination. A few colleges provide both programs, but normally they are offered at business colleges and technical colleges, respectively. Both are of three years' duration.

Between them, Denmark's technical colleges, commercial colleges, agricultural colleges, and social and health care colleges provide about 125 different vocational education and training programs. This area of educational provision forms a dual training structure in which an apprenticeship in a private firm is combined with periods of school attendance. Vocational education and training programs typically take three to three-and-a-half years to complete.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

The Folkeskole Act states that one purpose of schooling in Denmark is to prepare students for life in a democratic society. One often cited passage is this from Part 1, Section 1 (3), of the Act: "The folkeskole must prepare students for participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society with freedom and democracy. School activities must therefore be characterized by intellectual freedom, equality, and democracy" (Ministry of Education, 2010). The reference in this passage to intellectual freedom, equality, and democracy implicates civic and citizenship education as essential to school identities and activities, even though the Act does not specify how this status should be achieved.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

Denmark's primary and lower-secondary schools do not have a subject area specifically titled civic and citizenship education. Instead, this area of education is integrated into other subjects (e.g., as part of Danish language and literature and other humanities subjects), as well as into a whole-school approach. Grades 8 and 9 have a subject called *samfundsfag*, which translates into English as "social studies" or "civics."

It is quite common in Denmark for crosscurricular topics to be allocated to schools as additional tasks outside the scope of specific subjects. A number of such topics have elements of civic and citizenship education, particularly those that focus on students' future lives in society and the labor market. These are organized as themes, dimensions, and/or optional subjects. Three examples of these follow.



- *Information technology (IT) and media skills:* The government expects all Danish schools to integrate this dimension into all subjects given that proficient use of IT is regarded as necessary for participation in contemporary modern and globalized society. This dimension incorporates four themes: searching for and collecting information, producing and disseminating information, analyzing information, and communicating, sharing knowledge, and cooperating.
- *Work and employment:* This optional subject is targeted at students in Grades 8 and 9. Its purpose is to help students obtain knowledge of and experience in the labor market and to learn about the different qualifications required in order to work in the various sectors of that market. The subject includes the following themes: enterprise, the labor market, the workforce, and the environment and resources.
- *Education, occupations, and the labor market:* This dimension, which operates as a compulsory crosscurricular theme from Grades 3 to 9, covers personal choice, education and occupations, and the labor market.

Social studies became mandatory for Grades 8 and 9 in 2005. The subject was introduced into these two grades in 1976 as “current studies” (*samtidsorientering*), but in 1993 that subject morphed into “social studies” (*samfundsfag*) and was offered at Grade 9 only. After the 2005 curriculum reform, Common Objectives 2009 (*Fælles Mål 2009*) defined new official goals for social studies, which now comprises three main themes: politics, economics, and social and cultural matters.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Students from Grades 5 to 10 have the right to form a student council. Although schools are not mandated to have a council, school principals are obliged to encourage students to form one.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education matters have not been a focus of Denmark’s recent educational reforms and debates. Since the 1970s, Ministry of Education documents in the area of civic and citizenship education have emphasized participatory democracy and favored the inculcation of democratic principles in a school system where students do not enter different educational tracks until upper-secondary school. In recent years, however, discussions have shifted toward the value of differentiated teaching in order to accommodate and draw on students’ individual competencies. This development is aligned with a culture of evaluation and assessment that has led to new national standards and nationwide testing of achievement against those standards.

In recent years, the rhetoric among educational stakeholders relating to civic and citizenship education has shifted toward democratic values. In 2004, Denmark brought in annual “school wellbeing days” (*Skolernes Trivselsdag*), during which schools provide extracurricular activities focusing on promoting a school environment that is conducive to student and teacher wellbeing.

Public debate on civic and citizenship education seems to focus on specific citizenship-related problems, such as bullying at school, drug and alcohol misuse, health and obesity problems, and matters related to non-European immigrant students, rather than on matters related to the subject of civics or social studies. In response to the focus on bullying in schools, the Ministry of Education and Youth implemented an official campaign called Together Against Bullying. Eighty-five percent of all public schools have developed an official anti-bullying plan as part of what in Danish is called a *værdiregelsæt*, which literally means “a set of rules based on values,” or



rules that go further than ordinary rules of conduct. The purpose of the *verdiregelsæt* is to define what is considered good behavior and respectful relationships between students and teachers at school.

Globalization and the increasingly multicultural nature of Danish society have further shaped civics-related debate, especially on democracy and democratic principles, by those in the political arena as well as members of the public. In 2006, the government introduced a globalization strategy which stressed that classroom teaching should always have an international dimension.

From time to time, the Ministry of Education publishes books or reports on specific themes. One such book is *Learning Democracy 2006*, the foreword (by the then Minister of Education) of which reads as follows: “The publication comes out in times of much debate and focus on democracy as well as freedom of expression, and it is not only intended as a tool to make pupils aware of democratic values. It also provides good advice and practical instruction on how to deal with extremism in the school system” (Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 2). Debate is also growing on the need to teach citizenship and democratic values in schools because of the growing number of students from minority immigrant groups. In other words, many people see teaching democracy as a means of helping combat extremism among students.

In essence, Denmark is experiencing not only a growing focus on national or democratic values, with this apparently informing recent Ministry of Education and Youth initiatives, but also a growing interest in the global community and universal democratic values. There is thus a somewhat delicate balance in policy between enhancing national trends and embracing global trends. Recent Danish school policy has also revealed a tension between continuing widespread decentralization of the municipal school system and the ever strengthening move toward nationally mandated educational objectives, mandatory national testing, and accountability for an increasing number of school activities, all of which have the potential to limit school autonomy.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

The most recent Act regulating Danish preservice teacher education was passed in June 2006. This Act stipulates that a Bachelor of Education degree must be of four years' duration, thereby corresponding to 240 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) points, and comprising the following:

- Two or three main subjects covering a total of 2.4 years of study, or 144 ECTS points, with selections from:
  - At least one compulsory, age-specific subject (either beginning- to middle-level or middle- to senior-level Danish or mathematics) or one nonage-specific subject (either physics/chemistry or nature/technique). Each must be 1.2 years' worth of study, or 72 ECTS.
  - Noncompulsory subjects: English, history, and sports. Each must be 1.2 years' worth of study, or 72 ECTS.
  - Other noncompulsory main subjects, such as visual arts, biology, French, German, geography, music, and social studies. Each must be 0.6 years' worth of study, or 36 ECTS.
- Compulsory and general elements:
  - Didactics, psychology, and pedagogy, taking up 0.55 of a year, or 33 ECTS.



- Christianity studies, life learning, and citizenship, taking up 0.28 of a year, or 17 ECTS.
- Capstone project (i.e., a Bachelor's project) consisting of a written report about a specific topic, with study taking up 0.17 of a year, or 10 ECTS.
- Teaching practicums during all four years in primary and lower-secondary schools or in other school types, for a total of 24 weeks or 0.6 of a year, or 36 ECTS.

Teacher education is provided by *professionshøjskoler*, which are known as university colleges even though they are not universities in the sense of independent research institutions, but institutions for professionally oriented education. These institutions offer basic, further, and continuing education within the fields of health, education and didactics, engineering and business, social work, and the creative arts. There are eight such university colleges and two engineering colleges in Denmark.

This structure dates from January 2008. Prior to 2008, teachers earned qualifications from one of 18 independent teacher training colleges located all over the country. Most of these colleges have since become part of a university college. In order to be admitted to a teacher education program, students need an upper-secondary school-leaving certificate or a higher preparatory certificate.

Although there is no compulsory professional development for inservice teachers in Denmark, most schools offer inservice courses for their teachers from time to time. The eight university colleges are the most important providers of professional development courses. Among other programs, they offer diplomas, which are flexible, part-time courses with a modular structure. Diploma courses are practice-oriented, and the teachers must have at least two years of relevant practical experience in order to attend them. Courses are either depth-focused, which means they provide teachers with specialized knowledge within their field, or breadth-focused, thereby allowing teachers to broaden their general qualifications. Some universities also offer Master's programs for inservice teachers.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

In Denmark, civic and citizenship education is not taught by specialists but by teachers who specialize in subjects that incorporate elements of civic and citizenship education, such as social studies, or by all teachers if civic and citizenship education matters are integrated as an implicit part of a variety of subjects. This framework means there are no special requirements for teachers with regard to civic and citizenship education training and certification, apart from the general description above.

However, a recent development has been the introduction of a new, compulsory subject in teacher education called "Christianity studies, life learning, and citizenship." This subject has changed over the years from its original name, "Christianity studies." It next became "Christianity studies and life learning," and then, in 2007, it took on the title noted above. The subject covers other religions besides Christianity, and also includes ethics and the history of ideas (philosophies). The official subject description indicates that the subject provides teachers with insight into religion and culture, history of ideas and ethics, democracy and citizenship, and on into the age of information technology and the virtual world. Among the specific civic and citizenship education subthemes contained in the subject are:

- The different forms of legal, political, social, and cultural citizenship;
- Identity aspects of citizenship;
- Ethical issues in connection with teaching democratic citizenship; and
- Citizenship as a subject, as a dimension of different subjects, and as the basis of school culture.



## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

In Denmark, students sit a compulsory leaving examination at the end of Grade 9 of their primary and lower-secondary schooling (i.e., at the end of *folkeskole*). The examination actually consists of five compulsory examinations (two in Danish, one in mathematics, one in English, and one in physics/chemistry) and two examinations chosen “by lot” each year (one in science and one in the humanities subjects). Students can also elect to be examined in one of their optional subjects (German, French, needlework, woodwork, and home economics). The examinations may be oral, written, or digital. After passing the examination, students can attend general, commercial, or technical upper-secondary school (the *gymnasium*), higher preparatory school, or a school for vocational education and training. Private schools must observe the same examination standards and schedules as the public schools.

Teachers have the option of formally examining their students during the school year, but often they will observe and assess the work of their students continuously, using a wide variety of assessment and evaluation tools. Marks are not given to students in preschool or in Grades 1 to 7. Instead, students and parents are regularly informed of the school’s ongoing evaluation outcomes. *Folkeskole* teachers must produce a written plan for each student. This contains not only the student’s learning plan for the immediate future but also a status report of his or her skills and competencies. Grades 8 to 10 students receive (at least twice a year) assessment marks delineating their educational achievement in curriculum subjects.

“School–home meetings” are normally held twice a year for all grades in all Danish schools. At these meetings, the student, the student’s parents, and one or two teachers discuss the student’s personal, social, and academic achievements.

As noted earlier in this chapter, recent years have seen an increased focus on testing students during the nine years of primary and lower-secondary school—a focus that has culminated in the launch of compulsory national testing of students throughout this period of their education. These tests, which are conducted online, cover Danish (Grades 2, 4, 6, and 8), mathematics (Grades 3 and 6), English (Grade 7), and biology, geography, and physics/chemistry (Grade 8).

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

There is no specific assessment or examination of civic and citizenship education in Denmark. However, as noted above, teachers continuously observe and assess their students in subjects that have elements of civic and citizenship education integrated into them, as, for example, in the subject Danish. Civic and citizenship education may also be associated with or integrated into one of the compulsory subjects for the Grade 9 leaving examination, but not all students will be examined in specific civic and citizenship education-related themes or areas. Social studies is now one of these other subjects, but only in terms of being part of the group of Grade 9 subjects examined in 2006.

Correspondingly, there are no standard procedures for monitoring the quality of civic and citizenship education learning and teaching in Denmark, but sometimes special initiatives are undertaken. In 2009, the Danish Government introduced an action plan titled *A Safe and Secure Future: Action Plan to Prevent Extremist Attitudes and Radicalism Among Youth*. Its launch included an inspection of 25 private schools to determine whether they were maintaining the same standards as the public schools in the area of civic and citizenship education.



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## Further Reading

Readers who are interested in reviewing the regulatory framework or learning more about education in Denmark may wish to consult the following websites. The list is arranged in sections to correspond with the chapter outline.

### *General background information*

- The official website of Denmark  
<http://www.denmark.dk/en/menu/About-Denmark/Government-Politics/>
- The Danish Parliament  
[http://www.ft.dk/~media/Pdf\\_materiale/Pdf\\_publicationer/English/The%20Parliamentary%20System%20of%20Denmark\\_A4\\_Opslag\\_24s%20pdf.ashx](http://www.ft.dk/~media/Pdf_materiale/Pdf_publicationer/English/The%20Parliamentary%20System%20of%20Denmark_A4_Opslag_24s%20pdf.ashx)
- The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
<http://www.um.dk/en>
- *Statistical Yearbook 2011* from Statistics Denmark  
<http://www.dst.dk/da/statistik/publikationer/aarboeger-ogtemapublikationer/vispub.aspx?cid=16218>

### *Education system*

- The *folkeskole* in figures  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Primary%20and%20Lower%20Secondary%20Education/The%20Folkeskole.aspx>
- Danish municipal primary and lower-secondary schooling  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Fact-Sheets>
- Danish private schools  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Fact-Sheets/Primary-and-lower-secondary-education/Private-schools>
- Danish upper-secondary education  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Fact-Sheets/Upper-secondary-education>

### *Current reforms and debates in civic and citizenship education*

- Bullying and value-rules (in Danish)  
<http://www.uvm.dk/Uddannelser-og-dagtilbud/Folkeskolen/I-fokus/Mobning>
- IT and media (in Danish)  
<http://www.uvm.dk/Uddannelser-og-dagtilbud/Folkeskolen/I-fokus/It-i-folkeskolen>
- Knowledge of work and life  
[http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publicationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090708\\_arbejdskend\\_07.ashx](http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publicationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090708_arbejdskend_07.ashx)
- Christianity  
[http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publicationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090707\\_kristen\\_08.ashx](http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publicationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090707_kristen_08.ashx)
- Social studies  
[http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publicationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090709\\_samfund\\_12.ashx](http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publicationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090709_samfund_12.ashx)



- Information on education, vocational occupations, and the labor market  
[http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publikationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090625\\_uea\\_06.ashx](http://www.uvm.dk/~media/Publikationer/2009/Folke/Faelles%20Maal/Filer/Faghaefter/090625_uea_06.ashx)
- Rights and duties  
<http://pub.uvm.dk/2002/rettigheder/engelsk.pdf>

*Teacher education in general*

- Danish Teacher Education Act (in Danish)  
<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=25113>
- Danish Union of Teachers  
<http://www.dlf.org/english>
- Student plans  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Primary%20and%20Lower%20Secondary%20Education/The%20Folkeskole/Evaluation%20Tests%20Student%20Plans.aspx>
- Cooperation between home and school  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Primary%20and%20Lower%20Secondary%20Education/The%20Folkeskole/Additional%20Information.aspx>

*Assessment and quality assurance*

- Official online guide to evaluation tools (in Danish)  
[http://www.evaluering.uvm.dk/templates/laerereOgLedere\\_layout.jsf](http://www.evaluering.uvm.dk/templates/laerereOgLedere_layout.jsf)
- Examinations and assessment  
<http://eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Primary%20and%20Lower%20Secondary%20Education/The%20Folkeskole/Examinations%20Assessment.aspx>





# Dominican Republic

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

According to census data, the population of the Dominican Republic was 9,884,371 in 2010, an increase of 36 percent from the 1993 census tally of 7,293,390. In 2000, the birth rate was estimated at just over 25 per 1,000 people, while the death rate was estimated to be approximately 5 per 1,000 people. In absolute terms, the population is still growing, but at a relatively slow pace.

The Dominican population is mostly of mixed African and European descent, with 73 percent of people describing themselves as of mixed race. The population is generally young: 34 percent of Dominicans are under the age of 14, and only five percent are over the age of 65. Most people live in urban areas, especially in the Santo Domingo area, which has a population of more than 2.5 million inhabitants. The average population density in 1997 was just under 170 people per square kilometer, and was unevenly distributed, with a large part of the population concentrated in Santo Domingo, Santiago, and the coastal towns.

Spanish is the official language by custom and practice. People living along the republic's border with Haiti speak a Creole dialect.

The Dominican Republic's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was estimated to be US\$4,815 in 2009, and the annual growth rate of the GDP was estimated as 5.3 percent. The growth national income per capita was estimated to be 3.5 percent (Central Bank of the Dominican Republic, 2012).

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Dominican Republic is a democratic republic. As established in the constitution, the government is organized into three independent powers—executive, legislative, and judicial. The president represents executive power. Legislative power is vested in the National Congress, which is composed of two chambers—the Senate and the House of Representatives. Judicial power is exercised by the Supreme Court and the judicial courts.

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter was authored by the Directorate of Evaluation of the Quality of Education at the Ministry of Education in the Dominican Republic. Information concerning developments in civic and citizenship education in the Dominican Republic was drawn from the Dominican Republic's national contexts survey (ICCS) and from information contained in the *Plan Decenal de Educación* (Ten-Year Education Plan) 2008–2018 (Ministry of Education, 2008). More information about the country and the structure of its education system can be found in *Reviews of National Policies for Education, Dominican Republic*, published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2008.



## Education System

### Overview and Background

The General Education Law of 1997 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1997) provides the legal framework for the Dominican Republic's education system, which is administered by the Ministry of Education. Over the past few decades, the Dominican Republic has been successful in progressively expanding educational coverage. In 2009, the nation's 10,986 schools were being attended by 2,650,873 students, of whom 644,656 were enrolled in private schools. Enrolment rates in 2009 were just over 33 percent for preprimary education (catering to children 0 to 6 years of age), just under 90 percent for basic education (6 to 14 years of age), and 51 percent for secondary education (14 to 18 years of age). However, repetition of year levels and dropout rates remain high throughout the system, a situation reflected in low rates of study completion and over-age students.

The Dominican Republic has a centralized education system made up of three structural levels. At the national level, the Ministry of Education is responsible for regulation, policies, and general administration of the system. However, the National Education Council, which is chaired by the Minister of Education and composed of representatives from different sectors of society as well as various organizations, is the primary decisionmaker on education matters. At the regional level, ministry executive agencies are responsible for administering the education regions. At the local level, school district authorities work under the supervision of the regional authorities and are responsible for the local administration of schools. Public schools are overseen by an administrator or principal and a school board.

School administrators are responsible for complying with legal provisions as well as for executing decisions made by the school board. The school board is a representative body that is responsible for creating a link between the community and the school, and for ensuring the success of educational processes. It consists of the school administrator, members of the teachers' assembly, members of the parents' association, members of the community, and members of the student council. In general, school autonomy is limited in the Dominican Republic.

### Structure of the Education System

The Dominican education system consists of preprimary, primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. The latter is under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology. The other levels are organized in cycles, further divided into grades, with each of the latter corresponding to one year of schooling. Compulsory education encompasses nine years, from kindergarten to Grade 8, or one year of preschool and eight years of basic education.

Preprimary education is organized into three cycles: the first intended for children aged two or below, the second for children aged two to four years, and the third for children who are four to six years old. The preprimary level covers children who are under six years of age, but only the final year of the level (five-year-old children) is compulsory. The current enrolment rate is 72 percent.

The primary level—basic education—lasts eight years and caters to the population of students who are 6 to 14 years of age. Basic education has a two-cycle structure: the first cycle covers Grades 1 to 4 (primary education), and the second covers Grades 5 to 8 (lower-secondary education). Within these cycles, learning is organized by grades, each of which lasts one year and encompasses 10 months of teaching. Because basic education is compulsory and universal, the state has a constitutional responsibility to ensure all children have access to it.



The secondary level of schooling (upper-secondary education) lasts four years and is intended for the population of students 14 to 18 years of age. It is designed to strengthen and deepen the knowledge, values, attitudes, and vocational interests that students acquire during their basic education, and it provides access to higher learning as well as to further training for the labor market. As with basic education, there are two cycles, each lasting two years. The first cycle offers general education, while the second has three strands—general, vocational or technical, and arts. Each of these offers different options within a flexible curriculum that facilitates a transition from one strand to another. Upper-secondary education is free but not compulsory.

Vocational or technical secondary education, which is part of upper-secondary education, prepares students for entry into qualified professions at the tertiary level. It focuses on three main sectors of the Dominican economy—industry, agriculture, and services. Secondary arts education seeks to further develop students’ sensibilities and creative skills as well as enabling them to incorporate their knowledge and practical skills into a variety of arts-related professions and occupations. This area of the education system has four major orientations—music, visual arts, performing arts, and applied arts.

The Dominican education system also has two subsystems. These are special needs education and adult education. The former provides children with physical and intellectual disabilities and other special needs with the opportunity to acquire basic learning. Wherever possible, children with special needs are integrated into regular schools. The subsystem of adult education offers a comprehensive, ongoing program aimed at delivering education to adults who, for a number of reasons, were not able to attend regular, systematic schooling. It is also intended for adults who wish to acquire further training out of a desire for self-fulfillment or in order to enter or work in some other area of the labor market. Adult education offers literacy and primary education programs as well as secondary education and professional training. Primary adult education lasts five years and is divided into three cycles, the first two lasting two years each, and the third cycle lasting one year. Some programs provide students with flexible learning options by combining face-to-face and distance learning.

The main priority of current education policy is to improve education quality, and the fundamental strategy used to achieve this is the curriculum. The national curriculum that has been in place since 1995 defines curricular areas and subjects and specifies the objectives and contents for each grade. There are also crosscurricular themes that include topics of relevance to civic and citizenship education. The curriculum follows a constructivist and sociocultural approach to learning. Particular emphases are making learning more active and placing the student at the center of the process.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Education law states that the aim of education in the Dominican Republic is “to promote the education of an individual for a socially productive life that will enable him [sic] to fully exercise his rights and fulfill his duties in a democratic, pluralist and participatory society.” The national curriculum accordingly establishes as one of its main purposes the preparation of “human beings for the full exercise of their rights and duties for the transformation of society based on justice, peace and participatory democracy” (Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture, 1994a, pp. 5–6; see also Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture, 1994b).

The Education Act requires both basic and secondary schools to work to a program focused on moral and civic education. The main aim of the program is to strengthen moral and citizenship values and ethics as well as political literacy. More specifically, the program is expected to meet



a number of objectives relating to school climate, student wellbeing, and political/democratic engagement. These objectives include the following:

- Developing democratic relations between family, school, and community;
- Ensuring that all school-based stakeholders (including students) can participate in managing the school and community environment and in making decisions that affect one or other or both;
- Valuing and fostering equity, justice, freedom, and respect for cultural diversity;
- Respecting the opinions of others, being tolerant, resolving conflicts through dialogue, using participation and cooperation with respect to political and issues-based engagement, and exercising consensual decisionmaking;
- Strengthening individual and national identities; and
- Knowing citizens' rights and responsibilities.

Civic and citizenship education in the Dominican Republic is a specific subject called “moral and civic education” (*Educación moral y cívica*) that schools are required to teach for one hour a week in every grade, especially in the upper cycle of basic education and secondary education. It is also integrated into social sciences and is a crosscurricular subject.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

Curricular documents establish general and comprehensive objectives related to civic values, attitudes, and knowledge of civic institutions and rights. In addition, the moral and civic education program specifies content and suggests activities for the classroom.

The social science curriculum is organized into four dimensions—spatial, economic, sociocultural, and citizenship. Some of the main themes running through the citizenship dimension reference the history of becoming a nation, the building of democracy, forms of participation in civic life, and human rights and social movements.

During the second cycle of basic education (Grades 5 to 8), the moral and civic education program specifies that students acknowledge their social environment, recreate traditions and local customs, participate in civic and cultural activities, identify national symbols, participate in school and community projects, identify citizens' rights and responsibilities, and develop harmonious relationships. Although moral and civic education is a national program, its implementation varies considerably across schools.

### **Civic and Citizenship Activities in Schools**

The curriculum suggests the use of participatory strategies for learning such as group work, role play, community projects, and debates. Involvement in community projects is encouraged, but the extent of involvement varies across schools.

Dominican schools are mandated to have a council of students elected by their peers. This council represents the students, plans different activities for the school, and makes decisions relating to students' issues. The council gives students opportunity to experience democratic representation.

Schools also participate in specific civics-related projects, such as setting up a model United Nations, an activity that promotes student research on different countries and assemblies and allows them to learn the UN model of debating. Several nongovernmental agencies, such as *Centro Cultural Poveda*, along with international organizations and the Dominican Republic's Consortium of Civic Education (mentioned in more detail below), operate various programs that promote student participation in the school and the community.



## Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic education in the Dominican Republic faces the challenge of institutional and cultural practices characterized by authoritarianism, ongoing change, and the exclusion of large sectors of the population. This situation is connected to the colonial heritage of the country, a long history of political dictatorships, and increasing social inequality.

One of the most important historical events in the development of civic and citizenship education was the Ten-Year Education Plan 1992–2002 (*Plan Decenal de Educación*; Ministry of Education, Culture, and Fine Arts, 1992), which was developed with the participation of several sectors of Dominican society. However, in 1999, the Education Act of that year established a program of civic education because the government considered the crosscurricular approach outlined in the Ten-Year Plan insufficient to promote civic and citizenship education.

The curriculum is currently undergoing a revision which recommends that civic education remain an important part of the social sciences curriculum and a crosscurricular area, although not a specific subject. Current reform intends to move schools away from the traditional approach to civic and citizenship education of memorizing concepts and norms by promoting an active learning approach.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

In school year 2005/2006, the public sector accounted for the highest proportion (just over 73%) of teaching staff, while about one-quarter of teachers were employed in the private sector. Some schools are administered by nonprofit organizations or religious institutions but are financed through public funds and are therefore considered part of the public sector. During school year 2005/2006, a total of 58,261 teachers worked in the public sector.

One aspect of the Dominican education system that needs to be emphasized is the predominance of female teaching staff. More than 70 percent of teachers are female, and this proportion is particularly high in the lower grades. The participation of female staff is even more dominant at the preprimary level, accounting for more than 96 percent of teaching staff in 2002/2003 and totaling 9,264 teachers.

Currently, individuals must hold a four-year Bachelor's degree (*licenciatura*) in order to work as a teacher in primary or secondary education. At the primary level, the required degree is called basic education whereas at the secondary level teachers need to have a degree in a specific subject area, such as mathematics or science. However, not all teachers have higher education degrees because, prior to 1992, only school teacher certification, obtainable at the secondary level (*maestro normal*), was needed for teaching in primary schools. Most teachers in the Dominican Republic (nearly 90%) have the equivalent of a four-year Bachelor's degree. At the primary level, 88 percent of the teaching personnel have a basic education degree.

The Ministry of Education is currently endeavoring to provide professional development for its teaching staff. Through the National Institute for Teacher Education (*Instituto Nacional de Formación y Capacitación del Magisterio*), the ministry provides, in cooperation with higher education institutions, courses and training for teachers in the public system. Teachers can also apply for scholarships in order to finance their attendance at various kinds of teacher training courses.



### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education is taught by regular classroom teachers, and there are no requirements for special training. However, since 2001, the republic's Consortium for Civic Education, consisting of schools and nongovernmental organizations, and coordinated by a private university, the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM), has been providing training for teachers in civic and citizenship education. Schools participating in this program must develop a citizenship project focusing on a particular social problem identified by their students. As part of the project, schools work collaboratively with the community and government agencies. PUCMM also offers a graduate program specializing in civic and citizenship education. So far, 80 teachers have completed this program.

### Assessments and Quality Assurance

#### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Students in the Dominican Republic take compulsory national tests at the end of basic education and again at the end of secondary education in order to progress to the next level of the education system. National tests (*Pruebas Nacionales*) examine four subject areas (Spanish, mathematics, social sciences, and natural sciences) in Grades 8 and 12. These tests account for 30 percent of the marks awarded for each subject. The school is responsible for awarding the other 70 percent. Since 2010, Dominican schools have been required to conduct a diagnostic assessment at the beginning of Grade 4, but only for Spanish and mathematics.

#### Assessment and Examinations in Civic and Citizenship Education

Even though a national test assesses student achievement in social sciences, it does not include content specific to civic and citizenship education, other than requiring students to discuss matters relating to authoritarian and democratic governments. Civic and citizenship education is therefore evaluated principally by classroom teachers according to criteria outlined in the official curriculum. However, plans are afoot to include, in the near future, content related to this learning area in the social sciences national test.

Schools are supervised by the educational district authorities, with supervision conducted according to guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education. In general, supervisors visit schools once a month. A new automated system, set up to facilitate monitoring of schools, is today allowing authorities to obtain quick reports on several aspects of school management and curriculum development.

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# England

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

In 2010, the population of England was 52,234,000. The proportion of the population of Great Britain<sup>1</sup> from a non-white ethnic minority background in 2008 was around 17 percent (Office for National Statistics, 2010a). The land area of England in 2008 was 130,280 square kilometers, and in 2005 approximately 19 percent of England was designated urban, including land not otherwise specified (Office for National Statistics, 2010a).

In common with most of Western Europe, England and the rest of the United Kingdom has an ageing population due to an increase in the number of people aged 65 and over and a decline in the number of people 16 years of age and under. The proportion of people under 16 is expected to continue falling. The following figures for the UK under-16 population<sup>2</sup> demonstrate this downward trend. In 1971, there were 7,318,000 people under 16 in the UK. In 2001, there were 6,077,000, and in 2008, 5,898,000 (Office for National Statistics, 2010a).

The official language in England by custom and practice is English. However, a wide range of languages is sustained within ethnic minority communities. A survey of languages conducted by the National Centre for Languages (2005), found that there were at least 300 languages spoken by school students in England. The most prevalent group comprises South Asian languages such as Punjabi, Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, and Bengali. Other languages include Cantonese, Polish, Italian, Turkish, and Greek. While London is the most linguistically diverse area, the National Centre for Languages survey found growing diversity in parts of the country where previously few languages other than English were spoken.

In 2009, the gross national income of the United Kingdom (at market prices) was £M1,423,812, and the gross domestic product (at market prices) was £M1,395,872 (Office for National Statistics, 2010a).

### Characteristics of the Political System

England is one of four countries in the United Kingdom (UK). The UK has a constitutional monarchy, with the sovereign as head of state and head of government. The UK Government comprises the legislature (parliament), the executive (the cabinet, which consists of about 20 ministers, usually heads of the government departments and chosen by the prime minister), and the judiciary. Parliament consists of the Queen, the appointed House of Lords, and the elected House of Commons. Parliament passes laws, monitors government policy and administration, controls finance, enables the government to levy taxes, protects and safeguards the rights of individuals, examines European Union proposals, and debates current major issues.

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1 Administrative data do not break down this figure at the level of individual country jurisdictions. Great Britain consists of three countries: England, Scotland, and Wales.

2 Administrative data do not break down this figure at the level of individual country jurisdictions. The United Kingdom consists of four countries: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.



Most of the work of parliament is conducted in the House of Commons, which is composed of 646 elected members, known as members of parliament (MPs). Most MPs belong to a political party, the main parties being Labour, Conservative, and Liberal Democrat. The political party that wins the most parliamentary seats in a general election—under a first-past-the-post system—forms the next government (the executive). The government is led by the leader of that party, who becomes prime minister.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

In January 2007, there were 25,000 schools in England, with 8.1 million students enrolled (Eurydice, 2008/2009). In 2008/2009, approximately 92 percent of students attended public sector schools (not including special schools and pupil referral units) while six percent attended non-publicly funded mainstream schools. A small proportion, around one percent, attended special schools (Office for National Statistics, 2010b). The Department for Children, Schools and Families, now the Department for Education, has overall responsibility for school education.

The structure of local government is not uniform across the country. In some areas, education is the responsibility of a single-tier local authority, while in other areas, which have a two-tier structure, it is the responsibility of the top-tier local authority. Although a great deal of education policy is centrally determined, the management of finance and human resources is delegated to schools. Each school has its own governing body, whose members are elected and appointed from different stakeholder groups. The governing body provides strategic direction for the school, approves the budget, and appoints the head teacher, who has responsibility for the internal organization, management, and control of the school and for the implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body.

### Structure of the Education System

#### Compulsory Education

Compulsory schooling in England begins in the term after a child's fifth birthday, although most schools take children during the year in which they turn five, and it continues to the age of 16. Younger children are taught in primary schools that serve children from ages 4 to 11. This phase of schooling is known as the early years foundation stage, or Years 1 to 6. Children in Years 1 to 2 are described as being in Key Stage 1 (ages five to seven), while children in Years 3 to 6 are in Key Stage 2 (ages 7 to 11). In some areas, primary education is provided in separate infant (Key Stage 1) and junior (Key Stage 2) schools.

Older children (ages 11 to 16) are normally educated in secondary schools. Students in Years 7 to 9 are described as being in Key Stage 3 (ages 11 to 14), while those in Years 10 to 11 are in Key Stage 4 (ages 14 to 16). In some local authority areas, schools are divided into first, middle, and upper schools. In these areas, students attend first school from the ages of five to nine, and then move to middle school where they remain until they are aged approximately 13 or 14. They then move to an upper or high school where they remain until they are 16.

All primary schools offer a general education. At the secondary level, students most commonly follow a general program of education until they reach the age of 16, with some schools providing opportunities for students to follow work-based learning and vocational education programs. In 2008, a new qualifications framework, the diploma, was introduced. This enables students aged 14 to 16 to undertake one of five new lines of learning that take place across multiple sites: schools, further education colleges, training providers, and/or the workplace.



### **The National Curriculum**

All publicly funded schools must follow a national curriculum for students aged 5 to 16. This curriculum was introduced in 1989, revised in 2000, and revised again in 2008.

Under the revised curriculum, new programs of study for each national curriculum subject have been developed, giving teachers a more flexible, less prescriptive framework for teaching and allowing them to tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of individual students. The curriculum now has a focus on three key aims and skills, with the intent of producing young people who are successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens.

The new curriculum continues to recognize the importance of specific subjects while emphasizing the development of skills for life and work. Crosscurricular dimensions provide unifying themes that give education relevance and authenticity. There are strong links between citizenship and the global dimension, sustainability, identity, cultural diversity, and community participation. Another intention underpinning the new curriculum is for learning to become more active through, for example, field trips and study outside classrooms, so enabling students to gain an understanding of how these subjects relate to the world outside school.

Although England has a national curriculum and national statutory programs of learning, schools have the freedom to design a curriculum around this framework in order to meet the needs of their students and communities. Schools decide locally on curriculum delivery methods and resources. Schools have complete autonomy in relation to the appointment of their teaching and ancillary staff.

### **Noncompulsory Education**

In September 2008, a new curriculum, the early years foundation stage (EYFS), was introduced. It was designed to support children's development from birth until the August after their fifth birthday. The EYFS promotes an integrated approach to care and education and forms a single framework of curricular requirements from birth to age five. It unifies previously separate welfare and early learning frameworks and requires every registered provider to support children's learning.

A wide range of care services exists for children between the ages of zero and five, including child minders and nannies who care for babies and children in their homes, as well as day nurseries that care for babies and children up to five years of age, preschool groups for children two to five years of age, nursery schools or classes for children three to five years of age, and reception classes in primary schools, which children can attend on turning four. Since April 2004, all children of preschool age have been entitled to five free, parttime, preschool education sessions per week (Eurydice, 2008/2009).

In a large number of local authority areas, schools continue to provide general and vocational education programs, including the new diploma qualification, to students aged 16 to 18, and often in conjunction with further education colleges or private training providers. In other local authority areas, students who wish to continue studying general education or vocational training courses need to attend a sixth-form college, a further education college, or a training provider. Young people who wish to receive work-based training can also apply to enroll in a modern apprenticeship program with an employer.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

The aims and purposes of citizenship education in England are defined within the national curriculum as follows:

Education for citizenship equips young people with the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in public life. Citizenship encourages them to take an interest in topical and controversial issues and to engage in discussion and debate. Pupils learn about their rights, responsibilities, duties and freedoms and about laws, justice and democracy. They learn to take part in decision-making and different forms of action. They play an active role in the life of their schools, neighbourhoods, communities and wider society as active and global citizens. (Department for Education, 2010a, p. 2)

There is no prescribed model for teaching citizenship education in schools. Schools are advised to dedicate up to five percent of curriculum time to the teaching of citizenship, but this can be undertaken through discrete citizenship lessons, integration into other subjects such as history or religious education, as a crosscurricular subject, through the pastoral or tutorial system, through extracurricular activities, or through special events, dedicated curriculum days, and school assemblies.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

#### Overview

Citizenship education is recommended to primary schools as a nonstatutory program of study at Key Stages 1 and 2. Thereafter, at Key Stages 3 and 4, citizenship is a statutory national curriculum subject. At Key Stages 1 and 2, citizenship education seeks to develop a range of skills, knowledge, and understanding as follows:

- *Key Stage 1* (ages five to seven): During this stage, students learn about themselves as developing individuals and as members of their communities, building on their own experiences and on the early learning goals for personal, social, and emotional development. They learn the basic rules and skills for keeping themselves healthy and safe and for behaving well. They have opportunities to show they can take some responsibility for themselves and their environment. They begin to learn about their own and other people's feelings and to become aware of the views, needs, and rights of other children and older people. As members of a class and school community, they learn social skills such as how to share, take turns, play, help others, resolve simple arguments, and resist bullying. They begin to take an active part in the life of their school and its neighborhood (Department for Education, 2010b).
- *Key Stage 2* (ages 7 to 11): During this stage, students learn about themselves as growing and changing individuals, with their own experiences and ideas, and as members of their communities. They become more mature, independent, and self-confident. They learn about the wider world and the interdependence of communities within it. They develop their sense of social justice and moral responsibility and begin to understand that their own choices and behavior can affect local, national, and global issues and political and social institutions. They learn how to take part more fully in school and community activities. They learn how to make more confident and informed choices about their health and environment, to take more responsibility, individually and as a group, for their own learning, and to resist bullying (Department for Education, 2010b).



- *Key Stages 3 (ages 11 to 14) and 4 (ages 14 to 16)*: There is still, during this stage, a strong focus within the citizenship curriculum on key skills and concepts. However, at this stage, students begin to examine more specific subject content, including politics, social science, history, economics, geography, English, information and communication technologies, and religious education. There is also a stronger focus on social, personal, and health education.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

Citizenship education at Key Stage 3 (ISCED 2) can be organized in a number of ways. Some schools offer it as a discrete subject, while others integrate it across the curriculum, within specific subjects, or as an element of the personal, social, and health education curriculum. Teachers are free to implement and teach the national curriculum programs of study as they judge best, using resources that they feel are the most appropriate. The Qualifications, Curriculum and Development Agency, the government's expert body on curriculum and assessment, also provides guidance to schools on implementing an effective curriculum. The curriculum does not specify the amount of instructional time that should be devoted to citizenship education, although there is a recommendation that this learning area should take up approximately five percent of overall curriculum time. Teachers assess students against an eight-point attainment target scale devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, with Level 8 representing the highest level of achievement (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007).

The program of study for citizenship at Key Stage 3 (11 to 14) was recently revised during the major revision of the national curriculum in England. The new program of study for citizenship came into effect in 2008. However, implementation is occurring in phases, which meant that at the time of ICCS 2009, Year 7 students were the only students to have experienced the new program of study (in September 2008). Year 8 students were introduced to the new curriculum from September 2009 and Year 9 students from September 2010.

Three key concepts underpin the study of citizenship within the revised curriculum: democracy and justice, rights and responsibilities, and identities and diversity. The curriculum also identifies three key skills and processes: critical thinking and enquiry, advocacy and representation, and taking informed and responsible action.

The revised curriculum represents a change of emphasis from the previous curriculum, in that there is now a more explicit focus on the process of becoming an active citizen—by developing skills of advocacy and representation, for example. A focus on identity and diversity in British society is also a response to current debates about the role that citizenship can play in developing a sense of community cohesion and an appreciation of “core British values” among young people (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007; Department for Education and Skills, 2007).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The program of study for citizenship at Key Stage 3 recommends that students be actively involved in their citizenship lessons through discussion, debate, and critical enquiry, and within their schools and communities through involvement in community projects, school councils (which are democratic student bodies), and other extracurricular opportunities. However, the manner in which individual schools and students interpret and implement these guidelines varies considerably.

Although the government strongly supports the effective involvement of children, young people, and their families or carers in the development and running of children's trusts, schools, and school councils, it does not prescribe the means for schools to achieve participation. Schools are under a statutory obligation to consider involving their students in the life of the school, but each school is free to design participation mechanisms that meet its needs.



In 2008, The Department for Children, Schools and Families issued statutory guidance entitled *Working Together: Giving Children and Young People a Say*. The guidance is designed to help schools organize opportunities for children and young people to develop their skills as active citizens. It outlines how governing bodies can seek students' views and engage them in strategic decisionmaking (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008). Currently, 99 percent of schools have some means of giving students a voice and 95 percent have a student council (Whitty & Wisby, 2007).

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Until recently, there has been no tradition of civic or citizenship teaching in English schools (Kerr, 1999). In the late 1990s, a number of factors acted as drivers for the introduction of citizenship education as a statutory national curriculum subject in 2002 (Advisory Group on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools, 1998). These included:

- The perception of a dwindling interest in politics, the political process, and voting, especially among young people (sometimes referred to as a democratic deficit);
- An apparent disintegration of the social fabric of society—a sense of a reduced emphasis on the importance of society and community and a growth in individualism;
- Growing concerns about violence and extremism in society;
- Concerns that the national curriculum was too narrow and prescriptive.

These matters created a desire to broaden young people's civic-related knowledge, understanding, and skills. The introduction of citizenship as a statutory subject in 2002 aimed to help young people become politically literate, socially and morally responsible, and active within their schools and local communities.

The revised curriculum for citizenship builds on strengths within the original curriculum and focuses on three key concepts: democracy and justice, rights and responsibilities, and identities and diversity. While the drivers noted above helped shape the new curriculum, more recent issues have also influenced the focus of the new curriculum, including the enlargement of Europe and increased migration of people, the perceived threat of international terrorism, particularly following the London bombings of 2005, and the introduction of a duty on schools to promote community cohesion (Kerr & Cleaver, 2009).

The curriculum is therefore not just about educating for political literacy and student participation, but also about educating for social cohesion. Current debates center on two issues—strengthening civic and citizenship education as part of a review of the primary curriculum in schools (Department for Education, 2010c), and setting up a civic service program—the National Citizens Service (NCS)—in local communities for all young people aged 16 to 17.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

In January 2007, England had 439,200 fulltime teachers in schools (Mullis et al., 2008). Teaching is an all-graduate profession, which students can enter through three routes. After successfully completing two or more advanced-level qualifications or equivalent and five or more General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications at Grade C or above, prospective teachers may undertake:

- A three- or four-year degree, during which they study one or more academic subjects and gain professional training in aspects of education, a route that leads either to a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) or a Bachelor of Arts (BA);



- A three-year Bachelor's degree followed by a one-year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), with a recommendation for qualified teacher status via an employment-based route. This is the least common route into teaching.

The majority of teachers entering secondary schools and teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 have a relevant degree and a PGCE. Bachelor's degree programs that confer qualified teacher status are more common among primary teachers teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2. All teachers undertake a minimum of five years postcompulsory education and training in order to achieve qualified status.

The content of initial teacher education programs is, in part, determined by the rigorous demands of a series of professional competencies that student teachers must attain. These are organized into three interrelated categories—professional values and practice, knowledge and understanding, and teaching. Prospective teachers must also pass skills tests in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technologies. Student teachers register with higher education institutions and spend a large proportion of their time in the classroom under the supervision of a practicing teacher. Primary teachers are trained to teach all subjects in the national curriculum, while secondary teachers are subject specialists.

During the early part of the teaching career, a school mentor supports newly qualified teachers. Qualified teacher status is confirmed on satisfactory completion of the induction year. The mentoring process provides a bridge between initial teacher education and effective professional practice (Mullis et al., 2008).

#### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

All teachers teaching in lower-secondary education (Key Stage 3) are graduates with qualified teacher status, conferred through a B.Ed or BA degree, or through a PGCE qualification gained after completion of a Bachelor's degree. Citizenship education at Key Stage 3 is taught by a range of teachers. In some schools, those teaching citizenship are subject specialists who may have completed a citizenship PGCE, while in others, teachers specializing in related subjects, such as history, geography, and religious education, also teach citizenship. In yet other schools, general classroom teachers are responsible for curriculum delivery. The reasons for this diverse approach to teaching relate to the different models of citizenship delivery across schools, as outlined earlier in this chapter. There are no specific training or certification requirements for teachers who teach citizenship at Key Stage 3, other than that they have qualified teacher status.

Prospective secondary teachers in England may choose to undertake their initial teacher training (PGCE) in citizenship. The main providers of this training are higher education institutions, which work in partnership with schools and colleges. Citizenship education is not a feature of all initial teacher training programs. Instead, it is the sole focus of programs for those wishing to become specialist teachers of citizenship. Although this training, introduced in 2001, has increased the number of specialist citizenship teachers, there is still a need for more teachers to qualify as citizenship specialists if quality teaching and learning is to be ensured.

Citizenship education can be a feature of inservice teacher training and continuing professional development for teachers. The main providers of this training are higher education institutions, professional associations (such as the Association for Citizenship Teaching), schools and colleges, and local authorities and nongovernmental organizations. However, such training is not compulsory, which means schools decide whether or not to include citizenship in their teachers' professional development plans.



## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

England has an extensive system of formal assessment, which begins with a mandatory assessment of five-year-olds in state-funded settings. Assessments are mandatory at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 (ages 7 and 11), but as of 2008 became no longer mandatory at the end of Key Stage 3 (age 14). Children are assessed in English (reading, writing, and spelling) and mathematics at age seven, and in English, mathematics, and science at age 11. However, the Department for Children, Schools and Families decided that, from 2010 on, there would be no more whole-cohort testing of science at age 11.

At age seven, children experience teacher-conducted assessments, informed by the outcomes of a series of formal tests. At age 11, they experience assessments that consist of formal pencil-and-paper tests. These latter assessments are scored externally by trained scorers, who return results to the schools. Results are published nationally on a school-by-school basis, while the results for seven-year-olds are published as a national summary. The assessments measure the progress made by students from the end of one stage to the end of another, and involve comparison of the results of cohorts of students of the same or similar prior attainment (Mullis et al., 2008). Regardless of the outcomes of these tests, all students normally progress to the next year of schooling until they reach the end of compulsory schooling at age 16.

After Key Stage 3, most students stay at their existing school, where they complete a two-year course that covers national curriculum minimum requirements and some optional subjects. At age 16, students seek single-subject qualifications in the subjects they have studied. They participate in a variety of academic or vocational qualifications, most commonly leading to the General Certificate of School Education or GCSE. Since September 2008, some schools have also offered young people aged 14 to 16 applied learning through a new diploma qualification. The diploma is also available after the end of compulsory schooling to young people aged 16 to 19, although most students of this age work toward Advanced Level (A Level) qualifications in three or four subjects. Examination results for students 16 and 18 years of age are published on a per school basis.

### Assessment and Examinations in Civic and Citizenship Education

At Key Stage 3, there are eight attainment targets for citizenship learning, with an additional level—exceptional performance—being awarded to the highest performers. Assessment is not limited to written outcomes but is also based on a range of evidence, as determined by teachers. Evidence might include assessing learning as it is happening through observation, discussion, or focused questioning; involving students through peer- or self-assessment; or sampling a range of work over a period of time. Students' written tasks, presentations, project work, discussions, and extracurricular activities can also contribute to an assessment of their learning. Parents are informed about their children's progress in citizenship and other national curriculum subjects through annual student-level school reports.

Students can voluntarily take a formal examination in citizenship if their school offers this option. Such qualifications include entry-level citizenship studies; GCSE citizenship studies (short course and full course), usually taken at age 16; and AS and A-level citizenship studies, usually taken at ages 17 and 18.

Students can also study toward a range of broader qualifications that recognize aspects of citizenship. These include entry-level life skills and entry-level personal and social skills, the Certificate in Community Volunteering, the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, the National Vocational Qualification in Community Development Work, GCSE humanities, and AS and A-level government and politics (Department for Education, 2010d).



### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

All schools in England are inspected by the national inspectorate—the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (OFSTED). Since 2004, national inspections have adopted a lighter approach, allowing schools to undertake self-evaluations that OFSTED then comments on. Citizenship is no longer inspected as a separate subject. However, there is a new duty upon schools to promote community cohesion, and OFSTED measures their achievement in relation to this. OFSTED also now conducts separate evaluations of citizenship learning across clusters of schools, the results of which have been used to inform policy in relation to citizenship education (Office for Standards in Education, 2006, 2010).

In addition to evaluation under the inspections framework, citizenship has been the subject of independent evaluation in England. The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study was a nine-year evaluation undertaken by the NFER on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The study researchers reported annually and produced their final report in 2010 (Keating, Kerr, Benton, Mundy, & Lopes, 2010; see also Benton et al., 2008; Keating, Kerr, Lopes, Featherstone, & Benton, 2009). Its findings provide powerful insights into the impact that citizenship education has had on schools, teachers, and young people since its introduction as a national curriculum subject in 2002. It continues to enable the DCSF to make strong recommendations about the future of citizenship education in England.

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# Estonia

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Estonia has a population of 1,340,127 people, of whom 69 percent are native Estonian and 26 percent have Russian origins. The remaining six percent originate from Ukraine, Belarus, Finland, and other nearby countries.

The official state language is Estonian. Russian is also widely spoken in the capital city Tallinn and in the northeast region, which borders the Russian Federation. The language of instruction in general education is Estonian or Russian; all Russian-speaking schools offer Estonian as a compulsory subject. In 2009, approximately 14 percent of all general educational institutions had Russian as their language of instruction. A small percentage of schools, approximately three percent, had English or Finnish as the language of instruction (Statistics Estonia, n. d.). In 2009, the first International Baccalaureate programs were launched within Estonian-speaking schools.

Most of Estonia's nonnative population arrived in the country between 1950 and the 1980s, when Estonia was part of the Soviet Union. At the beginning of this century, immigrants comprised 15 percent of the population. The emigration rate (12%) today exceeds the immigration rate, with 81 percent of emigrants moving to European countries (United Nations Development Programme, 2009). More than 69 percent of the population is urban, and one-third of the total population lives in the capital city, Tallinn. A decreasing and ageing population in rural areas is one of the biggest demographic and social problems in Estonia, and it is a problem that is having a significant impact on the country's education system. The gross domestic product per capita for Estonia was US\$20,361 in 2009 (United Nations Development Programme, 2009).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Estonia is a unitary parliamentary democracy. The head of the state is the president, who is elected by parliament for a five-year term. Members of the national legislature (*Riigikogu*) are elected by Estonian citizens for four years on the basis of proportional representation. Typically, six political parties are represented in parliament, which has 101 seats in total. Since 1991, when Estonia regained its independence, governments have required coalitions to form a majority, with governments of center-right or right-wing orientation prevailing. The political spectrum can be characterized as having a modest ideological distance between parties, which are neither radical right nor radical left in orientation.

Estonia has a two-tier administrative system, which includes the central government and municipal self-governments. Most policies are planned and implemented by the central authorities, but in some areas, such as education and social care, municipalities have considerable responsibility. Territorially, Estonia is divided into 15 counties, although the county level plays only a minimal role in governance.

Major societal factors influencing civic and citizenship education in Estonia are rooted in the



events of the 20th century, when the country lost its independence on the eve of the Second World War and was occupied for 50 years by the Soviet Union. Three important factors relative to this context can be highlighted with respect to civic and citizenship education.

First, Estonia inherited a large Russian-speaking minority, 49 percent of whom still do not hold Estonian citizenship (Integration and Migration Foundation, 2008). In 2000, Estonia launched a national integration program to facilitate integration of nonnative residents into Estonian society. Although progress in this regard has been considerable, the overall effect of integration policies continues to be debated. Second, the need to rapidly democratize the education system and the content of education precipitated several reforms over the past 20 years. Change was accelerated by the Europeanization of education after Estonia joined the European Union (EU) in 2004. The third factor affecting civic and citizenship education has been the renaissance of civil society and the emergence of powerful pressure groups in educational policymaking. National legislative acts mandate the participation of teacher, student, and parent organizations in policymaking and school governance (Act on Basic and Secondary Schools, Government of Estonia, n. d.).

## Education System

### Overview and Background

The Estonian education system is decentralized. The *Riigikogu* (parliament), the government of the republic, and the Ministry of Education and Research define the strategic development of the education system. Counties, local governments, and educational institutions each have specific roles in administering the system.

The *Riigikogu* has exclusive authority to enact laws that determine the basic principles of the formation, functioning, and development of the education system. The government adopts national education development programs and ensures their implementation; it also establishes annual funding rates for public educational institutions, establishes remuneration rates for teachers, and approves the framework requirements for teacher preparation. The Ministry of Education and Research plans education, research, and youth policies, and guarantees their sustainable and effective development. In recent years, equal access to lifelong learning has emerged as the ministry's priority mission (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010).

In addition to the ministry, four national government institutions are responsible for implementing and developing education policy. Two have important roles in general education and youth policy. The National Examinations and Qualifications Center deals with public examinations and develops the national curriculum. It also organizes external assessment of schools and coordinates Estonia's participation in international surveys such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) studies. The Estonian Youth Work Center enhances the capacity and quality of national youth policy by directing and organizing youth work.

Operating alongside, but subordinate to, the Ministry of Education and Research are eight foundations. These semi-independent agencies are responsible for implementing particular tasks or programs arising out of the country's education policy. For example, Tiger Leap Foundation is responsible for implementing information and communication technologies in education, and the Archimedes Foundation is responsible for coordinating and implementing international and national programs for young people and teachers as well as EU programs in education.

The county government in Estonia has a modest role in implementing educational policy, reflecting the general weakness of the regional level in the administrative system. The county's



task is to prepare regional development plans that include a focus on education. Counties also assist municipalities in carrying out national examinations and organizing youth work, including career advice and crime prevention. However, in the course of current upper-secondary school reform, counties will take over some *gymnasiums* (upper-secondary schools) from municipalities, thus increasing their role in education policy at the regional level.

Local governments are responsible for providing general education (from preprimary to upper-secondary education), monitoring compulsory school attendance, and maintaining preprimary institutions and general education schools.

Most students attend public sector schools, which are funded by the state. Ninety percent of general education schools are municipally owned, five percent are state schools, and five percent are private schools (European Commission, 2009). Religious schools are almost nonexistent in Estonia.

### Structure of the Education System

The Estonian education system has a single-track structure, which means all students follow the same curriculum until the end of basic education, which ends for students when they reach 16 years of age. The pre-university education system consists of three levels:

- Preprimary education for children under the age of seven;
- Basic school, including primary and lower-secondary education, comprising Grades 1 to 9 for children aged 7 to 16 or 17;
- Upper-secondary education, including either general school (*gymnasium*) or vocational school for Grades 10 to 12, for students aged 16 or 17 to 18.

Although preprimary education is not compulsory in Estonia, 94 percent of children aged four to six were attending a preprimary facility in 2007 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010). Most kindergartens are run by municipalities. Parents contribute toward the costs, but what they pay depends on family income.

Compulsory schooling begins at the age of seven and ends when students complete compulsory education at the end of nine years. Students who have not acquired basic education are obliged to study until the age of 17. Municipal schools have their own school districts, and must guarantee a place for all students in a school that is close to their homes. Parents can also choose another school if there is a place available. Some of the most popular schools use admission tests. This is a common practice at the upper-secondary level.

After completing basic school, students continue their education in an upper-secondary general or a vocational school. They can apply for admission to the kind of school they prefer. Some vocational programs also offer post-secondary education, which lasts one to five years depending on the profession. All secondary and postsecondary education diplomas allow students to apply for admission to higher education institutions.

Although Estonia has a single-track system, upper-secondary schools in urban areas have a long tradition of streaming. Typically, there is a mathematics/science track and a humanities track. The new national curriculum for upper-secondary schools (*gymnasiums*) requires each school to offer at least three streams, in order to better respond to the variety of student interests and to better prepare students for university. The subject called social sciences has recently been listed, for the first time, as one of the recommended tracks (Government of Estonia, 2010a).

Schools in Estonia have a considerable degree of autonomy. They not only determine staffing and teaching duties but also allocate operating expenditures (Eurydice, 2007). Most of the financial resources are granted to municipalities from the state budget. These funds ensure the minimum salary and inservice training of teachers, and include allocations for investments,



school lunches, textbooks, and study materials. The state supports private general education schools according to the same principles. However, parents who send their children to such schools still have to pay fees.

The main decisionmaking authority of schools is the school head, who is appointed by the municipal government. He or she engages and dismisses teachers and determines expenditure, including teachers' remuneration. However, as noted above, the central government sets the minimum salary. There are two collective decisionmaking bodies at the school level. The internal body is the teachers' council, which discusses pedagogical issues. The external management body, the board of trustees, was enacted in 2000 in order to make schools more responsive to the wider community. The board is a tripartite body, which includes representatives of parents, local government, and school management. Student representatives may attend board meetings. At the upper-secondary level, one student representative attends board meetings as a full member.

Estonia has a national curriculum, which has the status of a governmental decree. The national curriculum lists compulsory subjects and the basic allocation of teaching time. Compulsory subjects account for 70 percent of curricular content. However, each school is obliged to compile its own curriculum based on the national curriculum. Schools are currently experiencing increasing opportunities, and also obligations, to provide elective subjects. Teachers are free to use the teaching methods and textbooks of their choice. The structure of the vocational upper-secondary curriculum (number of and teaching time allocated to general and vocational subjects) varies across the field of training and must be approved by the Ministry of Education and Research. Out of a minimum of 120 weeks of study in the vocational upper-secondary curriculum, 40 weeks must be allocated to general subjects; of these, 32 weeks are given over to compulsory subjects.

In 2010, after extensive political debate, the government amended three fundamental education Acts. The first was the Act on Basic and Secondary Schools (Government of Estonia, n. d.), and the second and third were the acts governing the national curriculum for basic and secondary schools (Government of Estonia, 2010b) and upper-secondary schools (Government of Estonia, 2010a). For basic schools, the most significant change arising out of these amendments has been the greater emphasis placed on holistic learning in schools, a development that has favored inclusive education and improved school attendance. At the upper-secondary level, the priority is to broaden choices for students by decreasing the compulsory component of the curriculum and increasing the responsibilities that schools, municipalities, and parents have in ensuring quality education.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education has been a separate, compulsory subject in Estonia's national curriculum since 1997. Its status remained the same in the updated versions of the curriculum launched in 2002 and 2010. The national curriculum determines the aim, purposes, content, time allocation, and learning outcomes of all compulsory subjects.

Civic and citizenship education is defined as a subject that has political, economic, social, cultural, and value dimensions. It plays an important role in developing social competencies, and it contributes to the development of democratic values, entrepreneurship, self-efficacy, and social sensibility in students (Government of Estonia, 2002). The general aim of civic and citizenship education is for students to understand social processes and to acquire attitudes and skills conducive to active participation in society. Active participation must be based on democratic values and responsible choices. Civic and citizenship education also creates opportunities for developing social cohesion, civic identity, and participatory democracy.



## Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

### General Overview

Civic and citizenship education is represented in the curriculum as a crosscurricular theme and as a separate subject at various grades. At the primary level, civic and citizenship education is integrated into all subjects and is closely linked to human studies (*inimeseõpetus*), a subject designed to help students understand social and cultural differences and to interact successfully with others. At the lower- and upper-secondary levels, civic and citizenship education is taught as a separate subject. Other subjects, such as history, geography, and homeland studies, also contribute to civic and citizenship education.

ISCED 1 of the Estonian education system offers a 35-hour civic and citizenship course that is currently taught in Grade 4 (ages 10 to 11). As an outcome of the revised curriculum of 2010, this course is being moved to Grade 6 because it is regarded as too difficult for 10- and 11-year-olds. The main 70-hour civic and citizenship education course is taught at ISCED 2 (Grade 9, or students aged 15 to 16), which is also the final year of compulsory schooling. At the upper-secondary level (ISCED 3), civic and citizenship education is taught in Grade 12 to students aged 17 to 18. This course totals 70 hours.

Civic and citizenship education in the lower-secondary school provides basic knowledge on the functioning of society and explains citizens' relations with politics, the economy, and social groups. At Grades 4 and 6, the focus is on social relations in the local community. At Grade 9, the core focus is Estonian government and economics. Grade 9 is the final opportunity that students not continuing on to general upper-secondary education have to study civic and citizenship education. The Grade 9 course therefore emphasizes practical skills relating to engagement in political and commercial spheres and the labor market.

Civic and citizenship education at the upper-secondary level deals with social processes in contemporary society and provides knowledge of political processes, the economy, and the law. European and global dimensions are integral to all topics. The learning process aims to create foundations for a competent, responsible, and active citizen who can efficiently cope in an ever-changing, multicultural society. Civic and citizenship education also contributes to the development of positive attitudes toward cultural and ideological differences and constructive dialogue.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools (ISCED 2)

Estonia's national curriculum for this level of schooling lists the principles and content of civic and citizenship education in Grade 9. Each revision of the curriculum has seen the list become increasingly detailed. The curriculum states aims, learning processes, time allocation, content, and expected outcomes for each subject. Every school must follow the content determined by the national curriculum; additional topics may be included if the teacher so decides. Schools can also organize elective courses. The curriculum recommends approaches to teaching and assessment, although teachers are free to design their own teaching and learning activities. In addition, teachers can select textbooks from the list recommended by the Ministry of Education.

The 2010 updated curriculum for civic and citizenship education has been introduced gradually, with implementation beginning in the autumn of that year. The new curriculum will come into effect for Grade 9 in 2013. The curriculum covers the following topics:

- Social differences and social structure;
- Law and justice;
- Human rights;
- Citizen's rights and responsibilities;



- A free media;
- Freedom of information;
- Estonian government and constitution;
- The rule of law and courts in Estonia;
- Local government and local communities;
- Civil society and nonprofit organizations;
- Principles of the market economy;
- Taxes;
- State budget and public goods;
- Estonian labor market and labor market policy;
- Employer's rights and responsibilities;
- Household economy; and
- Consumer behavior.

By the end of basic school, the Estonian Government expects students to understand:

- The main areas of social life and their interconnectedness;
- The Constitution of the Estonian Republic and Estonian governmental and administrative institutions;
- Human rights; and
- The principles of the market economy.

The government also expects students to have skills that will enable them to:

- Lawfully defend individual and collective rights and interests;
- Behave efficiently within the labor market;
- Evaluate how their personal capacities and the possibilities available to them will enable their effective participation in society;
- Communicate with state and municipal institutions; and
- Defend their rights as consumers (Government of Estonia, 2002).

The 2010 curriculum has retained the main principles of the existing curriculum, but emphasized the need to facilitate students' interest in real-life social problems and students' willingness to take an active part in handling them. To achieve these aims, the government strongly encourages teachers to use out-of-class activities such as site visits, projects, field research, and voluntary work in the community (Government of Estonia, 2010a). These measures are supposed to decrease the theoretical orientation of civic and citizenship education, which has hitherto been a focus of public criticism.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

During the last 10 years, Estonia has implemented an advanced legal framework supportive of school democracy. The Act on Basic and Secondary Schools (Government of Estonia, n. d.) outlines students' right to self-government and to elect a student representative board. Students participate in decisionmaking in schools and actively participate in school life and events through the work of their elected student representatives.

Despite the formal existence of student representative bodies throughout Estonia, their impact on school management varies considerably in line with the attitude of the school principal and the existence or otherwise of strong student leaders. The general opinion is that formal civic education remains detached from school life and does not contribute to active student



participation at school. Mindful of this criticism, those developing the revised 2010 national curriculum emphasized the provision of opportunities for extracurricular activities within schools. School democracy is now a compulsory topic in the civic and citizenship education curriculum for Grade 6, rendering it impossible for schools to avoid teaching it. The Ministry of Education and Research encourages school staff to discuss with the ministry and one another the implementation and testing of democratic principles in school.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Since 1991, Estonia has been a country in transition from communist rule to democracy and has therefore experienced several fundamental reforms to its education system. Peculiarly, anti-communist political measures were absent throughout the transition process, a happenstance that held for educational policy. Soviet social education was not formally abolished but rather transformed, step by step, into democratic civic and citizenship education. In legal terms, this transformation was guided by the introduction of the 1997 national curriculum and its revisions in 2002 and 2010. The enactment of each revised curriculum was accompanied by the production of new textbooks that have fundamental importance for social sciences.

Another specific feature of civic and citizenship education in Estonia has been its close link to national citizenship policy. Residents who apply for Estonian citizenship on the basis of naturalization must pass examinations in the Estonian language and on the Estonian constitution and the country's citizenship Act. After a lengthy debate, the government decided that the national examination in civics fulfills the requirements of the examination on the Constitution. Thus, migrant students who pass the basic school final examination in civics are entitled to become Estonian citizens.

Major current debates on civic and citizenship education focus on four key issues:

1. The subject is too theoretical and does not address real-life situations and does not provide necessary or practical social skills, an issue noted earlier in this chapter;
2. Civic and citizenship education is still limited to the formal classroom and does not contribute to the enhancement of democracy in schools;
3. The curriculum is too overloaded and does not leave enough room for projects, study visits, and discussions;
4. Civic and citizenship education in Russian-speaking schools is not efficient, which is evidenced by the lower achievement and weaker civic identity of the students in these schools.

The new National Curriculum for Basic and Secondary Schools is meant to address these shortcomings. It pays considerably more attention than the previous versions to options that allow children to participate in society before they reach voting age. The current curriculum defines a citizen as an active member of society who interacts with social institutions according to his or her interests and possibilities (Government of Estonia, 2010b). This definition represents an important shift from the previous curriculum, where the emphasis was on loyalty to the Estonian state. Today, the Estonian concept of citizenship is understood to be similar to the European concept of active citizenship.

For Russian speaking-schools, the framework of the National Migrant Integration Program (Integration and Migration Foundation, 2008) outlines several special programs connected to civic and citizenship education. These initiatives include inservice training for civic and citizenship education teachers, compilation of additional teaching materials, and student exchanges. However, civic knowledge among students in Russian-speaking schools remains below the national average (National Examinations and Qualifications Center, 2010; Toots, 2011).



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Candidates for a teaching qualification in Estonia must fulfill two requirements: pedagogical education and specialist education in a subject area. Ninety-three percent of teachers working in Estonian general education have a pedagogical qualification. Seventy-five percent of teachers have a university degree that includes both pedagogical and subject-specialist components (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008). Although teachers are expected to have a Master's degree, the shortage of qualified applicants means that this requirement is often overlooked.

The three-stage system of teacher education is designed to ensure continuous professional development:

- One year of initial teacher education following a four-year program in specialist-subject studies at the university, after which graduates receive a Master's degree;
- One year of induction into the profession, that is, the first year in the school system, during which novice teachers work in cooperation with mentors. The induction year ends with an examination, the passing of which gives teachers full qualification;
- Inservice training that deepens or broadens the existing special qualification.

Two large public universities, Tartu University and Tallinn University, have the main responsibility for initial teacher training. Universities enjoy considerable autonomy in Estonia, which means curricula in the same field may vary significantly. However, policy on teacher preparation is relatively strict. All teacher education curricula must follow the framework requirements for teacher education (Government of Estonia, 2000). For example, 50 percent (60 credits according to the European Credit Transfer System) of the two-year program must be devoted to pedagogy and professional placement (Government of Estonia, 2000).

Other important policy documents guiding the development of teacher education are the National Development Plan for Teacher Education 2003–2010 and the Estonian Strategy for Teacher Education 2009–2013. These decrees were also designed to apply to teachers' inservice training (professional development), which is currently fragmented and carried out by a pastiche of nongovernmental organizations, teachers' associations, and universities. The Ministry of Education intends to tighten the quality standard for teacher education and, as part of this initiative, to make all inservice courses part of a national system of teacher training. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010).

Teacher inservice training is financed by a targeted central government fund that comprises three percent of a school's payroll. Regulations require teachers to undertake 160 hours of training during a five-year period. However, until recently, there has been no special administrative unit responsible for planning and monitoring inservice professional development. School heads have sole responsibility for allocating inservice education funds to individual teachers.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Teachers in lower-secondary schools are graduates with qualifications in one or several subjects. At ISCED 1, one teacher teaches all subjects. From Grade 6 on, there are different teachers for different subjects. However, civic and citizenship education comprises less than one percent of the fulltime standard workload and therefore is often taught by teachers whose specialty is another discipline, most often history. This pattern is especially typical in smaller rural and town schools.



In 2009, Estonia had 444 lower- and upper-secondary schools, which means that at least 444 teachers were teaching civic and citizenship education classes at this time. However, only 108 teachers were employed as teachers of civic and citizenship education and 86 percent of these teachers (93 persons) held a relevant higher education diploma (Government of Estonia, 2007). This small number reflects the fact that the majority of teachers had obtained their qualifications some years ago. The first specialist civic and citizenship education teachers graduated from university in 2004.

Until recently, Estonia experienced a general shortage of teachers, caused by low salaries, high professional requirements, and the retirement of a large number of teachers. Today, the situation has improved, and the teaching profession has become more popular. Teachers of civic and citizenship education are, on average, slightly younger than other teachers (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008).

Currently, only one institution, Tallinn University, provides initial training for civic and citizenship education teachers. The curriculum for history and civics teachers has a module on civics within the two-year program that accounts for 15 percent of all courses. Half the study time (in credit points) is devoted to didactics and development of pedagogical skills as required by the Framework for Teacher Education. However, there are no specialized didactics related to teaching civic and citizenship education, which is regarded as a serious shortcoming within the context of the current policy (Räis, 2008).

Inservice training for teachers of civic and citizenship education follows the same rules and regulations as for teachers of other subjects. All teachers must successfully complete inservice training within each five-year period. However, according to estimates, approximately only 25 percent of civics teachers regularly attend inservice courses. During the transition period from communism to democracy, several American and European foundations and nongovernmental organizations provided teacher education in Estonia. Today, teachers' associations are responsible for teachers' professional development, which tends to be project-based, a characteristic providing one of the main reasons for its irregular uptake.

## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Estonian general education requires a state assessment at the end of primary school (Grade 3), at the end of both the first stage (Grade 6) and second stage (Grade 9) of basic school, and at the end of upper-secondary school. The assessment is delivered via three different modes—tests called level tests, centrally (nationally) set examinations at the end of lower-secondary school (Grade 9), and national examinations at the end of upper-secondary school (Grade 12). The system of external assessment was implemented in 1997 and most recently revised in 2010. Each year, the Minister of Education decides which subjects will be level-tested. Civic and citizenship education, however, has never been level-tested.

In order to graduate from basic school, students are required to take three examinations: Estonian language and literature (or Estonian as a second language, depending on the language of instruction at the school), mathematics, and one elective subject selected by the student. Elective subjects include English, German, Russian as a foreign language, French, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, history, civic studies, and Russian language and literature. The Estonian Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development (commonly known as Innove) prepares the examinations, which are identical for all schools in Estonia, and are held simultaneously. Final examination committees at schools organize and assess the examinations. The quality of their scoring is evaluated through random checks and feedback is provided. All



basic school graduates are eligible to continue on to upper-secondary school and to take final examinations prior to graduating from this level of the education system.

To graduate from upper-secondary school, students must take at least five final examinations, which may be prepared by the state or by the school. For students whose language of instruction is Estonian, an essay is an obligatory state examination. If Russian is the language of instruction, students must sit the state examination in the official language (Estonian). Students can choose from 14 subjects: Estonian, Estonian as a second language, Russian, Russian as a foreign language, civics, mathematics, English, German, French, biology, geography, chemistry, history, and physics.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Students' performance in civic and citizenship education is graded according to a five-point scale, as used for all other subjects. Grading takes place at the end of each semester, and annual grades are awarded at the end of each school year. The revised Act on Basic and Secondary Schools of 2010 does allow for a written evaluation of students' performance to replace numerical grading. Precise rules regarding this process are set out in the school curriculum.

At the end of basic school, students can choose to sit the national examination in civic and citizenship education as one of 10 optional subjects. At the end of upper-secondary school, civics is one of the optional public examinations. The content of these examinations follows the national curriculum, and all content areas are covered, given the aim is to evaluate how efficiently the curriculum has been implemented and taught. In addition to assessing knowledge of the subject matter, the examination also assesses general educational competencies, such as students' ability to evaluate relationships and situations, and to take adequate actions. The examination employs various types of items to assess knowledge and skills. Some questions are based on work with statistical or documentary sources, and some demand analytical skills or the ability to see the relationship between facts and developments. Dialogic skills, as well as the ability to formulate and defend a personal viewpoint, are also assessed.

The introduction of final examinations in civic education at the end of lower- and upper-secondary schooling has had a positive effect on attitudes toward the subject. Schools and teachers now allocate more time and effort to the topic, while students take learning more seriously. As a result of these changes, the number of students who choose to take the examination in civic education has been increasing yearly. When the examination for upper-secondary school was first introduced in 2002, 995 students chose it. By 2010, the number of participants had increased to 5,880, comprising about 30 percent of *gymnasium* graduates in Estonia. Among basic school graduates in 2009, civic and citizenship education was the second-most popular choice after English (National Examinations and Qualifications Center, 2010).

The format of the final examinations is continuously improving as a result of feedback. However, ongoing change to the national assessment system means that assessment rules are also frequently changing, a situation that is complicating comparison of achievement levels across years and challenging the reliability of achievement findings (Toots, 2009).

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

In terms of quality assurance, the main focus in Estonia during the last five to six years has been on teachers, not on student achievement. The system of qualification standards for teachers was enacted in 2005 by the Estonian Qualification Authority (*Kutsekoda*) and includes five qualification levels. To obtain a high qualification standard, applicant teachers must demonstrate to the Education Profession (*hariduse kutseenõukogu*) Council that they possess all required knowledge and skills.



The profession qualification standards serve also as a basis for the development of preservice and inservice teacher education curricula.

Estonia has no special procedures or forms of organization for monitoring the quality of civic and citizenship education learning and teaching. However, student achievement in national examinations in civics as well as on IEA's Civic Education Study (CIVED) and its International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) have become important sources of information about the relatively recent and current state of affairs of this area of educational provision in Estonia.

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# Finland

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

At the end of 2009, the population of Finland was 5,351,427 people. The country's population is aging, and in 2009 17 percent of it was aged 65 and over, and 17 percent were children aged 14 or under. For the sake of comparison, the corresponding percentages in 1990 were 14 percent and 19 percent respectively (Statistics Finland, 2011).

The official languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish: Finnish is the mother tongue for 91 percent of the population and Swedish for five percent. Sámi is the mother tongue of about 1,700 people who are members of the indigenous Sámi people of northern Lapland (Statistics Finland, 2011).

Finland's area is 338,424 square kilometers, of which about 10 percent is water; Finland has approximately 188,000 lakes. Population density is 16 inhabitants per square kilometer, with most of the population living in southern Finland. In Lapland, the population density is only two inhabitants per square kilometer (Finland Promotion Board, 2012).

In 2009, the gross domestic product (GDP) of Finland was €B171, with a GDP per capita of €32,025 (Finland Promotion Board, 2012; Suomi.fi, n. d.).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Finland is a parliamentary democracy. The head of state is the president of the republic, elected every six years with a two-term maximum. The one-chamber parliament has 200 members. These representatives are elected every four years in a direct vote. In 2010, eight political parties were represented in parliament. The largest political parties are the Center Party, the National Coalition Party, and the Social Democratic Party. Major political power is exercised by the Cabinet, which in Finland is usually made up of a multiparty coalition (Finland Promotion Board, 2012).

Finland has been a member of the European Union since 1995, and has 13 representatives in the European Parliament.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

The main objective of Finnish education policy is to offer all citizens an equal opportunity to receive an education, regardless of age, domicile, financial situation, gender, or mother tongue. Education is considered to be a fundamental right of all citizens. This right guarantees everyone (not just Finnish citizens) the right to free basic education; the provisions also specify compulsory education. Public authorities are obligated to guarantee everyone an equal opportunity to obtain education beyond basic education according to their abilities and special needs, and to be able to access this education no matter what their financial circumstances are.



A major objective of Finnish education policy is to achieve as high a level of education and competence as possible for the whole population. One of the basic principles behind this objective is enabling each age cohort to go on to postcompulsory education if they so wish. A high proportion of each age group does elect to continue on with upper-secondary education when they leave comprehensive school: more than 90 percent of those completing basic education continue their studies in general or vocational upper-secondary schools (Eurydice, 2009/2010).

The government determines the general objectives of basic education and the allocation of classroom hours across the different subjects. The Finnish National Board of Education decides on the aims and core contents of instruction in the different subjects, recording them in the national core curriculum that education providers and schools then use as the basis of their curricula (Finnish National Board of Education, 2010a). The board, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Education and Culture, is responsible for developing education, enhancing its effectiveness, and monitoring educational provision (Finnish National Board of Education, 2010b; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010).

The majority of students in Finland attend publicly funded schools; approximately eight percent attend private, grant-aided institutions. Most primary and upper-secondary institutions are maintained by municipalities or federations of municipalities. Private institutions are controlled by nongovernment bodies, but they receive the same level of public funding as publicly funded schools. Responsibility for educational funding is divided between central and local governments. The central government subsidy averages 57 percent of the total costs of primary and secondary education, and the municipal contributions cover the remaining percentage.

### **Structure of the Education System**

During the year before compulsory education begins, children can participate in preprimary education. Local authorities provide preprimary education in schools, daycare centers, family daycare homes, or in other appropriate places. Participation in preprimary education is voluntary, but the municipality is obliged to provide it.

Compulsory education starts in the year when a child has his or her seventh birthday, unless the child needs special education. The scope of the basic education syllabus is nine years, and nearly all children complete this by attending comprehensive schools.

Basic education is free of charge for students. Textbooks and other learning materials are also free of charge, and students are offered a free daily meal. In addition, school health care and other welfare services are free to students.

The objectives of basic education are to support students' growth toward humanistic and ethically responsible membership in society, and to provide them with the knowledge and skills they will need throughout their lives. The intention behind these objectives is not only to provide students with requisite knowledge but also to promote lifelong learning and equality in society. In line with this intention, the government is committed to ensuring equality of access to education throughout the country.

The postcompulsory upper-secondary level comprises general and vocational education. Both forms usually take three years to complete and both yield eligibility for higher education. General upper-secondary education continues basic education for students ages 16 to 19. General upper-secondary education is generally not organized into grades, and teaching is not tied to year-level classes. The syllabus covers three years of study, but students can complete it in two, three, or four years, and they can proceed in their studies either in a group or individually. General upper-secondary education is free of charge for students, but students must pay for materials. General upper-secondary school ends with a matriculation examination, the passing of which allows entry to all higher education studies, including those offered by universities.



The aims of vocational education and training are to increase the skill-level of the workforce, to give students the skills they need to enter the workplace, and to support lifelong learning. Students attending vocational education are mainly 16 to 25 years of age. Finland's school-based education system means that those students studying fulltime attend a vocational school. Education in these schools has a complement of compulsory studies and is primarily organized in year-level classes. Alternatively, students can follow individual study plans.

Other objectives of upper-secondary vocational education and training are to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to acquire vocational competence, including that needed for self-employment, or to undertake further study. This area of educational provision is primarily free of charge for students; all that students have to pay for is materials. A three-year vocational upper-secondary qualification gives general eligibility to enter both polytechnics and universities.

Public authorities are obligated to cater for the educational needs of the Finnish- and the Swedish-speaking populations of Finland, and according to the same criteria. Bilingual municipalities have two educational-institution networks, one for each language group and the other covering all levels of education. Municipalities are also required to organize education in Sámi in the Sámi-speaking areas, and care is taken to secure educational opportunities for Romany and other minorities in Finland, as well as for persons using sign language.

The aims of immigrant education, for both children and adults, include equality, functional bilingualism, and multiculturalism. The objectives of immigrant education, which all educational institutions in Finland must provide, are to prepare immigrants for integration into the Finnish education system and Finnish society, to support their cultural identity, and to support their transition to functional bilingualism so that, in addition to Finnish (or Swedish), they retain a command of their native language.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

In Finland, basic education is governed by the Basic Education Act (628/1998) and the Basic Education Decree (852/1998). The national core curriculum, which is determined by the Finnish National Board of Education, includes the objectives and core content of subjects. The principles of a good learning environment, working approaches, and learning concepts are also addressed in the core curriculum. The present national core curriculum for basic education was confirmed in January 2004 and was introduced into schools in August 2006. The education providers, usually the local education authorities and the schools themselves, draw up their own curricula for basic education within the framework of the national core curriculum.

Even though civic and citizenship education is not mentioned directly in the national curriculum, it is present at various levels, starting from the values and mission statements pertaining to basic education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004, p. 12). The underlying values of basic education are human rights, equality, democracy, natural diversity, preservation of environmental viability, and the endorsement of multiculturalism. Basic education promotes responsibility, a sense of community, and respect for the rights and freedoms of the individual.

Basic education aims to provide an opportunity for diversified growth, learning, and the development of a healthy sense of self-esteem, so that students may obtain the knowledge and skills they need in life, become capable of further study, and, as involved citizens, develop a democratic society. ... In order to ensure social continuity and build the future, basic education assumes the purposes of transferring cultural traditions from one generation to the next, augmenting knowledge and skills, and increasing awareness of the values and



ways of acting that form the foundation of society. It is also the mission of basic education to create new culture, revitalize ways of thinking and acting, and develop the pupil's ability to evaluate critically. (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004, p. 12)

## **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

### **General Overview**

National regulations stipulate such matters as the core subjects to be taught to all students and the distribution of teaching hours among the various subjects. The national core-curriculum subjects for basic education are mother tongue and literature (Finnish or Swedish), the other official language, one foreign language, environmental studies, health education, religion or ethics, history, social studies, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, physical education, music, art and crafts, and home economics. Not all of these subjects are, however, taught in Grades 1 through 6. Also, several core subjects might be combined. In Grades 7 through 9, the syllabus includes more elective subjects (e.g., additional foreign languages) than does the syllabus for the earlier grades.

The national core curriculum for basic education does not define civic and citizenship education as a separate subject. However, content related to different civic and citizenship education content domains (as defined in the ICCS assessment framework) are included in the teaching of several core subjects. For example, in foreign language instruction, the history and culture of the language forms an important part of instruction. Civic and citizenship education themes are also evident in the underlying values and mission of basic education as well as in the learning environment and operational culture of schools.

The national core curriculum for basic education also defines seven crosscurricular themes that are closely connected to civic and citizenship education. These crosscurricular themes are “growth as a person; cultural identity and internationalism; media skills and communication; participatory citizenship and entrepreneurship; responsibility for the environment, well-being, and a sustainable future; safety and traffic; and technology and the individual” (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004, pp. 36–41).

Crosscurricular themes represent the central emphases of educational and teaching work. Their objectives and content are incorporated into numerous subjects, so providing a close integration between educational content and instruction. When formulating their curriculums, schools are required to include crosscurricular themes in both core and optional subjects and to ensure that they underpin events such as school assemblies. These themes must also be manifest in the school's operational culture.

In Grades 1 through 6 (ages 7 to 12), civic and citizenship education topics are particularly evident in the syllabuses of religion or ethics and geography. In Grades 7 through 9 (ages 13 to 15), civic and citizenship education topics are particularly evident in the syllabuses for geography, history, social studies, religion or ethics, health education, and home economics.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

In lower-secondary schools (ISCED 2), social studies is the subject most closely connected to civic and citizenship education, but this subject is usually taught only in Grade 9. In addition, and as just noted, topics related to civic and citizenship education play an important role in the syllabuses of geography, history, religion or ethics, health education, and home economics. The civic and citizenship education contents of different subjects are defined in the national core curriculum; the following refers to social studies.

The task of instruction in social studies is to guide the pupil in becoming an active and responsible player in society. Instruction in social studies in the seventh through ninth grades of basic education must provide basic knowledge and skills concerning the structure



and operation of society, and the citizen's opportunities for influence. The purpose of the instruction is to support the pupil's growth as tolerant, democratic citizens, and to give them experience with social action and the democratic exercise of influence. (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004, pp. 182–250)

The aim underlying the teaching of geography is to increase students' cultural knowledge and their appreciation of the diversity of human life and living environments around the world. Instruction in geography is intended to serve as a bridge between understanding gained from the natural sciences and understanding drawn from the social sciences. The objective is to guide students in considering how the natural world shapes global cultural, social, and economic phenomena, and how the latter, in turn, shape the former. Another important aim of geography tuition is to support students' active commitment, throughout their lives, to living in an environmentally sustainable way.

The purpose of history instruction is to guide students toward understanding that their own culture and other cultures are the result of historical processes, and to gain a strong appreciation of how they, as individuals and collectively, contribute to these processes in the present day. Students are encouraged to critically examine the events of the past and how they have informed the present and to become responsible and critical players in the events and phenomena of their own era. The history syllabus covers both Finnish and general history. History instruction in Grades 7 through 9 seeks to deepen students' knowledge of history, strengthen their own identities, and familiarize them with other cultures and their influences on local and world events.

The task of instruction in religion is to provide students with knowledge, skills, and experiences that help them build both an individual identity and a worldview. The syllabus prepares students to encounter the religious and ethical dimensions in their own lives and the lives of their communities. It also aims to provide students with a general education in religious ideologies and life-based philosophies.

Instruction in ethics is guided by the aim of expanding students' opportunities to grow into free, equal, and critical creators of an ethical, harmonious society. It therefore seeks to provide students with a basis from which they can grow into independent, tolerant, responsible, and judicious members of society. Instruction in ethics also supports growth into full democratic citizenship, which, in a globalizing and swiftly changing society, requires ability to think and act ethically. In addition to providing students with a broad complement of ethics-based knowledge and skills, the ethics syllabus helps students develop a strong sense of enculturation as well as their personal world view.

Health education is multidisciplinary and intended to promote students' competence in the areas of health, physical and emotional wellbeing, and keeping safe. Instruction also focuses on developing students' cognitive, social, functional, and ethical capabilities and their ability to regulate their emotions.

The purpose of home economics is to develop the cooperative aptitudes, information, and practical working skills required to manage day-to-day life, as well as to apply them in everyday situations. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their health, their relationships with others, and their finances, and to contribute to the comfort and safety of their homes and communities.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

In recent years, the Finnish National Board of Education has launched several initiatives and plans to increase students' involvement in schools and in local communities. Among these projects is a national forum wherein children and young people can contribute to



decisionmaking at both local and national levels. Almost all Finnish lower-secondary schools and about half of primary schools have student boards, but the role of these boards varies widely. In most schools, the student board is involved with arranging school trips and celebrations, as well as (for example) designing school grounds. Rimpelä, Fröjd, and Peltonen (2010) estimate that student boards are involved in making decisions about school work in 5 to 19 percent of all Finnish schools.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

The national core curriculum of 2004 gave more consideration to civic and citizenship education than the versions issued in 1985 and 1994. Although civic and citizenship education is not a specific subject, it is at the heart of the very mission of basic education—the development of participative citizens. Reform of the core curriculum is now underway and should be completed by 2014. The new curriculum will be in effect for 10 years. It appears that civic and citizenship education will not be a specific subject in the new core curriculum and that several current subjects will be integrated into larger, crosscurricular subject groups.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

Teachers at all school levels of the Finnish education system are highly qualified and committed. Because teaching is a very popular profession in Finland, universities can select the most motivated and talented applicants. Teachers work independently and enjoy considerable autonomy in the classroom. All have civil servant status.

Preprimary teachers are either kindergarten teachers who have completed a Bachelor's degree in education or are classroom teachers. Teachers in the first six grades of basic education are usually generalists (classroom teachers), whereas those in the last grades of this and the upper-secondary levels are subject specialists. Classroom teachers have Master of Education degrees, and subject teachers must have completed a Master's degree in the subject they teach as well as in pedagogical studies. Students thus spend at least five years training to become teachers. All teachers' preservice teacher education must include teaching practice.

Classroom teacher education is provided by university faculties of education or other equivalent units called teacher education units. A university may even have two departments of teacher education. Education is provided by seven Finnish-language universities and by one Swedish-language university. Each teacher education unit has at least one teacher training school for teaching practice, trialing and piloting educational ideas, engaging in research, and providing continuing education. Classroom-teacher and kindergarten-teacher education is organized concurrently.

Subject-specialist teacher education is provided by university faculties related to particular subjects. Teacher education units within faculties of education provide pedagogical studies. The periods of teaching practice included in pedagogical studies are organized at university teacher training schools and at so-called affiliated schools. Teacher education in art subjects is offered by art academies.

Subject-specialist teacher education students usually first apply to study a particular subject at the relevant university faculty, and after one or two years of studying, they apply for subject-specialist teacher education. At some universities and faculties, students may also apply directly to subject-specialist teacher education facilities; in such cases, education is provided by the department of teacher education, the relevant subject departments, and teacher training schools. The department of teacher education is responsible for providing pedagogical studies, whereas subject departments of different faculties provide education in teaching subjects. These studies



are taken in parallel and in interaction with one another. The duration of studies for subject-specialist teacher education is five to six years.

Teachers' pedagogical studies, which combine theory with practice, comprise a minimum of 60 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) units, while the whole degree is made up of 300 ECTS for class and subject teachers. The practicum (practical training) component of pedagogical studies amounts to 20 ECTS for class teachers and subject teachers and 25 ECTS for kindergarten teachers.

Municipalities and school administrators are responsible for inservice teachers' professional development. There is, however, no specific legislation governing ongoing teacher education and training. The obligation to participate in inservice training is partly defined in various statutes and partly in collective agreements. Teachers are obligated to participate in inservice training for one or five days a year, according to the statutes and collective agreements governing their work. Teachers who engage in professional development retain their full salary and benefits while doing so. Some employers have the right to assign all fulltime teachers to professional development. Employers also decide which training programs and forms of education they will offer their teachers, with decisions based on the terms of the collective agreements with the teachers they employ.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

In the Finnish education system, almost all teachers in schools participate in civic and citizenship education. This means that both class teachers and teachers of civic and citizenship education-related subjects are responsible for teaching civic and citizenship content to students. Teacher education for civic and citizenship education thus follows the procedures described above.

## **Assessment and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Finland has neither national nor regional examinations. Instead, the Finnish National Board of Education regularly evaluates learning in basic education. Since 1998, learning achievement in basic education (e.g., in mother tongue and mathematics) has been evaluated biennially. Within basic education, Grade 9 has experienced four bouts of evaluation and Grade 6, two.

The aim of national evaluation is to monitor the knowledge and skills of students at both national and regional levels. The evaluations are carried out using results from samples of schools. However, schools that are not included in an evaluation can apply to have the Finnish National Board of Education evaluate their students' learning outcomes. These external evaluations enable schools and their teachers to obtain regular updates about their students in relation to students in other schools and in relation to the nationally set objectives. The information provided also enables schools to take the necessary remedial steps if their students' performance is below average.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Given the crosscurricular nature of civic and citizenship education in Finland, assessment of learning in this area of the curriculum is part of the overall assessment of curriculum subjects. Finland's national core curriculum provides guidelines and principles for student assessment. Student assessment is divided into assessment that takes place during the course of studies and assessment that takes place at the end of a stage of schooling (e.g., end of year). These two types of assessment have different roles.



During the course of studies, the purpose of assessment is not only to help students learn, but also to guide how they learn and to motivate them to learn. Continuous feedback from the teacher is deemed very important because it helps students identify the ways they prefer to learn, to think about what they have learned and why, and to identify what they need to do if their learning is not as strong as it could be.

Students receive reports at the end of each school year; they may also receive one or more intermediate reports. During the first seven grades of comprehensive school, assessment data in reports may be descriptive, numerical, or a combination of the two. Later assessments must be presented numerically, although they can be complemented by descriptions. Numerical assessment (on a scale of 4 to 10) describes only the level of performance in relation to the objectives of the curriculum. Descriptive assessment in reports allows teachers to give more fulsome feedback on each student's progress and learning processes in different areas of a subject. Assessments given in reports must be based on a diversity of evidence, not just that emerging from examinations. The national core curriculum also includes descriptions (exemplars) of good performance in all core subjects.

The final assessment at the end of basic education helps determine which students have the option of undertaking further study when they leave comprehensive school. This assessment must be nationally comparable, and it must treat students equally. Assessment criteria set down what constitutes the grade of "good" (8) in all common subjects in the national core curriculum.

The scale of numerical grades used in all reports and certificates is, as noted above, from 4 to 10, where 5 is adequate, 6 moderate, 7 satisfactory, 8 good, 9 very good, and 10 shows excellent knowledge and skills. Grade 4 is a fail mark. The assessment is carried out by the relevant subject teacher. Each student's conduct and overall schoolwork are assessed by the class teacher, or jointly by a number of teachers if the student has several teachers.

One important task of basic education is—as alluded to earlier—to develop students' capacity for self-assessment. Self-assessment is seen not only as a means of supporting the growth of self-knowledge and study skills but also as a means of helping students become critically aware of their progress and their preferred learning style.

Promotion is based on achievement in each subject; an examination is taken in a subject where a student has not gained a pass grade. The final decision on progression to the next year rests with teaching staff. Students who successfully complete the full nine years of comprehensive schooling receive a certificate—the comprehensive school-leaving certificate. Students who successfully complete the optional 10th year of schooling receive an additional certificate.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

As with assessment of civic and citizenship education, quality monitoring of this area of the curriculum is part of general monitoring of student learning and of education and training providers. The latter have a statutory duty to evaluate their activities and participate in external evaluations. Evaluation is used to collect data to inform educational policy decisions and to develop course content and performance objectives. Education is evaluated locally, regionally, and nationally. Finland also takes part in international reviews, including, of course, ICCS.

The Education Evaluation Council is an independent body that evaluates general, vocational, and adult education and learning. It also develops evaluation policy and promotes research in evaluation. The council serves the Ministry of Education and Culture as well as education and training providers and educational institutions. Systemwide findings are used to develop the education system, core curricula, and pedagogical practice. This information and international comparative data also provide a tool for monitoring the implementation of equality and equity in education.



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# Greece

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Greece is located in the southern part of continental Europe and covers an area of 131,957 square kilometers. About 20 percent of the land consists of islands that spread across the Aegean archipelago, the Ionian *pelagos*, and the Cretan *pelagos*. The coast line is 15,000 kilometers long; a large proportion of the population lives along it.

At the end of 2007, Greece's population was, according to the 2008 census data of the National Statistical Service of Greece (Eurydice, 2009/2010a), 11,213,785 persons. Average life expectancy was 77.4 years for men and 82.2 years for women. In recent decades, the proportion of the population under the age of 14 has declined while the number of people 65 years of age and over has increased. In 2008, the majority of the population lived within the environs of large cities, with approximately 28 percent living in and around Athens, seven percent in Thessaloniki, and two percent in Patras. Demographics show an increased number of immigrants to Greece since the beginning of the 1990s. The majority come from the Balkans, former Soviet republics, and other eastern European countries (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

In 2007, Greece's gross domestic product per capita was US\$31,382 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010a, 2010b). A large majority of the population—92 percent of adults and 99 percent of youth—is literate (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010b).

The official language, Greek, is used throughout the country and is the language of instruction at all levels of education. The Muslim minority groups of Turkish, Pomak, and Romany origin reside primarily in Thrace and comprise approximately one percent of the total population of Greece. Minority schools with these communities provide instruction in both Turkish and Greek (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Greece is a presidential parliamentary republic. Parliament passed the current constitution in June 1975, and revised it in 1986 and again in 2001. The constitution, executive laws, and international conventions govern relations between the state and religious communities. There is no legal separation between church and state. In accordance with the constitution, the Eastern Orthodox Church is the prevailing religion. However, the constitution stipulates that freedom of religious belief is inviolable (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

The legislative function is exercised primarily by parliament, which is elected every four years by all adult Greek citizens. The president of the republic has a limited role, as defined in the constitution. The executive function is exercised by the government and depends on presidential approval.

Both central and regional public-sector services participate in administration. The central public-sector services are responsible for the general orientation of administrative processes, along with the coordination and the control of the actions of regional bodies. The city governments and the municipalities comprise the first tier of local government authorities.



Regional authorities comprise the second and more inclusive tier at the prefectural level (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

Greece joined the European Union (EU), or European Community as it was then known, in 1979. In 2002, Greece joined the European Monetary Union. Greece was among the 51 founding members of the United Nations in 1945. The country is also part of most major international organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Western European Union. Greece is party to a large number of bilateral and multilateral agreements and, as a member of the EU, participates in all of its bodies and cooperative forums (Eurydice, 2009/2010b).

Recently, conflict and disputes involving small autonomous groups of anarchists in downtown Athens have led to protests against the new reality of the International Monetary Fund.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Greece's Constitution defines education as a fundamental mission of the state, encompassing moral, intellectual, professional, and physical education, the enhancement of national and religious consciousness, and the development of free and responsible citizens. In line with these objectives, curricular provisions are directed toward students' holistic development—cognitive, emotional, mental, physical, and social—and toward integrating students into society. The curriculum framework therefore requires schools not only to provide students with a general education but also to accomplish the following:

- Cultivate students' abilities and enhance their interests;
- Ensure that all students have equal opportunities to engage in learning;
- Enhance students' cultural and linguistic identities within the context of a multicultural society;
- Increase students' awareness of protecting the natural environment;
- Develop students' proficiency in using information and communication technologies;
- Raise students' awareness of human rights and related issues; and
- Integrate students into the labor market (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

During school year 2008/2009, there were 15,986 public and private schools across all levels and strands of Greece's education system, and a student population of almost 1.5 million. Approximately 94 percent of students were attending public schools at this time, and six percent were attending private schools (Department of Statistics and Research, Ministry of Education, 2009). Primary and secondary education in Greece's public schools is free of charge, as are all textbooks (Law 1566, 1985).

The language of instruction in schools is Greek. Private schools are financed through tuition fees. Private primary and secondary schools are under the guidance and supervision of the Ministry of Education. The university level is comprised exclusively of state institutions. They are self-governed under the auspices of the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for education policy and for the definition, assessment, and provision of conditions designed to meet the educational needs of students. More specifically, the ministry drafts legislation affecting all levels of education and supervises the application and administration of education laws. It also provides financial support for all educational activities, appoints teachers for basic (compulsory) education, and coordinates regional educational services. Certain competencies and duties are assigned to public



organizations and other bodies that report directly to the ministry. The Pedagogical Institute, an independent agency that also reports to the Ministry of Education, prepares the national curriculum, develops guidelines for textbooks, and contracts and approves textbook preparation.

The Ministry of Education has 13 regional education directorates that implement education policy and link local agents to central education services and organizations. The regional directorates administer and supervise decentralized services in their area and coordinate local school advisors. At the lower level of the administrative structure, education directorates and district education offices provide administrative support, supervise the operation of schools, and facilitate coordination and cooperation between schools. School principals serve as the administrative and educational heads of schools. These individuals coordinate teachers' work and arrange inservice training (Eurydice, 2009).

Several bodies within each school serve specific functions. At the school level, teachers' councils implement the curriculum and monitor student attendance and discipline. Schools also have parent associations made up of parents of students enrolled at the school. School councils support the running of the school and plan its extracurricular activities. They consist, within each school, of teachers, parent association board members, and a local government representative. School committees are responsible for one or more schools, are chaired by the school principals, and include representatives from the local parents' and students' associations as well as local government representatives. They manage the state funds provided to cover the school's operational expenses, which include maintenance, heating, lighting, and equipment (Law 1566, 1985).

Schools operate within a legal framework and regulations outlined by the Ministry of Education. There is no process for ensuring that educational policy is implemented as specified in detail. The school principal and the teachers' council are responsible for decisions relating to the day-to-day functioning of the school. These individuals do not make curricular decisions regarding the choice of school subjects and teaching content.

At the beginning of each school year, the Ministry of Education (through the Pedagogical Institute and the Ministry Department for Primary and Secondary Education) gives schools and teachers all curriculum content, textbooks, and implementation guidelines. The ministry also provides teacher handbooks for each subject, the content of which includes model teaching practice. Teachers are, however, free to choose the teaching method they consider most appropriate for their class.

The Ministry of Education issues regulations regarding every aspect of school life, including school culture and ethos. School principals, teachers, and students are obliged to follow "internal school regulations," which are the same in all schools. In practice, schools may also adopt a more independent approach to the regulations by gearing them to their specific needs.

### **Structure of the Education System**

Education is compulsory for students 5 to 15 years of age and is delivered at the following levels—preprimary, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, and postsecondary.

Preschool education is for children four to six years of age. The children attend public or private kindergartens (*nipiagogeia*). Kindergarten attendance has been compulsory since school year 2007/2008 for all five-year-olds (Law 3518, 2006) but remains optional for four-year-olds. Administratively, *nipiagogeia* are considered part of primary education. They follow national curricula for the kindergarten level (Eurydice, 2009). The Pedagogical Institute, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, develops the kindergarten curriculum.



Primary schools, called *dimotico*, teach 6- to 12-year-olds, in Grades 1 to 6. Greece has both public and private primary schools. There are three main types of primary school: mainstream, all-day, and special. Mainstream primary schools are inclusive and cater for all students for five to six hours per day. Recent years have seen the implementation of all-day primary schools. These have an extended timetable and an enriched curriculum (Law 2525, 1997), and they address needs arising from modern family life and the demands of new pedagogical trends. Special primary schools cater for students who have significant special educational needs (Law 3699, 2008).

The geographical region of Thrace has a sizeable Muslim minority and operates minority schools that cater to this group. Instruction in these schools is offered in both Greek and Turkish. Primary schools also encompass the following schools:

- Experimental schools;
- Crosscultural schools with an enriched curriculum, located in regions where there are many repatriated, immigrant, or Romany students; and
- Second-chance schools for adults who dropped out of school and wish to obtain a primary-school leaving certificate (Law 2525, 1997).

All primary schools have only one approved textbook per subject and grade. Teachers are encouraged to prepare their own materials and resources in line with the topic to be taught each week. Teachers thus use this material in association with the textbook.

The national curriculum includes Greek language, mathematics, history, religion, environmental studies, geography, science, social and civic studies, art studies, two foreign languages, and physical education. Both primary and lower-secondary education curricula include a so-called “flexible zone” that is dedicated to the development of crosscurricular themes and creative activities. The flexible zone encompasses four hours per week for the first three grades, three hours per week for Grade 4, and two hours per week for Grades 5 and 6 (Ministerial Decisions 21072a/C2 and 21072b/C2, 2003). Flexible-zone projects focus on issues and skills relating to the environment and environmental sustainability, multiculturalism, new technologies, and health (Ministerial Decisions 21072a/C2 and 21072b/C2, 2003).

The national curriculum for each specific subject is differentiated into six levels corresponding to the six grades (or into fewer levels according to the subject). Each subject curriculum specifies educational objectives and content, as well as exemplary activities and projects. All subjects are compulsory for all students and are generally considered to be of equal value. However, the time allocation varies across subjects, with more time devoted to Greek language learning than to other subjects.

Students who experience learning difficulties have recourse to extra teaching support, but generally only for modern Greek and mathematics. There are also courses for specific groups (e.g., illiterate students, Romany students) and introductory classes for the children of repatriates and foreigners.

Lower-secondary education schools are called *gymnasia* and teach students who are 12 to 15 years old. The aim of *gymnasio* (lower-secondary education) is to promote the comprehensive development of students according to their individual capacity and the demands of everyday life (Law 1566, 1985). Students attend *gymnasio* for three years (i.e., Grades 7 to 9). *Gymnasia*, which include both public and private schools, operate five days a week, and their timetable is 34 or 35 class periods per week. Each class period lasts from 40 to 45 minutes.

The national curriculum for this level of the Greek education system includes ancient Greek literature, modern Greek language and literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, religious education, geography, biology, physical education, civics and social studies, social



and political education, aesthetics, computer science, technology, foreign languages (English, French, or German), school vocational guidance, and home economics. The national curriculum at this level also includes a flexible zone. As is the case at the primary level, the lower-secondary flexible zone is concerned with crosscurricular themes and creative activities relating to the environment, multiculturalism, new technologies, and health (Ministerial Decisions 21072a/C2 and 21072b/C2, 2003).

Lower-secondary school students with learning difficulties have access to support teaching programs in language, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and the foreign languages. Lower-secondary students can furthermore attend different types of *gymnasia* that offer tuition additional to that of the standard *gymnasium* curriculum. They include:

- *Gymnasia* that offer extended curricula catering for the needs of repatriated Greeks;
- Music *gymnasia*;
- Experimental *gymnasia*, dedicated to trialling new pedagogical ideas;
- Ecclesiastical *gymnasia*;
- Sports *gymnasia*; and
- Special *gymnasia* for students with severe special educational needs.

*Gymnasia* operate primarily during the day. However, working people beyond compulsory-education age can attend evening schools that offer lower-secondary curriculum content. Completion of *gymnasio* constitutes the end of compulsory education.

Postcompulsory upper-secondary education schools are called *lykeia*. They encompass Grades 10 to 12 and operate five days a week, with the weekly timetable including 30 to 35 class periods, each of which lasts 40 to 45 minutes. Students attending public *lykeia* can do so free of charge. Their textbooks are also supplied free of charge.

There are two types of *lykeia*—*genika lykeia* (general upper-secondary schools) and *eppaggelmatika lykeia* (vocational upper-secondary schools). *Lykeia* also offer day and evening programs. The day program is of three years' duration; the evening program, four. Holders of a lower-secondary school-leaving certificate (*apolytirio gymnasiou*) can enroll in the first grade of either type of *lykeia*—no other entry requirements are necessary, and there is no age limit. In general, 15- to 18-year-olds attend the day schools, and 18- to 25-year-olds attend the evening ones.

Students attending *genika lykeia* are tracked into one of three streams—the humanities, science, and technology. The curriculum of the *epangelmatiko lykeia* (professional schools) includes general education subjects similar to those of *general lykeia*, as well as technical or vocational subjects that vary according to specialization (technological, services sector, and maritime). There are also musical, ecclesiastical, sports, and special upper-secondary education schools, as well as special education classes that are incorporated into regular *lykeia*. Upper-secondary education furthermore includes vocational training schools (*epangelmatikes scholes*, or EPAS). These cater for students from 16 to 18 years of age who do not want to attend *lykeio* (upper-secondary school). EPAS curricula include technical and vocational subjects as well as workshops.

The Pedagogical Institute prepares the national curricula for all upper-secondary schools. The curriculum for *geniko lykeia* includes general education subjects (modern and ancient Greek language and literature, history, mathematics, sciences, religion, a foreign language, technology, social sciences, and physical education) as well as electives and specialist subjects. The latter are offered from Grade 10, with subjects taken depending on the stream each student decides to follow.



*Postsecondary, nontertiary institutes (Instituta Epangelmatikis Katartisis or IEK)* are for students 18 years of age and over. Graduates of any type of postcompulsory secondary school, including vocational training schools, may enroll in IEK. Adult graduates of compulsory education (e.g., evening *lykeia*) are eligible to enroll only in certain IEK courses. IEK curricula include both theoretical and practical components and emphasize methods and skills that enhance adult students' chances of securing work.

The Ministry of Education is currently advancing the quality of public education through an innovative action platform founded on five pillars:

- *Humanist education*, which focuses on the integration of socially at-risk groups and individuals with disabilities;
- *Digital convergence*, which promotes the introduction of new technologies in the educational process;
- *Multilingualism and language learning*, which includes the promotion of Greek-language teaching abroad;
- *Sports and culture*, with effort directed toward making these an intrinsic part of education; and
- *Environmental consciousness*, developed through the inclusion of environmental courses in the formal education system (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

Recently, the Ministry of Education implemented a crosscurricular education course framework for compulsory education (*dimotiko–gymnasio*). New textbooks that accord with the framework were produced, along with support resources such as software, educational digital films, and maps (Eurydice, 2009/2010a). The crosscurricular education course framework for compulsory education is based on the following principles:

- Serving education's purposes as defined in the Greek constitution;
- Multicultural education;
- Education for students with special educational needs;
- Integration of preschool education into general education; and
- Interdisciplinary and crosscurricular approaches to knowledge (Ministerial Decisions 21072a/C2 and 21072b/C2, 2003).

Compulsory education programs are currently being reviewed against this framework.

An ongoing national debate in Greece concerns admission to higher education. The process by which prospective students can enter higher education is currently under review.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

The three major aims of education for students at the primary and secondary levels has long been personal development, acquisition of knowledge, and social and political acumen. Since the 1820s, the central discourse about education in Greece has viewed the preparation of future citizens as central to the educational process. Generally, both educational contents and processes are seen as elements of citizenship education (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999). The “formation of free and responsible citizens” has high priority among the aims of compulsory education.

Article 16 of the Greek constitution refers to the rights and obligations of citizens and states that “educating Greeks to become free and responsible citizens is one of the basic aims of education, which constitutes the main goal of the state.” The aims of educational reform have



been to make education universally available, increase comprehensive educational attainment, and modernize education. The reform was enacted through Law 1566 (1985) and has three components, referred to as didactic (or practice-oriented), pedagogic, and participatory (Eurydice, 2005).

Law 1566 (1985) states that the purpose of primary and secondary education is to contribute to the full and balanced development of students' emotional, social, and physical capacities, thereby giving them the opportunity to fully enhance their personalities and to be creative in their lives irrespective of their origin or gender. One of the special objectives of primary and secondary education is "to help students become free, responsible, and democratic citizens, as well as citizens capable of fighting for democracy and national independence." Cultivating creative and critical thinking and developing a spirit of friendly cooperation with people from all over the world are also important objectives. The law furthermore, in line with the constitution, acknowledges freedom of religion as a sacrosanct right of citizens.

There is no strict official definition of "citizenship" in the Greek national curriculums for primary and secondary schools. Instead, the concept of citizenship underpins the curriculums, and its meaning is derived from the following sources:

- *The Greek Constitution of 1975*, which provides the legal status whereby citizens acquire rights as individuals (civil, political, and social) and responsibilities with respect to the state and their fellow citizens;
- *Curricular content*, which assumes that citizenship relates to every aspect of civic life and that people share rights and responsibilities as individuals (Papakonstantinou & Katsiras, 2009; Sotiriou, Kordonouri, & Zafranidou, 2006). It emphasizes active participation (at the local, national, European, and international levels), European citizenship, informed decisionmaking, constructive dialogue, collective action, social diversity, and tolerance within the context of a globalized, multicultural society (Papakonstantinou & Katsiras, 2009);
- *A conservative approach*, which assumes that citizenship is connected to national and cultural identity (Fragoudaki & Dragona, 1997; Kazamias & Petronikolos, 2003); and
- *A liberal approach*, which embraces concepts of tolerance and acceptance of diversity, and rejects racism (but not multiculturalism).

## Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

### General Overview

In general, although civic and citizenship education at schools is taught in a relatively diffused manner, the curriculum defines a specific set of school subjects that is related to this learning area. The subjects are social and political education for Grades 5, 6, and 9 students, and introduction to the law and civic institutions for Grade 11 students. However, other subjects such as history, religion, modern Greek, literature, ancient Greek, and geography also deliver (albeit indirectly) political messages, social values, and national ideals that all play a role in civic socialization (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999).

In the past, these subjects referenced, either directly or indirectly, the historical continuity of Greek civilization from ancient to modern times, the preservation of the Greek language and national symbols, and territory and religion as dominant elements of national identity (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999). However, during the past few years, and in response to increased immigration over the last two decades, there has been a shift in these subjects toward multiculturalism, respect for difference, acknowledging the value of others, and pluralism.



According to the current curriculum, the broader learning area of civics and social studies in preschool and compulsory education has the following aims:

- The intellectual development of students by promoting comprehension of the meaning and the aim of life as well as the universal and diachronic values of society, with the purpose of having students apply these values in daily life;
- The moral development of students by encouraging them to critically evaluate issues relating to freedom, justice, and human rights as well as issues concerning their own rights and responsibilities in society;
- The social, economic, and political development of students by helping them acquire knowledge, comprehension, and skills that are essential for their active and responsible participation in civil society;
- The cultural development of students by strengthening their national and cultural identities, by making them aware of the nature and the role of the various groups they belong to, and by helping them to accept diversity and pluralism;
- The development of the Hellenic identity of students and awareness of Greek national and cultural heritage;
- The development of social relationships and social integration, personal responsibility, and social solidarity (Ministerial Decisions 21072a/C2 and 21072b/C2, 2003).

#### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Primary Education**

Civic and citizenship education in primary schools is an integrated part of several subjects, including language, history, religious education, and environmental studies. It is also a specific subject (social and political education) in Grades 5 and 6, where it is taught for one class period per week.

Under the current curriculum, civic and citizenship education during primary education has the following aims:

- Intellectual development, by helping students understand the different values held within human society;
- Moral development, by helping students critically evaluate issues of equality and justice as well as individual and other rights and obligations in different societies; and
- Cultural development, by helping students acquire national and cultural identities and understand the nature and role of the different groups to which they belong, and the multiple identities they possess.

Grade 5 textbooks include a description of the following rights: life, freedom, free expression, education, equality before the law, protection of the family, and religious tolerance. The description is followed by an enumeration of human responsibilities and duties in relation to each of these rights. Grade 6 textbooks include sections that articulate human rights, including the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and children's rights (illustrated through pictures and drawings). Throughout primary education, teaching about these different rights occurs through the study of language, history, religious education, and the environment (Eurydice, 2005).

#### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Secondary Education**

Civic and citizenship education is offered as a specific subject (social and political education) in lower- and upper-secondary schools. It is also integrated into several other subjects, including ancient and modern Greek literature, psychology, sociology, religious studies, history of the social sciences, and principles pertaining to environmental sciences and their history.



The current Grade 9 syllabus for social and political education has the following aims:

- To consolidate students' knowledge and skills and to help them further develop the attitudes and values they learned in primary school;
- To develop students' critical thinking about social and political matters in a way that enables them to comprehend, analyze, and interpret social and political events in Greece, Europe, and the world;
- To help students acquire values, attitudes, and skills for effective communication and collaboration conducive to personal growth and social integration;
- To have students understand the codependence of people and the need for collaboration and solidarity in order to protect global humanitarian values and human rights;
- To help students comprehend the importance of active participation in everyday social and political life and to take an active interest in improving society and the world;
- To help students develop a realization of the self as a citizen of Greece, the EU, and the world, and the need to have certain rights and exercise certain responsibilities in relation to these spheres;
- To help students realize that it is people who create and resolve social and political problems;
- To encourage students to learn skills that enable them to harmoniously discuss and accept different opinions, to express personal opinions, and to support those opinions with well-founded and supported arguments; and
- To encourage students to ask questions and find solutions to social and political problems (Ministry of Education, 2003).

In Grade 11, a subject called “introduction to the law and civic institutions” is taught for two periods a week. Instruction and student assessment follow the same guidelines used in all school subjects, but have a special emphasis on European citizenship. The teachers' handbook for this subject provides guidance on how teachers should discuss European citizenship. In particular, teachers are asked to promote projects with an intercultural approach within the context of flexible zone provision, a description of which appeared earlier in this chapter. Teachers are furthermore encouraged to initiate extracurricular educational activities designed to raise students' social awareness. However, initiatives of this kind are rare.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Student governance and activities (including activism) are very important elements of school life and social behavior in Greece. Student assemblies in primary school are optional, but many schools have established elections for student government for the last three grades of primary education. This process is usually initiated by teachers and principals.

Under Law 1566 (1985), students in lower- and upper-secondary schools have the right to establish groups such as student partnerships and communities and sports clubs. The Ministry of Education issues a set of regulations regarding such aspects of school life, another one of which is student councils. The regulations relating to student councils cover elections of council members and their responsibilities and stress that student councils need to be strongly connected to the educational process. The regulations also emphasize that participation helps students develop initiative and practice democratic procedures. Student discussions and problemsolving are deemed to be particularly important features of participation. Student councils also give voice to students' views on school matters and foster students' sense of responsibility, their critical thinking, and their ability to appreciate the reasons behind the plethora of school activities. The councils also help consolidate cooperation between students and teachers.



For school councils to be fully effective, schools must guarantee to students freedom of thought and freedom of expression. The particular responsibilities of student councils are to represent students during student–teacher–parent meetings, to ensure that school premises are kept neat, and to organize various cultural and sports events. Student council members participate in school meetings and are free to express their positions on the issues discussed during those meetings (Law 1566, 1985). Student councils across the country have organized sit-ins and student strikes that have sometimes resulted in changes to Ministry of Education policy.

In order to promote the concept of democratic citizenship among students, Greece has organized a program called Teen Parliament since 1996 for students in the first and second years of *lykeio*. The aim of Teen Parliament is to cultivate an attitude among young people that facilitates their participation in community life and inducts them into democratic values, principles, and practices. The Teen Parliament consists of 350 young people. Its members represent the same electoral districts as the Greek parliament (Eurydice, 2005).

Schools can also choose to participate in experimental and pilot programs that offer innovative civic-related activities. These are designed to enable students to examine multiple aspects of citizenship, such as peace, tolerance, and the integration of individuals with physical impairments into mainstream society (Eurydice, 2005).

#### **Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education is influenced by changing political and social conditions. Shifts in perspective and ideals in the dominant political discourse have consequences for the subject in terms of its content (selection, omissions, and emphases) and the pedagogical dialogue used to justify its importance (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999).

Civic and citizenship education acquired its present form in Greece during the country's first period of socialist party government, which began in 1981. The government introduced new textbooks across the national curriculums, which, together with redefined curricular goals, were accompanied by a teacher handbook. Effort was also made to establish student government bodies, known as student communities, at the classroom and school levels, particularly in secondary schools. The teachers' handbook provided instruction on content, teaching methods, and the main principles of child-centered pedagogy, and accordingly encouraged teachers to support student participation and contributions and to relate the content to issues taken from the everyday experiences of students. Teachers were also encouraged to introduce alternatives to conventional teaching methods (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999).

The government introduced the aforementioned subject for Grade 11 students called introduction to law and political institutions during school year 1997/1998. It redefined goals of civic and citizenship education. These, in turn, were influenced by EU policy and practice and included concepts and terms associated with political, institutional, and legal systems. They also promoted a more conscious practice of civic rights and responsibilities (Karakatsani, 2003).

In 2001, the government endeavored to reorganize the content and aims of all school subjects along the lines of a new educational philosophy that envisaged a cross thematic approach to learning.<sup>1</sup> The new philosophy adjusted teaching aims and methods while focusing on the following:

- A balanced distribution of teaching content across all grade levels;
- Horizontal linkage across subjects, along with a greater variety of topics; and
- A fully comprehensive analysis of basic (subject-based) concepts.

<sup>1</sup> The cross thematic curriculum was established in all schools in 2003 (Ministerial Decisions No21072a/C2 and No21072b/C2: Cross thematic curriculum framework for citizenship education, *The Official Gazette*, Issue B, No. 303 and No 304, Athens, Greece, March 3, 2003).



This crosscurricular thematic approach to learning was regarded as a great step forward in education (Karakatsani, 2003), and it led to the introduction of new textbooks at the beginning of school year 2006/2007.

The redefined crossthematic curriculum is also currently being reviewed. As part of this process, the Ministry of Education is piloting a flexible zone program for use in compulsory education. It, too, promotes a crossthematic approach to learning, and is supported by specially designed educational materials. Students take part in projects that extend across subjects and can be grounded in and related to the nature of and events in the schools' local communities (Karakatsani, 2003). The Ministry of Education is presently evaluating the new curriculum and is canvassing teachers' opinions on the textbooks introduced in 2006/2007. Teachers have already voiced some criticism of the implementation process of both the curriculum and the textbooks because neither has been accompanied by a structural reform of the whole education system, which, teachers argue, might have led to a more inclusive stakeholder approach to both system and curricular reform.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

The Ministry of Education determines the duration and content of preservice and inservice training programs. The route to teacher certification is highly structured, and teachers at all levels of schooling must have a university degree. The degree that preprimary and primary school teachers complete is a four-year teaching-related degree (*ptychio*). Individuals wanting to teach in lower- and upper-secondary schools must hold subject-specific university degrees and are required to engage in a three-month introductory teacher training course once appointed to a teaching position.

In order to obtain a teaching-related university degree, candidates must participate in a prepracticum and a supervised practicum in the subject(s) they intend to teach. After completing the degree, teacher candidates are then required to take a national certification examination, which is conducted every two years. Candidates who pass the examination have to complete a probationary teaching period before applying for and securing a teaching position. Postgraduate diplomas, certificates, and awards are considered important qualifications for teaching in schools.

Post-probation, teachers are appointed to permanent positions in regional schools. Placement decisions are based on teacher placement criteria. Teachers' wishes as to where they would like to be located are also taken into consideration (Eurydice, 2009/2010a). Teachers are public servants. As such, their first two years of service are considered probationary, as is the case with anyone who is appointed to the public sector.

Both preservice education and inservice teacher education take place at regional further education centers. Each year, the Ministry of Education defines the content, length, and details of preservice training through presidential decrees. Preschool and primary school teacher education has a strong intercultural and multicultural focus, as do teachers' inservice training programs. Teachers actually experience their preservice practicums in multicultural and multiethnic classrooms (Ministerial Decision 95892/D3, 2009). Since school year 2003/2004, all new teachers have been required to undertake regular inservice training.

The Organization for the Further Education of Teachers (OEPEK), a legal entity supervised by the Ministry of Education, provides additional vocational training (professional development) for teachers. In order to achieve its goals, OEPEK works collaboratively with the Pedagogical Institute, the Education Research Center, educational organizations, education-based public services, and Greek and foreign universities and research centers. OEPEK'S professional



development programs are either short-term compulsory or optional ones that last for half a school term or a full term. Their aim is to provide teachers with up-to-date subject content knowledge and pedagogical and assessment methods, and to make sure that teachers have the skills and resources they need to readily adapt to ever-changing conditions in education (Eurydice, 2009/2010b).

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Primary school teachers do not require a specific qualification to teach civic and citizenship education. In secondary education, teachers who have degrees in science, law, social sciences, economics, or Greek philology teach content related to civic and citizenship education. Teachers who are qualified in political science, law, social sciences, and economics learn civics-related content and pedagogy during their initial teacher training. Today, all newly trained teachers have opportunity to learn about the European dimension of citizenship during their preservice education.

## **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Current educational policy states that student assessment is an ongoing pedagogical process that makes it possible to monitor student progress, grade student performance, and assess different aspects of attainment. The purpose of assessment is to continually improve the teaching process and the work of schools and to provide teachers and students with feedback on their teaching and learning that they can then use to inform ongoing teaching and learning goals. Assessment is therefore not just a matter of monitoring student performance in school subjects, but also of promoting effort, interest, initiative, creativity, cooperation, and respect for school rules (Presidential Decree 409, 1994).

In preschool education (*nipiagogeio*), evaluation is based on observation of everyday behaviors and activities, at both individual and group levels. Each student has an evaluation file that includes assessment results, records, occasional notes from the teacher, and the student's work. Teachers meet with parents at least once a month, or more often if needed. Parents have the right to view their children's evaluation files.

Primary school students are assessed throughout the school year. Periodic and annual assessments are descriptive and also include letter grades from Grades 3 to 6. Student assessment is undertaken by the class teacher or teachers for all subjects and is based on:

- Everyday participation in the teaching and learning process and other school activities;
- Student performance against the assessment criteria;
- The results of tasks and work assigned to students; and
- A creative project in Grades 5 and 6.

Teachers compile student progress reports every trimester and meet parents to inform them about their child's progress at least once every three months (Presidential Decree 409, 1994).

At the end of each school year, students move on to the next grade, except in cases of insufficient attendance. Students completing Grade 6 are awarded a primary-school leaving certificate (*apolytirio dimotikou*), which provides them with admission to lower-secondary school (*gymnasio*).

In lower-secondary schools, teachers assess students on the following bases:

- Performance in daily activities and participation in the teaching and learning process;
- Short written tests;



- Hour-long compulsory written tests, which are given at the discretion of the teacher, in consultation with the school principal;
- Assignments completed at school or at home, as part of students' everyday workload;
- Composite creative projects undertaken by the students either alone or in cooperation with classmates, on a subject of their choice and under the guidance of the teacher;
- Written examinations, which are held at the end of the school year in all subjects except physical education, music, home economics, technology, art, and vocational guidance.

Assessment at this level is both numerical and descriptive. Promotion is based on achievement. Students who fail a subject or subjects can sit a written/oral additional examination in September in those subjects in order to secure a passing grade (which is 10, on a scale from 1 to 20). Students who achieve a passing grade point average at the end of Grade 9 are awarded a school-leaving certificate (*apolytirio gymnasiou*), which grants them access to the upper-secondary level. Students who are not awarded a leaving certificate are permitted to repeat the examinations as many times as necessary until they have passed.

*Lykeio* students are assessed by their teachers on the basis of their participation in daily classroom work and their performance on tests and examinations at the end of the school year. To advance to the next grade and to be awarded a *lykeio diploma (apolytirio lykeiou)*, students must attain a minimum grade point average of 9.5 (out of 20).

Admission to tertiary education is based on two factors. The first is grade point average on the *lykeio diploma*. The second is grades on the diploma as well as the results of regular assessment and marks in six general education and “stream” subjects examined at the national level. In addition to the school-leaving certificate, *epangelmatiko lykeio*, upper-secondary graduates acquire a Level-3 vocational education certificate (*ptychio epangelmatikis ekpaidefsis, epipedou 3*), the awarding of which is based on school-level examinations. Assessment for promotion and graduation from the *epangelmatikes scholes* is conducted at the school level. Students who successfully complete the course also receive a Level-3 vocational education certificate (*ptychio*, as above), which gives them access to employment and allows them to enroll in post-secondary IEK.

Trainees at IEK are assessed by their instructors during and upon completion of their training. Students who successfully complete an IEK course are awarded an attestation of training (*bebaiosi epangelmatikis katartisis*) and then participate in external examinations conducted by national or local committees. The goal is to obtain a postsecondary-level Diploma of Vocational Training (*diploma epangelmatikis katartisis*).

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

Instruction and student assessment at all levels of education and in all subjects, including those relating to civic and citizenship education, follow the same guidelines. As a result of the Ministry of Education curriculum reforms in 2003, civic and citizenship education ceased to be part of the external qualifying examination held at the end of upper-secondary education.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Quality monitoring of educational institutions and the education system has been a topic of some debate in recent years.<sup>2</sup> The debate centers on the role and nature of assessment and evaluation, with conclusions positioning assessment as an ongoing process that determines not only how well the aims and objectives of education are being met but also the quality of the education that students receive.



<sup>2</sup> For more details regarding the different opinions expressed, see Further Reading at the end of this chapter.

Findings from pilot projects, exploratory research, and discussions with relevant organizations indicate that, under the current legislative framework, issues of quality control are now a central part of educational policy. The goal of institutional intervention is the improvement and quality assurance of all partners in the education process, feedback and constant improvement of pedagogical communication, and improved relations between teachers and students (Eurydice, 2009/2010a).

Current legislation stipulates that each school must determine a set of goals to be achieved during the school year. At the end of the school year, the school principal and the school's teachers' council, in cooperation with school advisors, write and then submit an evaluation report to Greece's Education Research Center. This report contains an assessment of the school's overall performance, how well the school has met its goals, and the school's response to problems and challenges encountered during the school year. Schools can also include proposed improvements for the next school year (Law 3848, 2010). At the same time, district education offices submit a quality assessment and goals for the following year to the regional education directorates. The directorates, in turn, submit their assessment reports to the Education Research Center. All data for school year 2010/2011 were made available to the public on the internet (Law 3848, 2010), a practice that will continue at the end of each school year.

Finally, it is important to note that systematic and regular quality assurance practices with respect to education are still relatively recent in Greece. The culture of quality assurance, therefore, is at an early stage.

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# Guatemala

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

In 2011, Guatemala had an estimated population of 14,361,666. According to recent surveys, the median age for females is 20 years, and for males, 19 years. The breakdown of age groups is as follows: 39 percent of the population is aged 0 to 14 years (approximately 2.6 million males and 2.5 million females), 57 percent is aged 15 to 64 years (3.6 million males and 3.9 million females), and 4 percent is over the age of 65 (231,652 males and 268,286 females).

Guatemala's official language, Spanish, is spoken by 60 percent of the population as a first language. The rest of the population speaks indigenous Mayan languages, Garifuna or Xinca, as their first language. There are 25 officially recognized languages. These include the four major indigenous Mayan language groups: K'iche', Kaqchikel, Q'eqchi', and Mam.

The major population groups and the proportion that each group represents in the total population are 59 percent Mestizo (mixed Amerindian-Spanish, in local Spanish referred to as *Ladino*), 9 percent K'iche', 8 percent Kaqchikel, 8 percent Mam, 6 percent Q'eqchi', 9 percent other Mayan groups, 0.2 percent indigenous non-Mayan groups, and 0.1 percent other groups.

The Guatemalan gross domestic product (GDP) is US\$M23,253.3 at constant 2000 prices (Economic Commission for Latin America, 2009). Education expenditure in 2008 was 3.2 percent of the country's GDP.

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Republic of Guatemala has a constitutional democratic government that consists of three branches:

- The legislative branch, known as the Congress of the Republic, which is a unicameral national congress with 110 deputies who serve four terms;
- The executive branch, which includes the president, vice-president, and the Council of Ministers, who are appointed by the president; and
- The judicial branch, which comprises a hierarchical system of upper and lower courts presided over by the 13 members of the Supreme Court.

Members of the Supreme Court serve five-year terms, and the president, who acts as both chief of state and as head of government, serves a four-year term. Under the current constitution, the president and the vice-president are elected by national vote and may serve for one term only.

Guatemala is divided into 22 departments and 333 municipalities. Each department is headed by a governor. Guatemala's Constitution was reformed in May 1985, came into effect in January 1986, was suspended in May 1993, reinstated in June 1993, and amended in November 1993. Voting in elections is universal and mandatory for citizens aged 18 years and above. Members of the armed forces on active duty are not entitled to vote and must remain in their barracks on election day.



## Education System

### Overview and Background

Education in Guatemala is free and compulsory up to Grade 9 (Congress of the Republic of Guatemala, 1991). Because public schools are often sparsely located in rural areas, there is an abundance of private schools in Guatemala. In total, there are approximately 15,000 primary schools, and these are attended by 2.3 million students (Ministry of Education & General Directorate for Planning, 2011).

Upper-secondary education consists of both private and public schools, attended by 1.1 million students. Public sector schools enroll 38 percent of students in this age group. After completing secondary school, students are able to study at university. The total university enrollment in Guatemala is approximately 88,000.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for initial, preprimary, primary, and secondary education in public, cooperative, and private schools. Although the state provides schooling for Grades 1 to 9, private schools draw enrollment away from public schools, particularly at the upper levels. Most primary students are enrolled in public schools whereas most secondary school enrollments are in private schools. The latter group of schools is responsible for a significant percentage of school coverage in Grades 7, 8, and 9.

### Structure of the Education System

The education system in Guatemala is divided into four levels: preprimary or preschool, primary, lower secondary (middle school), and upper secondary (high school).

Preprimary education, which is offered to children five to six years of age, is not compulsory. Most providers of preprimary education are private, and many families cannot afford to enroll their children. Primary education, spanning six years from age 7 to age 12, is compulsory and has the highest coverage rates in the country. This level is divided into two cycles. The first cycle includes the first, second, and third years; the second cycle includes the fourth, fifth, and sixth years. Secondary education is divided into two levels. The first level is *Básica* for students aged 13 to 15. It aims to provide students with general cultural facts. Although *Básica* is compulsory, coverage rates are low. The second level of secondary education is called *Ciclo Diversificado* and is for students aged 16 to 18. This level aims to provide students with knowledge and practical abilities related to different professions, including preparation for tertiary study.

There are several types of school in Guatemala. In preprimary and primary education, schools are either public or private. Public schools are funded by the government, whereas private schools have their own sources of funding. Tuition fees pay for school maintenance, staff salaries, and so on. At the lower-secondary level, schools may be private or public, but can also be *Cooperativas*, *Nucleo Familiar Educativo* (NUFED), or *Telesecundaria*. Schools of these types rely on funding from the government and other sources.

- *Cooperativas*, or Cooperative Institutes of Basic Education, are partnerships among the Ministry of Education, local authorities, and parents. They facilitate programs and incentives aimed at encouraging greater participation in education, particularly in rural areas.
- *NUFED*, or family development groups, provide young men and women in rural areas with training based on their particular needs. Learning is combined with technical vocational work in order to prepare young people to join the country's workforce.
- *Telesecundaria*, or telesecondary schools, use media and information and communication technologies to provide secondary education to young people living in communities where there is insufficient educational provision.



Guatemalan schools generally enjoy a high level of decisionmaking autonomy, particularly the private schools. Each school develops its own educational projects under the principal's leadership. Principals, teachers, and students work together to carry out these projects. The Ministry of Education sets quality standards for educational outcomes, and provides technical, administrative, and financial support.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

In Guatemala, civic values, notably social justice, mutual respect, equality, and social welfare, are regarded as foundational to democratic, well-balanced societies. Citizenship education is presently a crosscurricular part of Guatemalan education. Recent curricular reform has focused on strengthening learning in this area and on encouraging the exercise of citizenship. The curriculum now reflects a culture and vision of citizenship that includes critical awareness, the acquisition of civic values, and a commitment to building a better country. Its goals include strengthening democracy and developing a culture of peace.

Guatemala's approach to civic and citizenship education includes several curricular strands: gender equity, ethnic and social values education, family life, and civic life. Gender equity contains topics related to equity and equality, gender and self-esteem, sexual education, employment equity, ethnic equity, social equity, and gender and class. The social values strand covers topics associated with personal, social, civic, ethical, cultural, and ecological components. The family life strand includes topics related to family configurations and household economy, duties and rights of the family, duties and rights of children and youth, health education, and prevention and eradication of domestic violence. This strand also focuses on intergenerational relations, including care and respect for the elderly. The components of the civic life curriculum strand are education for the benefit of society, human rights education, democracy and the culture of peace education, and civics education. The latter covers judicial and legal culture, tax education, road and traffic education, and consumer education.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

Education in Guatemala is based on law and aims to build students' competencies according to their level of maturity. At each level of the education system, civic and citizenship education topics are treated as a crosscurricular learning area and are therefore integrated into other subjects.

In primary education, the aim of civic and citizenship education is to foster individual and group participation in order to strengthen democracy and peaceful coexistence. As part of this learning area, students acquire citizenship competencies, in particular with regard to a culture of respect, the exercise of human rights, communication skills, and peaceful resolution of conflict. Competency development also focuses on leadership and a culture that strives for peace. Civic and citizenship education at this level is furthermore directed toward promoting civic participation, developing critical self-knowledge, and internalizing values, democratic principles, solidarity, self-management, and self-determination of peoples as an expression of human rights.

Civic and citizenship education in the secondary curriculum is incorporated into social studies and provides students with the information necessary to understand the interrelationships between individuals, groups, institutions, peoples, societal spheres, and aspects of social life. This understanding, in turn, contributes to students' understanding of the sociocultural context of life because it imparts sociohistorical knowledge. It also promotes intra- and intercultural relations, empathy with other people and nations, and an appreciation of and respect for the cultural diversity of the multiethnic and multilingual nation of Guatemala. This learning area



encourages individuals to become proactive participants in society, as well as efficient, effective, and self-determined 21st-century citizens who stand for peaceful coexistence and embrace democratic and intercultural attitudes.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The national curriculum provides not only a framework but also methodological and pedagogical guidelines for all schools. The curriculum allows for flexibility within a common framework by giving each educational institution and its faculty the autonomy to adapt and contextualize subjects and activities according to their communities' particular needs and characteristics.

The curriculum suggests the following activities to promote and implement civic and citizenship education: role playing, debates, open conversations in the classroom about democracy and human rights, and civic activities that require organization by students. Some educational institutions encourage students to participate in school government, which is run by students with the assistance of teachers and administrators. Students are elected onto the government by their peers and perform duties commensurate with their role. Another practice that encourages students' civic participation is writing and producing school newspapers.

The Ministry of Education publishes an annual civic agenda that serves as a companion to the activities proposed in the national curriculum. The agenda's main purpose is to suggest a weekly civic activity that teachers and educators can use in support of civic and citizenship education practices. The agenda includes the following: singing the national and Central American anthems, a weekly civic assembly, monitored discussions about democracy, human rights, civics, participation, and volunteering, and reflections on special holidays and commemorative days.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

As a result of Guatemala's most recent educational reform, the national curriculum now includes themes and subjects related to civic and citizenship education. Part of the reform process involved creating a national civic education and values program. The program develops values that help form democratic citizens through an educational process of participation as well as through the creation and strengthening of a culture of peace (Ministry of Education & Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, 2005).

The new curriculum, designed in 2004, includes a learning area called civic and values education. The aim behind this inclusion was to strengthen civic and citizenship education at the preprimary, primary, and secondary levels, to promote values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, solidarity, and self-determination in students, and to help modify current teaching methods by introducing new, innovative practices (Ministry of Education & Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, 2004).

During the first half of the 20th century, morality and urban studies was taught as a compulsory subject at all levels of the education system and included topics related to civic and citizenship education. Until 1996, this subject was taught as part of the social studies and civic education program. After the 2004 education reform, the Ministry of Education defined civic and values education as a crosscurricular learning area in the national curriculum (Ministry of Education & Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, 2004).

In 2004, as part of the effort to implement civic and values education at the national, regional, local, and school levels, the Ministry of Education introduced a program called Building Citizenship (*Construyendo Ciudadanía*), the aim of which is to reinforce values-based practices



in the classroom, to promote democracy, and to build a culture of peace and citizenship. The program includes the following specific goals:

- To organize national workshops and seminars related to citizenship formation and civic education;
- To participate in international and national forums related to the subject;
- To approve didactic material;
- To elaborate civic and citizenship education materials and manuals for principals and teachers at all educational levels; and
- To monitor and evaluate students' attitudes and knowledge pertaining to civic values and citizenship (Ministry of Education & Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, 2004).

Building Citizenship is based on peace agreements, education reform, and Guatemala's National Education Plan 2004–2007. The program coordinates the activities of 43 national and international organizations and institutions that are represented on the Assessment Council on Values and Citizenship Education. The program is now part of Guatemala's Directorate for Quality and Educational Development (Ministry of Education & Directorate of Quality Management & Educational Development, 2004).

Guatemala also has a number of current civics-related national and international projects and programs designed to assist with training school teachers and principals. Agencies such as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organization of American States (OAS), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the German Cooperation for Development (GTZ), among others, work with local agencies such as the Office for Human Rights of the Archdiocese of Guatemala, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, local universities, and private businesses to promote programs and projects that implement civic education in schools across the country (Ministry of Education & Directorate of Quality Management and Educational Development, 2007).

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Guatemala's Ministry of Education recognizes five categories of educators: preschool, primary (with urban or rural specialization), secondary, vocational/technical, and special education. Initial teacher education is completed at two levels: in upper-secondary schools for educators who will work in preschools and elementary schools; and in higher education institutions for educators who will teach in secondary schools and special education schools (Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science, and Culture & Ministry of Education, 2003).

After six years of secondary school, individuals wanting to become preschool or primary school teachers need to have a diploma that attests to their completion of secondary schooling. Candidates for teaching at secondary or special education schools must complete a three-year program at a teachers' training college. Teacher education includes pedagogical and scientific-humanist courses, along with vocational/technical teaching practice (Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science, and Culture & Ministry of Education, 2003).

The initial teacher education curriculum is based on the principle that teachers must understand and develop four human dimensions: being, thinking, communicating, and doing. It also includes the following strands, which are designed to guide methodological and pedagogical processes: multiculturalism and interculturalism, democratic life and the culture of peace (equity



and values education), and integral and sustainable development. Teachers need to acquire these competencies in order to provide guidance, facilitate educational experiences, and become models and promoters of creative ability, as well as researchers and innovators (Ministry of Education & Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, 2006).

Guatemala's national university, the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, offers the Academic Program for Teachers' Professional Development. The university's teacher training college offers 10 different specialization programs for inservice teachers, granting these individuals a technical degree and a teaching license. It also offers seven degree programs in education, two postgraduate degree programs, and two Master's programs. In addition, the teacher training college offers courses in education and pedagogy in collaboration with government and nongovernmental organizations. The Academic Program for Teachers' Professional Development favors a comprehensive training approach, with educators mastering teaching skills, developing a professional identity and ethics, learning and applying methodological strategies, and learning to respond to the social conditions of the school environment. The curricular framework for teacher education includes personal, social, methodological, and content competencies (University of San Carlos of Guatemala, 2009).

Given the need to ensure a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers throughout Guatemala, the Ministry of Education established in 2008 a homologation process, which accredits and certifies teachers according to their respective qualifications (Ministry of Education, 2009). Applicants seeking accreditation enroll in specialized courses, with enrollment contingent on their previous examination results and experience. On passing these courses, graduates receive an academic title commensurate with their qualification. There are two types of courses. The first accredits preschool teachers as primary education teachers, and the second accredits professionals as secondary education teachers with specialization in a specific subject area. Participants with sufficient experience must take eight semesters of higher education in order to attain the secondary teacher qualification (Ministry of Education, 2009).

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

The National Education Act outlines teachers' responsibilities in regard to civic and citizenship education. These include:

- Providing guidance to students, based on the historical, social, and cultural ethos of Guatemala;
- Encouraging students to value and respect their communities and their moral and ethical values;
- Actively participating in the educational process;
- Teaching according to the ecological, economic, social, political, and cultural reality and context of Guatemala;
- Achieving congruence between the teaching–learning process and national development needs; and
- Assisting in the organization and implementation of educational and cultural activities for and with the wider community.

Teachers are also expected to promote knowledge of Guatemala's Constitution, the Declaration of Human Rights, and the Universal Convention on Children's Rights. As a further element of the expected teacher profile, educators are obliged to promote national and civic awareness among students.



## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

In 2005, the Guatemalan government established the National Educational Evaluation and Research System (SINEIE) in order to provide the Ministry of Education with information about school quality. SINEIE brings continuity and congruence to evaluation efforts and activities, such as accountability evaluations conducted in upper-secondary schools and monitoring at the primary education level. In 2007, SINEIE became an official part of the Ministry of Education under the name of Directorate for Educational Evaluation and Research (*Dirección General de Evaluación e Investigación Educativa*). Since then, the directorate has executed all government evaluation and research processes, thus ensuring educational quality through informed policymaking and decisionmaking (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Since 2006, the Ministry of Education has evaluated mathematics and language competencies at the primary level (students in Grades 1, 3, and 6), at the lower-secondary level, and at the end of upper-secondary education. Primary school evaluations test representative samples of students enrolled at public schools, while the evaluations performed at lower- and upper-secondary levels are conducted as census evaluations.

Candidates for graduation from upper-secondary schools must participate in the mathematics and language evaluations. However, the results do not determine whether a student passes or fails the courses in question. In a similar vein, evaluation results are not used in pass/fail decisions at the primary education level.

Mathematics and language evaluations are undertaken in order to assess student achievement levels in those subjects, to explore the factors influencing achievement, and to provide evidence of each student's competency levels. The Ministry of Education uses this information when making decisions about educational policies.

According to Guatemala's national evaluation manual, teachers are responsible for the design, application, and administration of evaluation instruments and procedures in their classrooms. The manual also makes clear that teachers need to use their own school-based results when making decisions relating to teaching and learning in their classrooms (Ministry of Education, 2007).

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education is part of the curriculum at the primary level of the Guatemalan education system. When conducting assessments and evaluations of this area of learning, teachers reference national curriculum guidelines, criteria, and achievement indicators. (Ministry of Education & Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, 2006b).

Although the national evaluation system does not evaluate teaching and learning of civic and citizenship topics or related subjects, it is currently developing an assessment framework in this area. In addition, Guatemala participated in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) in 2009.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

The Ministry of Education, through the Directorate for Quality Management and Educational Development, is responsible for implementing the national curriculum and then monitoring how well it is taught. As such, it monitors the activities and learning methodologies related to all subjects and curricular areas, including civic and citizenship education.



Civic and citizenship education projects in Guatemala have built-in evaluations that assess student knowledge and competencies. Schools also establish guidelines and criteria to determine the competencies that students need to acquire when participating in a project.

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# Hong Kong SAR

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

As of mid-2009, the population of Hong Kong was approximately seven million (Information Services Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2012a). People of Chinese descent comprise the vast majority of the population, with ethnic minorities representing about five percent (Information Services Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2012b). Hong Kong's land area is 1,104 square kilometers (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2009). Geographically, Hong Kong consists largely of steep hillside. Only 60 square kilometers of land are actively farmed (Information Services Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2012c). According to the United Nation's classification, 100 percent of Hong Kong's population was urban in 2011 (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2011).

The official languages in Hong Kong SAR are Chinese and English. The census of 2006 showed that 91 percent of the population uses Cantonese as their usual language. While English is extensively used by the government and in the business, professional, and legal sectors, only about three percent of the population uses English as their usual language. Slightly less than one percent of the population usually uses another language (either an European language such as French or German, or an Asian language such as Japanese, Korean, Thai, or Vietnamese). About four percent use other Chinese dialects as their usual language (Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2006).

In 2010, Hong Kong's gross domestic product was estimated to be HK\$B1,748.1 (at current market prices; Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2010). In 2010/2011, the government spent HK\$B63.7 on education, amounting for 19 percent of total public expenditure (Information Services Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2012d).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Hong Kong was a British colony for over 150 years, beginning in 1842. On July 1, 1997, the United Kingdom returned sovereignty to the People's Republic of China, at which time Hong Kong became a special administrative region (SAR) of China. Since then, Hong Kong's political system has been guided by the principle of "one country, two systems." This principle is given expression in the Basic Law, which can be regarded as Hong Kong's "mini" constitution. The Basic Law allows Hong Kong SAR to enjoy a high degree of autonomy except in matters of foreign affairs and defense.

Hong Kong has an executive-led government supported by a legislature that approves government budgets and monitors the performance of the administration. Eighteen democratically elected district councils advise on regional issues. The executive branch of government is headed by a chief executive with the support of the Executive Council, which currently consists of 15 principal officers and 14 nonofficial members. The latter are appointed by the chief executive for consultative purposes, especially in terms of giving advice before the executing of major policy decisions or the introduction of new bills into the Legislative



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<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to acknowledge Patrick Lau for his contribution to an earlier draft of this chapter.

Council. The administration itself is made up of 12 policy bureau secretariats, which devise policies and initiate new legislation, and 61 departments, which implement policies.

Hong Kong's Basic Law stipulates that elections for both the chief executive and the Legislative Council will eventually involve universal suffrage. In 2007, the National People's Congress Standing Committee ruled that the chief executive may be elected by universal suffrage by 2017, and the Legislative Council by 2020. During the elections of 2012, the chief executive was elected by an election committee consisting of 1,200 members from different sectors, an increase from 800 in previous elections. The Legislative Council now consists of 30 functional constituencies and 30 geographical constituencies elected through direct elections.

The judiciary is the third branch of the government structure. Members of the judiciary are entirely independent of the administration and the legislature, and follow the fundamental principle of common law jurisdictions. Headed by the secretary of the judiciary, the courts of justice hear all prosecutions and civil disputes, including disputes between individuals and the government.

Voter turnout rate was 45 percent for the Legislative Council election of 2008, and 39 percent for the District Council election of 2007.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

The Education Bureau bears overall responsibility for formulating new education policies and overseeing the implementation of these policies in Hong Kong SAR. The current education system has three main types of local schools:

- Government schools directly operated by the government;
- Aided schools (comprising 80% of local schools) run by voluntary bodies but fully subsidized by the government; and
- Private schools, some of which also receive financial support from the government.

At the beginning of the 2008/2009 school year, the government extended the period of free education in public sector schools from 9 to 12 years.

### Structure of the Education System

Compulsory education is divided into four key stages:

- Key Stage One—Primary 1 to 3;
- Key Stage Two—Primary 4 to 6;
- Key Stage Three—Secondary 1 to 3; and
- Key Stage Four—Secondary 4 to 6.

This new structure is part of the education reform initiated in 2000, which caters for more varied interests, needs, and abilities as well as nurturing whole-person development and lifelong learning. The new senior-secondary academic structure and curriculum implemented at Secondary 4 in 2009 has one less public examination than previously, as part of an initiative to allow students more space and time to develop their individual learning experiences.

Private kindergarten education is provided for children aged three to five by voluntary organizations or other private bodies. Kindergartens are largely divided into private and not-for-profit, with the Education Bureau subsidizing the costs of the latter. In September 2009, 140,500 students were enrolled in 950 kindergartens. In 2007/2008, the government introduced a preprimary voucher scheme in order to provide direct fee subsidies for parents.



Parents can use the subsidy for nursery, eligible local not-for-profit kindergartens, or kindergarten-cum-childcare centers. Since the 2000/2001 school year, organizations receiving voucher subsidies have been subject to quality assurance inspections.

Primary education starts at the age of six, and the government provides it free of charge for a six-year period as part of the 12 years of free education. During the 2009/2010 school year, 344,748 students were enrolled in 582 primary schools, approximately seven percent of which were private.

Secondary education is provided for free for children aged 12 to 18. During the 2009/2010 school year, there were 469,466 students enrolled in 523 secondary schools, of which about five percent were private. Secondary 3 leavers can also opt to take alternative educational routes provided by the Vocational Training Council, which is a statutory body monitored by the government (Information Services Department, Hong Kong SAR Government, 2011).

Children eligible for entry into either Primary 1 or Secondary 1 complete an admission system that consists of a discretionary places stage (where schools admit students based on the schools' admission criteria) and a central allocation stage, where students are allocated according to the school catchment, parental preference, and a random-numbers ballot. Eight thousand students attend special schools on an as-needs-necessitate basis, while integrated education—placing children with special educational needs in ordinary schools—is encouraged as far as possible.

All schools are required to follow the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide* (Curriculum Development Council, 2002), which provides recommendations for the core curriculum and the time to be allocated to each subject at primary and junior-secondary levels. The curriculum framework has three interconnected components: key learning areas, generic skills, and values and attitudes.

Students are expected to acquire not only academic knowledge but also life skills (i.e., whole-person development) through the following five essential learning experiences:

- Moral and civic education;
- Intellectual development;
- Community service;
- Physical and aesthetic development; and
- Career-related activity.

A major initiative conducted over the past decade has been the introduction of school-based management, with the Education Bureau devolving decisionmaking with respect to personnel procedures, financial matters, and curriculum design and delivery to the schools. The aim behind this change was to make school governance more school-based, student-centered, and quality-focused. Schools must still follow regulatory requirements and the Codes of Aid (governing all aided schools, including grant schools and subsidized schools) in their operations and are accountable to the community for their performance and use of funds.

Since the 1980s, and particularly since 1997, government policy under the document titled *Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools* (Education Commission, 1997) has focused on promoting the use of children's mother tongue in learning, in order to maximize learning effectiveness. This focus initially led to a system of secondary schooling characterized by Chinese-medium schools and English-medium schools. Traditionally, schools using English as the medium of instruction were considered more prestigious and academically rigorous than the schools using Chinese-medium instruction (Government of Hong Kong SAR Education Bureau, 2009). In 2010, the government introduced a fine-tuning policy that gives schools some flexibility in determining which method of instruction to adopt.



Another measure to improve school autonomy has been the direct subsidy scheme, introduced in 1991. The government encourages nongovernment schools that have attained a sufficiently high educational standard to join the subsidy scheme, which provides funds to enhance the quality of private school education. Direct subsidy schools are free to determine their curriculum, fees, and entrance requirements. The ultimate aim is to have a strong private school sector emerge in Hong Kong SAR, thereby providing parents with greater choice of schools for their children. As of September 2010, there were 73 direct subsidy schools, with 11 operating classes at the primary level, 52 operating classes at the secondary level, and 10 operating classes at both levels (Government of Hong Kong SAR Education Bureau, 2010a).

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education is called “moral and civic education” in Hong Kong SAR. The main goal of civic and citizenship education in the special administrative region is to facilitate the moral development of students, which can also be considered as the overall aim of school curricula. As one of the five essential learning experiences for whole-person development in the current curriculum framework, moral and civic education aims to help students develop positive values and attitudes. Perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity, and commitment are the five values regarded as most important to student development (Lee, 2008).

The general approach to moral and civic education in Hong Kong SAR is holistic and learner-focused, covering areas relevant to students’ daily lives and related to values development, such as sex education, environmental protection, media education, ethical education, and health education.

Schools are free to design school-based approaches to their implementation of the moral and civic education curriculum. Specific approaches range from integrating and teaching this content within other independent subjects and presenting case studies in school assemblies or during classroom periods through to extracurricular learning experiences and activities, such as project learning and study camps.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

Moral and civic education in Hong Kong SAR is designed to span the 12 years of compulsory education. Topics related to moral and civic education find their way into a variety of subjects through the following key learning areas (Lee, 1999):

- Chinese language education;
- English language education;
- Mathematics education;
- Science education;
- Technology education;
- Personal, social, and humanities education;
- Arts education; and
- Physical education.

Civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools in Hong Kong SAR is also infused into different subjects in the curriculum. Some schools set up specific subjects to teach moral and civic education but most schools adopt the infused, crosscurricular approach (Po, 2004). The main concern is to instill positive values and attitudes in students.



“Liberal studies,” a new core subject in the new senior-secondary curriculum, could be considered a subject related to civic and citizenship education. Liberal studies is designed to provide opportunities for students to explore issues relevant to the human condition in a wide range of contexts and to enable students to understand the contemporary world and its pluralistic nature. It aims to help students make connections across different disciplines, examine issues from a variety of perspectives, and construct personal knowledge of immediate relevance to themselves in today’s world.

The liberal studies curriculum has six key areas of study:

- Personal development and interpersonal relationships;
- Hong Kong today;
- Modern China;
- Globalization;
- Public health; and
- Energy technology and the environment.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Moral and civic education activities in schools in Hong Kong SAR are generally promoted in school-based programs, morning assemblies, classroom-instruction periods, and community service activities. Most of these programs are crosscurricular, and they encompass activities such as “keeping it green” clean-up days and national flag-raising ceremonies.

Students have opportunity to be involved in civic and citizenship education-related activities as part of their extracurricular activities (e.g., school newspapers, interest groups, connections with community organizations, and debating groups). Although students can express their views to school management through their teachers or student councils (assuming these have been established), they are not formally involved in school governance.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

According to a number of scholars, civic education in Hong Kong schools prior to 1984 aimed to prepare law-abiding and obedient residents (Morris, 1997), who were passive, compliant, and cooperative recipients of government services (Tse, 1999). Civic participation, political activities, and discussion were discouraged (Morris, 1992). Under British colonial rule, the concept of citizenship was avoided in the school curriculum, which was depoliticized as far as possible (Lee, 1996). Political education, as a civics-oriented approach, was either not emphasized (Tse, 1997) or it took a conformity-oriented perspective (Morris, 1992).

After the 1984 signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on the political future of Hong Kong, most schools continued to emphasize moral education instead of civic education, which Tse (1999) characterized as moralizing and trivializing civic education. Nationalistic and democratic education, the core components of political education in the views of Heater (1999) and Porter (1991), were not included in the formal curriculum.

In August 1985, the government published the first issue of *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (Curriculum Development Council, 1985). The guidelines recommended that schools adopt a crosscurricular approach when implementing civic education. Schools were encouraged to promote civic education through different subjects in the formal curriculum and also through school assemblies, classroom-based tuition, and extracurricular activities. According to some scholars, the guidelines avoided democracy education and the issues of sovereignty and political changeover (Wong, 1998). Instead, they emphasized social stability. According to Leung and Lau (1999) the document belonged to a “social-control” type of civic education that was underpinned by a conservative ideology.



As Hong Kong prepared to change its status from a British colony to a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China by 1997, the role of civic education in preparing young citizens for the upcoming political change was considered an urgent priority for schools. In March 1995, the Hong Kong government set up a working group to revise the 1985 civic education guidelines. There were heated debates both inside the working group and in wider society among those who were concerned about civic education as it pertained to the immediate political handover (Chan, 2004). Whether nationalistic education or education for human rights and democracy should be given priority in civic education as 1997 approached became the particular focus of controversy (Choi, 1997; Tsang, 1998). The revised edition of *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* was published in 1996 (Curriculum Development Council, 1996).

It should be noted that although both editions of the guidelines were published under British colonial rule, tension between the pro-China and the pro-democracy views in the drafting of these documents was ever present, and especially so during drafting of the 1996 edition when the pro-China stand became more and more influential. In the view of Lee and Bray (1995), the work of drafting new guidelines in early 1995 was set in motion by the pro-China camp's call for greater attention to be paid to nationalistic and patriotic education.

However, there were objections from the pro-democracy camp. They argued that nationalistic education should not take priority over education for democracy and human rights. They worried that this area of education would be downplayed if nationalistic and patriotic education was overemphasized (Lee & Sweeting, 2001). Leung (1996) argued that the key focus in civic education in Hong Kong should be education for democracy and citizenship rather than education for patriotism.

The underlying tensions and debates about the role of civic and citizenship education in schools in Hong Kong continued to be reflected in the naming of the particular government section responsible for moral and civic education promotion. In 1992, the government established a division called the Moral and Civic Education Section within the Curriculum Development Institute of the Education Bureau. The section was charged with promoting moral and civic education in schools. On July 1, 2010, the section was renamed the Moral, Civic, and National Education Section.

In a 2010/2011 policy address, Hong Kong SAR's chief executive announced that

the Education Bureau [EDB] will invite the Curriculum Development Council to review the curriculum framework for moral and civic education at primary and secondary levels, and to develop an independent subject on moral and national education. This initiative is expected to be implemented in the 2013/2014 school year to further enhance the elements of national education. (Paragraph 161, chief executive's policy address, October 11, 2010)

The chief executive also stated that, in order to improve students' understanding of the Basic Law,

the EDB will step up the teaching support relating to the Basic Law and "One Country, Two Systems" in the primary and secondary school curricula and compile a learning package in this school year. We also propose to increase study hours on the Basic Law and related topics. Furthermore, the EDB will develop a database of questions on the Basic Law for students to attempt online and for schools to use in examinations. (Paragraph 160, chief executive's policy address, October 11, 2010)



The Alliance of Civic Education strongly objected to this proposal regarding the development of civic and citizenship education in Hong Kong. They demanded that:

- The proposal to establish the subject moral and national education should be immediately suspended;
- Current policy should be reviewed and reformed to avoid reducing it to a tool for political indoctrination; and
- Human rights education and civic education should be strengthened in primary and secondary schools and incorporated into the formal curriculum (Alliance of Civic Education, October 14, 2010).

After public consultation on the proposed new school subject, a decision was made to delay its implementation until 2015.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Teacher education in Hong Kong SAR is mainly provided by four teacher education institutions, that is, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, the Hong Kong Baptist University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the University of Hong Kong. The Open University of Hong Kong also offers an inservice Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree program and inservice and preservice postgraduate diploma in education programs for primary and secondary school teachers. In general, graduates holding a B.Ed qualification or graduates with an undergraduate degree plus a postgraduate diploma in education are qualified to work as teachers in Hong Kong SAR.

Bachelor of Education programs at teacher education institutions are fulltime, four-year programs. Upon graduation, students are qualified as teachers and do not need to undertake any other qualification program. The postgraduate diploma in education program is a one-year, fulltime program. To be eligible for admission, applicants need to hold a recognized Bachelor's degree that includes a field of study relevant to their chosen teaching subject. The diploma prepares university graduates to become qualified teachers in Hong Kong SAR.

Both B.Ed and diploma courses are offered in key learning areas that include English, Chinese, mathematics, general studies, science education, technology education, personal, social, and humanities education, arts education, physical education, and liberal studies. The curriculum includes both subject-area knowledge and pedagogy.

Inservice teachers also have access to further professional training. Courses designed to upgrade teachers' knowledge and qualifications are available. They are mainly offered by the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Because civic and citizenship education is not taught as an independent subject in lower-secondary schools in Hong Kong SAR but is intended to permeate all key learning areas through a crosscurricular approach, the subject is not taught by specialist teachers. Teachers who teach civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools do not have to have additional training or certification in this area. All general classroom teachers with basic teacher training and qualifications are expected to teach civic and citizenship education as the circumstances arise.

Most teachers of liberal studies, the new core subject in the new senior-secondary curriculum, come from backgrounds in related disciplines. There is some concern that there may not be enough qualified teachers to teach this subject. Given that 2011 was only the second year of



implementation, the situation in schools is not yet clear. The Education Bureau has provided short-term inservice professional development courses for liberal studies teachers, and teacher education institutions are offering relevant training programs for both preservice and inservice teachers.

## **Assessment and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) is a statutory body that oversees all public assessment and examination matters from the primary and secondary school levels through to examinations for university admission. The HKEAA develops and implements basic competency assessments in Chinese language, English language, and mathematics for students at Primary 3 (P3), Primary 6 (P6), and Secondary 3 (S3). The assessments program has two components—student assessment and territory-wide system assessment.

The student assessment operates online in order to provide instant feedback to students and teachers. It allows teachers to review and improve student progress toward achieving learning objectives and to set appropriate new learning targets for students. The territory-wide system assessment is a low-stakes test of student performance at P3, P6, and S3 levels in three subject areas. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the government and school management with information on school standards in key learning areas for the purposes of school improvement, and to provide more targeted support to those schools needing assistance.

Traditionally, examinations at the end of secondary school education in Hong Kong SAR have been high-stakes ones. University places are limited and can cater for only about 18 percent of secondary school leavers. University admissions have been largely based on the results of two public examinations—the Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCEE) and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE). The implementation of the new senior secondary curriculum at Secondary 4 during the 2009/2010 school year led to the new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) examination, which, as of 2012, is offered to students completing six years of secondary education. The HKCEE and HKALE will eventually be phased out. Students take the HKDSE in four core subjects—Chinese language, English language, mathematics, and liberal studies, plus two or three elective subjects.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Because moral and civic education is not taught as an independent subject in lower-secondary schools, it is not usually assessed formally. Schools are encouraged to carry out assessments of this learning area in authentic contexts such as group work and discussion. Teachers are expected to record the process and outcome of their students' learning and to provide feedback on students' achievements. Evidence of students' achievements are usually recorded briefly in report cards, which feature grades and/or written comments.

The liberal studies subject is, as noted above, a new subject, first implemented in 2011 and with its first formal HKDSE examination in 2012. Regular formal examinations are held in other civic and citizenship education-related subjects such as history, geography, economics, and general studies.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

The monitoring of the quality of learning and teaching of all subjects, including moral and civic education, is carried out by the Education Bureau. It conducts external reviews of the performance of every school every few years. The review teams conduct five-day onsite school visits, during which they examine school documents, observe lessons, and interact with



different stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents. The team enquires about the performance of schools in a broad range of areas, including management and organization, learning and teaching, support to children, school culture, and children's development (Government of Hong Kong SAR Education Bureau, 2010b). After each school visit, the bureau writes a report offering comments and advice and sends it to the school. The implementation of moral and civic education in schools is one of the aspects that review teams will examine during school visits.

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# Republic of Ireland

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The island of Ireland has a total area of 84,421 square kilometers of which the Republic of Ireland occupies 70,282 square kilometers; the remainder of the island (Northern Ireland) forms part of the United Kingdom (see “Characteristics of the Political System,” below). In April 2010, the population of the Republic of Ireland (henceforth Ireland) was estimated to be 4,470,700 (Central Statistics Office, 2010a). The 2006 census indicates that approximately 23 percent of the population were aged 16 or under (Central Statistics Office, 2007a). In 2006, approximately 61 percent of the Irish population were living in towns with a population of 1,500 or more, and approximately 85 percent were born in Ireland. A further 11 percent reported that they were born in one of the European Union (EU) countries, most commonly in Great Britain (5%), Poland (2%), and Northern Ireland (1%) (Central Statistics Office, 2007a).

Article 8 of the Constitution of Ireland recognizes Irish as the first official language and English as the second official language of the country (Department of the Taoiseach, n. d.). Although over half of private households (53%) in 2006 had at least one person with the ability to speak Irish, the language is used most frequently within the education system and in Irish-speaking regions known as *Gaeltacht* areas (Central Statistics Office, 2007b).<sup>2</sup> The study of Irish is obligatory during compulsory education (unless a student has an exemption<sup>3</sup>), and a small proportion of students are educated entirely in Irish.<sup>4</sup> Irish became an official working language of the EU in 2005 (European Commission, 2011).

In 2009, the gross domestic product (GDP) of Ireland was €B159.6, and the gross national income (GNI) was €B132.6 (Central Statistics Office, 2010b). While GDP growth averaged six percent in the period from 1995 to 2007, economic activity dropped sharply in 2008/2009. The GDP fell by five percent in 2008 and by a further 11 percent in 2009 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2010; Central Statistics Office, 2010b). A slowdown in the Irish property and construction sectors, combined with the international financial crises, resulted in the Irish economy entering a recessionary period in 2008 (Central Statistics Office, 2008).

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2 In the 2006 census, 27 percent of Irish speakers reported using the language on a daily basis within the education system compared to just three percent of Irish speakers who reported using the language on a daily basis outside the education system (Central Statistics Office, 2007b).

3 Students may receive an exemption from the study of Irish in certain specific circumstances, for example if the student was, up to the age of 11 years, in primary education in another country or if the student has a specific learning disability.

4 In 2006/2007, 32,155 primary-level students and 8,351 secondary students were receiving their education in at least some subjects through the medium of Irish (Eurydice, 2011).



## Characteristics of the Political System

Ireland is a republic, governed by a parliamentary democracy. The national parliament (*Oireachtas*) consists of the president and two houses (*Dáil Éireann* and *Seanad Éireann*) whose functions and powers derive from the Constitution of Ireland enacted in 1937 (Houses of the *Oireachtas*, n. d.a). The president does not have an executive role in the Irish political system.

A general election to *Dáil Éireann* must be held at least once every five years. Under the constitution, there must be at least one member of the *Dáil* (*Teachta Dála* [TD]) for every 20,000 to 30,000 people. TDs are elected by citizens aged 18 years and over on the basis of proportional representation. Based on the current population, Ireland today has 169 TDs representing 43 constituencies (Houses of the *Oireachtas*, n. d.b).

*Seanad Éireann* (the Irish senate) is composed of 60 members: 11 are nominated by the *Taoiseach* (prime minister), six are elected by graduates of two universities, and 43 are elected by five panels representing specified vocational interests (Houses of the *Oireachtas*, n. d.c). In recent years, joint *Oireachtas* committees consisting of both senators and TDs have been established to advise on a range of legislative, social, economic, educational, and business issues (Houses of the *Oireachtas*, n. d.d).

Political division between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland dates from the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. Under the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921, ratified in 1922), 26 out of the 32 counties in Ireland gained independence while the remaining six counties formed Northern Ireland and continued to be governed within the United Kingdom (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2009). In the late 1960s, civil rights campaigners in Northern Ireland began to seek equal rights for Catholics vis à vis Protestants in areas such as housing, voting, employment, and education. The upsurge in civil unrest from 1968/1969 involved paramilitary groups, the army, and the police. This state of unrest continued for three decades until peace talks in the 1990s culminated in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

This agreement accorded a special constitutional position to Northern Ireland and provided for the establishment of new democratic and legislative institutions, initiatives for policing and justice, and measures to protect human rights and equality. Ireland joined the European Union (EU), which was then the European Economic Community, in 1973 and has benefited greatly from (among other advantages) EU-inspired modernizing legislation, structural and cohesion funds, funding allocated for rural development, and the Common Agricultural Policy (European Commission, 2010). Having initially rejected the Lisbon Treaty, Irish voters endorsed it in October 2009 after the Irish Government secured guarantees on national sovereignty and the right of each country to have a commissioner (European Commission, 2009).

The Irish economy contracted sharply in 2008 after a period of record growth, termed the “Celtic Tiger” era (Gardiner, 1994). This period saw an unprecedented level of inward migration, and it was estimated that, in 2009, 15 percent of the primary school-going population and 11 percent of the secondary population were immigrant students (Cosgrove, Gilleece, & Shiel, 2011; Eivers et al., 2010; see also Smyth, Darmody, McGinnity, & Byrne, 2009).

## Education System

### Overview and Background

In 2008, approximately 98 percent of fulltime students in Ireland were attending publicly aided schools (i.e., schools financed in part or in whole by the Department of Education and Skills), and just two percent were attending private non-grant-aided schools, that is, schools provided and controlled by nongovernmental bodies, and receiving none of their finance from the public sector (Eurydice, 2011). During school year 2009/2010, the Department of Education and Skills provided financial aid to a total of 3,295 primary schools and 730 secondary schools,



attended by 505,998 and 350,998 students, respectively (Department of Education and Skills, 2010a).<sup>5</sup>

Responsibility for primary and secondary education in Ireland is largely centralized to the Department of Education and Skills with support from associated bodies and services, including Vocational Educational Committees, the State Examinations Commission, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the National Educational Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education, and the Teaching Council. The Department of Education and Skills sets down a broad regulatory framework within which schools in receipt of state funding are required to operate: for example, under Section 14 of the Education Act of 1998, publicly aided schools are advised, where practicable, to have a board of management with representation from parents, teachers, and the community (Oireachtas, 1998).

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills is responsible for evaluating primary and secondary schools, providing advice to the system, and contributing to the formulation of education policy. The State Examinations Commission (SEC), established as an independent statutory body in 2003, is responsible for the operation of the certificate examinations administered at the end of Grades 9 and 12. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is a statutory, representative body whose chief function is to advise the Minister for Education and Skills on curricular and assessment issues in early childhood, primary, and secondary education. It is not directly involved in the national certificate examinations, as these are the responsibility of the SEC. However, the NCCA periodically makes recommendations on examination issues such as assessment models and time allocations.

## Structure of the Education System

### Organization

Schooling in Ireland is compulsory between 6 and 16 years of age. In practice, most children start school at the age of four or five.<sup>6</sup> However, since January 2010, the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme has been in place. This aims to provide free preschool education for all children between the ages of 3.3 years and 4.6 years for two hours and 15 minutes per day, 50 weeks per year. Primary schools cater for children up to the age of about 12, or Grade 6. Children then transfer to secondary schools, which typically provide both lower- and upper-secondary education, from Grades 7 to 12.

At the primary level, most schools are privately owned by religious authorities (mostly Roman Catholic dioceses, see “Current Education Debates” below) and funded mainly by the state.<sup>7</sup> At the secondary level, the main school types are:

- Voluntary secondary schools, a high proportion of which are single-sex schools, owned by religious groups or organizations or by their trustees;
- Vocational schools or community colleges, usually coeducational schools, owned and run by Vocational Educational Committees; and

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<sup>5</sup> Some of the running costs of schools may be met through local contributions.

<sup>6</sup> In 2006/2007, 45 percent of four-year-olds and 100 percent of five-year-olds were enrolled in primary school infant classes, known as junior and senior infants, respectively. The six other primary-level grades are called first to sixth class (Eurydice, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> During school year 2009/2010, 91 percent of schools were under Catholic patronage, six percent were Church of Ireland, two percent were inter- or multid denominational, and the remainder were under other religious patronage (Department of Education and Skills, 2010b).

<sup>8</sup> In Ireland, 18 percent of all 15-year-old students are in single-sex boys' schools and 26 percent of all students are in single-sex girls' schools. Therefore, 44 percent of all 15-year-old students in Ireland are in single-sex schools. Fifty percent of Ireland's total cohort of female school students are in all-girls' schools and 37 percent of the total cohort of male school students are in all-boys' schools (Department of Education and Skills Post-Primary Student Database 2010/2011, [cso-ie/px/des/database/des/asp](http://cso-ie/px/des/database/des/asp)).



- Community or comprehensive schools, established by the state and managed by boards of partners and trustees.<sup>8</sup>

All types of secondary school offer a similar, broad-based secondary education. In accordance with legislation, boards of management are responsible for managing schools on behalf of the school owner(s) (Oireachtas, 1998).

### **Study Programs**

At the lower-secondary education level, all students follow a three-year program leading to the Junior Certificate Examination at the end of Grade 9. Students for whom the academic Junior Certificate is judged unsuitable (e.g., those at risk of leaving school early) may follow the Junior Certificate School Program (JCSP), which emphasizes active learning and basic skills.<sup>9</sup> A small cohort of students, about five percent, participate in this program, which is offered in some mainstream schools alongside the Junior Certificate program (Houses of the Oireachtas, Joint Committee on Education and Skills, 2010).

Upper-secondary education is of two or three years' duration depending on whether students take an optional transition year (Grade 10, offered in about 70% of schools), where the emphasis is on personal and social development, active and participatory learning, and vocational and educational development. Whether students participate in the transition year or not, they have a choice of three upper-secondary programs: the established Leaving Certificate (LC), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Program (LCVP), and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). Students in all three programs take national certificate examinations at the end of Grade 12.

Students who participate in the established Leaving Certificate usually study seven subjects, one of which is Irish. This is the most academically oriented of the Leaving Certificate options and is pursued by the majority of students (about 50,000 annually, of whom 15,000 take the LCVP modules). The LCVP has a distinct vocational element, and along with at least five established Leaving Certificate subjects, students study two modules on enterprise and work. In practice, a large majority of LCVP students study seven subjects. The LCVP is an add-on to the established Leaving Certificate and its content is usually taught in one or two class periods per week. The LCA is a learner-centered, modular, prevocational program. About 3,000 students take the LCA (Department of Education and Skills Post-Primary Student Database, 2010/2011, <http://www.cso-ie/px/des/database/des/asp>).

### **Tracking and Streaming**

Under Section 9 of the Education Act 1998, schools are required to “establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school.” Students are therefore not officially tracked into academic or vocational systems (Oireachtas, 1998). Within schools, ability grouping for the core subjects of Irish and mathematics is relatively common even at the lower-secondary level, although there has been a decline in ability grouping in recent years (Smyth, McCoy, & Darmody, 2004).

### **School Autonomy**

As noted above, Irish secondary schools are privately owned by religious groups or by trustees on their behalf (voluntary secondary schools). They are also owned by partnership boards of trustees (comprehensive and community schools) or by Vocational Educational Committees (vocational schools and community colleges). Schools are generally managed locally by



<sup>9</sup> The JCSP is offered in 240 schools in Ireland. Participating schools receive an improved teacher allocation and a small capitation allowance per participating student. The program aims to make the Junior Certificate more accessible to young people who may leave school without a qualification. Students receive an official certificate of their achievements, validated by the Department of Education and Skills, in addition to their Junior Certificate.

representative boards of management, as provided for in the Education Act (1998). The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for determining, on advice from the NCCA, the length of the school year and the content of the curriculum. Teachers' salaries and school capital and operating costs are substantially met by the state (Eurydice, 2011).

Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Study (TALIS), conducted in 2008 at the lower-secondary school level by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), showed that schools in Ireland have higher levels of autonomy relative to other countries in establishing student disciplinary and assessment policies, approving students for admission to schools, determining which courses are offered, and choosing the textbooks (OECD, 2009). Almost all teachers in Ireland work in schools that have considerable responsibility for each of these areas (Gilleece, Shiel, Perkins, & Proctor, 2009; OECD, 2009). However, a strong common feature across schools is the use of syllabuses related to the state examinations taken by students.

### **Curriculum**

The primary school curriculum is determined centrally by the Department of Education and Skills. It is organized into seven areas: language (Irish and English); mathematics; social, environmental, and scientific education (history, geography, and science); arts education (visual arts, music, and drama); physical education; social, personal, and health education; and religious education.

At the lower-secondary level, 28 subjects are provided for in the curriculum. Again, the curriculum is centrally determined and some core subjects are specified. However, schools are free to decide which other subjects will be offered, and the levels at which they will be offered.<sup>10</sup>

The leaving-certificate curriculum allows students to choose from a centrally determined list of 33 approved subjects. Students must sit examinations in at least five subjects; most sit between six and eight subjects. The State Examinations Commission can provide, in addition to the 33 approved subjects, examinations in any of the recognized languages of the EU, where this is deemed appropriate and practicable. Schools have considerable flexibility in the range of subjects they provide, and they can also determine whether to provide a transition year or alternatives to the Leaving Certificate (i.e., the LCA and the LCVP programs discussed above).

### **Current Education Debates**

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is currently undertaking a review of lower-secondary education that involves an examination of the curriculum and approaches to assessment (NCCA, 2010a). The review process includes widespread consultation, with stakeholders and the general public having opportunities to contribute to the debate (NCCA, 2010b). The recommendations arising from this review went for ministerial consideration in October 2011. A new framework for lower-secondary education (junior cycle) was published in the autumn of 2012. It details the proposed changes to the curriculum and, more fundamentally, assessment of students (Department of Education and Skills, 2012). The NCCA has also developed a draft syllabus for an optional politics and society course in upper-secondary schools (NCCA, 2010c). Just when this course will be introduced has yet to be confirmed.

Beginning in January 2010, all children between 3.3 and 4.6 years of age became entitled, for the first time, to a year of free preschool education (Office of the Minister for Children and



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<sup>10</sup> Most subjects can be studied at ordinary or higher level, although three subjects (Irish, English, and mathematics) can also be studied at foundation level, which is aimed at students who would have difficulty reaching the ordinary or higher level.

Youth Affairs, 2010). The introduction of the free preschool year replaced a system whereby parents received €500 per annum per child under the age of five in the form of an early childhood supplement. The merits of the new system and the need to ensure that the preschool education provided is of adequate quality are under debate. It has also been noted that universal access does not guarantee universal take-up, and concerns have been raised about levels of parental support, particularly in disadvantaged communities (Houses of the Oireachtas, Joint Committee on Education and Skills, 2010).

The integration of immigrant students and provision of language support for students with English as a second language are priorities at all levels of the education system. These priorities are reflected in a 2010 publication that sets out a strategy for intercultural education (Department of Education and Skills & the Office of the Minister for Integration, 2010).

Over 91 percent of primary-level schools in Ireland are under Catholic patronage, and there is increasing interest in the possibility that some of these patrons may be willing to divest their patronage.<sup>11</sup>

Concerns have been expressed about the low numbers of students studying advanced-level mathematics and science subjects and the lack of satisfactory achievement in these subjects (NCCA, 2005, 2006; Varley, Murphy, & Veale, 2008a, 2008b). A new mathematics syllabus (under the auspices of the NCCA's Project Maths) is being introduced at the secondary level. This aims to enhance students' learning experience, to increase their ability to apply mathematics knowledge, and to improve their overall levels of achievement (Project Maths Development Team, n. d.).

Less than satisfactory Irish results in the most recent OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests (Perkins, Cosgrove, Moran, & Shiel, 2012) have confirmed the need for implementation of a major initiative by the Department of Education and Skills, which is outlined in the 2011 strategy document, *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* (Department of Education and Skills, 2011). The strategy envisages a comprehensive approach to promoting and supporting better standards in these key skills across preschools and all formal education up to 2020.

Attention has also been given to raising literacy and numeracy levels in schools serving large numbers of disadvantaged students, as well as to engaging these students more fully in their education. The current initiative in Ireland designed to promote educational equality, *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools*, accords a high priority to these areas (Department of Education and Science, 2005, n. d.).

Reducing the number of early school-leavers is another focus area. The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science identified this issue as a priority in 2008, and it recently published a report on the topic (Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills, 2010).

The enactment of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) was an important legislative development that led to significant investments for students with special educational needs (Government of Ireland, 2004; National Council for Special Education, 2008). However, as in other countries, there is not a consensus on the most appropriate way to assess and educate children with special educational needs, and there are also concerns about the effects that recent cutbacks have had on the provision of support for these children.



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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, [http://www.ivea.ie/news/2010/05/school\\_patronage.shtml](http://www.ivea.ie/news/2010/05/school_patronage.shtml); <http://www.independent.ie/national-news/40-areas-picked-for-church-to-hand-over-school-control-2275710.html>

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Primary school students are introduced to citizenship in a developmental and integrated manner via a program called social, personal, and health education (SPHE). Through learning about personal and interpersonal issues, and in conjunction with the study of geography and history, students build an awareness of their place as citizens of their communities, their country, and the world:

SPHE plays an important role in developing an understanding of the democratic way of life and individual and group rights and responsibilities. It provides opportunities for children to learn about, and actively participate in, the various communities to which they belong and to develop a sense of a shared commitment. It can also help them to value and take pride in their national, European and global identities and come to an understanding of what it means to be a citizen in the widest sense. (Government of Ireland, 1999, p. 3)

At the secondary level, it is anticipated that several core and optional subjects will continue to reinforce citizenship ideals. In addition, a specific, compulsory subject called “civic, social, and political education” (CSPE)—is offered in Grades 7 to 9:

... the main purpose of this Junior Certificate [ISCED 2] course in Civic, Social and Political Education is to provide the pupil with a concentrated and dedicated focus on all aspects of this area of education, with particular emphasis on the importance of active, participatory citizenship to the life of the young person in society. It is envisaged that this course will also provide pupils with a central reference point for those aspects of Civic, Social and Political Education which they learn about through other subject disciplines, and through their daily school-life. (Department of Education and Skills, 1996, p. 3)

There is no compulsory citizenship course at the upper-secondary level. Some schools offer courses or modules in sociology, politics, and other related areas in the optional transition year. Schools may also involve themselves in a range of projects and initiatives, including the Young Social Innovators<sup>12</sup> and Gaisce<sup>13</sup> (President’s Award). Student councils and community-based activities provide a further support for citizenship education within schools throughout secondary education. However, the presence of both is at the discretion of individual schools. As noted above, the NCCA, in consultation with education partners and stakeholders, has developed a draft syllabus for a new, optional, upper-secondary subject called “politics and society.”

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

#### General Overview

In primary schools, social, personal, and health education (SPHE) is taught through a syllabus tailored to four distinct age groups: infant classes (pre-ISCED 1, ages four to six), Grades 1 and 2 (ages seven to eight), Grades 3 and 4 (ages 9 to 10), and Grades 5 and 6 (ages 11 to 12). Within SPHE, the three content strands are myself, myself and others, and myself and the wider world. Many of the citizenship-specific issues are dealt with under the third of these strands, which takes a three-tier approach involving a positive school climate and atmosphere, discrete SPHE time (organized as teachers see fit but for a recommended half hour per week), and an integrated approach in the context of relevant subject areas.

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12 Young Social Innovators aims to raise social awareness among 15- to 18-year-olds in Ireland. It encourages young people to get involved in social awareness and action initiatives in their communities (see <http://www.youngsocialinnovators.ie/>).

13 Gaisce works on the basis of a personal challenge across four challenge areas (community involvement, personal skills, physical recreation, and adventure journey). The award is available at three levels (bronze, silver, and gold) (see <http://www.gaisce.ie/>).



During the first three years of secondary education, students are taught the compulsory civic, social, and political education (CSPE) program. Introduced in 1996, it replaced an earlier subject, “civics.” All secondary schools also offer a separate SPHE program that allows CSPE to stand as a discrete subject and helps to place a greater emphasis on citizenship, social, and political education.<sup>14</sup>

When the politics and society syllabus is introduced at the upper-secondary level, it will be an optional subject, to be delivered during approximately five class periods of (usually) 40 minutes per week over two years. While it will undoubtedly complement a number of existing subjects, it will also bring into focus social science and political science perspectives that are new to upper-secondary education in Ireland. The introduction to the draft syllabus states, “Politics and Society aims to develop the student’s capacity to engage in reflective and active citizenship, informed by the insight and skills of social and political sciences” (NCCA, 2009, p. 9).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

All students in lower-secondary schools (ISCED 2) in Ireland are taught CSPE for an average of one 40-minute class period per week over three years, yielding a total delivery allocation of about 70 hours during that time.

The CSPE curriculum is organized into four units of study: the individual, the community, the state (Ireland), and Ireland and the wider world. These units focus on seven core concepts: democracy, rights and responsibilities, human dignity, interdependence, development, law, and stewardship. The skills that CSPE aims to develop are identification and awareness, analysis and evaluation, communication, and action. The attitudes and values that CSPE seeks to promote are personal commitment to active, constructive, and participatory citizenship, personal commitment to the CSPE concepts, appreciation of critical awareness and independence of thought, respect for diversity, rights and responsibilities, non-violent ways of resolving conflict, and a commitment to oppose prejudice, discrimination, and social injustice at all levels of society.

The subject is delivered by teachers with a wide variety of subject expertise. However, Department of Education and Skills circulars,<sup>15</sup> guidelines, and inspection reports consistently recommend the deployment of a subject coordinator and team of interested teachers. Certain aspects of civic and citizenship education, including the history of the EU and modern climate change, are covered in subjects such as history and geography, but the aim is for this material to complement rather than duplicate what CSPE is seeking to achieve in general.

The seven core concepts of the CSPE curriculum may be delivered in any order or combination that teachers and students want. However, the syllabus guidelines recommend a developmental approach, as well as an approach that incorporates the different units of study. There is a strong emphasis on active learning, and on students learning by doing. The syllabus places some emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and also strongly encourages the development of values, attitudes, and skills.

For over 10 years, a designated support service was responsible for teacher training and for the development of a wide range of resources and supports for the delivery of CSPE.<sup>16</sup> Many state and interstate agencies, as well as nongovernmental agencies, also assist with CSPE delivery through education packs and other supports.



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<sup>14</sup> Two departmental circulars in particular govern the delivery of CSPE in schools. They are denoted as M12/01 and M13/05. Both can be accessed under Circulars at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

<sup>15</sup> Circulars are periodic correspondences generally sent to all postprimary schools. These documents provide informational updates and guidelines on a wide range of educational issues.

While CSPE has a place for more traditional forms of assessment, it has also pioneered the promotion of stimulus-driven questioning, the use of discussion and debate, and, above all, the use of action projects as an element of formal assessment. The written report on an action project comprises 60 percent of the marks in the Junior Certificate Examination, with the remaining 40 percent allocated to a 90-minute written examination. Assessment is at a common level. In other words, no distinction is made between advanced-, medium-, and basic-level certification, making the subject unique in this respect.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The use of in-school action projects has been a central component of CSPE. These can be conducted on an individual or group basis and include diverse activities such as carrying out simple surveys, hosting visiting speakers, and going on field trips relevant to the subject (Wilson, 2008). The work involved in organizing projects such as these, along with the broader delivery of the syllabus, forges links between schools and local authorities and bodies. These organizations range from town, city, and county councils through to local police, charities, and animal-rights groups.

Within schools, CSPE classes have driven initiatives to promote democratic engagement, such as mock elections and assisting with student council elections. At the national level, some CSPE classes have engaged proactively with the national youth parliament, *Dáil na nÓg*, and local youth councils. A formal national initiative to promote student councils had strong links with CSPE, although it went beyond the subject in both its remit and the links it had with students who are past the age level at which CSPE is a core subject. Ireland does not, as yet, have significant student involvement in formal school governance, that is, membership on boards of management, but there is a growing emphasis on listening to the student voice in matters such as policy development, school rules, and so on.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

As noted above, CSPE replaced an earlier subject, civics, in 1996. Civics was not subject to formal assessment or certification, which may have caused a lack of emphasis on some parts of the syllabus. However, CSPE has always been formally assessed as part of the Junior Certificate Examination.<sup>17</sup> Initial concerns about plagiarism and oversupporting students doing project work and writing reports have gradually eased since the subject's inception (Jeffers, 2008).

In recent years, the levels of support available to teachers of CSPE have been reduced and rationalized, due to financial constraints and because CSPE is now well established in schools. Supports continue to be available online and through facilitation by a trainer in certain circumstances, while systemic supports also include the availability of previous examination papers, project report templates, and examination marking schemes from the State Examinations Commission.

Work is ongoing on a series of short, modular courses designed for the transition year (Grade 10); some of these can be expected to enhance the citizenship agenda in Grades 11 and 12. Ireland is currently undertaking a major review of lower-secondary education as part of its overall educational aims. The public consultation process on the new politics and society syllabus for upper-secondary students has generally resulted in positive feedback from a

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<sup>16</sup> See [www.cspe.ie](http://www.cspe.ie) for a wide range of the materials developed and deployed by the CSPE support service, as well as other subject-relevant documentation. In 2009, the Post-Primary Support Service underwent substantial restructuring and a reduction in staff numbers, as well as changes in personnel and in the nature and focus of its work.

<sup>17</sup> These materials can all be found in the Junior Certificate section on the State Examinations Commission website at [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie)



range of partners and stakeholders. However, decisions have not yet been made as to when the syllabus will be implemented, how it will be accommodated in school timetables, and—crucially—how teachers will upgrade their skills to teach this subject at the Leaving-Certificate level, given that the Irish secondary system does not currently have large numbers of social science and politics graduates teaching it.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Primary teachers in Ireland are educated to degree level (ISCED 5A) in four designated colleges of education. Some primary teachers first pursue degrees at universities and then do an additional course of one-and-a-half years' duration at a college of education to qualify as primary teachers. Primary teachers may qualify abroad, but they are then required to achieve an additional qualification in the Irish language, given that Irish is a compulsory subject in primary schools.

Secondary teachers in Ireland are generally expected to be graduates in the subjects or subject area that they teach. Ireland has two main routes to teacher qualification at this level:

- *Concurrent qualification:* Some universities and colleges offer four-year degree courses with built-in modules on education, opportunities to engage in teaching practice, and methodological lectures, which students can take while studying (usually) two arts or science subjects to degree level.
- *Consecutive qualification:* Most universities offer students the option of obtaining a degree after three years of studying (usually) two subjects, followed by a one-year or one-and-a-half-year diploma in education, generally referred to as a postgraduate diploma in education (PGDE).

The Department of Education and Skills' (2011) literacy and numeracy for learning and life strategy envisages that teacher-training courses at both primary and secondary levels will be extended by up to a year in order to equip new teachers to better support literacy and numeracy education in Irish schools.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Traditionally, secondary teachers in Ireland are considered to be qualified to teach a subject in both lower- and upper-secondary schools if they have a degree in that subject or discipline. Where a teacher may have studied an additional subject in an initial year at university, he or she can generally teach that subject at the lower-secondary level only. The Teaching Council, established in 2006, is a statutory body that registers teachers and accredits those who have qualifications obtained outside of Ireland.

Because CSPE is not a recognized degree subject for teachers, and because the number of teachers with politics, sociology, or related subjects in their degrees is not high, it is accepted that CSPE teachers may not have even a first-year university course in a relevant subject area. Evidence from a survey in 2004 and from more recent inspection reports suggests that most CSPE teachers come from humanities backgrounds, but this is by no means universal (NEXUS, 2004). This situation helps to explain the desirability of ensuring that CSPE is taught by teachers who are interested in the subject and are engaging in continuing professional development in this area of learning.

When CSPE was first implemented, continuing professional development was provided by the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Skills (then the Department of Education and Science). It included seminars and meetings of school staff in clusters of schools, facilitated by a team of national and local coordinators. After the initial phase, a core team of



three trainers and up to 20 parttime facilitators continued to provide training in specific aspects of CSPE. They also worked with new teachers, coordinators, and management personnel in schools.

At present, a team of parttime facilitators operating under the remit of the Professional Development Service for Teachers has responsibility for supporting teacher education in CSPE. The subject has also been to the fore in a number of ancillary initiatives that are relevant to teacher education, such as the North–South Project, Education for Reconciliation, and the European Studies Project.<sup>18</sup> Most universities with education departments have also developed CSPE courses for teacher candidates, generally as options, and some offer postgraduate diplomas in CSPE-related study to enable established teachers to upgrade their skills.

None of the inservice or postgraduate courses offered in CSPE has been mandatory, although many have been accompanied by certification. The anticipated implementation of the leaving-certificate syllabus for politics and society is likely to require significant investment in both initial teacher education and continuing professional development, in order to ensure that schools have personnel who are sufficiently qualified to teach the subject at that level.

CSPE teacher educators, especially the members of the Second-Level Support Service, have been heavily involved in a number of national and international initiatives over the years. Resource packs, online resources, newsletters, and other supports have been developed, with much of the work being coordinated by the Curriculum Development Unit of the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee. The Association of CSPE Teachers has been another important support to teachers. It has held annual conferences on issues such as the development of pedagogy and teaching methodology. Internationally, CSPE trainers have worked on Council of Europe initiatives supporting democracy education in Eastern Europe, and participated in a five-nation conference in cooperation with the Gordon Cook Foundation. Ireland organized this conference as part of its contribution to the European Year of Citizenship in Education in 2005.

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

There are no national examinations at the primary school level in Ireland. As noted above, students sit a multisubject examination called the Junior Certificate after three years of study at lower-secondary level. English, mathematics, CSPE, and Irish are mandatory subjects in this examination, unless a student has an exemption from studying Irish. Other subjects, namely history and geography, are mandatory for students in voluntary secondary schools, while still other subjects are designated as optional, with science and a modern European language being taken, from among other available options, by the vast majority of students. The proposals for change in junior cycle education may impact on the mandatory nature of some subjects. However, this potential outcome has yet to be announced.

In the Junior Certificate Examination, Irish, English, and mathematics are offered at higher, ordinary, and foundation levels (i.e., certified at advanced, medium, and basic levels) to suit students' abilities. All other subjects are offered at higher or ordinary levels, with the exception of CSPE, which is a common-level paper. Examination papers in all subjects may be taken in English or Irish, as schools and students request.

There is no formal assessment associated with the transition year (Grade 10), and schools are free to self-certify the program, or to award external certification in any areas where students have completed externally provided courses, such as in first aid or speech and drama.



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<sup>18</sup> See [www.northsouthproject.com](http://www.northsouthproject.com); [www.reconciliation.ie](http://www.reconciliation.ie); [www.European-studies.org](http://www.European-studies.org)

Assessment in the transition year normally includes debating, public speaking, and portfolio and project work. The national Young Social Innovators initiative is designed to encourage social and civic responsibility and is particularly suited to transition-year students.<sup>19</sup>

The Leaving Certificate Examination is taken at the end of Grade 12. There are no regional variations associated with this examination. However, as noted previously, a modified Leaving Certificate Applied program, taken by approximately six percent of students, is aimed at those seeking to enter the labor force directly. As with assessment at the lower-secondary level, upper-secondary English, Irish, and mathematics are regarded as compulsory subjects, with almost all students taking an additional four subjects. Therefore, it is the norm for students in Ireland to leave secondary education having completed a broad-based education across a larger number of subjects than the number in many other countries. Access to further and higher education is mainly based on performance in the Leaving Certificate Examination, with performance assessed according to a matriculation system that awards points to each student based on the six subjects with the highest grades.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

CSPE is the only civic and citizenship education-related subject currently assessed at national level. As noted previously, formal assessment of CSPE in the Junior Certificate is divided into two components: a coursework component worth 60 percent of the marks, and a written examination worth 40 percent.

To fulfill the coursework component, students are required to undertake a small number of action projects over the three-year junior cycle. The coursework is then assessed using one of two options: a report on an action project (RAP) or a shorter coursework assessment book (CWAB), with the latter taken by just three percent of the cohort (Wilson, 2008). If students are assessed using a RAP, they are asked, in advance of the Junior Certificate Examination, to complete the RAP using a template that enables examiners to assess the degree of personal involvement, learning, and reflection that took place during the project. Students complete the coursework component (RAP or CWAB) under teacher supervision, and the school retains the materials for collection, along with the written examination.

The written examination, of one-and-a-half hours' duration, is a mix of visual and verbal stimulus-driven questions drawn from across the course concepts and units of study. It also requires students to give written answers and to respond to drawing and diagrammatic tasks. The same examiner who views the RAP or CWAB assesses the written paper, and the combined marks from the written paper and the coursework component form the final mark awarded. Students receive their results in grade form. About 90 percent of students are awarded Grade A, B, or C for CSPE, which is higher than the pass rate for other Junior Certificate subjects.

As noted earlier, formal assessment at the national level is under the remit of the State Examination Commission (SEC). It publishes national statistics on the percentages of students achieving different grades in all subjects, including CSPE. At intervals of a few years, the SEC also publishes a chief examiner's report on CSPE, which offers both an outline of how questions are marked and advice for schools on how to approach the examination and the coursework components. The chief examiner's report on the 2009 CSPE examination is available at [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie).



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<sup>19</sup> See [www.youngsocialinnovators.ie](http://www.youngsocialinnovators.ie)

## Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Since 2007, the Department of Education and Skills' inspectorate has included evaluation and reporting on CSPE as part of its work in secondary schools. This evaluation work is carried out in a fashion similar to inspections in other subject areas. When carrying out evaluations, the inspectorate focuses on whole-school provision and support, on planning and preparation, and particularly on teaching and learning. Evaluations involve meetings with principals, subject coordinators, and teachers, as well as classroom visits and scrutiny of documentation and students' state-examination results. After the inspection, the inspector writes a report on CSPE at the school, and this is published on the Department of Education and Skills' website.

The reports originating from CSPE evaluations may, in time, help to form an evidence base from which a composite report on the teaching and learning of CSPE can be written. Individual school reports already feed into the system and offer guidelines on good practice for CSPE departments, should they desire to use them. Inspectorate findings and recommendations are closely aligned to the good practice promoted by the former support service and the Teachers' Professional Network.

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# Italy

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

As of December 2009, the Republic of Italy had a population of over 60,000,000 people, including approximately 4,000,000 immigrants (Italian National Institute of Statistics, 2010). About 83 percent of the population lives in urban areas.<sup>1</sup> The Italian Constitution delineates Italy into 20 regions: Lombardia, Campania, Lazio, Sicilia, Veneto, Piemonte, Emilia-Romagna, Puglia, Toscana, Calabria, Sardegna, Liguria, Marche, Abruzzo, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Trentino-Alto Adige, Umbria, Basilicata, Molise, and Valle d'Aosta. Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sardegna, Sicilia, Trentino-Alto Adige, and Valle d'Aosta are autonomous territories.

The official language is Italian, although three communities have an additional official language: German in Alto Adige, French in Valle d'Aosta, and Slovenian in Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The Italian constitution expressly recognizes them as official languages of instruction.<sup>2</sup>

The Italian National Institute for Statistics (2011) estimates that, as of January 1, 2011, over seven percent of Italy's total population was made up of immigrants. Intake from five countries accounts for approximately half of the total immigrant population, with Romanians representing the largest community (997,000), followed by Albanians (491,000), Moroccans (457,000), Chinese (201,000), and Ukrainians (192,000).

In 2009, Italy's gross domestic product (GDP) was €M1,521.0 (European Commission, 2009), while public expenditure on education in 2008 was approximately 4.6 percent of GDP (Italian National Institute for Statistics, 2011).<sup>3</sup>

### Characteristics of the Political System

Italy is a bicameral (two chambers) parliamentary republic made up of the Senate (*Senato della Repubblica*) and the Chamber of Deputies (*Camera dei Deputati*). Elections take place every five years, with compulsory voting for citizens aged 18 years and over. The head of the republic, the president, represents national unity and is elected for a period of seven years. The president's primary responsibility is to guarantee the Italian constitutional system and to ensure constitutional and political balance (Government of Italy, 1947/2003, Article 83). Power is divided among three bodies: legislative, executive, and judiciary. The legislative function is carried out by the two chambers acting in unison (Article 70). The head of the executive is the prime minister. The prime minister is the president of the Council of Ministers, which assists with executive functions (Articles 92 and 93). The judiciary function in Italy is carried out by independent judges (Article 101).

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1 INVALSI dataprocessing based on data from the Italian National Institute of Statistics. The definition of urban population was derived from Eurostat (European Commission) urban rankings, which considered rural citizens to be people living in cities or towns equal to or below 5,000 inhabitants. See also the Eurostat website: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Urban\\_rankings](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Urban_rankings)

2 The protection of minority languages and cultures is provided by the constitution and Law 482/1999 (Italian Parliament, 1999). Minority languages are Albanian, Catalan, German, Greek, Slovenian, Croatian, French, Franco-Provençal, Occitan, Friulian, Ladin, and Sardinian.

3 Data refer to the year 2008 and concern the aggregate of education and training.



The republic is administratively divided into municipalities, provinces, metropolitan cities, regions, and the state. Municipalities, provinces, metropolitan cities, and regions are autonomous bodies with their own statutes, powers, and functions (Article 114). The division of power among these levels is defined through a list of matters entrusted to the regional legislative authority by the constitution (Article 117).

The Italian Constitution underwent a reform in 2001 that strengthened the degree of autonomy exercised by regions, provinces, and municipalities. Some of the changes also limited government authority over the education system with respect to its operation in autonomous regions, provinces, and municipalities. The state now has legislative powers only over “general rules concerning education” and the “determination of essential levels of services that relate to civil and social rights to be guaranteed throughout the national territory” (Constitutional Law No. 2/2001, Article 3; Government of Italy, 2001). As a result of these changes, regions and the state today have competing authority over education and vocational training.

Civic and citizenship education was influenced by this switch to a federalist model as well as by European and national regulations. Through its education legislation, Italy adopted the recommendation of both the European Parliament and the Council of December 2006 on key competencies, including social and civic competencies, which affected the implementation of civic and citizenship education curricula in Italian schools.

At the national level, the president signed a decree in 2008 underlining the importance of education that promotes a culture of legality and respect for constitutional principles.<sup>4</sup> The decree and subsequent law identified the Italian Constitution as the basis for a national civic and citizenship education curriculum. This initiative was triggered by an increase in bullying in Italian schools and by the government’s aim to develop social competencies and an awareness of individual rights and responsibilities among Italy’s future citizens. As a consequence, “citizenship and constitution” (*Cittadinanza e Costituzione*) was introduced as a new curricular area.<sup>5</sup>

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Traditionally, Italy has had a centralized education system, but this system is currently being radically restructured. Reforms are being developed on the basis of two main principles:

- *Subsidiarity* or administrative decentralization, a change that will affect the teaching and organizational autonomy of educational institutions;
- *Consistency with European guidelines*, aimed at improving the education system from the perspective of lifelong learning.

The education system is divided into the following levels: state, regional, provincial, municipal, and school. Laws introduced since 1997 have profoundly altered the distribution of power between the state and regional authorities. The principal aim of these legislative changes has been decentralization of educational administration. This process has taken account of different stakeholder perspectives (e.g., education, training, labor, and social sphere) and led to considerable ongoing debate on the merits of expanding vocational education and training, modernizing curricula, and defining a valid, nationwide system of skill certification.



4 The Presidential Decree from September 1, 2008 (No. 137) (Italian Parliament, 2008) was enacted into law on October 30, 2008 (No. 169; Government of Italy, 2008a).

5 The school year 2011/2012 was the first year for this new curricular area in schools (see “Civic and Citizenship Education” below for more information).

The School Autonomy Act (Law No. 275/1999; President of the Republic of Italy, 1999) has had a particularly profound impact on the decentralization process. The Act details the powers and responsibilities of the state, the autonomous communities, local government agencies, and schools. Schools now have the pedagogic and organizational autonomy to draft, approve, and execute educational and management plans. Schools can carry out research, trial initiatives, adopt work plans, and organize or extend school timetables under the terms established by public authorities. They have autonomy over school curricula within the boundaries of the national curriculum and over introducing learner-centered approaches that may go beyond those specified in the national curriculum. Furthermore, they can define school times and spaces, bring flexibility to their school timetables, create open classes, and develop a local curriculum that can form up to 15 percent of the total curriculum. At the other end of the spectrum, the national Ministry of Education, University, and Research defines general educational guidelines and learning objectives for each subject, in order to guarantee the unity of the national education system. The law defining system levels is Constitutional Law No. 3/2001 (Government of Italy, 2001).

Vocational regional training systems, however, are the responsibility of regional authorities. The state is responsible for the general organization of the education system, including the legal status of school staff, system evaluation, allocation of financial resources, and hiring of staff. It also plans research institutions and interventions in the higher education system, issues general regulations, evaluates and finances the higher education system, sets requirements for admissions to higher education, coordinates European-based harmonization with and international integration of the higher education system, and manages foreign schools and cultural institutions in Italy (Eurydice, 2010a).

Regions have legislative power over educational matters. Through their scholastic offices (*uffici scolastici regionali*), they control national education and training regulations at the local level and plan the “integrated formative offer” (*offerta formativa integrata*), which is a combination of education and vocational training. The integrated formative offer requires the scholastic offices to organize and supervise school networks on the basis of provincial plans, arrange the school calendar, establish contributions to nonstate schools, and provide vocational training courses and adult education through accredited agencies. The work of the Provincial Educational Office (*Ufficio Scolastico Provinciale*) is mainly administrative (Eurydice, 2010a). At the local level, provinces (in relation to upper-secondary schools) and municipalities (in relation to the lower school levels) have specified responsibilities relating to the establishment, aggregation, merging, and closing down of schools, changes to teaching programs and schedules (for serious and urgent reasons), and the establishment, control, and oversight of school collegial bodies (Eurydice, 2010b).

### Structure of the Education System

Italy’s Constitution establishes that the state must not only provide a state-owned education system but also permit the establishment of nonstate schools, of which there are two types: schools with equal status (*paritarie*) and schools with nonequal status (*non paritarie*, Law 27/2006; Italian Parliament, 2006). Schools with equal status are managed by private or public bodies and are accorded equal status because they meet specific requirements, such as carrying out an educational program that accords with the principles underlying the constitution and relevant legislation, admitting all students who apply, and hiring teaching staff with nationally recognized qualifications (Law 62/2000; Italian Parliament, 2000). Schools with equal status are allowed to issue legally recognized certificates and are part of the national education and training system. Schools without equal status include those that have not requested equal status or do not meet the specific requirements. Because these schools are not allowed to issue officially recognized certificates, they cannot officially be called schools. In 2007/2008,



students enrolled in nonstate schools made up approximately six percent of the entire student population (Eurydice, 2010a).

The Italian education system was reformed in 2003 under the Moratti Act (Law No. 53/2003; Government of Italy, 2003). The innovations introduced by that law and by subsequent regulations (*decreti attuativi* and *regolamenti*) were only the beginning of a long process that has transformed Italy's entire school system, from preprimary through to upper secondary. The reform, which continued from 2008 to 2010, became operative in 2009 for preprimary and lower-secondary schools (Presidential Decree No. 89/2009; President of the Republic of Italy, 2009a), and on September 1, 2010, for upper-secondary schools (Presidential Decrees No. 87, 88, 89/2010; President of the Republic of Italy, 2010a, 2010b).

Compulsory education begins at the age of six and lasts for 10 or 12 years, depending on the study program that each student chooses. Current regulations state that there are three routes to completion of compulsory education: attainment of a regional vocational qualification (at age 16), attainment of a secondary school diploma, and reaching 18 years of age (Ministerial Newsletter 4/2010; Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010a). Preprimary education is not mandatory but is attended by almost all children aged three to six years. Children aged two-and-a-half years may also be admitted. Primary education and lower-secondary education constitute basic compulsory education and are free of charge. Education is structured into two cycles. The first cycle includes primary schools for students aged 6 to 10 (Grades 1 to 5) and lower-secondary schools for students aged 11 to 13 (Grades 6 to 8). The second cycle includes upper-secondary schools for students aged 14 to 18 (Grades 9 to 13).

Preprimary schools (kindergarten, *scuola dell'infanzia*) are characterized by an educational environment in which children have recourse to real-life experiences and engage in experiential learning. The purpose of these schools is to contribute to children's physical, affective, social, and intellectual development and wellbeing (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2007). A subsequent legislative Act described the main purposes of these educational levels, and specifically referenced the education of tomorrow's citizens according to the principles in Italy's Constitution, which is regarded as the primary source of values such as freedom, justice, equality, dignity, solidarity, equal opportunities, and democracy (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2009).

Primary and lower-secondary schools constitute two different education levels, each with its own specificities, even though both belong to the first cycle. Primary school is subdivided into a first year linked to kindergarten, and two two-year periods. Some comprehensive institutes include preprimary schools, primary schools, and lower-secondary schools, all managed by one head of school.<sup>6</sup> Primary schools foster personality development and the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, including those pertaining to information and communication technologies, as well as competency in one European language. All schools are expected to inculcate the fundamental principles of civil coexistence (Eurydice, 2010b).

Lower-secondary schools are, like primary schools, general education institutions, a characteristic which means there is no ability-based selection (tracking) of students into specialized classes. The primary aim is to further develop knowledge and skills conducive to creating balanced personalities and a sense of citizenship. For this reason, lower-secondary schools introduce more detailed disciplinary divisions and specific subjects. Lower-secondary schools also aim to orient students toward the type of educational path best suited to their



6 Article 19 of Decree No. 98/2011, converted into Law No. 111/2011 in July 2011 (President of the Republic of Italy, 2011), established that all preprimary, primary, and lower-secondary schools must become comprehensive institutes, beginning in 2011/2012. This law provided urgent regulations concerning the rationalization and stabilization of public expenditure as a response to the current economic crisis.

abilities and workplace goals. Selecting students for vocational education or other types of secondary schools takes place at the end of lower secondary and after a national examination. Inclusive education is offered to students with special educational needs (Law No. 104/92; Italian Parliament, 1992).

Upper-secondary school (five years) is divided into four school types (Presidential Decrees No. 87, 88, 89/2010; Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010a): lyceums, technical schools, professional schools, and art schools. Lyceums are college-preparatory schools that are divided into two separate periods of two and three years, respectively. The following types of lyceums, each of which offers tuition in specific curriculum areas, can be distinguished:

- *Liceo classico* (classical);
- *Liceo linguistico* (languages);
- *Liceo musicale e coreutico* (music and dance);
- *Liceo scientifico* (science); and
- *Liceo delle scienze umane* (humanities).

All five-year secondary schools provide access to university. Technical schools train technicians in various fields, while professional schools focus more on operative skills. Vocational and professional schools have similar profiles, but vary in administrative control (regional versus state). Technical, professional, and vocational schools all prepare students for occupations, including those in the voluntary and private social services sectors. Ministerial regulations define the organizational structure, educational objectives, teaching, and assessment of secondary schools (Presidential Decrees No. 87, 88, 89/2010; Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010a).

Irrespective of type of secondary school, the purpose of the first two years of all such schools is to ensure that students achieve, by the end of their compulsory schooling, the requisite general knowledge, skills, and competencies. The third and fourth years aim to develop the specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that characterize each school type. During the fifth year, students round out and complete their educational, cultural, and professional profiles.

Italy has several types of school board: the school council, teacher assembly, school evaluation board, and a teacher evaluation board for recently hired teachers (Eurydice, 2010a).

As noted earlier, the most recent reform of Italy's education system commenced during school year 2010/2011. The effects of the interventions that resulted from this reform are still the subject of much debate in Italy. According to the current government, federalism (i.e., greater local autonomy), equity between state and nonstate schools, evaluations of school principals, performance-based teacher pay, and inservice assessment and training are further priorities for educational reform.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Reform of the education system established early on (Government of Italy, 2003) that teaching “the fundamental principles of civil coexistence” is one of the essential aims of education (Article 2, Point 1, Letter f). Successive national guidelines (Decree No. 59/2004 and annexes; Italian Parliament, 2004) have specified structuring the teaching of civic coexistence into six areas of education: citizenship education, road safety education, environmental education, food education, health education, and affective education. These guidelines have never been implemented. In 2007, a new law and new guidelines defined citizenship as a key competency to be acquired by the end of compulsory education (National Agency for the Development of Education, 2007).



In August 2008, an educational bill proposed “citizenship and constitution” as a new subject to be taught at all school levels with a time allocation of 33 hours per year (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2008). The subject is now part of the subject areas history/geography and society/history for all educational cycles (including preprimary school), although Law No. 169/2008 (Government of Italy, 2008a) does not refer to a specific time allocation as initially proposed. The Ministry of Education, University, and Research has begun promoting within-school research that will aid the development of knowledge and competencies related to citizenship and constitution during the first and second educational cycles.

In March 2010, the government passed several decrees aimed at reforming upper-secondary schooling. Under the new curricular guidelines, citizenship and constitution is treated as a crosscurricular topic related to both the historical/geographical and historical/social subject areas in *lyceums*. In technical and vocational secondary schools, it is regarded as a crosscurricular topic related to both the historical/social and scientific/technological subject areas. This crosscurricular emphasis has meant no additional allocation of time to citizenship and constitution as a learning area.

In October 2010, the Ministry of Education, University, and Research issued a specific newsletter on citizenship and constitution (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d). Law No. 169/2008 (Government of Italy, 2008a) and this newsletter together represent the most up-to-date legal framework for citizenship and constitution.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

The crosscurricular dimension of citizenship and constitution emerged from school-monitoring results reported in the ministerial newsletter mentioned directly above. Although this learning area has its own program, schools have interpreted its teaching as a purely crosscurricular activity (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d).

The March 2009 guidelines document (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2009b), which pertained to piloting citizenship and constitution in schools, provided specific pathways for this learning area at all levels of education, as summarized here.

- In *preprimary schools*, teaching should develop specific knowledge about the concepts of family, school, and group; in addition, teaching should foster correct ways to relate to peers, parents, teachers, and other adults, according to their respective roles and to current rules.
- In *primary schools* and within the framework of personality development, teaching should build knowledge of the basics of civil coexistence, with reference to the Italian Constitution (fundamentals of human rights, concepts of social groupings such as family, neighborhood, and local and national communities, the importance of environmental protection, the basics of road safety and health protection, and values commensurate with multiculturalism and respect).
- In *lower-secondary schools*, teaching should be directed toward enhancing students’ knowledge and understanding of the following topics: the rights and duties of citizens, the rights and duties of workers, international laws on human rights, and European institutions.
- In *upper-secondary schools*, teaching should aim at providing students with an indepth study of the constitution through an analysis of current events, a commitment to volunteer work, the promotion of respect for and protection of the environment, the promotion of fair play and positive sporting values, and consideration of road safety regulations.



In 2009, the Ministry of Education, University, and Research invited all school levels to implement the monitoring of innovative strategies for teaching citizenship and constitution. Three major interregional seminars involved school principals, teachers, regional politicians, and the directors of regional scholastic offices and the territorial offices of the National Institute of Documentation for Innovation and Educational Research (ANSAS). In January 2010, ANSAS prepared an online environment for information and training. This service site offers educational and instructional resources for schools, along with a comprehensive learning environment and opportunities for interaction and exchange.

For lower-secondary education, the guideline document of 2009 detailed knowledge objectives and identified a series of concrete situations where students could actually exercise their civic knowledge. Exemplary aspects of knowledge include the universal declaration of human rights; the political and economic organization of the European Union with respect to its constitution; international bodies such as the United Nations, UNESCO, and Amnesty International; and Italy's constitution and institutions. Four domains of development are also highlighted: human dignity, identity and a sense of belonging, social diversity and relationships with others, and social participation. All lower-secondary schools followed these guidelines during the piloting phase of citizenship and constitution, and all followed the same study program because, in Italy, this level of the education system is common to all students and is comprehensive in nature.

### **Civic Activities in Schools**

The aforementioned ministerial newsletter to all schools in 2010/2011 provided examples of activities and practices that schools could employ when teaching citizenship and constitution (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d). It stressed the importance that citizenship education holds for consolidating a civic and citizenship-related social culture among younger generations and with respect to local, regional, national, European, and international contexts: "... this is a goal that must be translated into conscious acceptance of the set of values expressed in our constitution, which inspire attitudes, behaviors, perspectives, languages and daily practices" (p. 3).

Although, as the newsletter explained, citizenship and constitution is conceived of as a learning area that has its own specific contents integrated into the historical/geographical and historical/social areas, it also has a dimension that crosses and interconnects the entire process of teaching and learning. The two approaches to this learning area—integrated and transversal—are not mutually exclusive but are meant to complement and enrich each other in a continuous and constructive dialogue that involves schools and teachers. The specific contents of the historical/geographical and social/historical areas should therefore be integrated with the following specific citizenship and constitution content: Italian constitution, regional statutes, national, European, and international papers (the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Charter of Values, Citizenship and Integration), of the institutions of the republic, as well as the political and economic organization of Europe and international bodies, and with a look at the constitutions of other countries, with a view to broadening students' perspectives and their sense of inclusive citizenship (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d, pp. 3–4).

The newsletter furthermore stated that citizenship competencies should be developed together with all other key competencies and then interconnected with them. It specified transdisciplinary content as that relating to "issues of legality and social cohesion, national and European senses of belonging within the framework of an international and interdependent community, human rights, gender equality, pluralism, respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue, ethics of individual and social responsibility, bioethics, and the protection of artistic and cultural heritage" (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d, p. 4).



The newsletter also stated the need to raise students' awareness of problems related to the above content and of helping them engage in critical evaluation of facts and behaviors, appreciate and practice harmonious resolution of conflict, exhibit environmental awareness and honor the principle of sustainable development, exhibit fair play in sport, strive for social and personal wellbeing, be aware of the need for safety and security in their various guises, especially road safety, and embrace the principles of solidarity, volunteering, and active citizenship.

Within this context, the school is viewed as a privileged place to learn and live together, where rights are recognized and a sense of duty is practiced. It is also a place where students are expected to acquire knowledge and criteria for critically evaluating reality and the principles of law and justice. To this end, educational institutions are expected to create environments conducive to such learning and to the formation of harmonious relationships with others.

Schools, moreover, must strive to understand students' implicit and explicit educational needs and to foster and promote students' active participation in activities such as school councils and student associations. Such participation extends students' practice of citizenship, especially in terms of the principles of democracy. Opportunities for peer learning, along with mentoring of classmates in difficult situations, working cooperatively, learning the art of debate and dialogue, reaching consensus, and exercising shared responsibility are all activities and skills that feed into students' appreciation and practice of civic and citizenship-related principles and behaviors.

Schools are also expected to promote student participation in other active citizenship initiatives, especially those that involve cooperation with community groups, such as local administrative agencies, sport and student associations, judiciary bodies, and the like. Student experiences carried out within the wider community should be those that will strengthen students' active practice of citizenship. School should furthermore have in place open and constructive dialogue with students' families and local community members so that they (the schools) can take the views, ideas, and needs of these people into account when planning the above activities for students.<sup>7</sup>

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic education in Italy was introduced as a curricular subject in 1958 by Aldo Moro, a renowned politician and member of the Constituent Assembly (President of the Republic of Italy, 1958). At that time, civic education was integrated into the history curriculum, and although it was considered to be a separate subject, there were no formal assessments and it was taught for only two hours per month.

The lack of importance given to civic education at this time has had an impact on the subsequent development of the subject within Italian education. Because civic education was not viewed as an autonomous discipline, it continued to be regarded as irrelevant during the next four or so decades (*Speciale Tuttoscuola*, 2008). In 1995, a ministerial commission was set up to integrate the various subject areas of school curricula. As part of this review, a ministerial document from 1996 proposed linking all subject areas to civic education, with the Italian constitution as the common reference point, and also including an international dimension (Amatucci, 2006). The 2000 educational reforms introduced "citizenship education" in line with the 1996 ministerial recommendation, and the new educational law established human rights as a guiding principle for all subject areas. However, the new subject did not come into force because of a change in government (Cerini & Fiorin, 2001). The 2003 Moratti reform referred to the Italian constitution but not to the human rights declaration nor to the international dimension of education. The decree of 2004 finally actualized the 2000 reform



<sup>7</sup> Due to a lack of data, it is not yet possible to determine the extent of student involvement in school governance, or the activities that have been carried out in schools since the newsletter was issued.

by introducing education for civic coexistence, including education for citizenship, road safety, environment, health, food, and affective education (Amatucci, 2006).

Current debate about civic and citizenship education—or, within the Italian context, about citizenship and constitution—continues to focus on the publication of Ministerial Newsletter No. 86/2010 (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d), which was described in the previous section on civic activities in schools. While there is general consensus about the need for civic and citizenship education (citizenship and constitution) to be a new subject in the curriculum, schools say that there is no clear articulation of just what responsibilities teachers have with respect to it. More specifically, they complain about the lack of clarity on how to teach and assess this subject in both the lower and upper levels of the secondary school. They also maintain that the subject has been introduced without reference to research on what sorts of teaching methodologies are best suited to it (Losito, 2009).

According to the popular Italian online journal called *Educazione e Scuola* (Education and School), debate also centers on how to confer a higher status on this “subject” and on how to give it “teeth” within the curriculum. These outcomes, critics argue, cannot be achieved solely through the creation of a new school subject but require the acquisition of a set of knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and values that teachers can impart and students can share with one another and actually practice (Board of School and Education, n. d.). Another agent in this debate is the Center for Teachers’ Democratic Initiative (*Centro Iniziativa Democratica Insegnanti*, 2009). It calls for citizenship competencies to be set out in greater detail. Members of the initiative also state that schools currently place no emphasis on the actual exercise of citizenship in student bodies both within and outside the school walls.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Until 2008, initial training for secondary school teachers was implemented under a program called Specialist Schools for Secondary Education (*Scuola di Specializzazione all’Insegnamento nella Scuola Secondaria* [SSIS]). In order to be admitted to this program, candidates had to complete a degree and pass an entrance examination; participation in SSIS was mandatory. This form of initial teacher training was abolished in 2009, and there has been, until recently, no provision for postdegree training. A new system of initial teacher training was introduced as part of the general reform of the Italian school system. In 2010, the Ministry of Education, University, and Research (2010e) published a regulation on teacher training, under which the organization and implementation of teacher training courses has been entrusted to universities. The fact that teacher training is now under university jurisdiction heightens the appeal of these courses and, as such, provides a new means of attracting individuals to take up a career in teaching or, to put this another way, of recruiting teachers.

The content of the teacher education courses on offer are established along the lines of the groups of subjects (*classi di concorso*) a prospective teacher will teach, and they are divided as follows:

- A five-year degree course, with apprenticeship beginning in the second year, for preservice teachers intending to teach in preprimary and primary schools;
- A five-year degree course followed by one year of apprenticeship for preservice teachers intending to teach in secondary schools.

Initial teacher education is intended to qualify and enhance teaching by equipping preservice teachers with the disciplinary (i.e., subject-based), psycho-pedagogical, methodological, didactical, organizational, and social skills they need in order to promote and improve the



learning of their students. The integral components of teacher education, which preservice teachers may or may not need to acquire during their training because of their prior skills levels, focus on:

- The acquisition of language skills at English Proficiency Level B2 under the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, adopted in 1996 by the Council of Europe (acquisition of these skills, as confirmed through an evaluation, is an essential requirement for achieving certification);
- The acquisition of digital competencies outlined in the *Recommendation of the European Parliament* from the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2006), with a particular focus on skills related to the use of multimedia tools; and
- The acquisition of teaching skills that enable teachers to promote the integration and education of students with disabilities.

Until 2010, inservice teacher training was regulated by Sections 63 to 71 of the current collective national labor contract for schools, which was in force from 2006 to 2009. In line with the recent educational reforms, teacher education is today seen as fundamental for supporting policy changes directed toward ongoing improvement of the teacher workforce and, from there, the overall performance of the education system.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education, University, and Research released new guidelines on inservice training, describing the overall content, subjects, and teaching methods to be implemented at the second cycle of education during 2010 and 2011 (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010c). The plan specified the following priorities:

- Indepth and comprehensive information covering all the innovations introduced by the reform;
- Teacher training geared toward improving student learning outcomes;
- Teacher training geared toward understanding the need for national student assessments; and
- Teacher training focused not only on implementing those parts of the curriculum over which schools can exercise autonomy but also on improving schools' formative assessments.

Within this framework, the National Agency for the Development of School Autonomy (*Agenzia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo dell'Autonomia Scolastica*) has the following duties:

- Providing online information and training;
- Creating plans for interactive communication and an e-newsletter for school staff and other stakeholders interested in the reform; and
- Developing, in collaboration with universities and other stakeholders, plans for establishing training in specific areas indicated by the two national commissions responsible for reform of the second cycle of education.

INVALSI, the National Institute for the Educational Evaluation of Instruction and Training (*Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema di Istruzione e della Formazione*), is responsible, in turn, for developing student-assessment tools and assessment items. These are specified in national proposals, and can also be used in courses designed by individual schools (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010c).



## Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools is taught by teachers of the historical/geographical subject area. Teachers in this subject area only need to satisfy the general requirements to teach in lower-secondary schools, which means they do not need to be certified teachers of civic and citizenship education. There are also no training or certification requirements for teachers of other subject areas related to civic and citizenship education. At present, there are no shortages of teachers of the historical/geographical learning area, which may be promoting the perception that civic and citizenship education is well catered for in terms of teacher acumen.

With regard to teacher training, it is interesting to note that citizenship and constitution is part of a set of different crosscurricular themes (e.g., integrated into science content and safety). Training in these crosscurricular themes is provided by the National Institute of Documentation for Innovation and Educational Research (ANSAS), which offers a comprehensive teaching methodology based on, for example, blended learning and combining online with face-to-face teaching and learning approaches. However, this area of teacher training is not compulsory, which means teachers, both preservice and inservice, can elect to participate in it, or not.

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Classroom teachers at all levels of the education system carry out periodic formative and summative student assessments. The usual practice is for teachers to meet to determine the marks to be given to each student in each subject at the end of each four-month period. These marks are based on students' knowledge and competencies, which are assessed in various ways. Marks range from 1 to 10, and in primary schools are accompanied by a short description of each student's activities and motivation. The marks should ideally take into account the learning process, student behavior, and learning outcomes. These assessments inform families about student progress, received in the form of a report card detailing marks in all subjects (President of the Republic of Italy, 2009b).

Under the current legislation (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010b), there are only two national examinations: one at the end of Grade 8 (which is the end of lower-secondary school), and one at the end of upper-secondary school (Grade 13). Each examination entitles students to receive a certificate of completion for either lower-secondary or upper-secondary education. At the upper-secondary level, students who successfully pass the examination can enter higher education. Students who do not pass these examinations do not obtain certification and need to repeat the corresponding grade level. The examinations differ according to educational level.

- At the lower-secondary level, students are entitled to be examined only if their assessment at the end of Grade 8 from their school teachers is equal to or above the threshold of 6 out of 10 in all subjects. The examination consists of a written test in the national language, mathematics, and a foreign language. Students must also pass an oral examination in all Grade 8 subjects. Both of these examinations are provided by local schools. In addition, students can sit national assessments in the national language (reading and comprehension) and in mathematics (Ministry of Public Instruction, 2008). Teachers combine the outcomes of the written tests and the oral examinations when calculating the average mark each student receives for a subject.
- Students in upper-secondary schools face two national examinations—one for national language and one for an additional subject that is commensurate with the student's program of study (e.g., Latin or Greek for *lyceums*, mathematics for scientific secondary



schools, other technical subjects for technical high schools, and so on). An additional locally developed multidisciplinary examination tests other subjects not covered by the national “additional subject” examination. Finally, the oral examination includes the presentation of a personal thesis. The National Institute for the Educational Evaluation of Instruction and Training (INVALSI) is involved in the upper-secondary school examinations. Its task is to analyze students’ knowledge and competencies on completion of their upper-secondary education. The evaluation consists of a post-examination study of a representative sample of students’ work in both national language and mathematics.

INVALSI’s current structure was established in 2004, and the nature of its work has evolved constantly since then. Its responsibilities include improving educational quality through efficiency evaluations and international comparisons (INVALSI, 2008, 2009, 2010). In addition, INVALSI carries out an annual study of student learning and the factors affecting it. During 2010/2011, INVALSI collected data for all students in Grades 2, 5, 6, 8, and 10 (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010f). The Grade 8 assessment will coincide with the INVALSI evaluation of the national examination results.

INVALSI is also the national center responsible for coordinating Italy’s participation in international studies and comparative assessments conducted by agencies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Most recently, this involvement has included the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2006, 2009, and 2012), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2006 and 2011), the Trends in Mathematics and Science Education Study (TIMSS 2007, 2008, and 2011), the International Civics and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2009), the Second Information Technology in Education Study (SITES 2006), and the Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics (TEDS-M).

### **Assessment and Examinations in Civic and Citizenship Education**

According to the ministerial newsletter discussed earlier in this chapter, civic and citizenship education is not considered an autonomous discipline and therefore is not assessed separately (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d). However, it is included in the overall assessment of the historical/geographical area of learning in lower-secondary schools and in the historical/social area of learning in upper-secondary schools. There are currently no specific guidelines in place for assessing citizenship and constitution. Assessment of this subject area is regulated in the same way as in other subject areas, most notably history and geography and social studies.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

The National Agency for the Development of School Autonomy recently carried out a study that monitored not only the methods that teachers were using to teach citizenship and constitution but also the content of that learning area. The only currently available data are those that were presented in the 2010 ministerial newsletter (Ministry of Education, University, and Research, 2010d). More than 4,000 schools participated in the study, which examined over 3,200 projects. The reason why there were fewer projects than schools is because groups of schools worked together in networks during the research.



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8 For further information, see the National Agency for the Development of Education (*Agenzia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo dell’Autonomia Scolastica*) website: <http://www.indire.it/cittadinanzaecostituzione/>

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# Republic of Korea

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

South Korea, officially recognized as The Republic of Korea and henceforth referred to as Korea, is located in the southern portion of the Korean Peninsula in East Asia. In 2010, the population of Korea was 49,410,000. The total fertility rate dropped to approximately 1.15 persons in 2004 from 1.18 persons in 2003, bringing Korea's fertility rate to the lowest level among member economies of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Kim, 2009).

In 2011, Korean people aged 65 or older made up just over 11 percent of the population. It is estimated that Korea will be an ageing society by 2018, when more than 14 percent of its population will be 65 years of age or older (Lee, 2008).

Koreans have primarily one ethnic root and are recognized as the only people in the world who speak the Korean language. The 5,000-year history and common linguistic heritage of Korea have created a strong sense of homogeneity among its people. However, since the 1990s, there has been a marked inflow of foreign migrant workers and growing numbers of international marriages. As of May 2007, 722,686 foreign nationals were living in Korea, accounting for around two percent of the total population (Statistics Korea, 2011).

In the economic sphere, Korea has, over the last 30 years, recorded spectacular economic growth. Within two or three generations, Korea has developed world-class corporations in shipbuilding, semiconductor manufacturing, electronics, and the automobile industry. A report by the Bank of Korea shows that, as of 2007, per capita income stood at US\$20,045 while the gross domestic product grew by five percent compared to the previous year.

### Characteristics of the Political System

Korea is a presidential republic, consisting of 16 administrative divisions. The political system is republican in form, with the president as the head of state and the prime minister as the head of government. Government powers are shared by the executive, legislature, and judiciary.

Korea's administration system comprises three levels. At the upper level of the structure are seven independent metropolitan cities and nine provinces. The largest metropolitan city is Seoul, which has a population of approximately 10,000,000 people. The lower municipal level consists of district governments under metropolitan cities and county or local governments within provinces. The lowest level of the administrative structure is made up of cities, towns, and townships.

After the Second World War, the division of the Korean Peninsula and the subsequent Korean War shaped the early politics of the Republic of Korea. During the years following the proclamation of the Republic of Korea in August 1948, there were alternating periods of democratic and autocratic rule. At the beginning of the First Republic, government was perhaps democratic but gradually became autocratic until its collapse in 1960. Although the Second Republic was resolutely democratic, it was soon deposed and replaced by an autocratic military regime. With the Sixth Republic, the Republic of Korea attained stability as a liberal democracy.



## Education System

### Overview and Background

Korea has a single-track 6-3-3-4 system, which maintains a single line of school levels to ensure students have fair opportunities to participate in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in accordance with their abilities. This system is intended to provide equal educational opportunities for all citizens, regardless of social background. As an open system, it has expanded opportunities for ordinary people in the country (Lee, 2008).

In 1998, Korea's Education Act was replaced by the Basic Education Act, the Primary and Secondary Education Act, and the Higher Education Act. The Primary and Secondary Education Act covers education issues dealing with preschool, primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary education while the Higher Education Act pertains to matters related to higher education or postsecondary education.

### Structure of the Education System

#### Compulsory Education

Primary and lower-secondary education in Korea is free and compulsory and is viewed as the basic education necessary for coping with and engaging in life. Enrollment in primary and lower-secondary schools is almost universal. The expansion of primary and lower-secondary education can be attributed to Koreans' great zeal for education and to the government's educational policies (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2009).

A sudden increase in the number of students and a rural to urban migration drift prompted the government to create an education tax in 1982 in order to finance the expansion and modernization of school facilities and to improve the socioeconomic status of teachers (Huh, 2009a). As a result, the average number of students per class in elementary school dropped to approximately 41 in 1990 from 52 in 1980. Overcrowded schools were divided into smaller ones, and double-shift schooling was abolished. School-age regulations were revised to allow five-year-olds to begin school when they were judged capable. English, a regular curriculum topic since 1997, is taught for one hour a week to Grades 3 and 4 students, and for two hours a week to Grades 5 and 6 students.

The purpose of middle schools is to provide standard lower-secondary education that builds on the primary education foundation. Since 1969, there have been no quota restrictions on entrance to middle schools. Students attend the school nearest to their residence.

#### National Curriculum for Compulsory Education

As noted above, the Korean education system is a single-track system that includes six years of elementary school, three years of both middle school and high school, and four years of university education. The national curriculum and regional guidelines provide flexibility for schools to operate in a way that reflects their individual character and objectives. The national curriculum is revised regularly; there have been seven revisions since 2000. National curriculum standards provide the basis for educational content and textbook development at each school (Huh, 2009a).

The seventh curriculum, introduced in 1997, was initially implemented in Grades 1 and 2 in 2000 and was gradually extended to Grade 12 by 2004. The new curriculum has attempted to break away from prescriptive approaches to education, and it aims to develop students' capabilities and meet their individual learning needs. The new curriculum has also reduced study loads to a more appropriate level. Independent learning activities have been either introduced or expanded so as to allow for the development of self-directed learning (Huh, 2009b).



The seventh curriculum is, overall, student oriented (Seol, 2005). It consists of the basic common curriculum and the selected curriculum at the upper-secondary school level. It covers 10 years from the first year of primary school through the first year of secondary school. During Grades 11 and 12, students are able to choose their curriculum and courses.

The revised national curriculum was officially implemented in February 2007. It was first introduced in the first and second year of primary school and thereafter implemented throughout the school system. Its most salient features are:

- A reduction of one hour from total weekly teaching hours (except for the first and second years of primary school) and a reduction in discretionary activity time (the reduction was one hour in middle school and three hours in secondary school);
- An increase of one hour each in the time assigned to Korean history and science for the first year of secondary school;
- The addition of optional subjects in the second and third year of secondary school;
- A designation of physical education as an essential subject for the second and third years of secondary school; and
- A division of social studies into social studies and history from the first year of middle school to the first year of secondary school, with history becoming an independent subject (Lee, 2008).

In addition, an intensive curriculum completion system was introduced to middle and secondary schools to expand the scope of school-level curriculum decisionmaking.

### **Noncompulsory Education**

Secondary school education is mainly aimed at providing basic and advanced secondary education by building on middle school education. Secondary schools are categorized into general, vocational, and other secondary schools (foreign language, art, and science secondary schools). The period of study is three years, and students bear the expenses of education at this level. Students are selected into these schools through various methods, such as reference to school activity records and entrance tests (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2009).

General secondary schools provide regular secondary education. Students choose their subjects in the second year of secondary school. Most choices reflect the fields that will allow them to enter postsecondary education. Vocational secondary schools offer general secondary education and specialized courses, including those in the fields of agriculture, industry, commerce, fisheries/maritime, and home economics. The government intends to further develop and support vocational secondary schools.

Institutions of higher education in Korea are divided into seven categories: colleges and universities, industrial universities, universities of education, junior colleges, broadcast and correspondence (distance learning) universities, technical colleges, and other institutions. The duration of education ranges from two to six years. The government sets minimum requirements for universities regarding the student selection process to promote the independence and responsibility of universities, standardize public education, and alleviate the burden on parents of private tutoring costs.

In Korea, lifelong education is defined as all forms of education outside of regular school education. The lifelong education programs offered in Korea are categorized into occupational and technical education, general or liberal education, and a form of education called para-school education. Para-schools are separate from the main school structure in terms of not requiring day-long attendance in an institution. Included here are civic schools, civic secondary schools, industry-attached schools (middle and secondary), evening classes offered at schools



(middle and secondary), broadcast and correspondence (distance learning) secondary schools, accreditation programs for self-study, the Educational Credit Bank System, broadcast and correspondence universities, other distance learning universities, universities attached to companies, and industrial universities (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2008).

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Korea's national curriculum does not provide an official definition of the term civic and citizenship education, but it does suggest that this area of education is one that should be developed through public education (Article 2 of the Fundamentals of Education Act). In this regard, civic and citizenship education is intended to create citizens who can contribute to community development at different levels by solving problems rationally on the basis of knowledge about people and society. The goal is to instill the values and attitudes that are expected of members of a democratic society (Kang, 2008).

Within and outside of schools, civic and citizenship education is carried out in various ways, which include the following:

- As an integrated part of the regular curriculum of subjects such as social studies and moral education;
- As discretionary activities conducted by a unit, school, or teacher;
- As class activities performed by a homeroom teacher and his or her students;
- As club activities involving the participation of students with common interests and tastes; and
- As outdoor activities that involve visiting external institutions or learning centers.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

#### **General Overview**

In Korea, civic and citizenship education is embedded in civic and citizenship education-related subjects rather than taught as a single subject. Although the terms citizen, citizenship, and civic and citizenship education are not specifically used, the content implied by these terms is reflected in some subjects (Kang, 2008).

Of all the curriculum subjects, social studies is the one with the strongest relationship to civic and citizenship education in Korea (Cha & Mo, 2008). Social studies is designed to illuminate what is meant by citizenship and to encourage its cultivation. Social studies curriculum documents and guidelines along with the teachers' manual for this subject emphasize the importance of civic and citizenship education within the social studies learning area. Civic and citizenship education is also affiliated with a subject called "moral education," which covers those aspects of citizenship concerned with values and attitudes (Ministry of Education, 1997a; Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2009a).

#### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

In lower-secondary schools (ISCED 2), social studies and moral education both contribute to civic and citizenship education. In terms of the knowledge domain, social studies covers various characteristics of society, interactions between people and the physical environment, occupational diversity, regional geographical characteristics, and historical tradition. It also covers the cultural uniqueness of Korea, Korean culture and history, the processes contributing to Korea's development, and the cultural characteristics of each historical period. In the functional domain, the subject covers the acquisition, organization, and application of knowledge and information as well as skills relating to exploration, decisionmaking, social



participation, and rational problemsolving. In the domain of values and attitudes, social studies covers democratic attitudes, concerns relating to current social issues, and attitudes toward the development of democracy in Korea and the world (Ministry of Education, 1997b; Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2009b).

In middle schools, the subject of social studies occupies three to four hours per week, and moral education, two hours. The two subjects take up approximately 15 percent of total instructional time at this level of the education system.

Social studies and moral education are differentiated in terms of purpose, content, methods, and evaluation. For example, social studies focuses on developing citizens who are aware of social phenomena and able to make rational decisions, while moral education aims to internalize and develop the values and moral virtues necessary for community life. These two subjects differ from content taught in extracurricular education such as vocational and career education.

However, specific topics in social studies and moral education do reference vocational and career education, and some of what is taught in these subjects and some of what is taught in vocational and career education overlap. However, in general, social studies and moral education deal with these overlapping topics in a relatively broader social and ethical context than does vocational and career education.

According to Cha and Mo (2008), the revised curriculum for social studies presents six learning objectives for students:

- Understand various social phenomena and characteristics in relation to Korea's geography, history, politics, economics, and social system;
- Comprehend the diversity of human life in terms of place and develop a systematic understanding of the geographical characteristics of towns, regions, states, and the world;
- Comprehend Korea's progress in terms of the development of human life and the cultural features of each period of Korea's history and appreciate the uniqueness of the country's historical tradition and culture in terms of how these characteristics manifested in each period;
- Gain a comprehensive knowledge and principles of social life and of political, economic, social, and cultural phenomena and recognize the various problems that need to be solved in today's society;
- Develop the capacity to acquire, analyze, organize, and utilize the knowledge and information necessary for understanding social phenomena and issues and cultivate the capacity for rational problemsolving, decisionmaking, and social participation; and
- Cultivate the attitude needed to democratically manage both individual and community life, develop an interest in social issues, and actively contribute to the development of a democratic nation and world.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The scope of civic and citizenship education-related activities for students in Korean schools is wide, ranging from regular classes at school to activities outside of school. During regular classes, students participate in debates and discussions. They join in club activities underpinned by themes that include universal values or focus on global issues such as the environment, human rights, anti-war initiatives, peace, and welfare. As members of a class or school student council, students participate in making decisions and managing an organization. They may also have opportunities to visit nongovernmental organizations, welfare organizations, and government agencies to seek out information about relevant issues or obtain advice. At times, they may even conduct campaigns in cooperation with these organizations.



The homeroom and student council are the relatively typical situations in which Korean students can take part in decisionmaking processes relating to classroom and school issues. This traditional system still exists, but according to the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (2010), it is neither practical nor effective. Recently, there has been a growing trend for students to convey their opinions by leaving messages or comments on the school website or their teachers' blogs or by sending emails and texts to their teachers. In some cases, school administrators may hold meetings with student representatives. Some schools conduct student surveys to determine matters relating to school trips or school regulations.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Compared to the 1997 curriculum, the 2007 and 2009 national curricula reflect social changes such as multiculturalism and globalization. In the 1997 curriculum, specific terms such as national identity and national culture were mentioned only in the social studies syllabus. However, in the revised curriculum, these words have been deleted or replaced by the term *world development*. In light of the recent conflicts with China and Japan over ancient history, discussion about history education (specifically Korean history and world history) has become more intense. In this context, middle and secondary schools have put together a textbook entitled *History* which includes both Korean history and world history. In addition, compared to the 1997 curriculum, the revised curriculum assigns more hours to history-related classes.

During the late 1990s, one of the significant developments in Korea's civic and citizenship education program was the emergence of and increased attention paid to the term *citizen*. Despite recognizing that social studies aims to cultivate citizenship, those responsible for formulating this area of learning emphasized the term *people* more often than the term *citizen* in its content, textbooks, and teaching. The distinction is an important one: people, as members of a nation, have a legal right to act and make decisions. Citizens, as members of various communities, including a national community, act and make decisions based not only on their legal rights but also on universal values and ethics. This change was reflected in the social studies curriculum that began in 1992, was expanded in the 1997 curriculum, and continued in the 2007 and 2009 curricula.

Currently, there is some debate about the structure and emphasis of civic and citizenship education in the curriculum. Some stakeholders maintain that civic and citizenship perspectives should be more apparent in social studies and moral education. Adherents of this perspective also argue that it is difficult to know what to teach because the core competencies for all subjects are primarily weighted toward function. An alternate viewpoint suggests that the existing subjects should be reorganized to focus on core competencies rather than on subject content. Holders of this viewpoint argue that the existing, segmented curriculum creates problems, such as the repetition or omission of content. Cultivating citizenship, it is believed, should be achieved through functional elements, such as creativity, communication skills, information skills, and problemsolving, and not confined to specific subjects. Although the current curriculum is well established, it does appear likely that more stakeholders will adopt this latter perspective.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

The Primary and Secondary School Education Act defines teachers' classifications and qualifications. Education professionals are classified into teachers, assistant teachers, professional counselors, librarians, training teachers, and health and nutrition teachers. Each category has specific certification requirements set by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. Teacher education is offered by universities of education, colleges of education, departments of education. It is also offered by general colleges and universities that provide teacher certification programs.



Most primary school teachers attend a teacher education program at one of 11 universities of education, including the Department of Primary Education at the Korea National University of Education and Ewha Woman's University. In 1984, all colleges of education were upgraded to four-year universities. Secondary school teachers engage in a mixed system of exclusive and open training systems at colleges of education, national universities of education, teacher education courses at universities, and graduate schools of education. Until 1990, graduates from national universities were hired at middle and secondary schools without having to pass any examinations (Kim, 2009).

Special school teachers, school librarians, and nurse teachers must take a two- or four-year college degree with a relevant major and including teacher education. Teachers training on a parttime basis must satisfy a minimum standard of educational attainment, including a two- or four-year college degree in the relevant field, along with professional training.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

The education of social studies teachers is very similar to the education of general middle and secondary school teachers. However, social studies teachers typically have more diverse educational backgrounds than other teachers, given that social studies itself covers a broad spectrum of issues in terms of content and scope. At present, graduates from the tertiary level of education are eligible to receive a social studies teaching certificate if they have done one of the following:

- Majored in history education, geography education, or social studies at a college of education; or
- Majored in history, geography, politics, economics, sociology, public administration, or law with pedagogy-related credits; or
- Majored in pedagogy and minored in history, geography, politics, economics, sociology, public administration, or law.

The certificate awarded is the same regardless of whether the graduate will teach at a national, public, or private school. In this respect, civic and citizenship education in Korean schools is in the hands of people who have majored in social studies and related topics. These teachers are also licensed as teachers from different sources. Some are people who majored in social studies at a college of education, some are pedagogy majors who minored in social studies at a college of education, others are four-year college graduates who completed a course in teaching, and others again are four-year college graduates who have a Master's degree in education.

## **Assessment and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

In general, examinations take place at the end of a unit of teaching. Teachers use both diagnostic and formative assessments. Summative evaluation is often conducted at the unit level either by the school or the Office of Education. Because Koreans recognize examinations as a crucial factor in deciding students' futures in Korea, examinations place all stakeholders, especially students, parents, and teachers, under great pressure.

The College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) is the most influential test with respect to college entrance in Korea. It is taken by Grade 12 students completing secondary school education, secondary school graduates, and secondary school diploma equivalents. Students answer a series of multiple-choice questions requiring an increasing level of higher-order thinking and application skills. The CSAT consists of five sections: Korean, mathematics, a combination of social studies, science, and vocational training, English as a foreign language, and a second



foreign language, such as Chinese or Japanese. A “listening test,” in which students listen to questions and respond in writing, is included in the Korean and foreign language sections.

The government conducts the National Assessment of Educational Achievement (NAEA) to determine how well students understand what they have learned at school. The assessment, which is carried out in specific grades at primary, middle, and secondary school levels, has been ongoing since the 1960s. The NAEA formerly tested the entire student population, but in 1998, the government changed this approach to a sampling method. It then, in 2008, changed the assessment back to a full-population one. The test consists of Korean language, social studies and moral education, mathematics, science, and English. Since 2010, Grade 11 students, who are in their second year of secondary school, have experienced NAEA testing in Korean, mathematics, and English. The tests cover material from Grades 4 to 6 for Grade 6 students, material from Grades 7 to 9 for Grade 9 students, and Grade 10 material for Grade 11 students.

Education offices administer a National Scholastic Aptitude Test for all secondary school students as preparation for the CSAT. Students must be enrolled in secondary school in order to take this test. Individuals who have already graduated from secondary school and their equivalents are not eligible to take it. Education offices also conduct a diagnostic evaluation for primary and middle school students in March, and an academic ability evaluation in December.

#### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

National-level testing for civic and citizenship education-related subjects is conducted through the CSAT and the NAEA. Since 2010, 11 civic and citizenship education-related topics have been placed in the CSAT’s social studies category. These are ethics, Korean history, Korean modern and contemporary history, world history, Korean geography, world geography, economic geography, law and society, politics, economics, and sociology and anthropology. Students can select up to four out of these 11, and the test itself requires students to answer a series of multiple-choice items. The test references six behavioral domains: understanding concepts and principles, grasping problems, analyzing and interpreting data, designing and implementing research, drawing conclusions and conducting assessments, and value-setting and decisionmaking. Each question falls into one of the six domains, the first and second of which test knowledge and the third and fourth of which stress skills.

The NAEA is taken by students in Grades 6, 9, and 11. Its basic form is similar to that of the CSAT. Social studies had been included in the NAEA since 2009; however, it was omitted for Grade 11 students from school year 2010/2011 on. Social studies is included in the diagnostic and academic ability evaluations led by each education office. Questions are set by individual teachers with a relevant background or cooperatively by several teachers with the same background. The test relating to social studies and moral education takes two forms. One is a written test that has a multiple-choice format similar to that of the CSAT as well as a descriptive essay section. The other is a performance assessment of work involving the writing of reports, role plays, discussions and debates, simulations, and field trips. In general, the ratio of written to performance assessment is 7:3. While the written test is aimed at assessing knowledge, the performance test is used for assessing skills and competencies as well as values and attitudes, and therefore not knowledge alone.

#### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

There is no independent monitoring process for civic and citizenship education-related teaching in social studies and moral education. Because a variety of monitoring methods may be used for all subjects, a variety is also used to manage the quality of civic and citizenship education-related subjects. One of the most common monitoring methods is supervision performed by fellow teachers or school supervisors. This involves opening up each class to



colleagues and supervisors and sharing opinions about classroom teaching. Nowadays, this form of consulting is growing because it is deemed to better reflect teachers' opinions and contexts. Parents' opportunities to observe classes are also growing.

Monitoring of civic and citizenship education-related classes is not specified at the national level or by the Office of Education, but rather at the school level. Regulations vary from school to school and often pertain to the open classroom, as described above. For example, one of the school regulations might specify that an open class must be held at least twice a year, with all subjects available for scrutiny by teachers and parents. Before and after the open class, participants have an opportunity to discuss how to improve classroom activity. All discussions are recorded for information-sharing purposes. Each teacher is expected to try to reflect shared opinions when teaching future classes.

Groups conducting quality control and monitoring of social studies and moral education at the school level include school-based teacher groups, social studies teachers' councils, moral education teachers' councils, and other similar bodies. Secondary school teachers also receive support from outside agencies such as offices of education, college of education-based departments of social studies, and departments of moral education. Primary school teachers are supported by civic and citizenship education-related government agencies, research institutes (notably the Korea Civic Education Institute for Democracy and the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation), parental groups, and teachers' associations, among others. Each group contributes to improving and controlling the quality of civic and citizenship education-related classes by observing and analyzing those classes, reviewing teaching plans, and interviewing teachers responsible for teaching social studies and moral education. With the exception of education offices, most groups have neither legal authority nor obligation. In this regard, they perform partial monitoring in autonomous coordination with individual schools and their teachers.

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# Latvia

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

According to the last published census data, the population of Latvia in 2011 was 2,070,371, 69 percent of whom were living in cities (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2012a). The territory of Latvia is approximately 64,000 square kilometers, and more than half of it is covered by forests. The length of the land border of Latvia is 1,400 kilometers, and the Baltic Sea border runs for 500 kilometers (Jana Seta Map Publishers, 2008). Latvia borders with Estonia, Russia, Belarus, and Lithuania, and it has a sea border with Sweden.

The ethnic composition of Latvia's inhabitants is heterogeneous and includes Latvians (62%), Russians (27%), Byelorussians (3%), Ukrainians (2%), Poles (2%), and Lithuanians (1%) (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2012b). The state language of Latvia is Latvian. Russian is frequently spoken, mainly by Russians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, and other ethnic minorities. The language of instruction in a relatively high number of schools is Russian. Only a few minority schools use Lithuanian, Estonian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Polish, Hebrew, or other languages as the language of instruction.

The gross national product of Latvia in 2010 was €18,125,690.00 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2010).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Latvia became an independent state on November 18, 1918, and was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1941. The Republic of Latvia declared its independence on May 4, 1990, and international recognition of Latvia's independent status began on August 21, 1991. Latvia became a member state of both NATO and the European Union in 2004.

The political system in Latvia is a parliamentary democracy (Freedom House, 2012). The head of the state is the president, and the head of the government is the prime minister. There have been seven parliamentary elections in Latvia since it regained its independence in 1990. The parliament of Latvia, or *Saeima*, is elected once every four years and has 100 members. To be represented in parliament, political parties need the support of at least five percent of the votes. Electoral results are published by the Central Election Commission of Latvia. All citizens who are at least 18 years old on the day of the election have the right to vote (Central Election Commission of Latvia, 2010).

The last parliamentary elections took place on September 17, 2011, with about 59 percent of eligible voters participating. Four party alliances surpassed the five percent threshold (Central Election Commission of Latvia, 2011).



## Education System

### Overview and Background

The education system in Latvia is administered at three levels: national, municipal, and institutional. Parliament (*Saeima*), the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Ministry of Education and Science are the main decisionmaking bodies at the national level. The Ministry of Education and Science is the institution in charge of education policymaking. It issues licenses for opening comprehensive education institutions. It also determines education standards and the content of and procedures for teacher education.

Municipalities make decisions about establishing or closing general comprehensive institutions and are responsible for maintaining schools. The state budget finances teacher salaries, for which municipalities receive financial resources proportional to the number of student numbers in their schools.

The following laws and regulations form the basis of educational policy in Latvia:

- The Law on Education 1998 (defines all types and levels of education and outlines the general principles and competencies of governing bodies);
- The Law on General Education 1999 (stipulates, in detail, the main organizational principles and procedures of general education services);
- Youth Law (2009);
- Law on Vocational Education (1999);
- Law on Institutions of Higher Education (1995); and
- Law on Scientific Activity (2005).

Education policy is also shaped by regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers and by decrees, instructions, and methodology guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education and Science (Ozola, 2007; Ministry of Education and Science, 2006, 2010).

Comprehensive schools in Latvia enjoy a relatively high level of autonomy. The municipalities hire school principals. They, in turn, hire and dismiss teachers, and the school principal together with the members of the school board make decisions about many teaching-related issues.

### Structure of the Education System

Preschool education (ISCED 0) caters for children aged two to seven in Latvia. Attendance is voluntary for children up to four years of age, and is compulsory thereafter as preparation for primary school. Preschool education for children with special needs is implemented by special preschool institutions.

Schooling starts with the basic education program, comprising primary education (ISCED 1) and lower-secondary education (ISCED 2). Children begin basic education when they turn seven. They then continue on in compulsory schooling (Grades 1 to 9) until they reach the age of 16. For some young people, the acquisition of basic education continues until they reach the age of 18. The curricular content of compulsory basic education is determined by the national standards.

At present, several schools in Latvia are participating in a pilot project whereby parents can choose to have their child start school at the age of six. If the results of the pilot project are successful, there will be a transition to basic education beginning at age six.

Latvia offers two kinds of secondary education programs (ISCED 3): general secondary education and vocational secondary education. General secondary education programs (Grades 9 to 12) are academically oriented; their purpose is to prepare students for further studies at the



tertiary level. The purpose of vocational education is to provide students with an opportunity to gain initial qualifications, to develop skills for further professional education, and to obtain the qualifications necessary to continue education at the tertiary level. Vocational educational institutions offer programs in all types of nonacademic occupations. The content is defined by national standards for vocational secondary education and the respective professional standards.

On completing basic education, students can choose from the following two types of vocational programs—the vocational basic education program and vocational secondary education programs. Under the first type of program, students study for three years in order to acquire a *partial* vocational secondary education along with a professional qualification at the second level. Young people who complete the vocational basic education program can start working while still completing their general secondary education.

Students engaged in vocational secondary education programs have to complete four years of study, at the end of which they are certified as having acquired vocational secondary education and a professional qualification at the third level. At this point, young people can start working, or they can continue their studies in higher education institutions. The content of vocational secondary education programs includes enough general subjects to allow graduates to continue their education at the next level.

Several vocational institutions allow young people to acquire professional qualifications after graduating from general secondary school. Qualifications may be acquired in one- or two-year vocational education programs (ISCED 4).

In Latvia, basic education from Grade 1 to Grade 9 is carried out in basic schools. The first six grades comprise primary education, which is typically offered at basic education schools (*pamatskola*). This is followed by three years (Grades 7 to 9) of lower-secondary education. Some secondary schools also offer the whole range of basic education. Other educational institutions that can offer basic education include vocational special education institutions, evening (shift) schools, boarding schools, and remedial (in terms of social and learning remediation) educational institutions.

Secondary schools (*vidusskola*) or gymnasiums (*ģimnāzija*) implement general secondary education programs. However, secondary schools usually implement complete basic education programs (i.e., allowing students to study from Grades 1 to 12). Gymnasiums typically offer general secondary education programs from Grades 10 to 12. Some of them also include the second stage of basic education (lower-secondary education), beginning in Grade 7. Students can furthermore acquire their vocational basic education or vocational secondary education in vocational schools and vocational secondary schools, respectively.

During school year 2011/2012, the general education school system in Latvia consisted of 35 primary schools that offered only the first stage of basic education, 365 basic education schools, 367 secondary education schools or gymnasiums, and 63 special education schools (Ministry of Education and Science, 2011a).

Schools and teachers have the right to determine their own school curricula in the subjects they offer as well as to select the relevant textbooks and materials. However, they are obliged to take the existing national curriculum standards into account.

The general secondary education certificate and the vocational secondary education diploma allow students to advance to a higher level of education (ISCED 5 and then ISCED 6). Higher education in Latvia can be acquired in universities and nonuniversity higher education institutions (Ministry of Education and Science, 2006).



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Official state documents define the aim of citizenship education as providing students with the knowledge and experience necessary for successful participation in civil society (Secretariat to the Minister for Social Integration Affairs, 2005). Standards for basic education and general education state that citizens of the Republic of Latvia require knowledge about its history, its language, and its constitution (*Satversme*).

In order to successfully participate in civic life, citizens need to develop participatory skills, such as acting in the interests of society, engaging in policy formulation at the municipal, national, and/or European levels, participating in public organizations or political parties, and/or engaging in volunteer work (Ministry of Education and Science, 2006). Civic and citizenship education consists of three significant components: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic attitudes.

Civic and citizenship education at school is implemented through three different approaches:

- Direct teaching and learning during classroom lessons;
- Out-of-class activities, such as engagement in school parliaments and civic-related projects; and
- A civic school culture held in common by all school members.

Although these three approaches are different, they are interconnected. Direct teaching related to this learning area can occur in almost any school subject, including political science, social science, history, literature, biology, and geography. It can also occur during interactions between teachers and students. And it is represented in school culture as a way of making decisions and solving problems, as a way of communicating among school managers/administrators, students, teachers, parents, and the larger community, and as a set of values and priorities pertaining to the school community (Irbite, 2008).

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

#### General Overview

The National Standards of Compulsory Education define the key aims of basic education as:

- Supporting personal growth;
- Promoting responsible attitudes and higher moral values with respect to the self, family, other people, the nation, and humanity;
- Laying the groundwork for further education; and
- Ensuring the acquisition of the knowledge and skills necessary for public and personal life (Ministry of Education and Science, 1998).

The social science curriculum states that civic education takes place in different areas of the social sciences: the individual and society; society, state, and power; the social environment; and culture in time and “space” (in the sense of place and human diversity—customs, gender, religion, emotional and psychological wellbeing, etc). In 2005, in order to ensure success and to promote a systematic approach to social science teaching, the government established the subject as a comprehensive school subject for Grades 1 to 9.

Social science promotes understanding of social processes. It increases students’ readiness to make and implement socially responsible decisions in their personal, professional, and public lives. The compulsory content of this subject includes themes related to students’ preparedness to assume social responsibility, to study and interpret social, political, and economic events,



to develop their personalities, and to understand the development of humanity and society (Ministry of Education and Science, 2007).

Other subjects such as history, geography, economics, politics and law, philosophy, cultural studies, ethics, psychology, and home economics also have content that relates to civic and citizenship education (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, 2008). These subjects are delivered as separate subjects during the second stage of basic school (ISCED 2) and during the upper stage of secondary schooling (ISCED 3).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

Students learn about civic and citizenship education in basic school as part of the framework for the thematically integrated subject of social science. Social science content from Grade 1 to Grade 9 covers different themes related to civic and citizenship education as well as aspects related to several academic disciplines: political science and law, sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology, and ethics. It emphasizes the development of civic competence as well as the study of important personal and social issues and problems. The subject furthermore stresses the acquisition of general or integral skills such as learning, decisionmaking, interacting, cooperating, communicating, and participating socially.

Since 2005, student learning in social sciences from Grades 5 to 9 has included the following content.

- In Grade 5, students learn about the culture of mutual relations, personal responsibility, issues related to health, and human interaction with the environment.
- In Grade 6, the subject addresses more complex topics. Students acquire knowledge about rights and duties, environmental issues, participation in society, coexistence with different cultures, professional activities, the role and responsibilities of the state, economic processes, and public goods and services.
- In Grade 7, the subject addresses personality development, mental health, ethics, emotions, sexual and reproductive health, differences among people, prejudices and stereotypes, honor and tolerance, different social roles, conflict resolution, and increasingly detailed knowledge about economics, ethics, and goal-setting.
- In Grade 8, students continue to learn about ethics, ideals, physical and mental health, and career development. They begin to acquire knowledge about new themes related to laws, norms, causal relations, how to act in critical situations, values, municipal functions, economic activity, basic human rights, and Latvia's integration into the European Union.
- In Grade 9, students learn about issues related to health, civic participation in school, municipal and state activities, the environment and its preservation, the role of the state and democracy, laws, the legal system and its importance, commercial activities, and Latvia's role in the world.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Nearly all schools in Latvia offer voluntary out-of-class activities that promote civic and citizenship education. The most common activity in general education and in vocational education institutions, in particular, is the student government, which consists of students representing and defending their collective interests, promoting social life at school, and facilitating teaching and learning. The aim of student government is to coordinate active participation between students and school managers. Student participation may be directed at



educational work, teaching and learning processes, and/or organizing public activities. Students involved in student government have these specific tasks and responsibilities:

- Cooperate with school managers and teachers;
- Represent students' interests when discussing various matters with managers and teachers;
- Help make teaching and learning as effective as possible at their school;
- Participate in improving teaching and learning activities as well as the school's social life;
- Take into account students' suggestions when developing social activity at schools; and
- Work collegially with student governments at other education institutions, along with educational stakeholders in the municipalities, state institutions, and public organizations (*Jaunatnes lietas* [Youth], 2010).

In addition to these activities, students can participate in different youth-interest organizations, including debating groups and nongovernmental organizations. Writing and publishing school newspapers is a particularly popular activity among students.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Since September 2005, the civic and citizenship education component of basic education has been taught within the subject social science, which consists of four parts: ethics, introduction to economics, health education, and civic studies. Given that the subject has only recently been introduced, it continues to attract special attention in teachers' professional development sessions and in different projects related to educational development and improvement. One example of such a project is known as Let's Add Value to Social Science: Promoting Social Integration in the Process of Acquiring Social Science. The project made clear that teachers consider they have sufficient opportunity to participate in education policy planning and development at their schools (Politika.lv, 2005). The main perceived obstacle to implementing high-quality civic and citizenship education is a lack of cooperation and clear communication across the bodies involved in policymaking for this learning area (i.e., the Ministry of Education and Science, regional school boards, research associations, schools, parents, and teachers).

The Education Development Center implemented the project within the framework of the International Civic Education Exchange program (CIVITAS) in 2005 and 2006. The aim of the project was to improve the quality of civic and citizenship education, to promote democracy, and to strengthen civil society in Latvia. During the project, programs such as The Citizen Project, Foundations of Democracy, and The Citizen and Constitution were implemented with regard to different audiences. The Education Development Center also established at this time a support network for civic and citizenship education, which has helped teachers implement and teach civic-related content in their classrooms (Education Development Center, 2006).

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

The Law on Education and cabinet regulations state that teachers must have an appropriate level of higher pedagogical education. This means that teachers must hold at least an education qualification at the Bachelor's level as well as appropriate teacher qualifications (such as the pedagogy of teaching Latvian language and literature or primary education pedagogy).

The law acknowledges different pathways to obtain higher pedagogical qualifications, namely concurrent or integrated paths and consecutive paths. Concurrent or integrated models require candidates to study at a university or another higher educational institution for at least four years within a professional Bachelor's program. The program enables these individuals to master the theoretical and research-based foundations of their subject(s) as well as appropriate



teaching methodology, and knowledge related to the educational sciences and psychology. They also engage in practice teaching. On completing their studies, students are awarded both a Bachelor's degree in teaching and the teaching qualification for their specialty.

Under the consecutive model, students first obtain a Bachelor's degree in a subject area (usually as part of a three-year study program) and then undertake a professional teacher education program or a Master's program for 18 months to two years, during which they learn about pedagogy and the principles of teaching for their particular subject. They also participate in teaching practicums at schools (Kangro, 2004; Kangro & Kangro, 2012).

Bachelor's studies in teacher education and professional Master's programs need to correspond to the established standards for the teaching profession. Licensing and international accreditation processes in Latvia are carried out by the Higher Education Quality Evaluation Center. The requirements for teachers' professional development in Latvia state that teachers must complete at least 36 hours of professional development every three years.

During the 2011/2012 school year, general comprehensive schools in Latvia employed 23,108 teachers, of whom 486 were primary school teachers, 6,359 were basic school teachers, 14,419 were secondary school teachers, and 1,844 were special school teachers (Ministry of Education and Science, 2011b).

#### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Standards for social science teachers determine the duties and tasks required of these teachers. Latvia also has in place occupational standards concerning the working environment, requirements, skills, and knowledge that enable teachers to undertake their professional work. The standards make clear that teachers need strong applied pedagogical knowledge as well as expertise in health education, ethics, civic education, and economics. The standards additionally imply that social science teachers should have a desire to participate socially, understand democracy, and demonstrate tolerance in order to be successful teachers. On an even more specific level, the standards require social science teachers to exhibit these skills:

- Ability to include up-to-date information about civic society and political processes in their teaching and learning content;
- Ability to synthesize information from the different social science fields;
- Ability to analyze social, economic, and political processes;
- Ability to organize a health-promoting school environment; and
- Ability to integrate the topics relating to economics, ethics, health, and civic education into the curriculum (Occupational Standards, 2002).

The requirements for obtaining teacher qualifications for social science and for professional development are the same as for teachers of other subjects.

As mentioned above, the content of civic and citizenship education has been integrated into the social science curriculum since 2005. Four higher education institutions in Latvia offer programs that qualify candidates to teach this subject. The programs include a four-year professional Bachelor's program and a second-level professional study program followed by completion of a Bachelor of Education. Teachers can obtain a qualification as a social science teacher together with a qualification as a teacher of history, history of culture, geography, or another civic-related subject (Higher Education Quality Evaluation Center, 2005).



## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

The state-organized system for assessing students' knowledge and skills in general education in Latvia is divided into centralized examinations and state examinations.

The State Education Center determines the content of both centralized and state examinations. The principal difference between the two is that centralized examinations are carried out by the State Education Center, while assessments for state examinations take place in schools and are conducted by teachers under the school principal's supervision. Consequently, only centralized examinations provide independent assessments of student performance. All students receive certificates indicating their achievement in the centralized examinations. These determine entry to higher education institutions.

State examinations are organized in one subject or several subjects as a combined test at the end of the education level or course. State examinations assess students' knowledge and skills of the content defined in the curriculum of each examinable subject. The content of centralized examinations covers all requirements included in the national standards. Students must pass the compulsory centralized examinations to graduate from secondary school. Students wishing to graduate from the minority education program at the end of basic school (Grade 9) must pass the centralized examination in Latvian language.

The four centralized examinations, which are compulsory for students wanting to graduate from Grade 12, are Latvian language and literature (in written and oral forms for minority education programs and written form only for programs with Latvian as the language of instruction), mathematics (written), one foreign language of the student's choice, and a choice of one out of 10 centralized examination subjects. Examinations for elective subjects are offered by the State Education Center (2010; see also National Educational Research Database, 2010).

Students studying at the basic education level sit the following state examinations and tests:

- *Grade 3:* A statewide test in mathematics, social science, and the language of instruction. This is a single test containing combined learning content for students. However, the results are assessed separately in mathematics, social science, and the language. There is also a state test in the Latvian language for students in the minority education programs (State Education Center, 2010).
- *Grade 6:* A state test in Latvian language and mathematics in education programs with Latvian as the language of instruction, as well as tests in the state language (Latvian) and the minority language in minority education programs. At the beginning of school year 2010/2011, the government introduced a science test for students at this grade level.
- *Grade 9:* In order to graduate from Grade 9, students must pass a written state examination on the history of Latvia and the world, as well as in mathematics. All Grade 9 students take a written and oral examination in Latvian language and a foreign language, irrespective of the language of instruction. Minority students also have to pass the state examination in the language of instruction in the basic education program.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

The themes that relate to civic education are assessed in the first two grades of basic education, but no marks are assigned (only "tested" and "not tested" are reported). In other grades, the assessment is graded on a 10-point scale. Grade 3 students sit a compulsory state test in mathematics, social science, and the language of instruction. Students take state examinations in subjects connected with civic and citizenship education at the end of their basic education and secondary education (Grades 9 and 12, respectively). Grade 9 students also take a compulsory



written state examination on the history of Latvia and the world. In Grade 12, examinations in subjects linked with civic and citizenship education are not assessed in compulsory centralized examinations. However, students can choose a centralized examination in history as one of their four centralized examinations or as a subject for the state examination.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

The State Education Quality Service is responsible for all issues concerning quality-based assessment of education in Latvia. The service acts under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science. The work of this institution includes supervision of the implementation of normative acts in the field of education, the acquisition of information about licensing education programs, the development and implementation of education policy, and the reporting and analysis of this information (State Education Quality Service, 2010). The institution is also responsible for accrediting education programs and schools, as well as quality monitoring of civic and citizenship education.

In Latvia, the significance of civic and citizenship education has been explored in eight different studies since 1999. These studies have examined and analyzed in great detail issues such as the integration of social groups, the development of civic society in Latvia, young people's vision on the development of a civil society, and young people's desire to participate in this process (Osis, 2008).

Since Latvia regained national independence in 1991, researchers from the University of Latvia, with support from the Ministry of Education and Science, have participated in many international comparative educational studies in order to assess the quality of the country's education system within an international context. These include assessments conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), namely the Reading Literacy Study, the Computers in Education Study, the Second Information Technology in Education Study, the Language Education Study, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study. Latvia has also participated in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD's) Programme for International Student Achievement program since its first cycle. With regard to civic and citizenship education, Latvia participated in the IEA Civic Education Study in 1999, and in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study in 2009. Latvia furthermore carried out a national study of educational achievement between 1999 and 2004 (Kangro & James, 2008).

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# Liechtenstein

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## General Background Information<sup>1</sup>

### Demographics and Language

In December 2011, the population of Liechtenstein was 36,476 (Principality of Liechtenstein Statistics Office, 2012). The population is spread across 11 municipalities that cover a total of 160 square kilometers, making Liechtenstein the sixth smallest country in the world in terms of area, and the fourth smallest country in Europe. The population density is around 221 residents per square kilometer, although the settled areas are primarily found on the plain of the Rhine River valley.

About 33 percent of the population is made up of immigrants, primarily from Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. The foreign population is markedly younger than the native-born population of Liechtenstein. This situation is a reflection of the high number of foreign residents who arrive within the employable age range, and who then return to their home countries once they reach retirement age.

The official language is standard High German. The colloquial language is an Alemannic German dialect. High German is both the official language and the teaching language. Children grow up using the Alemannic dialect and then learn High German when they start learning to write.

In 2008, Liechtenstein's gross domestic product (GDP) was €B3.5 (Government Spokesperson's Office & Liechtenstein Mission in Brussels, 2010). The value added by industry and productive trades accounted for 39 percent of GDP in 2008. Financial services accounted for 31 percent, and general services 23 percent. Agriculture and households accounted for the remaining 6 percent. The unemployment rate in Liechtenstein is traditionally very low (1.6% at the end of 2008).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Liechtenstein is a constitutional, hereditary monarchy founded on democratic and parliamentary bases. The current constitution builds on the four principles of monarchy, democracy, the rule of law, and municipal autonomy.

The structure of the state is characterized by dualism of the reigning prince—currently Prince Hans-Adam II—and the people. Neither the monarchic nor the democratic principle dominates. The reigning prince and the people stand at the same level. The people may exercise their rights directly through elections and popular votes. Further rights include the right of initiative and referendum at both the legislative and constitutional levels. Voting for both elections and plebiscites is compulsory for all Liechtenstein citizens over the age of 18 who are residing in the country.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the general background information about Liechtenstein and the structure of its education system is drawn from the report *Organization of the Education System in Liechtenstein 2009/2010*, published by the European Commission (Eurydice, 2010), and from the official web page of Liechtenstein ([www.liechtenstein.li](http://www.liechtenstein.li)). Information about civic and citizenship education in Liechtenstein was drawn from the report *Citizenship Education at School in Europe*, published by the European Commission (Eurydice, 2005). Other relevant sources include the Government Spokesperson's Office (2010a, 2010b, 2010c), and the Government Spokesperson's Office and Liechtenstein Mission in Brussels (2010).



The 25 members of parliament (*Landtag*) are elected directly by the people. The *Landtag* is the legal representative of the citizens of Liechtenstein. Its main function is legislative. In addition to the consent of parliament, new legislation requires the sanction of the reigning prince. Every law passed by the *Landtag* that is not declared urgent, as well as every international treaty, is subject to an optional referendum.

The authority of *Landtag* also includes the right to nominate the government, the appointment of which is undertaken by mutual agreement of the reigning prince and parliament. The government consists of the prime minister and four additional ministers. They are appointed by the reigning prince on the recommendation of parliament. The prime minister has the right of audience with the reigning prince, and he must countersign the laws sanctioned by the reigning prince.

The reigning prince is the head of state. He contributes to the legislative process through his right to initiate government proposals and to sanction legislation, the validity of which depends on such sanctions. He is also authorized to enact princely orders, such as the opening of parliament. By means of emergency decrees, the reigning prince can take urgent measures to ensure the security and welfare of the state without the involvement of parliament, but with the countersignature of the prime minister. The government is appointed by the reigning prince on the proposal of and with the concurrence of parliament. The reigning prince also appoints judges. Together with parliament, he refers to a joint commission for this purpose, which recommends candidates to parliament with the reigning prince's assent. Judges exercise all jurisdictions in the country on behalf of and under obligation to the reigning prince. Likewise, all court judgments are pronounced on behalf of the reigning prince and the people.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Liechtenstein's current education system is based on a series of reforms launched in the middle of the 1980s and implemented in the 1990s, and is subject to regular review. The Constitution of Liechtenstein requires the state to supervise the whole system of education and schooling. National education in Liechtenstein offers a system of general and vocational education for students, trainees, and apprentices, which is unrestricted in terms of entry and is free of charge.

The government of Liechtenstein and the Department of Education supervise the whole education system, provide financial support for the population's education within the country and abroad, and determine the curricula and the accreditation of all educational institutions within the nation's borders. The School Office (*Schulamt*) oversees the education system at preprimary, primary, and secondary levels. It reviews and recommends qualifications for teacher employment, teacher salaries, the level of state investment in the education system, the inspection procedures for public and private schools, and curricula. The authority of the School Office extends to higher education and grants, pedagogy, media, and teaching materials. Oversight for vocational education is given to the Council of Vocational Education (*Berufsbildungsrat*), which is an advisory committee, and to the National Authority of Vocational Education (*Amt für Berufsbildung*) to administer and organize the system (Education Encyclopedia-StateUniversity.com, 2010).

### Structure of the Education System

The general structure of Liechtenstein's education system is strongly influenced by the pedagogical traditions and the school systems of other German-speaking countries. Therefore, the school types and the nomenclature of Liechtenstein's school system are similar to those of these countries, particularly that of Switzerland. However, there are differences between the



systems of Liechtenstein and Switzerland in terms of the development and organization of educational provision.

- *Kindergarten* (ISCED 0): Kindergarten is the traditional form of preschool education for children aged between four and six. Their attendance is both voluntary and free of charge. Attendance is expected of children who are not native German speakers, and then becomes compulsory for such children during the second year of kindergarten, so that these children can learn German before they enter primary school. In practice, 99 percent of all children attend kindergarten.
- *Primary school* (ISCED 1, Grades 1 to 5): Compulsory school attendance starts at age six or seven, when children begin their primary schooling. Primary school caters for all children from Grade 1 to Grade 5. It acquaints students with basic knowledge and skills and prepares them to meet the requirements of secondary school.
- *Lower-secondary school* (ISCED 2, Grades 6 to 9): Liechtenstein has three different independent types of lower-secondary school—the *oberschule*, the *realschule*, and the lower cycle of the *gymnasium* (the grammar school). The aim of lower-secondary schooling is to prepare students for vocational or other higher-education schools.

The *oberschule* is a general education school that offers basic courses serving a wide range of needs. It primarily prepares students for professional life or a possible transition to the next higher school form, the *realschule*. Upon successful completion of the *oberschule*, students enter vocational training or apprenticeships. Students also have the option of attending a voluntary 10th school year. The *realschule* provides a broader and deeper general education by offering expanded courses. It prepares students for professional life or for continued study.

The *gymnasium* (grammar school) is responsible for teaching students to think and to exercise judgments independently and in a more scholarly manner. Grammar school also introduces students to academic study methods and prepares them for university studies. The three years of courses in the lower forms (year levels) of the *gymnasium* aim to provide gifted young students with the best possible learning environment so as to prepare them for study in the upper-secondary level of the *gymnasium* or for other, continued study. The *gymnasium* in Liechtenstein offers a seven-year (long) study program and a four-year (short) study program. The long study program starts after primary school in Grade 6 and leads to the school-leaving certificate after seven years of secondary school—Grade 12. The first three years correspond to lower-secondary school or the lower cycle of the *gymnasium*. Upon successful completion of this lower level, students advance to the upper level.

- *Upper-secondary school* (ISCED 3, Grades 9 or 10 to 12 or 13): Students intending to continue their education at the upper-secondary school level have three options—vocational schools, the upper level of the *gymnasium* (grammar school), and a voluntary 10th school year.

Because Liechtenstein does not have its own vocational schools, it relies on the Swiss vocational training system. Young people who live in Liechtenstein complete their basic vocational training according to Swiss educational regulations. This part of the education system is not part of the compulsory system, and it is designed for the 16- to 20-year-old age group. A student's first vocational training program takes from two to four years to complete, depending on the vocation; practical vocational training takes up to 60 to 80 percent of the total time. Attendance at vocational schools is compulsory.

The upper level of grammar school offers a wide range of subjects and a balanced education that leads to university entrance qualifications. Students can transfer from the *realschule* to the upper level of the *gymnasium* after Grade 8 or 9 if they have a grade-point average of at least 5 (with grade-point 6 being the highest) and if their teachers



and members of the teachers' conference recommend that they move on to this level. Alternatively, they can enter the upper level after passing an entrance examination.

The voluntary 10th school year builds on the last school year of compulsory education (*oberschule* and *realschule*) and is mainly guided by criteria for adult education. Young people at this level commit themselves to independent study under a "school-and-learning agreement." The voluntary 10th school year provides students with more detailed and more differentiated general education, thus preparing them for the transition to vocational schools or other forms of continuing education.

- *Higher forms of education:* Secondary vocational education (ISCED 4) is offered at the *Berufsmittelschule Liechtenstein* (BMS). This school provides students who have completed vocational training with a more extensive general education so that they are ready to take on higher education programs of study. The university segment of Liechtenstein's higher education system includes three smaller institutions—the technical university *Hochschule Liechtenstein*, the university *Internationale Akademie für Philosophie*, and the private university *Universität im Fürstentum Liechtenstein*. The majority of Liechtenstein students who graduate from school with a university entrance certificate study abroad, in either Switzerland or Austria.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

The Constitution of Liechtenstein outlines the state's responsibility to ensure that children acquire ethical, civic, and future-professional education, in cooperation with family, school, and religious institutions. The Schools Act (*Schulgesetz*) of 1971 requires that state schools be responsible for "promoting and striving for the harmonious development of the intellectual, moral and physical powers of the young, and for raising them in accordance with religious principles to be independent, conscientious people able to fulfill the demands of work and of being members of the nation and the state" (*Liechtensteinisches Landesgesetzblatt*, 1972, p. 1).

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

A review of education conducted in 1999 and 2000 led to a new curriculum for compulsory education. The curriculum sets out the most important educational targets and criteria for each level of schooling. It does not include narrowly defined goals or standards of conduct, but rather a hierarchy of objectives and key qualifications. Schools and teachers use these to formulate more detailed learning outcomes.

During compulsory education (ISCED 1 and 2), citizenship education (*liechtensteinische staatskunde*) is included in a subject known as "realities" (*realien-, lebenskunde*), which introduces students to the rights of the state and its citizens. This subject forms part of the subject area "humanity and environment," which deals not only with the rights but also the obligations of the state and its citizens.

The syllabus for realities covers biological, chemical, physical, historical, and geographical topics. The general study topics contained in the overall school curriculum indicate which areas of learning need to reflect civic principles. These areas are listed as mutual dependence, imagery and perception, diversity and justice, conflicts and conflict resolution, and change and the future. For example, it is stated under diversity and justice that "differences are always with us at a global, local and individual level and raise the question of balance ... Every form of society, and especially democracy, thrives on the ability of people to attune their different needs and be increasingly sensitive to injustices" (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2005, p. 10). This study topic, linked as it is to subject areas such as humanity and environment, covers



homeland and other nationalities, my world, your world, our world, wealth and poverty, and industrialization. A subject called “Liechtenstein national studies” aims to help students assume responsibility in society and acquire a positive mindset toward the state.

In lower-secondary schools (*oberschule* and *hauptschule*), the following educational objectives are of particular importance: fundamental terms of civic and citizenship education, the constitution and its origins, significant national institutions, rights and duties of citizens, awareness of politics, forming opinions, cooperating with others, and knowledge of the history of Liechtenstein and its constitution (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2005). Generally, the grammar schools (*gymnasia*) provide a more academic form of education than other lower-secondary schools. However, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, during their first three years in grammar school (ISCED 2), students are taught the rights of the state and the citizen as part of the subject called realities.

During the four subsequent years of schooling (ISCED 3), the grammar schools offer the following options: German, second languages, art, music, and educational sciences, economics and law, and mathematics and natural sciences. However, each option includes history as a basic subject, which emphasizes the rights of the state and the citizen. The following is stated in the curriculum document under the heading Importance of This Subject: “In history classes, students gain insights into the constitution of the state and the rights and duties of every citizen. Furthermore, history teaching refers to the possibility of social and political participation and promotes independent behavior and social engagement, which are directed toward basic human values” (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2007, p. 94). In the subject “economics and law,” emphasis is placed on business studies and law, which deal with the Liechtenstein legal system and general legal matters.

The guiding principles of the curriculum, which are based on the notion of strengthening the individual, embody the basic aims of citizenship. Thus, under the heading Society and School, it is stated that “the school has the task both of strengthening adolescents in their individuality and of helping them become able members of society. Schools share this task with the family and other institutions” (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2005, p. 2).

The text under the heading Freedom and Responsibility reads: “... the school supports children and young people in the development of their consciousness in the area of rules and freedoms. It helps them by observing freedom on the one hand, and acting responsibly toward society on the other. It identifies the conditions under which children and young people cooperate responsibly to structure the world they live in and thereby enables them to experience democratic coexistence” (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2005, p. 3).

The principle and practice of a process in Liechtenstein schools called networking is an important aspect of civic and citizenship education. Networking, which is developed through tuition, embraces the entire curriculum and it works to expand school-based perspectives beyond the core tasks of schooling, which are, in themselves, reflections of society. Networked learning is characterized by openness toward the key questions facing any society, and it promotes recognition of possible ways of dealing with interrelated problem areas and the fulfillment of self-responsibility.

Emphasis is placed above all in the curriculum on the aspect called the individual and society. Included in this area are topics such as the economy and ecology, culture and politics, and the media and communication technologies. These areas relate to society as a whole at national, international, and global levels. The curriculum explicitly states that recognizing oneself as an individual in a global society is a precondition of any responsible behavior. People, the curriculum document continues, must be able to appreciate and function within a community in a way that reflects their understanding that while they are affected by their social environment



and are dependent upon it, they also influence it in the way in which they live. In this respect, subjects such as history and geography, as taught at school, constitute an ideal initiation to the topic of the individual and society. This is because they provide students with insights into the origins of statehood and enable them to see the state and their role within it as something more than just a system of regulations and laws. In a small country such as Liechtenstein, there are also opportunities to experience the state as an entity that is much more than the system just mentioned.

### Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in School

In Liechtenstein, students' participation in community life at school is fostered in several ways:

- *Through daily life at school:* At all levels of schooling, students are obliged to comply with school rules. However, a distinction can be drawn between school regulations laid down by order and that are legally binding, and school rules or house rules imposed by individual schools or classes. While these rules are generally not very strict, they reinforce awareness of the need to fulfill duties. Teachers are asked to ensure that students are mindful of house or classroom rules, and they have the right to penalize students in cases of noncompliance. Most teachers in Liechtenstein agree that such rules are an important means of making young people aware of the need to exercise responsibilities and to meet obligations. However, students are also made aware that they have rights as well as duties, and that they can assert them. According to teacher reports, an introduction at school into the legal basis of democracy is viewed as an ideal way of enabling children and young people to understand how to handle such concepts and to put them into practice (Ospelt-Geiger, 2003).
- *Through school-based participatory initiatives involving students:* Students at the secondary levels of schooling (ISCED 2 and 3) have considerably more opportunity to engage in school decisionmaking processes than do students in the earlier school years. Students' right, at these higher levels, to elect class representatives gives them first-hand experience of democratic elections and thereby facilitates their understanding of democratic processes. Class representatives act as spokespeople for the class by representing students' ideas and concerns to teachers. As a result, students learn how to resolve conflicts, seek compromises, formulate their own concerns, and enforce rules in order to achieve success.

Liechtenstein grammar schools have a statutory student council that also includes a school speaker. The council has a maximum of nine students, who between them represent all school levels to the greatest extent possible. In addition, each student in a grammar school (*gymnasium*) is entitled to join school-based student groups to carry out tasks that they have identified, such as forming discussion groups, promoting international contacts through various means of correspondence, and supporting charitable organizations.

- *Through school-based participatory initiatives involving parents:* Parents play an important role in Liechtenstein schools in terms of supporting schools' efforts to teach students about rights and duties. Parents' role in this regard is clearly defined both in law and the curriculum. For example, there is a statutory obligation on "schools and parents [to] ... work together in educating and bringing up students. Teachers have to nurture personal contacts with their students' parents and give them guidance concerning behavior, diligence and effort. ... The relations between school and the home are to be nurtured through discussion, parents' evenings, parents' days, school open days and invitations to special school events." (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2005, p. 20) Nearly every school in Liechtenstein has a parents' association, set up in order to intensify collaboration with the school and to enable parents to make proposals to the school on matters that concern them. In this respect, provisions are laid down outlining parents' rights at all school levels.



- *Through school participation in society:* Students also learn to assume responsibility in society through a wide range of different projects appropriate to various school levels. For example, students from time to time go into the forest to collect rubbish in return for money to pay for school excursions. A recent civic project has been a state-organized anti-smoking campaign designed to get whole classes not to smoke for a month. The project was given impetus by having students exert peer pressure on their classmates to give up smoking altogether.

### Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education

In Liechtenstein, there is no ongoing debate on the rights of the state and the citizen, or rights and duties in general. However, the government is convinced that much greater importance should be attached to these matters, especially now that the question of national identity is increasingly subject to scrutiny as a result of the extensive changes occurring beyond the country's borders. There is also awareness that determining how best to teach and resource this area is an extremely demanding activity.

Members of the teaching profession agree that the new curriculum for compulsory education could be used to develop greater understanding of the political system as well as personal value systems concerned with the common good (Ospelt-Geiger, 2003).

### Teachers and Teacher Education

#### Teacher Education in General

Teachers in Liechtenstein are typically educated at tertiary institutions in Switzerland (Brandt et al., 2011; Lehmann, Criblez, Guldemann, Fuchs, & Périsset-Bagnoud, 2006).

- *Preschool and primary school teachers* (ISCED 0 and 1): Currently, Swiss universities offering teacher education provide a total of 27 study programs for the preparation of teachers at the preschool and primary school levels. Teacher education lasts three years and qualifies new teachers to teach all subjects in the primary school curriculum. The subject portfolio for teacher education includes the following subjects: German, foreign languages, mathematics, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, history, geography, biology and physics, religious studies and ethics, design, music, and sport.
- *Lower-secondary school teachers* (ISCED 2): Teacher education for lower-secondary schools lasts five years and involves a mastery of three to five subjects. Teachers at this level therefore teach multiple subjects, but they usually choose between a language/history-oriented cluster and a mathematics/science-oriented cluster during their teacher training.
- *Upper-secondary school teachers* (ISCED 3): Teachers in *gymnasia* (the upper-secondary grammar schools) have a university qualification and specialize in one or two specific subjects.

#### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Teachers in Liechtenstein who teach national studies specialize during their teacher education in subjects related to civic and citizenship education. They also, during their teacher education, have to prepare material about the rights of the state and its citizens. However, the curricular content is based on the corresponding rights in Switzerland, which in many respects are similar to those of Liechtenstein. Despite this, applicants for teaching posts in Liechtenstein are still required to participate in inservice training activities related to the history and applied geography of Liechtenstein, and teachers working at all levels of the education system are required by law to write and pass an examination on topics related to these disciplines before they can be appointed to a permanent teaching position.



National studies at the secondary level are taught using the book *Sovereign and People (Fürst und Volk)*, which is a compulsory text in all lower-secondary schools. The content of the book ranges from the history of the nation of Liechtenstein to the country's legal foundation and its state constitution. This teaching material is also available online (School Office of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 1987). An additional textbook, used in economics and law, relates directly to the Principality of Liechtenstein and deals with the country's legal system.

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

At the primary level, student evaluation is based on the cumulative and predictive assessment of students. Cumulative evaluation uses learning or comprehension checks to assess the level of student achievement on individual subjects. These learning checks are oriented toward each subject's learning objectives, which are detailed in curriculum documents. Teachers are essentially free to choose the checks and the teaching methods they consider best suited to their students' learning needs.

Meetings with parents form an essential part of the student evaluation system and occur twice a year. During these meetings, parents receive information about the achievement levels and learning gains of their children.

At the secondary level, assessment is an intrinsic part of lesson design and is structured in a way that helps students achieve their learning objectives. Student reports give an account of student performance, learning, work habits, and behaviors. At the end of the term, class teachers are responsible for giving all students in their classes signed reports. Scholastic performance in each subject is graded along a range that extends from 6 to 1, where 6 represents an excellent standard and 1 represents a very weak standard. At this level of schooling, teachers can choose both the type of performance test and teaching methods they prefer to use, as long as they follow the curriculum mandates.

Although schools are largely self-governing, albeit within the boundaries of statutes and national curricula, they are still required to give an account of their performance. Internal evaluation takes place at two levels. At the school level, it is incorporated into the development of the school as part of *jahresplanung* (the yearly plan). When developing the plan, the school determines how it will report the results of its evaluation (set against the objectives of the school plan) to educational authorities (the supervisory school authority in the case of secondary schools and the local authority school council in the case of primary schools), as well as to parents and the general public. All members of the school teaching staff—the teacher team (*lehrerteam*)—are responsible for the school-level internal evaluation. At the personal level, school managers and teachers can elect whether or not to engage in an evaluation of their own performance, even though doing so is recommended. This form of evaluation typically involves self-reflection, or evaluation against items and criteria on “reflection sheets.” School staff can also elect to share their self-evaluations with trusted others.

External evaluation takes two forms. The first involves the supervisory school authority stipulating the topics and methods of evaluation after consulting with the school. Teachers are also evaluated at specified intervals by inspectors, who enter classrooms and observe lessons and also interview staff. The catalogue of inspection criteria includes the following:

- *Student activities*: For example, students have opportunity to set themselves independent tasks within a specific framework and to engage successfully in those tasks;
- *Academically conducive climate*: For example, the teacher takes into account his or her students' individuality, activities, and ideas, and uses this knowledge in his or her teaching;



- *Leadership*: For example, the teacher takes individual students seriously and treats them fairly;
- *Motivation*: For example, the teacher takes up ideas expressed by students and develops them further;
- *Conflicts*: For example, the teacher primarily seeks solutions consistent with democratic rules; and
- *Roles*: For example, the teacher is nonpartisan in his or her teaching.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

The assessment of and examinations in subjects related to civic and citizenship education take place as described above. There are no specific assessments and examinations for civic and citizenship education.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Liechtenstein has no specific procedure or organization for monitoring the quality of the teaching and learning of civic and citizenship education. Monitoring of this area of learning is part of the general oversight and evaluation of educational provision conducted by the key state authorities responsible for education: the Liechtenstein government, the Department of Education, and the School Office.

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# Luxembourg

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## General Background Information<sup>1</sup>

### Demographics and Language

In 2010, the population of Luxembourg was 502,066 with an annual growth rate of two percent and a population density of just over 194 persons per square kilometer. Luxembourgers formed approximately 63 percent of the population of Luxembourg, which also hosts a significant community of foreigners, namely Portuguese at 13 percent, French at 5 percent, Italians at 4 percent, Germans at 2 percent, other European origins at 7 percent, and others at 5 percent (Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2010a). The life expectancy in Luxembourg in 2010 was approximately 79 years (Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2010b).

Luxembourg is one of the few countries where several languages are spoken and written in the territory and in different areas of life. Luxembourg has three official languages by law. The first, Luxembourgish, which has its origins in Franconian German from the Mosel region and has strong French influences, is the main language of everyday communication among Luxembourgers. French and German are the two other official languages of the country. French is the more widely spoken of the two, and is also the language of administration in Luxembourg. English is widely spoken in the financial sector (Kennedy, Mullis, Martin, & Trong, 2007).

The labor force consists of 348,700 people, 146,300 of whom commute from neighboring countries. The unemployment rate in 2009 was six percent (up from about five percent in 2006).

The economy in Luxembourg in 2008 showed a gross domestic product (GDP) of €B36.7. The annual growth rate in 2009 was negative four percent, down from about seven percent in 2007. Luxembourg is a stable, high-income economy, benefiting from its proximity to France, Belgium, and Germany. Compared to other European countries, Luxembourg has historically featured solid growth rates, low inflation, and low unemployment. The industrial sector, initially dominated by steel, has become increasingly diversified to include chemicals, rubber, and other products. Growth in the financial sector, which now accounts for about 28 percent of the GDP, has more than compensated for the decline of the steel industry (U.S. Department of State, 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> More general information about Luxembourg and the structure of its education system were drawn from information contained in the encyclopedia published by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) for another international study, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), in 2006. This information was then updated where appropriate. The information concerning developments in civic and citizenship education in Luxembourg was drawn exclusively from Luxembourg's Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training.



### Characteristics of the Political System

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has been a sovereign and independent state since the Treaty of London was signed on April 19, 1839. The country is a parliamentary democracy in the form of a constitutional monarchy, and is, in fact, the only Grand Duchy in the world. The crown is handed down through the House of Nassau.

The legislative power resides jointly in the parliament (*Chambre des Députés*), the government, and the Council of State. Each entity serves a wholly separate function. Parliament is made up of 60 members (MPs). Its primary function is to vote on bills. Members of parliament also possess the right of parliamentary initiative, which is exercised by tabling private bills. The parliamentary committee for controlling budget implementation (which is chaired by an opposition MP), the Audit Court, and the Ombudsman are all bodies assisting parliament in exercising its right to inspect the administration of the state. The Council of State is composed of 21 councilors. State councilors are formally appointed and dismissed by the Grand Duke following their nomination by the government, parliament, or the Council of State.

The Grand Duke is the head of state. His inviolable status means that he cannot be charged or prosecuted. The Grand Duke enjoys complete political immunity; political responsibility lies with the ministers. Any measure taken by the Grand Duke in the exercise of his constitutional powers must be countersigned by a member of the government, which assumes full responsibility for that undertaking. In addition, any legislative document signed by the Grand Duke must have been submitted for prior consideration to the cabinet.

The 60 members of parliament are elected through national elections held every five years. If parliament is dissolved, new elections have to be held within three months of its dissolution. Elections are direct and by secret ballot. Members of parliament are elected on the basis of a mixed one-person-one-vote suffrage (where voters can vote for individual candidates) and a party-list system with proportional representation (where voters can vote for party lists). Voting is compulsory for voters on the electoral registers. According to electoral legislation, sanctions include fines and imprisonment, but none has ever been imposed. Any Luxembourg citizen who satisfies the legal conditions is entitled to participate in the elections. Under these conditions, a person must be a Luxembourg national, at least 18 years of age, and enjoy civic and political rights. The latter means that he or she has never been convicted of a criminal offence. To stand for election, a person must be at least 18 years old, be domiciled in the Grand Duchy, and satisfy the same conditions as those applicable to voters.

The office of an MP is incompatible with the duties of government members, judges, and members of the Council of State. There are four electoral constituencies: the southern constituency (the cantons of Esch-sur-Alzette and Capellen) with 23 members, the central constituency (the cantons of Luxembourg and Mersch) with 21 members, the northern constituency (the cantons of Diekirch, Redange, Wiltz, Clervaux, and Vianden) with nine members, and the eastern constituency (the cantons of Grevenmacher, Remich, and Echternach) with seven members.

There are no provinces or departments in the Grand Duchy. The only political subdivision of the country is the commune, which is a legal entity. It manages its assets and raises taxes through local representatives, overseen by the central authority represented by the Ministry of the Interior. At present, there are 118 communes, but the government has stated a preference to combine smaller communes with larger ones. Each commune has a communal council directly elected for a six-year term by those inhabitants of the commune who are entitled to vote. The day-to-day management of the commune corresponds to the mayor or the municipal council, bodies emanating from the communal council. In principle, elections are held according to a relative majority system. However, if the number of inhabitants exceeds 3,000, elections are



held by party list with proportional representation, as in general elections. Acting through the government, the Grand Duke may dissolve the communal council, in which case elections are called within three months of its dissolution (Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2010).

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Luxembourg's school system is centralized, and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training is responsible for the curricular content. At the preschool and primary school levels, inspectors employed by the ministry monitor schools in terms of educational competence. Budget and staffing issues are mainly dealt with by local authorities and the ministry. At the secondary level, the state government is directly responsible for all educational and financial matters.

### Structure of the Education System

The majority of institutions in preprimary and primary education are publicly owned; less than one percent of students are enrolled in private schools. These private institutions are usually controlled by nongovernmental bodies, but follow the national curriculum and receive public funding. Independent private schools in Luxembourg include the European School and international schools. These schools follow their own curriculum, which, in the case of some international schools, originates in specific countries. Some residents who live close to the border or who are not satisfied with the schools in Luxembourg prefer to send their children to schools in neighboring countries (Kennedy et al., 2007).

In September 2009, basic education in Luxembourg experienced a major reform, based on a needed adaption to student needs. The two special features of schools in Luxembourg—the multilingual tradition and the high proportion of students from immigrant families—continue to be an exceptional source of educational wealth, but at the same time a huge challenge for the education system. Educational politics must be firmly focused on efficiency while promoting equal opportunities for students and meeting the needs of an increasingly mixed school population. Another directive for national education is that of substantially reducing the number of early school-leavers. A further major challenge is addressing the strong association between educational success and social status.

National education in Luxembourg therefore continues to concentrate on improving the consistency, effectiveness, and fairness of the education system. This policy has resulted in education based on the acquisition of skills, aimed at moving Luxembourg schools away from a knowledge-based type of education toward a skill-based education. Core competencies are meant to be achieved by each student at varying stages of their education (European Commission, 2011).

Elementary school (*école fondamentale*) must provide every child with the necessary tools for success. In order to achieve this, teaching methods and content are targeted at the needs of each student. Both methods and content take a practical approach to developing students' knowledge-based skills and encouraging team work. This approach relies on high levels of professionalism among teachers. Elementary school welcomes children from 3 to 11 years of age. It consists of nine years of schooling over four cycles of learning. The first year, pre-elementary education, begins with an optional year of public nursery education (*éducation précoce*, Cycle 1) for three-year-old children.



Preschool education (*éducation préscolaire*, Cycle 1), for all children between the ages of four and six, marks the beginning of compulsory education in Luxembourg. The number of children enrolled has remained constant over recent years, with 9,966 children attending preschool education in the 2008 school year. The preprimary curriculum in preprimary education puts emphasis on physical, musical, and artistic activities and the development of children's mathematical-logic and linguistic skills. Children are also introduced to topics relating to nature and the environment.

Preschool education plays an important role in the national education system and is considered to provide a first opportunity to develop children's social and affective behavior and communication skills. It starts at age three and is compulsory for all four-year-old children. Particular focus is given to the children's linguistic, physical, and social development in order to prepare them for entry into primary education. The goal of preprimary education is to develop children's personality, social integration, and basic skills, thereby preparing them for learning reading, writing, arithmetic, and geometry. A further goal is the early identification of learning disabilities. Preprimary schooling is conducted by professional teaching staff.

Subjects in elementary education include languages (i.e., Luxembourgish, German, and French), mathematics, natural and social sciences, art, music, physical education, and religious or moral education. The elementary education system also includes special education classes for students with learning difficulties. The number of students enrolled in primary education rose slightly during recent years, from 31,751 students in 2002 to 32,274 students in 2008 in 152 schools. The proportion of students in special classes was less than one percent.

Of the two branches of secondary education—general secondary education (*enseignement secondaire*) and technical secondary education (*enseignement secondaire technique*)—a total of 12,469 students attended the former while 24,323 attended the latter during the 2008/2009 school year. General secondary education is divided into junior grades (three years) and upper grades (four years). In the last three years, students choose one of seven priority subjects, which include languages, mathematics, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, and art. On successfully completing the upper grades, students have access to studies at universities and technical colleges. At the end of school year 2008/2009, 1,263 students received general school-leaving certificates.

Technical secondary education consists of lower, middle, and upper grades and lasts between six and eight years, depending on the educational pathway (*régime scolaire*) that each student chooses. Middle and upper grades are divided into practical vocational training (*régime professionnel*) and specialist technical training (*régime technique*), as well as technician's training (*régime de technicien*). All three courses provide training for a technical specialization. Practical vocational tuition takes place parallel to, or in rotation with, practical onsite training at training centers. All other courses of training involve fulltime schooling. Practical vocational courses end after the lower-secondary grades with a final examination, while specialist technical training and technician's training include upper-secondary grades and qualify those who successfully complete their courses to study at a university or technical college. At the end of school year 2008/2009, 1,241 students received the technical school-leaving certificate (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2008a).

The curriculum is defined at the national level, but schools may adapt their teaching according to their needs within the framework of the national curriculum. Currently, a reform of secondary school education is under consideration. The reform will address changes in teaching, learning and assessment, school leadership, and school autonomy.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Adhering to the premise that promoting free and responsible citizenship of future adults is an important goal of any education system, Luxembourg requires civic and citizenship education to be taught within all its schools. Luxembourg maintains that while educating for citizenship should be taught through schools, it also stresses that it should be taught in conjunction with all school partners. The aim of this partnership is to prepare young people to become adults who are able to exercise responsibility concerning political, social, economic, and ecological values, with reference to democracy and human rights. To this end, schools and their respective offers of training have adjusted to the requirements of a modern democracy based on participation, initiative, and critical debate. There is no national definition of civic and citizenship education in Luxembourg. However, the Grand Duchy recognizes all the definitions for this learning area issued by the Council of Europe and the European Commission as valid and uses them as a basis for civic and citizenship education.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

The field of development and learning known as “community life and values” is a particular focus of the civic and citizenship learning area in elementary school (Cycle 1). Many elements are replicated in other areas, including the field called “language, language awareness, and Luxembourg languages” and the domain “discovering the world through the senses.” There are no content descriptors specific to this area of learning (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2010).

While the first three years of elementary school (Cycle 1) focus on the theme of community life and values, the learning area for the next two years is guided by the following concepts: perception of the world, understanding the world, participating in the world, and reflecting on the world. The lessons are taught twice a week for every school year in elementary school.

By the end of their secondary education, students are expected to have met the following objectives:

- Gained an overview of the functioning of political institutions in Luxembourg and Europe;
- Achieved an understanding of the political, social, and economic status of Luxembourg and of Europe; and
- Achieved understanding of the complexities of the political world and how it operates.

These topics are meant to promote reflection and critical thinking among students in order to prepare them to take on their responsibilities as citizens. Students visit political institutions, learn the technical vocabulary of the legal and administrative world, work on authentic documents, and develop skills of cooperation and teamwork through group activities.

The secondary school *née lycée* is currently the site of a pilot project that consists of a single lesson on values education (*éducation aux valeurs*). In 2012, the Vocational Training Division of the Ministry of Education introduced a new subject in Grade 10 called “education for citizenship” (*éducation à la citoyenneté*). In addition, a subject called “civic instruction” aims to give students of the upper years of general secondary education a notion of citizenship. This is also the case in technical secondary education, where the subjects “knowledge of the modern world” (*connaissance du monde contemporain*), “moral and social development” (*formation morale et sociale*), and “religious and moral education” (*instruction religieuse et morale*) provide students with understanding of citizenship and human rights (Ministry of Educational and Vocational Training, 2008c).



### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

In order to promote democratic life in schools, student participation in school-level decisions is encouraged through committees that defend students' interests as well as through educational advisories (*conseils d'éducation*), and through the student charter (*charte scolaire*).

Depending on student age, school activities related to civic and citizenship education incorporate many different aspects, including human behavior, traditional celebrations, nature and society, community participation, concept and opinion analyses, children's rights, different cultures, religions and ideologies, and the future.

During their secondary education, students have the opportunity to visit several areas of political interest, for example the palace or the commune. Students are also encouraged to prepare and submit a document or a report that is based on a legal or administrative theme. This kind of activity may account for half of their grade for this area of learning.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

During school year 2010/2011, the government introduced a new textbook titled *Civic Education (Education Civique)* into technical secondary classes. A special edition marking the 60th anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights has also been recently published. Another booklet, used in elementary schools and titled *Peace Education (Education à la Paix)*, focuses on human rights and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007). A further publication, used by students in the middle and upper levels of secondary schools, commemorates the Holocaust and raises awareness of crimes against humanity. The text is called *Day in Commemoration of the Holocaust and for the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity 2009 (Journée de la Mémoire de l'Holocauste et de la Prévention des Crimes contre L'Humanité 2009)*; Ministry of Educational and Vocational Training, 2009b). A day dedicated to this commemoration is organized annually. Another publication, released in 2012, is *Teaching and Learning Democracy (Demokratie Lehren und Lernen)*. It incorporates descriptions of democracy as practiced in schools through, for example, engagement in student parliaments.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

A preprimary or primary school teacher has usually completed three years of postsecondary studies in the field of educational sciences. More recent generations of teachers have studied in this field for four years before entering teaching service. Nearly half of all students who wish to become primary school teachers study at the University of Luxembourg. Initial teacher education in Luxembourg is, as a whole, both an academic study program and a professional training course. Admission requirements include a diploma in secondary education with qualifying marks as well as proven language skills in Luxembourgish, German, and French, which are assessed by an entry examination.

Studies follow a comprehensive approach and begin with courses in education theory, psychology, and didactics. Subject-specific courses are introduced in the second half of the program of study. All students take part in practical preservice training and also pursue studies abroad. The degree of Bachelor of Educational Sciences is conferred on successful completion of training. Some students prefer to acquire a qualification in primary teaching at a university abroad. Until recently, Luxembourg recognized foreign diplomas from certain universities in Belgium, France, Germany, and Austria. In these cases, students followed the foreign curriculum and finished their studies with the national diploma, for example, the national degree examination from German universities or the primary teacher's diploma from French universities (Kennedy et al., 2007). Today, the only foreign such qualifications recognized are those covering kindergarten and primary school.



On completion of studies in Luxembourg or abroad, prospective elementary school teachers must pass a national examination in order to become fully certified pre-elementary or elementary teachers. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training determines the examination's content, which includes language skills in Luxembourgish, German, and French, competence in the teaching of mathematics, languages, and sciences, as well as knowledge of the national curriculum and national legal regulations relating to schools.

In Luxembourg, teaching in secondary schools is mainly conducted by teachers who are public servants. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training recruits teachers for the postelementary division. The Government in Council determines, on an annual basis, the number of recruits needed. The minister determines the distribution of vacancies for various careers and specializations according to the specific needs of individual schools and technical colleges. Applicants for these positions must have a Bachelor's degree or a Master's degree. They must also take an examination in order to comply with admission regulations, which have been adapted to the Bologna process. Furthermore, applicants must have taken part in a two-year training internship.

Candidates for secondary teaching positions must comply with the following admission requirements: be a national of a member state of the European Union, enjoy civil and political rights, have a suitable personality, fulfill the physical and psychological conditions required for the position, and have adequate knowledge of the three administrative languages (German, French, and Luxembourg) (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2009a).

All forms of inservice education fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. Projects focus either on the development of specific professional skills or on innovative projects in primary schools. Training courses are held throughout the year, and the content and number of courses are determined following consultations between schools, school inspectors, national program committees, and teacher associations. Participation in continuing education always leads to the acquisition of a certificate, and some inservice training also leads to higher degrees. Further sources of inservice education are courses held by school inspectors. These courses, which are mandatory for teaching staff, deal with current issues and provide various types of professional development.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

There are no teachers specifically trained to teach civic and citizenship education and no specific credentials. However, most teachers providing civic and citizenship lessons have a history or philosophy degree.

## **Assessment and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Luxembourg has no program of national examinations during elementary education until the end of Grade 6, when all students take part in a national assessment designed to gauge their aptitude for postprimary education. This procedure was introduced in 1996 and replaced the former entrance examination for secondary education. Students' abilities in German, French, and mathematics are evaluated through the use of standardized assessments. The final recommendation is based on these results but also takes final Grade 6 marks into consideration. The final recommendation is issued by a committee that is headed by the local school inspector and includes the class teacher, two postprimary teachers, and a psychologist, who may provide an opinion at parents' request. Parents can appeal the recommendation if they disagree with the committee's decision.



Standardized tests of ability in German and French are conducted in elementary and secondary schools. In Grade 3, these tests assess students' educational development, while tests in Grades 6 and 9 determine the students' intended further education. German language tests focus on core aspects of the curriculum by examining reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing ability, grammar, and vocabulary. These tests also assess students' learning outcomes in terms of determining their skills levels and whether they have attained educational standards. The tests are based on a constructivist understanding of the reading process whereby the student is required to independently derive information from a text and to link this to prior knowledge in order to construct meaning regarding the structure and content of the text. A wide variety of texts and contents, based on theories about reading and text appreciation, are used in assessments. These texts range in scope from literary to factual texts and from continuous to noncontinuous texts. The texts are then put at the disposal of the class teacher and are used by a majority of teachers. All test instruments are produced by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. No commercial tests are used.

In all subjects and subject groups, students are assessed through regular tests of learning progress and students' work. Most of the tests are paper-and-pencil ones. Regular tests that accompany lessons give teachers an indication of their students' current level of knowledge and also of the effectiveness of the teaching methods being used. Periodic tests are more comprehensive, covering longer phases of learning and producing a conclusive survey of learning progress.

Assessments are both qualitative (in the form of written reports by the teacher) and quantitative (through a points rating system). A points scale from 60 (very good performance) to 1 (unsatisfactory performance) applies to all school subjects. A student must receive a minimum of 30 points for their performance to be judged satisfactory. The test results for each student and subject are documented in a report (notebook) that is shown to students and parents three times each school year. In addition to this practice, teachers are obliged to regularly consult with parents. These performance reports are collated in a term report and serve as the basis of teacher decisions about whether a student can proceed to the next grade.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

In elementary schools, subjects related to this learning area are not marked at the end of each term with a test. Instead, competence in civic and citizenship-related learning is evaluated through how well students carry out relevant activities. Student reports also detail students' achievement in this learning area.

In secondary schools, each student receives a grade at the end of each term (i.e., three times a year) for his or her civic and citizenship work. Half of this grade may be accounted for by an assessment of the student's work on an individual or group civic and citizenship-related project. The knowledge tested is based on the curriculum and relates to identifying the legal and administrative structures of Luxembourg and Europe and understanding Luxembourg's history.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

In 2008, a study was conducted with students toward the end of their secondary schooling, at which time most students reach 18 years of age and are therefore eligible to vote. The study, conducted by Faber and Boll (2010) and known as Sustainable Development from the Perspective of Young People (*Nachhaltige Entwicklung aus der Sicht von Jugendlichen*), explored students' general knowledge of and interest in sustainable development in various areas, such as their political involvement. It also described their concerns and fears regarding these matters and to what extent they felt they could contribute to making a difference. Other questions focused on their knowledge and their expectations for future schooling.



The results revealed a high interest in environmental issues and a lower interest in political issues. Over one-third of students did not think that their opinion mattered in politics. Political interest was even lower among students in technical secondary education than in general secondary education, and there was less interest among girls than among boys. Positive attitudes toward sustainable behavior and political engagement were, overall, weak. A small proportion, just under one-third, of students reported having participated in a petition or demonstration. The proportion of students with regular exposure to a group campaigning for sustainable development was even smaller.

These results suggest that Luxembourg students' knowledge and understanding about their involvement in political aspects is relatively low, and that their sense of self-efficacy regarding such commitments could be increased. In general, the study results indicate that students wished to have more interactions with political agents, more visits to political institutions, and more projects (Faber & Boll, 2010).

Primary education is based on a formal document called a study plan (*plan d'étude*), which includes a relational attitude component. This is used as a guide for monitoring the quality of civic and citizenship education. The National Curricular Commission (*Commission Nationale des Programmes*), in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, is responsible for ensuring the quality of civic learning at the level of secondary education.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has also established an Agency for Quality Development in Schools (*Agence pour le Développement de la Qualité Scolaire*). Its role is to support schools in implementing the school development plan within primary and secondary education.

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# Malta

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Data from the November 2005 census show that native Maltese make up the majority of the population of the Maltese Islands. However, there are several minority groups, the largest of which comprises British people, many of whom have retired to Malta. The resident population of Malta at the end of 2009 (based on projections from the 2005 census and including foreigners residing in Malta for at least a year) was estimated to be 414,372, split almost evenly between males and females. Of this population, approximately 15 percent were aged 14 and under, 70 percent were aged 15 to 64, and the remaining 15 percent were 65 years and over. The population of the Maltese Islands is projected to reach 424,000 by 2025.

The Maltese language, or *il-Malti*, is the constitutional national language of Malta. However, both Maltese and English are official languages. According to the *Eurobarometer* (European Commission, 2006), 100 percent of the indigenous population speaks Maltese. In addition, 88 percent of the population speaks English, 66 percent speaks Italian, and 17 percent speaks French.

In 2011, Malta's average gross domestic product (GDP) per inhabitant, calculated on a formula that eliminates price disparities between European Union (EU) member states, stood at 83 percent of the EU average. This percentage was one percentage point above the percentages for 2009 and 2010 (Eurostat, 2011, 2012a, 2012b). In 2010, Malta's GDP per capita (in PPP) was \$25,600 (IndexMundi, 2010).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Malta is a republic whose parliamentary system and public administration are closely modeled on the Westminster system. The unicameral House of Representatives (*Kamra tad-Deputati*) is elected by direct universal suffrage every five years, unless the house is dissolved earlier by the president on the advice of the prime minister.

The House of Representatives is made up of 65 members of parliament. The Constitution of Malta provides that the president appoints the prime minister as the member of the House of Representatives who is best able to command a governing majority in the house.

The president of Malta is appointed for a five-year term by a resolution of the House of Representatives, carried by a simple majority. The role of the president as head of state is largely ceremonial. The main political parties are the Nationalist Party, which is a Christian democratic party, and the Labour Party, which is a social democratic party.

There is no regional administrative level. The local level is made up of councils, first established in 1993, that are elected every four years. The Maltese Islands now have 68 local councils (54 in Malta and 14 in Gozo), each of which is administered according to the authority and power delegated to it. Each local council, elected by the residents of the locality, is a statutory government authority with a distinct legal personality. The number of councilors in each council depends on the number of inhabitants within the locality. Local councils are not responsible for providing education within their respective localities.



## Education System

### General Overview and Background

State education in Malta is administered at the national level. Malta's Education Act is the primary legal instrument covering the provision of education. It gives the minister responsible for education the power to set regulations through subsidiary legislation.

Compulsory education in Malta lasts 11 years. Children are admitted into the first year of primary education in October if they will be five years old by the end of December of that year. Primary schooling has been compulsory since 1946; secondary education for all was introduced in 1970. In 1974, the compulsory school-leaving age was raised from 14 to 16 years. The University of Malta, which can trace its origins to the 16th century, is the main tertiary education institution. Since 1971, students studying toward their first degree have not had to pay tuition fees.

Education is offered through three different providers. During the 2010/2011 school year, about 61 percent of the students attending preschool through to the end of compulsory education, were attending state schools, 28 percent were attending church schools, and the remaining 11 percent were attending independent private schools. The state and the church provide education free of charge (European Commission, 2012a). Students attending a church school may be requested to contribute an annual donation to fund school projects. Students attending independent schools are charged tuition fees. The parents of these students receive a tax rebate on the fees paid (Cutajar, 2007).

Malta is moving toward decentralizing the state education system in order to delegate more authority, initiative, and entrepreneurship to colleges and schools. State schools are organized into networks of schools, incorporating a number of primary schools and at least two secondary schools that receive students from these primary schools. Each network forms a college of schools. There are 10 such colleges. While retaining their individual identity and character, the schools within each network are coordinated by the college principal. School heads within the network form a Council of Heads. Colleges provide a continuous education program to students, that is, from kindergarten level right up to the end of secondary education. This structure promotes pooling and sharing of ideas, experiences, good practice, resources, services, and facilities.

In parallel with the decentralization process, Malta's former Education Division has been restructured into two education directorates with the objective of separating the standard functions (setting curricula and monitoring and evaluating schools) from the operational functions. The division has been split into two distinct entities—the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) and the Directorate for Educational Services (DES). The DQSE, whose responsibilities are evident in its name, functions as a central national policymaker and regulator for the whole educational network up to the end of compulsory education and for both the state and nonstate sectors. The DES coordinates the operation of all state and some nonstate educational services and schools, and fulfills the role of a support and services resource center.

### Structure of the Education System

#### Preprimary Education

Preprimary education caters for children from two years and nine months of age through to five years of age. Although attendance at the preprimary level is voluntary, provisional figures emerging from the 2011 Population and Housing Census indicate that slightly under 100 percent of four-year-olds were enrolled at this level of education in 2010. Preprimary education is coeducational and is provided free in state and church schools. Prior to children reaching kindergarten age, parents may elect to send their children to child daycare centers. This service is provided either by the private sector or through public/private partnerships. Families



who need this service but cannot afford it can apply, on a means-tested basis, to have their children's attendance fully funded. Most kindergarten centers are part of primary schools and are comprised of two classes called Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2 (European Commission, 2010b).

### **Compulsory Education**

Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 and 16. Children learn Maltese and English throughout this period of their education. Compulsory education consists of three phases: a six-year primary cycle (for students 5 to 10 years of age), a three-year lower-secondary cycle (for students from 11 to 14 years of age), and a two-year cycle for students aged 15 to 16.

The Maltese Government is committed to a policy of inclusion throughout all cycles. Of all students in compulsory education, only 0.3 percent of those with special education needs attend school in segregated settings (European Commission, 2009).

Primary education, from Years 1 to 6, is coeducational and is provided in primary schools, which are found in practically all localities. Neither state nor church schools charge fees. The school year starts on the fourth Monday of September and finishes at the end of June. The first two years of primary schooling act as a continuation of the two-year kindergarten period. Teachers adopt a pedagogy that develops knowledge, skills, and attitudes deriving from concrete experiences.

The NMC implemented in primary schools has the following main educational objectives:

- Teaching students a repertoire of skills, particularly by enabling them to explore knowledge domains and to use information technology to do so;
- Strengthening students' personal and social education;
- Developing and enhancing students' skills, knowledge, and attitudes with respect to the basic subjects of the curriculum;
- Fulfilling the principle of education for diversity;
- Linking summative and formative assessment;
- Implementing a policy of Maltese and English bilingualism;
- Facilitating learning about religion; and
- Providing educative programs for parents.

The NMC lists the following basic subjects at primary level: Maltese, English, mathematics, religion, social studies, personal and social development, physical education and sport, science and technology, and creative expression. Media education is often integrated into other subjects and the daily life of the class.

### **Secondary and Postsecondary Education**

Students typically enter secondary school at 11 years of age and continue on at least until the end of compulsory education, which for most students is at age 16. Secondary education, made up of a lower- and an upper-secondary cycle, and which is quite separate from primary education, provides a general education in single-sex schools. The school year and times of the school day are the same as those of primary education. There are no prevocational or vocational education paths.

School grades are called forms, with Form 1 being the first year of secondary education. At the end of Form 2, students choose two subjects as core curriculum options. These generally lead to a particular study path for each student that he or she follows during the last three years of secondary education. A pilot project that began in 2011 is offering vocational subjects as core curriculum options. Throughout secondary education, all students learn at least one modern foreign language. Assessment includes both formative and summative approaches.



The specific NMC objectives for students during their secondary education include the following:

- Strengthening and refining the skills developed at primary level;
- Developing the necessary confidence and independence to acquire and process information on their own or in groups;
- Making productive use of information technology;
- Identifying and planning their learning needs;
- Evaluating the results of their educational choices;
- Strengthening personal and social education;
- Reaching advanced levels of critical reflection;
- Continuing the process of recognition and affirmation of personal identity;
- Successfully facing up to the challenges of the contemporary world; and
- Strengthening their emotional education.

The current NMC covering preprimary and compulsory education has been in place since 2000. In 2008, Malta launched an extensive review of the curriculum in order to assess whether it reflected the changes taking place both nationally and internationally. Another aim was to determine what changes would be necessary to ensure the curriculum could respond to the current and future needs of Maltese society with respect to national, European, and international dimensions. The review resulted in the development of a national curriculum framework (NCF), which was launched in May 2011 and underwent a national consultative process that continued until the end of December 2011.

Upper-secondary noncompulsory education encompasses the 16 to 18 years and over age range. Admission to upper-secondary noncompulsory education institutions is subject to specific entry requirements. This phase covers both general and vocational education. Courses at this level are offered on a fulltime basis. However, some school-based vocational courses are available on a parttime or an apprenticeship basis.

Students intending to study at the upper-secondary noncompulsory education level can follow either an academic or a vocational course, administered by the University of Malta or one of the other upper-secondary institutions administered by the state, the church, or independent institutions. However, vocational courses can also be followed at either the Malta College of Arts, Science, and Technology or the Institution of Tourism Studies. These organizations provide courses up to first degree level (Level 6 of Malta's qualifications framework).

The general aim of the academic strand of upper-secondary noncompulsory education is to prepare students for admission into university or for the world of work. The general objectives of the vocational strand of upper-secondary education are more job-oriented, with course structure and content focusing on skills specific to particular jobs, again in preparation for employment. However, the tendency is to provide a wider approach to knowledge, competencies, and skills in view of the fact that employees may change careers a number of times throughout their lives and therefore need to be flexible and multifunctional. Entrepreneurship can also play a very important role in a successful career path.

The main body accrediting courses and certifying qualifications is the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC). Established in 2005, the MQC develops the national qualifications framework for lifelong learning and oversees the certification of qualifications not covered by compulsory education or degree-awarding bodies. The MQC also ensures that the national qualifications framework aligns with the European qualifications framework.



The MQC furthermore guarantees that certified standards are comparable to those in other countries. The national qualifications framework accordingly focuses on learning outcomes related to the attainment of knowledge, skills, and competencies, and it includes diverse forms of qualifications. The council is currently strengthening its efforts to validate nonformal and informal education by ensuring these providers offer accredited formal, higher, and further education programs. Realization of this aim includes licensing providers of further education and setting up structures that recognize nonformal and informal learning accrued through previous work experience.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

At the school and classroom level, citizenship education is addressed as a special-focus topic in social studies, history, geography, European studies, and personal and social education, and it is crosscurricular in approach. This area of learning is particularly evident when schools commemorate specific events such as Holocaust Day and World Poverty Day or participate in projects such as the World Children’s Prize for the Rights of the Child and Amnesty International’s Junior Urgent Action. The Curriculum Management and eLearning Department, one of the departments within the DQSE, invites schools and colleges to organize activities related to world remembrance days. All schools (both primary and secondary) have student councils, as required by law.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

One of the 14 aims of the NMC is to develop citizens who are comfortable within a democratic environment and thus know how to both participate in and contribute to it. The curriculum promotes such objectives as procuring knowledge about democratic institutions at the local and international levels, developing social skills and civic competencies, and learning about societal values. The main intention behind this orientation is to help students develop into independent young people who have the flexibility to live and work successfully in a changing world.

This type of citizenship education provides a theoretical framework and a relevant basis for school programs of study in civic education. The “National Curriculum is in fact a Framework Curriculum. It stipulates what is educationally necessary for a person to grow up cherishing such values as democracy and solidarity” (Ministry of Education, Youth, and Employment, 2005, p. 24).

Although Malta does not have a specific subject area called civic and citizenship education, or similar, elements of this learning area feature in the social studies curriculum at the primary level. Personal and social development (PSD) and religion are also compulsory learning domains at this level. Social studies is a compulsory subject for all primary school children. The national qualifications framework consultation document proposed that the revised curriculum contain a learning area (rather than a subject) known as citizenship education.

At the secondary level, all students have one social studies lesson per week. Religion and PSD are also compulsory at this level for all students. Social studies and religion are examinable subjects, but PSD is not. The former two subject areas are also examinable at the end of Form 5, when students take their Secondary Education Certificate examinations.



### Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools

As noted earlier, students at all levels of schooling in Cyprus participate in student councils.

A current proposal with respect to primary, secondary, and upper-secondary noncompulsory education is to create democratic citizenship schools, where the focus is on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education (EDC and HRE), implemented in accordance with the following principles:

- Exploration of rights and responsibilities;
- Whole-school involvement;
- Community engagement; and
- The promotion of student councils in schools.

Implementation and development of EDC and HRE also rest on providing both primary and secondary school children with active learning experiences within and beyond the school. The aim is to help students think about, discuss, and find out more about what it is to be a citizen today. Students are also encouraged to connect with society in a way which enables them to feel that they are citizens in their own right, with rights and responsibilities and the ability to make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of others. Activities and projects encompass the following:

- *The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Malta Outreach program*: Operational in schools for the past seven or so years, the program includes talks by refugees, artistic workshops about human rights, role plays designed to give students an appreciation of individuals' needs and fears, and visits to a local mosque. The aim of the project is to allow students to interact with people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and to recognize such differences as strengths rather than barriers. Students are also able to experience aspects of African culture.
- *Special assemblies in schools*: Assemblies give children opportunity to reflect on famous personalities, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, who have contributed to eliminating racism and fostering human rights.
- *The commemoration of memorial, world, and international days as a whole-school and also as a crosscurricular event*: Events that are commemorated include Human Rights Day, International Day of Tolerance, World Children's Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, and World Peace Day.
- *The World Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child Exercise in Global Voting*: Every year, teachers and students in both primary and secondary schools join the largest global annual children's educational program based on democracy, global friendship, and the rights of the child.
- *Global Action Schools*: This initiative is a unique partnership of seven organizations working within schools across Austria, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic, and Thailand. Through sustainable development education, students move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development through to understanding the causes and effects of global issues, and finally to becoming personally involved and taking informed action.
- *Global Education Week*: This event is celebrated during the third week of November, at which time students and teachers are encouraged to explore educational activities related to global citizenship. Global Education Week is seen as a way of addressing issues of diversity and inequality at the local as well as at the global level and of gaining an understanding of the core issues of global citizenship.



- *Inclusion and Diversity in Education:* This program, run in collaboration with national and regional educational authorities from nine EU member states, aims to promote social cohesion and raise educational standards in culturally inclusive schools. The program also develops new projects and practices directed toward managing inclusion and diversity in schools. These initiatives are based on a European Youth Charter drawn up by students and designed to give them a voice and a stake in this critical issue. These activities bring together students, school heads, and policymakers, who collaboratively respond to these challenges and build lasting networks.
- *Connecting Classrooms:* The basis of this program is building partnerships between groups of schools in the United Kingdom and in many other countries around the world. It aims to achieve culturally inclusive schools by developing understanding and trust between young people in different societies, and thereby creating a safer and more connected world for the future.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

In 1984, civic and citizenship education topics were included in the social studies syllabus throughout compulsory education. In 1987, the social studies examination at Secondary Education Certificate level included civic and citizenship education elements such as the exercise of authority and governance. During the 1980s, the education officer for social studies began to coordinate with UNESCO to gain assistance in implementing human rights education in Malta. During the 1990s, Malta consolidated its human rights education and peace education program and adopted November 17 as a national day of peace and nonviolence.

Since 1998, Malta's education directorates have participated in conferences and workshops on global education coordinated by the Council of Europe and the North–South Centre. In 2000, global and developmental education was consolidated through Malta's participation in European seminars and workshops and its engagement in Global Education Week. Another initiative that is still ongoing (it began in 1999) is the province of the professional development section within the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department. It organizes Council of Europe conferences and seminars on topics related to heritage education, gender issues, global education, and intercultural education. Between 2003 and 2008, Malta had an education officer for democracy and values education, and in 2005 it appointed a department head for citizenship and values education.

As part of the current review of the national minimum curriculum, the government has issued a consultation document called *Towards a Quality Education for All: The National Curriculum Framework 2011*. One of the proposals currently being discussed is that of making citizenship education one of eight core learning areas of the curriculum. Under this proposal, citizenship education in the primary years will include history, geography, social studies, environmental education, and aspects of personal, social, and health education. It will also include home economics. It is anticipated that by following a thematic approach and engaging in investigative and fact-finding experiences, students will come to a better understanding of how their community and country function.

During the secondary cycle of compulsory schooling, citizenship education will be further reinforced through the active participation of students on student councils, in national and international projects, and in curricular activities and initiatives held in the local community. Another proposal is for students in the last three years of the five-year secondary cycle to be able to choose an individual domain within citizenship education as a study option that they can then follow as a separate subject.



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

The initial training of teachers from primary to secondary level takes place at the University of Malta. Prospective teachers take a four-year Bachelor of Education Honors (B.Ed Hons) degree course. The Faculty of Education also organizes a year-long Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) for graduates from other faculties who want to take up teaching. During both courses, students engage in teaching practice at schools. Teachers may specialize either in teaching at the primary level (early years or junior years) or teaching a particular subject at the secondary level. Teachers who teach at the preprimary level follow a two-year diploma course (Level 4 of the MQF) at the Malta College of Arts, Science, and Technology. From the beginning of academic year 2015/2016 onwards, preservice teachers wishing to teach at the preprimary level must have a Bachelor's degree in early childhood education and care.

Teachers who teach in special schools follow the same course of study as primary and secondary school teachers and then specialize in teaching children with special educational needs. Students in mainstream schools who have been assessed as having special needs are assisted by learning support assistants. These individuals follow a two-year diploma that focuses on facilitating inclusive education and is offered by the University of Malta.

Professional development for inservice teachers takes different forms. All new teachers experience induction courses and mentoring, and all members of the school staff (i.e., both teachers and administrators) have access to professional development programs. These comprise two-hour sessions that are held once a term and after school hours. At the end of the scholastic year in July and at the beginning of each scholastic year in September, teachers have opportunity to attend half-day inservice education and training courses, some of which are compulsory and some of which teachers can attend on a voluntary basis. Each teacher is expected to attend at least one of these courses each year.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education is taught by teachers who specialize in civic and citizenship education-related subjects such as history, social studies, and personal and social development. Citizenship education has been incorporated as a subject area within the social studies units in the primary as well as secondary departments of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta.

The primary department of the faculty offers a program during the second year of the B.Ed (Hons) primary course titled Teaching Primary Social Studies: History, Geography, and Citizenship. It gives students opportunities to explore effective ways of teaching these areas, and it emphasizes the skills and concepts particular to each of them. Similar pedagogical training is offered in the secondary B.Ed (Hons) course and in the PGCE social studies and PSD courses.

Professional development linked to civic and citizenship education is also provided in the form of inservice education and training courses, which social studies teachers and PSD teachers can attend on a voluntary basis.



## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

During the first three years of the primary cycle of compulsory education, student assessment is carried out informally and for formative purposes. Evidence is collected in various ways (students' work, portfolios, interviews, and presentations) and is used to identify students' achievements and weaknesses. In its formative guise, assessment provides students with feedback on their achievement and enables them to identify and work toward new learning goals. This form of feedback therefore provides students with the support necessary to motivate them to learn. Parents meet formally with their children's teachers once a year to hear about and discuss their children's progress.

During the last three years of primary education, assessment is both formative and summative. At the end of the scholastic year, students in Years 4 and 5 in state schools take national examinations in Maltese, English, mathematics, religion, and social studies. Since June 2011, all Year 6 students have been required to write an end-of-primary benchmark assessment that functions as an evaluative and diagnostic tool designed to assess competency in Maltese, English, and mathematics. This assessment replaced the highly selective examinations that were held at the end of the primary cycle, the results of which determined the type of secondary schools that students could attend.

These changes are part of the reform of the Maltese education system that was initiated in 2006 when the Ministry of Education commissioned a group of assessment experts to review the transition mechanism from primary to secondary schools and to suggest alternative models. In September 2008, this working group published a report titled *Transition from Primary to Secondary Schools in Malta* (Ministry of Education, 2008), the recommendations of which are currently being phased in. These developments include removing streaming (tracking) according to academic ability from the last two years of primary education and introducing a new national benchmark at the end of primary education. However, the biggest change affects secondary schools. Under the old, bipartite secondary education cycle, the more academically able students attended grammar schools called junior lyceums, while those who were not successful in the end-of-primary examinations attended area secondary schools. This system has been eliminated, and all students now attend secondary schools. Enrolment in secondary schools thus depends only on student provenance.

The end-of-primary benchmark assessment also marks a shift toward a greater emphasis on skills rather than on content and knowledge. For example, in languages, assessments today focus on both oral and aural skills. All state schools and the majority of nonstate schools participated in the first benchmark assessment.

Secondary school students are assessed, as noted above, both on a formative and a continuous basis as well as on a summative basis. Half-yearly examinations, held in February, are school-based, while annual examinations are set centrally by the Education Assessment Unit (EAU) within the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department. Parents receive two reports a year on their children's results and progress. Schools use these results to determine student progression from one year to the next and for determining which programs of study in Maltese, English, and mathematics will best suit each student.

The annual examinations, taken by state-school students in their final year, are also used for certification purposes, with the examination results being utilized as a basis for issuance of the School-Leaving Certificate and Profile. This certificate also includes recognition of the assessment and certification of informal and nonformal education acquired by students during the secondary cycle and is recognized as Level 1 of Malta's national qualifications framework. The national examinations taken at the end of each scholastic year cover an extensive range



of subjects and areas that include, among others, Maltese, English, mathematics, one or two foreign languages, sciences, arts, and humanities-based subjects.

The Curriculum Management and eLearning Department's EAU administers examinations developed by subject-specialist education officers. Teachers mark the examinations at the school level using EAU-developed marking schemes. The government is responsible for the costs of running these examinations. Candidates do not have to pay examination fees.

Students completing secondary education and wishing to pursue further studies at the upper-secondary noncompulsory level or to secure a certificate that has more value in the job market than the School-Leaving Certificate and Profile can sit a Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) examination administered by the MATSEC board of the University of Malta. These examinations are intended to be of a level of difficulty that about 80 percent of the student cohort can meet.

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

At the primary and secondary school levels, the personal qualities of students, such as their leadership ability, respect for others, curiosity, and a critical outlook, are taken into consideration when they are assessed. Students' knowledge of democratic systems and rights, as well as their civic competency, are assessed by means of written tests. Summative assessment in subjects concerned with citizenship occurs at the end of secondary education and in the SEC examinations organized by the University of Malta.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Within the compulsory education sector, the organization responsible for external monitoring of civic and citizenship education learning and teaching is the Quality Assurance Department within the DQSE. A small team of education officers carries out an external review of schools every three years. At the end of the process, the team discusses the review report with the school head and the senior management team so that the school can address any shortcomings. This external review complements the self-evaluation that schools carry out annually. Each school also has to have in place a three-year school development plan that sets out the school's developmental priorities in a range of areas.

During the external school reviews, Quality Assurance Department (QAD) personnel also monitor elements of civic and citizenship education. The school's development plan can also be used to monitor the quality of civic and citizenship education teaching and learning in the school. During 2009 and 2010, the QAD undertook a review of the teaching and learning of social studies, including its civic and citizenship education elements. During 2011, the department completed a review of personal and social development, a subject that includes an element of civic and citizenship education. Both these reviews will inform the current review of the national curriculum framework.

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# Mexico

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Mexico's official name is the United Mexican States. Mexico covers a land area of 1,964,375 square kilometers, of which 1,959,248 square kilometers are continental surface and 5,127 square kilometers are an insular area (Presidency of the Republic, 2012).

Mexico consists of 32 federal entities. Mexico City is the federal district, seat of the powers of the union, and the capital of the United Mexican States, in accordance with Article 44 of the Federal constitution. Mexico has borders with the United States of America, Guatemala, and Belize.

The population of Mexico is 112,322,757, of whom 57,464,459 are female and 54,858,298 are male. The population is now about seven times as large as 100 years ago (National Institute of Statistics and Geography, 2010a). The most populous federative entities, which account for about 45 percent of the population, are México, Distrito Federal, Veracruz, Jalisco, Puebla, and Guanajuato. The less populated entities, which together account for just two percent of the population, are Campeche, Colima, and Baja California Sur. On average, every square kilometer of land in Mexico is inhabited by 67 people (National Institute of Statistics and Geography, 2010b). The federative entities with the highest population density are Distrito Federal (5,937 people per square kilometer), México (679 people per square kilometer), and Morelos (364 people per square kilometer).

As a result of Mexico's historical background, the country's indigenous languages and Spanish have the status of national languages. Mexico is a multicultural and multilingual nation, and has the second highest number of native languages still spoken within a country on the American continent (National Institute of Indigenous Languages, 2010). Mexico's indigenous languages can be grouped into 11 linguistic families, 68 linguistic groupings, and 364 linguistic variants.<sup>1</sup>

Indigenous policy in Mexico, which has progressed from assimilation to integration, is working toward an intercultural approach that includes a greater indigenous context for teaching.

The currency of Mexico is the peso. In 2010, Mexico's gross domestic product was US\$M1,039,000.

### Characteristics of the Political System

Mexico is a representative, democratic, and federal republic consisting of free and sovereign states. States have administrative autonomy in all matters concerning their internal government but are united as a federation at the national level. The constitution of the United Mexican States prescribes that sovereignty resides essentially and originally in the people. It is derived from the power of the people and is instituted for their benefit. The people have an inalienable

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<sup>1</sup> A linguistic family is a set of languages whose similarities in linguistic and lexical structures are caused by a common historical origin. A linguistic grouping is a set of linguistic variants that falls under the name traditionally given to an indigenous people. A linguistic variant is a form of language that (a) has structural and lexical differences compared with other variants of the same linguistic group, and (b) indicates sociolinguistic identity for users.



right to alter or modify the form of its government at any time. The people can exercise their sovereignty through the powers of the union and the federative entities, in terms established by the federal constitution and the constitutions of the federative entities.

The supreme power of the federation is divided into executive, legislative, and judicial power (Federal Judiciary, 2006). In Mexico, constitutional mandate vests executive power of the union in the president, who is elected by popular vote for a term of six years. Article 89 of the Federal Constitution establishes the faculties and duties of the president, which are to:

- Promulgate and implement laws enacted by congress and provide the administrative sphere for their enforcement (*facultad reglamentaria*);
- Appoint various officials of the federal public administration;
- Conduct foreign policy;
- Lead the federal government; and
- Promote legislative initiatives or decrees to the Congress of the Union.

The legislative power of the United Mexican States is represented by the Congress of the Union, which consists of the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Senators. The Chamber of Deputies comprises 500 deputies, who are elected every three years. The Chamber of Senators has 128 senators. These individuals are elected for six-year periods. The chambers operate during two periods each year. During the interim periods, called recess periods, and according to Article 78 of the Federal Constitution, work is undertaken by a body called the Permanent Commission, which is composed of 19 deputies and 18 senators.

Article 94 of the constitution establishes that judicial power rests with the Supreme Court of Justice, in the Electoral Tribunal, in collegiate and unitary circuit tribunals, and in district courts.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Under Article 3 of the Constitution of the United Mexican States, every individual has the right to receive an education. The federation, states, federal district, and municipalities provide preschool, primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary education. Preschool, primary, and lower-secondary education constitute basic education. A constitutional reform on February 9, 2012, made compulsory upper-secondary education (*educación media superior*) compulsory as well.

State-provided education is both lay (*laica*) and free (*gratuita*). Its aim is to foster the harmonious development of all human faculties, and to promote love of country, respect for human rights, and a sense of international solidarity.

In 2010, national expenditure on education was about seven percent of the gross domestic product (Ministry of Public Education, 2010). About two-thirds of this amount represent spending on public education; the remainder represented spending on private education. During the 2009/2010 school year, 34 million students were enrolled in the national education system (Ministry of Public Education, 2010).

### Structure of the Education System

The national education system consists of the following educational levels: pre-school, primary, lower-secondary, upper-secondary, and higher education. The system also offers special education services, training for work, adult education, and indigenous or bilingual/bicultural education. The system offers both school-based and nonschool-based (e.g., distance learning) forms of education.



Basic education consists of preschool, primary, and lower-secondary educational levels, and is considered the stage of compulsory education during which students should acquire basic knowledge and develop the core abilities and capacities to support lifelong learning. Table 1 provides an overview of basic compulsory education in Mexico.

Table 1: Overview of basic compulsory education in Mexico

	Compulsory education (years)	School grade	Approximate age of students
Basic education (compulsory and constitutionally mandated)	1	1st preschool	3 years
	2	2nd preschool	4 years
	3	3rd preschool	5 years
	4	1st primary	6 years
	5	2nd primary	7 years
	6	3rd primary	8 years
	7	4th primary	9 years
	8	5th primary	10 years
	9	6th primary	11 years
	10	1st secondary	12 years
	11	2nd secondary	13 years
	12	3rd secondary	14 years

**Note:** According to a Decree of the Chambers of Deputies, December 11, 2008, educational services with respect to the first year of preschool will be provided gradually and systematically in order to achieve its universalization.

At the beginning of the 2009/2010 school year, about 25.5 million students were enrolled in basic education. Approximately 18 percent of them were enrolled in preschool education, 58 percent in primary education, and 24 percent in lower-secondary education. During the same school year, Mexico had 224,326 public and private schools with 1,163,854 teachers and 104,353 principals (General Directorate of Planning and Programming, Ministry of Public Education, 2010).

Both the lower- and upper-secondary levels of education provide general and vocational programs of study. Upper-secondary education follows basic education and precedes higher education. It is offered to students between 15 and 19 years of age, the period when adolescents typically make decisions that determine their future life trajectories.

The focus of the Integral Reform of Upper-Secondary Education, currently being implemented, is to establish a National Baccalaureate System (SNB), in order to bring a common curricular framework to upper-secondary state-provided education throughout Mexico. The framework focuses on developing the competencies students will need in adulthood and for work and also fosters generic competencies, some of which relate to civic and citizenship education as well as to ethics (Undersecretary of Upper-Secondary Education of the Ministry of Public Education, 2008).

Higher education consists of university education, technological education, and teacher training colleges (*escuela normal*). In recent years, this sector of education has focused on ensuring the quality of educational programs, institutional strengthening, teacher training, and consolidating academic bodies.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Several government documents address issues related to civic and citizenship education. The *National Development Plan 2007–2012* refers to four aspects that have relevance for this learning area:

- Rule of law and security (culture of legality, respect for human rights and individual rights, and prevention of criminal behavior);
- Equal opportunities;
- Environmental sustainability; and
- Effective democracy and responsible foreign policy.

The fourth objective of the *Education Sector Program 2007–2012* refers to citizenship education as part of an integral education:

Offer integral education that balances the education in citizenship values, development of competencies and the acquisition of knowledge through regular classroom activities, teaching practice and institutional environment, to strengthen democratic and intercultural coexistence. (Ministry of Public Education, 2007, p. 11)

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

The national curriculum for education contains a formative learning field called “personal development and development for coexistence.” It incorporates aspects of civic and citizenship education and is delivered in different ways within preschool education through to the end of lower-secondary education.

- In preschool education, this area of learning is called “personal and social development.”
- In primary education, a subject called civic and ethical education (*formación cívica y ética*) is offered from Grades 1 to 6.
- During the first year of secondary education (Grade 7), students learn civic and citizenship-related aspects under a state-selected special subject (*asignatura estatal*), which can include different thematic fields.
- During lower-secondary education (Grades 8 and 9), students are taught subjects called “civic and ethical education 1” (*formación cívica y ética 1*) and “civic and ethical education 2” (*formación cívica y ética 2*). Students also learn other civic-related aspects in various subjects, most particularly the sciences (biology especially), geography, and history.

The preschool education program implemented in 2004 addresses issues related to civic and ethics education, especially the learning area called “personal and social development,” which explores personal identity and autonomy as well as interpersonal relationships.

A new program for primary education called the Integral Program for Civic and Ethical Education (*Programa Integral de Formación Cívica y Ética*) was developed in 2002 by the Ministry of Public Education, with implementation to be fully completed in schools by 2011/2012. The program describes the basic characteristics of civic and ethical education for primary education as follows:

Civic and Ethical Education (*Formación Cívica y Ética*) embodies the national democratic and lay character that determines public education and, therefore, encourages students to establish and consolidate forms of coexistence based on respect for human dignity, equality of rights, solidarity and the rejection of discrimination, appreciation for nature and care of resources. (Ministry of Public Education, 2008, p. 9)



The Integral Program for Civic and Ethical Education aims to develop a number of civics- and ethics-based competencies and attitudes among students that relate to the following:

- Knowledge and care of oneself;
- Self-regulation and the responsible exercise of freedom;
- Respect for and appreciation of diversity;
- A sense of belonging to the community, nation, and humanity;
- Ability to manage and resolve conflict;
- Social and political participation;
- Adherence to law and awareness of justice; and
- An understanding and appreciation of democracy.

During the first year of lower-secondary education (Grade 7), students are taught the state-selected subject *asignatura estatal*, which actually consists of four thematic fields. One of the subfields of the fourth field is directly related to “democratic citizenship education for coexistence within a culture of legality.” Approximately three hours of schooltime a week are dedicated specifically to the state-selected subject.

The lower-secondary education curriculum for civic and ethical education developed in 2006 constituted an important antecedent for the fundamental reform of basic education and the new 2011 syllabus. Today, civic and ethical education is taught during the second and third years of lower-secondary education (i.e., Grades 8 and 9). According to the 2011 syllabus, 160 hours per year should be given over to this subject in these two grades in line with the extended-day school program (*escuelas de jornada ampliada*).

Three important considerations underpin the delivery of civic and ethical education in lower-secondary schools:

- The amount of instructional time spent on the subject civic and ethical education;
- The contribution of all curricular subjects to the development of civic and ethical reflection; and
- The school environment as a space within which to actively practice democracy.

Civic and ethical education at this level of the education system also aims to further develop the eight civic competencies established during primary education. The content of this subject consequently revolve around three educational strands (*ejes formativos*): personal development (*formación de la persona*), ethical education (*formación ética*), and citizenship education (*formación ciudadana*). Finally, the spaces and means used to promote this area of learning include the classroom, transversal working (*trabajo transversal*) (i.e., crosscurricular experiences and learning), the school environment, and everyday life.

Civic and ethical education has links with all other subjects in the syllabus. For example, aspects of citizen participation relate to language-based activities, such as those experienced during Spanish lessons. The history and geography of Mexico and the world are other important subjects in this regard because the knowledge gained when learning this content provides context for the social processes studied in civic and ethical education.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

As part of their broader learning in the area of civic and ethical education, students develop school activities that relate to the matters and concerns they discuss and reflect on in class. They also engage in research projects that identify civics- and ethics-related problems and solutions, as well as group work that addresses specific dilemmas.



Because this learning area promotes democracy as a way of life, students also have opportunity to consider the written and unwritten rules that govern school activities. When considering these matters, students explore the extent of their rights and responsibilities as members of the school community, as well as their opportunities for participation in matters of collective interest. They are encouraged to find ways to ensure that their own contributions respect the rights of all members of the school.

Regulations created by the ministries of education at the local level focus on student associations and other student groups within secondary education. The regulations encourage students to:

- Elect representatives at the school level who can speak on educational matters that are relevant to all students;
- Work toward the economic, ethical, and civic improvement of the school and its wider community; and
- Promote the cultural and academic improvement of the school and participate cooperatively with principals and teachers in all activities that benefit the school community (see, for example, Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Free and Sovereign State of Sinaloa, 2001).

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Recent years have seen several developments of relevance for civic and citizenship education. The first relates to the integral reform of basic education, which was completed in 2011 and is outlined in Agreement No. 592 for the Articulation of Basic Education.

Part of this basic education reform process was a new curricular proposal for primary education, which was directed toward reorganizing the curriculum's contents as well as its relationship with adjacent levels of the education system (i.e., preschool and lower-secondary school). New programs for preschool, primary, and secondary education were accordingly developed. The reform was underpinned by the necessity to have an integrated curriculum that would have the following characteristics:

- Coherency, relevance, national in its conception, and flexible in its development;
- Aimed at overcoming the challenges of the national education system;
- Open to innovation and continuous revisions;
- Gradual but progressive in nature and implementation; and
- Easily updated, well articulated, and conducive to managing basic education throughout the country.

The second matter of relevance is the revision of the subject civic and ethical education in primary and lower-secondary schools. The years 2007 to 2010 saw, as part of the revision of civic and ethical education, the publication of 59 books for use in civic and ethical education lessons. This number and time period exceeded the target of 58 books to be ready by the 2012/2013 school year (Ministry of Public Education, 2010).

The third area of interest concerns the Regional System of Assessment and Development of Citizenship Competencies (SREDECC), which was initially developed as the Latin American Observatory of Citizenship Education (*Observatorio Latinoamericano de Educación Ciudadana*). SREDECC involves six Latin American countries (Colombia, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and the Dominican Republic), each working with the others to build a platform for the reflection, evaluation, analysis, development, and promotion of each of the following regional project components: a common regional frame of reference for civic and citizenship



education, an assessment of citizenship competencies, and a study of citizenship education programs.<sup>2</sup> The next step in the regional initiative will focus on providing teacher education (*formación docente*), both initial and continuing, that is directed toward improving citizenship competencies in students.

A fourth area of interest concerns the proposal by representatives of indigenous education in the Ministry of Public Education to bring about changes in the assessment of civic and citizenship education. These individuals are all familiar with the results of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) 2009. Their proposal, in stressing self-management strategies and shared responsibility, especially with respect to the contributions of indigenous people, should make assessment of civic and citizenship education a more participatory process. This is considered an area of opportunity, especially with respect to a possible redesign of the Latin American regional student assessment instrument for this learning area.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Mexico currently has 473 teacher education colleges (*escuela normal*), five of which are federal, 256 state, and 212 private (Ministry of Public Education, 2010). Teacher education colleges offer undergraduate degrees in initial, primary, secondary, bilingual/cultural, special, and physical education. They also offer postgraduate degrees.

The National Pedagogical University, a decentralized body of the Ministry of Public Education, is a public institution of higher education that not only prepares teaching professionals to meet the needs of the national education system but also offers other services such as specialist education related to school curriculum subjects. Bachelor's degrees encompass pedagogy, educational psychology, educational intervention, educational sociology, educational administration, and indigenous education.

Mexico has a number of centers (located in all regions of the country) responsible for providing professional development for inservice teachers. With regard to civic and citizenship education, these centers (*centros de actualización del magisterio*) provide academic programs and projects focusing on principles of quality and equity.

Applicants to a teacher education college must have completed a Baccalaureate certificate as well as an entry examination. Studies at a teacher training college usually take four years; however, certain study programs can take up to six years. In order to teach in publicly recognized teaching institutions, applicants must meet requirements prescribed by the respective authorities. Teachers of indigenous education who do not hold a Bachelor's degree, which is the minimum educational qualification, must participate in training programs designed by educational authorities and prove their bilingual proficiency in their own indigenous language and in Spanish.

Teachers of basic education need to have acquired specific intellectual skills and a mastery of teaching content. They also need to exhibit didactical competence, a professional identity, practice that has a strong ethical base, and the ability to respond to the sociocultural conditions of the school. Bachelor's degrees for preschool, primary, secondary, bilingual/intercultural, physical, and special education can be obtained at public or private teacher education colleges.

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2 The Regional System of Assessment and Development of Citizenship Competencies was developed on the initiative of ministers of education in Latin America, particularly those from Colombia, Chile, and Mexico, during a meeting in Trinidad and Tobago, 2005. The goal was to describe systems and practices characteristic of an electoral democracy. The participating countries were responding, in part, to the results of a study on democracy in Latin America that took place in 2005. In this study, 54.7 percent of the people surveyed said they would accept an authoritarian government and 45 percent said that they would not object to bribing public servants (cf Inter-American Council for Integral Development, 2005; Inter-American Development Bank, 2006; United National Development Programme, 2004, pp. 31, 86).



In order to obtain a professional degree, students need to complete credits in all subjects of their courses of study, complete their preservice teaching practice, and prepare a thesis, all of which are followed by a professional examination.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

The 1999 syllabus for a Bachelor's degree in secondary education includes a description of the course work for civic and ethical education, its basic contents, and the criteria that need to be met by the study programs. This component of the degree was developed in cooperation with academic staff from teacher education colleges and recognized experts in civic and ethical education.

According to Mexico's General Directorate of Professional Development for Inservice Teachers, about 100,000 teachers participate annually in courses relating to civic and ethical education. These courses cover topics such as civic and ethical formation, discrimination, and inclusive education. In 2010, the so-called basic course in this area of education provided mandatory professional development for approximately 1,200,000 inservice teachers. The course contained civic and citizenship education content, including the promotion of a culture of legality, human rights, and inclusive education.

During school year 2009/2010, a National Catalogue of Continuing Education and Professional Development for Inservice Basic Education Teachers was produced and made available (by the Undersecretary of Basic Education of the Ministry of Public Education) to teachers, principals, and technical/pedagogical advisory staff. It contains information about 165 educational programs that feature a focus on the following issues:

- Civic and ethical education focused on the theoretical and conceptual content of democracy and human rights;
- Critical and reflexive pedagogy that is in line with Mexico's current approach to civic education and citizenship competencies;
- School environments that enable the development of civic and ethical skills and attitudes, including those relating to gender equity, acceptance of diversity, inclusive education, and environmental education.

## **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Under Mexico's Education Law (*Ley General de Educación*), the Ministry of Public Education is responsible for evaluating Mexico's national education system, and local education authorities are responsible for conducting assessments in their own jurisdictions. Article 29 of the Education Law requires evaluation at both levels of the compulsory education system to be consistent and continuous. Education authorities inform teachers, students, parents, and society about the results of assessments. They also supply these stakeholders with other aggregate information that measures the progress of education in each state.

The National Assessment of Academic Achievement in Schools (ENLACE) is an assessment administered to students attending public and private schools. The agency responsible for administering ENLACE is the Directorate General for Policy Evaluation, which is part of the Ministry of Public Education's Unit for Planning and Evaluation of Education Policy. The purpose of the assessment is to create a single national scale able to provide comparable information about students' knowledge and skills in selected subjects, with that information then used to:

- Encourage parents and young people to participate in education;
- Facilitate the planning of teaching in classrooms;



- Determine specific training requirements for teachers and principals;
- Sustain effective and relevant processes in educational planning and public policy; and
- Meet established criteria for transparency and accountability.

In basic education, ENLACE is used to assess the achievement of Grades 3 to 6 primary school students in Spanish and mathematics. It assesses the same subjects in Grades 7 to 9 of lower-secondary education. During the last three cycles of ENLACE, a third subject (science in 2008, civic and ethical education in 2009, and history in 2010) was evaluated in both primary and secondary schools. ENLACE in upper-secondary education is administered to students in their final grade in order to assess basic knowledge and skills in reading and mathematics. ENLACE is not used for certification examinations but rather for diagnosis. It does not assess attitudes and values.

Agreement No. 535 on the general guidelines for the operation of school councils, issued June 4, 2010, specifies that school councils must be made up of principals, teachers, representatives of their unions, student alumni, and parents, and that these individuals should all be involved in analyzing the results of evaluations conducted by educational authorities. Agreement No. 592 on the guidelines for basic education stipulates the development of curriculum standards for the third year of preschool, Grades 3 and 6 of primary school, and the third grade of secondary education. Standards for civic and ethical education are currently being developed. These standards will ideally be accompanied by corresponding instruments for evaluation purposes.

#### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

As noted previously, ENLACE assesses student achievement in two basic subjects plus a third, rotational subject. In 2009, the rotational subject was civic and ethical education, as it will be again in 2013.

The National Institute for Educational Evaluation administers several other sample-based assessments. These assessments, known as Examinations for Quality and Educational Achievement (EXCALE), are administered within a four-year cycle (*sistema cuatrienal*). In 2006, the institute assessed, among other subjects, civic education in Grade 3 of primary education, and in 2008 it assessed civic and ethical education in the third year of lower-secondary education (Grade 9). In 2009, the institute used EXCALE to assess civic education in Grade 6 of primary education.

#### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

The Ministry of Public Education and the National Center of Evaluation for Higher Education are both responsible for certifying teacher quality through assessments set against national standards. The educational authorities monitor activities and provide technical and didactic support to ensure adequate teaching performance (Education Act, Article 22).

Mexico participated in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) in 2009, along with 37 other countries. The main survey was administered in March, 2009, in 216 schools, and included the participation of 6,576 students, 1,844 teachers, and 214 school principals.



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## Further Reading

Readers who are interested in reviewing the regulatory framework or learning more about education in Mexico may wish to consult the following websites, which are set out in accordance with the main sections of this chapter.

Constitution of the United Mexican States (Article 3):

<http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/1.pdf>

Education Act: <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/137.pdf>

Internal regulations of the Ministry of Public Education:

[http://upepe.sep.gob.mx/menu\\_lat/pdf\\_aspecto/reglamento\\_interior\\_sep.pdf](http://upepe.sep.gob.mx/menu_lat/pdf_aspecto/reglamento_interior_sep.pdf)

Law of Federal Public Administration: <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/153.pdf>

*National Development Plan 2007–2012*: <http://pnd.presidencia.gob.mx/>

*Education Sector Program 2007–2012*: [http://www.sep.gob.mx/es/sep1/programa\\_sectorial](http://www.sep.gob.mx/es/sep1/programa_sectorial)

Agreement Number 592: [http://basica.sep.gob.mx/dgdc/sitio/pdf/Acuerdo\\_592.pdf](http://basica.sep.gob.mx/dgdc/sitio/pdf/Acuerdo_592.pdf)

Ministry of Public Education: <http://www.sep.gob.mx>

Preschool Education Program 2004 for Mexico:

<http://www.reformapreescolar.sep.gob.mx/ACTUALIZACION/PROGRAMA/Programa2004PDF.PDF>

Basic Education, Secondary Curriculum 2006: <http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformaintegral/sitio/pdf/secundaria/plan/PlanEstudios2006.pdf>

Curriculum for Basic Education in Mexico 2009:

<http://www.siracfc.sep.gob.mx/docs/Catalogo2009/PlanPrimaria.pdf>

Curriculum for Basic Education in Mexico 2011:

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/dgdc/sitio/pdf/PlanEdu2011.pdf>

Program of Study 2011: Guidelines for preschool and basic education teachers:

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/dgdc/sitio/pdf/inicio/matlinea/2011/ProgramaPreescolar.pdf>

Curricula 2011: Guidelines for primary education:

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/dgdc/sitio/start.php?act=Edprimaria>

Curricula 2011: Guidelines for secondary education:

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/dgdc/sitio/start.php?act=Edsecundaria>

Integral Program for Civic and Ethical Education 2008 and programs for civic and ethical education for primary education (the first six grades):

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformaintegral/sitio/index.php?act=buscadorlibros>

Documents on the reform of secondary education: <http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformasecundaria/>

Bachelor of Secondary Education, specializing in civics and ethics, September 2000:

[http://www.benv.edu.mx/EduSec/plan\\_estudios/civ\\_etica.pdf](http://www.benv.edu.mx/EduSec/plan_estudios/civ_etica.pdf)

National guidelines for the design and development of programs for the state-selected subject 2009:

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformaintegral/sitio/pdf/secundaria/plan/LineamientosNalesSecundaria.pdf>

The state-selected subject, Thematic Fields 2 and 3: The state-selected subject (*asignatura estatal*):

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformasecundaria/aasignaturaestatal/catalogo.htm>

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformaintegral/sitio/index.php?act=seccampotem2>

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/reformaintegral/sitio/index.php?act=seccampotem3>

Agreement Number 513: (Rules for the Safe School Program):

<http://basica.sep.gob.mx/escuelasegura/pdf/reglasdeoperacion/reglasPES10.pdf>

General guidelines on participation for school councils:

[http://www.consejoscolares.sep.gob.mx/images/Documentos/Lineamientos/lineamientos\\_generales\\_2.pdf](http://www.consejoscolares.sep.gob.mx/images/Documentos/Lineamientos/lineamientos_generales_2.pdf)

System evaluation of and regional development in civic skills: <http://www.sredec.org>



Directorate General of Higher Education for Education Professionals:

[http://www.dgespe.sep.gob.mx/planes/les/listado\\_asig](http://www.dgespe.sep.gob.mx/planes/les/listado_asig)

Department of Continuing Education for Inservice Teachers: <http://formacioncontinua.sep.gob.mx/>

National Assessment of Academic Achievement in Schools (ENLACE 2012):

<http://enlace.sep.gob.mx/ba/>

National Institute for Educational Evaluation: <http://www.inee.edu.mx/index.php/publicaciones/informes-institucionales/resultados-de-aprendizaje/4539>



# The Netherlands

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The total population of the Netherlands is nearly 16.5 million people, of whom 35 percent are below 30 years of age. In October 2008, about 2.6 million children were enrolled in the 12 years of fulltime compulsory education.

The official languages of the Netherlands are Dutch and Frisian. The latter is regarded as the second official language and is mostly spoken in the province of Friesland, where it is the mother tongue of 350,000 people. The official language of instruction at school is Dutch, although a small number of Frisian schools are bilingual. A small number of living local dialects (Lower Saxon and Limburger) may be used as the language of instruction at educational institutions in areas where these dialects are spoken.

Nearly 20 percent of the population in the Netherlands is nonnative, defined as people who were born outside the Netherlands, or who have at least one parent who was born outside the country. Nearly 1.7 million people were not born in the Netherlands (10%), and slightly over 1.6 million people were born in the Netherlands while having at least one parent of another origin (10%). Major groups of nonnatives in the Netherlands are from Indonesia (2%), Turkey (2%), Morocco (2%), and Suriname (2%) (*Statline*, 2009).

The gross domestic product (GDP) of the Netherlands in 2008 was €B595. According to statistics from the Ministry of Education, public expenditure on education in 2008 (including student grants and loans, and research grants for educational institutions) was €M34,732 or about six percent of GDP.

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. Parliament, together with the sovereign and government ministers, form the legislature, while sovereign ministers constitute the executive. There are two chambers in the House of Parliament.

During the 1990s and on into 2002, the Netherlands was governed by a coalition of socialists and social liberals. Policies were characterized by a pragmatic approach, which was criticized by Christian parties in the Dutch parliament. During that period, the reasoning behind immigration policies was challenged, with many believing that foreigners and immigrants were not being properly integrated into Dutch society. This notion was articulated by right-wing politician Pim Fortuyn, who was assassinated in 2002. This action shocked many Dutch people, and contributed to the subsequent electoral landslide against the socialist/social liberal coalition in the next Dutch elections.

The Christian Party took the lead in forming a government that year and remained in power through coalitions with other parties until the beginning of 2010. In 2002, the Dutch Government espoused the concept of a civil society, which aimed to restore social cohesion in the Netherlands, reduce potential conflicts between various groups in society, and bolster citizens' trust in government and parliament.



In 2010, a new government was constituted, consisting of a coalition of the Liberal Party and the Christian Party, with support from the anti-immigrant Party for Freedom (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*), which had obtained 24 seats in Parliament.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

The Minister of Education, Culture, and Science is primarily responsible for the structure and funding of the education system and for school inspections, national examinations, and student support (Meelissen, 2008). School administration and management is decentralized and carried out by school boards, which are responsible for the school curriculum, school personnel, student admissions, and financial policy. A school board may be responsible for one school or for a number of schools.

School boards of the public schools consist of representatives of the municipality whereas those of private schools are often formed of representatives from an association or foundation. Both school types are funded by the central government and, to some extent, by the municipalities. The majority of private schools are Roman Catholic or Protestant, but there are also other religious schools as well as schools based on specific ideologies such as anthroposophy (*Vrije Scholen* or Waldorf schools). A small number of schools are based on the pedagogical approaches of educational reformers such as Maria Montessori, Helen Parkhurst (Dalton education), Peter Petersen (*Jenaplan*), and Célestin Freinet.

### Structure of the Education System

ISCED 1 of the Netherlands education system consists of primary education and special education. Primary education also includes kindergarten for four- and five-year olds (ISCED 0). Almost all four-year-olds in the Netherlands attend primary school, even though it is not compulsory for them to do so until they reach the age of five. ISCED 1 encompasses primary school Years 3 to 8. The demarcation between ISCED 0 and ISCED 1 has become blurred, as four- and five-year-olds (especially those from disadvantaged families) increasingly enroll in preschool programs designed to give them the cognitive skills they will need on entry to Year 3 of primary school.

ISCED 2 consists mainly of the first three years of senior general secondary education (*hoger algemeen voorbereidend onderwijs* or abbreviated *havo*), the first three years of preuniversity education (*voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs* or abbreviated *vwo*), and prevocational secondary education (*voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* or abbreviated *vmbo*).

The first three years of senior general secondary education and preuniversity education offer education at the ISCED 2A level. During these three years, students receive a basic education (*basisvorming*) that is designed to contribute to their holistic development and which includes a focus on the religious, philosophical, and social values that exist in Dutch society. Basic education essentially emphasizes the knowledge and skills that students will need to function well in society—as an individual, as a citizen, and as a worker. Lower-secondary school has 58 different general attainment targets that pertain to all students.

Prevocational secondary education lasts four years and is intended as a foundation for further vocational training. The curriculum consists of vocational as well as general subjects (ISCED 2B). Prevocational secondary education caters for students aged 12 to 16. Students may choose among four different tracks: the basic vocational program (*basisberoepsgerichte leerweg* or *bbi*), the middle-management vocational program (*kaderberoepsgerichte leerweg* or *kbi*), the combined program (*gemengde leerweg* or *gl*), and the theoretical program (*theoretische leerweg* or *tl*). Each of these programs offers students any extra support they might need.



Each track of prevocational education offers programs in four sectors: engineering and technology, care and welfare, business, and agriculture. The subjects taught in each sector are geared to the requirements of further vocational education beyond prevocational education. Within these sectors, students in the basic vocational program, the middle-management vocational program, or the combined program opt for one of a number of vocationally oriented programs. Students in the theoretical program, however, study only general subjects.

ISCED 2 also includes (in addition to prevocational education) practical and vocational training to assistant level (*assistentenopleiding*; ISCED 2C). The latter equips students to perform simple executive tasks. Practical training (*praktijkonderwijs*) is aimed at students who are unlikely to obtain a qualification through one of the four tracks in prevocational education, even when provided with learning support. Unlike the four tracks in prevocational education, practical training does not qualify students for further vocational education but prepares them for direct entry to the regional labor market. These courses are intended for those who are not able to obtain a basic qualification level (Level 2 in vocational education or higher) before entering the labor market.

ISCED 3 consists of senior general secondary education (Years 4 and 5) and preuniversity education (Years 4 to 6), as well as senior vocational training. Senior general secondary education and preuniversity education (ISCED 3A) provide a broad, general curriculum that qualifies students for entrance to higher professional education and university. Students choose one of the following subject combinations: culture and society, economics and society, science and health, or science and technology. Courses within these specializations represent 39 to 48 percent of the students' study program.

Institutes for vocational training offer students basic (ISCED 3C) vocational training (*basisberoepsopleiding*) and professional training (*vakopleiding*). Basic vocational training prepares students to perform executive tasks (involving slightly more complicated routines than those at the *assistentenopleiding* level as well as standard procedures). The diploma awarded at this level is equivalent to the basic qualification level, or Level 2. Professional training is directed toward helping students to obtain the ability to carry out tasks independently. Students must also be able to account for their actions to colleagues and must furthermore be able to monitor and supervise the application of standard procedures by others.

Institutes for higher professional education offer a broad range of *four*-year studies that lead to a Bachelor's degree. University education leads to a *three*-year Bachelor's degree. This may be followed by a Master's degree after completion of one or two additional years at an institute for higher professional education or at a university.

Compulsory education starts on the first day after the month a child turns five and ends at the end of the school year in which the child reaches age 16. However, students need to stay in school until the age of 18 to obtain a "starting qualification," or a diploma at ISCED 3 level.

Dutch schools have traditionally enjoyed considerable autonomy. The Dutch education system is based on the principle of freedom of education, or, more particularly, on freedom of establishment, freedom of conviction, and freedom of pedagogical approach (Vermeulen, 1999). Each inhabitant of the Netherlands has the right to found a school, and schools (or school boards) autonomously decide how and—to a large extent—when to teach the core objectives of the Dutch curriculum. The decisions made depend on the respective schools' religious, philosophical, and pedagogical views and principles.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education in the Netherlands aims to enhance active citizenship. Active citizenship is a broad concept that refers to readiness and capacity to take part in a community and to contribute actively to that community. Since February 2006, primary and secondary schools and vocational training institutes have been required to pay attention to preparing students to be active citizens who contribute to social integration. This latter aspect emphasizes the participation of every citizen in society and its institutions, regardless of their ethnic or cultural background. The concept also includes social involvement in and commitment to manifestations of Dutch culture.

Traditionally, civic and citizenship education has been regarded as a crosscurricular subject in education, as well as part of the specific projects and extracurricular activities that schools engage in. After some years of experimenting, the government introduced, in 1968, a subject into upper-secondary education called “social and political education” (Dekker, 1999). The subject has undergone frequent changes in status and form since its introduction, and the current form, “study of society,” is still mandatory. Students can also study an advanced course as an optional examination subject.

Secondary schools furthermore offer students opportunities to engage in community service programs as part of their extracurricular activities. The government has stimulated the implementation and advancement of these programs in recent years, and since school year 2011/2012, participation in a community service program has been obligatory for all secondary school students.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

#### General Overview

Primary and secondary schools are required to include civic and citizenship education in their curricula. Attainment targets for primary and lower-secondary education are formulated with regard to broad educational domains. In primary education, citizenship is reflected in the attainment targets for “language” and “orientation to yourself and the world.” Within lower-secondary education, citizenship relates to attainment targets in “Dutch language” and “persons and society.” During upper-secondary education, civic and citizenship education is addressed in the examination syllabus by the subject “the study of society” as well as by minor parts of the examination syllabuses for other subjects, including Dutch language, geography, and history (Bron, 2006; see also Hendriks & Maslowski, 2007).

#### Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools (ISCED 2)

Among the 58 attainment targets formulated for lower-secondary education, the following, which concern the domain “persons and society,” relate to civic and citizenship education (Bron, 2006; see also Hendriks & Maslowski, 2007).

- Students should learn to ask meaningful questions concerning social issues and phenomena, to take and advocate a substantiated position, as well as to deal with criticism in a respectful manner.
- Students should learn to use a framework consisting of 10 time periods to place historical events, developments, and persons in the corresponding time period.
- Students should learn, using a contemporary picture of their own community, the Netherlands, Europe, or the world, to appropriately interpret phenomena and developments in their context.
- Students should learn to conduct a simple study into contemporary phenomena in society.



- Students should learn to use historical sources, and to relate these to their own cultural-historical context.
- Students should learn to recognize similarities, differences, and changes in culture and religious and humanistic beliefs in the Netherlands, to relate them to their own and other people's modes of living, and to value their relevance for a society based on respect for other people's beliefs and modes of living.
- Students should learn in general terms how the Dutch political system functions as a democracy, and how people might become involved in political processes through different ways.
- Students should learn to understand the impact of European cooperation and the European Union on themselves, the Netherlands, and the world as a whole.
- Students should learn to situate contemporary tensions and conflicts in the world in their contexts and thereby become aware of the interdependencies worldwide and the importance of human rights, as well as the meaning of international cooperation.

Because these attainment targets do not relate to a specific subject, and because lower-secondary schools do not teach a subject specifically focused on civic and citizenship education, schools generally address aspects of these targets in history and geography, and to a lesser degree in other subjects. Textbooks for these subjects in lower-secondary education provide only marginal coverage of issues related to civic and citizenship education.

The National Institute for Curriculum Development's curriculum framework for civic and citizenship education covers primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary education (Bron, Veugelers, & Van Vliet, 2009). The framework, which is based on knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes of students in three major civic and citizenship domains—democracy, participation, and identity—outlines the content areas to be addressed. Schools are free to adopt the framework. To date, only a very few schools have chosen to implement parts of the proposed curriculum.

Since August 2011, secondary schools have been required to offer a community service program as part of the school curriculum. Notwithstanding this formal obligation for 2011, by school year 2009/2010 nearly all secondary schools had begun offering community service programs. As part of their participation in these programs, students are required to engage in service activities for at least 30 hours during their secondary studies. Most schools start with community service learning in Grade 8 or Grade 9. Students in upper-secondary education typically engage in individual service programs, whereas several lower-secondary education schools tend to approach community service projects with whole-class involvement.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Secondary schools are required to establish a participation council consisting of school staff, parents, and students. Under current law, the participation council as a whole decides on a broad range of issues concerning school policy. In addition, parental and student sectors need to approve those issues that directly relate to their position in school. A common example is a student statute, which describes the rights and duties of students in a school.

Most secondary schools (about 75 to 80%) have a student council, which usually consists of 8 to 15 students. Students participating in this council are often chosen through school elections—usually one representative per class—or assigned by class mentors. Student councils are generally concerned with festivities and celebrations, as well as with promoting student interests at school. This latter assignment requires coordination with the participation council, which can often be accomplished through the overlapping membership of the two organizations. Many student council representatives are also members of the National Action



Committee of Students (LAKS), which serves the interests of secondary students at the national level. Among several other activities, LAKS organizes courses for students in participation councils and collects comments and complaints on such matters as national examinations from students in secondary schools.

In addition to providing opportunities for civic-related participation and the formation of student councils, schools offer other ways of enabling students to engage in decisionmaking at school. These opportunities vary widely among schools, and typically relate to the following activities (Stokking & Sol, 2010):

- Schoolwide surveys of student opinions about the quality of education offered at school or about school-based themes in school that have no direct relationship to teaching or to curriculum subjects (students sometimes initiate and organize these surveys);
- Assessment of individual teachers through participation in selection committees of applicants for a teaching position at school;
- Questionnaires about specific school subjects or teachers, which are then used in discussions between teachers and students on how to improve the teaching or the course content;
- Informal contacts between students and individual teachers on content, approach, lesson planning, tests, and the classroom practice of teachers;
- Membership in committees managing cultural, music, or sports activities at school; and
- Tutoring or mentoring other students at school.

Secondary schools regularly issue school newspapers (partly or completely run by students) and encourage debating groups (during which students engage in local and national debating competitions between schools). They also undertake projects on human rights, environmental issues, or poverty, with the latter often combined with some form of fundraising. Schools are free to determine whether and to what degree they will encourage any of these civic and citizenship education activities on their premises.

Many schools take part in nationally organized elections for secondary school students between the ages of 12 and 18. These elections, organized by the Dutch Institute for Public and Politics, are held in advance of any election for the Dutch provinces, the national parliament, or the European Parliament. The outcomes of these school elections receive wide attention in the media. During the 2010 national elections, more than half of all secondary schools participated in the student elections, with over 91,000 students (51% of students in participating schools) placing a vote (ProDemos, 2010).

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Traditionally, civic and citizenship education has not been a prominent learning area in Dutch secondary schools. The extent to which civic and citizenship education is addressed has been largely left to the discretion of schools. Major exceptions to this rule have been the study of politics as part of history in upper-secondary education, and the subject “study of society,” which the government introduced into upper-secondary education in 1968. This latter subject is aimed at “giving some knowledge of and insights into the relations between individuals and groups” and at promoting “discussion of current issues” (Dekker, 1999, p. 448).

The major reform of upper-secondary education in 1998 introduced two separate subjects—“study of society 1” and “study of society 2.” The first subject focuses mainly on general citizenship education, and emphasizes requisite knowledge, understanding, and skills. Study of society 2 is concerned with analyzing developments and trends in society, using insights from social and behavioral sciences as part of this approach (Rexwinkel & Veldhuis, 2007). In senior general secondary education and preuniversity education, study of society 2 was recently transformed into a new subject called “social sciences.”



Since February 2006, primary schools, secondary schools, and institutes for vocational training have been required to prepare students for active citizenship and social integration. The law does not prescribe to what extent and in what form citizenship and social integration should be stimulated (except for the introduction of community service programs from August 2011 onwards). However, schools are required to report on the activities that they have developed. These activities are mainly directed toward the development of skills, values, and attitudes.

Recent evaluations of citizenship and social integration activities indicate that civic and citizenship education is largely underdeveloped in secondary education. Schools have no clear vision as to what they want to achieve with students in regard to this learning area (Hilbers, Dekkers, & Dijkstra, 2010). Based on these findings, the Education Council recently recommended defining a small core curriculum for civic and citizenship education (Education Council, 2009). This should give schools more direction as to which aspects of curriculum they need to focus on. Discussion on this development aimed to address fundamental questions regarding the importance of civic and citizenship education and the priority that should be given to it relative to the more traditional areas of the curriculum, such as language, science, and mathematics.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Teacher education is part of the higher education system and consists of two educational pathways—higher professional education or university education (Meesters, 2003). Higher professional education caters for fulltime, parttime, and dual teacher training courses, which can lead to qualification as a primary school teacher, a secondary school teacher Grade II (for lower-secondary education), or a teacher for prevocational education. This educational pathway ultimately leads to a Bachelor's degree that qualifies the graduate to teach either at the primary or secondary education level. Teacher training for secondary education is further divided according to the subject to be taught. To become a Grade I teacher for upper-secondary education or a special education teacher, students have to complete (often on a parttime basis) a postgraduate course provided by higher professional education institutes.

Students can also qualify to become a Grade I teacher through university education. Universities provide fulltime, parttime, and dual training courses, which are also based on two different pathways. In general, students study a specific subject such as geography, and earn both a Bachelor's (three years) and a Master's (one to two years) degree in the subject. To qualify as a teacher, these students need to do an additional year-long Master's degree at a university-based teacher-education institute. A parallel pathway requires completion of a two-year, intensive Master of Education degree at a teacher education institute, which individuals complete after gaining a university-taught Bachelor's degree in a specific subject.

Grade I secondary teachers are qualified to teach at all levels of secondary education. Individuals wanting to become a qualified Grade I teacher must complete a minimum of five years of postcompulsory education. Grade II secondary teachers are qualified to teach the first three years of senior general secondary education and preuniversity education, as well as all four years of prevocational education. Individuals wanting to qualify as a Grade II teacher must complete four years of postcompulsory teacher education (Meesters, 2003).

The Professions in Education Act, which came into effect in August 2006, requires teachers to remain professionally and pedagogically competent. Teacher professional development generally focuses on specific competencies outlined in the Act. Institutions for professional development, including teacher training institutes, offer professional development activities. These may be pursued by individual teachers, a small group of teachers, or even all teachers at a school. Teachers, in conjunction with the school board or the school management, are free to decide whether or not they will participate in professional development sessions (Meesters, 2003).



### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

In lower-secondary education, aspects of civic and citizenship education are principally taught in history and geography, and, to a lesser degree, as part of economics. However, aspects of civic and citizenship education can also be addressed in other subjects. In general, teachers specializing in subjects related to civic and citizenship education learn about civic and citizenship education during their preservice training, but only to the extent that these issues are reflected in the attainment targets related to the respective subjects. Teachers of upper-secondary education have recourse to Grade I and Grade II teacher education programs for the subjects study of society (1 and 2) and social sciences.

A few inservice courses on civic and citizenship education are available to teachers and coordinators in lower-secondary education. Participation in these courses, provided by diverse institutions offering professional development in the Netherlands, is not compulsory, but is based on agreements between school management and groups of teachers.

### **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

#### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Primary schools use standardized tests to assess student achievement at the end of primary education. Although these tests are not mandatory, nearly all schools use one of the tests offered by various agencies for educational measurement. The most commonly applied test is the primary school leaver's attainment test developed by the National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO). Students in nearly 85 percent of all primary schools take this test. CITO covers the basic skills in reading, writing, arithmetic, and mathematics, as well as study skills. CITO also develops standardized tests for measuring the progress of individual students. These tests are collectively known as a student monitoring system, and their function is to help teachers better tailor their classroom programs to students' individual needs.

There are no formal examinations at the end of lower-secondary education. On completing their upper-secondary education, students take national examinations. Students in prevocational education sit these examinations after four years of secondary education, those in senior general secondary education sit them after five years, and those in preuniversity education sit them at the end of six years. Students must pass these examinations in order to enter senior vocational education or higher education. The subjects that are assessed and the level of these subjects depend on the subject profiles students choose. Core subjects for everyone taking the final examinations are Dutch, mathematics, and foreign language.

#### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

The subjects called study of society (1 and 2) and social sciences are both taught in upper-secondary education. Assessment of the two subjects is different, however, and can vary across school types.

Study of society is part of the common core curriculum for all students in senior general secondary education and in preuniversity education programs. Regular assessment of this subject is at the discretion of the subject department or individual teacher. However, at the end of secondary school, students take a school examination in this subject. The domains that are assessed in this examination are determined nationally (with some minor differences between senior general secondary education and preuniversity education), but the actual assessment is administered at the school level.

Not all students study social sciences. Students whose study profiles include "economy and society" and "culture and society" must choose one subject from the humanities, including social sciences. Social sciences is part of both school and national examinations. The 2010



social sciences national examination featured three content domains—political decisionmaking, mass media, and criminality and the constitutional state. Other relevant domains, namely skills, multicultural society, people and work, environment and policy, and the Netherlands' role in establishing aid programs and trade networks with developing countries were subject to school examinations. The scores on both examinations were (and continue to be) equally weighted.

For each of the four tracks in prevocational education, study of society 1 is assessed only through school examinations. Study of society 2 is assessed partly by means of a school examination and partly by means of a national examination. Although the domains in prevocational education differ somewhat from those in senior general secondary education and preuniversity education, the domains across both examination cycles are similar.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

Schools are primarily responsible for the quality of education. School boards monitor the quality of teaching and instruction, and are accountable for its quality. Schools' responsibilities are elaborated in the statutory provisions governing the school plan and the school prospectus. Within these statutory parameters, schools themselves set their own quality targets and standards regarding civic and citizenship education and decide how the quality of civic and citizenship education will be assessed and evaluated.

In order to meet certain quality standards, the Dutch Inspectorate for Education visits schools at least once every four years. The inspectorate collects information on students' achievement and progress, learning materials, learning time, pedagogical climate, pedagogical approach, testing, evaluation, monitoring, and the way the schools manage differences between students in terms of learning abilities, behavior, and background. Since 2008, each school has been required to prepare an annual report for the inspectorate that details student achievement and the school's education policy. Schools not meeting quality standards are visited more frequently, and the inspectorate may place sanctions on them. The Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science has the final say on whether a school should be closed.

The inspectorate has in place a framework for monitoring civic and citizenship education in primary and secondary education. It consists of two indicators (School Inspectorate, 2006):

- Quality assurance of education for active citizenship and social integration; and
- Provision of education focusing on active citizenship and social integration.

With regard to the first indicator (quality assurance), the inspectorate evaluates to what degree the school has developed a vision to enhance citizenship among students. The inspectorate is also concerned with the degree to which the school has systematically established objectives and methods based on its vision. The inspectorate furthermore judges how well schools account for their vision, objectives, and methods to stakeholders and the extent to which they evaluate if students are meeting the objectives. Finally, the inspectorate examines whether schools are working toward a healthy development of citizenship attitudes and skills within the larger context of the school population and local environment.

With regard to the second indicator (education provision), the inspectorate evaluates whether the school systematically addresses students' social competencies, whether it stimulates active participation of students in society, whether it propagates basic values of democracy, and whether it offers school-based opportunities that enable students to actively experience these principles.



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# New Zealand

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

On December 31, 2009, the resident New Zealand population was 4,318,100. New Zealand's ethnic makeup has become more diverse over time. According to the 2006 census, two-thirds of all New Zealanders identified themselves as being of European origin. The second largest ethnic group at 15 percent of the total population was Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand. The Asian ethnic group was the fastest-growing group between 2001 and 2006 and now makes up nine percent of the population. Chinese and Indian are the two biggest subgroups within the Asian population. Pacific peoples comprise seven percent of the population, with just under half of these individuals identifying themselves as Samoan (Statistics New Zealand, 2006a).

New Zealand has a highly urbanized population. In 2009, 72 percent of New Zealand residents lived in one of the 16 main urban areas (Statistics New Zealand, 2006b).

New Zealand has three official languages—English, Māori, and New Zealand Sign Language. Other languages commonly spoken in New Zealand include Samoan, Tongan, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Hindi (Caygill, 2008).

The gross domestic product (GDP) of New Zealand was NZ\$M184,800 for the 2009 March year (The Treasury, 2010). New Zealand spent almost seven percent of its GDP on education (including tertiary-level education) in 2008 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011).

### Characteristics of the Political System

New Zealand is a nation state with a parliamentary democratic system. As a member of the British Commonwealth, New Zealand has as its formal head of state the Queen of England. She is represented in New Zealand by a governor-general. The governor-general's role is largely a symbolic one, and the elected House of Representatives passes laws, approves the raising and spending of government finances, monitors government policy and administration, and protects the rights of individuals. The elected government appoints ministers who are responsible for the actions and policies of their departments and state agencies (Wilson, 2011).

New Zealand has an unwritten constitution based on the Westminster (British) tradition. It is a combination of formal legal documents, common law decisions, and long-standing practices that are not laws and can be changed by parliamentary act. New Zealand's founding document is the Treaty of Waitangi (*te Tiriti o Waitangi*). The treaty is an agreement, in Māori and English, that was made between the British Crown and Māori chiefs in 1840 (New Zealand History, n. d.).

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1 The author wishes to acknowledge the valuable contributions of her colleagues, particularly Chris Arcus, Suze Strowger, Una Hyland, and of the Research Division of the Ministry of Education.

2 Ethnicity is a self-defined measure of cultural affiliation. People may identify with more than one ethnic group, which means totals may add to more than 100 percent.



New Zealand has a single chamber of parliament, the House of Representatives, which presently has 120 members (MPs). Elections take place every three years under the mixed member proportional system. Although individuals of voting age must register as voters, they are not compelled to vote in elections. Voters cast one vote for an electorate member of parliament and one for a political party. The party vote is used to elect half of all representatives, and the other half are electorate MPs (Elections New Zealand, n. d.).

Voters are divided into electoral districts on a geographical basis. There are also seven seats for Māori representation in Parliament. New Zealanders of Māori descent can choose to be enrolled on either the general or the Māori electoral roll. New Zealand also has elected subnational bodies that govern at local or regional levels.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

The New Zealand education system is based on the principle of free primary and secondary education for New Zealand citizens and permanent residents. All students undertake a general comprehensive education that offers flexible pathways for learning.

New Zealand has a decentralized system, wherein each school has the authority for its day-to-day operations and financial management. Legal responsibility for governing schools is assigned to boards of trustees, which comprise elected parent and community volunteers, the school principal, a staff representative, and (in secondary schools) a student representative. Boards of trustees must establish a charter for their respective schools and work within the framework of guidelines, requirements, and funding arrangements set by central government.

Four key governmental agencies are involved in delivering education. The Ministry of Education provides policy advice to the Minister of Education on all aspects of early childhood through to tertiary education, and manages the implementation of government policy. It is responsible for developing the national curriculum guidelines and learning resources for schools, and for funding early childhood facilities and schools. It collects and processes education statistics and information, and monitors the education sector's compliance with regulations.

The Education Review Office (ERO) evaluates the quality of education provided within each school. Its reports are freely available to the public. This process ensures that schools are accountable for their financial management and that they meet the educational objectives set out in their charters. ERO also evaluates the influence of broad educational policies.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority oversees the system of qualifications, certificates, and awards. In particular, it registers and monitors all national qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework and runs New Zealand's national senior secondary school examinations.

The Tertiary Education Commission is the lead agency for managing not only the government's relationships with the tertiary education sector but also the government's funding contribution to tertiary education. The commission provides policy advice and implementation across the tertiary sector.

While the Ministry of Education is responsible for developing national curriculum statements, it is schools and teachers, with oversight from the boards of trustees, who decide how curricula are implemented. ERO monitors the implementation of the national curricula.



## Structure of the Education System

Early childhood education in New Zealand is available to children under the age of six, and although it is not compulsory, the majority of children attend early education programs before starting primary school. Attendance at school is compulsory from ages 6 to 16, but in practice nearly all children enter primary school on or just after their fifth birthday.

In primary and secondary schooling, New Zealand has two education systems, English medium and Māori medium, each with its own curriculum (Chamberlain, 2007). Children attend either a full primary school (until Year 8) or a contributing primary school (until Year 6). Students attending a contributing primary school progress to an intermediate school for Years 7 and 8 or to a Year 7 to Year 13 secondary school. The majority of primary schools are coeducational. Most students receive their secondary education in comprehensive Years 9 to 13 or Years 7 to 13 secondary schools. There are also some composite schools that provide education from Year 1 through to Year 13 and, in recent years, schools for students at Years 7 to 10 have been established. Single-sex education is more prevalent at the secondary than at the primary level, although most secondary students attend coeducational schools.

New Zealand schools are funded primarily by the government. Private or independent schools are run by religious or philosophical organizations or by private individuals, and may be either coeducational or single-sex schools. Private schools charge fees, although fully registered independent schools receive partial funding from the central government. In 2008, four percent of all primary and secondary school students were enrolled in independent schools (Ministry of Education, 2009).

In 2009, international fee-paying students, the majority of whom came from Asia, made up approximately one percent of all primary and secondary school enrolments. The majority of New Zealand school children receive instruction in English. In 2008, three percent of students were enrolled in Māori-medium education where at least 30 percent of instruction is delivered in Māori. Approximately half of these students receive more than 80 percent of their instruction in Māori (Ministry of Education, 2009). A number of English-medium schools also make provision for instruction to be delivered to some students in the Māori language (e.g., in a separate class or unit).

In 2010, the government required New Zealand state and state-integrated secondary and composite schools to be open for instruction for 380 half-days and primary schools for 388 half-days. The school year runs from early February to mid-December, with the typical school day spanning the morning and afternoon (e.g., 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., including instructional time and breaks) (Ministry of Education, 2010a).

Primary and lower-secondary schools offer a general education. At senior secondary school level, students can choose from a range of academic subjects or move into vocational or work-based learning.

A new national curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in Years 1 to 13 was implemented in state and state-integrated schools in 2010. *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (TMOA), the national curriculum for Māori-medium teaching and learning, was implemented in 2011 (Ministry of Education, 2010b). The English-medium curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) contains eight learning areas: social sciences, arts, technology, science, mathematics and statistics, health and physical education, English, and learning languages. The curriculum document identifies five key competencies: thinking, using language, symbols, and texts, managing oneself, relating to others, and participating and contributing. TMOA has nine learning areas: *ngā toi* (arts), *pāngarau* (mathematics), *putaiao* (science), *te reo Māori* (Māori language), *hangarau* (technology), *tikanga-a-iwi* (social studies), *hauora* (health), *te reo Pākehā* (English language), and *ngā reo* (learning languages). The new national curricula are future-



focused and aim to help students successfully contribute to and participate in the 21st-century knowledge society.

Schools have considerable flexibility to design and review their own local curriculum. The principal function of the New Zealand curriculum and TMoA is to set the direction for student learning and to provide guidance for schools. Within this framework, schools have the scope, flexibility, and authority to shape the curriculum so that learning is meaningful to their particular communities (Ministry of Education, 2007).

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education is embedded in the principles, values, achievement objectives, and key competencies of the New Zealand curriculum. Its vision statement is for “young people who will be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 8). TMoA guides school curriculum development and teaching programs with a focus on learning experiences that meet the needs of individual students. TMoA supports Māori-medium students’ participation and achievement in *te ao reo Māori* (the Māori world) and as citizens of the world. Teaching and learning approaches emphasize content that reflects and values Māori knowledge and perspectives. The development of a graduate profile is identified as a starting point from which schools and their communities can develop their own school curriculum. Focusing on the shared vision for graduates from both school and *kura* (Māori-medium schools) also provides an outcomes-focused framework for planning teaching and learning programs (*Te Kete Ipurangi*, n. d.).

Civic and citizenship education is not taught as a separate subject in New Zealand schools, and there are no explicit criteria for teaching this learning domain at any level of compulsory education. Instead, civic and citizenship education is integrated into several curriculum subject areas, with social sciences being the key learning area. The social sciences learning area is conceptual in nature, with the concepts of participation and citizenship part of classroom learning from the start of compulsory schooling. As students progress through their schooling, their understanding of these concepts and the complexities inherent within them grows. At the lower-secondary level, civic and citizenship education is taught as part of the social studies curriculum, but is also incorporated into a range of other subject areas (e.g., geography, business studies, history, health, and religious studies). Learning also takes place through pastoral care, extracurricular activities, and school-based special events and assemblies.

The New Zealand curriculum document describes the social sciences learning area as being “about how societies work and how people can participate as critical, active, informed, and responsible citizens” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 30). In TMoA, the *tikanga-ā-iwi* (social studies) learning area states that learning this subject benefits students in terms of developing their knowledge of the diverse and dynamic nature of society and of gaining an understanding of the complexity of human behavior. This learning path not only keeps students informed but also helps them take stances that are critical yet constructive in nature. It also helps students participate responsibly in shaping society.

### General Overview

Although social sciences learning is typically integrative in Years 1 to 10 (as social studies), individual social science disciplines are sometimes part of junior secondary school programs, for example, as geography, history, or economics (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008). School boards of trustees, through school principals and their staff, are required to provide all Year 1 to Year 10 students with effectively taught programs of social sciences learning (Ministry of Education, 2007). A survey of Years 4 and 8 social studies teaching in 2005 found that teachers typically



taught around 40 to 60 hours of social studies per year, often as part of “topic time” (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008).

At the senior secondary school level, students in Years 11 to 13 are able to make wider subject choices as they near the end of their schooling. Schools offer a range of subjects at this level under the umbrella of social sciences, including social studies, history, geography, and economics. As well, some schools offer a range of other social science disciplines, such as business studies, classical studies, media studies, sociology, psychology, and legal studies (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008). The new business studies teaching and learning guidelines, which incorporate aspects of citizenship from a social philanthropy model, are an example of how civic and citizenship content is incorporated into other disciplines. To meet the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA)<sup>3</sup> Level 2 standard, students are required to undertake a business-related activity that benefits their community.

The New Zealand curriculum sets out achievement objectives for social studies for the first five of the eight curriculum levels, and these objectives are structured around four conceptual strands:

- *Identity, culture, and organization:* Students learn about society and communities and how they function. They also learn about diverse cultures and the identities of people within those communities and about the effects of these on the participation of groups and individuals.
- *Place and environment:* Students learn about how people perceive, represent, interpret, and interact with places and the environment. They also gain an understanding of the relationships between people and the environment.
- *Continuity and change:* Students learn about past events, experiences, and actions and how these have been interpreted over time. This learning helps them to understand the past, present, and possible futures.
- *The economic world:* Students learn about the ways in which people participate in economic activities and about the consumption, production, and distribution of goods and services. They develop an understanding of their role in the economy and of how economic decisions affect individuals and communities.

A social inquiry approach to teaching and learning is recommended. Social inquiry is an integrated process for examining social issues, ideas, and themes (Ministry of Education, 2008a). Using this approach, students:

- Ask questions, gather information and background ideas, and examine relevant current issues;
- Explore and analyze people’s values and perspectives;
- Consider the ways in which people make decisions and participate in social action;
- Reflect on and evaluate the understandings they have developed and the responses that may be required (Ministry of Education, 2007).

Teachers encourage their students to move from social inquiry to social action, or from “So what?” to “Now what?” The Ministry of Education has developed a number of resources to promote this pedagogy.

In 2008, the ministry published the *Building Conceptual Understandings in the Social Sciences* series of textbooks. The books are intended for use mainly by classroom teachers and were designed to help teachers support student learning in social studies (Ministry of Education, 2008b). The



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<sup>3</sup> For a description of the NCEA qualifications, see under Assessments and Quality Assurance below.

textbooks are of two types: the first provides information on approaches to learning, and the second focuses on key social science concepts. Support material for New Zealand teachers using the social inquiry approach to learning includes an interactive planning tool, which has also been accessed online by teachers in other countries (Ministry of Education, n. d.a).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

One of the five key competencies in the national curriculum is *participating and contributing*, that is, being actively involved in communities. Communities include family and school, and those based on a common interest or culture. The curriculum document suggests that teachers and schools provide a range of opportunities to integrate participating and contributing into school environments, activities, and events. However, schools are free to develop their own programs.

Schools use a variety of teaching and learning resources, experiences, and media to encourage critical thinking. The building conceptual understanding series supports teachers by providing textbooks for classroom use (Ministry of Education, n. d.b).

New Zealand secondary schools are required to have a student-elected trustee on their governing board. Elections for student trustees are held annually in September in schools with students above Year 9 (Grade 8 equivalent). Students made up two percent of all boards of trustee members in 2007 (Ministry of Education, n. d.c).

Most New Zealand secondary schools have a student council that comprises elected representatives from each year level. Student councils represent students' views to school management and voice concerns about school matters. Student councils may also take responsibility for organizing various school events.

Students are encouraged to ask questions, critically engage with contentious issues, and be actively involved in many levels of their school and community. For example, selected students from New Zealand schools take part in a youth parliament every three years. During this event, youth MPs have the opportunity to debate legislation, sit on select committees, and ask parliamentary questions of cabinet ministers (Ministry of Youth Development, n. d.).

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

In 2005, two parliamentary select committee reports noted that more should be done to promote citizenship education in schools and communities. The select committee reports suggested that government could partly address the recommendations through its review of the curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2006).

The *Curriculum Stocktake Report* (Ministry of Education, 2002) had also identified that citizenship education should be given greater emphasis in the New Zealand curriculum. The new national curriculum accordingly introduced explicit references to citizenship education in its vision statement, principles, values, and key competencies, as well as through the social sciences learning-area objectives. Implicit reference is made throughout the pedagogy section of the curriculum to the ways that students learn best (Ministry of Education, 2006).

The main priorities of current education policy and reform in New Zealand are numeracy, literacy, and student retention at school. Civic and citizenship education is not a current priority, although it is a central theme across the wider curriculum.



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

All teacher education programs that lead to certification must be approved by the New Zealand Teachers Council. To become a secondary school teacher, candidates must complete either a specialist-subject undergraduate degree, followed by a one-year graduate teaching diploma or a combined specialist-subject degree and secondary teaching qualification. Primary teachers complete a three- or four-year Bachelor of Education degree, or a postgraduate diploma of teaching for those who already have an undergraduate degree. First-year teachers must be provisionally registered with the New Zealand Teachers Council and will gain full registration after two years of satisfactory work as a teacher. On becoming fully registered, teachers receive a practicing certificate (Career Services Rapuara, n. d.).

Schools are responsible for ensuring that teachers participate regularly in professional development. Practicing certificate requirements specify that teachers undertake some form of professional development during the three-year period prior to the renewal of their certificate. A number of professional development opportunities are therefore available to teachers. These include classroom support for teachers and school-based programs facilitated by advisers, as well as externally facilitated courses ranging from one-day seminars and workshops to parttime Master's degree programs.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools (ISCED 2) is generally taught by teachers who specialize in civic and citizenship education-related subjects under the social sciences learning area. At the lower-secondary school level, civic and citizenship education is usually part of the social studies curriculum area. There are no specific qualifications required to teach civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools, although secondary teachers normally have a specialist subject as their degree major. Social studies teachers are likely to have completed relevant papers in subject areas such as history, geography, or social sciences as part of their university education. Primary-trained teachers can also teach lower-secondary students.

In 2010, around eight percent of the teacher vacancies reported by principals at the beginning of the school year were in the social sciences subject area (Lee, 2010). The highest proportion of vacancies was in English (21%).

## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

There are no high-stakes examinations at the primary school level in New Zealand. In 2010, national standards were introduced in English-medium schools catering for students in Years 1 to 8. The standards set out clear expectations that students need to meet in reading, writing, and mathematics during their first eight years at school. Evidence to support teachers' professional judgment can come from all learning areas, including the social sciences. National standards for Māori-medium students were developed and implemented in 2011 (Ministry of Education, n. d.b).

The main secondary school qualifications are the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Levels 1, 2, and 3. The government introduced these standards-based qualifications in 2002. Students usually begin studying for Level 1 NCEA in Year 11 and continue through Years 12 and 13. NCEA uses a mix of internal and external assessments (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2010).



To qualify for entrance to one of New Zealand's universities, candidates must have, as a minimum requirement, 42 credits at NCEA Level 3 or higher in approved subjects, 8 credits in English or *te reo Māori* at NCEA Level 2 or higher, and 14 numeracy credits at NCEA Level 1 or higher. Credits can be accumulated over more than one year. Students may also be eligible for discretionary entrance to university, although changes to tighten up university entrance criteria have been proposed (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, n. d.).

Between them, secondary schools also offer many vocational qualifications, such as national certificates in tourism, computing, and motor engineering.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

At the lower-secondary level, students are informally assessed in civic and citizenship education-related subjects through a variety of means, including written tasks, essays, tests, projects, presentations, self-assessment, and peer assessment.

Civic and citizenship education-related subjects are formally assessed through NCEA Levels 1 to 3 in Years 11 to 13 of secondary schooling. Civic and citizenship education is included in a number of subjects assessed through NCEA, such as social studies, business studies, history, geography, classical studies, media studies, economics, and health.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Lower-secondary schools are not evaluated in relation to their approaches to civic and citizenship education per se. However, the Education Review Office evaluates school-based education through its reports on individual schools.

New Zealand's National Education Monitoring Project assesses and reports on the achievement of primary school children in all areas of the school curriculum. Social studies has been assessed at Year 4 and Year 8 every four years since 1997, thereby including coverage of civic and citizenship-related topics (Smith, Crooks, Gilmore, & White, 2010).

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# Norway

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Norway has a population of approximately five million people. Seventy-five percent of the population lives in urban or urban-like areas. The language is Norwegian, which has two official written standards, *bokmål* and *nynorsk*, and a large number of dialects. Approximately 15 percent of students in Norwegian schools identify the new variant, *nynorsk*, as their preferred mode of written expression. A small group of indigenous people, the Sámi, lives in northern Norway.

Norway's gross domestic product (GDP) is 2,495 billion Norwegian kroner (approximately US\$85,000 per capita). Norway holds a top position on the Human Development Index (HDI = 0.938). The HDI ranking consists of life expectancy at birth (81 years), mean years of schooling (12.6 years), and average income.

The adult literacy rate in Norway is 100 percent. Public expenditure on education is very high, at seven percent of GDP. Internet coverage is also very high, with more than three million hosts in 2009.

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Norwegian Constitution of 1814 expresses a commitment to a free, open, and democratic society. Norway is a representative democracy with a unicameral national parliament that has legislative and granting authority. Rules for the parliamentary system were recently integrated into the constitution. Seven political parties are represented in parliament, which consists of 169 representatives. Women hold 40 percent of the seats. Norway is a constitutional monarchy in which the monarch holds only symbolic power.

All citizens have the right to vote, beginning at the age of 18, which corresponds to the last year of upper-secondary school. Voting is not compulsory. General elections for the national parliament are held every four years; the next will be held in 2013. Local elections for members of regional and municipal authorities occur every four years. During the local election of 2011, approximately one-quarter of the municipalities participated in a pilot project that trialed lowering the voting age from 18 to 16.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Norway has a unitary and compulsory education system. Compulsory schooling starts at the age of six, one year earlier than in the neighboring countries of Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Compulsory school lasts for 10 years. In the neighboring countries, compulsory schooling lasts nine years.

The national educational authorities are responsible for articulating the purposes of schooling, the core curriculum, and the various subject curricula. Municipalities are responsible for managing compulsory schooling and for implementing curricula in Norwegian schools.



## Structure of the Education System

In Norway, schools are organized in terms of levels or stages. Grades 1 to 4 are referred to as the lower-primary level, while Grades 5 to 7 are termed upper primary. The last three years of compulsory school are categorized as lower-secondary school and encompass Grades 8 to 10. Teachers in the lower stages are generalists. At other levels, teachers specialize to some extent in at least one subject.

Norway has noncompulsory upper-secondary education for Grades 11 to 13, with students choosing between academic and vocational courses. At this level, most teachers specialize in two subjects.

All Norwegian schools are obliged to follow the national curriculum in terms of content, instructional time, and assessment. The curriculum is formulated as descriptions of competencies in groups of grades (1 to 4, 5 to 7, and 8 to 10). Norwegian schools have autonomy in *interpreting* the competencies in different subjects. Choice of teaching material and of instructional methods is delegated to schools and teachers. The competencies are characterized as quite general skills. Time allocated to various subjects and competencies varies according to priorities set by schools. Management of Norwegian schools takes place in local boards, which generally consist of representatives from school leaders, teachers, students, parents, and community members.

Schooling and education are subject to continuous attention and debate in Norway. In 2010 and 2011, one of the main themes of debate focused on how compulsory school could contribute to preventing students from dropping out of upper-secondary education. The other main issue of debate concerned demands for improved documentation of how student assessment is carried out, including how teachers apply assessment criteria connected to definitions of skills in various school subjects.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Norway's Constitution propounds an inclusive and egalitarian society, and asserts support for democratic values and citizenship. Norway has declared policy goals regarding the encouragement of citizenship education. These commitments are evident in legislative Acts and in parts of the curriculum. The commitments are often directly stated, and are also integrated into descriptions of the various curricular purposes. Such statements often use the word democracy. However, words such as civic and citizenship are rarely explicitly used in relation to the preparation of young people for active participation in society. Also, the term civic cannot be adequately translated into Norwegian.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

In Norway, civic and citizenship education is implemented through the relevant competencies, knowledge, and skills of the various curricula for Grade 1 (age 6) through to Grade 10 (age 15). All curricula are divided into three parts, one for each group of grades: lower primary, upper primary, and lower secondary. Curricula therefore outline the aims of education at the end of Grades 4, 7, and 10. Schools and teachers are free to choose both the chronology of the various subjects (*what* to teach *when*) and the didactics applied (*how* to teach) within the main stages of the national curriculum.

The following subjects are those seen as most explicitly contributing to civic and citizenship education in Norwegian schools:

- Religion, philosophies of life, and ethics (REL);
- Student council work (Grades 8 to 10 only); and
- Social studies, which is a compound of history, geography, and sociology.



An impression of content and relevance for civic and citizenship education can be gained from curriculum statements relating to each of these subjects. This first one relates to REL.

By the end of Grade 4, the aims of this area of education are to enable the student to:

- Lead a simple dialogue about conscience, ethical rules of conduct, and values;
- Cite the rule of reciprocity and be able to put this rule into practice;
- Talk about respect and tolerance, and counteract bullying in real life;
- Use the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child to understand children's rights and equality, and be able to find examples of these in the media and on internet (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [UDIR], 2005, p. 4).

The second example of competencies relevant to civic and citizenship education comes from the curriculum subject called "student council work." The introduction to the subject states that:

An underpinning of a democratic society is that its inhabitants endorse fundamental democratic values and that they actively participate in societal life. Each new generation must therefore learn how to keep democracy alive, and learn to participate in society in a number of ways. The subject of student council work shall develop students' understanding of democracy and their ability to participate in a democracy on their way to active citizenship. By the end of Grade 10, the aims of this area of education are to enable the student to:

- Provide examples of and discuss differences between facts and opinions;
- Discuss the concepts of tolerance and compromise;
- Take a personal standpoint, promote and argue for a case, and prepare contributions to a debate;
- Discuss what it means to represent others as a representative for a student group, student council, and various committees;
- Discuss what it means to show loyalty to majority decisions and respect for the minority (UDIR, 2005b, p. 2).

The third example of competencies relevant to civic and citizenship education is contained in the following quote from the curriculum for social studies.

By the end of Grade 10, the aims of this area of education are to enable the student to:

- Explain what attitudes and prejudices are, and discuss and elaborate on opportunities and challenges in multicultural communities;
- Explore what a community needs to continue to exist, and compare two or more communities;
- Elaborate on political institutions in Norway and compare them with institutions in other countries;
- Provide examples of and discuss and elaborate on democracy as a form of government, elaborate on political influence and power distribution in Norway, and use digital channels to exercise democracy (UDIR, 2005c, p. 9).

As these examples indicate, the teaching of civic and citizenship education in Norway is based on a number of different subject fields and (generally) precisely formulated competencies related to the development of democratic knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as expressed in various curricula. Additionally, the idea of democracy as a way of living together with others, and analyses of what it takes to realize such an idea in the schools of a modern pluralistic society, are clearly stated in the core curriculum for primary, secondary, and adult education in Norway (UDIR, 2006).



Given that an important goal of civic and citizenship education is the development of certain skills, it is obvious that a number of other subject curricula contribute to students' training in reasoning and analyzing, most notably, natural science, mathematics, Norwegian, foreign languages, and arts and crafts.

Table 1 shows the teaching hours allocated to the three subjects that are most relevant to civic and citizenship education. In Norway, the curricula encompassing civic and citizenship education are similar for all students up to the age of 16. Differentiation of study programs takes place after Grade 10. In accordance with the Norwegian curriculum reform of 2006 (Knowledge Promotion 06), the various curricula give neither instructions nor specific information about approaches to teaching civic and citizenship education. The reform emphasizes that choices of material and methodology are issues to be decided by the professional teacher or the school.

*Table 1: Number of teaching hours allocated to the three subjects in the Norwegian national curriculum most related to civic and citizenship education*

Subject curriculum	Grades	Teaching hours
Student council work	8–10	71
Social studies	1–7	385
	8–10	256
Religion, philosophies of life, and ethics	1–7	427
	8–10	157

Note: Teaching hours are given in 60-minute units.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

As stated above, civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools (ISCED 2) is embedded within several subjects, each of which contributes significantly to the overarching aim of education: to expand the individual's capacity to perceive and to participate, to experience, to empathize, and to excel.

The various competencies of Norwegian curricula relating to civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement are closely connected with two main aspects of democratic citizenship: the principles of conventional citizenship and social-movement-related citizenship. The competencies also emphasize the value of both factual and operative knowledge as parts of an integrated understanding of democratic citizenship:

- Look up facts in printed and digital media [...]
- Discuss and elaborate on perceptions of justice and fairness (social studies curriculum) (UDIR, 2005a, p. 6)

Additionally, all curricula contain subject-specific descriptions of a set of five basic skills that, to a large extent, closely relate to the fundamental characteristics of a democratically oriented citizen. These include the ability to express oneself orally and in writing, the ability to read, the mastery of numeracy, and the mastery of digital skills. For instance, in the social studies curriculum, the basic skills of oral and written expression are presented as follows:

Being able to express oneself orally and in writing in social studies means telling others about events in the past and the present, explaining about places and facts and applying definitions, concepts, and terms to explain causes and effects in connection with society and culture. It also means being able to present one's own work clearly and comprehensively to others, and being able to discuss one's own presentations as well as those of others. The ability to express oneself orally and in writing means being able to reflect on the content of



meaning in texts, images, film, and artifacts, and being able to compare, argue, and discuss values inherent in information and sources, and in hypotheses and models. (UDIR, 2005c, p. 4)

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Students are strongly encouraged to take part in the governance of their school. As is evident from above, student council work is positioned as a school subject with its own curriculum. In lower-secondary schooling, the subject has defined teaching hours—71 distributed over these years of schooling. Student council work is structured into two main subject areas—“independence and cooperation” and “empowerment,” which are described as follows:

The main subject area, *independence and cooperation*, focuses on developing students’ ability to express their own opinions and to function in various roles and groups. This means mastering tasks that require one to understand the views and attitudes of others, show respect, manage conflicts, and practice equal rights. The main subject area also includes planning, implementation, and supplementary work in connection with various types of meetings.

The main subject area, *empowerment*, concerns the development of students’ understanding of democracy and participation in democratic processes. This includes performing duties and assuming responsibility in the school community. Work with the duties of the student council and other bodies is a key element of this main subject area. (UDIR, 2005b, p. 3)

All students are required to study student council work. Through activities carried out in student groups or class councils, and through students’ participation in influencing and decisionmaking processes, including their work in the school’s student council, the subject develops students’ ability to express independent opinions and their ability and willingness to cooperate. The subject is thus intended to promote the development of an inclusive learning environment that is devoid of bullying and where students feel secure, confident, and included.

All Norwegian schools have student councils. Students elect representatives to serve on them; in some municipalities, these students also serve on a local community council for young people. The councils address questions of special interest to young people. Many of these councils have their own budgets and determine how to use the money on purposes that will benefit young people.

### **Current Reform and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

#### **Recent Reforms in Civic and Citizenship Education**

The most recent reform to Norway’s national curriculum (K06) came into being during the 2006/2007 school year, and the ongoing importance of civic and citizenship education is evident in it. This area of education has been part of Norwegian curricula dating back to 1939. The curriculum reforms of 1959, 1974, 1987, 1997, and 2006 have thus all paid major attention to the development of democratic preparedness and the preservation of the democratic system and rule of law. The 1997 reform (L97) introduced a new core curriculum, and the 2006 reform is based on it. Both draw particular attention to democracy as a fundamental value of society and consequently as the common ground of education:

*Common references in a specialized society:* It is a central tenet of popular enlightenment that such frames of reference must be the common property of all the people—indeed must be an integral part of general education—to escape differences in competence which otherwise can surface in social inequality and be abused by undemocratic forces. (UDIR, 2006, p. 26)



## Essential Features of Current Debates on the Nature and Content of Civic and Citizenship Education

In 2004, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported the results of its first Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey of 15-year-olds' performance in key learning areas—reading, mathematics, and science. The results for Norwegian students were regarded as relatively poor. Since then, public and political attention in Norway has focused on the Norwegian context and the factors that allegedly influenced these results. Particular attention has been paid to teaching quality in reading, mathematics, and science in lower-secondary schools.

A notable outcome of these analyses has been the establishment of national centers for natural science, mathematics, and reading literacy, with the aim of providing more sustainable and evidence-based knowledge on how to improve the quality of education in these subjects. Consequently, civic and citizenship education has not attracted similar attention in recent years, in the sense that few teachers have been systematically trained in didactical implementation of the various skills outlined in the curriculum.

Biseth (2012) examined how 64 educators and 23 students in three junior high schools and senior high schools in the Scandinavian capitals of Copenhagen, Oslo, and Stockholm were carrying out certain aspects of civic and citizenship education. The study's findings indicate that teachers are very well aware of their civic and citizenship education obligations, but that they have a somewhat weak command of the didactical tools needed to fulfill these obligations. Findings also suggest that the priority given to civic and citizenship education varies considerably across Norwegian classrooms.

It is probably justified to say that there is no current debate on the *content* of civic and citizenship education in schools. It is probably also fair to observe that schools take civic and citizenship education subjects for granted, given the widespread acknowledgement that democratic preparedness and democratic citizenship are school responsibilities. Nevertheless, this area of education does appear to remain overshadowed by the importance ascribed to instrumental skills connected with science, mathematics, and literacy, and by political expectations that schools focus on pedagogical use of information and communication technologies (ICT). Despite these emphases, a few schools are actively seeking advice on how to make better use of the civic and citizenship education potential in the student council work curriculum.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

There are two different programs for teacher education in Norway. The first is administered by teachers' colleges and features a four-year, all-round teacher preparation with little or practically no subject specialization. The program qualifies candidates to teach Grades 1 to 10. The other program is organized as a three-year Bachelor's or five-year Master's degree at a university, including one year of teacher education encompassing pedagogical theory and didactical exercises, and 12 weeks of practical teaching at a school. The theoretical part of this year is integrated in the subject-based studies and is taught at the universities' teacher training institutes. Students specialize in two subjects in science, humanities, or social studies. The program qualifies candidates to teach from Grades 8 to 13.

Although Norway has no systematically organized or compulsory program for teachers' continuing professional development, educational authorities, teacher organizations, textbook publishers, and nongovernmental organizations offer a large number of inservice courses for teachers. In most cases, it is up to the individual teacher to decide whether to enroll in these



courses and which ones to take. After the 2006 curriculum reform, education authorities at both the national and local levels put a great deal of energy into encouraging teachers to enroll in courses intended to increase professional competence, particularly with respect to the new curricula and assessment.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Because civic and citizenship-related knowledge appears in the curriculums of several subjects, this area of education is not taught by specialists in lower-secondary schools but by teachers educated to teach a range of subjects. Informally, social studies teachers are probably regarded as those best qualified for teaching civic and citizenship education, but there is no clear evidence or generally accepted research sustaining this surmise.

Teachers of lower-secondary students do not need to have a specific qualification for teaching at this level, provided they have either a teachers' college or a university degree that includes pedagogical training. Also, because there are no specific requirements for teaching in lower-secondary school, there is no lack of teachers who are ostensibly qualified to teach civic and citizenship education-related subjects.

### **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

#### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

General guidelines on assessment are outlined in regulations relating to the Norwegian Education Act. In primary school, students are assessed in all subjects and grades, but do not receive marks. The main purpose of assessment is formative because it is directed toward improving students' learning processes and outcomes. Teachers use both oral and written tests in these assessments.

Norwegian students are formally assessed in lower- and upper-secondary schools in most subjects. Marks run from 6 (equivalent to an A) to 1 (equivalent to an F). In most subjects, standards are developed locally. Only three subjects in lower-secondary school are connected to summative examinations that are developed centrally—Norwegian, English, and mathematics.

Norway administers some national tests. Inspired by PISA, Norway now has a national test of reading proficiency in Grade 5 in primary school, Grade 8 in lower-secondary school, and Grade 1 in upper-secondary school. There are also national tests in English as a second language and in mathematics. The nature of these tests is diagnostic.

#### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

In the subjects most relevant to civic and citizenship education, the curricula sections outlining summative assessment state that students shall receive one overall achievement grade after Year 10. Students may also be selected for an oral examination. The examination is prepared and graded locally. Oral examinations are increasingly organized as student "lectures" based on general themes presented to the student 48 hours before the actual examination, with the expectation that the student should produce relevant questions when focusing on the given theme. The dialogues occur with the teacher and an external examiner. Formative assessment of students in civic and citizenship education is carried out in various ways. Written tests, observation of students, and written homework seem to be the approaches preferred by most teachers.

The two main civic and citizenship education-related subjects—social studies and religion, philosophies of life, and ethics (RLE)—are assessed through local interpretations and local standards. Students receive marks from the middle of Grade 8, and thereafter twice each year. At the end of Grade 10, they receive an overall achievement mark, which is locally based. Only



the overall achievement marks in the three centrally tested subjects are reported to a central database. There is no formal assessment for the subject student council work. Instead, students receive a written statement on their work in this area in their end of year school transcripts (reports).

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

There is no formal quality monitoring of civic and citizenship education in Norway. This lack influenced Norway's decision to participate in the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement Civic Education Study (IEA CIVED) in 1999 and the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) in 2009. These broad studies, in mapping the whole field of democratic awareness that the Norwegian core curriculum and several subject curricula emphasize, enabled Norway to monitor quality in this area. They also provided information about the views and priorities of school leaders and teachers on civic and citizenship education, thereby also securing important perspectives on quality.

Norway's Board of Education intends to develop standards in social studies in 2013. These will be connected to tests that were recently trialed in a small group of schools and then made available in a national database. The purposes of these tests are to help Norwegian schools and teachers of this subject interpret its curriculum, and to supply them with guidelines on formally evaluating student achievement in it.

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# Paraguay

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The Republic of Paraguay has a population of 6,451,122 people.<sup>1</sup> It is a multicultural and bilingual country where Spanish and Guaraní are recognized as official languages. Indigenous languages, as well as those of other minorities, are part of the nation's cultural heritage. Fifty-seven percent of the population lives in urban areas and 43 percent in rural areas.

Paraguay's gross domestic product in 2009 was 74,357,871 million guaraníes (US\$B14.310), as estimated by the Central Bank of Paraguay. According to preliminary figures from the Ministry of Education and Culture, state expenditure on education in 2009 was 3,279,236 million guaraníes (US\$M685).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Articles 1 and 3 of the National Constitution of Paraguay define Paraguay as a social and democratic nation with a political system that is a representative, participative, and pluralist democracy, based on the recognition of human dignity (Government of Paraguay, 1992). The political system consists of three areas of power: legislative, executive, and judicial. The president of the republic, who is elected directly by voters through universal suffrage, exercises the executive power.

Article 156 of the constitution establishes the political and administrative structure of the nation. It divides the national territory into departments, municipalities, and districts, each of which enjoys political and administrative autonomy in the management of its affairs and self-sufficiency in terms of the collection and investment of resources.

Since 1989, Paraguay has been experiencing a slow but sustained process of democratization, institutionalization, and decentralization. Freedom of speech and association is guaranteed, and elections in the country are free and becoming increasingly transparent.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Articles 73 to 80 of the national constitution determine the political framework for educational policy in Paraguay. The General Law of Education (Number 1264), enacted in 1998, confers a high priority on education in order to consolidate democracy, decrease poverty, and offer new opportunities to all citizens of the country (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1998).

Article 20 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code includes the notion that children and adolescents have the right to an education that guarantees their balanced and holistic development, as well as preparing them for exercising their citizenship (Government of Paraguay, 2003). Article 21 states that children and adolescents have the right to be respected by their educators, to organize and participate in student societies, to promote their own rights,



<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of Statistics, Survey and Census (DGEEC). Projection of the population is by gender and age group for the period 2000–2020.

to participate in free public schooling, and maintain respect and dignity. Article 22 of the code refers to the educational rights of children and young people with special educational needs, in order to prevent not only discrimination against them but also their social exclusion.

The Educator's Law (Number 1725; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001), approved and regulated in September 2001, establishes the duties and rights of educators, in general. Among the duties and rights referred to are those relating to ongoing professional development, staff advancement, and teaching practices.

The General Law of Education of 1998 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1998) also defines the basic structure of the Paraguayan education system, which is made up of general education, special education, and other forms of educational assistance. Education within the general system consists of formal and nonformal education as well as educational assistance through information and communication technologies (Article 26).

### Structure of the Education System

Formal education in Paraguay has three levels: (i) early education (*educación inicial*) and basic education (*educación básica*), (ii) upper-secondary education (*educación media* or *educación profesional*), and (iii) higher education. Early childhood education is offered to children from birth to the age of five and will soon become a compulsory part of basic education.

Basic education is compulsory and consists of Grades 1 to 9 for children from the ages of 6 to 14. Grades 1 to 6 correspond to primary education (ISCED 1) and Grades 7 to 9 to lower-secondary education (ISCED 2). Basic education is free in public schools, as is attendance at preschool. For students from low-income families, the cost-free policy will be progressively extended to school nutrition programs and the provision of school supplies. The cost-free policy may also be extended to other levels, institutions, or persons in line with budgetary resources. The objectives of basic education are defined and updated periodically by competent authorities, according to education reform policies and students' needs and potential.

Upper-secondary education includes two types of educational program—general (*educación media*) and professional (*educación profesional*). The general objectives of this level of education are to prepare students for entry into society and productive work (general program) or to help them progress to a higher level of education (professional program). More particularly, the aims of upper-secondary education include the following:

- To guide students' intellectual and emotional skills and wellbeing so they are equipped to participate in their respective cultures and communities as critical and creative citizens; and
- To help students acquire the knowledge and skills that will allow them to fulfill their social commitments responsibly and with competence.

The state encourages access to upper-secondary education through the provision of resources.

Special education is directed toward individuals with special learning needs and is designed to help them develop their potential to acquire knowledge and skills. The goal is to enable these students to reach their educational goals and actively participate in society. Where possible, special education is carried out as an integrated part of mainstream schooling.

Higher education is subject to the law regulating this type of education and is located at universities and other higher education institutions. Higher education institutions offer studies in a specific field of knowledge in compliance with their mission of research, professional training, and community service.

In 2008, 80 percent of students were enrolled in public schools, 9 percent in independent private institutions, and 11 percent in government-dependent (i.e., in terms of receiving a



funding subsidy) private institutions in early education, basic education, and upper-secondary education. Private education institutions must meet national certification requirements and are subject to the General Law of Education and to supervision by official educational authorities under the Ministry of Education and Culture (Article 62).

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education in Paraguay integrates knowledge, attitudes, and values related to democratic, family, and environmental education. Schools deliver civic and citizenship education as a crosscurricular learning area both in the classroom and outside of formal lessons through activities organized jointly by schools and local communities.

The national constitution describes the aims of civic and citizenship education in terms of developing students'

- Desire to promote liberty, peace, social justice, solidarity, cooperation, and the cultural and ethnic integration of the people of Paraguay;
- Respect for human rights and democratic principles;
- Commitment to the homeland; and
- Intellectual, moral, and civic identities.

Civic and citizenship education also aims to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, etc.

The curriculum documents for early education and basic education emphasize the participation of different community organizations in the educational process. They promote learning centered on the values that children and young people should acquire and internalize as part of educational processes. The documents for upper-secondary education emphasize the need to consolidate and strengthen the ethics of coexistence through acceptance and mutual respect in order to confront the challenges of pluralism in an era of globalization. Civic and citizenship education-related education at this level of the education system is also expected to consolidate students' personal identities by helping them develop and internalize transcendental, social, and emotional values. Essentially, this area of learning should develop young people's desire to act in ways that help them to improve the quality of their own lives and the lives of others.

The *National Plan of Education of 2024: Toward the Centennial of the New School of Ramon Indalecio Cardozo* (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009) is the referential document for Paraguayan educational policy. The plan, which sets out actions for the education sector from 2012 to 2024, is underpinned by the vision of a democratic, decentralized, participative, open, and intercultural education system that delivers education as a public good and a fundamental right of all people throughout their lives. Under the plan, education is expected to contribute to social cohesion, gender equality, respect for and value of ethnic groups, active participation of the family and community, the creation of knowledge, the socially responsible development of the country, and active integration among the nations of the region and the world. The plan also envisages education for responsible citizenship, the promotion of human rights, strengthening of the democratic system, solidarity with others, and participation in the construction of a more just and fraternal society.

The following principles are central to the implementation of the National Plan of Education 2024:

- The promotion of citizen participation, which is oriented toward the creation of a social contract for education that guarantees a high-quality education system with opportunities for everyone;



- Equality of educational opportunities for every citizen, especially for persons with disabilities or special learning needs; and
- Respect for cultural, linguistic, and social diversity.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

### **Early Childhood and Basic Education**

The curriculum of early childhood education is divided into three areas. One of these areas is presented in terms of the slogan, “I connect with the natural, social and cultural environment.” The goal of this learning area is to build children’s capacity for inquiry and to foster their curiosity and interests through science-based pedagogical methods. The fundamental skills detailed and assessed in this area include interest in the care and conservation of the environment and respect for cultural diversity.

During the first stage of basic education (Grades 1 to 3), citizenship-related topics are taught, as part of the general learning program, in an area called “social life and work.” This learning area has a cognitive component. However, it also aims to provide experiences which make students actively understand that being a part of a social group requires them to maintain and respect democratic rules in the family, classroom, school, and community.

Essentially, the inclusion of social life and work at the first level of basic education should provide ethical citizenship education that builds students’ personal and social identities and highlights for them the value of work as a social activity. Educating for work should not only provide the necessary competencies to undertake a chosen profession but also foster students’ awareness that work is a duty and a right, a means of personal fulfillment, and the way in which everyone contributes to quality of life and the development of the country.

During the second level of basic education (Grades 4 to 6), civic and citizenship learning is taught in a more academic and systematic way through the subjects history and geography as well as through the more specific subject called “ethics and civic education.” Ethics and civic education favors social and harmonious coexistence, builds knowledge and understanding, and promotes the responsible exercise of duties and rights in the family and in regional and national communities. Learning in this area focuses on the development of appropriate attitudes as well as moral, cultural, and civic values related to people, symbols, objects, situations, and ideas. Learning takes place not only in the classroom but also in the school as an institution, thereby helping students understand their connection to local, regional, and national communities.

During the last three years of basic education (Grades 7 to 9), the broader learning area called “social studies” is divided into two subareas. One of these consists of the subjects history and geography, whereas the other is the more specific subject called “ethics and civic formation.” The latter helps students acquire civic knowledge, thus building their capacity for moral thoughts and actions. The subject is taught for three hours a week in Grade 7 and two hours a week in Grades 8 and 9 by specialist social science teachers.

Social studies at the lower-secondary level emphasizes the development of social thinking among students. It also emphasizes the need for students to bring a critical analysis to social phenomena and to have opportunity to address topics such as human rights, conflict management, and democratic values.

### **Upper-Secondary Education**

During Grades 10 and 11, civic and citizenship education is taught as a specific subject called “ethics and citizenship education” (*formación ética y ciudadana*), whereas in Grade 12 it is integrated within the subject area called “politics.” Civic and citizenship education in upper-secondary education offers students opportunities for reflection and focuses in particular on citizens’ social conduct. The program not only develops knowledge and skills related



to citizenship but also encourages the acceptance of others and the need for responsible decisionmaking. It is furthermore designed to help students understand the principles of solidarity and citizen participation in different areas of social life. To this end, it promotes ethical and civic conduct that is compatible with the values of Paraguayan society and supports peaceful coexistence and democratic awareness. Through their learning, students learn to act with autonomy while at the same time remaining aware of the consequences of their actions. They also develop an understanding of their own contributions to constructing an equitable society (Ministry of Education and Culture Study Program of Secondary Education 2002).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The General Law of Education establishes students' rights to organize themselves as a group and to elect representatives. Parents also have the right to form associations, the goal of which is usually that of promoting education through collaboration between parents and those working in the education community. The law also requires school management to promote the formation and effective functioning of student and parent associations, as well as create associations for teaching and nonteaching staff within schools.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

To become a teacher in Paraguay, applicants must have graduated from teacher education centers, higher education institutes, or universities. Additional teacher training and improvement programs in educational sciences are available for inservice teachers. These programs must meet the requirements set by overseeing authorities (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1998). Legislation requires that, in addition to having a professional degree, teachers must display ethical behavior and prove their competence. Applicants without an appropriate educational degree may occupy temporary teaching positions if they demonstrate an adequate level of teaching competence.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

In their fourth year of teacher education, basic education teacher candidates have the option of studying ethics and citizen education in order to graduate as specialists in this area. The aim of this area of teacher training is to develop teachers who can help students become citizens who are

- Competent, open, critical, and proud (of themselves and their country);
- Responsible in terms of their duties, rights, and social obligations;
- Have a sense of belonging to a multiethnic and multicultural nation; and
- Share values common to the Paraguayan people.

## **Assessment and Quality Assurance**

Article 118 of the General Law of Education delegates responsibility for evaluation of the education system to the Ministry of Education and Culture. The ministry created the National System of Evaluation of the Educative Process (SNEPE) in 1995 as a means of contributing to the ongoing improvement of Paraguayan education. Improvement is expected to occur through the provision of regular, reliable, and opportune information. The data that are collected allow educators and policymakers to decide among options for improvement and to make informed decisions on education policies for the country.

SNEPE assesses the academic performance of students in their last year of each education cycle in the areas of Spanish language and literacy, mathematics, social studies, and natural sciences. Each assessment contains a questionnaire component that collects information



(e.g., on ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status) to assist with the interpretation of students' academic performance. The assessments are administered to a nationally representative sample of students every three or four years, depending on the availability of budgetary resources.

Paraguay participated in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), which assessed a representative sample of Grade 8 students. In Paraguay, the study was carried out by the General Department for Educational Planning through its Evaluation Department for Educational Quality.

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# Poland

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

In 2009, the population of Poland was 38,115,641 people, approximately 62 percent of whom were living in urban areas, with the remainder living in rural areas (Central Office of Statistics, 2010). The country occupies a land area of 322,575 square kilometers. Poland is a relatively homogeneous country in terms of ethnic composition. Racial, national, and religious minorities account for just a few percent of the total population. In 2002, 96 percent of people declared themselves to be of Polish nationality and 95 percent of people with religious beliefs said they belonged to the Roman Catholic Church (Central Office of Statistics, 2002). However, Polish law distinguishes nine national minorities: Byelorussian, Czech, Lithuanian, German, Armenian, Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian, and Jewish, as well as four ethnic minorities (Karaim, Lemko, Romany, and Tatar) and one community that uses the regional language of Kashubian (National Parliament of Poland, 2005a).

At the end of 2008, Poland had 7,349,700 people 17 years of age and under, 24,590,500 people of working age (including women aged 18 to 59 years and men aged 18 to 64 years), and 6,196,700 people of retirement age. During the years from 2001 to 2008, Poland experienced a slight increase in its population (Central Office of Statistics, 2010). Poland has an ageing population, as is also the case in a number of other European countries.

The official language, and thus the language of instruction, is Polish. However, national and ethnic minority languages and the regional language, Kashubian, are taught at all stages of the education system. In 2008/2009, there were 47,500 students enrolled in schools (mostly in elementary schools) who were being instructed in a language other than Polish. German was the most common such language: it was being used to teach 46 percent of the total student population at this time (Central Office of Statistics, 2009).

In 2009, the International Monetary Fund (2010) reported Poland's gross domestic product (GDP) as US\$430,197, placing the country at 21st position on the world ranking of nations' GDP. The per capita GDP was US\$11,273.

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Republic of Poland is a parliamentary democracy with a constitution as the basis of its political system. Poland is governed by a parliamentary and cabinet system in which each has separate but balanced powers. There are three branches: legislative power is held by parliament (the *Sejm* or lower house and the senate or upper house), executive by the president, the prime minister, and the Council of Ministers, and judicial by an independent judiciary comprised of common, administrative, and military courts. The constitution protects civil rights and freedoms, determines the relationships between the legislative, executive, and judiciary powers, and defines the structure and electoral rules for state roles and institutions such as the *Sejm*, senate, president, and Council of Ministers. The constitution also regulates governmental administration, public finance, and states of emergency. Electoral laws describe the candidacy and voting procedures for the *Sejm* and senate, the presidency, and local bodies. They also regulate the laws governing referenda. Voting is not obligatory but is regarded as a citizen's privilege and civic duty.



## Education System

### Overview and Background

The Polish education system has two sectors: public or state schools and nonpublic schools. The latter includes civic, church, and private schools. Nonpublic schools can use their own curricula, subject to the approval of the Minister of National Education. During the 2008/2009 school year, about 97 percent of students were attending public schools.

Almost all funds for public-sector schools come from the state budget. Nonpublic schools are financed by fees received from parents as well as by funds gained from private enterprise and foundations. According to the School Education Act of September 1991 (see National Parliament of Poland, 2004), nonpublic schools with public school rights are eligible for a grant calculated according to the number of students. The grant per student equals 100 percent of the average cost of educating a student in a public school.

Nonpublic schools in Poland issue school certificates that are recognized by all other schools and the universities. The Ministry of National Education is responsible for virtually the entire education system, with the exception of higher education, which is supervised by the Minister of Science and Higher Education. At present, only a few types of school operate outside of the Ministry of National Education's jurisdiction. Two examples are art schools, which are supervised by the Minister of Culture, and correctional facilities, which are supervised by the Minister of Justice. Their jurisdictions are determined by the School Education Act of 7 September 1991, and subsequent amendments (National Parliament of Poland, 2004).

The reform of the state administration system and the associated educational reform introduced in 1999 ushered in a new era in Poland's education system. The reform decentralized the management of educational institutions by delegating administration of public kindergartens, primary schools, and lower-secondary schools (*gimnazjum*) to municipal authorities. Upper-secondary, artistic, and special schools are the statutory responsibility of wider districts (*powiat*). At the provincial level, the Superintendent of Education Office (*kuratorium*) undertakes pedagogical supervision, coordination, and implementation of ministry policy. School heads operate schools, supervise pedagogy, implement resolutions made by the schools' and teachers' councils, manage school finances, and organize and administer external tests and examinations. In March 2008, the Minister of National Education established a National Education Council that has an advisory capacity with respect to the Minister of Education. Local education councils operate at the local government level.

### Structure of the Education System

Preprimary education is the first level of the school system. It covers children from three to five or six years of age. Since school year 2004/2005, six-year-old children have been required to complete a year of preparation for primary education (preparatory class) called Grade 0. These classes are attached either to kindergartens or to primary schools. The local authority (*gmina*) is responsible for organizing these classes.

Core curriculum activities are offered free of charge in all public kindergartens and schools. Additional activities and child care in public kindergartens are paid for by parents, with the local authority determining fees. Core curriculum activities in Grade 0, as well as additional activities and child care, may be financed by parents in nonpublic schools and kindergartens.

Under legislation adopted in 2009 and changed in 2011, compulsory preprimary education from the age of five will be brought in at the beginning of the 2014/2015 school year. Primary education became compulsory for six-year-olds at the beginning of the 2012/2013 school year. Before 2012, parents could choose whether to send their six-year-old children to school.



Compulsory education lasts 10 years from the age of six or seven. Further education is also compulsory, either in school or out of school, and lasts until the age of 18. Primary school has two stages and six grades. The first stage uses integrated teaching, whereas the second stage uses teaching based on separate subjects. The lower-secondary level is a three-grade compulsory school. Admission criteria for lower-secondary schooling consist of a primary school completion certificate and an external test that children take at the end of primary school. The latter, however, has no selection function.

The introduction of the lower-secondary level in 1999 led to a reform of the upper-secondary school system (ISCED 3). Today, students who successfully graduate from lower-secondary school can choose from various types of school: three-year general secondary schools (*liceum ogólnokształcące*), three-year specialized secondary schools (*liceum profilowane*), four-year technical secondary schools (*technikum*), and two- to three-year basic vocational schools (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*). There are also general or technical upper-secondary schools for adult students as well as postsecondary, nontertiary schools.

The admission criteria for upper-secondary education are diverse. However, in general, the number of points that students have on their lower-secondary leaving certificate, including the points they receive for the examination held at the end of this level of their schooling, helps determine which type of upper-secondary school they will attend.

Core curricula for compulsory education, created at the central level, are the same for all schools. During the first stage of primary school, children are taught a common integrated curriculum. The curriculum for the second stage of primary school and the curriculum for the lower-secondary school are differentiated into separate subjects with crosscurricular themes. Schools and teachers can choose textbooks from a ministry-approved list. They are free to determine both teaching and internal assessment methods, but what they teach must be listed on the ministry's list of curriculum-approved subjects. Teachers can develop their own subject-based curricula but these, too, must be based on the government's core curriculum and must be submitted to the ministry for approval.

At the end of upper-secondary education (with the exception of basic vocational schools), students can take an upper-secondary school final examination called the General Certificate of Secondary Education (the GCSE or *Matura* Matriculation Examination). Students who pass this examination are eligible for entry to higher education.

Current discussions in education circles focus on lowering the school-starting age and on the recent curricular reforms. At the beginning of the 2009/2010 school year, curricular changes were introduced in preprimary schools, as well as into the first year of primary and lower-secondary schools. These changes were extended to the first and second grades of primary and lower-secondary schools at the beginning of 2010/2011. Gradually, year by year, the changes will reach all grades in Poland's education system. Complete coverage should be in place in general upper-secondary schools and basic vocational schools by the beginning of the 2015/2016 school year, in technical upper-secondary schools and upper-secondary schools with artistic profiles by 2016/2017, and in supplementary upper-secondary schools by 2017/2018. In general, the reform encompasses adjusting teaching contents to students' current needs, developing students' practical skills, satisfying the needs of the labor market, and ensuring congruence with the aims of European educational reforms. The reform also includes the implementation of a coherent curriculum extending across six or seven years, instead of the previous two separate three-year cycles.

Changes in the *Matura* examination have also been discussed and have already led to one change. In 2009/2010, mathematics became an obligatory *Matura* examination subject. It replaced an examination in a subject that students could self select.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

There is no specific definition of civic and citizenship education in Poland's official curriculum documents. The 2002 core curriculum, which was in place at the time of ICCS and is still in place in a number of primary and secondary school grades, describes all school subjects in terms of educational goals, school tasks, contents, and students' achievements, whereas the new curriculum focuses on the aims and outcomes of learning. In Poland, civic and citizenship education can be taught as a separate school subject called "knowledge of society," or it may be incorporated as an optional crosscurricular module taught with related subjects such as history, Polish, and geography (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2002a). Each school head (principal) is responsible for choosing which crosscurricular themes to include in the school curriculum. Subject teachers implement these themes through the content they include in the subject syllabuses.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

Poland's core curriculum regulations require civic and citizenship education to be implemented at all school levels, beginning in Stage 2 of primary school (Grades 4 to 6). In primary school, the subject is called history and society, and it includes four basic goals:

- Developing students' interest in history;
- Developing students' identities in the context of family, local community, ethnicity, and nationality, as well as of Europe and the world;
- Fostering conscious patriotic and civic attitudes among students in the hope that these attitudes will encourage them to be effective and longterm participants in society; and
- Teaching students those values that are important motivators of individual and public activity in Poland, Europe, and the world.

Regulations set the number of teaching hours of history and society as "four hours per week across a period of three years" (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2002b). Schools can therefore plan a program for this subject that can extend across one, two, or even three school years.

The new core curriculum for primary school also proposes an optional crosscurricular theme called "education for life in society." It comprises three modules: education for family life, cultural heritage of the region, and patriotic and civic education. The aim of the first module is to have students critically think about the role of family in personal life. The second module familiarizes students with their local region and develops an identity based on regional culture and community. The third module aims to develop students' bonds with the homeland, as well as their civic consciousness, community-minded attitudes, and respect for the common good and the state.

The new curriculum's structure consists of two parts. The first focuses on teaching aims and the second on general requirements, instructional content, and the particular pedagogical considerations that address learning processes. Both parts include a list of issues to study and describe the competencies required of students. Particular emphasis is placed on practical usage of school knowledge. The civic and citizenship education subject "history and society" includes, in addition to historical content, topics concerning the homeland, state, society, the European Union, and the problems currently facing humankind, such as globalization, technocracy, mass media, poverty, and military conflicts (Minister of National Education, 2008).

Under the 2002 core curriculum, civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary school is delivered through a subject called knowledge of society, consisting of three modules: education



for family life, civic education, and education for active participation in economic life. The aims of the second module are the following:

- Deepen students' sense of membership in the Polish community;
- Build students' sense of duty toward the homeland, especially in terms of protecting and maintaining its good name;
- Help students understand the value and usefulness of individual and group contributions to the local community;
- Facilitate students' understanding of current important social, political, and economic issues in Poland and in the world; and
- Deepen students' respect for their own state (i.e., Poland).

The 2002 core curriculum also describes school tasks linked to these aims in these terms:

- To inculcate proper attitudes among students with respect to the national emblem, anthem, and state ceremonies;
- To help students learn their rights and duties;
- To show students (to model for them) the practical application of democratic rules and procedures;
- To develop students' sense of responsibility for themselves and others; and
- To support students' self-governance.

The third module also has several aims with corresponding school tasks. Aims concentrate on preparing students for active participation in socioeconomic life, which requires understanding of economic phenomena and changes, the ability to find one's own place in the changing free market economy, and initial preparation for future professional activity. The module delivers basic economic knowledge and seeks to develop entrepreneurial attitudes, stimulate the type of imaginative, inventive approaches needed in the future professional workforce, and shape initial vocational guidance. The subject includes three compulsory teaching hours per week, and can be rearranged across two or three years of teaching (the regular school year encompasses 32 to 36 weeks).

Civic and citizenship education in lower-secondary schools may be also delivered under optional crosscurricular themes such as ecological education and regional education, which embraces cultural heritage of the region, and European education. The latter covers issues such as defining the place and role of Poland in an integrated Europe, learning about the European Union (EU), developing a European identity—in terms of the students' homeland (Poland) and the greater area of Europe—and showing the integration process as an opportunity for political and economic development.

The new core curriculum introduced in September 2009 for Grade 1 of lower-secondary schools accords the civic and citizenship education subject knowledge of society greater attention than previously. The core curriculum proposes 31 themes, including living harmoniously in a community, mass media, citizenship, democratic state, forms of authority, self-government, nation and national minorities, modern models of patriotism, the European Union, international institutions, jobs and management (including business ethics), modern economy, and problems of the contemporary world.

Civic and citizenship education is also taught at the upper-secondary level at basic and advanced levels (with the exception of basic vocational schools) through crosscurricular themes (European education, regional education/cultural heritage of the region, and ecological education). All upper-secondary schools have well-defined obligatory core curricula. In general, however, two to four advanced-level subjects may be taught in upper-secondary schools to a given class or group of students from different classes. Content is divided into four main areas



at both levels: society, politics, law, and Poland/Europe/world. The educational aims include responsibility for individual and collective activity at the level of both local community and state, developing civic and patriotic attitudes, improving critical assessment of activity in public life, understanding and obeying the law, and deepening cultural and national identity. The subject is taught for two hours per week for approximately 65 hours in total.

Another subject taught at upper-secondary level, which is called introduction to management, is devoted to social and economic issues. The subject has two compulsory teaching hours per week, in basic vocational schools.

Requirements for the basic level of the subject knowledge of society are also being gradually introduced to the upper-secondary level. The change encompasses fewer requirements than before, limiting them to practical knowledge about the institutions of state, human rights, the EU, and education and jobs in Poland. In comparison, the requirements at advanced levels are well developed. They cover 45 issues, some of them difficult and controversial, such as current areas and issues of dispute, political ideologies and doctrines, types of law, and national security systems.

General education is limited in basic vocational schools. Civic and citizenship education is implemented through the subject history and knowledge of society in which the aims are to synthesize school learning and to prepare students for participation in social and professional life. The number of compulsory teaching hours is two per week over three school years.

#### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The school council consists of equal numbers of elected teachers, parents, and, in some schools, students. The school council participates in decisionmaking related to school activities, such as approving school statutes. It also offers opinions on the school's financial plan. School councils in primary schools do not include students, and student participation is not obligatory at the lower-secondary level.

In addition to school councils, parents' councils may also operate in schools and educational institutions. Their role is to submit proposals related to school matters to the school principal and other school bodies, as well as to the regional educational superintendent and the local government authority. Parents' councils can also offer views on the school's program and timetable, suggest teaching efficiencies, and comment on the financial plan proposed by the school head.

Student governments exist in many schools, and are established as governing bodies representing all students. Rules about elections and functions are defined in regulations established by all students through a secret vote. Student governments can propose motions to the school council, pedagogical council, and school principal concerning issues such as clear and justified assessments, the right to publish a school newspaper, and the right to organize cultural, educational, sports, and entertainment events (National Parliament of Poland, 2005b, Article 55). In many schools, however, there are only relatively low levels of student participation in school-governance activities.

#### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

As previously mentioned, the gradual implementation of the new core curriculum began at the beginning of the 2009/2010 school year. There is currently some debate about the syllabuses of almost all subjects in that curriculum, including its civic and citizenship education-related content. Debate typically focuses on the content of each subject, how that content will influence learning, and the number of teaching hours per subject. There are also debates on matters such as patriotism and national identity, topics with direct relevance to civic and citizenship education.



The issue of how to teach civic and citizenship education-related subjects in order to increase active citizenship and readiness for civic activity is often discussed. Debate is also ongoing with respect to active learning methods, group work, lower-secondary examinations, and team-based projects.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Teaching in Poland is an all-graduate profession. The professional requirements for teachers at the different levels of education are as follows:

- Stage 1 primary teachers (first three years of primary school) are trained to teach all subjects in the national curriculum. The minimum requirement is a three-year Bachelor's degree.
- Stage 2 primary teachers (Years 4 to 6 of primary school), Stage 3 lower-secondary education teachers, and subject specialists at vocational schools must have, as a minimum, a three-year Bachelor's degree. They must also have completed a teacher education program.
- Upper-secondary school teachers are subject specialists who have completed five years of study for a Master's degree and undertaken a teacher education program.

If there is a particular teaching deficit in a school, a person who does not meet all of the requirements can be employed as a teacher with the regional superintendent's permission (Minister of National Education, 2009).

Prospective teachers following the General Certificate of Secondary Education (the GCSE or Matura) can choose from one of these two routes:

1. *A three-year study of two academic subjects with professional training in education:* A greater amount of time is devoted to one subject, which is treated as a major, than the other. The second subject may be taught only for core curriculum preparation. The teacher is awarded the title of *licencjat*—ISCED 5A (Bachelor of Arts). A further two-year study of one or two academic subjects and professional training in education earns its graduates the title of *magister* (master)—ISCED 5A (Master of Arts)
2. *A three-year study of an academic subject, earning the candidate the title of licencjat and then completion of a certificate of education program of one to one and a half years' duration:* Alternatively, after two years of study in a Bachelor's degree program encompassing a chosen academic subject, and the awarding of the title of *magister*, prospective teachers enter a certificate of education program of one to one and a half years' duration (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2004a).

Teacher education follows the standards of subject education (e.g., chemistry, biology, or Polish), and the program covers the elements of psychology, pedagogy, didactic skills, and practical skills such as voice production. This part may span 330 to 420 teaching hours, depending on the kind of teaching studies and school-based professional practice each teacher education institution offers. It is worth mentioning that education in modern foreign languages and ICT is part of initial teacher preparation, but is not demanded of inservice teachers.

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Because teaching of history and society begins in Stage 2 of primary education, teachers at this level of the education system must have the appropriate general teaching qualification and a specialist qualification in this area of learning. All teachers who teach at the lower-secondary school level (*gimnazjum*) and teachers of knowledge of society and other civic-related subjects must complete at least the first cycle of preservice studies, lasting three years. The majority of teachers who teach these subjects at the lower-secondary level have completed the second



cycle of study and have the title of *magister* (Master of Arts). Although there is no academic subject titled “civic knowledge,” teachers are required to have undertaken study appropriate to this learning area. Teachers who are fully qualified to teach knowledge of society have usually completed studies in social science, political science, sociology, and history. The requirements for upper-secondary school teachers of knowledge of society are the same as those for all other Stage 4 teachers (Minister of National Education, 2009).

The Teachers’ Charter outlines general rules for inservice professional development (National Parliament of Poland, 2006). Participation in inservice courses and postgraduate studies is not compulsory in Poland but may be important for teachers wanting to advance their career, particularly as career stages are closely linked with remuneration level (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2004b). Because of this, the majority of teachers participate in both internal and external training that relates either to their field or to education in general (Piwowski & Krawczyk, 2009; Wilkomirska, 2005).

The same requirements apply to teachers responsible for civic and citizenship education. However, these teachers tend to participate more often than teachers in other areas in courses and postgraduate studies that improve their knowledge and skills. This difference may reflect the rapidly changing nature of the civics-related subjects and topics they teach, that is, those relating to politics, the economy, and social issues.

Heads of schools, local governments, and regional superintendents are responsible for ensuring the professional development of inservice teachers (National Parliament of Poland, 2004). Although financing is guaranteed in local-government budgets, these resources are not sufficient, and teachers usually pay some of the costs of their professional development.

## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Poland has both internal and external assessments and examinations. These are regulated by executive instructions issued by the Minister of National Education and are mandatory for all schools in Poland (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2007). The ministry outlines general principles for school assessment and the organization of external examinations.

Assessment of students’ knowledge and skills throughout the school year is not standardized in Poland. Each school creates its own intraschool assessment system (*wewnętrzny system oceniania*) and regulates the requirements for all subjects and all grades. Assessment at Stage 1 (first three years of primary education) is descriptive. Teachers provide information on student progress in all knowledge and skill areas covered by the integrated curriculum.

From the fourth year of education (the beginning of Stage 2) on, teachers must assign grades in each subject they teach. Grading is mandatory for this and all subsequent levels of the education system. Assessment is based on regular written and oral tests. School grades and the criteria on which they are based must be transparent for students and their parents. At the end of each semester, the teachers’ council of each school is mandated to approve all student results. At the end of each school year, students receive grades ranging from one (unsatisfactory) to six (excellent). Students who obtain unsatisfactory results may be required to repeat a year if the teachers’ council decides this is necessary.

The external assessment system consists of a variety of standardized tests and examinations (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2001). At the end of primary school, after six years of school education (Stages 1 and 2), all students complete a compulsory assessment, which was first conducted in 2002, of their knowledge and skills in Polish language, history, mathematics, and science. This test enables students to begin lower-secondary school and provides students, parents, and schools (primary and lower secondary) with information about student achievement.



At the end of lower-secondary school, students sit a general, compulsory examination (*egzamin gimnazjalny*), which was also first conducted in 2002. The results of this examination are indicated in the Gymnasium Leaving Certificate, which consists of three parts—humanities, mathematics and science, and (as of 2008/2009) a modern foreign language (e.g., English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, or Russian). The results of the examination help determine admission to upper-secondary school.

A noncompulsory examination, conducted as part of the course of study toward the General Certificate in Secondary Education (the GCSE or *Matura*), has oral and written components, with the oral part consisting of Polish and a modern foreign language. Students may also choose a minority or regional language. The written part consists of Polish, a modern foreign language (the same language as the oral portion), mathematics (as of 2009/2010), and a chosen subject (e.g., biology, history, geography, or chemistry). Students must pass the examinations in all subjects in order to receive the GCSE. They must also choose the level—either basic or advanced—at which they will take the examination. The only examination for which students cannot choose the level is Polish. In other words, this examination is set at the same level of proficiency for all students. The oral Polish language assessment takes the form of a presentation on a chosen topic. The results of the *Matura* are the basis for recruitment into tertiary education. In order to increase their chances of gaining admission to university, students may elect to take examinations in one to three additional subjects.

During vocational education, students have the option of taking a noncompulsory examination that consists of two parts—written (which examines the knowledge and abilities connected with a particular job) and practical (which assesses the skills necessary for a job).

External agencies develop and administer all of these tests and examinations. The eight regional examination boards (*okregowa komisja egzaminacyjna*) are supported and supervised by the Central Examination Board (*Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna*). In accordance with the Education System Act, the Central Examination Board has the following main tasks: developing proposals for educational standards, preparing tests for each type of examination, and evaluating and analyzing tests results (National Parliament of Poland, 2004, Articles 9a–9d).

### **Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education**

The system of assessment and examinations covers all subjects taught at school, including subjects related to civic and citizenship education. The intraschool assessment system at each school outlines the rules for evaluating student achievement in subjects that relate to civic and citizenship education. Teachers of these subjects prepare assessment reports based on written and oral tests and often on other forms of student results, such as group work and projects. End-of-semester results for all subjects must be approved by the teachers' council.

The compulsory tests at the end of primary school may contain some questions connected with the subject history and society. The compulsory examination at the end of lower-secondary school has a humanities section that may include questions relating to knowledge of society. Students can elect this area of learning as one of their *Matura* examination subjects. They can also choose knowledge of society as an additional subject in order to increase their chances of admission to tertiary education institutions. The education institutions have the right to determine which subjects and levels they prefer candidates to have taken and passed examinations in (National Parliament of Poland, 2005c). Knowledge of society is taken into consideration during recruitment to some university majors or faculties, for example, law, history, political science, and sociology.



Poland also has in place a number of provisions and procedures designed to monitor quality for civic and citizenship education:

- At the school level, provisions are included in the school's assessment system, which schools are obliged to establish. The school principal and the subject teachers are responsible for their application (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2007).
- At the provincial level (*województwo*), the superintendent of the Education Office (*Kurator Oświaty*) monitors the quality of teaching in all subjects, including those related to civic and citizenship education (National Parliament of Poland, 2004, Articles 33–34).
- At the national level, the Central Examination Board (*Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna*) prepares national standards and monitors test results for all subjects, including those related to civic and citizenship education (Minister of National Education and Sport, 2001).
- The Ministry of National Education and some universities, associations, or other relevant organizations from time to time conduct research on the quality of teaching civic and citizenship education.

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# The Russian Federation

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The Russian Federation (hereafter Russia) is the largest country in the world. It occupies one-seventh of the earth's surface and has a territory of over 17 million square kilometers that features a vast diversity of geographical, natural, and meteorological conditions.

Russia has a population of about 143 million people and is home to more than 100 ethnic groups, each with its own language. The official language of the federation is Russian, and about 80 percent of the population is Russian-speaking. According to the 2002 census, Russians constitute the majority of the population in most of the federation's republics and autonomous *okrug* (areas). Other large ethnic groups are Tatars (about four percent of the total population), Ukrainians (two percent), Bashkir (one percent), and Chuvash (one percent). No other ethnic group in Russia exceeds one percent of the total population.

Russia's overall population density is around nine persons per square kilometer. The urban population numbers 104 million people or 73 percent of the Russian population. Over 10 million people live in the Russian capital, Moscow. The Russian Federation consists of 83 administrative regions, including autonomous districts that have their own regional cultures and community identities.

In 2006, Russia's gross domestic product (GDP) was approximately US\$B1,881, and expenditure on education was about 5.5 percent of GDP (Agranovitch, Kovaleva, Polivanova, & Fateeva, 2009). The country's primary industries include oil, gas, and metal production as well as agriculture, forestry, and fishing. In 2006, the unemployment rate was estimated at eight percent of the total workforce. In the same year, women and men were equally represented in the total workforce, at around 49 percent and 51 percent, respectively (Russia in Figures, 2010).

### Characteristics of the Political System

Russia is a democratic federal parliamentary republic, and its executive, legislative, and judiciary powers are vested in the president, the Federal Assembly (comprising the Council of Federation and the State Duma), the government, and the courts of the Russian Federation. Legislative powers are exercised by the State Duma, or Russian parliament. State power resides in the authorities of the 83 regions of the Russian Federation.

Russia's Constitution of 1993 marked the beginning of the development of local self-government in Russia, whereby all local governments enjoy the same institutional and administrative rights.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Education policy is developed at the national level and implemented at regional and local levels under the control of the national authorities. Legislation attempts to establish a balance between national, state, and municipal control of education and the autonomy of educational providers. In 2006, the Federal Law on Autonomous Establishments introduced a new type of



educational institution that has a greater degree of freedom in managing its resources. The law aimed to increase the effectiveness of education and to provide financial support for educational institutions from state budgets in order to implement more effective and innovative learning technologies.

Approximately 99 percent of all primary, basic, and secondary schools in Russia are state-municipal, meaning that the municipal budget is the main source of financing for these schools and that many decisions are made at the regional level. In school year 2006/2007, Russia had 58,503 state-municipal schools, with 14,263,657 students, and 716 nonstate schools, with 71,278 students (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2006).

The 1992 Law on Education gave greater autonomy and responsibility to schools. Educational programs are determined independently by the educational institutions themselves, on the basis of documents recommended by central authorities. The educational program includes the curriculum, annual calendar, study plan, and class timetables. State power, management bodies, and local government bodies cannot change curriculum or study schedules once they have been approved, except in special cases stipulated by the Russian legislature.

### **Structure of the Education System**

The state system of education includes general education (preprimary, primary, basic, and upper secondary) and vocational education (initial, secondary, higher, and postgraduate).

Preprimary education caters for children from three to six years of age, and is not compulsory. In 2006, preprimary education included about 46,200 preprimary educational institutions, catering to almost five million children. New types of institutions have been established that focus on special care, child development, and compensatory (remedial) care.

Primary general education (Grades 1 to 4) may be provided in primary schools, in basic schools that include the primary stage, and in secondary education institutions that include all three stages. Basic general education or lower-secondary education consists of Grades 5 to 9 while secondary general education or upper-secondary education includes Grades 10 to 11. General education is compulsory for all students. Students who finish basic school (Grade 9) and then go on to attend vocational school study general education subjects (equivalent to Grades 10 to 11, but at a basic level) as well as vocational education subjects. They also receive training in a chosen vocation.

Different types of school provide general education. They are general schools, schools specializing in specific disciplines, gymnasiums, lyceums, evening schools, boarding schools, and schools for children with special needs. Two of these school types are of a more academic nature and require higher educational standards of their students. They include the gymnasiums, which offer a broad, humanities-based education, and the lyceums, which are mainly oriented to university preparation. Many schools offer indepth education in specific subjects. These schools are particularly evident in the big cities, where up to 15 percent of the schools are of this type. The most popular topics of study are languages (English, German, French, or Spanish), and mathematics or physics.

At the upper-secondary stage, the majority of schools offer different study profiles that roughly reflect the educational standards for upper-secondary education established in 2004. The profiles most commonly offered are humanities, scientific, general, linguistics, and technical.

Despite the fact that the 2004 national curriculum had not yet been fully implemented, new strategic goals were formulated in 2006. The goals seek to provide innovative pedagogical development over the long term and include new requirements directed toward preparing young people to assume professional and social roles. The new educational standards emphasize key competencies, personal creative development, and interdisciplinary outcomes.



The new standards of general education, based on the goals introduced in 2006, are being developed and introduced progressively into schools, with implementation beginning in primary schools at the beginning of the 2011/2012 school year. Federal law outlines the structure of the new education standards, which encompass three main areas:

- The structure of the main curriculum and its programs of study;
- The conditions that need to be in place to enable implementation and delivery of these programs; and
- Student achievement standards.<sup>1</sup>

In January 2010, the president of the Russian Federation approved the initiative Our New School, established to meet five main directives:

- Implementing federal education standards in order to stimulate a higher quality of education;
- Providing enrichment activities and programs for gifted children;
- Further developing teachers' potential (by providing new models of inservice teacher education, new certification programs for teachers, and new initial teacher education centers based in existing pedagogical universities and institutes);
- Improving the infrastructure that supports school networks and networking; and
- Improving students' overall health and wellbeing (physical, mental, social).

Russia's educational reforms share the following features with reforms in other countries throughout the world:

- The transition to competency-based standards;
- The creation of a national system of independent school examinations;
- The use of school self-evaluations and increased understanding of their importance;
- Public involvement in school management at different levels (municipal, regional, and national); and
- Changes in the nature of evaluation from a quality-control to a quality-assurance stance.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

In 1994, the Ministry of Education prepared a set of instructional letters that emphasized the new role of schools with respect to civic and citizenship education. Civic and citizenship education was defined as the system of upbringing (*vospitaniye*) and education that creates conditions for the development of civic dispositions and competencies. Part of the system involves experiencing socially useful activities within the context of lifelong education.<sup>2</sup>

In 1995, the Ministry of Education wrote to all regional educational authorities in the Russian Federation in order to emphasize the role of schools "in developing a civic personality based on our moral, legal, and political culture." The letter described the goal of civic and citizenship education as "preparing students for responsible activity in the legal democratic state and civic society."<sup>3</sup> Another letter from 1996 advised that having taken "into account the great

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1 The federal law on the new education standards, Law #309, was introduced on December 1, 2007.

2 Letter from the Ministry of Education, January 15, 2003, No. 13-51-08/13, "On civic education of school students in educational institutions of the Russian Federation."

3 Letter from the Ministry of Education, February 6, 1995, No. 151/11, "On civic education and studying the Constitution of the Russian Federation."



value of civic-legal education,” the ministry recommended that “school principals support the development of civic and legal education through the inclusion of courses with political, legal, and moral content from Grade 1 to Grade 11.”<sup>4</sup>

The most important educational program established by the government during the last decade is Conceptualizing the Modernization of Russian Education 2010. It assigns a critical role to the development of civic and citizenship education. The concept set new goals for Russian education, with schooling (in the broad sense of the term) becoming a major factor in the humanizing of social and economic relations, as well as in the development of individuals’ attitudes to life.

The main thrusts for civic and citizenship education in the Russian Federation are socialization, patriotism, citizenship, self-determination, communication with others, respect, freedom of choice, and constructivism. The program is characterized by a focus on the development of self-awareness, positive attitudes toward one’s country, interest in Russian history and laws, and personal responsibility for one’s own behavior and the common interest.

Civic and citizenship education in Russia is delivered through three basic models: a subject model, an institutional model, and a project model. The subject model reflects the teaching and learning process according to the goals of civic and citizenship education. Its aim is to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, competencies, and values through the study of school subjects such as social studies, political science, jurisprudence, sociology, economics, culture, history, and literature. The institutional model involves both curricular and extracurricular activities that involve students working collaboratively with their teachers on activities related to civic and citizenship education. The key elements in this model are school self-government, students and teachers interacting as partners in the learning process, and a democratic style of school life. The project model integrates curricular and extracurricular activities through projects related to civic and citizenship education.

Over the last decade, many regions of Russia have initiated activities established with the aim of creating regional programs for civic and citizenship education. These programs have involved (among other groups) educational authorities, teacher education and inservice training institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and schools, and they offer activities aimed at different target groups. For example, a regional program in Perm Krai (a region of Russia) called Development of Civic Education included civic and citizenship education-related activities that school students could engage in both inside the classroom and outside the school. The region also offers university students an annual forum called Civic Education in Perm Krai: Problems and Perspectives (Center for Civic Education and Human Rights, 2012).

To encourage discussion of issues related to civic and citizenship education, some regions organize conferences for teachers, school principals, representatives of local educational authorities, the mass media, and nongovernmental organizations. For example, activities organized by the Tomsk region include the establishment of the Association of Democratic Schools and the Association for Civic Education, and the regular publication of a newspaper dedicated to civic and citizenship education.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

In primary schools (Grades 1 to 4), civic and citizenship education consists of the preliminary study of carefully selected knowledge about life in society, the place of humans in society, people’s relations with one another, and activities in different spheres of life. This content is delivered through a course titled “the world around us.”



4 Letter from the Ministry of Education, March 19, 1996, No. 391/11, “On civic-legal education of students in the general education institutions of the Russian Federation.”

The curricula for basic and upper-secondary schools contain a special course focusing on social studies (*obtchestvoznaniye*) called “knowledge about society.” The federal basic study plan, which is part of the state educational standards established in 2004, determines the amount of instructional time for this course. Basic schools deliver it for one hour per week in Grades 6 to 9. In Grades 10 and 11, civic and citizenship education can either be studied as part of a basic integrated course of 140 hours’ duration (two hours per week) or an advanced integrated course of 210 hours’ duration (three hours per week). In addition, students can choose to study economics and law (140 hours of instructional time for each subject).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools**

Knowledge about society, as taught in basic schools, has special value because it is the main vector for addressing the development of civic dignity, appropriate socialization, and finding one’s place in society. The subject plays an important role in integrating young people into modern society, reveals various aspects of interactions with people, and introduces social norms and the main institutions of civil society and state. Knowledge about society also provides the conditions for interdisciplinary interactions, in particular with regard to history, geography, literature, and art.

The most recent curriculum documents (from 2009) identify the following main goals of civic and citizenship education in basic schools:

- The development of students’ personalities during an important period of their socialization, as well as the development of their cognitive interests and critical thinking, their moral and legal understandings, their insights into the economy, and their ability to achieve self-determination and self-realization;
- The development of a Russian identity, civic responsibility, respect for social norms, and adherence to humanistic and democratic values as stated in the Constitution of the Russian Federation;
- The acquisition of knowledge about society and social roles, and the promotion of positive personal qualities that allow students to interact successfully in the social sphere;
- The acquisition of skills for the cognitive, communicative, and practical activities associated with social roles; and
- The development of experiences that enable students to use acquired knowledge to solve tasks related to social relations, economic and civic-social activities, interpersonal relations, interethnic and interfaith relations, interdependent cognitive activities, and legal and family relations (Bogolubov, 2009).

Furthermore, civic and citizenship education in basic education should enable students to achieve the following learning outcomes.

- Know and understand:
  - The social aspects of individuals, including their interactions with other people;
  - The main characteristics of a society;
  - The main spheres in society; and
  - The content and meaning of the social norms that regulate public relations.
- Accomplish the following:
  - Describe the main social institutions and their essential features;
  - Compare social institutions;
  - Make judgments about society and people, and their common features and differences;
  - Explain connections between the social constructs studied;



- Give examples of social constructs of certain types;
- Understand social relations and situations regulated by various types of social norms;
- Evaluate people’s behavior from the point of view of social norms and economic rationality;
- Solve cognitive and practical tasks that reflect typical situations in different spheres of social activity;
- Search for social information on a given topic;
- Differentiate between facts and opinions; and
- Independently compile simple legal documents.
- Use acquired skills in order to:
  - Fulfill social roles common among adolescents;
  - Orient oneself with respect to important social events and processes;
  - Evaluate other people’s actions from moral and legal standpoints;
  - Realize and protect citizens’ rights;
  - Undertake primary analysis and use of social information; and
  - Identify unacceptable and antisocial behavior (*Obshchestvoznaniye* [social studies], 2009).

According to the basic school curriculum, more than 30 percent of instructional time should be used for practical work, discussions, engagement with different sources of social information, analysis of social situations, and role playing. Age-appropriate instructional activities are meant to prepare students to engage in acceptable social behavior in modern Russian society. The various practical tasks and projects are not limited to classroom instruction. They instead provide a basis for extracurricular activities in which teachers organize creative opportunities for student interaction.

Civic and citizenship education is only regarded as effective when it is based on students’ personal experiences. This development requires an analysis of current political, economic, and social situations as well as consideration of problems and anomalies in these spheres. If learning in this area of the curriculum is not connected to real-life situations, there is the risk of two unwanted outcomes. The first is that students will develop merely academic knowledge (for use in examinations) that has no association with the parallel world of ideas and attitudes that they inhabit and that both influences and is influenced by their behavior. The second is that students will reject what they learn at school because they perceive it as having no relevance to their real-life experiences.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

In Russia, students are encouraged to take part in school activities related to civic and citizenship education, such as school governance, school newspapers, interest groups, community organizations, and debating groups.

New approaches to civic and citizenship education in schools are based on principles of democracy, the collective nature of society, school efficiency, situational leadership, and the mutual interests of students and teachers. More and more schools have begun encouraging students to self-manage their learning and behavior, by having them set their own learning goals and activities on the basis of self-analysis and self-evaluation of prior learning and strengths and weaknesses. Schools are also increasingly giving students opportunity to organize student activities, analyze and summarize their peers’ work, and participate in school-based decisionmaking processes. The structure and forms of students’ self-management



depend not only on local conditions and student interest but also on the school's experience with democratic activities and culture, as well as on the level of teachers' sociopedagogical experience at their particular school.

Schools have different forms of student participation in school governance. Many schools involve their students in school planning and decisionmaking processes. Some establish school governance in the form of a "school republic" wherein students form a school government/school parliament, elect a school president as their representative, and produce a school newspaper or magazine. The most popular form of student governance is the student committee (*uchkom*), the members of which are elected as class representatives. These individuals are also members of the school council. The student committee usually helps plan curriculum activities, discusses how to prepare and implement activities, and supports such activities through reports in their school newspapers.

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

Over the last two decades, Russia has developed a new social studies curriculum that is designed to reflect the federation's transition to a democracy and a market economy. It also aligns with the new values formulated in the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993). The changed social and economic conditions of post-2000 Russia have necessitated reforming civic and citizenship education to meet new goals, most notably those relating to innovative national development, globalization, Russia's changing position in the world, new means of information dissemination and acquisition, developments in the social sciences, pedagogy, and psychology, and changes to the education system.

The main changes in civic and citizenship education have been the development of a continuous system of civic education courses (beginning in primary school), the establishment of an integrated interdisciplinary social studies course about human beings and society, a broadening of students' social activities beyond the school environment, and an increased emphasis on student self-management and participation in school governance.

The aforementioned initiative Our New School, introduced by the president of the Russian Federation in 2010, brought a new emphasis to civic and citizenship education and its outcomes. This emphasis encompasses both theoretical and practical knowledge about laws, civic responsibility, and openness to diversity, and seeks to promote students' decisionmaking abilities. The initiative also focuses on a new concept of moral development that embraces a combination of a whole-school approach, a school-curricular approach, classroom experience, and participation within and by the wider community.

The next step in reforming civic and citizenship education in Russia was the introduction of new education standards in primary schools in 2011. This development will be followed by the introduction of new standards in basic schools in 2015, and in upper-secondary schools in 2020.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

The system of preservice teacher education in Russia is currently in transition from a specialized pedagogical education to a two-level system resulting in a Bachelor's or Master's degree.

Individuals wanting to qualify as primary school teachers have the following training options:

- Five years of formal education at a higher education institution, with specialization in pedagogy, methodology, and instruction for primary education;



- Four years at a higher education institution, with the program of study leading to a Bachelor's degree with a specialization in pedagogy;
- Two years at a pedagogical college, having entered the college following graduation from secondary school; and
- Four years at a pedagogical college, having entered the college following graduation from basic school.

In recent years, earning a diploma from a higher education institution has increasingly become the most favored option among candidates for primary school teaching positions.

Teacher education for basic and secondary schools includes the following study programs:

- Five years of formal education at a higher education institution; and
- Five years of higher education, leading to a Bachelor's degree in pedagogical education, and two more years of higher education, yielding a Master's degree in pedagogical education.

Irrespective of the nature of the higher education diploma sought, students who want to become teachers must complete the program in accordance with the state educational standards for higher professional education, prepare and defend a graduate qualification thesis, and pass the state examinations.

As a rule, school teachers take part in inservice education (professional development) every five years. Inservice teacher education is changing its orientation to align with new pedagogical goals that are moving away from teacher-imparted subject content to student-directed learning. Nowadays, teachers receive more training in active learning strategies and child development than they did in previous times.

In line with current public education policies, teachers' work is evaluated not only with regard to their own knowledge levels and pedagogical competency but also in regard to their students' learning achievement. Accordingly, professional development programs are teaching teachers how to use information and communication technologies as teaching and learning tools, as well as new ways of assessing student achievement and development.

#### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

In Russia, civic and citizenship education is taught by teachers who specialize in history and social studies. Under the new requirements for teachers of civic and citizenship education, university and inservice teacher education courses now offer the following content:

- Basic theory of socialization in civic and citizenship education;
- Modern methods of organizing learning activities;
- Basics of democracy and human rights;
- Theories pertaining to civic society and legal statehood;
- Modern thinking about democratization of school life;
- Learning processes and school governance;
- Cooperative/collaborative learning processes;
- Basics of constructive communications and critique;
- Basics of conflict resolution; and
- Development of critical thinking.

The new requirements for teachers of civic and citizenship education-related learning areas promote the development of teachers who, in principle and practice, exemplify civic engagement. Included in the requirements are personal values of self-determination related to diversity and tolerance, democratic teaching styles, and a culture of open communication between teachers and students.



## Assessments and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

The introduction of the Unified State Examination (USE) in 2001 was a key element of the comprehensive reform of Russia's education system. Since 2009, the USE has been centrally administered across the Russian Federation. Students who successfully complete the examination receive a general secondary education certificate and are eligible for admission to national universities. Federal law issued on February 9, 2007, established the examination as the only form of school-leaving examination and the main examination qualifying entrance to universities.

The USE requires school graduates to take two compulsory examinations (Russian and mathematics) as well as examinations in several other subjects, and it includes the following features:

- The creation and development of a system of monitoring the quality of education that is based on external independent assessments;
- The introduction of educational standards aimed at raising educational achievement outcomes; and
- The introduction of "student-profiling programs" in upper-secondary schools.

The examination is also designed, through reporting of examination results, to encourage public involvement in the development and delivery of education.

Between April and June 2009, the USE was administered by 83 educational agencies within the Russian Federation as well as in 49 other countries (for example, at Russian embassy schools and military bases). The Federal Testing Center is responsible for the overall coordination of the USE within Russia.

In 2009, about one million students passed the USE, which included over three million individual examinations. In 2009, the Federal Institute for Educational Measurement developed about 470 versions of the examinations in 14 different subjects. Six of the examinations were converted to Braille for students with impaired vision.

Assessments for Grade 11 graduates are developed on the basis of educational standards set in 2004 for basic and secondary general education. They focus on students' ability to use knowledge in diverse situations, and also attempt to assess general learning and intellectual skills related to the analysis, interpretation, and reporting of information.

The USE 2009 results were widely discussed at federal, regional, and municipal levels, as well as within individual high schools and higher educational institutions. USE results continue to be analyzed at national and regional levels and are regarded as instrumental for benchmarking the subject-specific achievement of school graduates. Russian regions have started to use USE results as a means of assessing the quality of regional education and making decisions about educational provision on the basis of their findings.

A second innovation in the education system has been the use of externally developed, state-administered testing of Grade 9 graduates. Until recently, individual schools conducted these assessments. However, this work is now conducted externally by municipal, territorial, and district examination commissions. In 2009, the assessment of these graduates covered nine general education subjects, with the Federal Institute for Educational Measurements developing the examination materials on the basis of the general education standards of 2004. Practically all regions of the Russian Federation (80 out of 83) administered the basic school examinations in 2009 using the new format. The new test was passed by about 1.5 million students, a number that accounted for 95 percent of all basic school graduates. Examinations in mathematics and Russian are also compulsory at this stage of schooling.



Examination outcomes suggest that the new system of assessment of basic school students is objective and reliable, and that it helps students determine their programs of study as they progress to upper-secondary school. As Bolotov, Valdman, Kovaleva, and Pinskaia (2010) point out, this system has turned into an integral part of the systems used to assess the quality of basic education at the regional level.

To help identify talented students interested in different academic areas, schools organize events known as Olympiads along with other kinds of academic competitions. Over the last decade, these competitions have increasingly focused on project work and investigative skills instead of on mere acquisition of subject knowledge.

### Assessments of Civic and Citizenship Education

In 2009, 446,390 of the approximately one million Grade 11 students sat, at the end of their school year, the examination in social studies (*obshchestvoznaniye*), which is offered as an optional subject at this level of schooling. Students can also take an optional examination in social studies at the end of their Grade 9 year. The main goal of the Grade 11 examination is to assess students' levels of knowledge and skill in the social sciences. The examination includes tasks that assess student learning in the major topics covered in upper-secondary school at different levels. The test questions are presented in multiple-choice, short, and extended-response formats. Some sections of the assessment allow students to choose questions that relate to their preferred social study topics.

All USE examinations are assigned a minimum score that examinees must achieve in order to receive an examination certificate. Candidates who score below the minimum cannot apply for entry to university programs of study.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

At present, educational quality monitoring relies on the USE, the Grade 9 examinations, international comparative surveys, federal or regional monitoring studies, accreditation of educational institutions, and teacher attestations. The Russian Academy of Education (RAE) conducts research projects monitoring the quality of education and participates in international studies such as the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement's Civic Education Study (IEA CIVED) in 1999 and the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) in 2009 (Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 2009).

Between 2001 and 2005, Russia conducted national monitoring of student achievement in social studies. More than 2,000 schools from 76 regions participated in it. The Department of Social Studies at the Institute of Content and Methods of Education, which is part of RAE and is responsible for developing the content of civic and citizenship education, also collects information and reports the results of evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of civic and citizenship education in the Russian Federation (Russian Academy of Education, 2010).

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# The Slovak Republic

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The land area of the Slovak Republic consists of 49,034 square kilometers that were divided into eight autonomous counties in 1996 (Public Administration Section, Ministry of the Interior, 1996). The self-government of these counties, their authority, their relationship with the state, and their financing and functioning principles are set down in the Constitution of Slovakia (Ministry of the Interior, 2007).

As of March 2010, the population of the Slovak Republic was estimated to be 5,427,000 people, of whom approximately 47,000 were immigrants (Divinský, 2009; Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2010a). Of the total population, 57 percent lived in urban areas (Vokoun, Brzica, & Kačírková, 2006). In 2008, the population of the Slovak Republic consisted of the following ethnic groups: Slovaks (85% of the total population), Hungarians (10%), Romani (2%), Czechs (1%), Ruthenians (0.4%), Ukrainians (0.2%), Germans (0.1%), Poles (0.1%), and other groups (2%) (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2009).

The official language is Slovak. Services in minority languages are offered in areas where at least 20% of the population belongs to that minority group (National Council of the Slovak Republic, 1999a).

In 2008, the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Slovak Republic was €M67,221 (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2010b). From 1999 to 2006, the percentage of GDP spent on education was about four percent (Ministry of the Environment, 2002).

### Characteristics of the Political System

The Slovak Republic is a democratic republic led by a president whose role is to represent the country and ensure the proper functioning of constitutional bodies. The president is elected by citizens in direct elections every five years (National Council of the Slovak Republic, 1999b). Representatives of the National Council of the Slovak Republic are elected by universal suffrage under proportional representation every four years. The council is the executive branch of government and consists of 150 members. The head of the government is the prime minister, who is assisted by a deputy. Parliament approves legislation, sets state budgets, modifies the constitution, and adjudicates government activities.

Typically after an election, a coalition of political parties forms the government. The prime minister, who is appointed by the president and is usually from the political party that received the most votes, forms alliances with other parties to ensure support from a majority in the national council. In 2010, for the first time, the national council elected a female prime minister. The president is entitled to appoint and dismiss members of the cabinet and to allocate positions to members of the government. However, he or she can only do this on the advice of the prime minister.



## Education System

### Overview and Background

In 2003, educational legislation (Act 596/2003) changed the regulations relating to school curricula, the establishment and closure of schools, and school autonomy (Ministry of Education, 2003). In 2004, school financing was reformed at the primary and secondary levels. The National Council of the Slovak Republic approved the New School Act on Education (Act 245/2008) in 2008 (Ministry of Education, 2008a). This law established legislation concerning implementation of the reforms in regional education.

### Structure of the Education System

The Law of the State Civil Service (Act 596/2003) regulates the scope, organization, and tasks of state administration bodies relative to education, communities, and the county governments. The central authority for education is the Ministry of Education. The State School Inspection monitors school quality. Its activities are independent and are governed by laws and other binding regulations. The Minister of Education appoints school inspectors for five-year terms.

Preschool facilities are managed by the state, the municipalities, or church groups. Early childhood education is offered through a network of nurseries, as well as in the form of halftime, fulltime, weekly, and continuous educational care at kindergartens and special kindergartens supervised by the Ministry of Education. Preschool education in these institutions is offered through educational work programs approved by the Ministry of Education. Municipalities and regional education authorities are responsible for creating and operating kindergartens.

Primary schools are classified as public, private, or church schools, but the Ministry of Education determines all educational matters carried out within all of them. Regional education authorities have the power to establish and close primary schools when required.

Under current legislation, education is offered through a number of different programs. Students at different levels of the education system (encompassing elementary and secondary education at ISCED 1, ISCED 2, and ISCED 3 levels) need to acquire specific skills and competencies defined by the Ministry of Education. The study programs for each level outline what schools are to teach. Program content must be prepared in accordance with the principles and objectives prescribed by law (Ministry of Education, 2008b).

School attendance in the Slovak Republic is compulsory for children and young people between the ages of 6 and 16. Preschool education is not compulsory and is offered to children three to six years of age. Primary education is the first stage of a combined basic school (*zakladna skola*) that covers Grades 1 to 4. This stage is followed by lower-secondary education, which serves Grades 5 to 9, and is termed the second stage of basic school. It is also offered as the first stage of secondary school (the eight-year *gymnazium*). Upper-secondary education usually comprises Grades 10 to 13 (Grades 10 to 12 at vocational colleges) and is offered in general and vocational study programs.

Legislation under the new Education Act of 2008 implemented reforms through the introduction of two-level educational programs at schools. Under this Act, education in schools is conducted through the State Education Program and the School Education Program. The State Education Program outlines curricula and defines the compulsory content of education in schools. The School Education Program is a document that sets out, for each school, the education and training the school is to carry out. This reform was introduced in school year 2008/2009 and was applied in the first and fifth grades of primary schools and the first grade of secondary schools (i.e., the first grades of ISCED 1, ISCED 2, and ISCED 3). It has since



been progressively introduced into each following grade. The students tested in ICCS 2009 were the final cohort of Grades 4 and 8 students to be educated under the previous policy.

The Ministry of Education has established a curricular board as an advisory body regarding key areas in education. It also set up a schools register that records information about schools, facilities, and enrolments. Another agency, the National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements, was set up by the government in order to improve monitoring of educational processes in particular and the education system in general.

## **Civic and Citizenship Education**

### **General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education**

Since 1989, civic and citizenship education has played a more prominent role in Slovak education. From 1989 until 1993, it was taught in a limited manner, with very little in the way of educational materials and textbooks to support its content. As a result, many teachers began to create their own teaching materials, including textbooks and teaching aids. Others developed lessons on civic and citizenship education from discussion boards that addressed students' social problems. This period was characterized by considerable improvisation and was not subject to school regulations. Much of the teaching during this period was considered unprofessional because the teachers teaching this subject area were not sufficiently qualified to teach it effectively.

In the autumn of 1991, the government created an expert commission charged with developing new curricula for primary and secondary schools, including a curriculum for civic and citizenship education. The task was completed in 1993, at which time a ministerial decree (2166/1993-31) approved a new direction for civic education in primary and secondary schools. The teaching of civic and citizenship education as a specific subject in Grades 6 and 7 was replaced with the elective subject "ethics and religious education," to be taught at the second stage of basic education. Over the next four years, civic and citizenship education was taught in Grades 8 and 9 only (Ministry of Education and Science, 1993). Then, in 1997, and in line with recommendations from the expert commission and the National Institute for Education, the Ministry of Education reintroduced civic and citizenship education into the curriculum for Grades 6 to 9 (Ministry of Education, 1997).

The main objective of civic and citizenship education as taught today is formulated as follows:

Civic and citizenship education meaningfully affects students' knowledge and action in the spirit of humanity, morality and democracy. It leads students to develop attitudes and actions which reflect civic activity, patriotism, a positive relationship to work and to its results. It has an impact on students in the sense that they realize the responsibility to themselves, their loved ones, their nation, and their society. (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 3)

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

#### **General Overview**

Civic and citizenship education in basic school is taught in two forms during students' lower-secondary education:

- Mandatory civic and citizenship education lessons as part of the school's total curriculum, delivered through one lesson a week from Grades 6 to 9; and
- Lessons integrated into a number of subjects that include topics related to civic and citizenship education, such as history, geography, native language, and ethics. It is also taught, to a limited extent, in other subjects.



This area of learning also encompasses students' extracurricular activities, such as student participation in the nationwide project called Citizen, a national competition pertaining to student rights, work in student school councils, preparation of school magazines, and engagement in decisionmaking on aspects of school life. The key topics and lesson time given over to civic and citizenship education before the recent curricular reforms were as follows:

- In Grade 6, 10 lessons devoted to a subject called “the individual and society;”
- In Grade 7, eight lessons devoted to personality development through the topic “the individual and society,” and 11 hours to topics related to global issues and the cultural and social aspects of adolescence;
- In Grade 8, 22 lessons devoted to the subject “the individual, citizen, and state” and eight hours to legal education;
- In Grade 9, 24 lessons devoted to basic economics and eight hours to legal education (Ministry of Education, 1997).

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

As noted earlier, the Slovak Republic's Act No. 245/2008 on education (the Education Act 2008) legislated reforms to primary and secondary education. It defined mandatory content for study programs at ISCED 1, ISCED 2, and ISCED 3 levels, and brought changes to civic and citizenship education. The reforms established student acquisition, in primary and secondary schools, of civic knowledge and understanding of civics and civic participation as prerequisites for future successful participation in society. Civic and citizenship education is now part of the learning area “the individual and society,” and schools must devote a minimum teaching time to it of four hours a week at the ISCED 2 level (Grades 5 to 9). Subject content was also partially modified under the changes, and greater emphasis given to acquisition of civic knowledge and skills, the development of critical thinking, and the principles of active civic participation (National Institute for Education, 2008).

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

Teaching at all types of schools in the Slovak Republic requires the completion of an accredited program at a higher education institution. The study programs consist of two stages: a Bachelor's degree encompassing six undergraduate semesters of study over three years, followed by a Master's degree, which takes students four semesters over two years to complete. In order to qualify as teachers, candidates must meet minimum standards, as defined for the teaching profession, pertaining to knowledge, skills, abilities, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes.

The documents that govern qualification requirements for teachers are the Law on Teaching and Professional Staff (Ministry of Education, 2009a) and a decree from the Ministry of Education (Nr. 437/2009) that documents the qualifications and moral requirements for different categories of teaching staff (Ministry of Education, 2009b). These documents provide a comprehensive account of teachers' professional standing with regard to position, professional development, and pay. They also address different aspects of the teaching profession, such as teaching experience, professional activities, professional development, and career development. One of the main goals of the new legislation is to bring a more concise differentiation to the remuneration offered to inservice teachers who participate in professional development.



## Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

The teacher education curriculum for civic and citizenship education (whether delivered as separate subjects or integrated into other school subjects) at public universities in the Slovak Republic is both theoretically and practically oriented. Students studying to become teachers of civic-related subjects receive training in the theoretical foundations of disciplines related to this area of learning. The curriculum also includes interdisciplinary topics designed to give preservice teachers understanding of the wider range of relevant subject areas, such as philosophy, economics, legal studies, political science, sociology, ethics, religious studies, and environmental science. A core part of graduate specialty training is didactic and pedagogic practice in primary and secondary schools.

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Assessment and classification of student achievement, behavior, and activities in Slovakian primary and secondary schools are regulated through provisions in the Education Act of 2008 (245/2008, Article 55). Depending on grade level, assessment takes oral or written forms as well as a combination of both and takes place either throughout or at the end of each term. End-of-term assessments of student learning are recorded on certificates, and students' overall progress and grades are discussed by each school's council.

Verbal assessment is the only form of assessment for Grades 1 to 4 students. In the higher school levels, teachers use a grading system that has a five-point marking scale to assess student progress. Continuous assessment is conducted throughout the school year for the higher school grades, and is based on observations, student activities, oral examinations, written examinations, and other assignments (e.g., projects). Students receive feedback based on this assessment twice each school year (at the end of January and the end of June). The final evaluation is conducted in June, after which each student receives a report card documenting his or her achievement.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

In lower-secondary education, assessment of civic education learning outcomes focuses on three components: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Since 2002, exemplars of standard tasks have formed the basis of assessment at the second grade in lower-secondary schools. The exemplars set out a number of requirements ("operationalized goals") for learning achievement, to ensure that basic curriculum content is delivered and learned.

Performance standards for civic education are assessed through standardized tests designed to measure the extent to which students have mastered the basic knowledge and skills prescribed by the curriculum. Teachers also give students verbal feedback during lessons on their learning, especially the learning evident in their written work.

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# Slovenia

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

Slovenia is a Central European country, which in January 2010 had a population of just over two million people. With an average population density of 99 inhabitants per square kilometer, Slovenia is a relatively densely populated country. Half of the population resides in 50 cities and towns. Ljubljana is the largest of these, with 270,000 inhabitants. The rest of Slovenia's people live in nearly 6,000 smaller towns and villages.

Slovene is the official language of Slovenia. Italian and Hungarian are also official languages in regions with minority populations of Italian and Hungarian descent. The majority of the population (88%) speaks Slovene. Five percent speak Serbian, Croatian, or Serbian-Croatian. Two percent speak Macedonian and less than one percent speaks Italian, Hungarian, Romany, or Albanian.

The official language of instruction is Slovene. However, the Constitution of Slovenia accords the Italian and Hungarian minorities the right to receive education in their own language. In Hungarian-speaking areas, bilingual instruction in Hungarian and Slovenian is compulsory. The Italian-speaking areas have both Italian and Slovenian schools.

According to the 2002 census, the approximate percentages of ethnic groups in Slovenia are as follows: Slovenes (83%), Croats (2%), Serbs (2%), Muslims (including Bosnians) (2%), Hungarians (0.3%), Italians (0.1%), others (2%), and unknown (9%).

The gross domestic product per capita in Slovenia in 2009 was €17,331.

### Characteristics of the Political System

According to its constitution, Slovenia is a democratic parliamentary republic and a social state governed by the rule of law. It became an independent country after the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1991, and has been a member of the European Union since May 2004. The state's authority is based on the principle of separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Power is held by the people, and they exercise this power directly through referendums and through elections.

The right to vote is universal. Every citizen 18 years of age and older has the right to vote and stand for office. Voting is not, however, compulsory. The turnout in the legislative elections of the past two decades was approximately 86 percent in 1992, followed by 74 percent in 1996, 70 percent in 2000, and 63 percent in 2008.

The bicameral Slovenian parliament is composed of the National Assembly and the National Council. The highest legislative authority is the National Assembly, which has 90 deputies consisting of 88 elected representatives of the parliamentary parties and one representative each from the Italian and Hungarian national communities. The National Assembly enacts laws, and the National Council serves as the representative body for social, economic, professional, and local interests.



The president of the republic is the official representative of the Republic of Slovenia and commander-in-chief of its armed forces. The government of the Republic of Slovenia, the highest body of the state administration, passes regulations and adopts legal, political, economic, financial, and organizational measures.

The judicial system is the third branch of government. The Constitutional Court is the highest judicial authority with regard to the protection of constitutionality, human rights, and basic freedoms. The Republic of Slovenia has an ombudsman to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Law stipulates the municipality as the basic unit of self-governance for communities with at least 5,000 inhabitants. As of January 2010, there were 210 municipalities in Slovenia. Urban municipalities are defined as having at least 20,000 inhabitants. Among its other tasks, each municipality has the authority to manage its assets, manage local public services, establish basic and nursery schools, and build and maintain local roads.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Responsibility for implementing education policies at the preuniversity level rests with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport. The ministry is responsible for most of the education system's financial, administrative, and technical tasks, as well as for developing, on the basis of expert opinion, policies, strategies, legislation, and regulations.

Three national agencies provide support in this process—the National Institute for General Education, the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training, and the National Examination Center. These agencies prepare materials that serve as the basis of educational decisionmaking. They also draw up national curricula for basic and secondary education, which then require approval from the ministry. They furthermore help prepare statewide examinations, promote the ongoing development of schools, and offer advice to teachers. The Council of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education is responsible for approving and formally adopting the curricular programs of preschool education, basic education (combined primary and lower-secondary), and upper-secondary education.

At the local level, municipalities are responsible for managing public preschool institutions, basic schools, and music schools. Municipalities are required to provide the funds for capital investments, maintenance, and extracurricular activities. Preschool institutions also rely on municipalities to provide salaries for their staff. Public preschool institutions are founded and partly financed by municipalities. However, in many cases, they are also financed through parental contributions, depending on parental income. The state funds employee salaries in basic schools and provides supplementary funding for buildings, equipment, and operational expenses.

Municipalities do not have authority over upper-secondary education. At this level, the national government acts as the founding agency. However, school councils include representatives from local communities. Each school's council appoints the school's principal, thus enabling the local community to participate in the selection process via its representative on the council.

School councils and their principals are responsible for managing schools at the basic and upper-secondary levels of the education system. Basic school councils consist of three representatives from the municipality, three employee representatives, and three parent representatives. Upper-secondary school councils consist of two representatives of the school's founding agency, one representative from the local community, three teacher representatives, and three parent representatives. Student representatives also have the right to participate in council activities whenever issues of particular relevance for students are being considered.



In addition to carrying out other activities, the school council appoints the school principal, adopts the school's development plan and annual work plan, reports on progress against those plans, and sets school rules.

Other agencies with specific administrative, pedagogical, and decisionmaking roles in basic schools and upper-secondary schools include teachers' assemblies, homeroom teachers, expert panels, and parents' councils. Teachers' assemblies adopt and implement decisions relating to the curriculum and educational measures. Teachers autonomously decide which textbooks they will use and which teaching methods they will apply. Homeroom teachers follow the academic progress of the class assigned to them each school year and participate in decisionmaking on educational measures. Expert panels discuss specific issues. Parents are represented by the parents' council, which consists of one parent representative from each class and has a consultative role.

### Structure of the Education System

The Slovene education system consists of preprimary, basic (combined primary and lower-secondary), upper-secondary, and higher education. Preschool education, for children aged one to five, is not compulsory. Compulsory basic education combines primary (ISCED 1) and lower-secondary education (ISCED 2), and is organized as a single-structure school with nine grades. Upper-secondary education serves students 15 to 18 years of age through several types of program:

- Two-year short vocational education provided by upper-secondary vocational schools;
- Three-year vocational education provided by upper-secondary vocational and technical schools;
- Four-year technical education provided by upper-secondary technical schools;
- Four-year vocational and technical education provided by upper-secondary vocational and technical schools; and
- Four-year general education provided by general upper-secondary schools called *gimnazija* (gymnasiums), which offer general, classic, and subject-specific programs, all of which have a duration of four years (Eurydice, 2008/2009).

The national curriculum documents for basic and upper-secondary education include the general aims, objectives, and core contents of each subject, as well as didactic principles and recommendations and learning standards.

Teachers are expected to adapt their teaching programs according to the ability of their students. The most common teaching method is "internal differentiation," meaning that students of one or several classes are divided into smaller study groups. In Grades 7, 8, and 9 in basic education (the lower-secondary phase), schools can elect to group students into three ability levels for mathematics and foreign language education. The curriculum defines standards of knowledge for each level that students are required to achieve by the end of each grade.

The Slovenian government (elected in November 2008) published a new white paper on education in 2011 (see Krek & Metljak, 2011). However, partly because of the economic crisis, no major changes are likely to occur in the structure and organization of the education system for the time being.



## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

One of the most important changes introduced to schooling during the reform of public education between 1996 and 1999 was the increased emphasis on citizenship education and student participation, including students' active involvement in the school community. According to the document titled *Starting Points for Curriculum Reform* (National Curriculum Council, 1996), public education should promote:

- Individuals and their development as cultural, creative, and working social beings aware of their environment;
- Freedom and responsibility on the part of those who educate students, such as parents and teachers;
- Equal opportunities in education for all individuals and social groups;
- Tolerance and solidarity with respect to curricular content and as a way of educating; and
- National identity and openness to international cooperation.

Both the 1996 *White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia* (Krek, 1996) and the educational legislation enacted in 1996 sought to establish a systemic, normative, and legislative framework for public education. Both emphasized the need to found the basic aims of public education in Slovenia on recommendations from leading international organizations in the field of citizenship education, such as the European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and the OECD. Article 2 of the Basic School Act 2007 (Government of Slovenia, 2007) sets out the aims of basic education in Slovenia:

- Raising awareness of citizenship and national identity and improving knowledge of Slovene history and culture;
- Educating for the general cultural and civic values originating out of European traditions; and
- Educating for mutual tolerance, respect for differences, cooperation with others, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, thus developing the competencies required for living in a democratic society.

The Organization and Financing of Education Act 2008 (Government of Slovenia, 2008) set the following goals as the basis of all aspects of active citizenship in basic and upper-secondary education.

- Education should be conducive in terms of mutual tolerance, gender equality, respect for differences, cooperation, respect for children's and human rights, and fundamental freedoms;
- Education should develop equal opportunities for men and women; and (consequently)
- Education should develop the competencies that individuals need to live in a democratic society.

These developments reflect two major changes in the understanding of the civic purposes of public education and the role of citizenship education. The first change marked a transition toward an understanding of citizenship as a shared political status associated with free and equal membership in a political community. The second (and related) change marked a transition from a purely procedure-oriented approach to an approach that emphasizes the role and the importance of civic virtues and the search for practices that promote attitudes and behaviors respectful of basic human rights.



## Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum

### General Overview

The curricula introduced at the end of the 1990s stipulated the presence of civic and citizenship education at all levels of public education. Although this area of learning is implicitly evident in subjects such as history, geography, and Slovene at all levels of the education system as well as in sociology and philosophy in general upper-secondary schools, that presence is not the result of careful preparation or planning. Rather, it reflects the absence of an effective tradition of crosscurricular themes in Slovene education.

During basic education, citizenship education is included in the national curriculum via two separate subjects—the compulsory subject “citizenship education and ethics” for Grades 7 and 8, and the optional subject “civic culture” for Grade 9. At the same time, topics associated with civic and citizenship education may be included in the curriculum by integrating them into other civic-related subjects, such as Slovene language, history, and geography, and into various project-based activities.

In general upper-secondary schools, civic and citizenship education is an elective subject. Unlike compulsory subjects, elective subjects have no national-level syllabus but only a set of recommendations. Recommendations for a learning area called “civic culture” include a list of five topics—the constitutional order of the Republic of Slovenia; the government; the individual, society, and state; political systems; and the economic system of the Republic of Slovenia. Civic and citizenship education is expected to include three topics from this list. Because there is little evidence with respect to the overall effectiveness, in learning terms, of elective content, it is difficult to estimate to what extent recommendations regarding the civic culture course contribute to the civic education of students.

In two-year and three-year vocational schools, the civic culture learning area is included in the subject “social sciences.” The subject consists of three parts—history, geography, and civic culture. The topics that are taught in the latter include myself and others, religion and beliefs, authority and rebels, rights and responsibilities, elections, the market, social policy, and the world I live in. Four-year vocational education and training programs do not feature social sciences as part of their curricula. Instead, they include separate subjects, namely history, geography, and sociology. These subjects contain several aspects that relate to the civic culture learning area.

### Civic and Citizenship Education in Lower-Secondary Schools

In lower-secondary education (ISCED 2)—the second stage of basic school—the subject citizenship education and ethics is an integral part of the social sciences and humanities curriculum. It is taught in Grades 7 and 8 for one hour per week. Students acquire knowledge about society, reflect on their experiences, and develop their capacity for understanding and solving ethical questions. The aim of the educational process at this level of schooling is to promote the development of skills that enable students to participate autonomously in the life of a community. Toward the end of basic education, this subject aims to help students integrate their knowledge of social phenomena as well as their thinking about ethical considerations into their overall coursework (Schlamberger, 2002).

The content of the subject “citizenship education and ethics” relates to knowledge about society and participation in the community.<sup>1</sup> Its framework consists of a general conceptualization of society and community rather than of a more specific political system or a definition of citizenship. The vocabulary attempts to be neutral, but there is a subtle implication that the



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<sup>1</sup> The syllabus for this subject was changed in 2011.

subject deals primarily with society and not with politics. This avoidance of political issues is also noticeable with regard to the general educational aims for this subject, which are as follows:

- The acquisition of knowledge that enables a young person to develop independent answers to social and ethical questions (through access to key information/data, basic concepts, conceptual networks, cognitive procedures, and techniques and methods);
- The development of ethical attitudes and skills that are a precondition for independent, free, and responsible social action; and
- The development of capacity for forming relatively complex and internally articulated civic and moral judgments as a basis for moral action.

The subject called “citizenship education and ethics” includes two separate sets of units:

1. *Compulsory units*: These include 10 compulsory themes—life in the community; family; models and authorities; mass media and information; generations and cultures; religions, beliefs, and Christianity; dealing with common issues; democracy; vocation and work; and the future of society.
2. *Optional units*: These are selected from 18 thematic areas of learning.

The sequence in which these topics are to be taught is not necessarily determined in advance because individual themes may be designed as parts of larger thematic units.

Recommendations at the national level in regard to civic and citizenship education encourage methods of work that require active participation from students. These include group work, discussion, dialogue, research-based learning, and independent observation. Because no indication is given as to the time to be spent on each topic, teachers have considerable discretion in structuring the time allocated to compulsory or optional themes.

The fact that only one hour a week is dedicated to citizenship education and ethics has had an unexpected consequence. Teachers of the subject tend to be those who spend most of their overall teaching time on other subjects, most notably history, given that most of them have studied this subject. However, Slovene language and geography teachers are also strongly represented amongst the teachers of this civics-related subject.

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

Education legislation supports the active participation of students at various levels of school life. As members of the school community, students in basic schools have rights associated with their participation in school matters. The Basic School Act (Government of Slovenia, 2007) introduced a weekly half-hour homeroom session for discussions on matters of interest to school parliaments. The Regulations on the Rights and Duties of Pupils in Basic Schools (Government of Slovenia, 1996) stipulate that school principals must summon a school parliament at least twice a year.

Student parliaments are highlighted as one of the best forms of education for active citizenship and as a mode of student participation. Student parliaments have a further important educative role—that of allowing children to express their opinions on all issues concerning them.

Students at all levels of the education system have recourse to a range of project-based activities with relevance to civics and citizenship. Several nongovernmental organizations have been or are actively involved in implementing these projects.



## Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education

A number of social and political changes over the last two decades in Slovenia have had an important impact on the status and scope of and justification for citizenship education in Slovene public education. One of these changes is Slovenia's transition from a one-party system to a parliamentary democracy. A second is the positive influence that democratization through dissemination of the culture of human rights has had on Slovene society.

The citizenship agenda introduced during the 1996–1999 reform of public education was based on a common European heritage of political, cultural, and moral values. The aims of civic and citizenship education were given particular prominence in the 1996 *White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia* (Krek, 1996). The paper provided the conceptual basis for the reform of civic literacy, namely, knowledge of human rights, education for democracy, and participation in democratic processes.

An interesting trend can be observed in the evolution of the educational agenda of civics and citizenship in Slovene public education. While there has been little disagreement over the central importance of public education in terms of preparing citizens to become active members of their polity, some aspects of civic and citizenship education continue to be a contested area of public education policy (Štrajn, 1999).

Official public education policy not only regards schools as playing “an important role in forming a democratic public and in the development of the capacity to participate in the democratic processes,” but also views the “contents of curricula (variations of the so-called citizenship education) as well as their forms” as important in facilitating this process (Krek, 1996, p. 48). It is also widely agreed that the stability of a diverse polity and the maintenance of its basic institutional framework depend, to a large extent, on the success of its educational institutions in preparing citizens to become engaged members of society (Krek & Šebart, 1999).

In terms of the contestation of this area of learning, controversies over the educational agenda of civic and citizenship education in Slovene public education, especially in regard to prioritizing its aims, have been many and are ongoing. One such issue concerns the role that education plays in promoting patriotism. The proposed new syllabus for civic and citizenship education has changed the name of the subject from “citizenship education and ethics” to “citizenship and patriotic education and ethics.”

## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

Preschool, basic, and upper-secondary school teachers must complete a study program in higher education, obtain the appropriate degree, and pass a certification examination in order to be qualified as teachers. After graduation, teacher candidates receive additional practical training in schools (or preprimary institutions), which includes the support and supervision of a mentor. Finally, they are required to pass a certification examination, which acknowledges their formal competence as a teacher.

The initial training period is three years for preprimary teachers and four years for primary and upper-secondary teachers. Once the Bologna Process of standardizing the quality and standards of higher educational qualifications across European countries has been fully implemented in Slovenia, the duration of initial teacher education will be five years.

Basic schools have two types of teachers: class teachers and specialist teachers. Class teachers for Grades 1, 2, and 3 teach all subjects. Class teachers may also teach Grades 4, 5, and 6, with the exception of foreign languages and sports, which are taught by specialist teachers. Specialist teachers teach individual subjects from Grade 4 to Grade 9. Class teachers must have a degree



from a faculty of education. Basic school teachers of natural sciences can obtain their degree at a faculty of education or they may choose a general university program, during which or after which they take additional pedagogical courses. Basic school language, geography, and history teachers, as well as upper-secondary school teachers, complete their initial teacher education in university faculties of arts or natural sciences.

Inservice teacher education is not mandatory for basic school teachers, except in cases of substantial changes to the curriculum. However, to ensure that teachers are sufficiently competent, the Ministry of Education finances various forms of inservice teacher education. Inservice teacher education is seen not only as an integral part of supporting and promoting teachers, but also as a means of encouraging them to participate in professional development on an ongoing basis. Teacher promotion encompasses three ranks: teacher-mentor, teacher-adviser, and teacher-counselor. To obtain promotion to a higher rank, teachers must submit—among other things—proof of successful participation in professional development courses (Doupona Horvat, 2006).

Universities and other educational institutions offer various forms of professional development, including theme-based conferences, licensing courses, and training courses. Teachers are entitled to inservice training, and their respective schools must provide each of them with a minimum of five days' leave per year so they can pursue continuing education.

Inservice education is also not mandatory for upper-secondary teachers. However, because it is related to staff advancement, teachers generally participate in it. Teachers at this level are entitled to three days of paid leave per year for professional development.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Teachers who teach citizenship education and ethics in lower-secondary education (the second phase of basic education) must hold a university degree and be fully qualified in a related subject (history, geography, philosophy, sociology, political sciences, ethnology, Slovene language and literature, theology, psychology, pedagogy, special pedagogy, or law) or have already been teaching the subject for at least two years. They must also participate in an inservice program for civic and citizenship education that includes courses on pedagogy and teaching strategies, key philosophical and ethical concepts, and the theoretical bases of citizenship education. The same criteria apply to those who teach civic culture as part of the Grade 9 curriculum.

Teacher education in the area of civic and citizenship education is a priority area, particularly for inservice teachers and teacher educators. Educational authorities in Slovenia emphasize inservice teacher training by organizing annual seminars for teachers of citizenship education and other civic-related subjects such as Slovene language, history, and geography. This training is funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sports and is organized on an annual basis.

## **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Teachers assess their students' knowledge on a regular basis throughout the school year. Assessment is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Basic School Act (Government of Slovenia, 2007a) and the Regulations on Examination and Assessment of Knowledge and Advancement of Students in Basic School (Government of Slovenia, 2007b). Students and their parents receive regular progress reports throughout the school year. At the end of each school year, they receive a report that sets out the grades awarded in individual subjects.



Monitoring the progress of individual students varies across grades. Teachers assess their students against objectives stipulated in curriculum and assessment procedure regulations. Regulations also exist as to the number of times a year students must demonstrate their knowledge in both written and oral forms.

During the first three years of basic school, students' learning achievement is not graded. Instead, teachers write twice-yearly reports containing a description of each student's achievement. Reports at the end of the year are standardized and document how well a student performed during the year. In Grades 4 to 9, students receive numeric grades for every written or oral examination. Numeric grades are based on a five-level grading scale, with 5 indicating excellent, 4 above average, 3 average, 2 satisfactory, and 1 fail. Students also receive a report card that contains their final grades in each subject for every semester. Reports in all grades additionally function as certificates that can be used in fulfillment of admission criteria to upper-secondary schools (in cases of restricted entry) and can therefore help students enroll in the school of their choice.

Students who receive pass grades can advance to the next grade. Students in the first two three-year cycles can proceed to the next year even if they receive a fail grade. Students who receive a failing grade in Grades 3 to 6 may repeat a year with their parents' consent. Third-cycle students, Grades 6 to 9, who receive a failing grade in one or two subjects may take a second examination and proceed to the following year if they pass. Students who fail in three or more subjects must repeat the year. However, Grade 9 students have several options with regard to improving their final grades. Students who successfully complete basic education receive a school-leaving certificate containing their final Grade 9 marks for all subjects.

At the end of the second three-year cycle (Grade 6), students can sit optional national examinations. These include written tests in mother tongue, mathematics, and a foreign language.

External national examinations at the end of Grade 9 are compulsory for all students. They are required to take examinations in their mother tongue, mathematics, and a third subject. The Ministry of Education, in consultation with a council of experts, selects the range of subject options for the examination. Each student's performance in these examinations is noted on his or her basic school certificate. The examination results do not, however, affect students' grades or their progression to the next cycle, nor do they serve as criteria for admission to upper-secondary education. Their only purpose is to provide feedback to schools, parents, and students.

The National Committee prepares the examinations, the National Examination Center administers them, and the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia evaluates the results. Examination content is based on the objectives of compulsory education and the standards of knowledge set for individual subjects.

General and technical upper-secondary education ends with an external examination. General secondary schools (*gimnazija*) end with a general examination, whereas vocational secondary education is completed with a vocational examination. The general examination (*Matura*) comprises examinations in five different subjects (mathematics, mother tongue, a foreign language, and two optional subjects), while the vocational examination (also called *Matura*) comprises examinations in four subjects (mother tongue, mathematics or a foreign language, and two optional subjects). The upper-secondary education certificate is required for entry to university education.



### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

Assessment of students' learning in this area of education takes place primarily through project-based activities, including posters and presentations. Considerable attention is paid to the student's understanding of the topic being presented, its interrelationship with other topics, and its relevance within civic and citizenship education-related subjects. Students are taught to engage in thoughtful, critical debate and argumentation and to use respectful dialogue.

### Quality Monitoring of Education

Feedback on the performance of the education system as a whole is collected through statistics, targeted evaluation studies, statewide examinations, and international research. Preschool institutions and schools conduct internal evaluations and measure the quality of the educational process through several methods of self-evaluation. Schools' administrative work is evaluated by the National School Inspectorate, which ensures that the rights of preschool children and other learners are being met. The inspectorate also monitors the organization, financing, and implementation of educational programs.

The Ministry of Education operates a special advisory body called the Council for Quality and Evaluation. It evaluates the education system as a whole. The council proposes a list of evaluation topics, determines research projects, and presents its findings to the Minister of Education.

Various national and international research projects measure students' academic achievement at the national level. These evaluations include yearly analyses of student achievement in external assessments at the national level. They also include analyses and comparison of national results against the results for other nations participating in large-scale international studies of educational achievement. Slovenia has participated in a good number of these. They include the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), the Second Information Technology in Education Study (SITES), the Civic Education Study (CIVED), and the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS).

The National Institute for Education evaluates schools in the area of civic and citizenship education. The evaluation includes observations of teaching lessons and also features questionnaires that ask school personnel to state who, in their school, is teaching civic and citizenship education, which civic-related topics they are teaching in classrooms, and how they assess students' civics and citizenship learning. The questionnaire also asks for information on what kind of inservice professional development teachers of civic and citizenship education have attended, how those teachers plan their lessons and what content they include in them, and what learning resources they use in their classrooms.

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# Sweden

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

At the beginning of 2010, Sweden had a population of 9,340,682. Some 14 percent of Swedish residents were born abroad, with around 15 percent of them coming from Finland. The second largest group comprised people born in the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Sweden has also experienced significant immigration from countries such as Iraq, Iran, Turkey, or Poland (Statistics Sweden, 2010a).

About 90 percent of Sweden's inhabitants live in communities with more than 2,000 residents. The most densely populated areas lie in the triangle formed by the three largest cities—Stockholm, Göteborg, and Malmö—and along the Baltic coastline north of the capital. The interior of Norrland (the northern part of Sweden) is very sparsely populated.

Sweden has two minority groups of native inhabitants: the Finnish-speaking people of the northeast, along the Finnish border, who total about 30,000 people, and the Sami (Lapp) population of about 15,000. The Sami in Sweden have a Sami Parliament that has decisionmaking authority on specified issues (Sweden.se, 2008).

Sweden's official language is Swedish, but five official minority languages are also recognized—Sami, Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedal Finnish), Romany Chib, and Yiddish (*Manskliga Rattigheter*, 2008). The language of instruction in schools is Swedish. However, both Swedish and Sami are used in Sami schools (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010a).

In 2009, the gross domestic product of Sweden was 3,108,002 million krona or €M296,437.79 (Statistics Sweden, 2010b).

### Characteristics of the Political System

A king or queen occupies the Swedish throne under the Act of Succession and is the head of state. Since September 1973, Sweden's head of state has been King Carl XVI Gustaf. He exercises no political power and does not participate in political life. The head of state represents the country as a whole, and in that capacity performs only ceremonial duties and functions.

Since 1971, Sweden has had a unicameral parliament, or *Riksdag*, which has 349 members. Members are chosen by direct elections based on suffrage for all Swedish citizens aged 18 or over who are, or have previously been, residents of Sweden. Voting is not compulsory.

The *Riksdag* has legislative power. The government, which is accountable to the *Riksdag*, implements its decisions and submits proposals for new laws or amendments to laws. The elections of September 2010 led to eight parties being represented in the *Riksdag*.

The government rules Sweden by implementing the decisions of the *Riksdag*, which include formulation of new laws and amendments to existing ones. A group of government offices and about 250 central government agencies assist the government with these tasks.



The Swedish public sector has three levels of government: national, regional, and local. Government at the local level is based on municipalities, each of which has an elected assembly or council. Municipalities are responsible for a broad range of facilities and services, including housing, roads, water supply and wastewater processing, schools, public assistance, elder care, and childcare. Municipalities are entitled to levy income taxes on individuals. They also charge for various services. As a result, municipalities have some discretion in deciding what services they should offer. However, they are legally obliged to provide certain basic services.

The regional level comprises both elected county councils and county administrative boards. The county councils oversee tasks that the municipalities cannot handle because these tasks, most notably health care, require coordination across a larger region. County councils are entitled to levy income taxes to cover their costs.

The county administrative boards are the central government's representatives at the regional level. The central government appoints the head of the county administrative board—the county governor—for a six-year term. This person is often a previously prominent politician, such as a former cabinet minister or member of the *Riksdag*. The county administrative boards make decisions about such issues as land use (e.g., building permits) and traffic (including driver licenses) (Sweden.se, 2007).

Sweden is a member of the European Union, but has kept the Swedish crown as the national currency instead of replacing it with the euro.

## Education System

### Overview and Background

Sweden's Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for a number of government agencies, foundations, associations, and companies. These bodies handle the central government's day-to-day education-related administrative work. The central government determines educational objectives and guidelines as well as the distribution of educational resourcing, which is carried out through appropriations and appropriation directives.

The Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) is the central administrative authority for the Swedish public school system for children, young people, and adults, as well as for preschool activities and child care for children of school age. The agency steers, supports, follows up, and evaluates the work of municipalities and schools to ensure not only the quality of educational provision but also that all students have equal access to education (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2005). The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools, established in July 2008, coordinates the government's support for special needs education (Swedish National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools, n. d.)

The Swedish school system is goal-based and has a high degree of local autonomy (Ministry of Finance, 1991). Responsibility lies with the municipalities for public schools and with other authorities for independent schools. The municipalities operate the vast majority of schools in Sweden. Independent schools are open to all children and must be approved by the Schools Inspectorate. The teaching programs at independent schools must have similar objectives to those of municipal schools, but can differ in orientation (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2009a).

### Structure of the Education System

Children can attend preschool from the age of one until they reach school-entry age. Municipalities arrange open preschools that provide the children with educational group-based activities. Although preschool is not mandatory, most Swedish children attend them, generally when they reach the age of six (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2009b).



In Sweden, compulsory school starts from the year students turn seven (Grade 1) and ends in the year they turn 15 (Grade 9). Grades 1 to 6 are called primary level and Grades 7 to 9, lower-secondary level. The Swedish compulsory school system is comprehensive, but it is not uncommon for schools to stream or to create ability groups, especially for mathematics, English, and Swedish.

Two parallel compulsory school types exist for children with intellectual disabilities: a comprehensive school for children with intellectual disabilities, and a training school for those with profound intellectual disabilities. Sweden also provides special schools for children with deafness or a hearing impairment, severe language disturbance, or visual impairment in combination with additional functional disorders. These schools are of 10 years' duration and are meant to be as comparable to regular compulsory school as possible (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2009b).

Schools specifically catering for Sami children cover the first six years of compulsory schooling. Education in these schools provides the children with schooling that has a Sami orientation but which otherwise corresponds to schooling up to and including Grade 6 of the regular compulsory school.

At the beginning of school year 2009/2010, Sweden had 4,660 compulsory schools (primary and lower secondary), of which 709 (or 15%) were independently run. Approximately 891,000 students were enrolled in compulsory schools at this time. In recent years, the proportion of students in independent schools has gradually increased and currently comprises around 10 percent of all students.

During the 2009/2010 school year, approximately 85,750 teachers were working in compulsory schools. The student–teacher ratio was 12.2:1. Approximately 87 percent of fulltime teachers in compulsory schools at this time had a university diploma (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010b, n. d.a).

The upper-secondary level of education offers 17 national three-year programs. These provide a broad general education and eligibility to study at university or another postsecondary institution. All national programs include eight core subjects: English, the arts, physical education and health, mathematics, general science, social studies, Swedish (or Swedish as a second language), and religion. The majority of upper-secondary schools are municipal, with most students attending a school in the municipality where they reside. Students may, however, choose to attend a school in another municipality if, for example, their own municipality does not offer the desired program. Students can also opt to attend a privately operated or independent upper-secondary school (Swedish National Agency for Education, 1998).

Upper-secondary school for individuals with learning disabilities is a contribution-free, voluntary form of schooling that young people with intellectual disabilities may choose to enter after completing compulsory school for children with intellectual disabilities or school for children with profound intellectual disabilities.

Adult education in Sweden focuses on basic adult education and is either the equivalent of nine-year compulsory schooling, upper-secondary education, education for adults with an intellectual disability, or the teaching of Swedish for immigrants (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2009b).

Each municipality has an education committee (or equivalent) that is responsible for the municipality's preschool activities and compulsory education (Ministry of Finance, 1991). Schools rarely have a governing body or council that is concerned with, or in charge of, the actual running of the school because this is the responsibility of school principals (Ministry of Education and Science, 1985). Some independent and private schools do utilize such a body,



but how common this practice actually is remains uncertain because such a body can never replace the role of the principal. In addition, some schools have local school-governing boards that consist of members of the school's staff, parents, and students. The purpose of these boards is to enhance the influence that parents and/or students have on school decisionmaking and to facilitate communication between school and home (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Documents setting out educational goals along with syllabuses, tests, grading criteria, and general guidelines form the framework for the conduct and assessment of education throughout Sweden. However, municipalities and schools can set their own pedagogical goals within the national boundaries. Every municipality is obliged to prepare a school plan that states how it will achieve the nationally prescribed goals (Ministry of Education, 1994). In turn, every school within the municipality creates its own work plan, which sets out how the school intends to realize the municipal goals (Ministry of Education, 1994).

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic and citizenship education is not a specific subject but is integrated into several subjects (social studies, civics, history, geography, and religion). It is also a crosscurricular theme.

National curriculum documents contain sections that relate to civic and citizenship education. The first chapter of the curriculum, which deals with the fundamental values and tasks of the school, states that democracy forms the basis of the national school system. The second chapter focuses on, among other topics, norms and values and provides guidelines for school staff. It maintains that schools should actively and consciously influence and stimulate students into embracing the common values of Swedish society and expressing these in their everyday behavior. Another chapter sets out students' responsibilities and influence within schools, while yet another considers the school, its community, and the wider world (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006).

Sweden's Education Act stipulates that all school activity is to be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and that everyone working in the school is to encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person and the environment that all members of the school and its community share. The school has the important task of imparting to students, as well as instilling and forming in them, the fundamental values on which Swedish society is based. The Education Act also stipulates that the school must give students requisite knowledge and skills and, in cooperation with parents (or those who have custody of the students), promote their development as well-balanced, responsible human-beings and citizens. Special emphasis is given to the promotion of equality and working against all forms of abuse, such as bullying and racism (Ministry of Education and Science, 1985).

The following, taken from the national social studies syllabus text, provides an overview of the purpose of the four subjects included in this area of learning:

Knowledge in the area of social studies provides students with the opportunity of seeing their surroundings in relation to themselves, and understanding themselves in relation to their surroundings, i.e. how individuals form and are formed by their world. This knowledge provides a foundation for participating, taking responsibility and acting as citizens in a democratic society and also contributes to the sustainable development of society. The main task of social studies is to develop students' knowledge about Man and his activities, as well as about changes in the landscape and society in different places and during different periods. The aim is to stimulate reflection over human thinking and actions, and over phenomena in society, to strengthen preparedness to review the life situation of one's own and others, to increase security in one's own identity, as well as provide



knowledge of how our society is based on ethnic and cultural diversity. (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2008a, p. 57)

### **Civic and Citizenship Education in the Curriculum**

Because the Swedish school system is highly decentralized and its administrators (municipalities or independent agencies) are largely autonomous, there are no regulations or specifications pertaining to how schools should conduct instruction for civic and citizenship education. The individual administrative entities, the schools, and teachers consequently determine how they will meet the national goals for this learning area.

The four subjects (civics, history, religion, and geography) that make up social studies are the subjects most closely related to civic and citizenship education. The common syllabus for social studies specifies the goals that schools and their students are to work toward in Grades 5 and 9. Although each of the four individual subjects has its own syllabus, all four have a common structure. The overall social studies syllabus specifies, among other matters, that teaching this curriculum area should aim to ensure that students develop their knowledge of and ability to:

- Imagine themselves living in different ways, times, or locales, and to reflect on what is common to different cultures;
- Develop respect for the views of other persons, but observe and distance themselves from activities that involve oppression and violation of others;
- Make it a habit to take account of the equal value and rights of everyone, irrespective of gender, class, or ethnic affiliation;
- Develop the ability to see the consequences of their own and others' views and actions; and
- Develop an understanding of how activities and cultures are reflected in and influenced by art, literature, and music.

The syllabus text for social studies also sets out the goals that students should have attained by the end of their ninth year of schooling:

- An understanding of the fundamental concepts informing and phenomena of a democratic system, and the ability to discuss problems concerning democratic attitudes in everyday life;
- The ability to understand connections between events in society and to differentiate among the factors affecting those events;
- Knowledge of the consequences of alternative actions on issues affecting the environment, life, and society;
- Ability (when working from within a societal perspective) to search for information from different sources, to work through, examine, and value information, and to present results and conclusions in different forms (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2000).

### **Civic and Citizenship Education Activities in Schools**

The Education Act stipulates that students have the right to influence how their education is structured (Swedish Ministry of Education and Science, 1985). The Compulsory School Ordinance requires students and teachers in every class to discuss mutual issues such as school climate, teaching, school rules, and social interaction. How these class meetings are to be organized must be stated in the school plan, and students are expected to have input into its formulation (Ministry of Education, 1994).

The new Education Act of 2010/2011 states that every student should be given the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest during the school day, and that students



who represent other students (e.g., in a student council) should be compensated for the classroom learning time they miss due to their responsibilities as student representatives. The Act furthermore states that each school can decide what form student participation will take (Ministry of Education and Science, 1985).

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, schools must ensure that, from Grade 7 on, students can elect representatives from amongst their peers to represent their interests (especially those interests relating to student wellbeing) to the school's principal and management team. Every school is also required to have a plan that specifies how it will implement the government's equality of educational opportunity policy. Again, the expectation is that students will be involved in producing, implementing, and evaluating the plan (Ministry of Employment, 1977).

The curriculum contains a separate chapter on student responsibilities and influences (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006). The Education Act (Ministry of Education and Science, 1985), the curriculum (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006), and the four subject syllabuses that contribute to the social studies syllabus (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2000) emphasize schools' role in fostering democratic attitudes and actions. Schools are therefore expected not only to ensure students know about democratic procedures but also function according to democratic precepts, which include letting students participate in school decisionmaking so that they can influence the policies and practices that affect them.

The following text in the Swedish compulsory curriculum is an excerpt from the chapter on students' responsibilities:

The democratic principles of being able to influence, take responsibility and be involved should embrace all pupils. Development of pupils' knowledge and social awareness requires that they take increasingly greater responsibility for their own work as well as for the school environment and that they are also able to exercise real influence over their education.

According to the Education Act, it is incumbent on all who work in the school to work for democratic working structures. (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006, Chap. 1, ¶2)

The curriculum also asserts that the school should strive to ensure that all students:

- Take personal responsibility for their studies and working environment;
- Gradually exercise increasingly greater influence over their education and the internal work of the school; and
- Understand democratic principles and develop their ability to work in democratic ways.

The curriculum furthermore indicates that all who work in the school should support students' abilities and willingness to both influence and take responsibility for the social, cultural, and physical school environment. In addition, teachers should:

- Assume, as a starting point, that students are willing and able to take personal responsibility for their learning and work in school;
- Ensure that all students, independent of social background, and regardless of gender, ethnic affiliation, religious or other belief, sexual orientation, or disability, influence the work methods, work structures, and educational content, and ensure that this influence increases as they grow in age and maturity;
- Work so that boys and girls have equal influence on and participation in their education;
- Respond to students' willingness to try different working methods and structures;
- Work together with students to plan and evaluate teaching; and



- Prepare students for participating in and sharing the joint responsibilities, rights, and obligations that characterize a democratic society (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006).

### **Current Reforms and Debates in Civic and Citizenship Education**

The goal of developing democratic citizens is not new in Swedish educational policy. The collapse of democracies around the world in the 1940s together with totalitarian trends in a number of countries made it evident that support for democracy is not inevitable. Politicians in Sweden responsible for education were attracted to the American progressive approach to education, which maintains that school plays an important role in shaping society. This thinking led to the creation of social science as a school subject, and the Swedish school system being explicitly charged with educating students as democratic citizens (Bennich-Björkman, 2002; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2003a).

Although the interpretation of the school's role with respect to fostering the principles and practice of democracy has shifted over time, the last two national curricula for Sweden, *Lgr 80* (Swedish National Agency for Education, 1980) and *Lpo 94* (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006), specify the importance of democratic values and democratic experience. Recent decades have seen an emphasis on the school as a democratic environment, with student influence as a desired goal. The meaning of the concept “equal” or “equivalent” education has varied across time, vacillating between emphasizing equal access of education for all and emphasizing equal opportunities for all when educated. Whatever the case, some form of equality-based ideal is strongly conspicuous in the Swedish national school curriculum.

The biggest change in educational policy took place at the beginning of the 1990s when responsibility for schools shifted from the national to the municipal level. From exercising centralized control of education through detailed regulations, the state now governs through overarching goals, with decisions as to how to meet those goals decentralized to the municipalities. School leaders and teachers have been given greater responsibility for designing education, as long as it serves the general purpose of the school. These developments have had major consequences for how the national curriculum is expressed: schools of today are required to have teaching programs that encompass prescribed basic and general values and objectives, but they have very few guidelines or prescriptions on how to achieve these (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2001). One important recent development with respect to school ethos was the election of a conservative government in 2006 after a long period of social-democratic rule. The new government has put more emphasis on knowledge and order within schools.

An issue attracting considerable debate in Sweden concerns the consequences that the increased freedom of choice within the Swedish school system has had on equality (equivalence) of educational opportunity and school segregation (connected to housing segregation) in urban areas. This matter has also been affected by the somewhat unexpected success of right-wing parties during the elections of 2006 and 2010, in particular in school elections. Debates about reforms of the school system have been very intense since these elections. An indication of some of the major changes that have taken place or are expected to take place over the next few years follows (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2003b).

In 2011/2012, a new curriculum and a new marking scale were implemented in all compulsory schools. This comprehensive document contains both the curriculum and its subject syllabuses; the latter were previously separated out from the former. The new curriculum stipulates general content for Grades 1 to 3, 4 to 6, and 7 to 9. The previous two-level goal structure (goals to aim for and goals to attain) has been abolished. The introduction of acceptable knowledge levels for Grade 3 (for some, not all, subjects) and Grade 6 (for all subjects except foreign languages) is also new. For Grade 9, acceptable knowledge levels are



specified for three of the six assessment grades. The new marking scale has six grades. At the time of writing, there was also a proposal abroad for marks to be introduced in Grade 6 (instead of Grade 8 as at present), beginning in school year 2012/2013 (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010c).

The aforementioned new Education Act introduced in August 2010 took effect in July 2011. One of the new regulations states that all schools are now subject to a common set of objectives and rules regardless of who organizes the school. The legal rights of students have been enhanced, with extended possibilities for appealing teachers' and principals' decisions. The Act has also given teachers and principals more authority with respect to creating an orderly and safe environment in schools (Ministry of Education, 2010a).

Upper-secondary schools also underwent reform during the 2011/2012 school year. The schools now offer 18 national programs, of which 12 are vocationally oriented. The division between types of program has meant different certificates, one of which is a vocational qualification and the other of which is for preparatory programs. The preparatory programs are oriented to preparing students for higher (tertiary-level) education. Students who complete a vocationally oriented program can no longer enter higher education unless they have a supplemental qualification. Students enrolled in vocationally oriented programs may apply for apprenticeship training, which means that a major part of their training is likely to be conducted within workplaces. Apprenticeship training is currently experiencing reform, and history is now a mandatory subject in all national programs. The Swedish National Agency for Education has finalized new syllabuses that specify acceptable levels of knowledge for three of the six assessment grades. A new marking scale, similar to the one described above for compulsory schools, is also under development. Many of the changes for upper-secondary school will also affect adult education (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010c).

Sweden has used national tests for many years in both compulsory schools and upper-secondary schools, but the number of tests and the grades in which they are carried out have expanded. Tests that were introduced after the reforms of 2010 include mathematics, Swedish, and Swedish as a second language (for Grade 3), and biology, physics, and chemistry for Grade 9. The Swedish National Agency for Education provides a test item bank for several other subjects that schools and teachers can use. Tests and items for social science subjects (history, geography, civics, and religion) have also been made available recently. At the beginning of the 2008/2009 school year, written assessments became mandatory for all grades. The aim of these assessments is to provide feedback on student progress to students and parents (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010d).

A new preschool curriculum took effect in July 2011. Its goals, relative to the former curriculum, have been clarified and extended, and there is more emphasis than formerly on the learning aspects of language, communication, mathematics, science, and technology (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010c).

Finally, the rights of the five identified ethnic minorities have been strengthened relative to mother-tongue tuition. The new ordinance took effect in July 2008. Each municipality has to arrange for mother-tongue tuition in minority languages regardless of how many students need the tuition and regardless of whether students use it in their daily lives (Ministry of Education, 2008a, 2008b).



## Teachers and Teacher Education

### Teacher Education in General

In 2007, teacher education was adjusted to mesh with the Bologna system, which divides teacher education into basic and advanced levels. Students studying to become teachers in the earlier years of compulsory schooling can choose whether to study toward a degree at the basic level or the advanced level.

Teacher education varies between 180 credits (for vocational studies teachers in upper-secondary schools) and 270 credits (for teachers in lower- and upper-secondary schools). However, teachers teaching Swedish and civics at the upper-secondary level need 330 credits and teachers teaching Swedish and civics at the lower-secondary level need 300 credits in order to qualify. In addition to academic subjects, teacher education courses include pedagogy, methodology, and didactics, as well as teaching practicums in schools (Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations, n. d.).

In 2010, the Swedish Parliament approved the government's proposed restructuring of teacher education. Teacher education now encompasses four professional degrees—one for preschool teachers, one for compulsory school teachers, one for subject teachers, and one for vocational studies teachers. The new teacher education structure took effect in the autumn of 2011 (Government Offices of Sweden, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2010b).

Inservice teacher education (professional development) is mainly the responsibility of the authority responsible for the school and the school principal, and therefore differs across schools. In 2007, the government launched an initiative to raise teachers' competency and status nationwide. The aim of this professional development program was to give qualified teachers opportunity to strengthen their didactic skills as well as their competency in the subjects they were teaching. Around 30,000 teachers had access to this program, which continued until 2011 (Swedish National Agency for Education, n. d.b).

### Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education

Although civic and citizenship education is primarily taught by teachers of social science subjects, all teachers have a stake in this area of education, given that it entails a whole-school approach. The principles and practice of democracy, tolerance, equity, and cooperation not only are part of all subject syllabuses but also are expected to imbue the ethos of the school and thereby influence how it operates (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006).

Many schools offer a subject that is not part of the regularly timetabled subjects. This subject, called *livskunskap* (life skills), deals with more existential issues, such as relationships, values, health, lifestyle, culture, self-esteem, and self-confidence. It also has a practical orientation in terms of enabling students to practice, via role-playing, their conversational, discussion, and debating skills. These opportunities also help students develop their social and emotional skills and their ability to listen to others, to cooperate, and to resolve conflicts harmoniously (Värdegrundsförlaget, n. d.).

Teachers of civic and citizenship education-related subjects (i.e., the social-science subjects of history, geography, civics, and religion) in lower- and upper-secondary schools have a university degree that encompasses 300 and 330 credits respectively. Different universities provide somewhat different content in their teacher education programs, but all programs offer 90 credits of general education studies (questions and perspectives on learning, teaching, and development). Civic and citizenship education teachers receive the following complement of credits: 90 credits for the chosen subject area, didactics, and teaching practice; 30 credits for specialization; and an additional 15 to 30 credits for a degree project or thesis. The rest of the



teacher education program consists of teaching practice and elective subjects (Lararutbildning.nu, 2010; Stockholm University, 2010).

During the 2009/2010 school year, 87 percent of teachers teaching Swedish, civics, history, religion, and geography had a pedagogical university degree. This percentage is nearly the same as that for teachers with general teaching degrees in compulsory schools. Sweden currently has no expectation of an upcoming shortage of teachers of these subjects. In general, supply throughout Sweden is stable (Statistics Sweden, 2009).

In all likelihood, the number of students aged 12 to 15 will decrease by 18 percent between 2007 and 2012, and from then, until 2018, to increase somewhat, with a final figure around five percent lower than the figure for 2007 (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2008b). Because of this expectation, the demand for teachers during the period 2012 to 2015 is expected to decrease by 12 to 13 percent, and then to increase slightly as student numbers rise again (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2008c).

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

Students in compulsory schools receive marks after the fall and spring terms in Grade 8 and after the fall term in Grade 9. Marks are given for single subjects as well as for blocks of subjects. Students receive a school-leaving certificate on completing compulsory attendance at school.

As of the 2011/2012 school year, students wanting to continue their studies in upper-secondary school have to achieve a passing grade in Swedish or Swedish as a second language, English, and mathematics. To gain admission to a program designed to prepare students for academic and professional studies at the tertiary level of the education system, applicants must attain a passing grade in nine other subjects, for a total of 12 subjects. Students wanting to enter vocationally oriented programs need to attain a passing grade in five other subjects, for a total of eight (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2009c).

Swedish students do not have to sit a final examination at the end of their upper-secondary schooling. Eligibility for university study is based on the following requirements (from January 2010): a mark of at least “G” (pass) based on securing 2,250 points of educational achievement (an upper-secondary education encompasses 2,500 points). Students must also achieve a “G” (pass) in Swedish or Swedish as a second language, English, and mathematics (Studera.nu, 2010).

Although Sweden has a national testing system, it has no national examinations. The purposes of the testing system are to determine students’ knowledge and skills in relation to national learning goals, to help teachers assess and grade their students and develop their ongoing teaching and learning plans, and to make grading criteria more concrete. Measures are in place to ensure that assessments and grading are carried out on an equitable and fair basis. The tests are mandatory and are carried out in Grades 3, 5, and 9. However, since the beginning of 2011/2012, testing has shifted from Grade 5 to Grade 6, in accordance with the new curriculum for compulsory schools. The subjects tested in Grade 3 are mathematics and Swedish or Swedish as a second language. Grade 6 students are tested in these subjects as well as in English. In Grade 9 (Grade 10 for the special schools), the subjects tested are mathematics, Swedish or Swedish as a second language, English, biology, chemistry, and physics (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2007a).



### Assessment and Examinations in Subjects Related to Civic and Citizenship Education

Sweden's national curriculum and other official documents stipulate that students must be assessed, but it is up to each school to determine how this should be done. There are no specific guidelines on testing students' learning achievement in civic and citizenship education. The subjects most closely related to this area of education, that is, civics, religion, history, and geography, are tested in Grades 8 and 9 as described above. The Swedish National Agency for Education is developing an item bank for the social sciences that schools and teachers can draw upon for assessment and diagnostic purposes.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Since 2008, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate has been the central agency responsible for monitoring the quality of preschool activities, the welfare of schoolchildren, school management, and adult education. Its main task is to regularly monitor all schools to ensure that the respective authorities responsible for them are following national laws and regulations. Four main areas are subject to supervision: goal fulfillment and results, pedagogical leadership and development, the learning environment, and students' rights and access to education and care (Swedish Schools Inspectorate, n. d.a).

In-depth investigations of student achievement are also carried out. One such investigation, conducted in 2012, focused on civics in upper-secondary education. Findings showed that the achievement of students in vocationally oriented programs was lower than that of students in the more academic programs. One essential question asked in response to this finding was whether schools are succeeding in adapting instruction to the specific goals of each upper-secondary program (Swedish Schools Inspectorate, n. d.b).

In 2003, the Swedish National Agency for Education conducted an evaluation of goal fulfillment in all compulsory school subjects. The agency examined all the social sciences subjects, especially civics, and eventually put out one report on students' democratic competence and another on students' views on global conditions and the future (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2007b).

In the spring of 2009, the government asked the Swedish National Agency for Education to promote and thereby help strengthen fundamental civic values in schools. The assignment included developing a website that disseminates information that will assist schools with their work in this area, and conducting a study on the different ways schools deal with issues related to these values. The outcomes of this study and information obtained from other materials will provide the basis for creating resources that schools can use to help them inculcate these values among their students (Ministry of Education, 2009).

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### Further Reading

Readers who are interested in reviewing the regulatory framework or learning more about education in Sweden may wish to consult the following websites.

#### *Facts on Sweden*

<http://www.sweden.se>

[http://www.scb.se/statistik/\\_publikationer/NR0103\\_2010K02s\\_TI\\_NR01TI1003.pdf](http://www.scb.se/statistik/_publikationer/NR0103_2010K02s_TI_NR01TI1003.pdf)

#### *Acts and agencies governing the Swedish education system*

<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3008>

<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/574/a/21538>

<http://www.skolinspektionen.se>

<http://www.skolverket.se>

<http://www.spsm.se/Startpage/>

<http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/209/a/221>

#### *Teacher training in Sweden*

<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/14626>

<http://www.kau.se/lararutbildningen>

<http://www.su.se/lararutbildningar>



<http://www.saco.se/templates/Ocupation.aspx?id=4039&epslanguage=SV>

<https://www.studera.nu>

*Civics, democratic values, and national minorities in Swedish schools*

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<http://www.livskunskap.net/>

[http://www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se/extra/pod/?module\\_instance=2&action=pod\\_show&id=55](http://www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se/extra/pod/?module_instance=2&action=pod_show&id=55)

[http://www.skolverket.se/content/1/c6/01/96/66/Grundskolan\\_Personal\\_Riksniv%20E5\\_Tabel15Awebb.xls](http://www.skolverket.se/content/1/c6/01/96/66/Grundskolan_Personal_Riksniv%20E5_Tabel15Awebb.xls)

<http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/784/a/3447>

<http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/12/63/93/b5fb7bc3.pdf>

[http://www.skolverket.se/content/1/c6/01/b6/Grundskolan\\_Personal\\_Riksniv%20E5\\_Tabel15Awebb.xls](http://www.skolverket.se/content/1/c6/01/b6/Grundskolan_Personal_Riksniv%20E5_Tabel15Awebb.xls)





# Switzerland

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## General Background Information

### Demographics and Language

The official name of Switzerland is “Swiss Confederation” (*Eidgenossenschaft* in German). Switzerland is located in the middle of Europe but is not a member country of the European Union. It is an alpine country with a high level of linguistic and cultural heterogeneity. Switzerland contains 26 cantons and half cantons, each of which has a high level of autonomy with respect to the education system, in general, and to civic and citizenship education, in particular.

In 1900, the population of Switzerland was 3.3 million. By 2009, it had increased to 7.8 million. Until 1970, the number of births per year still outnumbered the number of deaths. Since then, population growth has been mainly due to immigration. The country has a slightly higher proportion of women (50.8%) than men, which is due to women’s higher life expectancy (Swiss Federal Office for Statistics, 2010).

About one-fifth of the population (just over 1.7 million people) has an immigrant background. This number is stable, with about 50,000 to 70,000 people of immigrant background given citizenship status each year. Approximately one-quarter of this population was born in Switzerland. Despite restrictions, the immigration rate is relatively similar to that of other countries. Today, about 18 percent of the immigrant population originates from Italy, 14 percent from Germany, 12 percent from Portugal, and 12 percent from Serbia and Montenegro (Swiss Federal Office for Statistics, 2011). There are also larger numbers of new immigrants to Switzerland from Northern Africa.

Switzerland has four official languages: German, French, Italian, and Romansh. In 17 of the 26 cantons, the most common language is a German dialect (spoken by 64% of the canton’s people), which every child learns to read and write early in their schooling. In four cantons, the prevalent language is French (19%), and in the canton of Ticino the main language is Italian (6%). Romansh is spoken by a small number of people, principally in the canton of Grisons. Other languages commonly spoken in Switzerland include Serbo-Croatian (spoken by 111,400 people), Albanian (94,000), Portuguese (89,500), Spanish (77,500), English (73,000), and Turkish (44,500). Other languages are spoken by 165,000 people in Switzerland ([www.swissworld.org](http://www.swissworld.org)).

Switzerland’s linguistic diversity is one of the major reasons for the federalist conception of Switzerland (Dürrenmatt, 1978). However, despite the constitutional framework for an explicitly multinational system, divisiveness and disharmony tend to emerge across the diverse ethnic groups during times of economic and political difficulty (Reichenbach, 1999). Over the last few decades, the language groups in Switzerland have become more distant from one another, and language regionalism has become more intensive (Altermatt, 1996). The ability to speak more than one of Switzerland’s official languages has become a central issue for intellectual and cultural life, and also for political interaction and parliamentary culture. Civic understanding in Switzerland can therefore be regarded as communication in different official languages.



In 2011, Switzerland's gross domestic product was estimated to be US\$B512,065 ([www.tradingeconomics.com/switzerland](http://www.tradingeconomics.com/switzerland)).

### **Characteristics of the Political System**

Switzerland's political system is unique in the world, but it has similarities to the systems of Germany and the United States. The particular form of democracy that Switzerland has developed is called "direct democracy," which means that decisionmaking power is vested in the country's citizens. The Swiss people not only elect their representatives in the communities, the cantons, and the federal parliament, but also have the right to vote directly on laws, changes to the constitution, important public issues such as education and the military, and matters such as public transportation and health. Switzerland's form of democracy is also therefore a grassroots one. Switzerland accordingly has as its sovereign the people; every citizen is called upon to have the last word with respect to important political issues.

Switzerland has a bicameral form of parliament. Citizens elect representatives to the Federal Assembly of Switzerland, which is made up of the National Council (lower house) and the Council of States (upper house). There is approximately one representative per 100,000 inhabitants in the lower house, and there are two representatives from each of the full cantons and one representative from each half canton in the upper house. The assembly exercises legislative power.

The executive branch of government comprises seven ministers elected by the two chambers of the Federal Assembly (in a common session). They are commonly drawn from the strongest political parties represented in the Federal Assembly and together form the Federal Council of Switzerland, which acts as the head of government. As of 2012, the council consists of two representatives from the Social Democrats, two representatives from the Liberals, one representative from the Christian Democrats, one representative from the Swiss People's Party, and one representative from the Conservative Democrats. The notion of consensus democracy is important because these seven people have to reach consensual (compromise) decisions on many issues involving conflicting interests. The presidency of the country is rotated among the members of the council for one-year periods.

The Federal Council represents Switzerland's interests on the world stage, but its members have to make sure that this representation balances the interests of all Swiss cantons. The 23 full and six half cantons each has its own constitution, parliament, and courts. The cantons' constitutions are aligned to the federal constitution. About 2,600 municipalities exist at the local level, and each also has its own parliament and specific municipality laws.

## **Education System**

### **Overview and Background**

The cantons direct and maintain Switzerland's education system. They and the municipalities provide 80 percent of the financial support for education. Ninety-five percent of all children attend public kindergartens or public schools; only five percent therefore attend private schools. The cantons have overall responsibility for determining the curriculum, years of schooling, teacher training, and procedures for student advancement from one level of the education system to the next. The cantons are also responsible for the respective universities, except the two technical universities that are funded by the federal government. The municipalities are responsible for the day-to-day administration of schools.



## Structure of the Education System

Preschool education in Switzerland lasts two years. Children begin primary school at the age of six or seven. Children must attend nine years of schooling; this period ends when the children reach age 15. Recently, the majority of the cantons voted on a structural change to the education system called “HarmoS,” which saw preschool education and the first two years of primary school combined to form a stage called basic level, which is followed by seven more years of compulsory schooling.

Preschool education and primary schools are organized according to a federal structure that can be adapted to suit all language cultures and cantonal requirements. Although the ultimate responsibility for education rests with the cantons, their ministers of education try to coordinate the length of the school year and the start and end dates of examination periods so that they are the same across cantons. However, there are some important differences across cantons with regard to education. For example, unlike students in other cantons, students in the city of Basel start Secondary I (lower-secondary school) after the fourth year of primary school.

Primary school encompasses six years in most of the cantons: two years of basic level and four years of primary school. On reaching lower-secondary school, which spans Grades 7 to 9, students are tracked into three different groups based on low, medium, and high performance levels. Lower-secondary students learn at least one second official language as well as English.

After completing lower-secondary school, most students progress to the Secondary II education programs (upper secondary), which are highly differentiated. About 70 to 75 percent of students attend vocational school, which has a dual system, wherein students spend half of their time working as apprentices for a profession and the other half attending vocational education and training (VET) school. VET education has a high national status because of its tendency to integrate everyone in a work-based situation. VET school is organized at the federal level and lasts between two and four years, depending on the course of study, after which students can progress to a higher vocationally oriented university (*Fachhochschule*). However, in order to do this, they must obtain the VET Matura certificate.

Between 20 and 30 percent of upper-secondary students are engaged in academic programs, which are highly selective. The schools in which these programs are offered are called gymnasias. On successfully completing their education, upper-secondary students obtain a Matura certificate, which entitles them to study in universities. The Matura is, in general, the only requirement governing entry to Swiss universities.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

### General Approach to Civic and Citizenship Education

The content and time given to civic and citizenship education across the different cantons are very heterogeneous; there is no common curriculum for this area of education. However, there are two areas of commonality across most cantons. The first is the call for civic education to be integrated into relevant school subjects, generally geography, history, social studies, religious education, philosophy, and literature (Reichenbach, 1999, p. 561). The second is the requirement for its content to be taught as part of the school subject history (*Lehrplan Geschichte und Politik*, 1991).

Civic and citizenship education topics typically encompass moral and social precepts. Pluralism, drug abuse, individualism, ethnocentrism, adherence to the law, and even “political correctness” are covered and are also evident in a subject area called “life science” (*Lebenskunde*). The function of political decisionmaking is seldom taught, and the same can be said of political matters such as freedom, power, equal rights, law enforcement, and national court work.



The federal level of Switzerland's education system plays no part in developing and implementing civic and citizenship education. Instead, federal offices have created what is known as "a platform for sustainable development" in education. Civic and citizenship education is part of this platform, but is referred to as "political education" (*Politische Bildung*).

Civic and citizenship education is generally seen throughout Switzerland as an important contributor to young people's competencies on leaving school, but is generally presented through an interdisciplinary approach rather than as a dedicated topic. Civic and citizenship education is thus not only integrated into different subject areas but also differentiated according to educational program. This approach enables schools to determine the content and scope of civic education in their programs, but the fact that this learning area is not a mandatory part of the curriculum leads to a lack of commitment to it (Leimgruber, 2008). In a study comparing Swiss teachers with Indian teachers in regard to their vision of democracy and democracy teaching, Varghese (2012) found the Swiss teachers lacked any "meta-concept" of what they could do to engage students in this subject matter.

In 2000, the committee of the ministers of education of cantons advised that more needed to be done with respect to civic and citizenship education both at schools and universities. In addition, the federal government sent a strong message to the conference of cantonal education ministers urging them to strengthen "education for democracy."

More recently, the federal parliament has begun to recommend and support the notion that teachers need to give dedicated time to civic and citizenship education. The plan is to strengthen civic and citizenship education by implementing education for democracy and creating curricular topics related to this learning area during certain phases of schooling. The federation is urging the cantons to develop their own textbooks and to ensure that these cover both traditional aspects of political education as well as relevant new topics. However, federal guidelines as to what the textbooks for different age groups might contain remain vague. There have also been moves to make civic and citizenship education (its principles and pedagogy) an integrated part of teacher training.

Because the cantons have the ultimate responsibility for education in their jurisdictions, there is, as previously noted, widespread and systematic diversity regarding civic and citizenship education throughout Switzerland. Attempts have been made to harmonize curricula across both German and French cantons, and to develop textbooks according to new standards built on particular conceptualizations of civic and citizenship education. Six cantons (Zürch, St. Gallen, Bern, Argau, Luzern, and Wallis) have expressed interest in this development.

Lower-secondary schools in most cantons use a curricular plan called "man and environment" (*Mensch-Umwelt*) or "individual, nature, and environment" (*Mensch-Natur-Umwelt*). It focuses on a range of historical, political, ecological, social, ethical, and economic issues as well as on a wide range of important issues evident in modern society. Only five cantons offer lower-secondary students a subject directly related to civic and citizenship education. Most of the French-speaking cantons teach civic-related content as part of the subject areas history and social learning (with the latter integrated into other school subjects). Most other cantons integrate civic and citizenship education topics into subjects such as "realities" (which focuses on natural science issues, such as the question of water supply), the specific sciences, history, and social studies (see [www.politischebildung.ch](http://www.politischebildung.ch)).

At the upper-secondary level of education (catering to students aged 16 to 20), civic and citizenship education is taught either in gymnasia or vocational schools. As is the case in lower-secondary education, there is neither systematic instruction nor a well-defined curriculum in this area of learning. It is again integrated into subjects such as history, social studies, and geography. However, students studying social studies are encouraged to think about and engage in political matters.



Students at this level of the education system do, however, have ready access to a wide range of leaflets, brochures, and student resources on particular issues such as human rights, gender rights, immigrants, poverty, the military, civil services, and the Red Cross. Swiss citizens have—as noted previously—the right to vote each year on a large number of current issues, such as laws, budgets, immigration policies, and educational concepts. They also have the right to initiate new policies and initiatives by collecting signatures for petitions that may lead to referendums on legislative change. Discussions about civic issues are therefore prominent within families and in the media—a situation that has implications for civic and citizenship education.

## Teachers and Teacher Education

Although there is no structured civic and citizenship education curriculum for teacher training, prospective teachers are likely to encounter content areas related to it. Topics such as participation, human rights, and child poverty are evident in the subject areas of literature, history, geography, and social studies, and in the pedagogical principles of ethics and responsibility. However, both preservice and inservice teachers do not yet have access to courses focusing specifically on the pedagogy of civic and citizenship education and encompassing such issues as political power, democracy, equal rights, freedom, religious indoctrination, and law enforcement. Opportunities to learn the didactics of civic education are nonexistent.

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

### General Assessment and Examination Standards

At the primary level, quality control has two dimensions. Cumulative evaluation typically encompasses comprehension checks, achievement controls, and an assessment of motivation and participation. Evaluations are conducted in relation to school goals and state-level curricular legislation. Although teachers are free to evaluate what seems most important to them, they must assign, at the end of each semester and at the end of the year, a numeric grade for each academic subject. In a typical marking scheme, 6 denotes excellent or the highest level of achievement, 5.5 denotes achievement between excellent and good, 5 denotes good, 4.5 sits between good and satisfactory, 4 is satisfactory, 3.5 is unacceptable, and 3 to 1 is considered entirely unacceptable. Parents regularly receive updates about their children's achievement level, about their general motivation, and especially about any learning weaknesses.

Teachers of the academic subjects at the Secondary I level tend to use written examinations to determine grades. However, students are graded not only on content knowledge but also on motivation, participation, and social ability. At the end of each semester and at the end of the school year, teachers issue a signed report consisting of two forms. The first is a list of grades, and the second is a list of commendations. Academic performance is graded from 6 to 1, with 6 indicating excellent, 5 good, 4 satisfactory, and 3 unsatisfactory. These numeric marks are calculated as the mean of all tests administered in the relevant subject over the course of the year. Many schools hold information evenings, during which teachers invite parents to reflect on their children's performance throughout the year.

In general, teachers in Switzerland have a high degree of autonomy with respect to student evaluation, and they are also expected to reflect on and self-evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. A number of teaching-related matters are, however, determined and then evaluated at school-level meetings of teachers and principals. These matters primarily concern standards pertaining to time allocations for different course content, students' academic performance, school social life, and disciplinary considerations. The strength of teacher engagement is also indicated by the extent to which a school engages in special projects, such as ecological conservation, democratic class discussions, and caring for a school garden. Teachers are also invited to reflect on their own teaching by visiting colleagues' classrooms or engaging in peer-



based coaching. Principals have the right to evaluate a teacher's performance if the teacher does not appear to be meeting all requirements.

At the external level, teacher evaluation is a two-part process. The state supervisory authority monitors curriculum fulfillment at the school level, based on a quality control report submitted by the principal. In addition, school inspectors visit classrooms once or twice a year, monitoring student engagement, the social climate, discipline, the culture of feedback, didactical techniques and methods, and the teachers' concepts of diversity. Inspectors also assess course content delivery by observing student interactions, group work, and competency-based groupings. These visits can be replaced by coaching structures that schools develop individually.

### Assessment of Civic and Citizenship Education

Evaluation of civic instruction is guided by its integration into other curricular subjects. If civic instruction is fully optional, as in religious instruction, art education, and cooking classes, there is no grading and no evaluation of the teaching process. If, however, civic instruction is integrated into history or social studies courses, teachers can set examinations and issue grades. However, civic teaching itself is not subject to special evaluation. As noted previously, teachers of civic or citizenship content are evaluated once or twice a year by the school principal or by an inspector; if no difficulties are noted, then the monitoring is regarded as complete and sufficient.

### Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education

Switzerland has no specific procedure or organization for monitoring the quality of its civic and citizenship education. The canton-level governments to which schools report generally allow schools a high degree of autonomy. Teachers are expected to operate within a framework based on professional engagement, curriculum fulfillment, and a respectful relationship with students. Within this framework, teachers are free to construct and implement civic education content into other domains, such as history, social learning, literature, and geography.

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## **General Background Information**

### **Demographics and Language**

Thailand, located in Southeast Asia, covers an area of 513,115 square kilometers. It shares borders with Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, and Malaysia. The monsoonal climate is marked by a pronounced rainy season from May to September and a relatively dry season for the remainder of the year. Thailand encompasses four geographical regions:

- The north, a mountainous area that has Chiangmai as its largest city;
- The central plain, the wealthiest and most extensive rice-producing area of Thailand, which has Bangkok, Thailand's capital, at its center;
- The northeast or Korat Plateau, which comprises an arid region with harsh climatic conditions; and
- The south, which includes the mountainous southern peninsula, contains rich deposits of minerals and ores, and is the center of rubber production.

The population of Thailand in 2008 was approximately 66 million with an annual growth rate of less than one percent. The majority of the nation's citizens are Thais. Other nationalities include ethnic Chinese, Malays, Lao, Vietnamese, and Indians.

Buddhism, the national religion, is the professed faith of 95 percent of the population. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and other religions are embraced by small percentages of the population. Thai is the national and official language; several dialects are spoken in rural areas. Other languages spoken in Thailand include Chinese, Malay, and English.

The Thai currency is the baht. In 2008, Thailand's gross domestic product (GDP) was 7,816.5 billion baht, with a per capita GDP of 111,376 baht (US\$3,592.77).

### **Characteristics of the Political System**

Thailand is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral, parliamentary form of government. The country is divided into 77 provinces, each administered by an appointed governor. The provinces, in turn, are divided into districts, subdistricts, and *tambons* (groups of villages). The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is made up of 38 districts and is administered by an elected governor.

Under the provisions relating to constitutional government and monarchy laid down in the 2007 constitution, three basic institutions form the governmental structure of Thailand:

- The monarch, who is regarded as the head of state and head of the Royal Armed Forces. The monarch is a Buddhist, but is also the protector of all other religions in Thailand.
- A bicameral national assembly, which is comprised of members of the Council of Ministers and members of the Senate. The national assembly administers the legislative branch of government.



- The prime minister, who, as head of the government and chief executive, oversees the executive branch, which includes the Council of Ministers. The latter is responsible for the administration of 19 ministries and the Office of the Prime Minister.

## Education System

### Overview and Background<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the National Education Act of 1999 (Office of the National Education Commission, Office of the Prime Minister, Kingdom of Thailand, 2000) and the Bureaucratic Reform Bill of 2002, the most important reform of educational administration and management in recent years has been the merging of three educational agencies—the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of University Affairs, and the Office of the National Education Commission—into a single agency, the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for promoting and overseeing all levels and types of education under the administration of the state. In particular, it is responsible for formulating policies, plans, and standards; mobilizing resources for education; promoting and co-coordinating, within the context of education, religious affairs, arts, culture, and sports; and monitoring, inspecting, and evaluating educational provision.

Local administration of education is conducted under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior. Management of education in specialized fields or for specific purposes is undertaken by other ministries. The Ministry of Defense, for example, is responsible for managing military education. The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration under the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for general education in Bangkok, mostly at the level of basic education, which combines primary and secondary education (i.e., Grades 1 to 12).

At the national level, five main bodies within the Ministry of Education oversee management of the education system. They are the Office of the Permanent Secretary, the Office of the Education Council, the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, and the Office of the Higher Education Commission.

The decentralization of educational administration in 1999 led to the establishment of educational service areas. At present, there are 225 such areas across 77 provinces (183 at the primary education level and 42 at the secondary education level). Each educational service area contains an area committee for education that is responsible for approximately 200 educational institutions.

Decentralization also made schools offering basic education responsible for administering certain of their own affairs, namely those relating to academic matters, budgets, personnel, and general administrative matters. Each school has a board consisting of 7 to 15 representatives of parents, teachers, community groups, local administration organizations, alumni, and academics. It is responsible for supervising the school's administrative policies and practices.

In higher education, state universities are moving toward transformation to state-supervised institutions that function as legal entities. The aim of this process is to improve the quality of educational provision at this level of the education system. Both local and foreign nongovernmental organizations also make major contributions to the provision of education. For example, several agencies, such as Child Development Centers and the Council of Early Childhood and Youth Development Organizations help provide nonformal preprimary education.



<sup>1</sup> Information for this section was drawn from Office of the Education Council, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Thailand (2005, 2008, 2009).

The government is responsible for overseeing the management of private education institutions (general and vocational education) as well as for monitoring the quality and standards of the education provided by these enterprises. Some prestigious private institutions are managed by Christian denominations.

During school year 2006, a total of 15,240,809 students were enrolled in preprimary, primary, and secondary education. Just over 82 percent of these students were studying at public institutions, and just over 17 percent at private institutions.

### Structure of the Education System

Formal education in Thailand takes various forms depending on the target group.

- Mainstream education, in both general and vocational streams, caters for general students in regular schools;
- Basic education for children with special education needs is offered as special education for gifted and talented students, special education for students with disabilities (at special schools, special centers, and inclusive schools), and welfare education for disadvantaged students (at welfare schools and border patrol police schools);
- Education for clerics is offered at several religious institutions;
- Specialized education is provided by specific agencies other than the Ministry of Education; and
- International education is offered in languages other than Thai, most often English.

Formal general education is provided at all levels from preprimary to higher education, while formal vocational education is offered only at the upper-secondary and higher education levels.

The curriculum for preprimary education, for children three to five years of age, focuses on preparing children physically, intellectually, emotionally, mentally, and socially for primary education. The basic education curriculum for Grades 1 to 12 is divided into four three-year stages, consisting of around 1,200 hours of instruction per year. The curriculum groups knowledge and skills into eight subject areas: Thai language, mathematics, science, social studies, religion and culture, health and physical education, art, careers and technology, and foreign languages. The curriculum also includes activities that respond to learners' specific interests.

The general study programs within basic education provide students at both the primary and secondary levels of the education system with career- and technology-related education. This area of educational provision gives students work experience and the basic knowledge they need, including use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in order to enter the workforce.

At the upper-secondary level, technical and vocational education and training in Thailand encompasses lower-certificate and associate-degree levels (see below). Both levels focus on competency and specify the standards of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal attributes that students will require in their future careers.

Curriculum standards cover nine fields—trade and industry, commerce, arts and crafts, home economics, agriculture, fisheries, business and tourism, textiles, and ICT. Students studying in these fields can take part in hands-on training in participating factories or companies for at least one semester. In addition, a number of entrepreneurs and educational institutions offer a dual education program that enables students to engage in on-the-job training for half of their total study period.



Formal technical and vocational education and training is conducted at three levels—upper secondary (leading to the lower certificate of vocational education), postsecondary (leading to a diploma or associate’s degree in vocational education), and university (leading to a degree). Special vocational education is offered in sports schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, and in dramatic arts and fine arts colleges under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture.

## Civic and Citizenship Education

Civic education in Thailand is delivered through discrete and compulsory school subjects in accordance with national educational policy. The formal civic education curriculum is dominated by concerns for “good” citizenship, the common good, moral education, and a range of values associated with these aspects.

A review of the history and development of civic education in Thailand can be divided into four major periods (Somwung & Siridej, 2005; see also Somwung & Rokspollmuang, 1998; Somwung & Siridej, 2000, 2002). The first or “premodernization” period (before 1870) can be termed the period of monastic education, the aim of which was to fit learners for a monastic way of life, given that monasteries were the then centers of learning and culture. During the second or initial modernization period (1870 to 1932), a secular curriculum was established and schools were separated from the temples. No specific content relating to civic and citizenship education was taught.

The third period, from 1932 to 1977, can be described as the modernization period. It coincided with Thailand’s transition from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy. With regard to moral and civic education, students were taught to understand the roles, functions, and responsibilities of a good citizen. The fourth and current period may be regarded as the modernized and developed education period. It began in 1978 after the introduction in 1977 of a new National Scheme of Education designed to reform the structure and curriculum of the education system.

In secondary education, the new curriculum includes two subjects related to the learning domain titled “civic and values education.” These subjects are social studies as a compulsory course, and Buddhism studies as an elective course. The new curriculum defines civic and values education as covering desirable aspects of education specific to human sensibilities, such as honesty, responsibility, kindness, reliability, diligence, and fairness. It is interesting to note that in the new curriculum, civic and values education (aimed at preparing good *national* citizens) is almost identical to citizenship education (aimed at preparing good *world* citizens). The National Education Act of 1999 stipulates the holistic development of the Thai people. This development therefore encompasses physical and mental health, the intellect, knowledge, morality, integrity, and other such desirable traits and values. It also emphasizes that life is enhanced when individuals, as national and global citizens, live in harmony with one another.

So far, all Thai governments have regarded education as essential for inducting individuals into Thai nationhood. National educational policy has therefore continued to focus on preparing students to become good citizens who will live in peace and harmony in society, and it expects schools of all types to implement government policies specific to civic and values education. The National Education Act of 1999 also emphasizes the need for students to be aware of appropriate practice within a democratic system of government. Although civic values are integrated with core work, extracurricular projects, and activities in Thai schools, lecturing remains the most popular method of teaching civic and citizenship education.

Various educational stakeholders have called for implementation of a comprehensive and experiential civic and values education program. Proposals suggest that aspects of civic and



citizenship education not currently present in schools need to be taken into consideration. These include measures directed toward students' active participation in civic affairs and democratic processes as well as measures associated with social enhancement, political literacy, civic values (especially with respect to consumerism and materialism) and the development of civic society.

There is little differentiation between teaching civic and citizenship education at the lower-secondary level of schooling and teaching this area of education at the upper-secondary level. However, during lower-secondary education, social studies teachers tend to use lecturing as the main means of delivering course content and offer little in the way of activities such as classroom discussions, whereas upper-secondary teachers tend to engage students in in-depth discussions concerning local and international situations and issues.

National policy expects all schools to give their students opportunities to participate in activities related to civic and citizenship education and school governance. Most schools comply with this expectation by encouraging their students to take part in selecting class representatives, voting for members of student councils, and engaging in volunteer community activities.

## **Teachers and Teacher Education**

### **Teacher Education in General**

In 2010, Thailand had 102 teacher education institutions, 72 of which were public and 30 of which were private institutions. Because teachers play a significant role in educating the future generation, they are involved in many aspects of young people's socialization. The government therefore views the development of teachers and teacher education as an urgent and ongoing educational priority. The National Education Act of 1999 stipulated the development of a new system for ensuring the professionalism and quality of teachers, faculty, staff, and other educational personnel.

In 2008, Thailand had about 700,000 fulltime teachers, about 600,000 of whom were teaching in public schools and the rest in private institutions. Teachers with a teaching license are entitled to salaried remuneration, welfare, and other benefits as stipulated in Section 55 of the 1999 National Education Act. Individuals wanting to enter teaching can traverse one of two pathways:

- Completion of a five-year Bachelor's degree in education; or
- Completion of a four-year Bachelor's degree in any discipline and completion of a one-year postgraduate certificate in education, consisting of at least 25 semester credits.

In addition to obtaining a teaching license, teachers must be Thai citizens and at least 18 years of age. They must also confirm their loyalty to the democratic government. Teachers in secondary schools are assigned according to their specialty subject.

Teacher education is rigorous in terms of the professional competencies that it demands of school teachers. Curriculum structures are relatively similar across the different university education faculties, with each program of study offering general education, professional education, major areas of specialization, and free electives.

The required minimum number of semester credits for a five-year Bachelor's degree in education is 160. A minimum of 30 credits is allocated to general education subjects, 50 credits to professional education courses, 74 credits to courses in major areas of specialization, and six credits to electives. Two study programs lead to certification as a secondary teacher. Those who prefer to pursue intensive study in a single area, such as social studies or civic and citizenship education, must take a minimum of 74 credits' worth of courses in that particular area. Those



who want to study two specializations (such as Thai and civic and citizenship education) must take a minimum of 37 credits' worth of courses in each area, for a combined total of 74 credits. Education faculties require all students in their fifth year of study to take a course in pedagogical practice.

Each university council is responsible for monitoring and assessing compliance with the academic and professional standards set for its teacher education curriculum (Somwung, 2003). At the national level, the Office of the Higher Education Commission is responsible for monitoring and assessing compliance with the academic standards set for the curriculum, while the National Teacher Council (Kuruspa) undertakes this role with respect to the *professional* standards set for the curriculum.

### **Teacher Education for Civic and Citizenship Education**

Civic and citizenship education is included in the curriculum as social studies and may be a feature of inservice teacher training, coaching, or continuing professional development for teachers. In 2010, the government funded a highly comprehensive teacher development program for all teachers, including social studies teachers. The main providers of this training were members of the education faculties of various universities. The trainers educated teachers using school-based training or a coaching approach. At present, 39 education faculties in universities prepare, on average, 1,400 social studies teachers per year for secondary schools in Thailand.

## **Assessments and Quality Assurance**

### **General Assessment and Examination Standards**

Teachers conduct classroom-based assessment of student learning in each subject. Assessment focuses not only on learning subject-matter content but also on whether student behavior is underpinned by requisite morals and desirable values. Schools stipulate assessment principles and criteria with the approval of their school committees. Schools also conduct learning assessments each year to check learning advancement in each class and grade level.

The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS) conducts an annual assessment, the National Learning Assessment (O-Net), in eight subject groups that include social studies and religion and culture (which is related to civic and citizenship education) at the end of Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12. NIETS also administers the General Aptitude Test and the Professional and Academic Aptitude Test, as well as Advanced Achievement Tests in seven subjects taught in Grade 12—Thai language, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, social studies, religion and culture, and English language. Students can use their test results to obtain entry to universities.

### **Quality Monitoring of Civic and Citizenship Education**

The establishment of decentralized educational administration and the ceding of autonomy to local educational agencies and educational institutions were accompanied by a system of educational quality assurance designed to ensure a consistent quality of educational provision throughout Thailand. The system is not seen as a punitive measure but as a means of providing educational institutions with information that they can use to improve the quality of their educational programs.

Two main kinds of quality assurance are evident in Thailand: internal and external. To ensure links and consistency between the two, the government, in 2003, formulated the criteria and methods for both for all types and levels of education. The government revised these conditions in 2010. Today, all educational institutions are required to implement an internal quality assurance system that consists of quality control, quality auditing, and quality assessment.



External quality assessments of all schools are conducted at least once every five years by an independent public organization, which submits its reports to the relevant agencies and to the general public. This process of independent review is done to ensure independence from the educational authorities and to facilitate the assessment of both government and private educational institutions.

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## APPENDIX: ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN ICCS

### *The international study center and its partner institutions*

The international study center is located at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and serves as the international study center for ICCS. Center staff at ACER were responsible for the design and implementation of the study. They worked in close cooperation with the center's partner institutions NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research, Slough, United Kingdom) and LPS (Laboratorio di Pedagogia Sperimentale at the Roma Tre University, Rome, Italy), as well as the IEA Data Processing and Research Center (DPC) and the IEA Secretariat.

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### *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)*

IEA provides overall support in coordinating ICCS. The IEA Secretariat in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, is responsible for membership, translation verification, and quality control monitoring. The IEA Data Processing and Research Center (DPC) in Hamburg, Germany, is mainly responsible for sampling procedures and the processing of ICCS data.

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PAC has, from the beginning of the project, advised the international study center and its partner institutions during regular meetings.

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Jean Dumais from Statistics Canada in Ottawa is the sampling referee for the study. He has provided invaluable advice on all sampling-related aspects of the study.

### *National research coordinators (NRCs)*

The national research coordinators (NRCs) played a crucial role in the development of the project. They provided policy- and content-oriented advice on the development of the instruments and were responsible for the implementation of ICCS in participating countries.

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This volume presents findings on civic and citizenship education-related policies and curriculum in the countries that participated in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) of 2009 sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Over the past 50 years, IEA has conducted 30 comparative research studies on educational policies, practices, and outcomes in various school subjects in more than 80 countries worldwide.

ICCS 2009 studied the ways in which young people in lower-secondary schools are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens. It investigated student knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship as well as student perceptions, attitudes, and activities related to this area of learning. It also examined differences among countries in these outcomes and the relationship of the latter to students' individual characteristics and family background, to teaching practices, and to school and broader community contexts.

Thirty-eight countries participated in ICCS. Data gathered from more than 140,000 Grade 8 students and 62,000 teachers in over 5,300 schools provide evidence that may be used to improve policy and practice in civic and citizenship education. This information also provides a new baseline for future research on civic and citizenship education.

Thirty-five of the ICCS participants prepared country chapters summarizing the structure of their education systems, the place of civic and citizenship education in the curriculum, and the preparation of teachers. Participants also included information on assessments and examinations, and ongoing reforms and debates. The chapters were written primarily by experts from ministries of education and/or research institutes presenting their country's viewpoints.

The encyclopedia chapters show that in almost all countries, civic and citizenship education was, at the time of study, part of the national curricula. However, there was considerable variation with regard to how this learning area was being taught. In about half of the countries, the chapter authors reported that this subject was compulsory, either as a separate subject or integrated into other subjects. In about one third of all participating countries, civic and citizenship specialists were teaching this area of education.

In combination with the ICCS international report and regional reports for Asia, Europe, and Latin America, the ICCS encyclopedia provides an indispensable resource for policy and research on educating future citizens worldwide. Researchers interested in conducting secondary analyses of ICCS can also access the study's technical report and international database.